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Contemporary Philosophical Discourse in Lithuania

Lithuanian Philosophical Studies IV

Edited by
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Introduction

What Do Contemporary Lithuanian Philosophers Philosophize?

Jurate Baranova

This volume follows the volume Lithuanian Philosophy: Persons and Ideas. Lithuanian Philosophical Studies II,[1] in which we tried to present to the reader the main trends in the history of Lithuanian philosophical thought, its historical, cultural and even geographical context. This second logical step seems to be the discussion of contemporary ideas. Who can decide what are the most important philosophical problems for the contemporary philosophers in Lithuania? What is the criterion to classify professional thinkers into different schools? When the main editor of our serious cultural newspaper Siaures Atenai asked the same question in an interview, adding which philosophers did I personally prefer, my spontaneous answer was, that I like all Lithuanian thinkers, because we have very few of them and they all are ours. We have no others.[2] And perhaps they do not want to be classified because they feel unique. I would not enjoy being classified myself. But typecasting is unavoidable – and for purposes of typecasting I can say that Tomas Sodeika creates a very adapted phenomenological approach to Zen. Hence, I consider that there is such thing in Lithuania as a Tomas Sodeika's philosophical school. The same is true of Arunas Sverdiolas' school oriented to hermeneutics, Evaldas Nekrasas[3] oriented to analytical philosophy, Antanas Antrijauskas oriented to the East. Arvydas Sliogeris is orientated more to himself, but with his poetically intensive and at the same time metaphysically clear thinking he is one of the most independent and brave thinkers in our country.[4] Zenonas Norkus is the closest to Heaven, because he never leaves his place in the highest floor of Vilnius University Building – the White Hall of the Professor's Library. He wrote a huge study on Weber and rational choice in German language. I am impressed by his devotion to his profession; it is a pity recently he moved from philosophy to sociology. Marius Povilas Saulauskas prefers methodological reflections on sociality. I enjoy also Vytautas Rubavicius' style of thinking uniting philosophical and poetical aspects. For purposes of typecasting I can agree with the evaluation of me as a follower of Richard Rorty's conception of philosophy as literary critique.

But as an editor of this volume Contemporary Philosophical Discourse in Lithuania I had to find more objective criterion. So I decided to make some sort of experiment: to ask all the writers who are doing philosophical critique to suggest to the volume the article they themselves enjoy most of all and which they would like to have presented as representing their contemporary interest. Thus the volume is a bit like a result of research. On the other hand, it is not precisely so, because not all the philosophers who really participate in contemporary philosophical discourse in

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[1] *Lithuanian Philosophy: Persons and Ideas. Lithuanian Philosophical Studies* II, ed. Jurate Baranova. Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change, Series IVA, Eastern and Central Europe, Volume 17, gen, ed. George F. McLean. Vashngton D.C.: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2000.

[2] Mastymo pratybos-atspara chaosui. Filosofijos profesore Jurate Baranova atsako i Sigito Parulskio klausimus. In *Siaures Atenai*, 2003. IV. 26, nr. 16 96500, p. 3.

[3] Published books: *Loginis empirizmas ir mokslo metodologija* (Logical Empiricism and the Methodolpgy of Science, 1979); *Tikimybinis zinojimas* (Probabilistic Knowledge, 1987); *Filosofijos ivadas* (Introduction to Philosophy, 1993).

[4] Published books: *Zmogaus pasaulis ir egzistencinis mastymas* (Human World and Existential Thinking, 1985); *Daiktai ir menas* (The Things and Art, 1988); *Butis ir pasaulis* (Being and World, 1990); *Sietuvos* (1992); *Post scriptum* (1992); *Transcendencijos tyla* (The Silence of Transcendence, 1996); *Niekio vardai* (The Names of Nothingness, 1997); *Niekis ir esmes* (Nothingness and Essences, 2004).

our country presented their texts, their reason being the barrier of the English language. Nevertheless some results are visible. One can see four main currents in what contemporary Lithuanian philosophers are discussing. They are trying to interpret the classical philosophy from the perspective of contemporary thought; they are meeting the challenge of Western postmodernism; they are comparing symbols of different cultures; and they are doing practical philosophy, e.g. using philosophical thought to interpret the existential problems, the problems of human identity, relation with literature, films, ecological processes and philosophical didactics.

What are the most popular classical philosophers discussed in Lithuanian philosophical literature today?

I. The first part "Classical Philosophy and Contemporary Thought" tries to answer that question. Tomas Sodeika interprets the mysticism of Master Eckehart from the perspective of Edmund Husserls' phenomenology. Currently he is translating the Cartesian Meditations into Lithuanian. He is a translator not only of Husserl, but of Max Scheller's and Martin Buber's works as well. His introductions to Buber's two volumes Ich und Du published in Lithuanian are the most eminent examples of talented contemporary philosophical interpretation.[5] The interesting thing is that he applied some insights taken from phenomenology to create new curriculum and new textbook for teaching philosophy in high schools.[6] The first chapter "What is a Man?" starts from the problem of the body, proceeds to the topic of soul, and afterwards to the problem of person, comparing man with the animal and the machine, asking the question about the puzzle and the meaning of human life. The second chapter of the textbook following Edmund Finks' insights has the title "Phenomena of Man" and uses all the phenomena Fink suggested (work, play, struggle, love, death), but adds some new one (truth and language). The third chapter deals with the institutions of man (science, art, morals, politics, history, and religion). What is most new and unusual is the method of study suggested by the author of textbook. He suggests a triadic method: interpretation, discussion and meditation, asking the student after interpretation and discussion to choose one idea, which seemed the most important and interesting. Some methodical steps on how to relax the body and achieve the inner silence and serenity for meditation is suggested as well. Phenomenology has no such background in Lithuanian philosophical tradition, as it has for example in the Czech[7] or Latvian.[8] Sodeika can be considered as the first representative of phenomenology here.

Jurate Baranova published some texbooks on political philosophy, philosophy of history, history of ethics and the main problems of philosophy.[9] Recently she published the book XX

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[5] Sodeika, T. Martinas Buberis ir zydiskoji "graikisko mastymo" alternatyva. In Buber, M. 1998. *Dialogo principas, I. Aš ir Tu*. Vilnius: Kataliku pasaulis, 1998.

[6] Sodeika, T., Baranova, J. *Filosofija XI-XII kl*. Vilnius: Tyto alba, 2002.

[7] *Czech Philosophy in the XXth Century. Czech Philosophical Studies, II.* Edited by Lumomir Novy, Jiri Gabriel, Jaroslav Hroch, general editor George F. McLean. Vashington D.C.: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1994.

[8] Kule, M. *Phenomelogy and Culture*. Riga: Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, University of Latvia, 2002.

[9] *Politine filosofija* (Political Philosophy). Vilnius: Pradai, 1995; *Filosofines etikos chrestomatija XI-XII* (Reader for Philosophical Ethics, *XI-XII grades*), ed. Jurate Baranova. Vilnius: Alma littera, 1998. *Istorijos filosofija* (Philosophy of History). Vilnius: Alma littera, 2000; Sodeika Tomas, Baranova Jurate. *Filosofija XI-XII* kl (Philosophy, XI-XII grades). Vilnius: Tyto alba, 2002; *Etika: filosofija kaip praktika* (Ethics: Philosophy as a Practice). Vilnius: Alma littera, 2002; *Filosofinë etika: að ir tu* (Philosophical Ethics: I and Thou). Vilnius: Alma littera, 2004; *Filosofinë etika: prasmë ir laisvë* (Philosophical Ethics: Meaning and Freedom). Vilnius: Alma littera, 2004; *XX amþiaus moralës filosofija: pokalbis su Kantu* (20th Century's Moral Philosophy: Conversation with Kant). Vilnius: VPU leidykla, 2004.

Century Moral Philosophy: Conversation with Kant. She contributes from that book the chapter "Categorical Imperative and The Face of the Other: Immanuel Kant, Emmanuel Levinas". The dialogue between Emmanuel Levinas and Immanuel Kant is extremely important. One is German, the other French, but both can be considered as the most "Lithuanian" thinkers, at least by their geographical origin. Levinas is not neo-Kantian. His style of philosophizing is postmodern, post-phenomenological and post-heideggerian. Nevertheless, author does agree with the insight of the interpreter, Adrian T. Peperzak, who concluded, that from among all modern philosophers Levinas' thinking is the most similar to Kant's. Levinas did not pay Kantian thought as much attention as he did, for example, to Edmund Husserl's phenomenology or Martin Heidegger's fundamental ontology, who were his mentors, inviting both his acceptance and disagreement. On the other hand, trying to state the status of ethics as the prime philosophy, Emmanuel Levinas took a standpoint similar to that discerned in Kant's approach. He accepted the idea of a categorical imperative trying to distance himself from the architectonics of Kantian philosophy. Like Sartre, he distinguishes the affinity between Kant's and Husserl's transcendental subject and questions the acceptability of such a subject. On the other hand, at the end of the article "Outside the subject", in which he was elaborating arguments against Husserl's conception of subject, he suddenly turns to Kant' categorical imperative and interprets the uniqueness of the subject as ability to take responsibility for the other person's (autrui) suffering. He sees this supposition as immanent in Kant's categorical imperative. The author of the book suggests that the common theoretical sources uniting Kant and Levinas are their openness to the tradition of Christian ethics, stemming in Kant's case from its justification by reason and moral law, and in Levinas case – through Fyodor Dostoyevsky's approach of total self-rejection and consciousness of guilt. On the other hand, Levinas was more close to the sober stability in Kantian understanding the world than to the anxiety of the existential tradition. Levinas relied more on rationalistic tradition than on existential thinking. He took the idea of Infinity from Descartes and interpreted life as the place for happiness. The most interesting thing is that for this assumption he was looking for support in Kant's philosophy as well. Nevertheless, the author of the book discerns the different approaches to the problem of happiness in the philosophy of the both. On the other hand, she concludes, that Kantian ethics is based on monologue; it is closed to the Other as a second person to me. As a Kantian in ethics I think about the Other as Each other, as the third, fourth and etc. Levinas, in contrast to Kant, first of all speaks about My openness to the Other as the second person. The discourse about each other (e.g., third, etc.) he addresses to politics.

Arunas Mickevicius creates new space for interpreting Friedrich Nietzsche's metaphors: he suggests reading Nietzsche from an interdisciplinary perspective in order to find the message he is sending to architects. Nietzsche is not neglected in Lithuania. His works *Also sprach Zaratustra, Jenseits von Gut und Bose, Gotzen-Dammerung, Die frohliche Wissenschaft, Zur Genealogie der Moral,* are translated into Lithuanian. Also sprach Zaratustra was traslated ten years later a second time by the same translator and philologist of German language, devoted to Nietzsche, Alfonsas Tekorius. We have a discussion on how to translate the famous expression of Nietzsche's *Der Wile zur Macht (The will to Power):* either as *valia valdyti (Tekorius),* or as *valia viespatauti (Sliogeris),* or as *valia galiai (Sverdiolas),* or as *valios galiai (Mickevicius).* For his new translation of *Zaratustra* Tekorius suggested a new expression, *valia siekti galios* (the will to achieve power). Arunas Mickevicius wrote his doctoral theses on the postmodern interpretation of Nietzsche and all the introductions to Nietzsche's books in Lithuanian as well. Five years ago we had a discussion on Nietzsche as parallel to Habermas' and Rorty's approach. Sliogeris writing the introduction to the collected writings of Friedrich Nietzsche expressed an idea very similar to that expressed by

Habermas concerning neo-Nietzscheans' approach. Both evaluated Nietzsche's influence as destructive and even dangerous. On the other hand, Richard Rorty, following Alexander Nehamas' interpretations of Nietzsche, states that his philosophy opens the possibility of self-creation. This is my approach as well.

But for a just evaluation one should note, that Kant, with whom Nietzsche hotely debated, is not less popular in Lithuania than is Nietzsche – even more popular. Like Emmanuel Levinas, Kant can be considered as the most geographically "Lithuanian" foreign philosopher. J. Stradinis in his article "Did Kantian ancestors descend from the Kurshes?" writes, that together with German blood Kant has a bit not of Scottish as was suggested earlier, but of Kurshian, and it seems Lithuanian, blood. He suggests deriving the origin of Kant's name from the place Kantwain – nowadays the village Kantvonai in Silutes district, five kilometers to the East of Priekule. Stradinis explains that Kant's great-grandfather was a tavern-keeper in Rusne, and his father and grandfather were saddle-makers.[10] Perhaps due to this kinship, or perhaps to some stringent thinking, and for this reason proximity to some "archetypal forms" of Lithuanian mentality, Kant never lacked for attention from Lithuanian philosophy critics. Romanas Pleckaitis translated his works *Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Prolegomena, Kritik der praktischen Vernunft, Kritik der Urteiskraft.* Kristina Rickeviciute translated *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten.* His political treatises are translated and published as well. Kant was interpreted not only by the philosophers of the "older generation": Kristina Rickeviciute, Romanas Pleckaitis, Bronius Kuzmickas. It seems that all the philosophers of the "middle generation", before choosing their main current of professional interests, in one or another aspect established their relation to Kant's philosophical inheritance. So in 1988 the book *The Profiles of Kant's philosophy* appeared. The editor of the book, Algirdas Degutis, in explaining the reason for its appearance wrote that he thinks that the original Kantian philosophy still is active and alive because it suggests the possibility of radical reflection on the place of philosophy in contemporary culture. Sliogeris emphasizes the quite contemporary style of Kant's thinking, Tomas Sodeika paradoxically concludes that rejecting the pretentious name of ontology and substituting the more modest name of analytic of pure intellect, Kant never rejected the possibility of the cognition of being, seeing the limited subject as capable of experiencing limited being. Aleksandras Dobryninas discusses the transition from the Augustinian question "What is Time?" to the Kantian question "How is time?" Arunas Sverdiolas discusses the Heideggerian attempts to distinguish Kantian insights from the Nietzschean and Schopenhauerian interpretations. Evaldas Nekrasas looks for Kants' influence on the common theory of knowledge, and especially on the philosophy of mathematics.[11]

"The younger part of the middle generation" showed more attention to the social philosophy of Kant. Rita Serpytyte analyzed juridical aspects of Kant's philosophical thought, Arvydas Jokubaitis the political, Jurate Baranova the historical. Zenonas Norkus discussed Kant's role in the defending the status of contemporary sociology and social sciences. Loreta Anilionyte continues ethical studies of Kant, started by Rickeviciute, Pleckaitis and Grazina Miniotaite. The Kantian ethics is the topic for investigation in philosophy as practice for Jurate Baranova as well. The youngest part of philosophical critiques does not ignore Kant. Nerija Putinaite wrote and defended as her Ph.D. thesis, *The Problem of Justice in the Philosophy of Immanuel Kant.*

[10] Stradinis, A. Ar I. Kanto proteviai kile is kursiu? In *Problemos*. Vilnius, nr. 36, 1987.
[11] *I. Kanto filosofijos profiliai,* ed. Algirdas Degutis. Vilnius: Mintis, 1988.

Leonidas Donskis[12] belongs to the "young generation" as well, but his academic and personal experience is rich in events. He was a former IREX-International Research and Exchanges Board Fellow at Dickinson College, and the Swedish Institute Guest Scholar at the University of Gothenburg. Having earned his first doctorate in the philosophy from the University of Vilnius, Leonidas Donskis then received his second doctorate in social and moral philosophy from the University of Helsinki. Recently he is leading discussions on culture on TV cultural programs as well. He is also a social critic and interpreter of culture and political trends. He reasons in a very "Popperian manner": looking for the moral and political consequences of every concept and text. This interest is revealed in the title of a new book recently published in English: *The End of Ideology and Utopia. Moral Imagination and Cultural Criticism in the Twentieth Century.* His attention to George Orwell' insights are not accidental as well. He uses them to analyze never-ending possibility of fanaticism and hatred in contemporary world.

II. The second part "Meeting the Challenge of Western Postmodernism" could be much broader by scope – including hermeneutics as well. Hermeneutics could have been an independent chapter, but the texts of Arunas Sverdiolas, Vytautas Rubavicius, Dalius Jonkus on this topic are missing. As a matter of fact two recently published monographs are reflections on hermeneutics. Arunas Sverdiolas in his book *Being and Asking. Studies in Philosophical Hermeneutics*[13] summarizers the results of many years of historical and critical study of philosophical hermeneutics, interpreting ideas of the main representatives of this movement – Wilhelm Dilthey, Martin Heidegger, Han-Georg Gadamer, Paul Ricoeur, Rudolf Bultman. Although this book does not seek to present a total picture or exhaustive history of the philosophical movement under discussion, both goals are borne in mind in each study: the reader is acquainted with the most important problem areas of philosophical hermeneutics as well as the stages of its appearances and development.

Vytautas Rubavicius' work, *Postmodern Discourse: Philosophical Hermeneutics, Deconstruction, and Art*,[14] appeared two months after that of Sverdiolas comparing Heidegger's and Derrida's deconstructive strategies and their attitudes towards meaning and truth in art. It analyses the roots of postmodern discourse and the internal courses of its "aesthetisation", conditioned by the peculiarities of re-thinking art phenomena as well as the deconstruction strategy for breaking down all the oppositions between the "center" and the "periphery". The appearance of this book creates two intellectual intrigues. The first is personal, concerning the fluctuation of interest from art (poetry) to philosophy on the part of the author himself; the other is theoretical. Twenty or more years ago Rubavicius began his doctoral studies at Vilnius University, but the attraction of poetry was stronger. He wrote verses himself, published six poetry books, translated from foreign languages and criticized poetry and fiction. He wrote philosophical texts as well,

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[12] Published books: *Moderniosios kulturos filosofijos metmenys* (The Outlines of Modern Philosophy of Culture, 1993); *Moderniosios samones konfiguracijos* (The Configurations of Modern Consciousness, 1994. In English: *The End of Ideology and Utopia? Moral Imagination and Cultural Criticism in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Peter Lang, 2000; *Identity and Freedom: Mapping Nationalism and Social Criticism in Twentieth-Century Lithuania.* London and New York: Routledge, 2002. His works are translated into Danish, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, and Ukrainian languages.

[13] Sverdiolas, A. *Buti ir klausti. Hermeneutines filosofijos studijos–I (To Be and to Ask: Studies in Hermeneutical Philosophy-I).* Vilnius: Strofa, 2002. The newest one: Sverdiolas, Arunas. *Aiskinimo ratas. Hermeneutines filosofijos studijos–2 (The Circle of Explanation. Studies in Hermeneutical Philosophy-II).* Vilnius: Strofa, 2003.

[14] Rubavicius, V. *Postmodernusis diskursas; filosofine hermeneutika, dekonstrukcija, menas*. (Postmodern Discourse, Philosophical Hermeneutics, Deconstruction, Art). Vinius: Kulturos, filosofijos ir meno institutas, 2003.

developing the genre of philosophical review or essay, from which we all learned how to write in essay form. One could remember his reviews of the books of Martin Heidegger, Arvydas Sliogeris, Alphonso Lingis. The last is published here as the last chapter, "Practical philosophy". Some years ago Rubavicius finished his doctoral investigation writing a book in which he reveals his interest in postmodern discourse of art and creation treating the relation between hermeneutics and deconstruction. Two years ago Audrone Zukauskaite published a book *Beyond the Signifier Principle: Deconstruction, Psychoanalysis, Critique of Ideology*,[15] which could be considered as the first answer to the challenge of Western Postmodernism. In this book the author tries to unveil the theoretical coherence and continuity not only of psychoanalysis and the critique of ideology, but of deconstruction as well. When Sverdiolas's book is devoted only to hermeneutics, Rubavius's study, even in the title of book, contains both terms: "hermeneutics" and "deconstruction". The author defines the goal of the book as the intention to reveal the interaction between philosophical hermeneutics and postmodern discourse, especially deconstruction.

Why does the relation between hermeneutics and deconstruction create a problem? One can remember the attempt of Jacques Derrida to deconstruct the Heideggerian hermeneutic project by interpreting Nietzsche as the last metaphysician in his book *Esperons. Nietzsche's Styles.* Both Sverdiolas and Rubavicius notice the unsuccessful attempt to find the possibility of dialogue between Gadamer and Derrida. But, in this situation they support more the position of Gadamer and try to "unmask" a bit Derrida. Sverdiolas states that the position of Derrida is more close to the hermeneutic project than he himself admits. Rubavicius broadly discusses the peculiarities of postmodern discourse: attempts to construct the discourse taken up by Rorty, or Derrida, analyzes the relations between literature and philosophy as two different genres, questions the understanding and interpretation of a work of art and meaning exposed by such contemporary postmodern theorists as J. Baudrillard, F. Jameson and Z. Bauman. Nevertheless he looks at postmodern discourse from the hermeneutic point of view and states that loosing the point of departure the postmodern approach very frequently turns to metaphors connected with light, pointing to the Heideggerian Lichtung. Thus interpreters of postmodern discourse are not followers of deconstruction themselves.

Rita Serpytyte[16] with the article "Nihilism and Weak Thought" discusses the postmodernism of the Italian philosopher Gianni Vattimo, who having called himself a "debolist" consistently seeks also to read "debolistically" the heritage of Nietzsche, Heidegger and the Christian tradition. Serpytyte concludes, that Vattimo's finding the end of the threat of the history of being in the weakening of the firm structures of Being means that for him being has a nihilistic vocation. Serpytyte herself is interested in the phenomenon of nihilism and is preparing for publication a book on this problem.

When two representatives from the analytical school – Evaldas Nekrasas and Zenonas Norkus, suggested articles on the problem of postmodernism as well, one can conclude that the challenge of Western postmodernism to Lithuanian philosophers is one of its most interesting topics.

Zenonas Norkus in his article "Between Philosophy and Rhetoric" discusses the status and genesis of postmodernism in the contemporary philosophy of history – namely, the postmodernism connected with Hayden White's works. But it seems that to the author the prehistory of the genesis of postmodernism in historical thinking to which he devotes more attention, is more interesting in

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[15] Zukauskaite, A. *Anapus signifikanto principo. Dekonstrukcija, psichoanalize, ideologijos kritika*. Vilnius: Aidai, 2001.

[16] The Head of the Center of Religious Studies at Vilnius University. Recently published texbook for schools: Serpytyte, R. *Religija ir filosofija*. Vadovelis XI klasei. Vilnius: Tyto alba, 2003.

itself than Hayden White's project. Ten years ago Norkus published a book, *The Theory of Historiography*,[17] uniting by this name both critical and analytical trends in the history of philosophy of history. Two years ago he published a huge new book in German, *Max Weber und Rational Choice*,[18] and with it turned from philosophy to sociology. His subject of investigation is Weber's sociological work concentrating on its relation to the rational choice interdisciplinary movement influential in the contemporary social science. The author pursued the goal of developing and substantiating a new interpretation of Weber's legacy using the vantage point of the rational choice approach represented by the work of the social scientists working with two assumptions. First of it states, that the explanation of the social (collective) facts must be grounded in the theory of individual behavior (the principle of methodological individualism). Second rational choice theory lends better micro-foundations for sociological explanation than psychological theories of individual behavior (the principle of antipsychologism). Unfortunately with this book and habilitation Norkus moved from philosophy to sociology, changing nor only topics, but departments as well.

Evaldas Nekrasas moved from the position of the head of the department of Philosophy at Vilnius University to the position of the head of international affairs at the Institute of International relations. It seems that Lithuanian philosophers are rather flexible: not only moving from the vita contemplativa toward the vita activa, from philosophy to politics and back as well, but also changing departments and participating in the cultural discourse of society.

Nekrasas approaches phenomenon of postmodernism not from the point of view of the follower, but, on the contrary from the modernist standpoint of the philosopher of science. His article "Positivism, Post-positivism and Postmodernism" investigates the possible relations between postmodernism and post-positivism. Nekrasas takes for his analyses the moderate type of postmodernism elaborated by Jean Lyotard and Jean Baudrillard. He does not relate the beginning of postmodernism to the revival of Nietzsche in the tradition of French philosophy, starting from Deleuze's book on Nietzsche in 1962, neglecting as well Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault or Gilles Deleuze's versions of postmodernism, but more to the student revolt in France in 1968 inspired by Marxist or neo-Marxist ideas. This premise allows him to discern a deep connection between the tradition of the philosophy of science and postmodernism. He concludes that postmodernism assimilated post-positivism by claiming that Kuhn, Paul Feyerabend and other post-positivists are clear-cut postmodernists. He notices, that Kuhn's concept of a paradigm is widely used in postmodernist writings and they regard him as one of the main exponents of postmodern thought. Nekrasas also states, that a closer look into the epistemological principles of moderate postmodernism reveals that many principles regarded by postmodernism as constitutive of its own philosophy are shared by it with positivism. At least two features – relativism and fallibilism – are common both to logical positivism and to postmodernism as well.

III. The third part of the book "Cultural Comparativistics" represents a rather strong orientated towards Eastern philosophy, the so-called Antanas Andrijauskas' school. All the authors of the articles have not only theoretical experience in Eastern philosophy; they have experienced Eastern culture from within as well. Andrijauskas who used to give lectures in Japan, keeps constant academic relations with Japanese and Chinese academics, and organizes academic exchanges for our students and investigators of the East at the universities of these countries. Andrijauskas in his article "Traditional Japanese Medieval Aesthetics from the Perspectives of Comparative Studies"

[17] Norkus, Z. *Istorika*. Vilnius: Taura, 1996.
[18] Norkus, Z. *Max Weber und Rational Choice.* Marburg: Metropolis Verlag, 2001.

presents a broad historical sketch of the peculiarities of art, especially Zen art in Japan. This article recalls his huge book, Traditional Japanese esthetics and art,[19] published in Lithuanian two years ago.

Arunas Gelunas suggests an article "The New Paradigm of Order: from the Comparison of Nishida Quitter and Maurice Merleau-Ponty to the Search for Strategies for Lithuanian Philosophy". Gelunas is a painter who rather independently spent quite a long two-year period in Japan mastering his skills in Japanese painting. On the other hand, at the same time he did not follow the path of a poet, as old Zen painter would have preferred as "a second speciality", but became a professional philosopher in the Western manner. He starts the article with the insight that his communication with the Japanese was most successful on the very common everyday level of human or professional relationships and not on the level of "the contact between the representatives of cultures". Nevertheless, he suggests a very impressive dialogue between two representatives of different cultures, Nishida Kitaro and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. The article for this volume compares two eminent philosophers from East and West, looking for common points of view. The concept of pure experience, according to Gelunas, unites not only the European French philosopher Merleau-Ponty and the Japanese Nishida, but includes in the common discourse the American, William James', conception of pure experience. William James was mentioned in one of Jurate Baranova's articles discussing the common links between pragmatism and deconstruction. She tried to establish connections between the pragmatism of William James and the contemporary postmodern thinkers, Richard Rorty and Jacques Derrida. James' appearance in Lithuanian philosophical discourse has its "American" Lithuanian sources. For long years the philosopher of Lithuanian origin in United States, Ignas Skrupskelis, was editing and publishing all the volumes of James works and correspondence and sending those volumes to Lithuania. Due to this, even in 1986 Jurate Baranova defended the Ph.D. theses "Pragmatist's Conception of Truth of William James". Gelunas discusses James' phenomenological insights. In the following article written by Audrius Beinorius, "Experience and Context: Cross-cultural Approach to the Epistemology of Mysticism", William James is discussed as the theoretician of mystical experience. Thus William James is still discussed and alive in the different parts of the world.

Beinorius discusses the problem of mystical experience from different points of view. His main interest is Hindu mysticism. He is a professional in this field and used to study in India itself. But the article precisely reveals the genesis of the conception of mysticism in Western culture, starting from Greece-Roman world and the Christian period, up to the Protestant Reformation and reaching the modern era. The author states that modern conceptions of the mystical have increasingly become divorced both from the originally Christian context of the term and from the scriptural and liturgical dimensions that the notion implied in ancient and medieval Christianity. The notion becomes overwhelmingly experimental and psychological, as William James suggested in his book *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. Beinorius also notices that mysticism in Western culture as a result of Kant's consideration of "supernatural communication" and "mystical experience' as a death of philosophy frequently are considered as marginalized and suppressed in mainstream of intellectual thought. In the second part of this article Beinorius discusses the appeal of the *Upanishads* and *Gita* to the anti-clerical and anti-ritualistic sentiments of many Western intellectuals and examines the historical and conceptual peculiarities of Hindu

[19] Published books: *Grozis ir menas. Estetikos ir meno filosofijos idëju istorija* (Rytai-Vakarai) (Beauty and Art. The History of Aesthetics and Ideas of the Philosophy of Art (East-West, 19950; *Tradicine japonu estetika ir menas (*Traditional Japaneese Aesthetics and Art, 2001).

mysticism. As the last sentences of the article show Beinorius with this investigation challenges a long and well-established tradition of Western arrogance about the superiority of Western ways of understanding the world. He states that the study of Asian cultures requires a much greater sensitivity and engagement with indigenous forms of knowledge.

Loreta Poskaite's article "Situationality as the Main Principle of Chinese 'Aesthetic Being'" is a very vivid and easily read extension of the problems of the aesthetics of the East discussed in Andrijauskas article. The logic of the book suggests that it be read before the Andrijauskas article, because it is concerned with the aesthetics of China, by which Japanese esthetics was later influenced. Poskaite knows Chinese, as Beinorius does Hindu and Gelunas Japanese. She stayed for a long time in China in academic exchange. For her article she have chosen to discus situationality in art creation and Chinese aesthetics, comparing the Confucian and Taoist approaches: how the situationality of the aesthetic experience is connected with music; how it is possible to hear absolute silence; what ordinary and extraordinary experience is revealed in the process of painting. Those interested in these questions will find Poskaite's article truly helpful.

Algis Uzdavinys in his article "Divine Light in Plotinus and Al-Suhrawardi" makes a comparative investigation as did Gelunas and Beinorius. Where they compared Western insights with the insights of the Japanese and Hindu worlds, Uzdavinys does this with Islamic suffism. The author states that the ontology of light in its advanced form became possible on the Islamic religious and Mazdean mythological grounds. This was a philosophical (or rather theosophical) adaptation of the Peripatetic noetics united with its astronomy and the neoplatonic (basically Plotinian, though paradoxically attributed to Aristotle) metaphysics of light, which passed into and charmed the Arab world. There are few investigators of Islamic culture in Lithuania today. Uzdavinys is one of these few and may be the most serious one, reading the Koran in its original language and visiting places dear to the Muslim heart (e.g. Meka).

IV. The fourth part, "Practical Philosophy", includes topics which show the intention of philosophy to reflect everyday experience. The first article by Alphonso Lingis is a remarkable example of a phenomenological approach to personal identity. Lingis lives in United States where he is a Professor of Philosophy at the University of Pennsylvania and has published such books as: *Abuses* (1994) and *Foreign Bodies* (1994).

A descendant of emigrants from Lithuania, he does not speak Lithuanian himself, but frequently visits Lithuania and gives lectures. His books, *The Community of Those Who Have Nothing in Common*[20] and *Dangerous emotions*,[21] are translated into Lithuanian. Lingis travels a lot and in his books he masterly communicates to the reader his impressions of Japan, Java, Brazil or the Easter islands as unique phenomenological insights. In his books Lingis pays much attention to the possible meeting and communication between "I" and the "Other" in different situations and different parts of the world. The stranger whom "I" meet in Lingis' books is not from my community or tribe. He can be an unknown boy, who leads me for a trip in a jungle. The stranger is also a one who simply gazes at me. The article "Word of Honor" published in this book is devoted more to the problem of self-identity. What are the possibilities of the meaning of the word "I"? One can distinguish linguistic level, but Lingis indicates also how the word "I" arises in an awakening out of the murmur of sensations; how it becomes the word related to my nobility; why the word of honor is so necessary to oneself; how the utterance "I am a dancer", or "I am a mother"

[20] Lingis, A. *The Community of Those Who Have Nothing in Common*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994.

[21] Lingis, A. *Dangerous Emotions*. California: University of California Press, 2000.

commits one's body; how it generates understanding; how it is related to self-consciousness; how we believe in this word and how we delude ourselves. All these questions are discussed in the article.

Next Vytautas Rubavicius' article, "Ordained by the Master's Hand", also touches the problem of "I" for the creator (e.g. architect) in a postmodern culture. The author notices, that postmodern culture holds that the "I" is only an illusion, a grammatical category, a side-product of discourse. Therefore it becomes problematic to talk about moral and social orientations since they are disconnected from the "stable" individuality. These two articles – Alphonso Lingis and Vytautas Rubavicius discuss one with another. Besides one can notice the dialogue between the two authors from the other side, for Rubavicius wrote a review of Lingis' book, *The Community of Those Who Have Nothing in Common*, when it first appeared in Lithuanian.

Marius Povilas Saulauskas creates a new tradition in Lithuanian philosophical discourse – the philosophy of the information society. His contribution deals with the critical analysis of the concept of an information society as a legitimate foundation of the whole field of emerging information society studies. He argues that a failure to provide sufficient empirical evidence for the existence of the information society itself depends not only on the inherent polisemy of employed sociometric criteria, but also on the deficiency of the concept of an information society itself insofar as it is articulated along the lines of any socio-metric approach. Furthermore, he concludes, that an adequate criterion of information society cannot be quantitative, but must be qualitative and formulated counterfactually. His article also dwells on the concept of the information society as it is articulated along the lines of modern ideological discourse: in terms of mainstream liberal-social-democratic controversies and also in terms of rational choice ideology. An article also puts under critical comparative scrutiny the usage of the information and knowledge society concept in the public sphere of present day Lithuania.

Few Lithuanian philosophers are interested in reflecting on the problem of nature. Maybe we are impressed by Immanuel Kant's or Georg Hegel's division between nature and freedom. It seems that the process of Geist itself is a more proper topic for reflection by philosophers than is nature. The exception – Ceslovas Kalenda' book *Ecological Ethics: Sources and Present*,[22] which appeared a year ago. The main ideas of the book are represented in the article "The Place of Ecological Ethics'in Culture", published in a recent volume.

Arvydas Sliogeris perhaps is the most eminent Lithuanian philosopher today. Where others are more critics of philosophical texts, whereas Sliogeris is trying to philosophize more directly. His personality and his works were presented in the previous volume, *Lithuanian Philosophy: Persons and Ideas. Lithuanian Philosophical Studies II,* in the chapter written by Naglis Kardelis. In this volume Sliogeris presents the main ideas from his new book *Nothing and Isness.* This new book is rather very impressive in size (more than 1000 pages) and provocative with its new ideas.

Gintautas Mazeikis is one of the most interesting philosophical anthropologists from the young generation. He is spreading the philosophical culture in the University of Siauliai in the north of Lithuania, the geographically distant from the capital. His contribution to this volume, "Pragmatics and Analytics of Philosophical Anthropology" compares the ideas of contemporary American neo-Pragmatist, Richard Rorty, with Kant.

Lilija Duobliene is the first educator to write her Ph.D. on philosophical didactics. In the article "Philosophy Teaching in Lithuanian Secondary Schools" she discusses the current practice, discerns the main trends, and interprets the broader context of philosophical didactics as the philosophical tradition itself. In one of the interviews Richard Rorty noted, that postmodernism,

[22] Kalenda, Ceslovas. *Ekologine etika: istakos ir dabartis*. Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla, 2002

such as that of J. Derrida and M. Foucault was possible in France, but not in Britain or United States because in France (and in Italy as well) students are taught philosophy as a compulsory discipline in humanitarian lyceums. Maybe when we succeed in doing so in Lithuanian schools we'll not be only duplicators of Western or Eastern thought, but begin to write more original philosophical texts ourselves. We are optimistic about such projects for future.

Chapter I
Mysticism of Meister Eckhart and the Phenomenology of Edmund Husser

Tomas Sodeika

At first sight it might seem that the only thing that links Meister Eckhart with Husserl is their belonging to "the community of those who have nothing in common" (Alphonso Lingis[1]). Indeed, what can there be in common between a preacher from the Middle Ages who proclaims that "the God's Kingdom is near" and a professor of philosophy of the 20th century whose main care is to confer for philosophy the status of "the rigoruos science". Moreover, for Husserl "mysticism" is one of the manifestations of "crisis of European sciences".[2]

But let us not yield to the first impression, but first of all take a more attentive look at that critical situation from which Husserl's phenomenology was trying to help science.

Crisis: "Scholasticism"

Husserl understands this crisis to be the deep crisis of rationality when it turns out that European *ratio* of the Modern Ages does not have an absolute foundation and hangs in the emptiness, that the highest form of this *ratio* – objective knowledge – does not have a binding force in the human life, that the "scientific mind" cannot give an answer to questions of vital importance and that this happens not because of some mistakes which can possibly eliminated sometime but because of the *objectivistic* attitude constituting the very foundation of modern science itself which requires renunciation of subjectivity. Husserl presents the critics of such objectivistic attitude in the programmatic text of his phenomenology *Philosophy as a Rigorous Science*, issued in the beginning of our century. In this article he writes about" Aberglaube der Tatsache"[3] – "the prejudice of the fact" Husserl which manifests itself first of all in the predominance of "objectivism" which consciously and ignores any subjective sources of meaning. Husserl is entirely aware that in order to find a way out it is not enough to eliminate mistakes, improve methods of investigation and make facts more precise. It is utterly clear for him that a radical alternative is required here.[4] It is hardly an accident that Husserl uses the word "Scholastik" – "scholasticism" here. Because exactly that unconditional trust in the unrestricted value of the "objective", "learnable" knowledge which finally leads to the crisis of rationality is a characteristic feature both of the positivistic scientism of the Modern times to which Husserl addresses his polemics and of the scholasticism of the Middle Ages.

One very well known episode from the last years of St. Thomas Aquinas could be given as symbol of this crisis of scholastic rationality. In the late autumn of 1273 suddenly he gave up writing the *Summa theologica* tract about the sacrament of penance although it was already half done and immersed himself in absolute silence. When his worried friend and secretary Reginaldo da Pipperno after long hesitations plucked up his courage to ask about the reason of that silence

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[1] Lingis, A. *The Community of Those who Have Nothing in Common*. Indiana University Press, 1994.
[2] *Husserliana.* Bd.VI, s.1.
[3] Husserl, E. "Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft". In *Logos* I, 1910/1911, s. 336.
[4] Husserl, E. "Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft". In *Logos* I, 1910/1911, s. 305.

the answer was short and enigmatic: "All I have written seemed to me as straw!". This experience of the great teacher and saint of the Church perfectly reveals the very essence of the crisis of the scholastic spirit when one day it turns out that the way that was expected to give firm root into the divine reality revealing itself in the Holy Scripture is the way rather leading to the derealized sphere of "hohlen Wortanalysen".

The beginning of this way was in reading of the Holy Scripture. The *Scholasticus* first of all was *lector*, *Lesemeister* – professional "reader of the word". But scholastic *lectio* is not the practice of *devotio* very well known for the Desert Fathers according to which reading of the Holy Scripture is first of all a practice of the respectful inner calming down, recognizing that without that calming down it is impossible to hear the Word spoken through Holy Scripture. On the contrary, scholastic *lectio* is an active, investigative, even aggressive "questioning". The most important element of the scholastic *fides quaerens intellectus* program is namely this dialectical *quaestio*. For the scholastic to read the Holy Scripture means to formulate *quaestiones* with the help of Aristotle's' logic, i.e. to search out the objective foundation (*rationes*) of the text that is read. One can say that the scholastic *intellectus fidei* means exactly the system of the objective *rationes*, which *makes* one, acknowledge the content of faith as objective truth independent of subjective conditions. Therefore it is no wonder that, in time, from such a "questioning" attitude there develops the competition of dialectical inventiveness – called *disputatio*. In the late scholasticism *disputatio* acquires more and more sophisticated forms while finally scholastic theology becomes an academic "technique".[5] One day the scholastic *intellectus fidei* founded on the dialectic turns out to be no longer the contemplation of the mystery of faith, but rather a dialectical "solving of problems".[6] Therefore the predominance of nominalism characteristic to the late scholasticism should be considered not as a "mistaken path" but as the logical conclusion of the scholastic program. It is the clear apprehension that the notions from which the scholastic formulates his *questiones* and with the help of which in the discussion he presents his *rationes* are notions formulated by *humans* and cannot express the absolute divine reality. Nominalists present the bill for the scholastic *intellectus fidei* in the way of *lectio – questio – ratio – disputatio*, exchanging subjectively engaged faith with "objective", "scholastic" knowledge depriving humans of the unconditional foundation.

Was not this trait of the scholasticism that St. Thomas Aquinas had in mind exclaiming: "All I have written seemed to me as straw!" as he uttered those words shortly before his death. So we shall never know what *doctor angelicus* could have suggested as the way out of that critical situation. We know very well the alternative suggested by a younger brother his Order, Meister Eckhart.

Alternative Paradigm: Monastic Theology

As professor at Paris University Meister Eckhart had undoubtedly to fit into the *lectio – questio – ratio – disputatio* frame of the paradigm of *scholastic* theology. Nevertheless he belongs far more in the alternative paradigm of *monastic* theology. This paradigm is linked with the names of the great mystics of the Middle Ages: Bernhard of Clairvaux and Hugh of St. Victo.[7] In the latter's essay *De meditatione* we find the concise formula of this alternative paradigm:

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[5] Cf. e.g. Chenu, M.-D." Scholastik". In *Handbuch theologischer Grundbegriffe*, Bd. 4, 1970, s. 40.

[6] The opposite of "mystery" and "problem" should be understood in the sense suggested by G. Marcel (Cf. Marcel, G. *Être et avoir*. Paris, 1935, p. 169).

[7] Cf. e.g. Leclercq, J. *Wissenschaft und Gottesverlangen. Zur Mönchstheologie des Mittelalters*. Düsseldorf, 1963.

Primo lectio ad cognoscendam veritatem materiam ministrat, meditatio coaptat, oratio sublevat, operatio componit, contemplatio in ipsa exsultat.[8]

It is obvious that the way suggested by Hugh is quite different from the scholastic one. Instead of the *lectio – questio – ratio – disputatio* characteristic to the scholasticism we have here *lectio – meditatio – oratio – operatio – contemplatio.* As we see is the only thing linking them both – the common beginning – is *lectio*. But it would be a mistake to identify "scholastic" *lectio* with the *monastic* one. Following the *monastic* way the "reader of the word" does not question the text that is read as do scholastics but meditates on it, does not turn the word into an object of investigation but strives to immerse oneself in it so that it penetrates the whole being of the reader, does not search for the objective *rationes* of the word but gets used to it subjectively, does not fix the opposition between the subject (the reader) and the object (the word that is read) but strives to overcome that opposition, i.e. to deobjectivize the objective content of the word that is read, to interiorize it, to experience it himself.[9] For the meditator the word is not "information" which should be examined (*questio*) and verified (*ratio*), but appeal that should be heard (*meditatio*) and answered by prayer (*oratio*). So one can say that following this way the *lector* is not the scholastic *Lesemeister,* but rather the mystagogical *Lebemeister*. One can say that the meditative "reader of the Word" is a "listener to the Word" which is concerned not about the formulating of the problems (*questio*) and their solutions which can be verified and affirmed, but rather about the things that Johannes B. Lotz has called "Befreiung zum Geheimnis".[10] The meditator encounters not the problems formulated in the shape of *question,* but the mystery elevated by prayer which is "used" for transition to the highest possible meditative relation to the mystery revealing itself in the word – to the joy of contemplation when one overcomes the dichotomy of the subject and the object, the "listener of the word" (Karl Rahner say: "Hörer des Wortes") unites with the word.

Meister Eckhart calls such unity "God's birth in the soul". In one of his best sermons he says:

Here in time we make holiday because the eternal birth which God the Father bore and bears unceasingly in eternity is now born in time, in human nature. St Augustine says this birth is always happening. But if it happens not in me what does it profit me? What matters is that it shall happen in me.[11]

In these words of Eckhart's we can clearly hear his insistent urging not to limit oneself to inventing *rationes* which would acknowledge the *objective* fact that God was born as human in the time of Emperor Augustus overcoming by that birth the division of the eternity and time. Also it is absolutely clear that the mere symbolic "repetition" of this fact by the yearly celebration of the Christmas Feast is not enough. It is necessary that God be born in the everyone's soul and be born in every moment. This birth of God is mystical and it is the content not of the scholastic objective knowledge, but of lived experience.

Mysticism of Meister Eckhart is not obscure reasoning about the Beyond, it is not the allegorical explanations, but first of all lived experience. Apparently, it was this experience that

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[8] *Sources Chretiennes*, t. 155, p. 46.

[9] Cf. *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité, Ascétique et Mystique*. Fasc. LXVI-LXVII. Paris, 1978, col. 906–914.

[10] Lotz, J.B. *Kurze Anleitung zum Meditieren.* Frankfurt.a. M., 1973, s. 66.

[11] Rahner, K. "Frömmigkeit früher und heute". In *Schriften zur Theologie*, Bd. VII. Einsiedeln/Zürich/Köln, 1966, s. 22.

Karl Rahner had in his mind when seven hundred years after Eckhart he considered the future perspectives of the devotion:

Religious man of tomorrow will be a 'mystic', someone who has experienced something, or else he will no longer be.[12]

Depicting the vision of devotion for the future Rahner emphasizes as the extremely important trait of the mysticism which makes it the heart of the authentic religiosity, namely, its experiential nature. Any scholastic speculation ostensibly presenting objective knowledge about the Beyond will not be sensible if it is not corroborated by lived experience. Without experience it will be, according to Husserl, just mere "hohlen Wortanalysen" – manipulation with the notional or visual representative of the thing as considered, instead of being by that thing oneself. Exactly this being by the thing is what Husserl means in his demand:

Die Sachen selbst müssen wir befragen. Zurück zur Erfahrung, zur Anschauung, die unseren Worten allein Sinn und vernünftiges Recht geben kann.[13]

From the point of view of form this invitation does not differ from the other analogous invitations of that time "back to Kant", "back to Thomas Aquinas"', "back to Hegel" and so on. But after more attentive listening we shall notice that the content of Husserl's request is totally different. They are nothing other than "scholastic" invitations to return to (according to the terminology of scholasticism) to *auctores*, whereas Husserl with his invitation to return to the things themselves invites one to return to the *reality* itself. But even more important is the direction of this return "back". One can collate invitations to return "back to Kant", "'to Thomas Aquinas" or "to Hegel" with the demand of one who shuts himself in the library and fenced himself off from reality. The "book reader" calls for books that were already read by him sometime before. The invitations "back to Kant", "back to Hegel" or "back to Thomas Aquinas" mean nothing else than invitations to "read Kant again", "read Hegel again" and "read Thomas Aquinas again". Meanwhile Husserl invites not to *read*, but to *experience*.

Paraphrase of "Plato's Cave" and the Categorical Imperative of Non-Scholastic Discourse

But if it is so then it is clear that phenomenologist's relation to the philosophical discourse should be quite different from that of the traditional philosophy. The essential defect of traditional philosophical discourse is the fact that such discourse inevitably becomes a rival to lived*experience*. Immersing ourselves into traditional philosophizing we begin to listen to (or to read) the philosophical narration about reality instead of striving to experience reality ourselves. In order to make us sure of this let us take a more attentive look at the essence of the traditional philosophical discourse and ask the question: what does the philosopher do when he orally or in written form lays out his philosophy? We shall hardly find the better description of this situation than the famous allegory of the cave in the seventh book of Plato's *Republic*. Let us turn our attention to the role of philosopher who is symbolized here by the prisoner, which went out of the cave. Having returned to the cave he tries to tell other prisoners what he had seen in freedom. Plato strongly emphasizes the misunderstanding this narrator encounters. To the prisoners who all their

[12] Husserl, E. "Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft". In *Logos* I, 1910/1911, s. 305.
[13] Meister Eckehart. *Deutsche Predigten und Traktate*. Zürich, 1979, s. 415.

life had seen just shadows this narration about the plastic reality lit by sunshine seems incredible. The allegorical narration ends on a pessimistic note – philosopher remains misunderstood and the inhabitants of the cave do not get to know the truth. It is very likely that Plato is speaking here about himself and about that misunderstanding with which many of his contemporaries met his doctrine of ideas. But taking into account the subsequent development of philosophy we could continue Plato's cave allegory and give it a more optimistic character. Such a continuation of the narration could be, for example, the following:

Having encountered with the misunderstanding of the cave's prisoners philosopher did not give up and persistently narrated what he had seen in freedom. Since he was a good narrator (which Plato really was) by inventively formulating *rationes* and swiftly presenting them he was able to "enchant" (cf. *Phaed*. 114d: *epaidein*) the inhabitants of the cave in such a way that they began to listen to his narration more attentively. When he succeeded to win some *disputationes* with the other narrators our philosopher's *auctoritas* began to increase very rapidly in the cave. In time he became a real *auctor* and the flocks of his disciples began to follow him closely about the cave listening to his narration. Among disciples there appeared some more gifted and they began to retell teacher's narration to the others, to cite some passages of the narration that seemed to them extremely important, and finally plucking up their courage more and more they began to create their own narration. Since the most important criteria of the value of the narration is their intriguing nature and coherence nobody tried to raise the question how those narrators know the things that they narrate. In order to believe the philosophical narration the narrator's ability to weave narration from *questiones* and *rationes* which were intriguing enough is much more important than the question of whether the narrator really had gone out of the cave and seen the reality "beyond" with his own eyes.

From Plato's times there appeared an abundance of such philosophical narration. They release us, lovers of this genre, from the necessity of striving to get free of the bonds and get out of the cave to freedom. We no longer need to climb the steep slopes of the cave ourselves. We do not need to suffer the pain of eyes which, having got out of the cave, are dazzled by the sunshine. We can live the usual safe life of the cave and at the same time can learn without any risk what is "beyond" – it is enough to listen to (to read) the narration of the philosophers. Philosophers themselves perceive in time that there is no need to torment themselves and to risk. Instead of searching for the lived experience beyond the cave they begin to improve their dialectical skills. And even those who decide to start on the journey and are not frightened to climb the steep slopes, suffer the dazzling sunshine and finally *see* "the real being" nevertheless carry out their experience in freedom in such a way that they would have something to narrate upon returning to the cave. They notice and memorize only those things that can be narrated, because the philosopher's success in the community of the cave's inhabitants depends rather on his or her ability to speak in a persuasive way than on the authenticity of his experience. By the evaluation of the philosophical narration one keeps the very well known Italian principle: *se non e vero, e ben trovato* – even if it is not truth, it is well invented. Therefore the "here and now" of lived experience does not have the value of things themselves even for those who gets out of the cave and experience reality because they need this experience only as the raw material for "memoirs" which like travelers to the distant lands will narrate after their return to the cave. Therefore the actual moment of being in the *real* reality is depreciated as the ephemeral accidental moment which should be made sensible by its connection to eternity. The fact that such eternity is more similar to numbers or geometrical figures than to the eternal life for such philosopher becomes unimportant.

It can seem that Husserl's texts are the same narration. Especially as Husserl himself sometimes relates phenomenological description with the things that traveler does in a strange country,[14] i.e. gives occasion to interpret phenomenological description as the phenomenologist's narration about the things that he saw "beyond". Nevertheless what we can read having opened any volume of *Husserliana* is the text of a quite different kind than that mentioned above as *Diaries of Journeys to the Beyond.*

First of all it should not be forgotten that Husserl categorically dissociates himself from any "dialectic". In his early work, *Logical investigations,* he emphasizes that phenomenological discourse is neither reasoning nor argumentation, but *description*.[15] The purpose of the phenomenologist is to describe as exactly and in detail as possible the structures of experience as being "by the things themselves"; i.e. let the things speak themselves. He strives only to fix the speaking of "the things themselves" without adding anything of his own.

But is not the result of such fixing in its essence the same *narration* about the (real or fictitious) "metaphysical" experience? Is it not that reading Husserl's text in essence we do the same thing as when we read Kant, Thomas Aquinas or Hegel? Do we not, as Husserl's readers, find ourselves in the situation of the inhabitants of the cave described by Plato? Isn't *Husserliana* the narration by the Platonic prisoner returned to the cave about the things experienced when in freedom?

The only way to dispel these doubts is to read Husserl's text more carefully. So let us do it. Here is an example of such a text:

Sehen wir den Tisch, so sehen wir ihn von irgendener Seite, und diese ist dabei da eigentlich Gesehene; er hat noch andere Seiten. Er hat eine unsichtige Rückseite, er hat unsichtiges Inneres, und diese Titel sind eigentlich Titel für vielerlei Seiten, vielerlei Komplexe möglicher Sichtigkeit. Das ist eine sehr merkwürdige Wesensanlage. Denn zu dem eigenen Sinn jeder Wahrnehmung gehört ihr wahrgenommener Gegenstand als ihr gegenständlicher Sinn, also diese Ding: der Tisch, der gesehen ist. Aber dieses Ding ist nicht die jetzt eigentlich gesehene Seite, sondern ist (und dem eigenen Sinn der Wahrnehmung gemäß) eben das Vollding, das noch andere Seiten hat, Seiten, die nicht in dieser, sondern in anderen Wahrnehmungen zur eigentlichen Wahrnehmung kommen würden. Wahrnehmung, ganz allgemein gesprochen, ist Originalbewußtsein.[16]

Surely everybody who reads over the fragment will agree that the description of the sense perception of the table presented in it is extremely banal. Writing about the things that we all know can hardly interest anybody. It is clear for everybody without reading Husserl's text that we can see the table (like any other thing) just from the one side and so on. For what purpose shuld such banalities be written or read? Are there not more interesting philosophical texts narrating about the Beyond, that enchant us with their unusualness and their impression of depth? But reasoning in such a way we give ourselves away, we yield to the habit of reading of philosophical texts and look now on Husserl's text for what could substitute for the actual lived experience of reality. But Husserl is not going to suggest that such a text substitute for the reality. On the contrary, the sense of the things he is writing about here reveals itself only then when we put the book aside, turn back to reality and *really experience* the things described in the phenomenological text. It seems as if it

[14] Cf. e.g. Husserl, E. *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*. Erstes Buch. Halle a.d.S., 1913, s. 201.
[15] Cf. e.g. Husserl, E. *Logische Untersuchungen*. Band I. Halle a.d.S., 1922, s. XIII-XIV.
[16] *Husserliana*. Bd.XI, s. 4.

were quite easy to do that and we are *a priori* convinced that the actual experience will show itself for us as banal as its description. I see my worktable every day and I see it in essence exactly in the way Husserl describes it. But do I *see* it really?

As we try to realize the experience Husserl describes we shall have the occasion for making sure that it is not easy to do this. In the beginning almost guaranteed failure awaits us. Only, when, after the long practical training, we finally succeed, shall we understand that the lived experience is remarkably wealthy with the sense that any narration is able to render. Only after this experience will the real sense of the phenomenological description become clear. It will turn out that the phenomenological description is not a *relatio* about the reality experienced by the phenomenologist, but rather an *itinerarium* – description of the way – which we should follow ourselves. And it will turn out that in order to see the table in the way Husserl describes it in the fragment given above first of all we have to liberate ourselves of the "magic charms" of the philosophical narration which renders us unable to *experience* reality. What we usually call "experience" reminds us more of reading. Our ordinary relation to the world is not a live and continuous stream of experience, but the sequence of the "'signs". When we turn our eyes, for example, to the table we really *see* it as long as we recognize it and state: "table", as long as we define it as a certain *kind* of the things. But this means that in fact we do not see the thing – it's being sign means that we look not *at* it, but *through* it. The sensible image of the table is like a "sign" indicating the corresponding significant reality which we do not experience, but reflect.

From such "reading" of reality phenomenology is trying to free us by demanding: "das Gesehene nicht unter dem Zwange der Vorurteile wegzudeuten".[17] But how could we insure ourselves against such "Wegdeuten", "thinking off" of reality? Apparently the only way out is to read Husserl's text not as "description" but as "prescription". We should treat phenomenological discourse not as narration:" it is thus and thus", but rather as the *indication* of the way: "take this way and you will experience this and this". So is it not more correct to read a phenomenological text in the same way as a musician reads a musical score, which is nothing other than the indication: "play in this way"? We have to obey this indication because the sense of what is written there reveals itself only in the performance of the music. Obedience to the indication of the phenomenological text is the same as the condition of its having or making sense. Difference between the musical score and the phenomenological text is only that in the first case the author of the command is a composer whereas the phenomenological text is imperious in speaking of the thing itself.[18]

But one could contradict that the musical score is not an *order* but rather a *suggestion* while phenomenological "prescription" should have a categorical nature for otherwise it could not claim on absolute founding character. So we still have to raise the most important question: why *must*we obey phenomenological prescription? We ask this question because we feel authorized and obliged to demand that the imperative of the prescription be rationally founded or legitimated. But the question "why?" could be answered only by a certain theoretical discourse presenting the*rationes* of the imperative. And such foundation of the imperative can only be conditional for it is clear that the founding discourse itself should be questioned: "why should I consider it as the truth?" Demanding an answer to the latter question requires another discourse, more fundamental, the probability of which we could question again and so on. It is clear that in this way we enter a *regressus ad infinitum* from which we could liberate ourselves only by having found such a position in which there is no need to raise the question "why?". But is such position possible at

[17] Husserl, E. "Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft". In *Logos* I, 1910/1911, s. 341.
[18] *Husserliana* Bd. XI, s. 5.

all? Is it possible to formulate the imperative in such a way that its ‘categoricalness’ makes impossible any demand of foundation? We find one excellent example of such categorically – imperative discourse in the sermons of Meister Eckhart where he turns our attention to the twofold foundation of the sensefullness of the things that a human encounters in his life:

The just person seeks nothing through their works, for those whose works are aimed at a particular end or who act with a particular Why in view, are servants and hirelings. If you with to be formed and transformed into justice then, do not intend anything particular by your works and do not embrace any particular Why, neither in time nor in eternity, neither reward nor blessedness, neither this nor that; such works in truth are dead. Indeed, even if you make God your goal, all the works you perform for his sake will be dead, and you will only spoil those works which are genuinely good.[19]

Although the imperative formulated here from the point of view of form is conditional ("willst du…, so…"), it is worth turning attention to the nature of that condition. Eckhart clearly perceives that the base of the human life cannot be expressed by any answer to the "why?" question about narrative discourse. We can only experience this base directly. Only in direct experience does it appeal imperiously to everyone of us like the archaic Apollo’s torso in the famous poem of Rilke: "Du musst dein Leben ändern!" It is an experience of the obligation not of one or another thing, but of being itself – the imperative "be!". Therefore the final formula of Eckhart’s "categorical imperative" sounds as follows:

People ought never to think too much about what they could do, but they ought to think about what they could be. (…) We ought not to think of building holiness upon the action; we ought to build it upon a way of being (…) It does not matter what men may do whose being is mean; nothing will come of it.[20]

The categoricalness of Eckhart’s imperative "be!" is not one of the many possible contents of homiletic discourse. One can say that it follows from the very essence of the sermon. Because such "unmotivated", "ohne Warum" imperative is the main trait of every *real* sermon, according to Karl Rahner it must be "mystagonic" one:

Darum gehören der Wortgottesdienst und die Opferfeier innerlich zusammen und ist die Predigt (ausdrücklich oder implizit unmittelbar oder als entferntere Vorbereitung) die Einweisung in die gläubig verstehende Annahme des wirksamen Wortes im Meßopfer und Sakrament, ‘mystagogische’ Predigt’.[21]

Indeed, as a preacher Meister Eckhart first of all is "mystagogue". He does not enchant us with the narration about the "beyond", but leads us to the mystery of "God’s birth in the soul". Any narrative discourse can present this mystery as objective information, but each and every one can and must experience it subjectively for oneself. Therefore we should treat Eckhart’s sermons not as the *relatio* but as the *tinerarium*, i.e. not as the retelling of the mystic’s experience which we could read and from which we could *know* about the "Beyond" and on this knowledge found our

[19] Meister Eckehart. *Deutsche Predigten und Traktate*. Zürich, 1979, s. 284.
[20] *Ibid*., s. 57.
[21] Rahner, K., Vorgrimmler, H. *Kleines theologisches Wörterbuch. Herder*–Freiburg, Basel, Wien, 1961, s. 229.

lives but rather as the indication of the way which we ourselves should follow. Namely this "itinerary" character distinguishes such texts of the great mystics as St. Bonaventure's *Itinerarium mentis in Deo*, St. John's of the Cross *Subida al monte Carmelo,* St. Teresa's of Avila*Castillo interior*, St. Ignatius' of Loyola *Ejercicios espirituales,* – from the "visions" of Emmanuel Swedenborg or William Blake. We can read the latter texts only as "poetry" which rather "enchant" the reader and rouse the illusion of knowledge than leads him towards the experience of the higher reality. True, one can read as "poetry", for example, St. John's of the Cross *Cantico espiritual*.[22] But the *aesthetic* experience during such reading should not be confused with the real *religious* experience. In order to avoid this one needs the corresponding attitude allowing hearing the categorical imperative of "itinerary" text adequately.

The Non-Discursive Motivation of the Categorical Imperative: The Poverty of the Spirit and Phenomenological *Epoche*

This imperative can be adequately heard only then when the soul liberates itself from the "magic charms" of the Platonic narration and enters into the state that Eckhart calls "Gelassenheit" or "Abgeschiedenheit". Eckhart clearly understands that constant questioning "Warum?" which the scholastic of the Middle Ages or also the contemporary would consider as the greatest virtue is nothing but an expression of the expediency of the human activity born by the human self-love and self-will.

An abundance of the acts of self-love and self-will, like the noisy crowd of traders, profanes the temple of our soul. In this way Eckhart explains the story about Jesus driving out the traders from the temple in the sermon dedicated to the words of the Gospel according to Matthew*Intravit Jesus in templum…* (*Mt 21,12*). Selfish and self-willed impulses settle in our soul and put their affairs in order making us forget the divine nature of the soul. In order that "God were born in the soul" first of all it is necessary to drive those "traders" out of that temple. But in order to get rid of the selfishness and self-will it is not enough to turn back to the so-called "spiritual values". Because what we most often consider as "spirituality" as a matter of fact is just a more subtle and refined form of the selfishness. The latter is even worse than the first because by it God himself is turned into the means for the pursuing selfish purposes.[23] Therefore Meister Eckhart's demand is extremely, even shockingly, radical:

When people think that they are acquiring more of God in inwardness, in devotion, in sweetness and in various approaches than they do by the fireside or in the stable, you are acting just as if you took God and muffled his head up in a cloak and punished him under a bench.[24]

The real alternative to the selfishness and self-will, the real "poverty of the spirit" is attainable only when all is refused absolutely: "A poor man wants nothing, and knows nothing, and has nothing".[25] Only having achieved that degree of the spiritual poverty does the human return to his real essence – to the absolute primordiality that is the final base of any conditionality:

[22] Valéry, P. "Cantiques spirituels". In: *Variété,* t. V. Paris, 1944, pp. 166–182.
[23] Meister Eckehart. *Deutsche Predigten und Traktate*. Zürich, 1979, ss. 170–171.
[24] *Ibid*., s. 180.
[25] *Ibid*., s. 303.

For if a person wants really to have poverty, he ought to be as free of his own created will as he was when he did not exist. (…) When I stood in my first cause, I then had no 'God', and then I was my own cause. I wanted nothing, I longed nothing, for I was an empty being and the only truth in which I rejoiced was in the knowledge of myself.[26]

Only in the state of such poverty does the act of will coincide with its motive, i.e. the "Warum?" question loses its sense. It is the state in which the imperative of the mystagogical sermon "be!" can be heard and perceived adequately, i.e. as *categorical* imperative.

But is the radical attitude of the "poverty of the spirit" opening the way to the absolutely founding experience of "God's birth in the soul" only the specific manifestation of the medieval *devotio moderna*? Could not this attitude be the *universal* condition of any absolute foundation? Does not the way Husserl suggests we follow in order to find the way out of the spiritual crisis of our times – phenomenological *epoche* – recall Eckhart's "poverty of the spirit"? True, we shall not find in Husserl's text such words as "Gelassenheit" or "Abgeschiedenheit". Defining the essence of the phenomenological attitude he says: "Ausschaltung", "Einklammerung", "Weltvernichtung". Surely "destruction" defined by these words is just the "thought experiment" reminiscent rather of the methodical doubt of Descartes than of the plans of the world terrorists. Like Descartes' doubt, *epoche* "destroys" the world only so that there be clarified its final base on which any thinking or action could be based. But, in contrast to Descartes, Husserl does not treat this base as the logical axiom in the speculative deductive chain made of *questiones* and*rationes*. The phenomenological *epoche* is not just a speculative premise, for instance: "suppose the world does not exist and look what follows from this", and so on. Premises of that kind can be sensible only in the indirect *reductio ad absurdum* proofs, which do not present the evident experience of the thing being proved. Therefore Husserl urgently emphasizes that the phenomenological *epoche* is not just a theoretical premise or a replacement of "positive assertion of the world" characteristic of the natural attitude by "the world's negation".[27]

This "apophatic" definition of the phenomenological *epoche* allows place for various interpretations. But *epoche* itself, the word borrowed from the ancient sceptics, is an indirect indication of the positive sense. *Epoche* for the ancient sceptics meant abstention from judgement, i.e. from the joining of subject and predicate in a proposition. For the sceptics it was not an end in itself but was meant to achieve the state of consciousness, which they called *ataraxia*. It is calm as the absolute foundation for any thought and act, i.e. exactly that for which phenomenology is searching. Practising *epoch*, the phenomenologist, like the ancient sceptic, stops at the place where subject and predicate are not yet joined. But for him this stop is not an ending in itself. He needs it in order that the procedure of predicating not hinder *experience*. Pure experience is that absolute base for which phenomenologist is looking. Phenomenological *epoche* is not a premise in the chain of deduction, but the practise of a certain attitude.

This experiential, practical nature of phenomenology mostly is passed by. What is not noticed is the fact that phenomenology is not a speculative "system" but "Phänomenopraxie" (H. Rombach)[28] – practice which has its goal in the cultivation or pre-predicative experience concentrated on the pure phenomenon. This experience requires from the phenomenologist very specific efforts, which differ radically from that demanded of us in ordinary "scholastic"

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[26] *Ibid*., ss. 304–305.

[27] Husserl, E. *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*. Erstes Buch. Halle a.d.S., 1913, ss. 54–55.

[28] Rombach, H. *Phänomenologie des gegenwärtingen Bewußtseins*. Freiburg/München, 1980, ss. 16–22.

speculative philosophising. To practice *epoche* first of all means to keep consciousness in the pre-predicative state which regardless of the fact that it does not accomplish any predicative act nevertheless is absolutely vigilant and therefore able to experience. It is the state which we attain when we succeed in overcoming seemingly insuperable opposition. That is, the opposition between the predicating which keeps up the vigilance of consciousness filling it with renewable speculative, i.e. questionable, contents on the one hand and the restrained drowsy consciousness blending vague and vanishing contents on the other hand. Such practising of the phenomenological *epoche* means nothing other than the pure experience – absolute vigilance of consciousness independent on any speculative content. Such an attitude is unusual enough, but only it can give an answer to the question about the final foundation of any sense. In practising phenomenological *epoche* any scholastic *questio*, any "Warum?", becomes impossible and unnecessary because the foundation that we experience here is not any thing or the whole of things, i.e. it is not any content of consciousness which can be questioned. This foundation is *pure experience* itself not basing itself on any thing, and because of that absolutely basing all things.

The Experience of "Emptiness"

If we try to give a name to that *what* is experienced by this experience we shall hardly find a more proper word than "nothing" or "emptiness". But we must not ignore that the emptiness with which the phenomenologist is concerned is not a pure *privativum* as speculative philosopher understands it, that is, it is not "lack" of "something". Such lack could be a speculatively thinkable "emptiness" through which the practising of *epoche* is experienced. This experience is significant because the "emptiness" that phenomenologist experiences in the practice of *epoche* is a constitutive moment of every real experience.[29]

One can say that exactly this moment of "emptiness" provides experience with its character as *experience*. Being-by-the-thing which is the constitutive moment of experiece[30] means that we are not only by its façade, but also by its invisible sides. These also must be experienced. Without this experience every content is just a "sign" which can be read, but not experienced. This lack of horizon of the "experiential emptiness" makes all speculative discourses unable to avoid *regressus ad infinitum* of the "Warum?" questioning and by that unable to provide the final base for our knowledge and action.

One can say that this experience of "emptiness" is the experience of *transcendence* founding the very nature of things. In other words "emptiness" is the form in which *transcendence* is experienced. Phenomenological *epochç* is a way, which leads to this experience of *transcendence*. Transcendence of the thing's nature is "nothing", "no-thing". So it enters into the field of the phenomenological experience only because the phenomenologist practicing *epochç* opens himself to the experience of "no-thing". Namely, the images of the transcendence that have the thing's nature as a Platonic heaven of ideas or the "third world" of Popper are the main obstacle that

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[29] *Husserliana.* Bd.XI, s. 6.

[30] Cf. Hegel, G.W.F. *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften*. I. *Die Wissenschaft der Logik*. In *Werke* in 20, Bänden, Bd. 8. Frankfurt a.M., 1970, s. 49f.: "Das Prinzip der Erfahrung enthält die unendlich wichtige Bestimmung, daß für das Annehmen und für Fürwahrhalten eines Inhalts der Mensch selbst dabei sein müsse, bestimmter, daß er solchen Inhalt mit der Gewißheit seiner selbst in Einigkeit und vereinigt finde. Er muß selbst dabei sein, sei es nur mit seinem äußerlichen Sinne oder aber mit seinem tieferen Geiste, seinem wesentlichen Selbstbewußtsein." Cf. Heidegger M. Hegels Begriff der Erfahrung. In: ders. *Holzwege*. Fr.a.M, 1950, s. 105–192; Gadamer H.-G. *Wahrheit und Methode.* Tübingen, 1960, s. 337.

hinders the *experience* of transcendence. These images are constitutive components of the philosophical narration. The "magic charms" of those images make philosophical narration a rival to the lived experience. Under the influence of those "magic charms" the inhabitants of Plato's cave no longer seek lived experience. They are sure that it is possible to live in the cave in "peace and safety" (*1 Tes 5,3*) leaning on the objective *knowledge* of transcendence which they get by learning the things that their *auctores* (Plato, Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Kant, Hegel etc.) narrate for them. Perceiving the imaginary nature of the knowledge and appearance of such a base Meister Eckhart insistently emphasizes the radical non-objectiveness of God.[31]

For humans the unconditionally significant, i.e. having the power of basing, is only the *experiential* relation to God – "God's birth in the soul". But such a relation can exist only if it has the nature not of the thing, if it is non-objective – "weiselos". Any objectively defined image of God having the nature of the thing is an obstacle here which should be overcome with the help of practice of "poverty of spirit" – striving for God's birth in the "bottom of the soul", i.e. in that "part" of a soul, where any objectivity is impossible. "God's birth in the soul" is God's absolute "de-objectivizing": "Gottes Entwerdung".[32]

This "ohne Warum" generates a lot of problems for everyone who tries to understand the essence of Meister Eckhart's mysticism. But difficulties essentially of the same nature arise for the one who studies phenomenology. The most difficult thing for the readers of Meister Eckhart and Husserl seems to be to overcome the point of view that every experience is experience of a certain *object* and that the lack of the object can only be speculatively *thinkable* but not *experienced*. Openness to the experience of the transcendence of the no-thing's nature demands from us a peculiar attempt, the peculiarity of which comes to light quite after the comparison of phenomenological attitude with the mystical way.

Instead of Conclusion: A Brief Interrogative Post Scriptum

Do not the things that are revealed here provide a foundation for a certain prognosis about the future of philosophy? Could we paraphrase Karl Rahner's words cited above on the base of the things that reveal themselves and say: "the future philosopher will be the 'mystic' – one who has experienced something or he will not be at all"?

[31] Meister Eckehart. *Deutsche Predigten und Traktate*. Zürich, 1979, s. 180.
[32] Cf. *ibid*., s. 273.

Chapter II

The Categorical Imperative and the Face of the Other: Immanuel Kant and Emmanuel Levinas

Jurate Baranova

The Two 'Most Lithuanian' Philosophers

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) and Emmanuel Levinas (1905-1996) are separated in time by two centuries, but by their origin in geographical space they are nearly neighbours. The distance from Keningsberg where Kant lived and Kovno where Levinas was born is not very great. One belongs to the tradition of German philosophy, the other – to the French, but they both can be considered as "the most Lithuanian" of all famous philosophers. J. Stradinis in his article "Did Kantian ancestors descend from the Kurshes?" writes, that together with German blood Kant has a bit not Scottish, as it was suggested earlier, but Kurshian and, it seems Lithuanian. He suggests deriving the origin of Kant's name from the place Kantwain – nowadays the village *Kantvonai* in the Silutes district, five kilometers East of Priekule. Stradinis explains that Kant's great-grandfather was a tavern-keeper in Rusne, and his father and grandfather were saddle-makers.[1] Maybe for this kinship, or maybe for some strictness of thinking and for this reason – proximity to some "archetypal forms" of Lithuanian mentality, Kant never lacked attention from Lithuanian philosophy critics. Romanas Pleckaitis translated his works *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, *Prolegomena*, *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. Kristina Rickeviciute – *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*. His political treatises are translated and published as well.

Arunas Sverdiolas began the reception of Levinas' philosophy in Lithuania. He and Nijole Kersyte translated two of Levinas' books into Lithuanian: *Ethics and Infinity (éthique et infini)* and *About God coming to Reason (De Dieu qui vient à l'idée).*

Levinas' grandparents lived in Kovno near the big synagogue. Levinas spent his childhood near the river at Kalejimo Street (recently – Spaustuvininku). When he left for Strasbourg as an exchange student from Lithuania and stayed in France for the rest time of his life, his parents moved to contemporary Mickeviciaus street No.19.[2] Levinas family used Russian in family communication, but Levinas' father made their family name *Levyne* as Lithuanian, adding the ending – *as*. The author of Levinas biography Marie-Anne Lescourret states, that Levinas, as well as his wife Raisa were never homesick for Lithuania, because at the beginning of the war their families were killed here.[3] Levinas' parents and brothers, Aminadab and Boris, were killed just near their home. On the other hand, she interprets Levinas as Litvak, who grew up under the influence of Gaon from Vilnius and even in this origin of Levinas she discerns the main differences between his and Martin' Buber's versions of dialogical philosophy. Maybe there is some sense in the phrase of Levinas in Jerusalem: "Je pensais que Kovno était morte, je sais que Kovno est éternelle".[4]

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[1] Stradinis, A. "Ar I. Kanto proteviai kile is kursiu?". In *Problemos*, Vilnius, 1987, nr. 36.

[2] Pazeraite, A. "Emmanuelis Levinas ir jo seima Kaune". In *Zmogus ir zodis. Filosofija. Mokslo darbai*. 2001, nr. IV, p. 49.

[3] Lescourret, M.-A. *Emmanuel Levinas.* France: Flammarion, 1994, p. 350.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 380.

Levinas, like Kant, grounded his ethics on the presuppositions transcending the situation and the ethnical or cultural background. It seems that dialogue between them became possible not by reason of their geographical origin, but from other sources. The purpose of this article is to investigate what these might be? What are the main trends in the dialogue between two eminent moral philosophers – one from the 18th, the other from the 20th centuries?

Happiness as an Ideal of Hope and as an Enjoyment

Could be the ability to experience happiness be the primary existential mode of man?

Kant and Levinas answer this question differently. Kant did not deny happiness as the landmark for human inclinations. "But here also do men of themselves already have, irrespective of duty, the strongest and deepest inclination toward happiness, because just in this idea are all inclinations combined into a total sum", wrote Kant in the *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*.[5] Even more. Kant considered, that to secure ones own happiness is a duty, for discontent with one's condition under many pressing cares and amid unsatisfied wants might easily become a great temptation to transgress one's duties. "Discontent with one's own condition" recalls Nietzsche's discerned *ressentiment.* Those who are discontent revolt against those who are able to be content and restrict their power of life. Kant reasons differently: "Discontent with one's own condition" could violate the fundamental source of human dignity – one's ability to constrain inclinations with the endowment of reason. The Kantian argument conceals an immanent paradox: needs should be satisfied for the sake of reason's ability more easily to dominate over them. In the Kantian ethics not happiness, but duty is the condition of the autonomy of moral subject.

Levinas, on the contrary, postulated as the primary presupposition for the autonomy of the subject his ability to experience happiness as existential enjoyment, (*jouissance*). By this presupposition he challenges Plato's psychology in which the need is postulated as a simple lack or, as in Kantian ethics, pure passivity.[6]

Kant did not state, that a subject is incapable of experiencing happiness. He stated only that he is incapable of reasoning to it as a principle. There is no possibility to express this in a formula or as a law, because whatever it is possible to say about it, happiness as an idea would always transcend the limits of this saying. One can conclude that here Kant quite critically evaluates the power of principles. The principles have great power for the source from which they stemmed, that is for reason. But the emotional life of a subject is more complicated and irreducible to one formula. The constantly changing circumstances of life permanently adjust the imaginable ideal of happiness for the subject. Kant is not very fond of this instability of the human situation. He only stated it, even expressing regret by adding the word "unfortunately". Kant wrote: "But, unfortunately, the concept of happiness is such an indeterminate one that even though everyone wishes to attain happiness, yet he can never say definitely and consistently what it is that he really wishes and wills".[7] For to determine the idea of happiness there would need to be an absolute whole, a maximum of well being in the present and in every future condition. The inner contradiction of the emotional life of the subject is not however the greatest unfortunate; that is

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[5] Kant, I. *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*. In Kant I. *Ethical Philosophy*. Indianapolis. Indiana: Hackett publishing company, 1983, p. 12. Translated by James W. Ellington.

[6] Levinas, E. *Totalite et infini: Essai sur l'exteriorite.* Paris: Kluwer Academic Press, 1971, p. 118. Levinas, E. *Totality and Infinity. An Esay on Exteriority*. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Duquesne University Press, 1998, p. 114. Translated by Alphonso Lingis.

[7] Kant, I. *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*. In Kant I. *Ethical Philosophy*. Indianapolis, Indiana: Hackett publishing company, 1983, p. 27. Translated by James W. Ellington.

the instability of the future. It is unfortunate because even in the case in which the subject is able to attain what he longed for, the results would never bring him what he really wanted. Does he want riches? How much anxiety, envy, and intrigue might he not thereby bring down upon his head? If one wants knowledge and insight, one never knows perhaps if these might give him only an eye that much sharper for revealing much more dreadful evils. If one wants long life, which guarantees that it would not be a long misery? Yet very often infirmity of the body kept one from excesses into which perfect health would have allowed him to fall.

However, if fundamental stability of the project for happiness is not possible, does this mean that in advance one should suspend the search for it, foreseeing the final collapse of expectations? The structure of the thought Kant has chosen would seem to indicate such an outcome. When he discussed the alternatives of real human happiness, he starts the sentence from the question of the possible condition: "does he want?" But the second sentence shows the fragility of the want. This play of language does not encourage a search for earthly happiness. Kant did not encourage his reader to choose the unstable path of contingencies; he is not intrigued by the empirical life of his subject. He was searching for more stable foundation in man and had found it – the moral law constructed by reason, the categorical imperative. On the other hand, Kant was not a rigorous dogmatist. He understood, that even the moral law in itself does not promise happiness for the subject, the nature of man is a permanent search for happiness. Kant simply transcended the ideal of happiness and went to the transcendent world. In the treatise, *Critique of Practical Reason,* he wrote that this gap is filled by the Christian moral doctrine. Christian ethics foresees the other world in which nature and morality could create a harmony and coincide. Kant did not leave his subject without hope of happiness. Even more he considered this hope for happiness to be the necessary second constituent part of the good. He did not want to prevent his subject from thoughts about happiness, but only warned him not to waste his time in vain, because the blessedness which is called happiness is not altogether available in this world, as it concerns the power of the subject. But, on the other hand, one can reach a good sense of self by self-discipline. For this feeling one needs not principles, but only some empirical advice: diet, economy, good-manners and so on.

Levinas, contrary to Kant, considers happiness as the fundamental mode of this life. Yet he indicated much broader possibilities of experiencing this feeling than the modest good self-feeling indicated by Kant. The possibility of enjoyment, as happiness in the phenomenology of Levinas takes its sources from various possible experiences of things. We live from "good soup', air, spectacles, work, ideas, sleep, etc., wrote Levinas.[8] Happiness is even the joy of breathing, looking, eating, working, handling a hammer and the machine, etc. Levinas considers things as being more than answers to strict needs; they make up the grace of life. Happiness is made up not of an absence of needs whose tyranny and imposed character one denounces, but of a satisfaction of all needs. Happiness is accomplishment: it exists in a soul that is satisfied, not in a soul that has extirpated its needs, a castrated soul. Life is affectivity and sentiment; to live is to enjoy life. "Life is love of life".[9]

Does this mean that Levinas did not notice suffering which according to Buda or Arthur Schopenhauer's teaching penetrates all human existence? Levinas just changes the point of departure. To despair of life makes sense only because originally life is happiness. Suffering is a failing of happiness; it is not correct to say that happiness is an absence of suffering.[10]

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[8] Levinas, E. *Totality and Infinity*. *An Esay on Exteriority*. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Duquesne University Press, 1998, p. 110. Translated by Alphonso Lingis.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 112.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 115.

Levinas does not follow the path of the stoics, who considered the happiness as state of *apathia* – a suppression of all needs. It seems that the Kantian subject in understanding happiness is more close to the tradition of the stoics than to the enjoyment of Levinas. But Levinas was not inclined to emphasize his differences with Kant. He did not consider Kant's understanding of happiness to be elaborated in terms of stoicism. He concluded that even Kant himself did not fully understand the presupositions of identity for his subject. He did not agree with the interpretation that the Kantian subject is not seeking for happiness.

"How could the Kantian kingdom of ends be possible, had not the rational beings that compose it retained, as the principle of individuation, their exigency for happiness, miraculously saved from the shipwreck of sensible nature?" concluded Levinas. " In Kant the I is met with again in this need for happiness".[11] It is obvious that Levinas is inclined to emphasize his affinities with Kantian ethics, not his differences. Why?

Ethics *Contra* Ontology

Adrian T. Peperzak, writing an introduction to the English version of Levinas's *Basic Philosophical Writings* states, that of the modern philosophers Kant is certainly the one with whom Levinas's thinking shows the most affinity. On the other hand, "far from being neo-Kantian, his style is post-modern, post phenomenological, and post-Heideggerian".

Kant critically revaluated all the attempts of previous ethics to ground morality on eudemonism and the heterogeneous empirical consequences. He was a creator of autonomous deontological ethics. Kant starts from a critique of theoretical reason and only afterwards moves to the critique of practical reason. Not having found the possibility of solving the *aporia* between freedom and determinism on the level of theoretical reason, Kant solved it by the means of practical reason. Levinas starts from theoretical philosophy as well. He studied Husserl's phenomenology and Heidegger's ontology. As a result of these studies he announced ethics as the first philosophy – philosophy before ontology, naming ethics as metaphysics. Trying to provide background for this insight, he begins his critical discussion not only with the tradition of classical ethics stemming from Aristotle, but also from phenomenology, Hegelian dialectics of "master and slave", Heidegger's ontology, Sartrean existentialism and even the philosophy of dialogue of Martin Buber. Much less did he oppose Kantian ethics. Levinas's philosophy consists in a critique of knowledge, as does Kantian philosophy too. One can notice several important ways in which his critique differs from the Kantian one: knowledge in Levinas' philosophy does emerge not more modest, but more realistic in its pretensions. Knowledge is denied and something (better) proposed in its place. Besides, in Levinas philosophy it is not all of knowledge that is criticized, but only knowledge of persons. Knowledge is held by Levinas to be a kind of violence, when deployed against human beings.[12] However in opposing the violence of such knowledge Levinas interacted more with Husserl and Heidegger than with Kant.

Levinas's dialogue with his teachers – Husserl and Heidegger is intensive and permanent. He constantly referred to them and polemicized with them both. As concluded Jacques Derrida, "Levinas, uncomfortably situated in the difference between Husserl and Heidegger, – and, indeed, by virtue of the history of his thought – always criticizes the one in a style and according to a scheme borrowed from the other, and finished by sending them off into the wings together as

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 119.
[12] *Ibid*., p. xxiv.

partners in the "play of the same" and as accomplices in the same historico-philosophical coup".[13] The result of this coup from the point of view of Levinas: an impossibility of meeting the Other as a Revelation and epiphany. The Other from the perspective of Husserl and Heidegger remains only phenomenon surrounded by other phenomena, or lost in the totality of Being.

Levinas criticized also Martin' Buber's philosophy of dialogue regardless of the fact that Buber, as well as Franz Rosenzweig, showed Levinas the path from the absolutism of Hegelian monism and opened the perspective of dialogical thinking. In his text, *Martin Buber, Gabriel Marcel and Philosophy,* Levinas emphasized that namely Buber sees the response as a condition of responsibility. Trans-subjectivity thus appears in Buber's work as a reciprocal responsibility, in keeping with the ancient Talmudic expression: "all in Israel are responsible for one another". So Buber, together with Marcel suggested a new ethics. This ethics begins neither in a mystical valuation of a few values having the status of Platonic ideas, nor on a basis of a prior thematization, knowledge and theory of being, culminating in a self-knowledge, of which ethics would constitute a consequence or appendix, nor in the universal law of Reason. Ethics begins before the exteriority of the other, before other people. Levinas prolonged this path of Buber's new ethics saying that ethics begins before the face of the other. This engages my responsibility by its human expression, which cannot – without being changed or immobilized – be held objectively at a distance.[14]

But, on the other hand, in this text, as well as in *Martin Buber's Thought and Contemporary Judaism*,[15] Levinas interprets Buber's invented I-Thou meeting as a "purely formal meeting". According to Levinas' view, Buber cannot avoid formality by continuous repetitions of the word 'responsibility'. Meetings are, for Buber, dazzling instants without continuity and content: pure act of transcendence, pure spark like the instant of Bergsonian intuition, like the "almost-nothing" of the Bergsonian thinker Jankelevitch.[16] Buber was not an admirer of Heidegger. He raised violent opposition to the Heideggerian notion of *Fürsorge* which, to the German philosopher, would be access to the Other. Levinas used to oppose Heidegger on his own grounds, but in this place Levinas did not share Buber's critique of Heidegger and supported Heidegger over Buber. Acknowledging that "it is certainly not from Heidegger that one should take lessons on the love of man or social justice", on the other had, Levinas notices that from Heideggerian *Fürsorge* one can go further to the alterity of the other. He takes into account that dimension of height and misery through which the epiphany of the Other takes place. Clothing the naked and feeding the hungry, according to Levinas, brings us closer to the neighbour than the rarefied atmosphere in which Buber's meeting sometime takes place.[17]

The interesting thing to notice is that Levinas in his polemic with Buber referred to Kant, as well as to Dostoyevsky. Even thought he did not analyse their views so eagerly as those of Husserl, Heidegger or Buber. Levinas mentioned them more rarely than the precursors he criticized, but leaned on them when seeking a broader context to express his own value orientation. In 1967 after the appearance of his main treatise, *Totality and Infinity* (*Totalite et infini*, 1961), when delivering the lectures in Brussels, *Substitution*, Levinas, first provided a critical analyses of the concept of

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[13] Derrida, J. "Violence and Metaphysic". In Derrida J. *Writing and Difference*. London: Routledge, 1995, pp. 97–98.

[14] Levinas, E. "Martin Buber, Gabriel Marcel and Philosophy". In Levinas E. *Outside the Subject*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1949, p. 35.

[15] Levinas, E. "Martin Buber's Thought and Contemporary Judaism". In Levinas E. *Outside the Subject*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1949.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

[17] Levinas, E. "Martin Buber, Gabriel Marcel and Philosophy". In Levinas E. *Outside the Subject*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1949, p. 18.

personal identity as coinciding with oneself, self-possession, or sovereignty so popular in the philosophical tradition of the West. He then turns towards the Copernican revolution of Kant. Levinas wants to neglect all the details of philosophical architecture of Kantianism and to take one trait from Kants' system – he would like to think of that Kantianism, which finds meaning in the human without measuring it by ontology and outside of the question "What is there here ...?" "The fact that immortality and theology could not determine the categorical imperative signifies the novelty of the Copernican revolution: a sense that is not measured by being and not being itself; but being on the contrary is determined on the basis of sense".[18] Levinas agreed with the Kantian notion of the categorical imperative while attempting to avoid the architectonics of his system.

Levinas in establishing a place for ethics as the first philosophy leaned on not only the Kantian critique of practical reason, but on the critique of theoretical reason as well. In *Totality and Infinity* Levinas considers ethics as metaphysics, which, according to Levinas, is enacted in inter-human relations. Theological concepts without ethics remain empty and formal frameworks. Inter-human relations in metaphysics Levinas compares with the role Kant attributed to sensible experience in the domain of understanding. It is from moral relationships that every metaphysical affirmation takes on a "spiritual" meaning, states Levinas. "When I maintain an ethical relation I refuse to recognize the role I would play in a drama of which I would not be the author or whose outcome another would know before me; I refuse to figure in a drama of salvation or of damnation that would be enacted in spite of me and that would make game of me".[19]

Levinas is really very close to Kant recognizing the priority and autonomy of moral subject as compared to all the other factors in the world. This respect of the person as a first postulate of practical reason draws closer both philosophers regardless of the fact that the presuppositions of their ethics are quite different: Kant started from the universality of common reason, Levinas from meeting the Other: the face of the Other as a revelation of Infinity, which shakes the ego logy of my existence. Levinas, as notices Derrida, is inspired by a messianic eschatology. This messianic eschatology is never mentioned literally, "it is but a question of designating a space or a hollow within naked experience where this eschatology can be understood and where it must resonate".[20]

Charles Taylor in his book, *Sources of Self*, interpreted Kantian ethics as a continuation of the Christian Augustinian line. He noticed that, like Augustine, Kant based his ethics on a presupposition that everything depends on a transformation of the will. The moral person may lead the same external life as the non-moral one, but is inwardly transformed by a different spirit, he is animated by a different end. Kant thus draws heavily on Augustine's model of the two loves, the two directions of human motivation. Notwithstanding that Kant's conception is radically anthropocentric, his theory, concluded Taylor, has deep roots in Christian theology, and Kant remained a believing Christian".[21] In my opinion, the presuppositions of Levinas' ethics could be derived from Dostoyevsky's phrase: "we all are guilty for everything, for everybody and before everybody, and me – more than everyone else". Levinas considers this responsibility as the main source of identity of the subject: *"Je puis me substituer à tous, mai nul ne peut se substituer à moi. Telle est mon identité inaliénable de sujet. C'est dans ce sens précis que Dostoievski dit: "Nous sommes tous responsables de tout et de tous et devant tous, et moi plus que tous les autres*".[22] By

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[18] Levinas, E. "Substitution". In *The Levinas Reader*. Oxford, Cambridge: Blackwell, 1989, p. 119.

[19] Levinas, E. *Totality and Infinity. An Esay on Exteriority*. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Duquesne University Press, 1998, p. 79. Translated by Alphonso Lingis.

[20] Derrida, J. "Violence et metaphysique. Essai sur la pensee d'Emmanuel Levinas". In Derrida J. *L'ecriture et la difference*. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1971, pp. 129–130.

[21] Taylor, Ch. *Sources of the Self. The Making of the Modern Identity.* Cambridge: University Press, 1989, p. 366.

[22] Lévinas, E. *Éthique et Infini. Dialogues avec Philippe Nemo*. Paris: Fayard, 1982, pp. 97–98.

this phrase Dostoyevsky interpreted the main requirement of the disinterested love for the neighbour imposed by Christian Bible. Integrating Dostoyevsky' approach as the main value approach Levinas accepted at the same time presuppositions of Christianity. His ethics at its roots becomes more close to the Christian line, interpreted by Dostoyevsky than to the Jewish tradition interpreted as symmetrical dialogue in Buber's version. One can see that Christian ethics brings Kant much closer to Levinas than all the other philosophers Levinas discussed.

Light and the Synthesys of Aperception

The theoretical sources of Kant's thought reach not only the Jewish-Christian, but also the ancient Greek paradigm. In this paradigm from Plato until Husserl's epoche the phenomenology of light dominates. The space of Kant also is fundamentally enlightened, says Levinas.

Levinas acknowledges the depth of Kantian syntheses of apperception, when it concerns the syntheses of intuition, seeing and light. Because of it the world, the existence of which is exposed by the light does not become only the sum of existing objects.

Kant's statement, that inner feeling gives us a subject, allows, according to Levinas, to perceive the essence of subject as never coinciding with one's image of oneself. The subject is a freedom in respect to any object, it is a subject for him. Such subject is in the light; he is the ability of infinite retreat, able to be always beyond everything what happens to us. The metaphor of light always was connected with power. Derrida, interpreting Levinas, recalled the phrase of Borges, who said: "perhaps universal history is but the history of several metaphors." Derrida ads, that "Light is only one example of these "several' fundamental 'metaphors".[23]

Levinas here turns to Kant because his notion of the transcendental subject is close to Husserl's subject. In his text, *Outside the Subject*, Levinas wrote, that phenomenology heralded a new atmosphere in European philosophy and that for a whole generation of students and readers of*Logical Investigations* this atmosphere meant an access of thought to being, thought stripped of subjectivist encumbrances, and hence a return to ontology without criticism problems, "the return to the things themselves".[24] Levinas himself was influenced by this atmosphere. He began to study philosophy from the viewpoint of Husserl's phenomenology. At this time Husserl was not broadly known in France. In 1929 Levinas published the survey of Husserl' philosophy *About the Ideas of Husserl* (*Sur les "Ideen" de m.E.Husserl),* and in 1930 *The Theory of Intuition in the phenomenology of Husserl* (*La theorie de l'intuition dans la phenomenologie de Husserl*), for which he received the prize of the French Academy.

In his essay *Outside the Subject* Levinas followed the path taken by Husserl himself. Levinas was impressed by Husserl's intentions in his *Logical Investigations* to question naturalistic interpretation of consciousness and the reduction of thought to a psychological mechanism. He took from Husserl the presupposition that all consciousness is conscious of that consciousness itself (pensée), but especially of something other than itself, of its intentional correlate, of its thought-of (pensé): all consciousness is consciousness of something. The ultimate lesson of Husserl's phenomenology Levinas considered to be his message that the scientific or philosophic manner of understanding is to study the values, correlates of affectivity and will in the concreteness

[23] Derrida, J. "Violence et metaphysique. Essai sur la pensee d'Emmanuel Levinas". In Derrida J. *L'ecriture et la difference*. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1971, p. 137. Cited: Derrida J. "Violence and Metaphysic". In Derrida J. *Writing and Difference*. London: Routledge, 1995, p. 92.

[24] Levinas, E. "Outside the Subject". In Levinas, E. *Outside the Subject*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1949, p. 153.

of thought and the noetic-noematic life of consciousness, cleared of all prior contamination by the premature affirmed objective in a mode of thought. This reduction of phenomenologically "naive" thought leads to the origination of the "pure ego", which according to Husserl's paradoxical expression, is "transcendent in immanence".

Levinas traces the origination of this pure ego, the pure I outside the subject in the Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. Namely Kant distinguished it from datum presented to knowledge in the *a priori* forms of experience. The purity of this transcendental ego "and nothing more" is a challenge to the messianic intentions of Levinas. Is the light of thought destined only to help us see the synthetic forms that through already constituted through jumbled, structureless elements of the sensible, –asked Levinas rhetorically. He asked this in order to prepare a path to further questions, leading him aside from the transcendental ego. "But the positing of the transcendental I in its uniqueness, ensuring the truth of being in the realm of appearance – is it not ordered, in its uniqueness, in a different light than the one illuminating the structures of the phenomenon? Does it not hark back to the ethical intrigue prior to all knowledge? Face to face with the other man that a man indeed approaches as presence? ... Had he not already been exposed to the misery of nakedness, but also to the loneliness of the face and hence to the categorical imperative of assuming responsibility for that misery?", step by step Levinas distance himself from the pure ego discerned by Husserl and Kant.[25]

So Levinas opposed Kant to Kant: returned to Kantian ethics, trying to find the way from the omnipotence of pure light and searching for a "different light". He concluded that from the implications of the other Kantian study, *Critique of Practical Reason,* it followed that the transcendental I will be postulated beyond its formative function for knowledge. The only co-operator in reflecting on responsibility when meeting the misery of the face of the Other for Levinas in discussion with phenomenology was Kant. He discerned inner links between the categorical imperative and his own version of disinterested responsibility.

Responsibility Before the Face of the Other

Levinas differs from Kant in one important aspect: he reasoned from the perspective of phenomenological ethics and for this reason he introduced new factors into the ethical discourse, which are not able to be drawn from the presuppositions of Kantian ethics: the Other, as the second person (*autrui*), the Gaze of the Other, the face of the other. Clear vision in Levinas' phenomenology of gaze does not open, it wants to see, but hides. Levinas wrote about the history as about the process of blinding to the Other. Jean-Paul Sartre discovered the aggression of gaze,[26] Michel Foucault – the un-proportionality of observation of Other (the mentally sick in an asylum or prisoners) as an asymmetry in the distribution of power.[27] Levinas in his ethics as a spiritual optics would question the power of the gaze. The gaze is aggressive; sight investigates; vision does not respect the otherness of the Other. But the face of the Other I meet is not visible. The respect to the face arises beyond grasping, contact, smelling or taste. It can arise as desire. But in contrast to Hegelian desire, Levinas' desire does not seek to dominate and to use. If the Other could be possessed, seized and known, it would not be the Other. To possess, to know, to grasp are all

[25] *Ibid*., p. 158.

[26] Sartre, J.-P. *L'etre et le neant. Essai d'ontologie phenomenologique*. Paris: Gallimard, 1943, pp. 292–343.

[27] Foucault, M. *Madness and Civilization. A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason.* London: Routledge, 1961, pp. 250–251.

synonyms of power. For this reason, noted Derrida, Levinas valued sound higher than light.[28] To meet the face of the Other means to hear things that are not visible. The face of the Other opens itself beyond any sign, it could not be thematized. I cannot speak about the Other as about an object. I must speak always to the Other, addressing him. "Speaking, rather than 'letting be', solicits the Other. Speech cuts across vision", concludes Levinas.[29]

One must seek the face of the Other only as unreachable, invisible, untouchable. When one addresses the Other without the aggression of his glance, the word of the Other reaches him as a prayer of request, the face of the Other is calling for help. But does clear vision reveal what it exposes or does it hide? Levinas will describe history as the blinding to the Other.[30] Is not light becoming the source of the violence?

As noted Derrida, for Levinas the sun will always illumine the pure awakening as inexhaustible source of thought. It became also an instrument of destruction for the phenomenology and ontology subjected to the neutral totality of the Same as Being or as Ego.[31] However, the consequences of this "destruction" remained in the intentionality of Levinas' research. In the process of this immanent critique – opposing Heidegger against Husserl, and again Husserl against Heidegger – Levinas is forming his own style of phenomenology.

Levinas stepped back from Husserl's understanding of intentionality, which was based on a symmetric correlation between *noesis* and *noema*. He leaned on the third Cartesian metaphysical meditation, in which the French philosopher wrote that human consciousness includes in itself not only the idea of itself, but the primary and irreducible idea of Infinity as well. The subject is able neither to create Infinity, nor to understand it. Infinity differs from the *noemos* or *cogitatum* because it fundamentally transcends our ability to grasp and to understand. From the Cartesian point of view this Infinity is God. But the formal structure of the argument also could be applied to the Other human being. Levinas did this. The Other is the one who remains invisible, who comes from above, who excels me. The Face is the faceless God, says Levinas. He is faceless for the reason that I do not see him, I do not investigate him by my vision. I hear him. He appeals to me, he commands me. "Speaking rather than "letting be", solicits the Other. Speech cuts across vision".[32] So the Face has the modus of God – Infinity. Levinas gives the ability to the subject of his ethics not only to reason about Infinity, but to experience Infinity as well. God is here – before me – I meet him in the Face of the Other.

By modes of finitude and infinity Paul Ricoeur would construct his ethics of the will. He would use them to reveal the vulnerability and fragility of a man. Ricoeur, the same as Levinas, would turn to the fourth Meditation of Descartes in which the subject states that he cannot be surprised that he errs, because when comparing himself to Infinity he finds his own imperfectness. Kantian transcendental apperception as a synthesis of finite as sensible and infinite is the point of departure for the structuring of ethics in the early writings of Ricoeur. On the other hand, Ricoeur

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[28] Derrida, J. "Violence et metaphysique. Essai sur la pensee d'Emmanuel Levinas". In Derrida J. *L'ecriture et la difference*. Paris: Editions du Seuil, Paris, 1971, p. 147.

[29] Levinas, E. *Totality* and Infinity. *An Esay on Exteriority.* Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Duquesne University Press, 1998, p. 195. Translated by Alphonso Lingis.

[30] *Ibid*., p. 94.

[31] Derrida, J. "Violence et metaphysique. Essai sur la pensee d'Emmanuel Levinas". In Derrida J. *L'ecriture et la difference*. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1971, p. 127. Cited: Derrida J. "Violence and Metaphysic". In Derrida J. *Writing and Difference.* London: Routledge, 1995, p. 85.

[32] Levinas, E. *Totality and Infinity. An Esay on Exteriority*. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Duquesne University Press, 1998, p. 195. Translated by Alphonso Lingis.

indicates the differences between him and Kant, because he prefers to say that the synthesis is the primary one of meaning and appearance, rather than a synthesis of the intelligible and the sensible.[33] Contrary to Ricoeur, Levinas intends to return to "pure" Descartes, considering Kantian (the same as Heideggerian) salvation the problem of opposition between finitude and infinity to be anti-Cartesian. Levinas notices, that the Kantian notion of infinity appears as an ideal of reason, the projection of its exigencies in a beyond, that is the ideal completion of what is given incomplete. – "But without the incomplete being confronted with a privileged experience of infinity, without it drawing the limits of its finitude from such a confrontation." The finite here is no longer conceived by relation to the infinite; quite the contrary, the infinite presupposes the finite, which it amplifies infinitely. Kantian finitude is described positively as sensibility, as the Heideggerian finitude of being-for-death. This infinity referring to the finite marks is the most anti-Cartesian point of Kantian philosophy, as, later, of Heideggerian philosophy. Levinas here contrasted himself to Kant in as much as, he differed from Descartes who came to his conclusion because he understood finitude mainly in relation to Infinity. In Kantian ethics, on the contrary, Infinity presupposes the finitude.

The subject of Levinas's ethics grasps his/her own finitude by "hearing" in the Face of the other the idea of Infinity. At this point he/she questions his/her freedom – this is the starting point of his moral consciousness. "Morality begins when freedom, instead of being justified by itself, feels itself to be arbitrary and violent".[34]

In Kantian ethics this point of account, by which I measure the cruelty of my self-love is in my mind, in which I can find the moral law – the categorical imperative, leading me towards other people by way of universality. In Kantian ethics I never meet the Other. The Other is in my mind, not *this concrete* Other, but the *each* of the Other. In Kantian ethics I find the Other only in the procedure of monological testing the universality of my own maxims and inclinations. In Levinas' ethics I acknowledge my self-love as guilt before the nakedness of the concrete face. Regardless of this, both in Kant's as in Levinas ethics, one's approach to the other is structured by some principle provided by reason. In Kantian ethics it would be moral law, in Levinas' it would be Descartes' Infinity. The mode of both ethics is quite rational and, from the point of view of the "maybe", which characterises, e.g., Derrida's postmodern ethics, is also quite rigorist. None of them suggests any exception or alternative possibility for avoiding morality as responsibility.

[33] Ricouer, P. *Fallible Man.* New York: Fordham University Press, 2000, p. 38.
[34] *Ibid.*, p. 84.

Chapter III

Friedrich Nietzsche: Architectural Metaphor of Classical Thought and Its Symptoms

Arunas Mickevicius

Architecture is a way for power to express itself in shapes: forceful, complementing, straightforwardly compelling. (F. Nietzsche)

"God has died" – What ARE the Implications?

Nietzsche's philosophy is a radical critique of the classical thinking paradigm. The radical style of Nietzsche's philosophy was determined by the loss of faith and tradition of confidence: "The ultimate and most trustworthy understanding of our disbelief is that the world does not have the value we believed it to have". Nietzsche's paradox refers to his study of the paradigm of classical thinking starting with Parmenides and concluding with G. Hegel; it is characterized by duality and "true" knowledge based on rational understanding, and a striving for absolute, divine truth. Parmenides asserted that we cannot reason what is not reality; Nietzsche, on the contrary, insisted that we are on the opposite side of vision: everything that can be reasoned must be fictitious. That undermined the whole classical tradition of thinking, proofs and certainty of human knowledge. All became untrustworthy, fictitious. All the maxims of classical thinking such as "truth", in Nietzsche's opinion, proved to be only errors born of human arrogance, long undetected as fallacy. Classical thinking referred to the rigid, rational, logical cannons of reason ordering the world into the real, "metaphysical", and the "fictitious", physical; it offered a theocentric view of the world from the absolutist perspective, which was held to be the only right position. Nietzsche attempted to prove that there does not exist nor could there possibly exist a sole correct view of the world. But if this is unmitigated convention it is necessary to deconstruct and to unmask it as a human, overtly human approach, i.e. as idiosyncratic. This practice was conditioned by the circumstance that God had died, i.e. the circumstance which brought along distrust of the tradition. "What now?", asks Nietzsche. When the belief in God is buried, will collapses because it is based on belief, backed by belief and has developed into belief. Undoubtedly the paradigm of classical thinking crumbles and the dualistic world view loses its value. This crisis created nihilism.

The breakout of nihilism is not just Nietzsche's invention. Today it would be naive to accept G. Hegel's idea that the world's history is the necessary progress of freedom; that history has only one end and that this is teleologically achievable. Therefore, it is naive to think that Nietzsche conspired a "God's death" in order to instigate nihilism. If God is dead and, *a fortiori*, all higher values lose their claimed absolute position, it is not Nietzsche's fault. True, he spoke of the "sunset of the idols" about philosophy under the hammer which could smash old values and coin new ones.

He spoke not only about the need to devalue old values, but, firstly, about new non-traditional basic structures and values. But most importantly this need was not initiated by Nietzsche himself, nor through the auspices of the approach nor the concept he represented, but through historic fate. K. Jaspers' remarked, that F. Nietzsche does not declare: God is no longer; nor does he say: I do not believe in God, but says: God is dead. The next step in the reasoning is found in A. Camus phrase: "Contrary to some Christian critics' opinion about him, Nietzsche did not design a plot to arrange God's death. He found God dead in the soul of his epoch". Similarly, M. Heidegger

considered that Nietzsche held nihilism as the imminent logic of Western history. Therefore, in the search for the event of "God's death" and the causes of the subsequent nihilism, it is possible to draw on the rather paradoxical idea of J.F. Lyotard, that thorough refinement of the concepts of "truth" and "reality" in the long run turns, despite everything, into the scientific conscience and intellectual ethics, and, in the long run, creates an erosion of the legitimising of knowledge. So, the erosion of the transcendental basis of classical thinking and its collapse had started long before Nietzsche. He only envisioned this process as the unwanted and uninvited guest of the doom of history on the threshold of the epoch and theoretically deliberated over it.

The death of God and the nihilism that sprang therefore as a phenomenon of fate should be separated from Nietzsche's personal attitudes. He sought to overcome nihilism. But in what way did he perceive such an ultimate victory over nihilism? Should it be a new attempt to return to the transcendental basics and their restoration? Nietzsche denied all renovation. In other words, the event of "God's death" and the loss of the old faith was not a painful existential drama for Nietzsche. The alternative of restoring of the transcendental basis on which one could build a magnificent rigid building and victoriously fly atop it the flag of the only Truth, Nietzsche, most certainly, refused.

The truth is that Nietzsche regarded and treated nihilism as a clinical case. He diagnosed for himself and for others the inability to believe. It is also true that he himself felt no nostalgia for the loss of the old belief. Moreover, "the death of the Grandfather God" cheered him in a way: "At last", says Nietzsche, "the horizon opens unobstructed for us ... at last, our ships will be able to voyage the seas, to meet dangers, all dangers lurking on the path to knowledge are welcome".

We will see that after "the death of God" thereare unrestricted horizons which Nietzsche identifies with the concept of perspectivism that deconstructs the only true seemingly Godlike approach to the world and projects a variety of approaches to the world, i.e., a variety of interpretations.

The event of "the death of God" is important, but not yet a sufficient condition to allow a deconstruction of mono-centricity of Western philosophy, to unmask the architecture of the classical mind and to accept poly-centricity. The latter is enforced by *der Wille zur Macht*, the principle of the will to power.

What is *der Wille zur Macht*?

Nietzsche used the concept to separate himself from the duality of classical thinking and especially from A. Schopenhauer's concept of the "will to live", which leads to passivity. Schopenhauer showed that the practical value of human activity will let itself be measured only when an ascetic way of life is accepted. Nietzsche opposed "the will to power" to the "suppression of will". The category of "life" for Nietzsche does not mean inactive seclusion, but activity: possessing, subduing the weaker dominance of individual shapes. So "the will to power " was built on a dynamic, antagonistic foundation.

It is from this antagonistic "life" that classic thinking turned away and erected the blocks of the fortress of "science"' whose architecture and symptoms we will discuss later.

"The will to power", understood in its most general sense, means that it organizes and structures the experience of our world. It is also the genealogical basis for the world: all phenomena are born from "the will to power", they are its manifestations. However, this does not mean that "the will to power" could be interpreted as a stable basis for a changing phenomenon, i.e., as a substance, and made it into a metaphysical abstraction. "The will to power" in Nietzsche's thinking

is not a "thing in itself", as opposed to "phenomenon" (E. Kant), or else "a will" as opposed to "an image" (A.Schopenhauer). "The will to power" is inseparable from the objectivity of its realization, just as lightning is inseparable from its luminescence. Strictly speaking "lightning" ("subject", "will", "reason", etc.) as object and act "lightning" ("image", "object", "effect", etc.) do not exist in separation; rather there is a sheer action, "lightning". Here is how the non-traditional essence of Nietzsche's philosophy penetrates through classical philosophy and identifies "will" either with metaphysical substance or with rational, subjective action. In either case, for classical philosophy "will" was the same concept. However, Nietzsche's "will to power" foresees a primeval classification where identity is a secondary, derived quality.

"The will to power" decides upon an approach which allows no substance of "will" outside of phenomenon, no existence of "an object in itself"; it is an approach that does not accept any "facts in themselves", only interpretations: "facts do not exist, only interpretations do". Therefore, Nietzsche's philosophy holds many associations with the postmodern paradigm that allows only an interpretative understanding of the world, i.e., understanding that creates only an interpretation of the interpretation. Interpretation of the interpretation may never cease, asserts M. Foucault, because there exists an interpreter. There is no absolute primordiality which would lend itself to interpretation, because anything can be the basis for interpretation. Every sign in itself is not an object which presents itself for interpretation, but interpretation of another sign". Therefore, "the will to power", as non-substance, is inseparable from the basis of self-demonstration and, in the long run, is only an interpretation and an interpretation of the interpretation, i.e., a phenomenalistic understanding of the world.

The essence of this phenomenalistic understanding is that "the world which we are capable of appropriating is only surface, generalized by oversimplified signs. It accepts only total supposition, visibility (*Scheinbare*), only "different degrees of visibility", brighter and darker shades of visibility and an overall background, different values, as the painter would put it. Nietzsche held as the achievement of his philosophy to stay in the visibility of this world and to secure it without being demolished or dragged down as a sleepwalker, who is safer in the world of dreams, and for whom awakening may only cause an accident.

"The will to power" is inseparable from realizations which take place through the agency of two different types of forces: active and reactive. Speaking about the relation between "the will to power " and these forces, we should highlight two moments. First, being the birth-giving and determining basis of powers, "the will to power " determines the quality of the relationship between the active and reactive forces.

Second, "the will" is somehow a part of these forces and is also determined by their activity. "The will to power" both manifests itself and also is being manifest. It indicates the divide between the powers and also is manifest in this "divide". In other words, "the will to power" foresees not identity but difference; it shows, determines and manifests difference. It shows not only itself but the qualitative difference of the active and reactive forces. As G. Deleuze would happily have it, for Nietzsche "the will to power" is a differentiating element, a genealogical element, which determines the relationship between two forces and imparts them with quality. With respect to the genesis of power or its generation, "the will to power" determines the relation between forces, but in its own turn is determined by the activity of these forces. "The will to power" is at the same time both determined and determiner. Thus, the power of will is the divide between the forces and is born in the divide of the forces, in determination of the active and reactive forces. The active force is different from the reactive force in that in the active point we start with assertive and positive assumptions. Let us take the statement "I am good, and you are bad (*Sclecht*)". This starts with the

positive assumption: "I am good…" The act of stating this begins with the sort of assumption Nietzsche called a Yes-statement. This act was associated with the assertion of "life", praise, etc., while the statement: "You are bad (*Bosse*), therefore I am good" starts with the negative assumption "You are bad…". This act of declaring Nietzsche called a *No-statement*. This act was, to follow Nietzsche's words, typical of all classical thinking that said No "to life", turned away from it, and tried to isolate itself from "life". The force is particularly active in building the different architectural defensive constructions. Therefore, Nietzsche himself understandably praised the active force.

Nietzsche created a theoretical construct based on the principle *Wille zur Macht*, where he emphatically praised "assertive" forces, and accused all classical thinking of turning away from life and associated it with reactive, negative forces. This construct is characterized by independently manifested speculative forms: genealogies, typologies and symptomatics. This means that every phenomenon we discuss springs from "the will to power". Since it is determined by different forces, all phenomena are either associated with active or with reactive forces. In the long run, all typologically different phenomena must be determined according to symptoms. If the force is active, all phenomena related to it will be associated with symptoms of a full-blooded and healthy life. If the power is reactive, the phenomena associated with it will be related to symptoms of crisis, depression, weakness and sickness.

Later we will see that the symptom of weakness Nietzsche ascribed to the whole tradition of classical thinking, which tried to hide its weakness and created ostensibly grand architectural thinking.

These three forms of reasoning: genealogy, typology and symptomatic that encompass "the will to power" and the construct, ultimately became known as semiology. This means that for Nietzsche, understanding the world is totally full of signs and totally interpretative. There are no "substances", "essences", "things in themselves", etc.; there are only signs and their differentiated interpretations. Understanding, in Nietzsche's words, functions as a force, (…) in other words, the level of the desire to know depends on the degree of growth of "the will to power". This type of understanding based on the principle of "the will to power" is interpretative: "the will to power" interprets. This phrase forestalls the approach that "the will to power" is "the subject" of interpretation. However, Nietzsche warns about the non-traditional meaning of this concept: "We have no right to ask: Who is interpreting?", – who is the "subject" of interpretation?" This question determines substantiality as unwelcome to Nietzsche and alien to the nature of "the will to power" and many other hypostases. On the contrary, we must accept, that interpretation by "the will to power" is pure process that denies classical substantialisation typical of classical thinking. The interpretation itself, declares Nietzsche, is a typical form of "the will to power"; it exists as an effect (not as inertia, but as a process, as becoming).

It is safe to guess that Nietzsche studied the process, especially the fact of how it is related to final "truth" and "meaning"; he understood process as infinitival signification without differentiation to the primal signifier. This destructive approach toward classical thinking was further developed in the 20th century. Many philosophers, J. Derrida for one, asserted that "the meaning of meaning is infinite implication, indeterminate reference of the signifier to the signified". Nietzsche "destroyed two dominant epistemological illusions: the referential theory of truth and the correspondent theory of meaning. The former held that language, through which the representational function acquires a privileged position (*adequatio*) is adequate to the extralinguistic referee, or correspondence of relation with reality". In his critique of the referential theory of meaning, Nietzsche stated that language, metaphoric in essence, cannot, through its

anthropomorphic activity transmit "true", "objective" information about the world and, *a fortiori*, has no right to refer to a sole truth, accessible to everyone.

Therefore, Nietzsche's philosophy, based on the power of will, denies the exceptionally unique true opinion of the world and offers instead a variety of interpretations; foresees the possibility to look at the world through different eyes, i.e. determines a perspectivist approach to the world.

Thus, "let us be cautious", warns Nietzsche, of the dangerous old invention of the concepts that gave birth to the pure, will-less, painless, timeless subject of knowledge: let us be cautious of such contradictory concepts as "pure reason", "absolute spirituality", "knowing per se"; here is always present the requirement to think of an eye (…), whose active and interpretative forces are limited; therefore, what is expected from the eye is absurdity and nonsense. There exists, holds Nietzsche, only perspectivist "knowledge"; and (…) the more eyes there are, the more different eyes we manage to put into ourselves to watch the same thing, the more exhaustive "understanding" of the thing – our objective vision – we acquire.

So, what was the unique truth of classical thinking from the point of view of language – basic, conceptual language? Nietzsche's answer: "Dynamic vastness of the metaphors, metonymies, anthropomorphisms, in the sum of human relations, that were poetically and rhetorically heightened, transferred and adorned, and which after a certain period of use appeared to people to be stable, canonical and mandatory: truths are illusions, which are forgotten to be illusions; metaphors that fell out of use and lost their sensory value, coins with worn-out pictures, out of use as coins, but useful as metal". The scientific conceptual language of classical thinking for Nietzsche are only forgotten, shallow and hardened metaphors. This forgetting, setting, creates an illusion of a unique, permanent and unchanging illusion of Truth, which Nietzsche attempts to unmask.

Architecture of Thinking

Nietzsche's deconstructive intentions toward truth and the paradigm related to classical thinking was neatly determined by S. Kofman. She ascertained that Nietzsche used abundant metaphors in his texts not only rhetorically, but also strategically, i.e., purposefully targeting the conceptual language of classical thinking; he attempted to deconstruct it, to free the mentioned "active and differently interpretative forces".

On the basis of Nietzsche's idea that every building must demonstrate "the will to power"; that architecture is a way of speaking of some force, Kofman analyzed Nietzsche's metaphors in the so-called Western thinking and culture of "architectural metaphors". Attention is paid to how philosophers constructed their epistemological architecture, how value penetrated it, and what were symptomatic of this penetration, etc. Nietzsche illustrated the construction of classical thinking through such "architectural metaphors" as "beehive", "pyramid", "tower", "spider's web" etc. Some metaphors Nietzsche borrowed from tradition. But he altered their use in his own way: he gave them other meanings and showed their negativity, projected towards the image of becoming, towards interpretative plurality of the world, i.e., he associated them with the reactive denial of "life", with suppressive force.

The first architectural construction representing classical thinking is the beehive. Through the architectural metaphor of the beehive, Nietzsche attempts to show that all of the concepts that were used by classical thinking were products of "instinctive" metaphoric activity. Similarly, the honeycomb is a construct of the bee instinct. A beehive as a geometric architectural ensemble

stands for the systemic order of concepts. Nietzsche noted that the architecture of the beehive is perfect: in its beauty, as well as the classical thinking and the grandeur of the science based on it, its beauty is not uninterested: beauty is a symptom of primordial lack. This lack explains the image of the necessity of busy, noisy activity: similarly to the reason the bee constructs a honeycomb to survive, fills it with honey brought from outside, so does classical scientific thinking construct an empty, formal carcass of thought into which it attempts to fit the entire outside world.

The architecture of scientific thinking that is basically characterized only by assumed luxury Nietzsche compares to the unhappy insect (scientists) in need and to his honeycomb (the structure of formal thinking). Thus, Nietzsche mocks scientific ambition to diminish the world to the limits of scientific speculation. He mocks the unlimited trust of science in itself, whereas it is characterized by metaphors held as true meanings. It is precisely because of its metaphoric nature that science may never explain the world as it is in reality, i.e., it is only subject to interpretation. In one of his extracts, Nietzsche defined rational thinking as interpretation according to a scheme from which one cannot release oneself. It must be added here that the nature of the scheme, as Nietzsche says, is not rational and logical, but metaphorical. Science is a pure system of signs (semiology). The scientific quality of classical thinking, in reality, emerges from metaphoric activity and rests on concepts, which are infinitely multiplied and renovated. The metaphor is here again with the bee and the beehive: both construct the honeycomb and fill it with honey simultaneously; similarly, science continually builds new honeycombs, layer upon layer, cleaning and reinforcing the old honeycomb. Nietzsche also connects scientific pretence to objectivity and absolute assuredness: that pretence by elimination of all anthropomorphisms hides metaphor and its interpretative nature. This deception is a sign of weakness in science. Similarly, as bees produce honey from flowers whose nectar they permanently assemble and accumulate, so classical scientific thinking cleans itself of "individualism", restricts itself from metaphoric, interpretative powers, and makes science move outside for accumulation of nectar, "fly and bring truth" to the beehive, Nietzsche speaks ironically of the process. We are constantly laboring, since by nature we are hard working winged collectors of spiritual honey, we are in a hurry with only one idea at the bottom of our hearts: to bring something home.

Nietzsche notes that when "individuality" is eliminated from the scientific imperative it is a sign that a separate individual is not strong enough to ascertain personal opinion. Therefore, the lack of science is correlated to the lack of scientists, the latter, devoid of individual powers, cannot protect individual evaluations, so they pass for being objective. This weakness in human architectural thinking makes us hid and seeks in the castle of science, which protects and feeds it. In this way, the metaphoric architecture of the beehive is supplemented and modified.

For scientific classical thinking, the castle serves as a protection from outer and inner dangers. In other words, the biggest danger for science is "life": it is necessary to protect against the powers which life itself asserts. Individuals in science build barricades around themselves to isolate and, in this way, to attempt to protect speculatory constructions from different events (alien opinions and evaluations). This could mean that classical thinking, through all means, attempted to protect itself from irrationality, myth, art and all that, to use Nietzsche’s image, "were faithful to life" and stated the cult of the imaginary, superficial, fictitious, interpretation without reference to the primordial signifier. Classical thinking protects itself and is turned against those who, risking to be overpowered, dared to accept their perspective as one of many or objective, absolute scientific Truths. The latter perspective Nietzsche unmasks in showing that it is human, too human, in essence, that the real world of metaphysics is a fairy-tale, or fiction. A "fortress" or "citadel" is so important for the survival of science that it is the protective shield, a symbol of self-protection,

self-isolation, self-castration. Scientists faithfully following one Godly Truth, or the Saint who believes in God is an ideal castrate: where the God's kingdom starts, there ends life.

For the characteristic of classical thinking, a metaphor illegitimately eliminates individuality and subjectivity, illegitimate mono-centric tendencies. He shows that the construction of the world, in essence, is not partial – that creation is inseparable from the will to power. Nietzsche supports agnostics, the variety of many approaches. He determined this position, as we have mentioned, as active, life assertive activities. The scientific position of classical thinking, which opens up on the Divine center, he terms reactive, i.e., annihilating life, hating it, building a fortress around life. Therefore the classical thinking of scientific grandeur, fictitious in its essence, hides its own fears and panic against life, hides errors and calls them truths. The helplessness of scientists separates them, builds barricades and makes them cling to them in order to survive. In this strange form of the architecture of thinking, around the "fortress" that a person builds against himself, there remain no gaps, no space for the smallest whim of the imagination. Science, asserts Nietzsche, first of all attempts to fill the magnificent building, and house all of the empirical and physical world. This filling grows to enormous proportions, and the fortress of science resembles the tower of Babel. The language of science cuts off its metaphoric roots and isolates itself from normal, everyday speech. Science creates a formal, logical language, built of abstract signs, i.e., true riddles, hiding portions and conflicts, rather than revealing the essence of things and the world. This Tower of Science, to quote Nietzsche, grows and grows to infinity, and with it grows the probability that the philosopher tires of learning, and will stop at some point and will start to specialize. In constructing the fortress or tower, human beings feel more secure. On the other hand, construction takes place at the expense of these very people, their alienation, introversion and perseverance within the boundaries of the mind, the world and life itself. This is why the rigidity of Nietzsche's opinion is identical to suicide: it is impossible to build the Tower of Science permanently, because there comes fatigue and specialization, which is inseparable from asceticism and mummification. In this way, to live long is possible not only while building the tower, but it also mummifies.

Thus, the "beehive", "fortress" and "tower"' acquire different architectural shapes, geometrical pyramids. For this new architectural thinking of classical reasoning, hardened metaphors are typical; they suggest a hierarchical world order, through classified categories and determined legal and rational order. Classical thinking is characterized by "pyramidality". It symbolizes a schematized, "intelligible" world. In this kingdom of schemes is possible what would never be thinkable among immediate impressions: to build a pyramid of castes and degrees, to create a new world of laws, privileges, a subordinate world whose regularity and interpretation confronts the world of immediate impressions. Mocking this new pyramidic thinking as typical of the new classical thinking, Nietzsche found it identical to a square block, resembling a tombstone. The metaphor of the pyramid symbolizes a long-buried, killed and mummified "individuality", mummified immediate sensations and impressions. Therefore, from the metaphor of the pyramid, Nietzsche glides into the metaphor of the columbarium, i.e., a space where urns of the remains of the deceased are kept. Mummification foresees that every individuality and immediate impression float away, become ashes and dust. A pyramid is a marvelous tombstone on the grave where lie the ashes of deceased individuality, immediate sensations, and life in general. Therefore, classical thinking and science, supporting themselves in this way are a symbol of individual experience, life-asserting power.

Nietzsche unearthed the supposedly firm basis of the pyramid, built from hard concepts, and showed that in fact every metaphor is visible. Nietzsche asserted that every visible metaphor is seen, but does not resemble any other, and therefore, cannot be classified. Therefore, the structure

of concepts is reminiscent of the regularity of the columbarium, and broad mathematical logic and coldness. Whoever has been touched by this cold will hardly ever be able to believe that a concept, dried and octagonal as dice in a game is a relict of a metaphor.

Therefore, the knowledge of classical thinking is a simple game with empty concepts. This game is serious, and disregard of its concepts will be punished; in this game of concepts, truth means every dice in the game moves in a different way, to count correctly, to formulate true rubrics and never violate the order of castes and ranks.

The last architectural metaphor associated with classical thinking is the spider web. Similarly to a spider that spins its web from saliva to catch its prey, so the scientist constructs a speculative net. They differ from the massive pyramidal hierarchy and systematizing because they are light, mobile, more repellent, and adaptive to different situations in life. It is not accidental that Nietzsche compared the scientist to a poisonous tarantula. As spiders suck the blood of victims caught in their web, so scientist-spiders make life ugly, joyless and bloodless.

The metaphor of a spider's web is associated with classical thinking dominated by an image of God. Nietzsche interpreted it as the idea of the spider-scientist, which becomes an imperative; ideas always breed on the blood of philosophers, says Nietzsche. Old philosophers were heartless; philosophical undertakings have always been somewhat ghoulish. In effect, philosophical empiricism has always been a kind of illness.

The webs of tarantula-scientists are the "phantoms", "simulacra" of life. In Nietzsche's words, the entire machinery of conceptual thinking – the web – is a symptom of the poverty of anachronistic creators.

In describing the architectural metaphors of classical thinking, Nietzsche was pursuing two goals. First, to show that the architecture of thinking is reactive, life denying, that it's assumed grandeur it in fact hides the simplicity and poverty of life. On the other hand, Nietzsche attempts to release metaphoric power from the single axiom of Truth, to release creativity, to legitimize a prospective, interpretative view of the world, based on the above-mentioned "will to power" principle, and related to the assertive powers of the active life.

Chapter IV

George Orwell: The Anatomy of Fanaticism and Hatred

Leonidas Donskis

> Madness is something rare in individuals
> but in groups, parties, peoples, ages it is the rule.
> Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*

George Orwell (1903–1950) played a decisive role in the struggle against totalitarian consciousness and organized hatred. It was through his satires, dystopias, and political essays that the literature of lonely humanists and skeptical liberals became the battleground where the cynical nature of violent politics and organized hatred of the twentieth century was revealed in a thrilling way. He not only exposed the totalitarianism and ideocratic hatred inherent in the age of the making and unmaking of enemies, but also uncovered the trajectories of modern consciousness and imagination that were characteristic of Western societies and were deeply symptomatic of the fabrication of political and ideological adversaries. Orwell's name may well be said to have become the banner raised by those who believed in the valid uniqueness of human life, individual reason, and individual conscience.

The quest for enemies and the invention of adversaries may be said to have been Orwell's major themes that permeated his fiction and political essays. He penetrated the politics of organized hatred that resulted from the phantoms and forgeries of the modern troubled imagination as nobody else in modern literature and philosophy. If Central and Eastern Europe may well be said to have become a litmus test case in world history concerning the intensity and lunacy of modern political and ideological hatred, then Orwell can certainly qualify for the title of the honorary Central and East European. 1984 still stands as an unsurpassed and astonishing example of the powers of social analysis and moral reflexivity that modern literature can possess. Animal Farm appears as the first social satire to have caught the tragicomic inadequacy between the initial – idealistic and romantic – phase of revolution and subsequent totalitarian practices inexorably following from the nature of revolution, rather than from the distortions of a worthy theory.

Concept and Forms of Nationalism

Yet it is Orwell's thoughtful essay, "Notes on Nationalism," rather than his remarkable dystopias, that gives us a clue to the origins of ideological and political fanaticism. Not having found a better word to describe this disturbing phenomenon of the twentieth century, Orwell employs "nationalism," which clearly means here something different from what the scholars of nationalism, equipped with conventional academic wisdom, would have discussing it.

> By "nationalism" I mean first of all the habit of assuming that human beings can be classified like insects and that whole blocks of millions or tens of millions of people can be confidently labeled "good" or "bad." But secondly – and this much more important – I mean the habit of identifying oneself with a single nation or other unit, placing it beyond good and evil and recognizing no other duty than that of advancing its interests. Nationalism is not to be confused with patriotism. Both words are normally used in so vague a way that any definition is liable to be challenged, but one

must draw a distinction between them, since two different and even opposing ideas are involved. By "patriotism" I mean devotion to a particular place and a particular way of life, which one believes to be the best in the world but has no wish to force upon other people. Patriotism is of its nature defensive, both militarily and culturally. Nationalism, on the other hand, is inseparable from the desire for power.[1]

In fact, nationalism can easily be defended against Orwell's devastating criticism. For instance, it might be suggested that what he describes as a propensity to place one's object of devotion and affection beyond good and evil and to recognize no other duty than that of advancing its interests concerns conservative and radical nationalism, rather than liberal one. More than that, nationalism could be advocated by recalling the myriad ways it manifests itself. Liberal nationalism, which obviously was the initial phase of nationalism in the first half of the nineteenth century, could be taken as just another term for liberalism itself. Herder's idea that every culture is a kind of self-asserting, self-sufficient, unique, and irreplaceable collective individual cannot be conceived of otherwise than another version – German or Central European – of liberalism.

Liberal nationalism has always been, and continues to be, an interpretive and normative framework for the critical questioning of one's society and culture, rather than a blind and deaf glorification of one's history and culture. As a social and moral philosophy, liberal nationalism established an important pattern of intellectual culture, whose essence lies in the modernizing critique of society and culture. Moreover, liberalism and democratic nationalism sustains our modern intellectual and grounded moral sensibilities. It is ironic that by lightly discarding nationalism as a whole, Orwell dismisses his own substantial contribution to the modern democratic world, namely, the struggle against totalitarianism. Yet he had not seen this sort of nationalism, whose merits in the struggle against totalitarianism were to mark the history of twentieth-century Central and Eastern Europe.[2]

Regrettably, in the second half of the nineteenth century, nationalism in Europe was increasingly becoming defensive, mass-oriented, ideological, and doctrinal. It seems to have been so partly because of the impact of Social Darwinism, and also because of some strong anti-modernist reactions, which capitalized on the idea of the defense of the nation from external and internal enemies alike. In many cases, nationalism, in fact, became primitive and "zoological." However, this has not always been so. In the first half of the nineteenth century, Europe was full of liberal nationalists who maintained the ideas of universal brotherhood and sisterhood, human fellowship, moral reciprocity, commitment, and sympathetic understanding, and who firmly believed that the fight for the independence and freedom of any country was a common cause. The epoch of the springtime of the peoples, as well as Herder's noble-spirited and generous philosophy of culture, is simply out of touch with what we can depict as blood-and-soil, ethnic cleansing brand of nationalism. If we are not to conflate National Socialism, as a global racist ideology and as a blueprint for a world order, with nationalism, then we have to admit that a widespread propensity to blame all evils of the twentieth century solely on nationalism is really odd, to say the least. The ethic of liberal nationalism was instrumental in discrediting and, consequently, dismantling

[1] Orwell, G. "Notes on Nationalism". In Orwell, G. *Decline of the English Murder and Other Essays*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1970, pp. 155–156.

[2] For more on the morphology of nationalism and also on the modernizing and critical potential of liberal nationalism, see Donskis, L. *Identity and Freedom: Mapping Nationalism and Social Criticism in Twentieth-Century Lithuania*. London & New York: Routledge, 2002.

totalitarianism. In communist countries, even conservative nationalism played an important role, advocating such fundamental forms of human rights and dignity as freedom of speech, conscience, and association, and also freedom to practice one's religion and culture.

This is not to say, however, that all forms of nationalism are compatible with the ideals of peace and democracy. A kind of para-ideology, nationalism proved adaptable to all principal modern ideologies, namely, conservatism, liberalism, and socialism. It makes nationalism a vague phenomenon of modern politics and culture. As Orwell admits himself, every definition of nationalism is doomed to be incomplete. If so, every definition of nationalism is liable to be challenged. One of the reasons is that "nationalism" cannot in principle function as a kind of abstract and polysemantic term. By making it so, we deprive the term "nationalism" of any sense. It simply makes no sense to disconnect nationalism from an ideological framework within which it comes to define identity, freedom, tradition, power, authority, virtue, and other key phenomena of politics and culture in whose name it speaks up. At the same time, it is an unpardonable mistake to detach nationalism from a concrete political setting in which it operates. In a liberal democracy, nationalism can be integrated into the liberal moral culture and thus accommodated in the pluralist setting. Needless to say, this is not exclusively the case: even in a liberal democracy, nationalism can be adjusted to, or translated into, a set of racist and xenophobic sentiments, anti-modernist reactions, or the illiberal systems of moralization, such as the culture of determinism. In undemocratic regimes, nationalism can be translated into any kind of predominant militant rhetoric or symbolic design of political and ideological partisanship. As a frame of reference for blood-and-soil mystique, it can also be incorporated into the general pattern of hatred and paranoia instigated by politically, ideologically, or religiously motivated hate groups, whatever their guise. It is simply pointless, if not to say unfair, to deal with nationalism without defining clearly its ideological framework and political setting.

Neither are things clear with patriotism. If the liberal facet of nationalism implies the critical questioning of one's society and culture, patriotism, in most cases, is a kind of attachment to, and identification with, a certain country, its territory, history, landscape, language, and symbols of power. This sort of attachment and identification usually is devoid of any critical approach. The principle "my country, right or wrong" may well be said to have always been the quintessence of patriotism.[3] Whereas a nationalist would criticize sharply any deviation from what he or she assumes as the moral substance of the object of his devotion or her commitment, a patriot would insist that no fact or event could prevent him or her from keeping fidelity to his or her country. Any form of government or political regime, in the patriot's perception, is an inalienable part of his/her country, and as such has to be supported. Loyalty to it is as necessary as opposition to those who too critically judge it or those who do not wish it well, both from within and from without. Therefore, the dividing line between small-scale, timid, and apologetic patriotism on the one hand, and imperial attachment to, and identification, with the territory as a symbol of the crown or of majestic history, i.e., Landespatriotismus on the other might not be as sharp as Orwell imagined it. Both rest on a vague territorial sentiment and a loosely bound idea of superiority of one's country over the rest of the world. Both reject a critical perspective in viewing one's country,

[3] Aleksandras Shtromas offers a challenging interpretation of nationalism vis-à-vis patriotism. His illuminating remarks on the differences between the two are a good example of how a thoughtful study of nationalism and patriotism can invite reconsideration of these phenomena. See Shtromas, A. "Ideological Politics and the Contemporary World: Have We Seen the Last of 'Isms'?". In Aleksandras Shtromas, ed., *The End of "Isms"? Reflections on the Fate of Ideological Politics after Communism's Collapse*. Oxford & Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1994, pp. 183–225.

which is perceived as an object of pride and of defense against those wishing it ill, rather than as an embodiment of a link between moral imagination and social reality.

However astonishing it may sound, Orwell appears to have applied the ethic of liberal nationalism to his social and cultural critique, rather than to have been just a fair-minded patriot of England, who passionately opposed jingoism and imperial patriotism. The point is that he found himself at odds with the banal and reactionary essence of jingoism precisely because of his liberal nationalism. I realize that I go against the current here. The idea that Orwell was a liberal nationalist may be perceived as a heresy, if not as a characteristically East-Central European obsession with the recent past of East Central Europe or as an imposition of its realities on the rest of the world. Indeed, liberal nationalism, as a moral and political paradigm, has little, if anything at all, to do with British intellectual and political culture. At the same time, it is difficult to imagine a more inhospitable and insensitive theoretical setting for the nationalist moral culture than Anglo-American philosophy permeated by nominalism as well as by mistrust for what it takes as Continental idiosyncrasies and wild political theories. This sort of philosophy regards nationalism merely as one more nebulous concept of the notorious holism. It is also true that the former imperial entities, such as Britain, France, Sweden, or Russia, are considerably more leaning to *Landespatriotismus*, patronizing politics, and to what they perceive as their civilizing mission than to that powerful ethical dimension of genuine internationalism, which is at the core of liberal nationalism. Hence, a great deal of moral provincialism and insensitivity to small countries and their cultures is inherent in the politics of the former empires. We have good reason to believe that liberal nationalism, which is by no means irreconcilable with skeptical liberalism, is likely to have originated from the specifically East-Central European political realities and moral sensibilities.

Yet Orwell's political and moral stance might best be described as a liberal nationalism, which made him so remarkably close and emphatically sensitive to the tragedies of Central and Eastern Europe. The idea that Orwell's moral stance was much closer to liberal nationalism than to a kind of abstract, ideological, and doctrinal socialism may shed new light on his overall hostility to doctrinaire intellectuals, ideological true believers, and fanatics of all shades. Here and nowhere else lies the secret of Orwell's nearly magical appeal to East-Central European intellectual and moral sensibilities. Noteworthy is the fact that it is liberal nationalists who tend to be the harshest critics of the sinister mystique, barbaric vocabulary, and ferocious politics of blood-and-soil nationalism. Recall such great Central and East European critics of illiberal nationalism as Czeslaw Milosz, Adam Michnik, Milan Kundera, Václav Havel, or Tomas Venclova.[4] We do not have to call ourselves a nationalist to be one.

However, nationalism, as well as its derivative phenomena, such as collective identity and collective memory, remained for Orwell a vague category. He regarded nationalism as just another term for moral provincialism, and quite justifiably so as far as conservative or radical nationalism is concerned. Writing his "Notes on Nationalism" in 1945, Orwell could associate nationalism only with the old imperial sentiment, i.e., jingoism, transferred ideological idioms or partisan feelings, and also with some antimodernist reactions, which he described so aptly. Hence, Orwell's strong opposition to nationalism as a sui generis phenomenon, and also his temptation to accord to the term an exclusively pejorative connotation. Ascribing to nationalism almost every possible manifestation of group stereotyping, political cleavages, social and ideological divisions, and even chauvinism and racism, Orwell is at risk of losing not only the frame of reference, but also the target of his criticism.

[4] For more this issue, see Donskis, *Identity and Freedom*, ibid.

However insightful and brilliant in his sharp and provocative analysis of what he called "transferred nationalism," i.e., such transferred or transposed forms of exclusive ideology as Communism, political Catholicism, color feeling, and class feeling, Orwell failed to understand and appreciate nationalism as social criticism. The trouble with his concept of nationalism is that nationalism begins to mean everything and, in effect, nothing. Although Orwell, as Timothy Garton Ash suggested, richly deserved to qualify for the honorable title of one of the great Central and East Europeans,[5] an additional remark is needed here. When depicting totalitarianism or deploring the naiveté and myopia of Western intellectuals concerning their attitude to the most "progressive" part of the world, Orwell reaches the heights of Central and East European intellectual and moral sensibility. Yet on nationalism he writes as a British maverick and dissenter, an enfant terrible of British socialism, who deliberately translates the term into a tool of critique targeted at pre- and postwar British and European political realities.

Yet we could argue that by nationalism Orwell clearly means something else here. Had he spoken about nationalism in the way we see it now, it would have been easy to discard his essay as a superficial writing unable to go to the root of the problem. The point, however, is that Orwell did touch upon the nerve of what we could call a dramatic encounter of debating loyalties and conflicting values. He described with the stroke of genius what we could take as intrinsic conflicts that occur within the troubled moral imagination. For him, "nationalism" was merely a code word for a more disturbing and complex phenomenon. Whatever the term he employed, Orwell gave us an invaluable clue to the origin of modern ideological and political fanaticism as a form of hatred. Although mass movements and their interchangeability, doctrinal and mass-oriented politics, and exclusive ideologies seem more accurate terms to describe the target of Orwell's smashing critique, his concept of transferred and transposed nationalism provides a valuable perspective to view modern fanaticism. It sheds new light on the modern moral imagination as the battleground of conflicting sets of concepts, values, ideas, stances, and objects of attachment. At the same time, he stresses the modern uncertainties and ambiguities as a source of fanaticism. Of transferred nationalism and transferable nationalist loyalties Orwell writes:

The intensity with which they are held does not prevent nationalist loyalties from being transferable…. They can be and often are fastened upon some foreign country. One quite commonly finds that great national leaders, or the founders of nationalist movements, do not even belong to the country they have glorified. Sometimes they are outright foreigners, or more often they come from peripheral areas where nationality is doubtful. Examples are Stalin, Hitler, Napoleon, de Valera, Disraeli, Poincaré, Beaverbrook. The Pan-German movement was in part the creation of an Englishman, Houston Chamberlain. For the past fifty or a hundred years, transferred nationalism has been a common phenomenon among literary intellectuals. With Lafcadio Hearne the transference was to Japan, with Carlyle and many others of his time to Germany, and in our own age it is usually Russia.[6]

The implication is that transferred nationalism results from uncertainty of one's primary identity and object of attachment. We do need an identity and an object of loyalty or attachment. If we are deprived of them or if we are not at peace with what others passionately identify, we are inexorably doomed to forge their substitutes. In so doing, we are at risk of dangerously improvising

[5] See Ash, T.G. *The Uses of Adversity: Essays on the Fate of Central Europe*. London: Penguin Books, 1999, p. 154, p. 157, p. 191.
[6] Orwell, "Notes on Nationalism," *ibid*., p. 163.

or simply fabricating an identity, which has no reference point in this-worldly reality and which extends an invitation to the realm of the troubled imagination. If we are not rooted in this-worldly reality in the sense of being an autonomous individual and of having a solid, resilient, and immutable identity, we will search for a substitute to fill the gap somehow. If we happen to have no attachment to our country or if we are little appreciated in our culture, a kind of dislocation of our human attachment and loyalty will inevitably take place.

The paradox of nationalism, as a thought-and-action system capable of sustaining the modern intellectual and grounded moral sensibilities, lies in the fact that its excess and absence can both end up in disaster. Whereas excess of nationalism leads to moral provincialism and total insensitivity to those who do not belong to us, its absence results in disconnectedness from all recognizable, down-to-earth idioms of human loyalty and attachment. Nationalism, if it operates in a liberal-democratic setting, does prevent us from ideological and political fanaticism, not to mention myriad travesties of human attachment, loyalty, collective memory, and collective sentiment. After all, our attachment to our culture, language, and landscape is among fundamental human needs. If we lose the primary object of our love and attachment, or if we are deprived of it, we will transfer our loyalty. We will find a new object of attachment elsewhere. It can be another country to which we will attach an alternative, no matter whether real or imaginary – a revolutionary political program or a dissenting religion or a rival civilization or an opposing value-and-idea system. As Orwell points out,

When one sees the slavish or boastful rubbish that is written about Stalin, the Red Army, etc., by fairly intelligent and sensitive people, one realizes that this is only possible because some kind of dislocation has taken place. In societies such as ours, it is unusual for anyone describable as an intellectual to feel a very deep attachment to his own country. Public opinion, that is, the section of public opinion of which he as an intellectual is aware, will not allow him to do so. Most of the people surrounding him are sceptical and disaffected, and he may adopt the same attitude from imitativeness or sheer cowardice: in that case he will have abandoned the form of nationalism that lies nearest to hand without getting any closer to a genuinely internationalist outlook. He still feels the need for a Fatherland, and it is natural to look for one somewhere abroad.

No wonder that transferred nationalism is possible precisely because of the aforementioned instability and intensity of the nationalist's loyalties. The only thing that remains constant in the nationalist, according to Orwell, is his or her own state of mind. The object of his/her feelings is changeable, and may be imaginary. It also happens that this sort of ideological fervor, nationalism, as Orwell would have it, can be transposed or reversed. Thus, former admirers of the United States of America can turn into the greatest skeptics and critics of that country, reserving their love and admiration for its newly found adversary, if not a rival civilization, namely, Russia. For instance, this happened to H.G.Wells, who moved from Americophilia to Americophobia, the latter coupled with Russophilia. That a number of members of the Nazi Party were recruited from the German Communist Party when the Nazis came to power, and that Communists were regarded by the Nazis as far lesser evil than Social Democrats is a fact. This was subtly interpreted by Eric Hoffer, who also placed much emphasis on what he termed the interchangeability of mass movements, roughly, this is much the same phenomenon, which Orwell described as transferred nationalism. Hoffer showed black on white how easily and naturally some Russian and East-Central European Jews moved from Communism to Zionism (and the other way around), or how complementary were Communism and National Socialism.[7]

[7] See Hoffer, E. *The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements.* New York: Time, 1963. For obvious reasons, I do not subscribe to many points Hoffer makes in his seminal and provocative essay on hatred and fanaticism

If people deny their primary linguistic and cultural identity, they have to forge a new one. If they feel that they had lost or had not found yet their homeland, they will search for one somewhere else. If they abandon an earthly homeland as such, they are condemned to fabricate an ideology as a substitute for one. Suffice it to recall a most telling hint that Marx drops concerning the proletarian, who has no homeland by definition. The proletarian's guiding principle and salvation come from the otherworldly reality, since he or she represents the home-free class with no attachment to bourgeois/this-worldly values and traditions. This sort of ontological placelessness, cultural homelessness, and historical rootlessness logically lead to an assertion that they have nothing to lose in this world. Instead, they have Communism, which is their real homeland. In fact, it might be suggested that this is much of a modern travesty of early Christianity with its idea of the populus Christianum, i.e., the people in Christ, or a spiritual ensemble of human individuals who become so insofar as they meet in Christ. Yet this is exactly what happens to people within whose minds and souls a kind of dislocation of identity, attachment, and loyalty has taken place. An ideology may become a spiritual Motherland for those who had been deprived of safe attachment to recognizable this-worldly idioms of human connection, and also of a sense of secure existence in a community of collective memory, shared sentiment, and symbolic participation.

This is not to say, however, that we must all be classified like flies, bees, or ants, or that we must all be associated with, and attached to, a once-and-for-all defined culture and community. Modernity denies neither individual identity nor collective identity. A substantial difference between pre-modern and modern conditions is that identity transforms itself from a matter of ascription into one of achievement and free choice. Moreover, modernity attempts to free us from our inherited identity, which is one the central and greatest, although unfulfilled, promises of the brave new world. As Zygmunt Bauman notes,

The modern project promised to free the individual from inherited identity. Yet it did not take a stand against identity as such, against having identity, against having a solid, resilient and immutable identity. It only transformed the identity from a matter of ascription into one of achievement, thus making it an individual task and the individual's responsibility.[8]

Modernity and National Stereotypes

At the same time, the modern individual can work out multiple, open-ended, and communicating identities. We can participate in several cultures or trajectories of consciousness, conceiving of them as complementary with regard to one another, and critically questioning our own primary object of loyalty and culture. This helps understand what has been suppressed in our culture, yet is more developed in other cultures. A presupposition of human incompleteness and of the dialogue-based nature of human awareness and self-comprehension, the principle of the polylogue of identities and cultures seems the most valuable achievement of modern condition. Some scholars stressed the crucial importance of such a phenomenon as postmodern nationalism, which "would allow for and recognize the human quality of openness and the cultural characteristic

written in 1951. Yet a gross oversimplification of the whole matter and some evident historical distortions concerning mass movements and their role in history notwithstanding, *The True Believer* remains a work of exceptional clarity and lucidity. From the standpoint of the incisiveness of his insights into the nature of self-contempt, uncertainty, ambivalence, fanaticism, and hatred, Hoffer's essay has yet to be surpassed in the fields of moral, social, and political philosophy.

[8] Bauman, Z. "Making and Unmaking of Stranger". In Sandro Fridlizius and Abby Peterson, eds., *Stranger or Guest? Racism and Nationalism in Contemporary Europe*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1996, p. 62.

of translucence ... a Milosz-like commitment to one's own nation permeated with a responsiveness to others, a sense of multiple, communicating identities".[9]

At this point, we have to agree with Orwell that it makes no sense to classify human beings as insects, as well as to over-generalize the entire nations as intrinsically good or bad. Such pearls of conventional wisdom as a tendency to describe a Spaniard as a natural-born aristocrat, a Briton as a hypocrite, or Germany as treacherous were ascribed by Orwell to that same kind of divorce of loyalty and moral judgment, a symptom of modern consciousness, which he described as nationalism. As we have witnessed, a sinister propensity to equate much-hated modernity exclusively with the "Jews" or with "America," which is arguably one of the most sinister and dangerous follies of the modern troubled imagination, may lead to far more tragic consequences than sheer stereotyping or the spread of exhausted clichés. It might be suggested, however, that nothing is innocent in the age of intense collective hatred, and that everything begins in political cartoons or literary forgeries and ends in the killing of innocent people.

Yet Orwell seems to have overlooked the fact that national stereotypes may have little to do with hatred. Instead, they appear as a kind of defensive mechanism against the general uncertainty of modernity, which is caused, among other things, by a shocking discovery of so many hitherto unknown modes of living and thinking, all located in societies and cultures different from ours. Stereotyping is likely to originate in our imagination as some sort of safe and comforting, albeit simplistic and naïve, categorization of the world. Under certain circumstances, it may be harmful, but in most cases it is not. Indeed, stereotyping is more of a spontaneously arising impulse to simplify and only then to grasp what looks at first sight as a threatening, insecure, unfamiliar, and diverse world of human thought and action. If so, it may nothing to do with the aforementioned split between identity, or loyalty, and moral judgment. As Leszek Kolakowski observes,

It is a fact seldom noticed that a great deal of our mental universe, our image of the world and of other people, and our reactions to them, is made up of, or caused by, stereotypes. By stereotypes I mean those spontaneously arising quasi-empirical generalizations which, once established in our minds, are almost impossible to shift in the light of subsequent experience. This is a natural and perhaps on the whole beneficial arrangement: stereotypes, of things and people, nations and places, are indispensable to our mental security. This is why, whether they are plausible or half-true or simply false, they tend to survive disproof by experience, unless their effects are obviously harmful. If they are innocuous in their practical effects, they will persist despite the counter-examples thrown up by experience because we feel safer with them than without them: discarding them would impose on us a constant need for vigilance and consign us to a permanent state of mental uncertainty and disarray.[10]

However, the split between identity/loyalty and sound moral judgment is also a trait of the modern moral imagination. Modernity separated fact/truth and value, expertise and human intimacy, innovation and tradition, individual and society. Having said that, the aforementioned gulf between the need for an object of loyalty/belonging and the inability to question that object critically and passionately is a derivative of the chain of those painfully splitting and dichotomizing tendencies that threaten the moral integrity and reflexivity of the modern individual. The gulf

[9] Kavolis, V. "Nationalism, Modernization, and the Polylogue of Civilizations". In *Comparative Civilizations Review*, 25, 1991, p. 136.

[10] Kolakowski, L. *Freedom, Fame, Lying, and Betrayal: Essays on Everyday Life*. Trans. Agnieszka Ko³akowska. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999, p. 139.

between fact and value might well be observed in what Orwell describes as one's unwillingness to see and admit sheer facts. Within the mind of the modern true believer, a fanatical belief in one set of values and ideas is sustained by a positive refusal to admit the existence of other sets of values and ideas. Moreover, a fervent belief in some abstract and distant ideal is accompanied by an equally ardent disbelief in reality. The denial of facts in favor of the hitherto unseen, unexamined, and critically unquestioned phenomenon, which was and continues to be the integral characteristic of the ideological and political fanatic's consciousness, betrays a conflict of mutually exclusive sets of value-and-idea orientations or thought-and-action systems, rather than sheer social pathology.

The striking refusal to rely on the evidence of the senses and of reason, in the age of mass movements and dramatic social change, is, perhaps, a clue to the mystery of fanaticism. As Hoffer put it,

To rely on the evidence of the senses and of reason is heresy and treason. It is startling to realize how much unbelief is necessary to make belief possible. What we know as blind faith is sustained by innumerable unbeliefs. The fanatical Japanese in Brazil refused to believe for years the evidence of Japan's defeat. The fanatical Communist refuses to believe an unfavorable report or evidence about Russia, nor will he be disillusioned by seeing with his own eyes the cruel misery inside the Soviet promised land.[11]

The refusal to accept empirical evidence, in a way, not dissimilar to the way in which a selective and arbitrary historical memory of conservative and radical nationalists works, is the denial of reality and favor of imagination. Reality unable to sustain our belief or support our ideological convictions is not worth existing. Without reservations, it has to be abandoned for the sake of the new reality to come. Such an attitude requires a more or less conscious suppression of a good part of our intellectual and moral sensibilities. Otherwise, the uncertainties and tensions inside us may run too high to remain firm and committed to a holy cause. This sort of mental block and suppression of one's moral sensitivity and common sense in favor of ideology, which by no means bypasses even intelligent people, protects them from unbearable inner contradictions and explosive conflicts with sound reason and conscience, the contradictions and conflicts that may occur at any time. For sound reason and moral sensitivity, in the age of the clash of mutually exclusive, militant, and rigid ideologies or of other symbolic designs of hatred and exclusion, are no longer at a premium. On the contrary, they become a liability.

It throws much light on what Orwell depicts as an astonishing ability to hold two contradictory beliefs or irreconcilable attitudes at the same time. Bloodshed and violence are strongly rejected, but only if they occur on the adversary's side. Violence ceases to be violence, once it is practiced by the "right side"; so does the mass killing of innocent people if it occurs in what is supposed to be a "progressive" country. This is not a plain stereotyping, which allows us to call our adversaries single-minded and homicidal fanatics, reserving the title of patriots and heroes for those who are on our side. This is rather a mental and ideological block of one's human qualities that are vital for human connection and interaction, such as empathic openness, sympathetic understanding, or sheer compassion. These qualities are suppressed insofar as "they," that is, our real or imagined ideological adversaries and political enemies, are concerned. They are fully released instantly when it comes to sympathize with human anguish and pain experienced by "us," that is, on the side of the righteous.

[11] Hoffer, *The True Believer*, *ibid.*, p. 83.

Pacifism and Military Might

Interestingly enough, Orwell suggests that even the pacifist movements are tinged with a tendency to transfer a loyalty and to improvise an identity, both expected to disguise the real attitude of some pacifists to social reality. However astonishing it may sound, that real attitude of some pacifists is nothing but a secret worship of brutal force and successful violence. This allows them to condemn instantly any war casualties inflicted by Britain or America on other countries without mentioning any single crime against humanity committed by China or Russia. A small minority of the adherents of this loosely bound ideology consists of intellectual pacifists solely motivated by hatred of Western democracy and secret admiration for totalitarianism. This is to say that a part of pacifism appears as nothing other than a profound contempt for, and intense hatred of, Western liberal democracy disguised as a humane concern for peace and human life. At the bottom of their hearts, intellectual pacifists of this cut despise Western legalist consciousness, democracy, political institutions, and prose of life as, supposedly, unable to inspire imagination and lacking in something thrilling, romantic, and adventurous. Hence, an idea that political force, if exercised by a liberal democracy, cannot in principle be efficient. Whatever happens in a liberal democracy in terms of its political victories or the demonstration of military might, is to profit the establishment or the bourgeoisie or capitalism. At the same time, violence practiced by a rival ideology or civilization, such as Communism, is efficient, for its purpose is to work out a viable alternative to much-hated Western democracy.

Interestingly, Orwell was not alone in his skepticism about pacifism and other vague social movements in the era of fiercely ideological and violent politics. Showing the origins and the rise of National Socialism, Raymond Aron assessed what he qualified as "the elements of the German fifth column" in the following way:

The fifth column is a typical element of the age of empires. It is recruited mainly among three sorts of men: pacifists, revolted by the material and moral cost of total war who, at the bottom of their hearts, prefer the triumph of an empire to the independent sovereignty of bellicose states; defeatists, who despair of their own country; and ideologues, who set their political faith above their patriotism and submit to the Caesar whose regime and ideology they admire.[12]

It should never be forgotten, however, that such global, all-embracing and exclusive ideologies as National Socialism and Communism functioned as secular religions. Moreover, secular ideocracies were able to manifest themselves as both an Army and a Church. This means that they were able to recruit their adherents from almost every walk of life and from every sector of society, from disenchanted intellectuals, who still felt a strong need for the certainty-emanating value-and-idea systems, to commoners infatuated with modern apocalyptic theories promising the beginning of a new history.[13] At the same time, it makes no sense to over-generalize the modern peace movements portraying them all as motivated either by hatred of the West accompanied by secret admiration for ideological and political adversaries of Western democracies or by latent adoration of brutal political force and violence. What Orwell achieved with the stroke of genius

[12] Aron, R. *The Century of Total War*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1959, p. 44.

[13] In addition to the aforementioned book by Aron, the following book is of great importance in studying totalitarianism as a secular and all-embracing religion, or ideocracy: Aron, R. *Democracy and Totalitarianism*. Trans. Valence Ionescu. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1968.

was, instead, his emphasis placed on spontaneously improvised attachments, transferred loyalties, and fabricated identities, all conceived of as a part of the hidden logic of hatred. Orwell's criticism of ideological forgeries implies that very seldom is hatred straight and obvious; instead, it prefers to walk in disguise. What results from this kind of the hidden logic and metaphysics of hatred is that hatred tends to masquerade as love and compassion, love of peace and humanity, or compassion for the weak, underprivileged, oppressed, and dispossessed.

One more lesson of great importance that we can learn from Orwell's "Notes on Nationalism" is that disenchanted, isolated, and alienated intellectuals tend to succumb to those transferable and dislocated identities much easier and much more frequently than common people. In the age of mass movements, independent, skeptical, and critical thought is no longer at a premium; instead, it becomes a liability. Since intellectuals, by virtue of being at odds with mundane forms of earthly attachment, are able to translate their needs for roots and home into ideological and political fidelity to imagined communities of virtue, they eventually lose their ability to be at peace with common sense. Common sense is a valuable quality of common people, who, precisely because of their natural skepticism to things disconnected from mundane reality, are much more immune to fanaticism and hatred. Hence, Orwell's merciless irony in his caustic remark about those British intellectuals, who confidently stated that the American troops had been brought to Europe not to fight the Germans but to crush an English revolution, and who sincerely believed this to have been the case. Only those who belong to the intelligentsia are able to believe things like that, concludes Orwell. In his view, no ordinary man could be such a fool. Orwell's mistrust for intellectuals, as we shall see, reaches its climax in his portrayal, in 1984, of the character O'Brien, a sinister mental technician dwelling far beyond good and evil, Oceania's top specialist in brainwashing and indoctrination, and a modern equivalent of the Grand Inquisitor.

This sort of loosely bound and flexible morality comes into being along with the aforementioned ideological blocks of sensitivity. Since our ideological commitment may be jeopardized by the fact that other flesh-and-blood human beings suffer bloodshed, torture, or other calamities, the only attitude at hand that can prevent us from inflicting pain or suffering on our fellow human beings is the denial of the facts of their suffering. Such a refusal to believe in politically inconvenient or otherwise harmful facts can be successfully combined with a propensity to deprive our enemies of their human traits. This mechanism of self-defense, or rather self-inflicted moral blindness, betrays the compensatory and defensive nature of hatred: hatred appears as the outcome of our self-contempt and suppressed sense of guilt. The same might be said about rage, which is an inevitable consequence of the suppressed sense of shame.[14] In the light of this, it becomes more or less comprehensible why even highly qualified scholars and sophisticated intellectuals can deny the Holocaust. It also sheds much light on why anti-semitism can be so intense and strong in Central and East European countries where there are no Jews left yet where the Holocaust occurred in conjunction with a strong support of local governments or even an active participation of local population.[15]

Orwell tells a most telling wartime story about how the liberal News Chronicle published, as an example of shocking barbarity, photographs of Russians hanged by the Germans. A couple of years later, they published, with warm approval, almost the same photographs with the only difference that this time it was Germans hanged by the Russians. Another example was the Star,

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[14] For more on this issue, see: Scheff, Th.J. and Retzinger, S.M. *Emotions and Violence: Shame and Rage in Destructive Conflicts.* Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1991.

[15] For more on the theory of two genocides and on the theory of symmetry in Lithuanian and Jewish sufferings, both disguised forms of modern Lithuanian antisemitism, see Donskis, *Identity and Freedom*, *ibid*.

which published with approval photographs of nearly naked female collaborationists being bated by the Paris mob. Orwell was deeply disturbed by the astonishing similarity of these photographs to the Nazi photographs of Jews being baited by the Berlin mob. This is to say that what had been initially perceived as an example of shocking barbarity, miraculously turned into a virtuous thing only because it had been done in the right cause.

History as a continuous record of heroic deeds is manufactured in much the same manner. Modern intellectuals celebrate the Inquisition, Sir Francis Drake skinning Spanish prisoners alive, the Reign of Terror, the heroes of the Mutiny blowing Indians from the guns, or Cromwell's soldiers slashing Irish women's faces with razors, without giving much consideration to atrocities in Russia, China, Spain, Mexico, or Hungary. A selective perception of history and politics is related not only to a widespread tendency to employ a double standard when dealing with "our" and "their" roles in history, but also to an astonishing ability to decide whether some historical events happened, resting such a decision solely on political predilection. History, thus, turns into a kind of irresponsible play of imagination of a partisan social actor, who sees in history what he or she wants to see and who builds, in his or her imagination, the monuments to his or her imagined communities of truth and virtue.

Origins of Fanaticism

However, the question remains, what is the origin of fanaticism? Orwell, as well as several other perceptive writers, pointed to the general uncertainty and failure to understand what is really happening in the world as an inciting invitation, extended to the most confused, scared, or frustrated modern individuals, to cling to lunatic beliefs. The fact generally acknowledged by all major social philosophers and sociologists of today is that modernity destroyed the old certainties without providing any new workable, normative, prescriptive, and imperative designs of selfhood. To create such a design of selfhood for oneself, without any assistance from an observable and unshakably reliable source, such as solid cultural tradition or enduring and change-immune faith, seems unbearably difficult, if not impossible, for those who are not at home in a world of modern self-making and self-discovery. Hence, a desperate need for beliefs, theories, or practices that promise to fight uncertainty and also to revive the neglected symbols and forgotten values. Hatred comes to such a disturbed soul as a promise of the restoration of certainty. The modern world, too complex and threatening to figure out what kind of values has to be taken seriously and what kind of ideas has to be credited, all of a sudden becomes transparent and clear. The image of an enemy restores our faith in ourselves as capable of supporting the right cause, the holy cause, the righteous and virtuous as against the vicious, spoiled, and incomprehensible. An enemy is what we can place beyond our reach and understanding. In so doing, we identify what is beyond our reach and understanding with what is uncertain inside us. At this point, hatred always comes from our self-contempt and self-hatred. Our enemies are nothing other than what we hate in ourselves the most, and what we externalize, projecting it onto the most familiar, though the least comprehensible, idiom of otherness. As Hoffer notes,

Are the frustrated more easily indoctrinated than the non-frustrated? Are they more credulous? Pascal was of the opinion that "one was well-minded to understand holy writ when one hated oneself." There is apparently some connection between dissatisfaction with oneself and a

proneness to credulity. The urge to escape our real self is also an urge to escape the rational and the obvious. The refusal to see ourselves as we are develops a distaste for facts and cold logic.[16]

Our willingness to sink our identity in some mysterious bodies of ideas or of "the spirit of the people" may be related to a considerable extent to our dissatisfactions, disappointments, personal failures, or overall alienation from modern society and culture. However, the question remains, why people can so easily transpose or reverse their attitudes and beliefs? For instance, how is it possible that an ardent patriot of Great Britain suddenly slips into Anglophobia (or the other way around)? Why and how can a seemingly sober-minded and skeptical intellectual turn into an enthusiastic adherent of other countries, cultures, religions, and political institutions? According to Orwell, British writers who might best exemplify the ability to transform oneself from an Anglophobe into someone violently pro-British were F. A. Voigt, Malcolm Muggeridge, Evelyn Waugh, Hugh Kingsmill, and, to some extent, T. S. Eliot and Wyndham Lewis. The intellectual who turned out to have been able to suppress his democratic sensibilities in favor of an opposing worldview was G.K. Chesterton described by Orwell as a writer of considerable talent who chose to suppress his sensibilities and intellectual honesty in the cause of Roman Catholic propaganda. This led him so far as to glorify every walk of life in largely idealized, if not imagined, France, or to admire Mussolini's Italy, a variety of transferred loyalty, which Orwell describes as political Catholicism. A true hater of jingoism and imperialism, and a true friend of democracy in home politics, Chesterton failed to find a word against imperialism and the conquest of colored races practiced by Italians or Frenchmen. Nor did he ever mention the fact that Mussolini had simply destroyed freedom and democracy in Italy.

Chesterton's case is particularly instructive when thinking of transferred loyalties and fabricated identities as one of the basic characteristics of the modern troubled imagination. The modern/troubled moral imagination appears to be unable to reconcile the conflicting sets of values and ideas, and also incapable of a truly workable universalistic pattern of worldview. It appears to be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to be a political liberal and a religious conservative at the same time. How to reconcile one's being a dedicated patriot of Britain and being a devout Roman Catholic? Or how about being an East-Central European nationalist and also a skeptical liberal cosmopolitan? How to combine fidelity and doubt, value and truth, imagination and reality? Organized religion is unable to show the way out, since religion itself increasingly becomes politically exploited or otherwise abused by modern barbarians. At best, it becomes politically neutral, if not to say marginal, in the modern world.

We have to admit that ethical universalism, or secular humanism, is far from a universally appealing answer, too. First and foremost, ethical universalism, so potent a form of social and cultural criticism, is placed in jeopardy or simply put aside in the time of trouble or in the era of ideological clashes. Within the framework of the modern moral/troubled imagination, nothing is durable and nothing is lasting. Ethical universalism may come, to a weak and disturbed modern individual, as much too big a challenge and also as too great a disappointment, for it offers neither prescriptive designs of thought and action nor the way out of a world of unbearable tensions, ambiguities, and uncertainties. Instead, it takes every human individual as, ultimately, the only agent of reason and conscience capable of moral choice. Sadly, this apparently appears as too weak

[16] Hoffer, *The True Believer*, ibid., p. 86. It is important that Hoffer defines clearly the term "frustrated," which is not used in his book as a clinical term. In ibid., p. 179, he writes that "it denotes here people who, for one reason or another, feel that their lives are spoiled or wasted."

a basis for decisive action and also for a workable identity, no matter whether ethnic, political, or cultural (as we have seen, they may be interchangeable).

Apparently, a society or culture in crisis inevitably reveals itself through individual consciousness in crisis. One such manifestation of culture in crisis is what was termed by Vytautas Kavolis the ambiguous person. Kavolis notes that a number of human beings quite frequently reveal, for themselves, their psychic ambiguity, although they become absolutely clear and unambiguous in forming or at least influencing behavior and stances of other human beings. In Kavolis's opinion, the ambiguous person especially longs for the intense experiences: this kind of the striving for intensity, which is psychoanalytically identifiable and exploitable, jeopardizes not only the personality of the ambiguous man/woman but the entire modern consciousness and culture as well. According to Kavolis,

Where the striving for intensity prevails, the authoritarian style in both thinking and decision-making predominates quite often, even when the conscious contents of the thought are libertarian: let's take, for example, Marcuse or the Living Theater. The intensity seekers quite naturally tend to think in polarities contrasting "truth" to "error," or "virtue" to "meanness," instead of searching for some missing links and nuances. Those nuances represent nothing other but the psychic ambiguity in their character, which they consider unbearable and try to repress with arbitrary, though "real," moments of intensity. This is why they, even in demanding the freedom of choice, expect others to choose their way to be free or even their way to conceive of freedom. The dogmatic demands to the world spring from the inner ambiguity of personality. One can be preserved by the vigorous terms from one's inner decomposition. (Psychoanalysts identified this mechanism in the earlier, more or less romantic, Russian revolutionaries.) Dogmatism is the mechanical stabilization of the ambiguous man, rather than the organic one springing from the depth of his personality. (Yet this kind of protective armor, deep inside the ambiguous man, sooner or later comes to crack down and destroy either the ambiguous man himself or others).[17]

One of the possible implications of Kavolis's thought would be that the ambiguous person, being incapable of analytically grasping and critically questioning him/herself, eventually comes to misrepresent social reality itself, projecting on it those painful elements of his/her personality and experience that are too hard for him/her to understand or to eliminate from him/herself. (It would be some kind of dogmatism, which springs from the cognitive dissonance.) Therefore, if "the dogmatic demands to the world spring from the inner ambiguity of personality," dogmatism itself is an illusion of the clear standpoint and transparent thought.

One's striving for intensity, in one's milieu, betrays one's inability to critically analyze oneself or human reality as it is, before its enchantment with some kind of ideological magic, ideocratic formulas, carnal and psychic experiments, and the like. The dogmatic/ambiguous person is incapable of critically analyzing at all; he/she is capable of creating only gloomy prophecies or of symbolically excommunicating those who are considered to be a threat to the body social and its nearly mystical coherence. When the quest for enemies comes to replace the critical analysis, his/her troubled imagination easily provides a group-target. Hence, a strong need for the conspiracy theory. Combined with a kind of self-inflicted moral blindness, block of moral

[17] Kavolis, V. "Neaiškumo patologijos" [The Pathologies of Ambiguity]. In Virginijus Gasiliûnas, ed., *Metmenø laisvieji svarstymai: 1959–1989* [Free Debates of the *Metmenys*: 1959–1989]. Vilnius: Lietuvos raðytojø sàjungos leidykla, 1993, p. 126. For more on Kavolis' concept of human ambiguity, see Donskis, L. *The End of Ideology and Utopia? Moral Imagination and Cultural Criticism in the Twentieth Century.* New York: Peter Lang, 2000.

sensitivity, refusal to accept reality, and distaste for cold logic and facts, the conspiratorial view of the world provides the necessary type of reasoning and amoral logic in finding an indispensable group target. If we refuse to believe in the infallibility of the Party or the Leader, or in the holiness of our cause, we will always link any sort of infamous things or violent politics practiced on our side to an imagined group target. Such a group target, as we have seen, is just a negative double of the imagined community of virtue and truth we identify with. The imagined community we love can be sustained in our imagination only by projecting its awful political practices and disgraceful manipulations onto the imagined community we hate. This is why the conspiracy theory will always survive any political regime, moral culture, or type of government. Whatever its guise and whatever its origin in a given society, the conspiracy theory is a ready-made answer to all politically or morally inconvenient questions. Indeed, the fanatic without the conspiracy theory at hand sounds as an oxymoron; and so does the dogmatic/ambiguous person without one.

Orwell's notes on the anatomy of collective hatred make several points of crucial importance. First and foremost, the designs of ideological faith, resentment, and hatred are interchangeable. Political and ideological loyalties are transferable. Identities are movable, changeable, and renewable. All of these things become possible not only because of the manipulative modern politics, cynical brainwashing, or propaganda. It is exactly the other way around that we could formulate this: manipulations, brainwashing, and propaganda can become truly efficient only in the epoch of transferred loyalties and fabricated identities. They would never have worked, say, in Medieval or Renaissance Europe. The phenomena of transferred loyalties, fabricated identities, and interchangeability of mass movements perfectly match the criteria of what Ernest Gellner described as human modularity. In his view, modular person, capable of adjusting him/herself to any kind of social arrangement or political setting, and also able to enter or terminate any association without being open to the charge of treason, is a highly ambivalent creation of modernity. He/she is so, since human modularity is equally indispensable for both civil society and nationalism, everything depends here on which direction it takes and what kind of politics it enters. As an expression of modern human flexibility and freedom of change or adjustment, it may well serve as a necessary condition of civil liberties. Yet it also may be instrumental in shaping nationalist movements with great risks involved. Fabrication of human loyalty, object of attachment, identity, and personality, the corner stone of a mass anonymous society, turns out to be one of the most ambivalent and unpredictable forces of modernity.[18]

Second, Orwell's thoughts throw new light on why and how, for instance, western Marxists and ideological/political Russophiles may well be regarded if not as brothers in faith, then at least as brothers in the dramatic loss of their initial identities and objects of loyalty. The loss of an initial object of individual love, loyalty, attachment, and memory anticipates the coming of the forged objects of collective love and hatred. If we begin to forge an interpretive framework for mobile and easily adjustable truth, and also to foster a design of selfhood, which allows room for nothing but transferable loyalties and interchangeable or otherwise fabricated identities, we shall sooner or later end up in an ideocracy. We will inevitably lose our traditions, favorite little things, friends, families, and, finally, language and memory. We will lose what makes us human beings – identity, freedom, and sensitivity. Having sacrificed faith, history, and culture to the glory of the phantoms of the troubled imagination, we will inexorably end up in an awful travesty of Truth, Liberty, Equality, and Justice.

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[18] For more on Gellner's concept of human modularity, see Gellner, E. "The Importance of Being Modular". In John A. Hall, ed., *Civil Society: Theory, History, Comparison* Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995, pp. 32–55; Gellner, E. *Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and Its Rivals*. London: Penguin Books, 1996.

Such was Orwell's warning to humanity after World War II. And we would simply deceive ourselves by stating that this warning is out of date in our days.

Chapter V

Postmodernism, Capitalism, and Regressive History in the Post-soviet Areality

Audrone Zukauskaite

Heterotopias, Utopias, Ectopias

The abnormality of a totalitarian regime always suggests the idea of reflecting on the situation which would have taken place if historical processes could had flown 'naturally', without external violence and constraint. This nostalgic idea is characteristic of the Eastern mentality and always takes a form of regret and a passion for monuments, archives and funeral rituals. Unfortunately, these symbolical forms can only supplement, but cannot replace the Soviet past. Some traumatic social groups are doing 'the work of mourning', what means they perceive themselves as an object, and not as a subject of past events. The 'work of mourning' takes the form of chronic indisposition and has the power to repeat itself at any time and in any context.

A different strategy – to perceive continuity of time and to acknowlegde social change – is also a challenge. Soviet and post-Soviet contexts are incomparable; they lack continuity and common social space. Because of the lack of a present, the post-Soviet areality is often considered as intrinsically postmodern – either it is oriented towards the past, as mentioned earlier, or it neglects the present for the sake of future tasks. This means that cultural and social events lack a place and time of their own. They seem to be not simply utopian, because they do take place, but heterotopian. Heterotopias, according to M. Foucault, are the mixed sites, which do take place, but at the same time refer to some other place or reality. For example, the mirror does exist in reality, but at the same time it takes us to the unreal or virtual space that opens up behind the surface. We also know from Foucault that heterotopias are most often linked to heterochronies – 'slices in time'.[1]

Heterotopias and heterochronies produce symbolic events; besides and regardless of the fact that they do take place, their status is purely imaginary or symbolic. These "areals" are a-real or non-real; they avoid the "face of reality". One example among others is the institution, which obliged to control the equality of opportunity between men and woman in Lithuania, takes it's task literally. If it is written in littera that some corporation wants to hire a man, though a violation of equal rights, a man is hired – it is considered as a correct and legal act. So we are reserving the term of areality for these events, which exist or persist only nominally. The concept of "areal" can be explained by contrasting it with the concept of utopia. Utopia usually means good things, which have no place (u-topos); on the contrary, "areals" do take place, but have no essence of their own.

But should everything have an appropriate time and place? Should everything have a proper essence? Referring to J.-L. Nancy's term of ectopia (which means deviation in a medical sense), we can theoretically construct and empirically detect situations, which do take same sort of deviations as a norm. Soviet and post-Soviet areality provide a great number of examples: we can state the disproportionate deviations of the social (class differences and antagonism) into the sphere of private life. Postmodern consumer society extends the limits of the social to such extent

[1] Foucault, M. "Of Other Spaces". In *The Visual Culture Reader*. Ed. by Nicholas Mirzoeff. London and New York: Routledge, 1998, pp. 239–242.

that the notion of privacy or intimacy loses any content. Vice versa: such a ‘private’ domain as desire is displaced (ektopos) into the social sphere. Deviations can be detected and reflected not only in the spatial, but also in the temporal sphere: for example, the common sense of temporal continuity (chronology) in post-Soviet areality is displaced by chronic past repetitions which produce some sort of ‘originary delay’.

Postmodernity, Antagonism, and Desire

The first type of deviations, detected in social/private domains, is related to a different understanding of the social and changing notions of subjectivity in postmodern discourse. Postmodern consumer society, according to J. Baudrillard, erases social differences and marks – social hierarchy and order disappears in the flow of consuming. The shift from modern society to postmodern, from industrial society to consumer society means for Baudrillard "the death of the social". To use another worn-out slogan – "society doesn’t exist", it is replaced by horizontal market relations. We can even say that in some respect consumer society has fulfilled the main fantasy of socialism: it has attempted to erase class differences and antagonism. Here we see how two different political regimes, incomparable and incompatible, paradoxically produce the same meaning. Of course, this meaning is represented by different signifiers: consumer society reduces class differences by affirming any individual‘s equal ability to consume, whereas socialism reduces class differences affirming everyone equal ability to take part in the process of production, and to possess the means of production as well as the goods produced.

How in this context can we describe our recent post-socialist condition? Of course, this condition is heterotopical, it is mixed of different ideologies and social forms. As E. Laclau suggests, "the principle of contradiction does not apply to society and that, as a result, somebody can be and not be in the same place at the same time".[2] This is why the post-socialist condition can be described as an evident contradiction: on the one hand, the dominant ideology is that of late capitalist consumerism, which urges us to find our freedom, self-confidence and self-esteem in consuming or by the way of consuming. Unfortunately, this ideology addresses very poor people, belonging to the social class which still owns the means of production. They are producing some goods for themselves and by themselves, for example, growing vegetables or making clothes. So when we detect the inability of post-Soviet society to take the "virtue of consuming" for granted, the question here is not about the Soviet mentality, as is often said, but about contradictory and incompatible ideologies. Contradictory are not only ideologies, but also social realities, there Soviet poverty still persists besides the surplus of goods.

This is one of the reasons why our post-Soviet or postmodern society is torn by class differences and antagonism. Antagonism here means not only ‘normal’ antagonism, existing between different social classes, but also antagonism, which is spread between different social conditions or formations. It seems as if the Titanic, which symbolically went down together with all existing class differences, reappeared again and is playing its drama. Speaking about the contradiction or incompatibility between these ideologies, it should be noted that the consumerist ideology has the capacity to justify even its failure, to give rational reason for someone’s inability to consume. As the title of the largest trading network in Lithuania suggests – consuming is for everyone, only to a different extent: for some – *Maxima*, for others – *Minima*.

[2] Laclau, E. *Emancipation(s)*. London and New York: Verso, 1996, p. 6.

In this context, contrary to Baudrillard, we can state that "the social" never disappears, still more, everything becomes social. Every single detail, every single act of our everydayness is socially connoted and carries ideological baggage. Such notions as privacy, intimacy or even the secret belong to the domain of the imaginary, because in consumerist ideology they lose any content. Privacy and intimacy have no value beyond social exchange. What can be more intimate that an act of taking a shower in your own bathroom? Helas, after using *Shiseido* body cream you are not lonely any more – you are producing a socially connoted act. This is not only because you are using a commodity, in this case body cream, but because by this single act you are entering the symbolical discourse of taking care of yourself, of enjoyment and of consuming your own personality.

In that way the consumerist ideology is inseparable from the notion of desire. Desire – besides class antagonism and differences – is another characteristic of our "postmodern condition". Desire here means a strictly objective and social inclination, and has nothing to do with sexuality in the Freudian sense. J. Lacan was the first to describe desire as an intersubjective and social relation; desire means not the desire for the Other, but Other's desire, the ability of the big Other to desire with us and instead of us. It is not by accident that commodities become the common point of desire, for the commodities hold everyone together as the object of common attraction. We can even say that the desire for consuming represses or sublimates sexuality as Freud describes it; the desire for consuming is stronger than *libido*. Some theoreticians even insist that commodity may become the basis for a purer kind of love.[3] For example, the family institution would have disappeared long ago if there didn't exist this possibility of common consuming.

Aporethically, this common desire for consuming simultaneously produces different effects of meaning: on the one hand, consuming produces class differences and antagonism, on the other hand – it produces longing for the sameness. "It is the *sameness*, ... that is the only common point of desire in the postmodern world", – insist D. MacCannel and J. Flower MacCannel.[4] This means that the new opposition between difference and identity replaces classical opposition between difference and sameness. If identity is constituted by the act of reflection, sameness is performed by the act of imitation. Imitation or *mimesis* never produces an identity, but only repetition and redublication of the imaginary prototype. The commodity is some kind of *simuliacrum*, which helps to satisfy this need for sameness, but at the same time produces new desires and new lacks – as a matter of fact, the "object" of sameness is never complete in itself.

The notion of sameness takes us to the realm of the imaginary: on the one hand, as we mentioned earlier, sameness can be performed only by means of imitation or *mimesis*; on the other hand, the prototype of miming is also imaginable, created by fantasy and imagination. It is often suggested that the expansion of the imaginary and the deflation of the Real is a recent historical event marking a transition from the industrial to consumerism, or modern to postmodern society. Unfortunately, we can not take this position for granted, because we are not able to affirm or to describe the "objective reality", which – as is suggested – preexists the imaginary one. So in order to avoid this classical opposition between imaginary and "the real" we prefer to speak about the areality of sameness.

This longing for sameness is always related to some kind of place: marketplace (commodity as sameness), TV shows (sameness in life styles), European Union (political and economical sameness), historical monuments and reconstructions (national sameness). These areals of

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[3] MacCannel, D. MacCannel, J.F. Social class in postmodernity. Simulacrum or return of the Real? In *Forget Baudrillard?* Ed. by Ch. Rojek and B.S. Turner. London and New York: Routledge, 1993, p. 135.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 134.

sameness do take place, but by their essence they are *a*-real, *non*-real or imaginary. Areals function like empty signifiers; they lack any fixed content or signified. As E. Laclau says, „the empty signifiers is not a being which has not been *actually* realized, but one which is constitutively unreachable ... That is, we are faced with a constitutive lack, with an impossible object which, as in Kant, shows itself through the impossibility of its adequate representation".[5] Because no one signifier can represent some content adequately, each one of them can be easily replaced by another: a commodity (for example, ice cream) supports art; artists support the reconstruction of historical monuments (Ruler's Palace, for example); historical monuments and their reconstructions approve our belonging to European values and traditions, our sameness with European areality.

A Regressive History

In this context frequent "escapes to history" should declare our aspiration to authenticity, opposing it to the devaluation of the marketplace. Unfortunately, this kind of authenticity functions like a commodity and also can be performed only by means of miming, imitation, and of making a copy. The project for rebuilding the Ruler's Palace is a good example: on a TV show, one of the initiators of this project was asked, – if the exact rebuilding is impossible because of the lack of information, what is the aim of this reconstruction, if we know beforehand that we are making kitsch? The answer was sincere: we know it is kitsch, but the same thing was done in Warsaw. So the areals of authenticity function like empty signifiers, where each of them can be easy replaced by another: one social group attains its authenticity by rebuilding the Ruler's Palace, another by building pagan stone altars (we can only guess about their source of information), another by buying furniture in Biedermeier style. In this case we should stress not the concrete reasons, why one and not the other content captures the place of empty signifier, but the contingent and temporal nature of every dominant signifier.

In this context we can state another type of ectopia(s) or deviations, which are related with our inability to perceive time's chronology, to conceive the present with all it's strangeness and without knowing the consequences of recent events. This common sense of temporal continuity in post-Soviet areality is displaced by diachronic past repetitions, which produce some sort of temporal delay. Nevertheless, these repetitions do not coincide with the habitual ability of consciousness to remember, to recollect, or to recall. In the moment of recollection, our past is 'alive', but we never stop realizing its imaginary nature. Here we see the sort of consciousness in which past fantasies not only are taken for the present moment, but are perceived it as future task. This description suits some traumatic social groups (II WW veterans, immigrants) as well as the dominant ideology, which takes as it's task the rebuilding of the lost paradise (the Ruler's Palace included). Even in making our future projects we always go „*back* to the future", this means, we conceive our future through 'original delay'.

This inability to conceive the 'live present', to comprehend the present moment psychoanalytically can be described as the 'work of mourning'. It is a 'normal' psychical reaction to the state of loss or lack, when the subject identifies himself with the lost object and takes himself as the object of present loss or lack. The lost object continues it's life in the 'work of mourning'; it reproduces itself in funeral rituals, monuments, archives. So the 'work of mourning' could be described as a relatively 'normal' reaction to the subjects/objects of the totalitarian regime (if we have in mind the Soviet context) or to some traumatic social groups, when speaking about the post-

[5] Laclau, E. *Emancipation(s).* London and New York: Verso, 1996, pp. 39–40.

Soviet context. But it becomes evidently ectopical in the context of a young liberal democracy. What is the object of its loss? What are we mourning for? Why do we need to build the monument for our State (Ruler's Palace), instead of building the State? Is it that we find our situation unique or do we want to prove that the State still exists?

Let's take another example, which I owe to historian E. Raila: Vilnius University preferred to build a new door for the University's Library as a monument for the first Lithuanian book. Actually the door has never been opened and was never intended to serve that purpose: it's design and function (or non-function) suggests that it is not a door, but a tombstone.[6] Vilnius University preferred a decent burial for the first book instead of buying new books for the University's Library or publishing new ones. How can we interpret this desire for tombstones and monuments? Isn't it just one example among others, which proves our belonging to "the death culture", or to take things psychoanalytically, – our desire for death? Or is it the desire for identification, for stable forms and defined places, which compensate the obscure and uncertain contours of the present condition? Maybe this desire for identification is the only possible way to fill the lack of social, historical or cultural identities?

This desire for identification can be interpreted as a reaction to sameness, which replaces identities by way of imitation, of making a copy. As we said earlier, the product of sameness functions like a commodity, even if it represents intellectual or cultural values. In this respect the act of identification creates some unique relationship with the object: as we see, a tombstone or a monument is some kind of a Thing, which incorporates a unique – authorized – relationship with it and guarantees our privileged position. As such, the Thing belongs to the domain of „the real": it disrupts the infinite process of miming and gives way to *jouissance*; it satisfies our desire.

On the other hand, isn't the Thing the exact place, which attaches us – although indirectly – to the present moment? Could the present be comprehended otherwise? We always need some detour and it always takes some delay in order to grasp the present moment. In this case the inability to grasp the present, which is characteristic to the post-Soviet mentality, can be described as a 'normal' state of things. Ectopia(s) or deviations in this context acquire a positive meaning: post-Soviet areality is by definition ectopical, lacking its proper essence and defined place. Although on an anatomical map ectopia(s) represent some deviations or even pathology, in textual anatomy, which is called rhetoric, displacements are interpreted as a source of innovation and art. This is why our topical interpretation of ectopia(s) depends on the way we perceive our post-Soviet areality – as an anatomical body or as a text.

[6] Raila, E. "Letter to the Editor. On the City of the Dead". In *Naujasis Židinys*, nr. 6, 2001, p. 289.

Chapter VI
Nihilism and Weak Thought

Rita Serpytyte

The *weak thought* (*il pensiero debole*) is an expression which was first used in the beginning of 90's by a contemporary Italian philosopher, Gianni Vattimo, in one of his articles. However this expression very soon (as Vattimo himself claims in *To Believe in Believing*, 1996) became the name not only for a collection of articles and, later, for an issue of a periodical but also for of all Italian postmodernism represented by Vattimo, Amoroso, Carchia, Comolli, Costa, Crespi, Dal Lago, Eco, Ferraris, Marconi etc. Even more, today it is the name of a philosophical position and thought. Nowadays *weak thought* became a philosophical paradigm. The goal of my article is not to clarify whether the *weak thought* is a philosophical movement or a specific mode of contemporary thought, but to discuss the philosophical position of the *weak thought* represented by Vattimo himself.

What is the *weak thought*? What kind of the disposition of thought is supposed in the adjective *weak* which from the first sight could hardly go as an attribute to the noun *thought*. Yet this word combination is how Vattimo called his philosophical position. The exposition of the program of his position was first presented in *The End of Modernity* (1985), which consists of separate articles which during the previous years had been published in periodicals. Later this position was re-discussed and re-specified in order to reveal it's new and unexpected aspects, as well as to indicate and to solve separate problems from the position of the *weak thought*.

The anti-metaphysical view of Nietzsche was conditioned by the horizon of Heidegger's thought. It is easily distinguishable as a formal feature of this thought in comparison with other postmodern thinkers (Rorty, Derrida). Here it seems rather to be one of similarity than of originality for the essence of the *weak thought* is to be sought by responding to the question of what these formal features hide.

Why Nietzsche and Heidegger?

In his preface to *The End of Modernity* Vattimo says that this book was dedicated to elucidate the relationship between the outcome of Nietzsche's and Heidegger's thoughts and the discourse on the end of Modernity and Postmodernism. Only the discussion about the post-modern relationship with Nietzsche's theme of eternal recurrence and Heidegger's position of the overcoming of metaphysics could reveal the peculiarities of post-modern thought. Both these philosophical insights are important as they can not be reduced to the simple *Kulturkritik* which pervaded the philosophical thought until the 20th century. Thus Vattimo considers both Heidegger's critique of humanism and Nietzsche's announcement of an accomplished nihilism as "'positive' moments for a philosophical reconstruction, and not merely as symptoms and declarations of decadence".[1] It can be clearly seen in the preface to the mentioned book that the *post-modern* relationship that Vattimo keeps with Nietzsche and Heidegger is the same attitude that these thinkers established in regard to the heritage of European thought. Despite all the

[1] Vattimo, G. *The End of Modernity*. *Nihilism and Hermeneutics in Postmodern Culture*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991, p. 1.

differences, Vattimo indicates in their thought a *common* point of view which opens the perspective in which the essential feature of European thought becomes clear: European thought is merged with an idea of history. Namely Hegel's historicism leads philosophy to evaluate the former heritage in view of a demand for its critical overcoming (*Aufhebung*); the Enlightenment's idea of progress now is directed against philosophy itself. According Vattimo, "from the point of view of Nietzsche and Heidegger […] modernity is in fact dominated by the idea that the history of thought is a progressive 'enlightenment' which develops through an ever more complete appropriation and re-appropriation of its own 'foundations'. These are often also understood as 'origins', so that the theoretical and practical revolutions of Western history are presented and legitimated for the most part as 'recoveries', rebirths, or returns (recurrences). The idea of 'overcoming', which is so important in all modern philosophy, understands the course of thought as being progressive development in which the new is identified with value through the mediation of the recovery and appropriation of the foundation-origin".[2] In this case Nietzsche's and Heidegger's positions are united by a refusal of the critical overcoming or progressive development of the former philosophical heritage. The other aspect of this attitude is its "anti-foundationalism". Vattimo says: "Precisely the notion of foundation, and of thought both as foundation and means of access to a foundation, is radically interrogated by Nietzsche and Heidegger".[3] The rejection of Hegel's ideas of historicism and foundationalism is the factor that, according Vattimo, can define the post-modern point of view. This attitude is complicated enough as, on the one hand, it is necessary to take up a critical distance from Western thought insofar as it is foundational; on the other hand, there is no possibility to criticize Western thought in the name of another, "truer foundation". And this is a critical situation in which Vattimo finds both Nietzsche, Heidegger and himself. However, are Nietzsche's and Heidegger's anti-historicism and anti-foundationalism *the same*? Or maybe that identity of Nietzsche's and Heidegger's positions is the identity seen by the eyes of Vattimo? The identity that defines the position represented by Vattimo himself, i.e. the post-modern position of the *weak thought*?

Vattimo appeals constantly to Nietzsche *and* Heidegger, not only in describing his starting point but also in formulating the philosophical problems that emerges in the horizon of his thought. Frequently, when indicating the sources of his thought, he will refer to Nietzsche, Heidegger and Christianity. The latter sounds paradoxical and even shocking. But the second enables us to understand the first one, that is to find the point from which the identity of Nietzsche's and Heidegger's thought is revealed.

In his *To Believe in Believing* Vattimo seeks to justify himself for setting the background on this strange combination: Nietzsche, Heidegger *and* Christianity. According to his words, he prefers these two thinkers "and (or even especially) because" their propositions seem to accord harmonically with the "religious, and specifically Christian, substratum which remained alive" also in Vattimo himself. "I return to think about Christianity, because I constructed a philosophy inspired by Nietzsche and Heidegger and in its light I interpreted my experience in the actual world; most probably I constructed this philosophy with a preference of these authors because I started to move from this Christian heritage, which, it seems, I discover now, but which, in fact, I have never really abandoned".[4] This *circulus vitiosus* is how Vattimo describes his philosophical identity and, to his mind, it is how the relation between our world of the late Modernity and the Christian heritage could be described as well.

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[2] *Ibid*., p. 2.
[3] *Ibid*., p. 2.
[4] Vattimo, G. *Credere di credere*. Milano: Garzanti, 1996, p. 24.

But in which way should we see the Christianity to be able to reveal from its perspective the identity of Nietzsche's and Heidegger's positions? On the other hand, how should we see Nietzsche and Heidegger that the identity of their positions could become the perspective of the interpretation of Christianity? Vattimo does not seek to run away from this circle. This circle in a certain way defines the horizon of his philosophy…

Thought as the History of Being (the Event)

The melting of the idea of history inevitably makes us put a question about the sense of place for our thought, that is whether it is possible to indicate the locality of our thought beyond the idea of history. The post-modern thought of our days considers the definition of its own place in *history* to be very important. Thus we should ask a natural question: on which concept of history is *weak thought* based, after having rejected the idea of history? In the history of thought of the latter two ages the tendency to deny the possibility to base thought on the stable structures of Being as on an immutably true background is easily noted. According to Vattimo, this melting of the stability of Being was only partially carried out in the main philosophical systems of the 19th century. It was only Nietzsche and Heidegger who radicalized this tendency, because they "conceive of Being as an *event*, for both of them it is vitally important, in order to be able to speak of Being, to understand at 'what point' we are, and at 'what point' Being itself is".[5] Thus ontology for Vattimo is "nothing other than the interpretation of our condition or situation, since Being is nothing apart from its 'event', which occurs when it historicizes itself and when we historicize ourselves".[6] The latter proposition of Vattimo is not only the reference point from what he thinks of *weak thought* as ontological hermeneutics, but reference to a certain concept of *historicity* "because firstly Heidegger considers philosophizing and practices it as his own time conceived by thought, as a reflected expression of themes which before belonging to everyday consciousness are the history of Being, the epoch constituting moments".[7] So there is no doubt that the concept of historicity that imposes itself upon Vattimo derives from Heidegger. This concept of historicity is demonstrated comprehensively by Heidegger in regard to Nietzsche's philosophy. To recall Heidegger's thoughts we could notice that he supposed Nietzsche's philosophical thought to be that kind of "knowledge", which "is staying inside the moment opened to our times by the history of Being".[8] The philosophy of Nietzsche, according Heidegger, essentially is an answer to the question "What is being in its Being?". And since the setting of truth about the world of beings is the essence of metaphysics, he considers Nietzsche's philosophy *still* as a moment of the history of metaphysics, and not a step for overcoming metaphysics. Vattimo accepts this position of Heidegger with respect to Nietzsche.

But what kind of relationship does Vattimo keep with Heidegger himself? Defining his position as *weak thought* Vattimo singles out the two ways of "reading" Heidegger. The *weak thought* is the one that in Heidegger's reconstruction of "metaphysics as the history of Being", i.e. the totality of *Ge-schik*, openness, is not able to see only maintenance of the metaphysical difference between Being and being. The thought that takes into its account that the real Being (God) can not be identified with any being, but is settled beyond every being, every name, every

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[5] *The End of Modernity*, p. 3.
[6] *Ibid*.
[7] Vattimo, G. "La traccia della traccia." In Derrida, J. Vattimo, G. (cur.) *Annuario filosofico europeo. La religione*. Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1995.
[8] Heidegger, M. "Evropeiskij nigilizm." In *Vremia i bytie*. Moskva: Respublika, 1993, p. 69.

metaphor, according Vattimo, could only be the "negative theology". That is why it legitimates the infinity of names, metaphors of Being, since the efforts to grasp the real Being (God) are always unsuccessful. Vattimo calls Heidegger's right the interpretation of Heidegger which thinks of the ontological difference in terms of negative theology. That is, if we think that the end of metaphysics opens the way to metaphor and different names of God this means that we read Heidegger as a negative theologian or even as a metaphysician.

But this latter position in regard of Heidegger does not take into serious consideration the real significance of Heidegger's concept of historicity. The left of Heidegger, according Vattimo, is represented by the *weak thought*. This thought both takes into account the ontological difference and fulfils the demand to think "metaphysics as the history of Being". For Vattimo this means to think the ontological difference as the "happening" of weakening, reduction, "continuous farewell", in which "Being consolidates and becomes valuable as far as it liberates itself and withdraws".[9]

From the point of view of *weak thought*, or the left of Heidegger, one of the greatest risks of hermeneutic philosophy that influenced Heidegger's heritage becomes clear, namely, this philosophy legitimates the non-reducible multitude of the images of the world. Cultural relativity, as Vattimo says, is nothing other than the last and more insidious form of the objective metaphysics. It considers all *re-descriptions* (myths, metaphors) to be legitimate ways to represent the world.

From the point of view of the left of Heidegger, the "liberation of metaphor" occurs as the outcome of the process of the conclusion/accomplishment of metaphysics. This process in no way opens the real structures of Being but appears as having significance, showing direction, "giving the guiding thread which leads from the confusion". Heidegger gives the name of a "thread" to the diminution of Being, to its liberation and withdrawal. This "thread", according Vattimo, is the way Being gives itself as a "trace" or "memory".[10]

Thus the *weak thought* is the disposition of thought that knows its limits. It is an idea of thought which rejects the pretensions of global metaphysical visions. If Heidegger's critique of objective metaphysics makes us reject the pretension to create the adequate concept of Being, it becomes necessary to think Being as in no sense able to be identified with a presence which can be attributed to an object.

Vattimo, after many times having called himself as a "debolist", consistently seeks also to read "debolistically" Nietzsche, Heidegger and the Christian heritage. This means that he finds "the guiding thread" in the weakening of firm structures. Vattimo considers the moment of Western metaphysics in which we live as an overcoming of metaphysics which has not yet been concluded.

The History Which Has The Name of Nihilism

On the other hand, the fact that Vattimo finds the end of thread of the history of Being in the weakening of the firm structures of Being means for him that Being has a nihilistic vocation. It means that to reduce, to withdraw, to liberate itself, to weaken is the feature of Being that defines the letting-presence of Being in the epoch of the end of metaphysics. Thus the history of weakening of Being, according Vattimo, is the history of nihilism. The problems of nihilism, for Vattimo, is not historiographical, but *geschichtlich* in the sense of the connection made by Heidegger

[9] Vattimo, G. "Fine del secolo, fine della secolarizzazione?". *In Trascendenza. Trascendentale*. *Esperienza. Biblioteca dell' "Archivio di filosofia",* 12. Padova: CEDAM, 1995, p. 148.
[10] *Ibid*.

between *Geschichte* (History) and *Geschick* (Destiny).[11] Even Heidegger pointed out that nihilism like a move of Western history towards Modernity was firstly recognized by Nietzsche. The same Heidegger, confirming Nietzsche's diagnosis, supposed that Western thought is inevitably to fall in nihilism. Vattimo, while speaking about the nihilistic vocation of Being, doesn't seek to hide that the origin of his attitude on nihilism derives from Nietzsche and Heidegger. He speaks about nihilism in which Nietzsche and Heidegger are able to see not only the outcome (result) of Western history but also its *sense*. Thus the name of Western history as the history of Being has the name of nihilism. But giving a name to history we still do not indicate what our place in this history is, or, speaking in terms of Heidegger, we still do not define "which moment of hidden Western history do we stand in, or, to put it more generally, whether we stand, or fall or already lie".[12]

So here arises the question whether the diagnosis of nihilism is not nihilistic as well. "We all are nihilists" – F. Dostoyevsky used to say. Does Vattimo, when turning back to Nietzsche and Heidegger, also pronounce that *all*? Nietzsche separated nihilism understood as a revaluation of values from the "classical nihilism" represented by himself. However, according to Heidegger, Nietzsche is a classical nihilist as far as, without being aware of it, he takes the position of disillusioned defensiveness against the knowing its essence.[13] Nietzsche is not able to think through to its end the essence of nihilism. He is seen as a classical *nihilist* and as giving "a word for the history that actually occurs";[14] he "recognizes and grasps nihilism as he himself thinks in a nihilistic way. Nietzsche's concept of nihilism itself is a nihilistic concept".[15] After having placed Nietzsche inside nihilism, Heidegger bends to set himself "outside" it. For Heidegger nihilism doesn't mean the same thing as for Nietzsche. In his *Seinsfrage*, dedicated to Jünger, Heidegger says that the essence of nihilism can't be grasped in the simply phenomenological field, i.e. by showing that nothing (or nothingness) remains from the sense of Being. On the contrary, it has to be grasped starting from Nothingness, from the possibility that the totality of being could be another way or not at all; otherwise nihilism obscures nothingness. There arises the question, says Heidegger, "whether the intimate essence and power of nihilism does not consist of the fact that people consider Nothingness as something empty, and nihilism as a naked adoration of emptiness, a negation that can easily be defeated by an assertion. Maybe the essence of nihilism is that people do not consider the question about Nothingness as a serious one".[16] Drawing the conclusions from Heidegger's opinion of Nietzsche, it becomes clear that, on the one hand, their concepts of nihilism are not equal, that Nietzsche was a nihilist in another sense as it seemed to himself; and finally, that Heidegger does not think himself a nihilist in the sense in which nihilism is attributed to Nietzsche.

Is there any sense in asking once more about the essence of nihilism? Vattimo, who announced the theme of nihilism as not historiographical but *geschichtlich*, supposes, that it does. Nihilism acts (occurs). Our state can be described using the definition of Nietzsche's "accomplished nihilism". "The accomplished nihilist, says Vattimo, has understood that nihilism is his or her sole opportunity. What is happening to us in regard to nihilism, today, is this: we begin to be, or to be able to be, accomplished nihilists".[17] But what concept of nihilism does Vattimo incline to use

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[11] *The End of Modernity*, p. 19.
[12] Heidegger, M. *Evropeiskij nigilizm*, p. 68.
[13] *Ibid*.
[14] *Ibid*., p. 74.
[15] *Ibid*., p.. 75.
[16] *Ibid*., p. 74.
[17] *The End of Modernity*, p. 19.

when giving a diagnosis of our state, and, according Heidegger, indicating where we "stand", or whether we "stand" at all, whether we "fall", or even "lie"?

On the one hand, the concept of accomplished nihilism, "the last opportunity", as it is called by Vattimo himself, allows one to see the origin of the *weak thought* in L. Pareyson's *ontology of freedom*. Namely through the *ontology of freedom* the *weak thought* adopts the critique of traditional metaphysics which abolished Nothingness. Pareyson considers Nothingness, the shadow of Being, its symmetrical duplicate, to be an indispensable satellite of Being, but not something that is finally abolished, as it is treated by metaphysical thought. The *ontology of freedom*tells the history of Nothingness that contradicts the metaphysical history of *nothingness*. It is the history of *nothingness* which opens itself not as a negativity that Being calls its opposition and at the same time abolishes, but as a principle which changes Being to Freedom. Being is no longer supposed to be a rational principle, and it is showed that it can be other than a rational principle. Even more, it is shown that Being cannot be at all. However, in the *ontology of freedom*, for Pareyson, the history of *nothingness* doesn't coincide with the history of nihilism. Still it is not without the so-called Turin school and his direct teacher that Vattimo accepted the attitude that the phenomenon of nihilism can hardly be explained if we do not take into account its historical roots, i.e. the *nothingness* which was not only the paradigm of crisis and fall, but firstly the power that in the space of Being opened the possibility of a certain style of life, for self-determination for or against certain values, or even for a new manifestation of divinity. Thus it becomes clear that it is not possible to explain the phenomenon of nihilism in separation from its profound connection with the problematic field of the ontology of *nothingness*. Only from the first sight it could seem that nihilism has nothing in common with a fundamental question "Why Being, rather than *nothing(ness)*?". This way of putting the problem of *nothingness* separates Vattimo from the position which criticizes onto-theology (Derrida, Rorty). *Nothingness* is the central point of *weak thought*, inspired by the *ontology of freedom*, while the critique of onto-theology evades the theme of *nothingness*; its discourse avoids discussing it.

Thus the history of nihilism told by Vattimo coincides with the history of *nothingness* or the history of the oblivion of the ontological difference.

In this sense Vattimo has to decide not only for the Nietzsche's "accomplished nihilism", but also for Heidegger's horizon that was consolidated by the *ontology of freedom*: the *nothingness* of Ground (*Grund*), the separation of *Grund* and *Boden* that lets us consider the sense of Being as Freedom.

What then is Vattimo's concept of nihilism? We have to note that Vattimo, who calls himself a nihilist, is able to do this only because, following Heidegger, having read nihilistically Nietzsche, he also reads Heidegger himself nihilistically. His attitude in regard to nihilism becomes clear when we recognize the strategy of relating Nietzsche and Heidegger.

In the first chapter of *The End of Modernity* called "An Apology for Nihilism" Vattimo first of all speaks about these moments of Nietzsche's and Heidegger's nihilism which, to his mind, do coincide. He says that nihilism signifies here what it means for Nietzsche: the situation in which 'man rolls from the centre toward X'. Then he clarifies: nihilism in this sense is the same as it meant for Heidegger, namely the process in which, at the end, 'there is nothing left'. To Vattimo's mind, both positions coincide as they do not speak about man at the psychological or sociological level, but concern Being itself. The latter situation which for Nietzsche means that man without ambiguity recognizes the absence of foundation as the constitution of the human situation. The non coincidence of Being and foundation is one of the least ambiguous moments of Heidegger's ontology as well.

Nietzsche and Heidegger, according Vattimo, come into accord when speaking about contents and ways of manifestation. In this case the process of nihilism for Nietzsche coincides with the "death of God" and the "revaluation of the highest values". For Heidegger nihilism is demolished as it is completely transformed into values. As mentioned above, Heidegger involves also the "accomplished nihilist" Nietzsche in the process of nihilism as the transformation of Being into values. Vattimo admits that it is possible to carry into effect Heidegger's posing of Nietzsche against nihilism. But right here he makes another unexpected step: he poses Nietzsche's nihilism against Heidegger. "Heidegger himself – from a more Nietzschean that Heideggerian point of view – is also a part of the history of the accomplished nihilism, for nihilism seems to be precisely that mode of thought beyond metaphysics for which he is looking".[18] Undoubtedly, this statement expresses rather the position of *weak thought* than "Nietzsche's point of view" on… Heidegger. And indeed, the configuration of the problem of nihilism in Vattimo's philosophy lets us assert without ambiguity that for Vattimo it is much more important to carry out this "Nietzsche's point of view on Heidegger" than *vice versa*, i.e. to read him as an accomplished nihilist, as it is only then when the nihilism perceived by Heidegger starts to be "active". On the other hand, only the execution of both procedures of putting each against the other enables us to consider nihilism as the process of overcoming metaphysics which is not yet concluded. This is how the *weak thought* represented by Vattimo treats nihilism.

Thus the concept of Vattimo's nihilism is for the most part based on the background of Heideggerian nihilism. Because it is only through the hermeneutical development of Heidegger's thought the nihilism appears as the sole opportunity of contemporary thought. But will Vattimo succeed in demonstrating the firmness of "Nietzsche's point of view on Heidegger" as a nihilist?

In the seventh chapter of the third part of *The End of Modernity* named "Hermeneutics and Nihilism" Vattimo asserts that it is possible to qualify the Heideggerian connection (identity) between Being and language (i.e. that on which hermeneutical ontology is based) in a nihilistic way. This kind of assertion, according Vattimo, if proved could have fundamental importance for the development of the theory of hermeneutics. Vatimo singles out the two elements of Heideggerian hermeneutics that indicate the relationship between Being and language and allow for this relationship to be interpreted in a nihilistic way: 1) The analysis of *Dasein* as a hermeneutical totality, and 2) An attempt to define thought beyond metaphysics in terms of *An-denken* (re-collection, keeping in mind).

Thus firstly Vattimo announces the vision of Heidegger's hermeneutical constitution of Dasein as nihilistic. Dasein as a hermeneutical totality, i.e. one that may not be identified with some Kantian *a priori* structure, is well-founded only when connected with mortality: Vattimo says: "Dasein establishes itself as a hermeneutical totality only insofar as it continually lives the possibility of no-longer-being-there. This condition may be described by saying that the foundation of Dasein coincides with groundlessness: the hermeneutic totality of Dasein exists only in relation to the constitutive possibility of no longer being there".[19]

Vattimo also indicates that the relation between grounding (founding) and un-grounding of *Sein und Zeit* in his final works corresponds to the concept of the event as *Ereignis*. The latter means the being of the thing, given as something, for self-demolition, for appropriating itself, as it is taken up in 'the mirror-play of the world". It has the fashion of the 'round dance', but not of the dialectical founding of totality. Do *Dasein, Sein-zum-Tode* and *Ereignis* demonstrate well-

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 20.
[19] *Ibid.*, p. 116.

enough Heidegger's nihilism? "In what sense can this vision of the hermeneutic constitution of Dasein be called 'nihilistic'? – this is Vattimo's question.

Not only the possibility of reading Heidegger consistently, but also the solidity of Vattimo's nihilistic position depend on the response to this question. According Vattimo, the nihilism which is attributed to Heidegger may be described by Nietzsche as the situation in which 'man rolls from the centre towards X'. For Nietzsche this situation means that the human subject recognizes that the lack of foundation is a constitutive part of its condition.[20] Therefore after having turned Nietzsche's nihilism against Heidegger, Vattimo finds the equivalents of the latter nihilism also in Heidegger's texts, though Heidegger himself did not qualify them nihilistically. Vattimo refers to *Sein und Zeit* where Heidegger speaks of the necessity of "forgetting about Being as foundation" if we do wish to become closer to the thought which is not directed to objectiveness.[21] After having turned Nietzsche against Heidegger, after having recognized the identity of their positions and, at the same time, having applied the Nietzschean nihilism to Heidegger, the nihilistic elements both in the demonstration of hermeneutic totality and in the concept of *Ereignis* become undoubted.

However, here we face another doubt which is obvious, or – to be more exact – which is being revealed by Vattimo for demonstrating the doubtfulness of the doubt. "Nevertheless it would appear that Heidegger's mode of thought is the opposite of nihilism, at least in the sense in which nihilism signifies that process which not only eliminates Being as foundation but forgets about Being altogether".[22] In other words, it seems that nihilism for Heidegger is something different than for Nietzsche, as the latter says that nihilism is the process in which at the end "there is nothing left from Being as such". Will the demonstration of the doubtfulness of the doubt be successful, that is, shall we succeed in proving the possibility of calling Heidegger's hermeneutics nihilistic also in this sense, contradicting Heidegger's texts? Or will it also the second attempt to turn Nietzsche against Heidegger be successful? For the realisation of this task one needs to demonstrate that the overcoming of the oblivion of Being does not contradict Nietzsche's "there is nothing left from Being as such" and this would mean that the overcoming of the oblivion of Being could only be nihilistic. The Heideggerian *An-denken* seems to provide the latter possibility. To Vattimo's mind, the second of above indicated moments in Heidegger's philosophy, should reveal itself as evidence that "this second meaning of nihilism can also be applied to Heidegger's philosophy".[23] *An-denken* is presented as the form of thought that opposes metaphysical thought which is dominated by the oblivion of Being. In his late works Heidegger himself sought to carry out *Andenken*, the form of recollecting thought, reviving in his memory the greatest moments of the history of metaphysics, i.e. re-thinking the creations of the greatest thinkers and poets. Establishing the relation between these two perspectives of nihilism, Vattimo writes: "The fact of mortality, which founds the hermeneutic totality of existence, appears more clearly in Heidegger's late works as *Andenken* or re-collective thought. It is by retracing the history of metaphysics as the forgetting of Being that Dasein decides for its own death and in this way founds itself as a hermeneutic totality whose foundation consists of a lack of foundation".[24] Vattimo asserts that this *An-denken* is nothing else but leap into the abyss "in which we, as mortals, always already find

[20] *Ibid., pp.* 117–118.
[21] *Ibid*., p. 29.
[22] *Ibid*., p. 118.
[23] *Ibid*.
[24] *Ibid*., p. 119.

ourselves".[25] This is the way how *An-denken,* as the entrusting to the liberating bond with tradition, becomes an opposite to metaphysical thought.

However one may draw a conclusion that Vattimo considers as most essential here that aspect of *An-denken* which refers to the impossibility of carring out the re-collection of Being in any other way than non-representative thought. Vattimo says: "Being can never really be thought of as a presence, and the thought that does not forget it is only that which remembers it or, in other words, already thinks of Being as absent, vanished, or gone away".[26] This opportunity of Heideggerian thought revealed by Vattimo to re-collect Being as non present unifies the overcoming of the oblivion of Being with nihilism, when "there is nothing left from Being as such". The outcome of this second turning of Nietzsche against Heidegger is not only the demonstration of the nihilism of the latter, but also *weak thought* itself as a contemporary opportunity of thought. It is easy to notice that the *weak thought* is valid not only because of reading Nietzsche in a Heideggerian way, but also because of reading Heidegger in a Nietzschean way. Accomplished nihilism understood as a sole opportunity is "debolism", the weakness of Being, the letting-presence of Being not as an object accessible for a representative thought but as recollection or as *trace*.

Finally, using another two provocative Vattimo's quotations, it should be necessary to open the perspective which enables *this kind* of reading of Nietzsche *and* Heidegger:

"We recognize that the history of Being has a reductive, 'nihilistic' sense, that it has a tendency to assert the truth of Being through the reduction of the significance of beings (be it a political power, or threatening and angry God of natural religions, or the self-consideration of a modern subject to be the last guarantee of the truth) – all this we recognize only if we are raised in the Christian tradition".[27]

"The overcoming of metaphysics may not occur in any other way than a nihilistic one. The sense of nihilism […] may not be other than a non-defined process of reduction, decrease, weakening. Is it possible to imagine this kind of thought beyond the horizon of Incarnation? May be this is the crucial question to which contemporary hermeneutics should search for an answer (if only it really seeks to go the way that was opened by the invitation of Heidegger to recollect Being; and this is what *Ereignis* really is)".[28]

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[25] *Ibid*.
[26] *Ibid*., p. 120.
[27] *Credere di credere*, p. 37.
[28] *La traccia della traccia*, p. 105.

Chapter VII

Between Philosophy and Rhetoric, or Historicizing Postmodernism in Meta-historical Studies[1]

Zenonas Norkus

Introduction

Plato insisted, "the life which is unexamined is not worth living".[2] Not many historians who believe that the research and writing of history which is unexamined is not worth doing. Nevertheless there are some who have written on the nature of the subject itself, of its aims and objectives, of its central concepts, and of the validity of the claims made by historians.[3] Some philosophers are eager to undertake this examination on behalf of reluctant historians.[4] The outcome is the body of writing on how to research and to write history. There is very good German work on this subject, but there is no appropriate translation in English of the term *Historik.* So I will take the freedom to use this German word intermittently with the more locutions "meta-historical studies" and "meta-history" to refer to my topic.

Recently, this body of writing was invaded (like many others) by the intellectual movement known as "postmodernism".[5] This invasion took place already in the early 1970s when one of the most famous postmodernist books – Hayden White's *Metahistory*[6] was published. *Historik* is the field of the first breakthrough of postmodern thinking to prominence. There is another reason for making *Historik* the Catalaunian fields for critical engagement with postmodernism. "I define *postmodern* as incredulity towards meta-narratives".[7] With these words, Jean-François Lyotard proposes perhaps the most clear and substantive statement of the postmodernist *credo.* In this statement, the discursive resources of the meta-historical thinking are doing the work. By "meta-narratives" Lyotard means grand schemas for organizing the interpretation and writing of history. The gist of Lyotard's definition is the observation that such grand schemas are presupposed not only by the language games which the historians are playing, but by all language games. Each language game has its own rules, but no language game can provide for their legitimation. A Meta-narrative is the story presupposed by the language game, legitimating its rules. The meta-narrative of "progress" is grand scheme presupposed by the language games played by the people describing themselves as "modern". The demise of credulity towards meta-narratives heralds the end of "modernity" and the outset of the postmodern times. In these times, only "little narratives" are credible which have neither legitimation power no legitimation claims.

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[2] Plato. "Apology". In *The Dialogues*, transl. B. Jowett. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1875. Vol. 1, p. 371.

[3] See e.g.: Carr, E. H. *What is History?* Harmonsworth: Penguin, 1964; Elton, G. R. *The Practice of History*. London: Fontana, 1970; Marwick, A. *The Nature of History*. London: Macmilllan, 1970.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] See recent anthology of postmodernist metahistorical texts: Jenkins, K. (Ed.) *The Postmodern History. Reader*. London: Routledge, 1997.

[6] White, H. *Metahistory: the Historical Imagination in Nineteenth Century Europe*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1973.

[7] Lyotard, J.-F. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1984, p. XXIV.

However, telling the story about the demise of meta-narratives, Lyotard becomes entangled in a performative self-contradiction because his story presents another meta-narrative. "Postmodernism is in fact one such meta-narrative, and many commentators have pointed to its unstated reliance on a narrative of modernism to make its point. As one historian reminds us, to proclaim the end of historical meta-narratives is itself 'a (quite totalizing) piece of historical narrative'".[8] If so, then the viable strategy to counteract postmodernism is to tell a grand story, which is more broad, encompassing and persuasive than the postmodernist meta-narrative about the demise of meta-narratives. This post-postmodernist meta-narrative must be broad enough to engulf the postmodernist meta-narrative and both to historicize and relativize its own relativizing and historicizing claims. I do not hope to repeat the feat of Aetius in the Catalaunian plains. I will be glad if I succeed in suggesting through my story a feeling of *deja vu* about postmodern theory. According to my story, the upsurge of postmodernism was simply another one Renaissance of the Rhetoric tradition in the history of Western culture.[9]

To be more specific, I will restrict the scope of my story to *Historik*. The plains of *Historik* are the meeting place for philosophy and history. So I will begin by presenting the historical map of this place (see Fig.1) and then proceed telling the happenings mapped. The author of a story is advised not to disclose the intrigue in advance. So I am closing my introduction without further hints of what follows.

The Simultaneity of the Unsimultaneous I: The Case of Philosophy

Fig. 1. *Historik* Between Philosophy and History

Each of the entries in this scheme denotes ideal typical units at the highest possible level of aggregation in the philosophy, history and area of interpenetration between them. This area is that of Historik.

What I want suggest with my scheme is the phenomenon of the simultaneity of the unsimultaneous or *Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen*. The phenomenon was called thus by the famous German historian Reinhart Koselleck, one of the founding fathers of the so-called*Begriffsgeschichte* (history of concepts).[10] The forms of philosophical thinking, writing history and meta-historical reflection did not always perish with the time which engendered them and in which they were dominant. Not all of them have the destiny of the Dinosaurier; some of them can survive their time and even undergo Renaissances. The chararacteristic case is philosophy. As the units of the highest level I take here the ontological, mentalist and linguistic paradigms. I shall elaborate with another scheme (see Fig. 2).[11]

Philosophical Ontological Mentalistic Linguistic
paradigm

[8] Appleby, J., Hunt, L., Jacob, M. *Telling the Truth about History*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co, 1994, p. 235–236. The historian cited is Reddy, W. "Postmodernism and the Public Sphere: Implications for a Historical Ethnography". In *Cultural Anthropology*. 1992, Vol. 7, pp. 135–168, quote p. 137.

[9] For more detailed version of this story see in: Norkus Z. *Istorika. Istorinis ávadas*. Vilnius: Taura, 1996.

[10] See Koselleck, R. *Vergangene Zukunft. Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten*. Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1979.

[11] Constructing this scheme, I am drawing on Schnädelbach H. *Zur Rehabilitierung des Animal rationale*. Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1992, s. 395. See too: Schnädelbach H. *Reflexion und Diskurs. Fragen einer Logik der Philosophie*. Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1977.

Object	Substance	Mind	Language
Basic concept(s)	Substance	Idea, mental representation	Sentence, language game
Basic divisions	Spiritualism and materialism	Idealism and realism; and rationalism and empiricism	Positivism and antipositivism

Fig. 2. Paradigms in Philosophy

The first, oldest and up to the 17th century only form of philosophical thinking was the ontological paradigm. The prevailing question of classical ontology was that of the "real being", technically called "substance". Substance is eternal and unchanging. So classical ontologists quarreled about the question: is there something eternal and unchanging above or under the sensuous appearances? Plato said real beings are ideas; in the opinion of Democrites the only really existing entities are atoms. The basic divide between the ontological philosophers was between the prevailing spiritualism and heterodox materialism.

In the 17th century philosophy was revolutionized by Descartes and a new philosophical paradigm emerged. The mentalists took to task the ontologists for going straight to the question of the "real being" without previous investigation of the cognitive faculties of the subject. As the starting point for philosophy they considered the subjective inner experience, which they called mind or consciousness. On mentalist opinion philosophy must analyze the mind to find among the introspective data of consciousness the ideas or representations which can provide some ultimate foundation for human knowledge. There were two main cleavages in the mentalist paradigm. One of them divided mentalists into rationalists and empiricists. Another line of division was between realists and idealists (or antirealists). Realism is the doctrine according to which our knowledge relates to some transcendent reality, which the German philosopher, Immanuel Kant, famously called "*Ding an sich*" (thing-in-itself), existing independently from the knowing subject. Idealists maintain that all our knowledge is subjective construction devoid of external or transcendent reference.

The sense of confusion a layman in philosophy (including, of course, almost all historians) inevitably feels after hearing or reading the sentences like that at the end of the previous paragraph was confessed unashamedly also by those philosophers, who initiated the next philosophical revolution called the "linguistic turn".[12] I mean Gottlob Frege, Bertrand Russell, Ludwig Wittgenstein. They are founders of the so-called analytical philosophy, which remains the dominant form of academic philosophy in the Anglo-Saxon countries up to now. Analytical philosophers criticized the mentalists for choosing the wrong starting point. The proper starting point in their opinion is not mind but language. This means that philosophy must be the analysis not of the mind but of language, establishing demarcation line between sentences which make

[12] See Rorty, R. (ed.) *The Linguistic Turn.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967. See also Stroll, A. *Twentieth Century Analytic Philosophy*. New York: Columbia UP, 2000.

sense and those which are senseless. Philosophy cannot bring about new knowledge about the world, but it can help to articulate more sharply the knowledge we already possess, making confused and implicit knowledge clear and explicit.

Mainstream analytical philosophers consider the natural science as the paradigm of knowledge. The implicit knowledge, which they try to make explicit, is that of the rules of scientific method. By accepting the exemplary status of natural scientific knowledge and the exemplarity of natural scientific method they are positivists. Nevertheless positivist philosophy and analytical philosophy are not identical. On the one hand there was positivism before the linguistic turn in philosophy. On the other hand there is the anti-positivist current in analytical philosophy going back to the late Wittgenstein who rejected his own former opinion that there is a hierarchical relation among languages depending on the degree to which they approximate the ideal language of predicate logic. The basic notion of this anti-positivist analytical philosophy is that of the language game. There is a variety of language games with rules of their own, none of them having exemplary or privileged status.

The linguistic paradigm in philosophy is not the same thing as analytical philosophy. Some decades after Anglo-Saxon Philosophy, Continental philosophy went through a linguistic turn of her own, associated with names of the late Martin Heidegger and Hans Georg Gadamer in Germany and currents like structuralism and post-structuralism in France. Differing very much among themselves they share some common features, which can be accentuated by comparing them with mainstream analytical philosophy.

(1) They tend to subscribe to the holistic view of language taking as its basic unit of reflection the linguistic objects of the higher level of aggregation than that preferred by analytical philosophy. This one takes as its basic unit of analysis the sentence considering the texts as nothing more than truth-functional compounds of atomic sentences. According to the Continental view, texts are the *sui generis* units containing emergent sense-effects that cannot be grasped by means of logical analysis, which reduces texts to strings of sentences.

(2) Continental linguistic philosophy considers as the philosophically most interesting linguistic objects not the scientific texts, but those produced by poets, religious prophets and last but not least – historians.

(3) Continental philosophers view language as inherently metaphorical, ambiguous and uncontrollable by the human subjects in spite of all their efforts to be logical and unambiguous.

The linguistic paradigm in philosophy in both their varieties – Anglo-Saxon and Continental – dominates the contemporary philosophical scene. Nevertheless I cannot say that it is the only existing philosophical paradigm. There are remnants of former dominant paradigms. The most significant of them is the ontological neo-Thomist philosophy, which survives, being institutionalized as the official philosophy of the Catholic Church and taught in Catholic Universities and other educational establishments. The mentalistic paradigm cannot be considered as totally defunct because of the continuing activities of phenomenological philosophy, which was the most important current in the mentalistic philosophy of the 20th century. Founded by the German philosopher Edmund Husserl it still prevailed up to some 30 or 40 years ago in the Continental West Europe.

My topic is however not philosophy in itself and for itself, but its impact on the change of the meta-historical discourse on its way to its present state. As I see it, philosophy is only one of the powers influencing and forming this discourse. The reason why meta-historical discourse exists is

the need of historians themselves to give a reflective account of their own activities and define the distinctive identity of their craft with respect to other intellectual activities. They can do it themselves or accept (or reject) definitions proposed by the philosophers. In every case they cannot avoid using intellectual resources coming from philosophy. But the reason why some special articles are chosen for purchase from this supply and others are rejected is the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of historians with the state of their craft. The state and change of the meta-historical discourse is conditioned by the changes in the philosophical climate jointly with the changes in the craft of historical research and writing. Let's us then take a closer look at the bottom part of our historical map of *Historik* (Fig.1)!

History and Rhetoric: The EARLIER Alliance and Its Dissolution

Confining myself to the Western tradition of the writing of history and to the units of the highest level of aggregation, I will distinguish four such units in the history of writing history. Labeling the first unit pragmatic history I follow the established usage of historiographical compendia to designate in this way the products of historical writing from its inception in Ancient Greece up to the 18th century. In its paradigmatic examples, it is recording history (*aufschreibende Geschichte*) concerned with the political events of contemporary and recent times, and written by their competent participants with autopsical experiences of the events recorded. Its task seems to be to preserve the memory of the great deeds of the present and recent times for coming generations, supplying examples to learn from them to be prudent and circumspect in politics, war and other practical matters.

Pragmatic history was contemporary with ontological philosophy. Within the world view of the ontological philosophy, the activity of writing history was illegitimate or at the very least not valuable because it was concerned with the singular, transient and temporal and could bring forth merely opinions which ancient Greeks called *doxa* in distinction from the knowledge or *episteme* about the unchanging, eternal and general. Classical ontological philosophy had simply no supply of ideas for meta-historical discourse except the remark made by Aristoteles in passing that the epistemic value of history is even less than that of poetry.

However, philosophy was not the only cultural power seeking domination. In pre-modern times, it had to struggle hard for predominance with rhetoric, whose ancestry can be traced back to the Greek sophists of the 5th century B.C.. Philosophers promised to teach the truth about eternal and unchanging substances. The offer of the rhetoricians was to teach, to speak and to write in aesthetically pleasing and persuasively effective way about matters of practical importance. What matters is not the truth of our opinions, but their public acceptance, which means their establishment as public, common opinion. Rhetoric is the art of influencing the public opinion through the spoken and written word.[13]

It was rhetoric, not philosophy, which till the 18th century supplied written history with legitimation and provided the formulas of self-definition. Pragmatic history defined itself as the

[13] For authoritative survey of sources and research in this tradition see: *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*. Hrsg. Ueding G. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag. At the time of my writing, volumes 1-4 (A-K) are published, with vol. 1 being published in 1992. For compelling introduction into the classical rhetoric and its history see: Kennedy, G. A. *A New History of Classical Rhetoric*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1994; Corbett, E. P. J., Connors R. J. *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*. 4th ed. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998. See also: Ijsseling, S.*Rhetoric and Philosophy in Conflict*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976; Kennedy, G. *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times*. Chapel, Hill: University of North Carolina Press 1980; Vickers, B. *In Defense of Rhetoric*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1989.

particular application of the rhetoric. The works of rhetoric included sections about the art of writing history. Many treatises about this art were written in the 16th century.[14] The late descendant of this tradition of rhetorical metahistory is the famous treatise by the Italian rhetorician Giambattista Vico "Principi di una scienza nuova intorno alla commune natura delle nazioni" (1744).[15]

The opposition between philosophy and rhetoric, which was the main divide in the Western pre-modern tradition of high literary culture became increasingly obsolete and peripheral as the new cultural power established its authority in providing knowledge about the world. I mean, of course, natural science. The advancement of modern Galilean and Newtonian science brought the academic institutionalization of research activities in the new (Humboldtian) universities and the creation of other full-time jobs in history. To survive in this new cultural world, the study of history redefined itself increasingly as science which distanced itself from pragmatic history as nonscientific or pre-scientific.

This change took place at the earliest in Germany from the end of the 18th century, being associated with names like Barthold G. Niebuhr and Leopold Ranke14. This new history claimed for itself the title of the science I call historist history, the adjective "historist" signaling its main feature distinguishing it from the previous practices of writing history: the declared intention to understand every epoch in its own terms using the remnants of former epochs in the historians present as the evidence controlling such understanding. The historist historiography shared with pragmatic history the view that politics and diplomacy is the most worthy object for the research and writing of history. But whereas pragmatic historians meant contemporary and recent history, the historists considered contemporary history *(Zeitgeschichte*) as unscientific because of the lack of the distance in time necessary for the objective consideration of the past and because of the inaccessibility of the most important evidence for understanding the most important events in the present: secret documents of the present and recent political decision-making.

There was another reason for historist historians to consider distance in time between historian and his objects as necessary for the acquisition of objective knowledge. They saw as the task of the historian to find out not only details of the decision-making of the politicians and military leaders in the remote and distant past, but to expose some long-term objective tendencies which are ascertainable only from remote temporal distance. Such long-term tendencies were called "historical ideas" by the German historians in the 19th century.

Philosophy of History: From Queen to Maidservant

In searching out "historical ideas" in the past historians were in tension with philosophers representing a new form of the meta-historical discourse designated in the *Fig.1* as "speculative philosophy of history". This form of discourse emerged in the 18th century and flourished during the first half of the 19th century in German philosophy (Fichte, Schelling, Georg Hegel). The emergence of the speculative philosophy of history presupposed the emergence of the idea of History (with "H" in the upper case) as one all-encompassing single process. The speculative philosophy of history had set for itself the task to get to know the overall shape of this process including its future. It questioned the claims of historist history of having accomplished scientific knowledge of the past, claiming superior competence for this task due to the application of some

[14] See Kessler, E. (Hrsg.) *Theoretiker humanistischer Geschichtsschreibung. Nachdruck exemplarischer Texte aus dem 16. Jahthundert*. München, 1971.

[15] Vico, G. *The New Science*. Transl. T. Goddard Bergin and M. M. Fisch. Ithaca: Cornell UP, N.Y., 1984.

special method of the analysis of mind which German philosophers in the 19th century called dialectics. It was business as usual in the early modern times – with the philosophy pretending to play the queen for history.

Critical Philosophy of History

This clash helped to establish the basic agenda of the meta-historical discourse of the 19th and of the first two thirds of the 20th century. This was centered about the claim of historical studies to scientific knowledge of the human past. There were two principal opponents against which the historical studies had to defend this claim. One of these opponents was the speculative philosophy of history. Another was positivist sociology, which was based on the positivist concept of scientific method. Positivists considered the discovery of laws as the defining feature of scientific method, understanding laws as unrestricted true universal statements describing the regularities of coexistence and succession between natural kinds. Everyone with a minimum of knowledge of the practice of historical studies knows that historians do not formulate and test nomological hypotheses. If the positivist concept of scientific method is accepted this gives rise to the problem, which was fundamental in the meta-historical discourse for more than a century: how to validate the claim of the historians that their activities really constitute a science?

Two new forms of meta-historical discourse tried to cope with this problem. One of them is represented by the manuals of historical method codifying the know-how of historians acquired in philological criticism since the 17th century. The high point in this tradition is marked by the famous "Historik" of the German historian Johann Gustav Droysen (1857-1859).[16] Very widely used were the texts of this sort written by the German Eduard Bernheim[17] and the Frenchmen Charles Langlois and Victor Seignobos.[18]

Another new form of meta-historical discourse was the critical philosophy of history. After the positivistic and materialistic flood in the 19th century, philosophy could no longer pretend to play the role of the queen in culture. It was glad to get the modest job of the maiden in the estate of science, which turned out to become its master. Those philosophers who were eager to be "scientific", cherished the hope of being useful to this master as its "epistemologists" seeking the "foundations" of scientific knowledge, "philosophers of science" or "methodologists". Critical philosophy of history conceived itself as the epistemology of historical knowledge or philosophy of historical studies.

Like the tradition of the "Manuals of Historical Method" critical philosophy of history articulates the methodological self-consciousness of historist historiography, but does so on the highest possible level of abstraction, mobilizing for this task the categories of mentalist philosophy. The visions of history that critical philosophers of history were proposing were decisively influenced by the peculiarities of the still prevailing mentalist philosophical doctrines used as the starting point for reflection about intellectual activities called history. Based on this starting point we can distinguish three varieties of critical philosophy of history:

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[16] Ranke, L. *The Theory and Practice of History*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1973.

[17] Droysen, J. G. *Historik. Vorlesungen über Enzyklopädie und Methodologie der Geschichte*. Hrsg. Hübner R. 5.Aufl. München-Wien, 1967.

[18] Bernheim, E. *Lehrbuch der historischen Methode und der Geschichtsphilosophie*. 5. und 6. Aufl. Leipzig, 1908 (Erste Aufl.1889).

(1) Neokantian, represented by the German philosophers Wilhelm Windelband and Heinrich Rickert;[19]

(2) Neohegelian with Italian Benedetto Croce[20] and British Robin George Collingwood[21] as the main representatives;

(3) Epistemological hermeneutics founded by the German Wilhelm Dilthey.[22]

All forms of the critical philosophy of history share a critical attitude towards the speculative philosophy of history. The critical philosophers of history say that the shape of the History as a totality including its past as well as the future parts cannot be known in an intersubjectively valid way. The speculative philosopher of history claims to achieve the impossible: himself being a part of History he tries to take some privileged point of view outside of History to oversee its overall shape. If theories about the overall shape of History say something reliable, they say it not about History, but about the people who invent and believe them: about their hopes, fears and prejudices.

Rejecting the claims of the speculative philosophy of history to provide objectively valid knowledge on history, critical philosophers of history accepted the same claim made by the "empirical" historical studies based on source criticism. Defending those claims against the positivist critique that made the scientific status of the history contingent on the search and discovery of the laws, the critical philosophers of history professed the doctrine of a duality of scientific method called also the methodological autonomy of history. German neo-Kantians did so by distinguishing the individualizing or historical and the generalizing or natural scientific methods of the concept formation. Dilthey did so by contra-posing the causal explanation characteristic for natural science and understanding or *Verstehen* in human studies. The most radical defense of the autonomy of history was expounded by the neo-Hegelians who maintained that history is not science at all, being a form of cognition superior to natural science.

What the critical philosophers of the history could not satisfactorily explain was how the empirical study of history can avoid the predicament which they exposed so convincingly in the project of the speculative philosophy of history: how can the study of history deliver the objectively valid knowledge of the past being itself a part of history? Can historians give a written account of some part of the past, which has no need to be written anew as time goes on? Are the new accounts simply different from the older ones, answering new questions and catering to new public predilections emerging with the social and cultural change in the societies of which historians are a part? Or are the new accounts not only different, but also better than old ones, correcting their mistakes and relentlessly approximating historical Truth (with T in the upper case)?

These questions express in the various ways the central question of the critical philosophy of history known also as the problem of the objectivity of historical knowledge. The philosophers maintaining that there is progress in historiography approximating objective Truth I will call objectivists; their opponents are called relativists. They maintain that there is no historical Truth

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[19] Langlois, Ch.V., Seignobos, V. *Introduction aux etudes historiques*. Paris, 1894.

19 Rickert, H. Die Grenzen der naturwissenschaftlichen Begriffsbildung. 5. Aufl. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1929.

[20] Croce, B. *Theory and History of Historiography*. London: Harrop, 1921; *History as the Story of Liberty*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1941.

[21] Collingwood, R. G. *The Idea of History. Rev. ed. with Lectures 1926-1928*. Ed. by van der Dussen. London: Oxford University Press, 1993.

[22] Dilthey, W. *Introduction to the Human Sciences*, in *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, ed. Makkreel, R. A., Rodi F. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1989; *Hermeneutics and the Study of History*, in *Selected Works*, Vol. 4, ed. Makkreel, R. A., Rodi, F. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1996.

in the upper case; only a lot of truths in the lower case: each for the time and the community for which the historians are writing. There is no single historical truth about, say, the causes for the outbreak of World War I. The Germans have one, the French another one and Serbs third. In the critical philosophy of history the neo-Kantians and hermeneutists like Dilthey tried to maintain an objectivist view; the neo-Hegelians embraced the relativist view.

Analytical Philosophy of History

As analytical philosophy has come increasingly into prominence in academic philosophy and ever more philosophers acquired skills of thinking in the manner of the linguistic paradigm, the critical philosophy of history has transformed itself into a so-called analytical philosophy of history. It was the dominant form of meta-historical discourse during the first 30 years after the World War II. Analytical philosophy of history is the application of the techniques of analytical philosophy for the more precise formulation (or explication) and solution discussed in the critical philosophy of history. Curiously, the analytical philosophers of history were little interested in the problem of the objectivity of historical knowledge sharing a predilection for a objectivism.

They considered most interesting among the problems raised in the critical philosophy Dilthey's doctrine that history differs from natural science in pursuing the task of understanding human actions, rather than of explaining them in causal manner. One of the purported achievements of analytical philosophy was the explication of the concept of scientific explanation. The founding texts of the analytical philosophy of history are the famous article of Carl G. Hempel "The Function of General Laws in History" (1942)[23] and famous books of Karl Raimund Popper "The Poverty of Historicism" and "Open Society and its Enemies".[24] Among other things these texts contain the analysis of the logical structure and conditions of the adequacy of the scientific explanation. The message of this analysis is displayed in fig.3:

C1, ..., Cn
L1, ..., Lm
_____
E

Covering Law Scheme

C1, ... Cn Singular statements, describing initial conditions
L1, ... Lm Nomological statement (laws)
E Description of the fact explained

Fig.3. Covering Law Scheme

According to this analysis to explain some event or fact means to deduce its description or explanandum from the set of premises called explanans and containing statements describing some other events or facts (initial conditions; C) and nomological statements or law (laws; L). The main

[23] Reprinted in: Hempel, C. G. *Aspects of Scientific Explanation*. London: Collier-Macmillan, 1965, pp. 231–243.
[24] Popper, K. R. *The Poverty of Historicism*. London: Routledge, 1957; *The Open Society and Its Enemies*. London: Routledge, 1945.

message of this analysis is that to explain some event causally means to subsume it or cover it by some law or laws. For this reason this analysis is called the "covering law scheme".

Hempel and some other analytical philosophers subscribed to the view that this scheme applies universally, including history. Against this positivist or assimilationist standpoint which denies the methodological autonomy of history some other analytical philosophers, influenced by the later Wittgenstein maintained that historians explaining the past human actions are playing the language game whose rules are different from those of the game of natural scientists. The most prominent representative of this anti-positivist or anti-assimilationist brand of analytical philosophy of history are William Dray[25] and Georg H. von Wright.[26] They insisted that the historians and other scholars can do their job without the laws, because human actions are explained sufficiently well by reconstructing the reasons which the human actors had for choosing their actions and displaying the rationality of those actions given the beliefs and wants of the actors.

The Coming of Narrativism and Postmodernism in the Historik: The Good Old Alliance Restored?

As the discussion between the assimilationists and anti-assimilationists developed many meta-theoreticians of history had a growing feeling that analytical philosophy of history bypasses really important questions about the study and writing of history in taking as its objects of analysis units of too low a level of aggregation: historical statements and arguments. As the narrativists point out, statements and arguments are normally parts of larger wholes, in which historians try to accomplish what they call historical synthesis. The exemplary syntheses represented by the so-called great historical works of the great historians are essentially narrative. This means that they are more like stories told by belletricians than scientific theories.

This insight was seminal for the narrativist philosophy of history which emerged into being after so-called narrativistic turn in early seventies. The most important event in the consolidation of narrativism was the appearance of a work by Hayden White, *Metahistory: the Historical Imagination in 19th Century Europe* (Baltimore & London, 1973). Other important narrativist meta-theoricians of history are Franklin Ankersmit[27] in the Netherlands, Jörn Rüsen[28] in Germany and Paul Ricoeur[29] in France.

As I already wrote in the introduction, White's work was one of the landmarks in the emergence of postmodernism. Still more important was the another connection between the meta-historical and postmodernist discourses established by Lyotard's concept of the postmodern also described in the introduction. In Lyotard's vision, the brief flourishing of the speculative philosophy of history from the end of the 18th century was not an insignificant curiosity in one of the remote departments of the community of literates. It was symptomatic of the consolidation of modernist culture whose specific feature is the legitimation of normative standards by speculation on the overall shape of history as Progress or Emancipation, in which the present Western world takes some privileged position as the "most progressive" or "emancipated". By this self-imagined position it authorizes itself to lead, to judge and reeducate those who are not so progressive or

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[25] Dray, W. H. *Laws and Explanation in History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1957.

[26] Wright, G. H. *Explanation and Understanding*. London: Routledge, 1971.

[27] Ankersmit, F. R. *Narrative logic. A Semantic Analysis of the Historian's Language*. The Hague, 1983; Ankersmit, F. R. *History and Tropology: The Rise and Fall of Metaphor*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.

[28] Rüsen, J. *Grundzüge einer Historik*. Bd. 1–3. Göttingen, 1983, 1986, 1989; *Studies in Metahistory*. Pretoria, 1993.

[29] Ricoeur, P. *Time and Narrative*. Vol. 1–3. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984–1988.

educated. Rejecting this meta-narrative, postmodernists promulgate the vision of the decentered and multicultural world, in which there are only truths and justices in the lower case, but no Truth or Justice in the upper case.

In the meta-theorizing about the writing of history, postmodernism implies preference for the relativistic option described above. There is no real historiographical Progress so that historians were making contributions to the ever more coherent and all-encompassing overall picture of the Past as it really was (*wie es eigentlich gewesen*). Depending on the peculiarities of their individual power of historical imagination they prefigure historical facts in the metaphorical, metonymical, synechdochical or ironical way, emplot them as romance, tragedy, comedy or satire to draw out of their stories anarchistic, radical, conservative or liberal implications. This is a way Hayden White sees the writing of history.

According to Ankersmit the historians seek after ever new points of view to represent the seemingly old realities in a new way. Freshness and aesthetic quality of historical representation, not their truth is the real question in the assessment of narrative representations, according to postmodernist narrative meta-theoreticians. The truth question is relevant in their opinion only for assessing separate statements, describing so called historical facts. They do not deny the possibility of ascertaining the truth value of such statements in an objectively valid way using classical means of historical research. But really interesting problems about history have to do not with historical research, but with narrative representation of past, which is underdetermined by the results of the research. Truth or validity are not the concepts applicable to narrative representations. In so far as historians narrate, tell stories, they can neither claim nor succeed in representing the past in an objectively valid manner.

Not all narrativist meta-theoreticians of history are postmodernists and not all of them are of the opinion that narrative representations are inherently subjective and cannot be assessed in terms of their objective validity. The most important case of such non-postmodernist and non-relativist narrativism is represented by the work of German historian and philosopher Jörn Rüsen. However, the more detailed analysis of the subtle differences of opinion between the narrativist meta-theoreticians of historical studies does not pertain to the tasks of this paper. Instead, I would like to use the advantages provided by the long-time perspective of my story. This perspective is already broad enough to make two observations of crucial importance.

The first of them I make as an intellectual historian. It was not for the sheer display of erudition that I began my story with the ancient Greeks. Seeing postmodernism and postmodernist meta-historical discourse against the background of the long-term perspective we can observe certain elective affinities and even continuities which connect it with some episodes of the past intellectual history of the West.

I see the recent efflorescence of the postmodernist discourse as part of the history of the struggle of the philosophical and the rhetorical traditions in the Western tradition of *Bildung* (literate culture) for predominance. There were times when rhetoricians had the upper hand and other times when the philosophy prevailed. Rhetoricians predominated in Ancient Greek and Ancient Roman literate culture (*Bildung)*, where philosophy with its preoccupation with the eternal and intransient played the role of the counterculture.

Turning into the maidservant of theology one could establish its supremacy during the Middle Ages. The Renaissance period really was the time of the revival and predominance of the tradition of Rhetoric. At the outset of the Modern era philosophy claimed revenge with Descartes. But with the dissolution of classical *Bildung* and establishment of the modern culture of specialists and expert knowledge (*des Fach- und Expertwissens*) they both became marginalized, philosophy

existing as the maidservant of science and rhetoric dissolving itself in the broad tract of scholarship known as *human studies*. Recent wars among modernists and postmodernists are really scrambles among marginals of the academic world, the postmodernism being another attempt to resurrect the rhetoric tradition. If we historicize postmodernism, we see it as simply neo-rhetoric.

For my historicizing vision of postmodernism, White's theory of the historiographical styles is a very interesting and important case because White constructs his theory directly from the elements of the rhetorical tradition, seeing himself as the heir of Giambattista Vico who was the last great representative of this tradition. The rhetorical tradition sees the production of the text as the process consisting of the substantial (*res*) and the linguistic (*verbum*) part. (See Fig. 4)

Phases of Production of Text

Substantive Linguistic
(res) (verbum)

Invention Systematization Memorization Linguistic Pronouncing
of thoughts of thoughts (*memoria*) expression (*pronunciatio*)
(*inventio*) (*dispositio)* (*elocutio*)

Fig. 4. Phases of production of text according to rhetorical theory

The substantial part consists of the invention of thoughts (*inventio*), their systematization (*dispositio*) and memorization (*memoria*). The linguistic part consists of the linguistic expression of thoughts (*elocutio*) and the pronunciation (*pronunciatio*), which is redundant if the text is written for reading. The part of rhetorics dealing with the invention of thoughts was called topics. The linguistic expression of thoughts was the subject of stylistics, which had as its part tropics analyzing tropes like metaphor or synecdoche that were conceived by the classical rhetoricians as mere adornements of style.

White works in the frame of the linguistic philosophy of the Continental sort that knows no pure thinking "before" or "besides" language. So he considers the master tropes as described in rhetoric not as vehicles to express already prefabricated thoughts, but as forms of synthetic historical thinking itself, like the Kantian categories or ideas. The product of this inversion of the classical sequence from topics to tropics is his theory of historiographical style where tropics goes first and steers everything.

The Simultaneity of the Unsimultaneous: History as the Case II?

My second observation is made as a philosopher interested in the philosophy of social science. It stands out that both White and Ankersmith choose as their preferred examples of narrative syntheses to illustrate their theories the works of the "great" historians of the 19th century representing the sort of history which I designated as "historist". But in the 20th century there arose new forms of history writing, which I classify in *Fig. Nr.1* as modernist and futurist.[30]

[30] About the recent trends in the history writing see: Bonnell, V., Hunt, L. A. (Eds) *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999; Burke, P. *History and Social Theory*. Cambridge: Polity, 1992; Burke, P. *The French historical revolution: the Annales School*, 1929, 89. Cambridge: Polity, 1990; Iggers, G. *Historiography in the Twentieth century: from Scientific Objectivity to the*

They were promulgated by the historians who considered that historist historians made an unwarranted claim when asserting about themselves that they already were doing history in a scientific way. Modernists and futurists are those historians of the 20th century who set for themselves the task of achieving a genuine scientification of history by transforming the study of history into the field of the application and testing of social scientific theories. There can be doubts whether the covering-law-scheme represents the logic-in-use of the work, which the historist historians are doing. But the interpretation of an incongruity between the positivist concept of science and the praxis of doing history to the advantage of the traditional ways of doing history is not the only possible interpretation. It can be interpreted to the disadvantage of traditional history. There were in the 20th century a lot of programs to change the traditional praxis of history to bring it more into the line with positivistic ideals: the famous "Annales"-Paradigm in France, *historische Sozialwissensch*aft in Germany, "new economic history" in USA. I subsume all of them in the concept of the "modernist" history.

Distinguishing between modernist and futurist history I would like to take into consideration the essential differences in the implicit meta-naratives presupposed by the innovators opposing traditional historist history. In modernist meta-narrative, History (in the upper case) has its end point in the present where its basic objectives are already achieved in the liberal democratic societies, which themselves subscribe to the doctrine of human rights. This type of History is usually referred as "modernization". In futurist meta-narrative, the sense-giving end point of History is conceived as some not yet realized utopia. The most influential specimen of the futurist history in the 20th century was Marxist history. The same type of history is represented however by feminist history, which presupposes a meta-narrative whose future-referring part anticipates the coming perfect emancipation of women; black history and other sorts of radical history.

Modernist history had its heyday in the 60ties and perhaps the seventies. The coming into prominence of narrrativist philosophy of history was symptomatic and perhaps catalytic for certain changes in the practice of doing history during 80ties and early 1990ties. Those changes are referred variously as the "revival of the narrative", the "cultural turn" and so on. They led to the emergence of types of history like "microhistory", "historical anthropological history", "*Alltagsgeschichte*" ("history of everyday life") and so on.

Those sorts of history I should like to classify as "neo-historist" history. Like classical historists, neo-historists cherish the idea of history as humanist scholarship, autonomous with respect to the natural and harder social sciences; as engaging in empathetic reconstruction of the life worlds we have lost. Unlike the old historists they prefer history written from below, to that from above. This means that they use as their topic or heuristic the system of relevances of the small people below, not that of those above. But in other ways they continue the traditions of the old historism.

Now, I can conclude with my second observation from the heights of the grand narrative that I have constructed. Like the contemporary state of philosophy, that of historical studies can be described as the simultaneity of the un-simultaneous. neo-historist or culturalist history is in, but

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Postmodern Challenge. Middletown: Wesleyan Univ. Press, 1997. Schlumbohm, J. (Hrsg.)*Mikrogeschichte, Makrogeschichte: komplementär oder inkommensurabel*? Göttingen: Wallstein-Verl., 1998; Schulze, W. (Hrsg.) *Sozialgeschichte, Alltagsgeschichte, Mikro-Historie: eine Diskussion*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1994; Topolski, J. (Ed.) *Historiography between Modernism and Postmodernism*. Amsterdam/Atlanta: Rodopi, 1994; Wilson, N. J. *History in Crisis? Recent Directions in Historiography*. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, 1998.

as far as I know modernistically oriented social and economic historians are doing their work too. And the same is true for meta-historical discourse.

Narrativist philosophy of history and its postmodernist variety remain still in vogue. But books continue to be published which continue the tradition of the analytical philosophy of history.[31] As far as I can see, the narrativist philosophy of history has already entered into the phase of diminishing returns. The narrativists have still to say a lot that is of interest on a subject like public representation of past, collective memory and other peripheral elements of the historical culture. But as for the central element of the historical culture of advanced societies – I mean, historical studies not disclaiming their affinities with social science – I expect in future more new insights from the revival of the tradition of the analytical philosophy of history than from narrativism.

[31] See e.g. Behan McCullagh, C. *The Truth of History*. London, 1998; Lorenz, Ch. "Can Histories Be True? Narrativism, Positivism, and the 'Metaphorical Turn'". In: *History and Theory*. 1998. Vol.37. Nr.3, p. 309–329; Martin, R. *The Past Within Us: An Empirical Approach to Philosophy of History*. Princeton, 1989; Roberts, C. *The Logic of Historical Explanation*. Pennsylvania: University Park, 1996.

Chapter VIII
Positivism, Post-Positivism and Postmodernism

Evaldas Nekrasas

Fierce attacks on modernism by postmodernists reawakened an interest in positivist modernism both inside and outside academic circles. This interest is still alive in spite of the fact that some philosophers claim that today we are living already in a post-post-modern era. A fundamental question looms large: are postmodernists right when they claim that postmodern thinking is radically different from the modern one, of which positive (or positivist) thinking is a paradigmatic case? When examining this issue it is advisable to start from the brief analysis of the causes which led to disintegration of the latest form of positivism which, a bit paradoxically, was likely closest to the philosophy of the originator of the movement, namely that of David Hume. By this latest form I mean, of course, logical positivism. (Not everyone would agree that precisely Hume and not Auguste Comte was the originator of positivism but I do not intend to discuss this issue here.)

Logical positivism as a distinct and integrated type of philosophy actually ceased to exist more or less three decades ago. According to the common wisdom it started to fell apart under criticism of W.V. Quine and Karl Popper. Their attacks on the fundamental principles of positivism were followed by later ones coming from different quarters and assailing positivism on different lines. Allegedly the most important, deadly blow was received by positivism in the early sixties, namely the publication of Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Kuhn 1962). The book was not conceived by its author as a critique of logical positivism *per se.* His aim was to explain how science develops, and specifically how and why scientific revolutions occur. Logical positivism, Kuhn seemingly thought, was not interested in the subject. Therefore he did not feel obliged to take a direct critical stance toward its theories and conceptions. However, publication of *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* performed in fact a fateful role in the history of logical positivism, contributing tremendously to the decline in its popularity. It turned the majority of young philosophers of science from the *kind* of philosophy of science logical positivists practiced to a rather different kind of research. The so-called historical school of philosophy of science emerged, and by the seventies it had already prevailed over the logical school inspired by the ideas and exemplars of logical positivism.

As at least some readers likely know, the basic idea of Kuhn's book is as follows: there are two phases in the development of science: the *normal* phase when scientists engage themselves in "puzzle solving", i.e. in rather routine activity on the basis and in the confines of an accepted paradigm, and the *revolutionary* phase when an old paradigm faces multiple problems of various character and is replaced by a new one. Paradigms include, among other things, certain generalizations and theoretical principles which are not subject to change in the normal phase of scientific development (although empirical facts may, seemingly, contradict them). Secondly, scientific revolutions occur when previously accepted paradigms are changed for various reasons only some of which may be classified as empirical. One important non-empirical reason is change in the predominating metaphysical ideas shared (at least to some degree) by the scientific community. Thirdly, different paradigms are incommensurable; they are different world conceptions that cannot be compared with each other. To be more exact, a scientific statement

formulated in terms of one paradigm cannot be translated (as a rule) into a statement of another paradigm.

Logical Positivism

The picture of science presented by Kuhn in a rather convincing and detailed way differed, greatly, at least at first glance, from that of the logical positivists. The latter were interested in the *synchronic* analysis of scientific knowledge. In *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* and in his later works (among which it is necessary to mention at least *The Essential Tension* published in 1977), Kuhn, to the contrary, engages himself in inquiry of a profoundly *diachronic* character. The sort of analysis that logical positivists were interested in was *logical* analysis. Kuhn's analysis is rather an *historical* one, and he does not use any technical logical instruments whatever. The research logical positivists were engaged in and especially its results had, at least partly, a normative, *prescriptive* character. The criterion of empirical significance was a rule specifying the requirements sentences *must* meet in order to be considered as scientific sentences. The change of the word "rule" into "proposal" in mature logical positivism did not matter: logical positivists were interested in *rational reconstruction* of concepts, theories, and arguments but not in the empirical description of actual scientific practice. Kuhn, on the other hand, seemed to be interested only in the *description* and explanation of how science actually functions and develops and not in the prescription as to how one must do scientific research.

The whole flock of fledgling philosophers of science faced in the sixties an alternative to continue Carnap's complicated and intricate work on the logic of science or to engage in research aimed at understanding how the great scientific revolutions which result in changes in the scientific conception of the world take place. The prevailing majority chose the latter.

This line of research was not only more exciting. It did not require systematic, cumbersome, and sometimes dull logical training. Carnap was a notably technical and not a passionate writer at all. Kuhn, on the contrary, was very adept at *telling* his story, it seemed that not much grueling preparation was needed to continue it. He also did his best to persuade his readers that the *normal* science (and at least some of them were inclined to include under this term *normal* philosophy of science as well) is a rather simple affair. Thus there is nothing strange about the fact that soon after the publication of *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* Kuhn became a hero. Carnap died, unfortunately, in 1970.

The most important of Carnap's books on the philosophy of science is, without doubt, *Logical Foundations of Probability*. I do not know exactly how many students of philosophy have read this voluminous (although from a logical point of view not very complicated) opus. Yet I dare estimate that it had at least one hundred times fewer readers than Kuhn's 1962 book. Thus Kuhn's "victory" over Carnap was rather easy: he commanded overwhelming forces.

But were they competitors after all? One could maintain that they competed at least for readers, although I would disagree. Carnap, it seems, was not very interested in his own popularity. But did they compete as philosophers? Did Kuhn say (not to mention prove) something antithetical to Carnap's philosophical views? I have *serious* doubts. But let us begin with some *minor* perplexities.

The first, 1962 edition (the second, revised edition followed in 1970) of Kuhn's famous book was published in a series initiated by logical positivists, namely in the "International Encyclopedia of Unified Science". In it, Kuhn claimed that great scientific revolutions embrace almost all of science or have at least a very wide sphere of influence. Thus Kuhn's work was rather amenable

to the ideas of the unified science movement, although it was a little ambiguous on the possibility of radical changes taking place in different sciences at different times. Nevertheless, the willingness of the logical positivists to cooperate with their archenemy, as some authors regard Kuhn today, is a bit puzzling. Yet much more perplexing for Kuhn's adherents must be another, not very well known fact: Carnap's *positive* attitude towards *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (see Reisch 1991).

These strange facts may be explained, however, on the basis of the supposition that Carnap apprehended the closeness of his and Kuhn's views or, to be more exact, the possibility of translation of the most important of Kuhn's notions into his, Carnap's, language. To show how it is possible to express Kuhn's ideas in Carnap's language it is necessary to recall Carnap's views on linguistic frameworks and scientific theories. A linguistic framework is characterized by Carnap by means of syntactic, semantic, and methodological rules. It is important to remember that according to the (logical) principle of tolerance, which was initially formulated by Carnap (1934) as a syntactic principle, but was later extended by him to cover semantics as well, we choose our linguistic frameworks freely on the basis of conventional, pragmatic considerations. Moreover, we are free to change them when we feel that it is advisable.

Every scientific theory is formulated in one or another linguistic framework. Because Carnap divides the language of scientific theory into two parts: observation language and theoretical language, he distinguishes theoretical postulates T containing theoretical descriptive terms only, and correspondence rules C containing terms from both parts of language, that is, both theoretical and observational.

Theoretical terms get their meaning, according to the later Carnap, not only through correspondence rules but through theoretical postulates as well, because not every theoretical term is connected with empirical language directly. Carnap emphasizes that unlike empirical generalizations "the very meaning of the theoretical terms is dependent on postulates" (Carnap 1968, p. 148). Thus Irzik and Grunberg are perfectly right in claiming that (the later) Carnap is a semantic holist subscribing to the doctrine "that the theoretical postulates of a theory contribute to the meaning of theoretical terms occurring in them and that a change in the theoretical postulates results in a change in meaning" (Irzik & Grunberg 1995, p. 289).

From Carnap's semantic holism (which he shares with Quine and Kuhn) there follows the thesis of the semantic incommensurability of theories or, which is the same, of the untranslatability of *some* sentences of one theory into sentences of another theory. Carnap's semantic holism finds its clearest expression in his publications of the 1950s and 1960s. Yet it is clear that he held it already in 1936. In "Truth and Confirmation" Carnap stressed that many statements of modern physics cannot be translated into statements of classical physics because these statements presuppose different forms of language or, as he would say later, different linguistic frameworks (cf. Carnap 1936, p. 126). This means that Carnap was a semantic holist already then.

Now we may come back to Kuhn's main points. In Carnap's language, scientific revolutions occur when the rules of the linguistic framework of a theory or its theoretical postulates suffer change. The normal phase in the development of science takes place when the meaning rules and postulates remain intact but the truth-values of statements that are not fixed by them are changed or added. It is also clear that the addition of some new correspondence rules does not involve drastic change. Calling changes of meaning rules and postulates changes of the first kind, and changes in truth values and the addition of new correspondence rules changes of the second kind, Carnap wrote: "A change of the first kind constitutes a radical alteration, sometimes a revolution, and it occurs only at certain historically decisive points in the development of science. On the other

hand, changes of the second kind occur every minute. A change of the first kind constitutes, strictly speaking, a transition from a language Ln to a new language Ln+1" (Carnap 1963, p. 921). I would like to emphasize that these words were *written* before Kuhn's *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* appeared (the publication of Schilpp's volume on Carnap was unduly delayed for a decade). Moreover, Carnap spoke about "radical revolutions in the system of science" in some of his works *published* in the fifties (cf. Carnap 1956, p. 51).

Thus according to Carnap, scientific revolutions occur when syntactical, semantical and methodological rules are replaced by new ones. There may be many different pragmatic reasons to change them. The encounter of some new empirical facts is not the main reason to change the rules, because the simpler way to accommodate them is to change the truth-values of the sentences not determined by these rules. Carnap leaves open the question whether new metaphysical ideas may influence our decision to change our rules, but does not *explicitly* exclude in his later works such a possibility. And from what has been said above, it must be clear that different theories may be incommensurable in the same sense that Kuhn's paradigms are.

Thus we must conclude that, in the fundamental theses Kuhn did not say much Carnap had not known (and written) before. Postpositivist philosophy of science mainly owes the fame of being a *revolution* in philosophy of science to insufficient knowledge of previous, positivist conceptions or to their misinterpretation. Of course, postpositivists introduced some new ideas, made new emphases and came to their conclusions mostly independent of the positivists, but it is certainly wrong to claim that logical positivism envisaged the growth of knowledge only as an accumulation of new empirical facts and possessed no theoretical conception of scientific revolution.

In the first glory years of post-positivist philosophy of science one of its representatives (whose name I have forgotten) publicly asked a rhetorical question about logical empiricism's philosophy of science: how was it possible that competent researchers (including those active in the natural sciences) maintained such strange views concerning the nature of scientific inquiry. It is an irony of fate that nowadays an opposite question looms large: "Why has the logical positivist movement been misunderstood so badly?" (Irzik & Grunberg 1995, p. 305).

The simplest answer to the last question is as follows: it has not been studied deeply enough. Its rivals managed to change the way of doing philosophy of science because the new paradigm seemed more promising, less technical, and closer to the actual practice and history of science. And neither Kuhn nor Carnap claimed that to change the old paradigm it is necessary to show that the old one is wrong or incorrect. Both Kuhn and Carnap could explain the changes philosophy of science suffered in the same pragmatic terms in which they could explain changes taking place in science itself.

Postmodernism

Post-positivism did not show and even did not have the intention to show that positivism was "wrong". The sixties, however, witnessed the outset of developments in philosophy more ambitious than post-positivism. They were wider in scope and aimed not specifically at positivist philosophy of science, or positivism in general, but at an almost all of modern philosophy. The aim of the rising wave of criticism was even wider. *Modernism* as such came under attack. The way of apprehending the world and expressing itself in a way allegedly diametrically opposed to that of modernism has become known as *postmodernism*.

Postmodernism assimilated post-positivism by claiming that Kuhn, Paul Feyerabend and other post-positivists are clear-cut postmodernists. Because of these developments, the term *post-positivism*, widely used from late sixties until the early eighties gradually fell out of fashion. One of the flaws of this notion was its lack of precise meaning since the prefix "post" added to "positivism" suggested the posteriority of post-positivism in relation to positivism, but left open the question as to whether post-positivism is inclusive of all philosophy of science practiced on the basis of non-positivist principles following the decline of positivism or, rather, only the historical school centered around Kuhn (its boundaries being rather blurry also). Of course, the same kind of critique may be directed towards the notion of postmodernism. Its meaning is vague, and there is no doubt that it is applied to different and not very coherent attitudes and orientations.

The notion of postmodernism is ambivalent for many reasons. First of all, it was used primarily to describe some new developments in the arts, especially in architecture. Later its meaning was extended to indicate the direction of recent cultural changes in general, and only subsequently was the term used as the name of a philosophical movement closely connected with the said developments in the arts but having (or at least avidly seeking) its own intellectual roots. Yet the philosophical character of the works of the representatives of this movement such as Jean Lyotard or Jean Baudrillard is often questioned, especially in the area where Anglo-American philosophy is prevalent. Its representatives are regarded by many "modernists" as cultural and literary critics, rather than as philosophers. Against the background of philosophy shaped mainly by the analytic tradition, they certainly do look like impostors, or at least outsiders. Both in the United States and the United Kingdom university departments of English show, as a rule, much more interest in postmodernism than do departments of philosophy. When referring to fellow Americans who defected to the postmodernist camp after making their names as analytic (or at least as post-analytic) philosophers, some of their colleagues prefer to call them "the new pragmatists" and not "postmodernists". The title "romantic pragmatist" is reserved, it seems, specifically for Richard Rorty (see Nevo 1995).

Rorty indeed tries to connect the ideas other postmodernists (predominantly French) have put forward with the tradition of pragmatism. Continental representatives of the movement owe, however, more to Marx, Nietzsche, Freud and Heidegger. It is quite natural that thinkers drawing on such different sources face tremendous problems in developing a more or less determinate philosophical point of view, not to mention a coherent doctrine.

In fact, postmodernists deny both the possibility and the desirability of an integral postmodernist philosophy. Notwithstanding this fact, there are some positive principles many postmodernists share. The main unifying principle is, however, a negative one, their opposition to modernism and modernity as an era shaped by manifestations of modernism in the arts, science, philosophy, and politics. As to the question of what modernism is, postmodernists give, however, different answers. Although one may think that the determination of chronological boundaries of modernism is a simpler task than the definition of its guiding principles, one encounters a wide disarray of opinions as to the beginning of the era of modernity. Some postmodernists go back to Socrates and Plato, others start with Descartes.

There is a much greater degree of consensus regarding the end of modernity and the dawn of postmodernity. The majority of postmodernist agree that the sought-for date is the end of the 1960s, and as far as I know nobody has claimed that postmodernity started earlier than 1875. Quite often 1968 is invoked as the thunderous rupture between two eras. One event postmodernists have in mind is, of course, the Student Revolt. In fact, postmodernism grew out of the *protest* against

entrenched values and practices of the new *ancien régime*. To quite a significant degree, this protest was inspired by Marxist and neo-Marxist ideas.

"A key date here", writes Thomas Docherty in his introduction to one of the best readers on postmodernism, "is, of course, 1968. The seeming availability of a revolution which brought workers and intellectuals together all across Europe represented a high point for a specific kind of Marxist theoretical practice. But when these revolutions failed, many began, at precisely that moment, to rethink their commitment to the fundamental premises of Marxist theory ... For many, Marxism now began to appear as part of the problem, especially in its assumption of the desirability of human mastery over nature" (Docherty 1993, p. 4).

Almost all the thinkers (at least the French and German ones) regarded as representative of postmodernism had rather close ties to Marxism, therefore the failure in 1968, both in Paris and Prague was perceived by them as an epoch-making event. That does not mean that after 1968 they rejected Marxism altogether; some Marxist or neo-Marxist ideas still play an important role in their writings. Many of them clearly draw on the Gramscian conception of *hegemony* in which the orthodox Marxist doctrine of class-hegemony is reconsidered by the means of examining other kinds of hegemony and oppression. The espousal of all possible sources and forms of domination and exploitation from sexual to intellectual is very characteristic of postmodernism and clearly indicates its origin.

Although postmodernism as a philosophy is extremely, if not impossibly diverse, and its different representatives stress sometimes radically different issues, the notion of postmodernism has one important logical advantage over that of post-positivism. I have in mind the fact that there is something like a standard definition of postmodernism which is widely although not universally referred to. It was laid down by Jean Lyotard in his book *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* published in 1979. This book performed an important role in consolidating the postmodernist movement. In it Lyotard defines the notion *postmodern* in negative terms juxtaposing it with the notion *modern* which he regards primarily as a characteristic of a certain state of science. At the same time, changes taking place in science and transferring it from a modern to a postmodern state are tied by him to altering rules of the game in other domains of culture. These changes are explained in terms of the crisis of *narratives*.

"Science", Lyotard claims, "has always been in conflict with narratives. Judged by the yardstick of science, the majority of them prove to be fables. But to the extent that science does not restrict itself to stating useful regularities and seeks the truth, it is obliged to legitimate the rules of its own game. It then produces a discourse of legitimation with respect to its own status, a discourse called philosophy. I will use the term *modern* to designate any science that legitimates itself with reference to a metadiscourse of this kind making an explicit appeal to some grand narrative, such as the dialectic of Spirit, the hermeneutics of meaning, the emancipation of the rational or working subject, or the creation of wealth. For example, the rule of consensus between the sender and addressee of a statement with truth-value is deemed acceptable if it is cast in terms of possible unanimity between rational minds: this is the Enlightenment narrative, in which the hero of knowledge works toward a good ethico-political end – universal peace ... Simplifying to the extreme, I define *postmodern* as incredulity towards meta-narratives" (Lyotard 1979, p. 71-72).

This incredulity is based on the belief that there are many language games leading to knowledge, not just a single one. The game characteristic of modern science was based on principles of commensurability, determinacy, and efficiency. The last principle, that of efficiency, was especially important for the legitimation both of scientific truth and of social institutions.

Lyotard emphasizes that application of the criterion of performance-efficiency inevitably entails a certain degree of terror: "be operational (that is commensurable) or disappear".

Opposing Juergen Habermas, Lyotard does not think that postmodern knowledge must seek consensus through discussion. Consensus is incompatible with the heterogeneity of language games. Moreover, consensus, even regarded as a purely regulative principle, produces intellectual terror. All postmodernists agree with Michel Foucault that knowledge is power, which at present exceeds traditional kinds of power – economic, political, or military. Hence intellectual terror is the most insidious and baleful brand of oppression.

Contrary to knowledge based on consensus, "postmodern knowledge", Lyotard claims, "is not simply a tool of the authorities; it refines our sensibility to differences and reinforces our ability to tolerate the incommensurable" (Lyotard 1979, p. 73]. In a different context, Baudrillard echoes the words of Lyotard: he denounces "the delirious dream of reunifying the world under a unitary principle" and the "mythic imperative of rationality" (Baudrillard 1976, p. 141).

Kuhn's concept of a paradigm is widely used in postmodernist writings, and they regard him as one of the main exponents of postmodernist thought. The use of the concept of paradigm reflects the belief that the mind's nature is essentially interpretative. In principle, different paradigms are regarded as being of equal standing. But because postmodernism constitutes itself by opposing the single (so postmodernists claim) paradigm of modernity which is denounced as the worst conceivable, postmodernism produces in fact a (meta)paradigm of the postmodern mind featuring main traits of different postmodernist paradigms. Historians of ideas have, it seems, no difficulty in grasping this *Postmodern Paradigm*. Admitting that "The postmodern paradigm is by its nature fundamentally subversive of all paradigms, for its core is the awareness of reality as being at once multiple, local and without demonstrable foundation", Richard Tarnas, nevertheless, is able to indicate some widely shared principles comprising the backbone of this paradigm.

There is an appreciation of the plasticity and constant change of reality and knowledge, a stress on the priority of concrete experience over fixed abstract principles, and a conviction that no single *a priori* thought system should govern belief or investigation. It is recognized that human knowledge is subjectively determined by a multitude of factors; that objective essences, or things-in-themselves are neither accessible nor positable; and that the value of all truths and assumptions must be continually subjected to direct testing. The critical search for truth is constrained to be tolerant of ambiguity and pluralism, and its outcome will necessarily be knowledge that is relative and fallible rather than absolute and certain" (Tarnas 1991, p. 401; 395-396).

I will call postmodernism characterized by these words a *moderate postmodernism.* A radical form of postmodernism rejects any attempt to seek cognitive unity, coherence, comprehensiveness and even simple understanding based on shared meanings. *Radical postmodernism* is, without any doubt, a new meta-narrative claiming that there are no general intersubjective truths. Because it maintains by this very claim at least one such truth, it is self-refuting in the same sense as is radical skepticism. Hence, from an epistemological point of view it is not very interesting, however entertaining and invigorating making such claims may be.

Positivism and Postmodernism

Neither Lyotard nor Baudrillard advocate radical postmodernism. However, Jacques Derrida's deconstructivism is very close to it. There is a real danger that the juggernaut of deconstruction, decentering, deferral, dissemination, difference, demystification, and dispersion, may indeed lead eventually to disappearance and death, not only of the last traces of the knowledge

itself, but even of the weakest wish to know anything beyond the interminable play of incoherent "intellectual" images and ideas: scholarship-as-music-video.

Recriminations of a similar kind cannot be held against moderate postmodernism. It opposes not knowledge as such but a specific form of knowledge and specific principles of construction, justification, interpretation, and use of knowledge. Postmodernism quite often counterposes itself to the Enlightenment and its conception of human knowledge. However, when postmodernists attack some specific epistemological principles, they attribute them usually not to Voltaire or Kant but to *positivism*. Positivism is regarded by them as a demon-seed of the Enlightenment project. And since positivism is more "modern" in the chronological sense of the word, it is a favorite object of postmodernist attacks. Positivism (with an interesting exception, namely Hume) is regarded by them as an embodiment of everything that is the worst in the Spirit of the Enlightenment: its emphasis on wholeness, unity, unequivocalness of knowledge and its use of knowledge as means to achieve social progress. And of course, its *foundationalism*, its belief in the existence of the ultimate grounds of knowledge ensuring its firmness and truthfulness. Foundationalism is regarded by postmodernists as the last source of all oppression, included that in the name of social progress.

There is no doubt that in many of its incarnations postmodernism differs from positivism. As one of the most influential theoreticians of postmodernism Ihab Hassan correctly claims, "as an artistic, philosophical, and social phenomenon, postmodernism veers toward open, playful, optative, provisional (open in time as well as in structure or space), disjunctive or indeterminate forms, a discourse of ironies and fragments, a "white ideology" of absences and fractures, a desire of diffractions and invocation of complex, articulate silences" (Hassan 1987, p. 283). However a closer look into the epistemological principles of (moderate) postmodernism reveals that many principles regarded by postmodernism as constitutive of its own philosophy are shared by it with positivism.

The exposure of "the obsolescence of the meta-narrative apparatus of legitimation" and the rise of postmodernism is tied by Lyotard directly to the crisis of metaphysical philosophy (cf. Lyotard 1979, p. 72). Postmodernism is overtly anti-metaphysical, and at least in this important aspect, rather continues the positivist tradition than negates it. Postmodernism shares with positivism and, especially logical positivism, some other epistemological features including those it pretends to be anti-positivist and, first of all, relativism and fallibilism. It equates knowledge with power, but in this respect it does not seem original at all. Of course, a postmodernist would claim that whereas positivists regard knowledge as a source of power, they treat it as power itself. However, I do not regard the difference between the two views as substantial.

The claim that postmodernism, contrary to modernism and thus to positivism also, is *anti-foundationalist* is already a tired and tattered cliché. This claim has at least two different versions depending on the interpretation of the term *anti-foundationalism*. According to the first version, the characteristics "foundational" and "anti-foundational" are treated as attributes of epistemology. Thus postmodernist epistemology is anti-foundational because it denies that knowledge rests on indubitable foundations. Taking a critical stance toward positivism, postmodernism implies that positivists believe in such foundations: they must be indubitable because of their *purely* experiential character. This allegation is not true. Some positivist thinkers, e.g. *Schlick*, have searched for the firm foundations of knowledge indeed, but neither Comte nor (from the early thirties) Carnap and logical positivists in general supported the foundationalist point of view.

In the second version postmodernism is claimed as being anti-foundational because it renounces "the view that casts philosophy in the role of founding discourse *vis-a-vis* social

criticism. That ‘modern’ conception gives way to a ‘postmodern’ one in which criticism floats free of any universalist theoretic ground" (Fraser & Nicholson 1988, p. 416-417). It seems that these authors convey rather exactly the meaning of Lyotard’s words that postmodernism rejects grand narratives (or meta-narratives).

Positivism was a prominent part of the great Enlightenment meta-narrative of progress, reason, and freedom indeed. I do not think that it should be shamefaced of this. Moreover, I have serious doubts that postmodernist social criticism "floats free of any universalist theoretic ground". Anti-foundational epistemology *in conjunction* with the thesis that intellectual rigorism amounts to oppression provides a perfect universalist theoretical ground for social criticism. Without such a ground postmodernism would lose its coherence (weak as it is) and any philosophical interest, because it would fall into a loose bunch of voices of discontent coming from diverse not very influential social groups. Postmodernism counterpoises itself with positivism (and modernism in general) by renouncing its optimism and progressivism. Indeed, positivism is a rather optimistic and progressivist philosophy.

On the other hand, it is not difficult to see that postmodernism is not a pessimist philosophy at all. Most often it presents itself as a *liberation* movement both in the intellectual and social meaning of the word. Postmodernists seek to *improve* the human condition, to *foster* liberty and solidarity; hence they may be perfectly regarded as (a bit anarchical) progressivists. In postmodernist literature one may even find an amazing analogy to Comte’s law of the three stages. In *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* regarded by some adherents of postmodernism as something like Holy Writ, Richard Rorty writes:

I can crudely sum up the story which historians like Blumenberg tell by saying that once upon a time we felt a need to worship something which lay beyond the visible world. Beginning in the seventeenth century we tried to substitute a love of truth for love of God, treating the world described by science as a quasi divinity. Beginning at the end of the eighteenth century we tried to substitute a love of ourselves for a love of scientific truth, a worship of our own deep spiritual nature, treated as one more quasi divinity.

The line of thought common to Blumenberg, Nietzsche, Freud, and Davidson suggests that we try to get to the point where we no longer worship *anything*, where we treat everything – our language, our conscience, our community – as a product of time and chance (Rorty 1989, p. 22).

Positivism was infused and informed with contingency and solidarity. Irony, perhaps, was in short supply, although sometimes it sparkled: Carnap’s characterization of metaphysicians as poor musicians comes to mind. And I have no doubt that positivists would look at postmodernists and their efforts to present themselves (for which time in the history of philosophy?) as revolutionaries with really a great degree of irony. Especially when reading Rorty’s words that these "revolutionaries", these "strong philosophers" at the end of twentieth century "are interested in dissolving inherited problems rather than solving them" (Rorty 1989, p. 20).

There is no reason to regard postmodernism as a revolution in philosophy which overcame all modernist philosophies, positivism included. Ernesto Laclau is right when claiming that "Postmodernity does not imply *change* in the values of Enlightenment modernity, but rather a particular weakening of their absolutist character" (Laclau 1988, p. 332). I would add to this that positivism, and especially logical positivism, weakened them to a great degree by means of undermining the belief in absolute truths and demonstrable values, and not much *reasonable* work in this area has been left to postmodernists.

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Chapter IX

Traditional Japanese Medieval Aesthetics: Comparative Studies

Antanas Andrijauskas

Japanese aesthetics, unlike that of India and China, does not have ancient traditions extending over thousands of years. It is more sensitive to external influences, to changes. The evolution of aesthetic thought in the Land of the Rising Sun gave birth to a world of unique categories, to distinctive principles of aesthetic understanding and art appreciation. In no other country on earth have aesthetic feeling and artistic values been able to take such firm root in everyday life. Most assuredly, the historical mission of the Japanese people is to exalt beauty and art. One of the most distinctive features of Japanese culture and aesthetic consciousness is that those areas of human creative expression which remain marginal in other cultures acquire extreme importance in Japan and become the focus of intense aesthetic reflection and artistic creation.

Japanese Aesthetics

Abstract speculation is foreign to Japanese aesthetic thought, which is typically aesthetics from below. Mainly, it is not developed in pedantic philosophical tracts but forms its structure, content, and system of categories in the context of specific artistic problems. In the early Middle Ages aesthetics was already closely tied to the artistic evolutionary process of the time and stimulated the development of original art forms. The most eminent aestheticians (Kûkai, Ki no Tsurayuki, Sei Shônagon, Murasaki Shikibu, Nijo Yoshimoto, Fujiwara Shunzei, Zeami, Ikkyû Sôjun, Sen no Rikyû, Bashô) were mainly synthesizing *homo universalis* personalities who stood out because of their multifaceted talent, refined aesthetic taste, and brilliant grasp of the technology of various art forms and of the means of artistic expression. They expressed themselves not simply as aestheticians, but primarily as famous thinkers, poets, writers, calligraphers, painters, and masters of other branches of art who sought to find theoretical principles for problems that arose in artistic practice. With the rise of different arts there appeared normative aesthetic treatises (*karon* – reflections about poetry, *bungeiron* – reflections about the arts), which explained how to create works in a specific art form or genre. Aesthetic ideas were not only developed in special treatises, but often they were also organically woven into the fabric of novels, travel writings, and diaries. They were expounded picturesquely with a broad reliance on the power of poetic images and metaphors.

Unlike the Western aesthetic tradition, which is dominated by distinctions between subject and object, idea and image, Japanese aesthetics tends to reject this dualism. Rejecting, too, the idea of actively reordering the world, characteristic of the Western mentality, it seeks to grasp man's unity with the world of nature, to discern its rhythms, the natural changes of the seasons, to illuminate man's unique relationship with the phenomena being contemplated, to reveal the beauty concealed beneath the outer mantle of reality. The idea of recreating the world is foreign to the Japanese. They exalt the principle of inaction. Beauty exists in the world around us. It is immanent in existence. Thus, man cannot create that which already exists. He can only discern.

Japanese aestheticians characteristically distrust the power of analytic reason and the logos principle in general. They understand very well the limitations of the rational mind, of abstract theoretical constructs, when seeking to know the most complex forms of aesthetic experience and

art. This attitude conditions their view of the rational mind as an instrument which creates and destroys the primordial integrity of the world of beauty. The essence of beauty is known not intellectually, but intuitively, through the most sensitive emotional experiences, which do not submit to rational, verbal description. Consequently, Japanese aesthetic evaluations are characterized by sensuality, softness, attention directed exclusively toward the problems of the psychology of art and aesthetic understanding.

This distinctively Japanese understanding of the aesthetic world is conditioned by national culture, mythology, religion, and folkloric tradition as well as by influences spreading from India, China, and Korea. Between many Japanese and continental schools of aesthetics and art we observe a direct connection which is often indicated by the Japanese borrowing of Indian and Chinese terms and names. The Japanese get the specific features of their mentality and aesthetic values mainly from Shinto, the old religion of Japan, and from their mythology, the essence of which is the awe-inspired deification of nature. The pan-aestheticism of Shinto forms in the consciousness of the Japanese a stable psychological attitude toward the sacral function of beauty. In the course of centuries many things have changed in this worldview; what has not changed, however, is the mythological-poetic understanding of the world, ecstatic enchantment with the constantly changing beauty of natural phenomena.

The Shinto cult of beauty has determined the basic direction of the Japanese aesthetic understanding of the world and of the evolution of art, while the waves of Buddhist, Taoist, Confucian, Tantric, and Ch'an influence coming from the continent have constantly adjusted it and enriched it with new ideas. The Japanese have adopted continental culture in their own way. Each significant wave of cultural influence from the continent has often been followed by a short period of isolation and assimilation. Aesthetic and artistic ideas spreading from the continent have always been critically examined, filtered through the Japanese mentality, and adapted to the requirements of the national culture. The spirit of Shinto pan-aestheticism has never disappeared from Japanese culture; it has merged with the torrent of Buddhist, Taoist, and Confucian ideas and later become an organic part of syncretistic Zen Buddhist aesthetics.

Japan is the only Oriental country, which has avoided invasions and prolonged occupations by nomadic peoples, which threatened the consistent transmission of cultural traditions. This fact has helped consolidate the traditionalism in the culture of this country. A grasp of tradition and canons, an understanding of their creative work within limits they themselves have drawn – these are an indispensable feature of Japanese aestheticians and artists. Tradition and canons provide them with inspiration, examples to imitate, high ideals, and criteria to evaluate their own work. What is considered honorable is not the negation of tradition and canon, but sensitive contact with the values, formed over the centuries, that they embody and with life-giving sources. Even resolute shifts in aesthetic thought or artistic development are justified by appealing to forgotten traditions and canons because violating them is the same as cutting short the unending thread of life. Such a respectful view of tradition explains why aestheticians and artists, regardless of their eminence and talent, create within the limits of a canon, defined by tradition, which suffices for their spiritual self-expression.

In the early Middle Ages, in the aesthetics of literature and representational art, a certain body of canonical secrets, consistently handed down from generation to generation, was already forming among professional artists. The role of these canonical secret traditions in the aesthetics and art of the early Middle Ages is very important. It expands perceptibly with the penetration of the country by various esoteric schools of Buddhism and Tantrism, dominated by the conviction, which developed from orthodox Buddhism, that real knowledge, the wisdom of the sutras, can be truly

passed on only by esoteric means, directly from mind to mind. Masters of secret traditions were not numerous and were highly valued. From the history of the country it is known that emperors and shoguns (supreme military commanders) sometimes ended the sieges of castles and cities when the danger arose that masters of secret traditions might perish in them.

The fact that during the Middle Ages many of the most eminent aestheticians, art critics, poets, calligraphers, painters, and masters of theater, the tea ceremony, and Japanese gardens were members of the same families or clans (Fujiwara, Tosa, Kanô, Soga, Hasegawa, Zeami, Rikyû) created favorable conditions for the consistent handing down of canonical secret traditions from generation to generation. For example, Zeami, a leading figure in the aesthetics of *nô* theater, like many other mediaeval aestheticians, does not exalt himself, but modestly values himself as a follower of canonized traditions, his father's successor, "seeking to strengthen family traditions" and give them meaning. "These notes, *Legend About the Flower of Style*," Zeami writes in the introduction to his programmatic treatise, "are not intended for the eyes of outsiders; they are written on paper to impart the tradition of our home to our own family's posterity. That is what is usually said, but the real impulse behind these notes arises from the thought constantly persecuting me that perhaps the time has come when our chosen path is no longer needed. I look at my brothers in art and see that they work carelessly, constantly immerse themselves in other pursuits, and drown in fleeting glory at the moment of accidental success, at some particular show. Having forgotten their sources, they fall out of the stream of tradition." (Zeami, 1989, p. 23–24). We encounter a similar appeal to secret traditions at the beginning of *Maigetsusho,* by Fujiwara Teika, the famous representative of Japanese literary aesthetics, when addressing himself to his disciple he writes: "I should be thankful for this opportunity to reveal several secrets from the art of poetry entrusted to me by my father." (Fujiwara Teika, Maigetsusho, 1981, p. 80).

When analyzing the evolution of Japanese aesthetic thought and art, we notice a characteristic feature: the development of different conceptions, schools, and artistic styles seems to obey a law of undulating change which manifests itself not only by constantly adopting pre-existing traditions, canons, symbols, and means of expression, but also by periodically repeating them. No significant school with its own distinctive theory or artistic style has ever disappeared without a trace from the cultural horizon of Japan. After flourishing it may temporarily withdraw from the foreground of cultural life, but later it is inevitably reborn by transmitting its vital ideas and achievements to other spiritually allied schools. For example, in the aesthetics of Japanese painting two different tendencies polemicize and alternate with each another: one, which relies on the principles of Confucian aesthetics and is inclined toward decorativeness and a colorful, realistic depiction of the world (*yamato-e, kano, ukiyo-e*), and another, which is oriented toward the principles of Taoist and Zen Buddhist aesthetics and exalts spontaneity, limitation, restraint, and the significance of natural flights of the spirit (*suibokuga, haiga, zenga, bunjinga*).

Japanese aesthetic ideals are expressed in situational categories which are difficult to define and of which the most important are *makoto* (truth, natural sincerity), *aware* (enchantment), *okashi* (charm of playful humor), *yugen* (mysterious beauty), *sabi* (veil of antiquity), *wabi* (restrained beauty), *shibui* (aristocratic simplicity), *en* (charm), *miyabi* (tranquility), *hosomi* (subtlety, fragility), *karumi* (lightness), *yubi* (elegance), *sobi* (grandeur), and *mei* (purity, nobility). In mediaeval aesthetics these categories crystallize mainly as a consequence of the personality's contemplative relationship with natural phenomena and artistic creations. Colored by sensitive emotional shadings, these syncretistic, visual-conceptual categories, which unite thought and image, unfold in the sphere not of abstract theoretical thought, but of sensitive psychological reactions. Subjectively emphasized in aesthetic evaluations, the psychological gradations of

aesthetic shadings highlight the relationship between Japanese aesthetic categories and Indian *rasa*.

The outer antithesis between beauty and ugliness is foreign to Japanese aestheticians. Their aesthetic evaluations are dialectical and sensitively nuanced; the influence of the *Yijing* (*I Ching*) and of Taoist dialectics can be felt in them. *Bi* (beauty), a concept close to the modern Western category of aestheticism, is seen as the eternal essence hidden in all the phenomena of existence. It unfolds in the structure of the universe, in the world of nature, in the spheres of human existence, art, and feeling. *Bi* is understood as a constant which not only in one way or another exists *a priori* in all the phenomena of existence, but which is also characterized by the power to change its outer shape and acquire a new form. From this springs the belief characteristic of Japanese aestheticians and artists that even the simplest unnoticed occurrence fading away in everyday life has within it a distinctive, unique beauty. When we delve into the world of Japanese aesthetics and reveal its specific character, we become convinced that even if during different stages of the evolution of Japanese culture the category *bi* has constantly changed its lexical shape, enriching it with new aesthetic qualities and shadings, nevertheless, in the words of Makoto Ueda, "beauty preserves its universal meaning as a principle of life and art." (Makoto Ueda, 1967, p. 53).

Because of the emotional character of the mentality and aesthetic thought of the Japanese, the situationalism of aesthetic categories, and the close interconnection of the problems of aesthetics and of the philosophy, theory, criticism, and psychology of art, Japanese aesthetics submits with difficulty to systematic research, formal description, and theoretical analysis. That is one of the most important reasons (alongside the non-alphabetic script) preventing Western research into Japanese aesthetics. Compared with Indian and Chinese aesthetics, which the scholars of various countries have been researching for a long time, the history of Japanese aesthetic thought is still poorly known in the West, and except for general research into art and culture there are almost no academic studies in this field.

The Heian Period (794-1185)

The orientation toward continental culture and its intensive assimilation during the Nara period stimulated a distinct advancement of cultural, artistic, and aesthetic thought in the later Heian period (794–1185), which many researchers justifiably call the Golden Age of Japanese classical literary aesthetics and literature. After synthesizing many of the achievements of the spiritual and material culture of India, China, and Korea, Japanese intellectuals gradually returned to national traditions. An important turning point in the evolution of Heian aesthetic thought and art came at the end of the 9th century, when a temporary rupture in official contacts with China led to the partial isolation of Japanese culture. This strengthened national consciousness and the effort to highlight the value of distinctively Japanese aesthetic and artistic traditions. Even though various aesthetic and artistic ideas continued to be adopted from the continent, they increasingly bore a Japanese stamp. At the beginning of the 10th century the Japanese language replaced Chinese as a literary language and finally became dominant in literature and poetry. The same tendencies actively manifested themselves in the fields of religious and secular painting, sculpture, calligraphy, and applied art.

Unlike calligraphy and painting, in which national tendencies developed without disruption, the influence of Chinese traditions was much stronger in poetry and literature. This influence was connected with the exclusive role of classical Chinese literature in the education and upbringing of the young as well as with the popularity of Chinese poetry among the educated.

The aestheticians and artists of the Heian period, after assimilating the achievements of continental culture, returned to national traditions and nurtured national ideals. In the works of Tsurayuki, Sei Shonagon, and Murasaki Shikibu the aesthetic thought of this period achieved noteworthy heights. Various forms of religious and secular art, poetry, and literature flourished. Japan became one of the most important centers of world culture by forming unique traditions of theory and art. The gentle, "feminine" aesthetics of the Heian period, which exalted national aesthetic values, became a sort of antiquity for the theoreticians and artists of later periods, an ideal without equal to which they constantly looked and from which they drew inspiration. This delicate, refined period, full of aesthetic spirit, ended with the dramatic sounding of the restless new leitmotifs of the "masculine" samurai era.

The establishment of the aesthetic ideas of Zen Buddhism in Japanese culture is closely related to important social changes that emerged at the end of the 12th century, when the country was gradually entering the late Middle Ages. When the influence of the Fujiwara family weakened in the political life of the country, a new class of warlike samurai arose, who limited the powers of the emperor and the aristocracy.

The Kamakura Period

During the Kamakura period new changes in philosophy, aesthetic thought, and art emerged which were connected to the gradual transition of cultural initiative from the imperial and aristocratic court located in the old capital of Heian to Zen monasteries and samurai castles scattered in the provinces. The aesthetic ideals of the Heian period with their characteristic refinement, hedonism and elegance were gradually replaced by the ascetic ideology of Zen Buddhists and the severe ideology of the samurai, who had actively invaded the spiritual life of the country.

The Japanese word *Zen* is derived from the term C*h'an*, which is the Chinese form of the Indian Buddhist term *Dhyana*, meaning "reflection, meditation, the concentration of one's consciousness." The philosophy and worldview of this school can be traced back to India, but as a distinct aesthetic trend with its characteristic paradoxical thinking and internal artistry it crystallized within Chinese culture.

The chief ideologists of Zen were Buddhist monks who acquired their knowledge in China and later, after returning to Japan, maintained close relations with Ch'an monastic centers. After spending many years on the continent, they were well acquainted with the Indian sources of Buddhism and with classical Chinese philosophy, aesthetics, Ch'an literature, calligraphy, poetry, painting, and other art forms cultivated by Ch'an monasteries. Ch'an adepts, who founded the first Zen monasteries and promoted the new Buddhist way, did much to assimilate the great achievements of Indian and Chinese civilization and gave powerful impulses to the native philosophy, aesthetics, and art of Japan. In contrast to India, where Buddhist philosophy and aesthetics were full of complex, abstract speculations and metaphysical constructions, in Japan they had passed through the filter of Chinese culture, lost their metaphysical character, and in Zen doctrine approached everyday life.

Most probably, Zen doctrine gained much greater influence and took deeper root in Japan than in China because in many essential features, especially love of nature and the exaltation of beauty and of emotionality, simplicity, and restraint, it was similar to the traditions of Shinto. This fact helped Zen ideas quickly spread far beyond the limits of monasteries and exert great influence on many spheres of Japanese spiritual life, aesthetics, and art.

Most influential of the more than fifty forms of Zen known in Japan are the two main schools that had already crystallized in the 13th century: Rinzai and Soto, whose founders developed the ideas of the northern and the southern forms of Ch'an that had formed in China. Rinzai teaching, which paid special attention to strictness of education, self-control, and the development of inner discipline and encouraged the pursuit of an active goal, spread not only among aestheticians and artists but also among the military aristocracy and ordinary samurai.

The Zen Buddhist worldview that became established during the Kamakura period exerted a strong influence on the aesthetic consciousness, style of thinking, and artistic culture of Japan. In large part, it determined the distinctive character of the Japanese aesthetic phenomenon. We can see traces of Zen influence in architecture sensitively integrated into the context of nature, in restrained interiors of subdued colors, in ascetic gardens, in the refined tea ceremony, in the distinctive aesthetics of *no* theatre, in monochrome *suiboku*, *haiga*, *zenga*, and *bunjinga* painting, in condensed calligraphy, in the concise poetry of haiku, in ceramic vessels that preserve the natural color of the materials used and details of texture, and in other branches of applied art.

Many specific features of Zen and of the Japanese aesthetic phenomenon in general have developed from fundamental postulates of the Zen Buddhist worldview and from a distinctive understanding of space, time, nonexistence, and emptiness. In Zen Buddhism the idea of the beginning or end of space does not exist. Here, everything is combined and intertwined in the eternal flow of the processes of being. Beyond the limits of the visible something unseen, indescribable is always unfolding. Because the idea of boundless being cannot by nature be expressed, the artist, after grasping its essence, does not seek to give the images he is creating a clearly defined form but relies on symbols, metaphors, and hints. *Emptiness* is one of the most fundamental categories of Zen aesthetics. As a symbol of inexhaustibility, it embodies the primordial essence of the ineffable, formless, and inaudible Absolute. Emptiness, a blank space in a picture, pauses in music and theater acquire a special significance because in these states of inactivity Zen aestheticians see the foundation of powerful creative forces of existence, that from which everything must begin.

In Zen aesthetics the exaltation of boundless space and of the substantiality of nonexistence is directly related to the dynamic concept of the flow of time, whose existence is interpreted as a seamless, spontaneous, vital process every moment of which is unique and valuable in and of itself.

From the Zen Buddhist understanding of time and space directly comes one of the basic principles of Zen aesthetics and art, called the *non-finito* in modern aesthetics. Aesthetic suggestion or reticence is interpreted as the completely natural result of any authentic creation. Its organic character is theoretically based on the Buddhist postulate that the human spirit is by nature ineffable, the view that personality is an unpredictable totality of potencies. Because a true artist is ineffable, just like existence itself, it follows that all the results of his creative work are also ineffable. According to Zen aestheticians, any finiteness is incompatible with the eternal movement of being and creative flight of spirit, and it is, therefore, associated with stagnation, death, and the loss of energetic creative impulses.

Another basic feature of Zen aesthetics is aestheticized pantheism. By developing the ideas of Shinto and Taoism, Zen aestheticians firmly established in the Japanese consciousness an ecstatic love for nature, which they regard as the chief source of artistic inspiration and authentic creation. To a follower of Zen, everything in nature is full of spirit, lofty poetry, and inner beauty. All of its phenomena excite special respect and admiration. Thus, the contemplation of nature acquires in Zen Buddhism a universal religious, ethical, and aesthetic meaning. In Zen aesthetic tradition, even the world of art is interpreted as the highest form of nature's self-expression.

By exalting asymmetry and rejecting statics, Zen artists seek movement. They see beauty in asymmetrical composition, in a conscious violation of balance, because symmetry constrains space while asymmetry frees it and nourishes the imagination. Everything that possesses an authentic creative spirit must be on the way, in movement, in constant change, because a stable, fixed state is associated with the termination of the natural flow of existence and is perceived as a symbol of death.

On the other hand, the exaltation of asymmetry in Zen aesthetics does not destroy the universal principle of harmony, which is directly connected to the idea of the harmony of the universe. Harmony is the primordial state of the world. Everything in nature obeys the laws of all-embracing harmony, and asymmetry, in this sense, is a higher manifestation of harmony. The goal of the artist is to perceive and convey this harmony. For this reason, the category of grandiosity and grandeur, so important in Western aesthetics, is rejected because that which is too grandiose violates the harmony of existence, overpowers and destroys the world of beauty.

The poetics of simplicity and naturalness is especially characteristic of Zen art. Even in the simplest materials artists discern the distinctive charm of textures and natural tones. These features of Zen art manifest themselves in the ascetic design of a dry garden, in the simplicity of a teahouse interior, in the naturalness of the materials and utensils used there, in the unobtrusive relationship between tone structures in a monochrome painting, in the emphasis on simple forms and natural colors characteristic of Zen ceramics. Here, simplicity usually means the absence of artificiality and a striving to reveal the natural functionality of materials. After all, a ceramic bowl of natural, simple form serves its purpose better and is more pleasing to the eye.

Closely related to simplicity and naturalness is another important feature of Zen art: ascetic grandeur or cold pride, which directly reflects the ideals of Zen Buddhists, their efforts to turn away from the vanity of the outer world, to proudly meet the blows of fate, misfortune, and to be content with little. These ideals determine the indifference of Zen art to universal norms and rules and the emergence of a highly personal relationship with the work of art. Avoiding great precision and attachment to things, Zen artists highly value improvisation, the freedom and spontaneity of the creative act. An atmosphere of freedom, imprecision, and ineffability dominates Zen art. Also characteristic are inner concentration produced by meditation, tranquility, and an orientation to inner spiritual values.

Characteristic of the development of aesthetic thought and art in the Kamakura period is the rapid decline of earlier secular influences and their replacement by those of Zen Buddhism. This gradual change of ideals manifests itself both in theoretical thought and in *tanka* and *renga* poetry, calligraphy, landscape and portrait painting, landscape architecture, and *no* theatre, whose aesthetics most sensitively reflected the spiritual quests of the period.

The development of secular art forms into religious ones was especially complicated in poetry. This fact can be explained by the special role of secular *tanka* poetry in the culture of the 9th-13th centuries. In addition, supporters of native *waka* poetry, which was written in Japanese and had become established at the end of Heian period, still actively contended against the creators of *kanshi* poetry, which was written in Chinese and had put down deep roots in Japanese culture. These factors slowed down the penetration of Zen ideology into the world of poetry.

The end of the Heian period was dramatic: endless civil wars not only devastated the country but also unsettled age-old spiritual values. Aesthetic treatises from the second half of the 12th century and works by the greatest poets attest to the slowly growing influence of Zen Buddhist ideology. It is evident in the spiritual evolution of Fujiwara Shunzei and Saigyo, the two leading

poets and aesthetic authorities of the 12th century. These two brilliant poets, who corresponded regularly with each other, account for a turning point in Japanese aesthetic consciousness.

After occupying the highest government offices and winning recognition as an incomparable *tanka* poet and art critic, Fujiwara Shunzei unexpectedly abandoned his public life, took the vows of a Zen monk, and devoted himself to art. A similar step was also taken by his younger contemporary Saigyo, who renounced a promising career in order to choose the way of a wandering Zen monk, poet, and hermit. In the worldview of Fujiwara Shunzei and Saigyô there emerges a dramatic view of human life; their creative work resounds with new elegiac Zen motifs. The challenge from these two outstanding personalities to the pleasures of worldly life became an example to their followers, who formed the ascetic ideal of *Gei-Doh* (Way of Art) characteristic of the cultures of the Far East. By devoting their lives to the creation of artistic values, the followers of this ideal attached to their choice the almost religious meaning of approaching the Absolute. The formation of the ideology of the Way of Art attests that in Zen aesthetic consciousness there was taking shape a new understanding of the special meaning of artistic activity.

The most influential exponent of the new ideal of the Way of Art was Fujiwara Shunzei's son Fujiwara Teika (1162–1241), who under the guidance of his father since childhood soon became famous for his penetrating critical mind, subtle aesthetic taste, and wonderful *tanka* poetry. As the initiator of a qualitatively new poetry of thought, he achieved in his verses extraordinary depths of philosophical insight and by force of his versatile talent surpassed his father's renown.

As Teika matured, the influence of Zen increased in his worldview and creative work. In the theoretical treatises *On the Creation of Verse* and *Maigetsusho* and in dialogs, critical articles, and the introductions to anthologies he became the greatest authority on the theory of *waka* poetry written in Japanese and consistently defended the aesthetic value of native poetic traditions. He developed the influential theories of *honkadori, ushin, kokoro,* and *yoen* and the teaching about ten poetic styles; he dealt with tradition and innovation, content and form, the process of artistic creation, the inner essence of a work of art, aesthetic suggestion, and other problems.

Developing Ki no Tsurayuki's ideas, Teika defended the originality and aesthetic value of native *waka* poetry written in Japanese. Characteristic of his feeling for the world was the cult of classical poetry, which invited aestheticians and artists to follow age-old traditions, in which he saw an inexhaustible source of creative inspiration and authentic creation. Thus, his negative attitude toward the poetry of his contemporaries is not surprising, for he saw in it much seeking after originality for its own sake and superficial complexity. The most important principle in Teika's aesthetic theory is *honkadori* (following the example of ancient poetry), the essence of which is an invitation to express new feelings by means of old words and images. He promotes the new ideal of *yoen* (charming beauty), whose expression causes even the greatest poets to stumble.

According to Teika, the most perfect *waka* verses are those "that, rising above all tendencies indicating dependence on any one of the ten styles, embrace the features of all of them and at the same time diffuse a suggestive aroma"(Fujiwara Teika, 1981, p. 82). Content and form must be organically joined in these verses, i.e., the expression of *kokoro* must be in harmony with skillfully chosen words. When speaking about the creation of perfect verses, Teika relies upon his father's idea that "a poet must choose such words as naturally flow from the depths of his spirit."

Teika exalts aesthetic suggestion, reticence. In his opinion, the poet who has begun a thought must be able to end it so masterfully that a rich space of suggestions unfolds in the imagination of his audience. In addition, purity of spirit is necessary to produce an authentic work of art because true depth of thought cannot be attained if one's consciousness is muddled or polluted with unclean thoughts or images. The most perfect works of art, which reveal the ideal of *yoen* (charming

beauty), are created when the spirit becomes serene, when the poet immerses himself in a state of tranquility, when his psychic concentration reaches such a degree that "verses start to flow as if of their own accord."

Thus, Fujiwara Teika's aesthetics became an important phenomenon in the maturation of Zen aesthetic thought in Japan. His aesthetic treatises are the equivalents of universal, practical textbooks on the philosophy of art; for this reason, theoreticians and artists have attentively studied them for many centuries. *Gei-Doh* (Way of Art), which was reflected in the life and work of this outstanding personality, became the philosophy of life and art for many great Zen Buddhist artists.

The Muromachi Period

The cultural development of the new Muromachi period was accompanied by powerful social convulsions and by the further Japanization of the aesthetic and artistic forms that had appeared during the Kamakura period. The cultural initiative began to change after 1333, when the Ashikaga clan, upon coming to power, transferred the capital of their state to the city of Muromachi near Kyôto. Although the samurai did not value the refined culture and effete lifestyle of the aristocracy, *Muromachi culture embraced the two tendencies that had formed earlier: 1) the refined aristocratic one of Heian and 2) the samurai one of Kamakura, severe in form and full of vital energy*.

During this time of war and disorder, while traditional institutions were collapsing, people longed for an idealized past and became interested in the cultural and artistic forms that had thrived during the Nara and Heian periods. There was a renewal of interest in the ideals, full of ecstatic love for nature and of spontaneous flights of spirit, which despite the spread of ascetic Buddhist ideology had not been forgotten. The cultural and artistic forms of the past acquired an aura of charm and interested the palace aristocracy, educated samurai, and artists. Great interest in poetry was seen; the verses of the great poets of the past were collected and repeatedly published; there were poetry tournaments and discussions.

Of the many traditional art forms that appeared during the Muromachi period *no* (*noh* – pleasure, skill, mastery) theater stands out for the suggestiveness and influence of its aesthetic principles. Its rise during the late Middle Ages was decisively influenced by the ideas of Zen. These ideas strongly influenced the aesthetics of the most eminent theoretician, dramatist, actor, and director of *no* theater, Zeami Motokiyo (1363–1443), who summarized and canonized the principles of *no* drama that had crystallized at the end of the 14th century.

In Zeami's tracts we encounter an aesthetic system that includes teachings about *monomane* (imitation), *yugen* (mysterious beauty), *hana* (the stage charm of the actor or the unfolding of his talent), artistic style, the process of artistic creation, a system of aesthetic education, and other less important matters. The principal way to true art, in Zeami's view, consists of studying traditions inherited from the past and following the best artistic examples. This following is not superficial imitation, but a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. *Monomane* (the study and imitation of things) is explained in Zeami's aesthetics as the gradual movement of the actor from outer form to inner essence, from grotesque affectation to concise symbolic image.

In Zeami's aesthetics the principle of *yugen* acquires a universal meaning. It becomes the criterion of an actor's artistry, his emotional attitude, and the aesthetic value of the play. *Yugen* expresses not merely the feeling of a universal worldview, of the ephemeral nature of human existence, but also, first of all, a quiet understanding of conditional, barely tangible, hidden beauty. Here, *yugen* is connected with the "inner essence," hidden under a veil of outward visibility, of the

action on stage, of the actor. A genuine artist who understands the enchanting power of *yugen* consciously avoids cheap effects. He orients himself not to outer emotions but to a maximally concentrated dramatic action, to a mysterious beauty, not fully expressed, with its characteristic depth, nobility, and softness of style.

Thus, the rise of the category of *yugen* in the mediaeval aesthetics of the theater is directly connected with the growing influence of Zen Buddhist ideals: distancing oneself from the hubbub of the outer world, tranquility, and the ability to penetrate through the veil of everyday life into the deep essence of phenomena. Zeami and other aestheticians of the Muromachi period encounter the spirit of mysterious beauty in the simplest inconspicuous phenomena, in things that conceal within them a distinctive beauty. Because this inner concentration of mysterious beauty is difficult to express in words, exponents of the principle of *yugen* exalt the exceptional significance of the mask, symbol, metaphor, and aesthetic suggestion. In order to successfully convey the difficult-to-define essence of *yugen* in a work of art, the artist needs to highlight his unique relationship with the work of art and by means of an imperceptible stroke, suggestive detail, or symbol just barely reveal a hidden aspect of beauty. Thus understood, the principle of *yugen*, which encompasses beauty that is not completely visible or audible but is only suggested, is with its exaltation of "hidden meaning" reminiscent of the Indian principle of *dhvani*.

In expressing the essential aspects of the Zen worldview, the category of *yugen* delineates all the principal levels of *no* theater aesthetics, beginning with the value of the play and ending with the artistry of a specific actor. The expression of mysterious beauty is the most important component of theater art and the mark of the highest artistry of the actor. Zeami connects the essence of *yugen* with aristocracy of spirit, which is based on subtlety of behavior, appearance, and other outward marks.

An extremely important place in Zeami's aesthetics is occupied by the problem of talent and its cultivation. When dealing with this part of Zeami's aesthetic program, we constantly encounter the image of *hana* (the blossom), which is interpreted as the charm and talent of the actor on stage. Here, the metaphorical category of the blossom is directly connected with the actor, who expresses charm on stage, and with his talent and artistry, which can be successfully developed and, likewise, destroyed. Zeami explains talent as a mysterious phenomenon, of a cosmic divine nature, which is expressed in the actor, poet, and dramatist through the powerful, creative, and vital energy hidden in them.

By summarizing the artistic and aesthetic principles of the Zen worldview, of the theories of allied art forms, and of the synthetic *no* theater of the Muromachi period, Zeami's aesthetic theory becomes the culmination of Japanese mediaeval aesthetic thought. In the works of this theoretician we encounter a unified, minutely systematized, and deeply, philosophically reasoned aesthetic conception whose most important component parts are teachings about imitation, mysterious beauty, artistic style, the process of artistic creation, talent, and the problems involved in cultivating it.

After the Mongol invasion of China and the devastation of the Southern Sung capital in 1279, Japan was inundated anew with the influence of Sung art and Ch'an aesthetic ideas. Zen calligraphy and monochrome painting of a high artistic level changed and gradually replaced the schools of calligraphy, Buddhist religious painting, and *yamato-e* that had formerly been dominant.

In comparison to the earlier styles of calligraphy, the works of the great Zen masters Ikkyu Sojun, Sesshû, and Zekkai Chushin are more concentrated, more dramatic, more intimate, and full of inner tension. They stand out for their special expressiveness and condensation. Here, even the

most spontaneous flights of creative spirit are full of the spiritual concentration and tranquility characteristic of meditative works. Laconic calligraphic structures that unfold against a background of active, empty, white space reveal an astonishingly high aesthetic culture and stylistic élan. Following *sabi* and *wabi* aesthetics, masters of Zen calligraphy highlight the beauty and aristocracy of simplicity in their works.

Under the influence of the art and Ch'an aesthetics of the Sung dynasty in China, two new traditions of painting were formed on which Zen calligraphy had great influence. The first, a school of Zen portrait painting based on realism, brought together artists who depicted people seeking spiritual enlightenment. These are ascetic portraits of followers of Zen, full of inner peace and reflectiveness, in which conscious emphasis is placed not on the outer, but on the inner beauty of a spiritually mature personality. These portraits are dominated by the spirit of *wabi*, which is full of openness, the austere beauty of poverty, and the poetry of simplicity.

The other, much more influential school of monochrome ink painting, which inspired by the spirit of Zen achieved perfection of form, perceptibly differs from the earlier tradition of Buddhist painting and may puzzle a European unacquainted with the distinctive features of Far Eastern art. The technique of monochrome *suiboku* ink painting is closely connected to calligraphy and is naturally influenced by its technical and compositional means of artistic expression. In the early stage of development of *suiboku*, the dependence of its means of artistic expression on calligraphy was striking and clearly tangible in the treatment of many canonical motifs and their component parts. This dependence is entirely understandable because the materials and the means of artistic expression were identical.

The Momoyama Period

An important turning point for Japanese culture occurred during the second half of the 16th century, a time full of dramatic historical events, when a rebirth of culture called the Japanese Renaissance began. The Neo-Confucianism of the Chinese Sung period became the official ideology of the state. The ascetic harshness of the early samurai culture was now replaced by a new ideology, oriented toward the values of secular culture, whose influence grew after 1573, when the Ashikaga family was deposed from rule and the Momoyama period began (1573–1603).

The Zen aesthetics dominant during the Middle Ages and the art forms closely connected with it changed. The tendencies to secularize Zen aesthetics were connected with a return to the cultural and artistic traditions of the past. The religious and secular traditions of aesthetics and art were closely intertwined during the Momoyama period. Alongside changing traditional art forms there arose new artistic styles and genres; magnificent castles and palaces thrived as well as landscape architecture, the decorative painting of screens and *fusuma* (wall partitions), the art of so-called dry gardens and of the tea ceremony, and ikebana.

Closely connected with the aesthetics of Japanese gardens is *cha-no-yu*, i.e., the art of the tea ceremony. This distinctive art form of the Far East is a unique expression, characteristic of the Momoyama period, of the penetration of aesthetic consciousness into everyday life, evolving in time and in a highly aestheticized environment specially intended for it. Directly connected with the tea ceremony is the development of almost all the most important art forms of the Momoyama period: architecture, the art of the garden, painting, calligraphy, ceramics, ikebana, and various forms of applied art. Then again, not only does the tea ceremony, which embodies the idea of close interaction of the arts, lack analogs in Western culture, but it is also not easy to determine its place even in the hierarchy of Japanese arts. Despite the distinctiveness of this art form, it can

undoubtedly be considered one of the most typical products of the development of Japanese culture.

The aesthetics of the tea ceremony acquired classical forms in the theory and artistic practice of the eminent master of the Sakai school and author of *The Tea Book*, Sen no Rikyû (1521–1591).

By developing the ideas of Ikkyû, Murata Shukô, and Takeno Jôô, Sen no Rikyû was the first to connect the various components of the *tea way* rituals and gave them the form of a unified system defined by canon. Apart from Zen aesthetics, his conception of the tea ceremony was greatly influenced by the philosophy of Taoism. Sen no Rikyû took over Taoist theories of psychological equilibrium, the calming of the passions, cosmic universality, and spiritual perfection as well as the teaching that a wise person must bridle his passions and plunge into a state of "inactivity" (*wu wei*). He devoted especially great attention to the inner interaction and functionality of the main components of the ceremony. Sen no Rikyû strengthened the role of *wabi* aesthetics and bestowed a restrained Zen undertone on the components of the tea ceremony, even though elements of a Taoist worldview and Confucian ethics remained hidden in it. Everything – from the garden, the house, the world of "dewy ground" surrounding it, i.e., of garden space surrounding the house, the exterior and interior of the house, the works of art in the *tokonoma*, the inventory, and the utensils with a clearly defined functional meaning to the sequence of rituals thought out in the most minute detail – was subordinated to one goal, the intuitive experience and veneration of beauty.

By taking place in the presence of beauty, this simple ritual was supposed to eliminate differences of wealth and social rank and help the people participating in it, under conditions of minimal comfort, feel the importance of intimate spiritual communion.

In the rituals of the tea ceremony many of the fundamental ideals of the secularized Zen worldview were distinctively transformed: the exaltation of meditation, of contemplation of the beauty of nature, and of purification from the mire of this earthly world; longing for spiritual enlightenment; and striving to transport oneself from this world of everyday existence to that of sacralized, purified spiritual values. A coherent sequence of ritualized procedures, from meeting the guests and preparing the tea to enjoying the spirit of *wabi*, creates the atmosphere of a unified, unbroken creative process. This ceremony helps its participants escape from the hubbub of gray everyday life and create a hermetic world of exalted aesthetic values in which satisfaction becomes identical to the pleasure derived from an act of artistic creation.

Thanks to the spirit of *wabi*, the aesthetics of the tea ceremony spread the principles of restrained taste far beyond the bounds of a specific sphere of art and became a significant phenomenon of Japanese spiritual culture. The secularizing tendencies that emerged in it were directly connected not only with economic and social trends in the life of the country but also with the ideals of the Zen worldview, its characteristic democracy, and the ignoring of social regulation and of the hierarchical structures of society. This art, which originated in Zen monasteries, spread its sphere of influence throughout the social strata of the Momoyama period. Each level of society discerned a distinctive charm in the "aesthetics of simplicity" of the tea ceremony.

The refined ritual of the tea ceremony, which synthesized within it the elements of many traditional Japanese aesthetic theories and art forms, was, like many other traditional Japanese art forms, taken over from China. However, the elements of this tea ceremony of Chinese origin were well assimilated into the culture of the Momoyama period and acquired distinctive aestheticized forms characteristic of Japanese culture and nuances which emerged, first of all, in various aspects of the bringing together of art and everyday life. The tea ceremony provides an excellent example of how the spiritual teachings of Zen are in harmony with firm ethical principles, aesthetic

receptiveness, and the universality of artistic thinking. In this synthetic, ritualized art form ceramics, garden architecture, interior design, calligraphy, painting, and ikebana along with many other aspects of artistic activity fuse into a single whole.

The most important role in the interior décor of fine buildings of the Momoyama period fell to painting, which, in order to meet the taste of the shogunate and the samurai aristocracy, was oriented to secular themes. Before the second half of the 15th century Japanese painting was dominated by the landscape genre cultivated by artists of the Zen tradition, while at the end of the 15th century a parallel interest emerged in "flower and bird" painting, which became especially popular in the decoration of screens and wall partitions which was dominant during the Momoyama period. This style of painting was one of the most significant artistic phenomena of the Momoyama period. This field saw the work of the most outstanding master painters, whose spectacularly painted large-scale decorative pictures gradually pushed into second place the painting of the formerly dominant Zen religious tradition. This new situation was also influenced by fundamental changes in Japanese society, by the emergence of a new shogunate and samurai aristocracy, of strata of rich merchants and craftsmen with their own distinctive aesthetic tastes.

The influential Kanô and Tosa schools, which were developing in parallel, sensitively reacted to this changed aesthetic taste, and their supporters mainly painted polychrome screens and wall partitions. This painting was dominated by the soft contours characteristic of earlier tradition and by the subdued colors directly connected with the foggy landscape of the country. These schools were constantly balanced between recognition of the priority of decorative and of representational elements. Their themes were taken from the world of nature, classical art, literature, and the daily life of the samurai aristocracy and the cities. Despite constant confrontation, these two schools, Kanô and Tosa, which dominated the Momoyama period, are close in spirit, in means of artistic expression, and especially in their tendency toward decorativeness. For the masters of the Kanô school the most important problem was how to convey space, while the works of Tosa painters emphasized the materiality of the things depicted, the formal and compositional elements of painting, its emotionality and inner architectonics.

Suibokuga and the decorative tendencies of Chinese "flowers and birds" and landscape painting were distinctively developed by the Kanô school, which existed for more than three centuries in Japanese culture. To it are ascribed artists of various styles who followed different aesthetic principles and who with few exceptions belonged to one dynasty of painters. This school, which was based on Confucian aesthetic principles, derived its name from Kanô Masanobu (1434–1530), the founder of a clan of painters, and this family's numerous members and descendents. It unites a multitude of official, academically oriented painters who were supported by the shogunate and samurai aristocracy and of whom the most eminent were Kanô Masanobu's son Kanô Motanobu (1476–1559), his grandson Kanô Eitoku (1543–1590), and Kanô Sanraku (1559–1635).

These painters were commissioned by shoguns and wealthy samurai to decorate the interiors of castles and palaces. Despite their attraction to decorativeness, the masters of this school preserved the tie with earlier traditions of Japanese painting that exalted the beauty of nature. In their works there is no clearly defined line between decorative and representational art. After combining the tendencies toward decorative art in the old schools of painting, they went over to the painting of larger-scale, imaginatively conceived, emotional pictures in the new expressive style. They painted with effect, boldly, freely taking advantage of the possibilities offered by graceful drawing, emotional colors, and decorative spots. For their works the masters of this school chose the most diverse subjects, from traditional landscapes conveying a feeling of boundless space to mythological persons, bird and flower motifs.

After taking over from their predecessors and Chinese painters the principles of artistic composition and the main motifs, masters of the Kanô school distanced themselves from the expression of more profound philosophical thought and spiritual experiences and concentrated their attention mostly on the plastic problems of decorative painting. They stressed the beauty of things, landscapes, animals, birds, and flowers. Their pictures stand out for integrity of decorative style, harmonious composition, beauty of color and ornament, and monumentality of form. Their compositions are often gigantic, of dimensions unseen even in China, because they were intended to adorn vast interior spaces. The Kanô school's decorative painting of walls and screens was a unique phenomenon in Japanese Renaissance culture, closely connected with the establishment of secular tendencies in painting.

Alongside the Kanô school undoubtedly the most influential school of decorative painting in the Momoyama period was Tosa, in which the aesthetic principles of the *yamato-e* school were reborn and a new interest in horizontal painting emerged. The most eminent masters of this school – members of the famous Tosa family of painters Tosa Mitsunobu (1434–1525), Tosa Mitsushige (1496–1559), Tosa Mitsumoto (1530–1569), Tosa Mitsuyoshi (1539–1613), and Tosa Mitsuoki (1617–1691) – were oriented toward the world of nature and themes from classical literature.

Unlike the masters of the Kanô school, who gave priority to transparent colors and took great advantage of the possibilities provided by restrained color tones, members of the Tosa school tended to a vibrant color scale, golden tones, and subtle calligraphic drawing that emphasized the beauty of expressive lines. In their work soft linear drawing predominates, while color, by acquiring a special intensity, becomes the dominant means of artistic expression. Masters of this school gave special attention to the purely formal, musical-plastic aspects of painting, to form, material, workmanship, glaze, problems of composition, and the relations between decorative color zones of different intensity. For them "the most important matter was not narrative theme but harmonious relations between separate parts of the picture, emotional understanding of the picture as a totality of plastic forms' (Andrijauskas, 2001, p. 314).

In the aesthetic theory of Tosa Mitsuoki one can see a shift from formerly dominant sacral principles of painting to new secular ones. He was mainly interested not in abstract aesthetic problems but in those concrete tasks and problems which as an artist he encountered in his everyday activity. At the center of Tosa Mitsuoki's attention were the nature of art, national identity, the autonomy of art, its relationship to reality, the training of the artist, his creative potential, the creative process, the conveyance of "flights of spirit," the basic qualities of a true work of art, the imperfection of a work of art, and many other problems. Like many other artists of his period, Tosa Mitsuoki dealt with the important problem of the character of national art and with its specific relationship to the artistic traditions of India, China, and Korea.

In comparing Japanese painting to that of China, Tosa Mitsuoki emphasizes the sensitivity, softness, poetry, and spontaneity of national art and the orthodoxy, conservatism, respect for tradition, and realism characteristic of Chinese painting. The highest goal of the artist and the fundamental law of painting are to authentically convey the *spirit* of every object depicted. In both monochrome and polychrome painting he exalts sublime lightness, the poetics of simplicity, and aristocracy. Here, the most exact characterization of the essence of painting is proclaimed to be the "sublime lightness" characteristic of all the masterpieces of the past. However, he also speaks out against exaggerated fascination with outward beauty.

Relying on the aesthetic traditions of Chinese and Japanese painting, Tosa Mitsuoki summarized, in his own aesthetics, many of the most important tendencies in the secular painting of his time. In his views there emerged the growth in national consciousness characteristic of this

period, the gradual weakening of the ideals of the religious aesthetics of Zen painting, and an orientation to the principles of authentic creation, for which outward illustrativeness is foreign.

Both in the Kanô school, which tended to the rationalism of Confucian aesthetics and to an exact reflection of reality, and in the more spontaneous Tosa school, which polemicized against it, canons that had lost their vitality gradually predominated as well as abstract decorativeness, illustrativeness, and attention to outward effects. As a reaction against the rigidity of the dominant schools, new schools arose which sought to restore life to painting.

A new wave in the rebirth of spontaneous monochrome painting was connected, in the Momoyama period, with the influential Unkoku, Hasegawa, and Soga schools, which distinctively developed separate tendencies in the tradition of *suiboku* painting. In these schools elements of painting and calligraphy are closely intertwined; compositions stand out for artistry of ink stroke and economy of image. Unlike the masters of monochrome painting in the Muromachi period, who worked mainly in the landscape genre, painters of these schools mainly created genre paintings of flowers, birds, and animals. Their works reveal the growing tendencies of stylization and decorativeness characteristic of the period.

The founder of the Unkoku school, Unkoku Tôgan (1547–1618), and his son Taeki Tôgan considered themselves followers of monochrome Sesshû painting. The work of masters of the Unkoku school is dominated by majestic landscapes and masterfully painted birds and animals against a background of nature. Despite their inclination to the traditional principles of monochrome painting, in the work of masters of the Unkoku school one can sense an effort to enrich ascetic monochrome painting with ornate elements taken from decorative painting. Pictures are often painted on gold-toned paper, whose gleam is highlighted along with the decorativeness of the stylized linear drawing.

The founder of the Hasegawa school, Hasegawa Tôhaku (his real surname was Okumura, 1539–1610), and his sons Kyuso, Sotaku, Sakon, and Sya likewise worked in landscape and genre painting. The works of Hasegawa Tôhaku reveal many tendencies characteristic of Zen monochrome painting. The screens he painted at the end of the 16th century stand out for their special economy of style, subtle graphic drawing, and great expanses of empty space full of the poetry of reticence. In the work of his sons we see the influence of the Kanô school, which is expressed as a tendency toward decorativeness and a preference for themes from everyday life. In works of polychrome painting, masters of the Hasegawa school introduced golden backgrounds and clear-cut outlines.

The founder of the Soga school in the city of Sakai, Soga Chokuan (active creative years, 1596–1610), and his son Nichokuan oriented their work toward the spontaneous aesthetics of Ikkyû painting. Turning their gaze to the world of nature, they painted splendid landscapes as well as birds, animals, and human figures against a landscape background. By preserving traces of the movement of a calligraphic brush, pictures by masters of this school express inner tension and drama more clearly than the work of many of their contemporaries. Their works stand out for tranquility, integrity of style, intimacy, and skillful drawing.

Through their inclination to "magnify" separate motifs and elevate them to the foreground of the picture, painters of the Unkoku, Hasegawa, and Soga schools paved the way for the spontaneous rebirth of schools of mixed-style *haiga*, *zenga*, and *bunjinga* monochrome painting, which appeared with full force during the following Tokugawa period.

Thus, in the Momoyama period there was a perceptible change in the cultural situation of the country and in the basic direction of aesthetic and artistic development. The shoguns, powerful military dictators who had come to power, began a comprehensive process of uniting the country.

They achieved much by weakening the influence of Zen religious aesthetics and art. The country entered a period of development similar to that of the Western Renaissance: the influence of Neo-Confucian humanism and universalism grew stronger, and a new conception of secular art emerged. Under the influence of these new ideas secular architecture, garden art, the tea ceremony, and decorative wall and screen painting flourished during the Momoyama period, and the tendencies emerged for various arts to interact and complement one another. The spirit of the age was best revealed in the distinctive art of the tea ceremony.

The character of Momoyama architecture was determined by the main building material, wood, by principles of construction, and by a secularized conception of the unity between man and the world surrounding him, a conception which was greatly influenced by a growing secular culture with its characteristic ideals and aesthetic priorities. In the design of the gardens surrounding homes and pavilions there was a growing tendency toward aesthetic sterility and a reduction in garden size. Gardens acquired new functions and became objects of aesthetic contemplation. Interiors came to be dominated by decorative tendencies that fundamentally changed the aesthetic functions of the Zen religious painting that had formerly been dominant. Decoration of the space surrounding man became the main goal of secular painting. The painting of easily disassembled wall partitions and screens provided great opportunities to transform interior space and enrich it with various motifs connecting it with the surrounding world of nature. During the Momoyama period the interaction of decorative painting, interior design, and architecture was based on universal symbols and motifs, taken over from the world of nature and given a secular interpretation, which were further developed during later centuries, when the city culture of the third estate came to power.

The Edo Period

After first appearing during the Momoyama period, tendencies to secularize culture perceptibly grew during the following Edo period (1603–1863), in which the third estate sought to establish its aesthetic criteria and ideals. In the development of aesthetic thought three basic trends emerged: 1) the most influential art was historical (represented by Chikamatsu, Bashô, Nishikawa Sukenobu, and Yusho), which was closely related to earlier traditions of aesthetic thought and sought to theoretically summarize new phenomena of artistic life; 2) the official *pro-Chinese, Neo-Confucian*, whose leading ideologist was Ogyû Sorai; and 3) the growing *national* or *school of national learning* (Keicho, Kada Atsumamaro, Kanô Mabuchi, and Motoori Norinaga), whose followers sought to revive the aesthetic ideals of the past and establish the priority of the*Japanese way*.

During the Edo period the field of poetry saw fundamental changes which were connected with the creator of the new poetic form *haikai*: Bashô Matsuo, who exalted the meaning of meditation and of a spiritual enlightenment close to the condition of *satori* and appealed to the impersonality of true art. Here, the creative act itself is regarded as a spontaneous opening up of existence and as an intuitive insight into the inner essence of phenomena. When plunging into the creative process, the artist must bridle his vanity, subdue his feelings, drive out personality, and with all his soul listen to the surrounding world of nature, intuitively find the profound connection of its phenomena to the spiritual world of man, to his most tender experiences.

Connected with Bashô's name is the emergence of three-line *haiku* poetry, qualitatively new and full of philosophical subtexts. Unlike *tanka* and *renga*, refined poetic forms favored by aristocrats, Bashô's *haiku* poems stand out for their emphatic simplicity, conciseness of thought,

image and association. In the miniature poetic form established by Bashô two different ways of understanding the world, defined by strict canons, are organically joined: the first, the universal *cosmic*, directly connects the poet with the world of nature surrounding him, with the constantly changing seasons, and appeals to man's dependence on the eternal cycle of being, and the second, the *local*, is the concrete objective world with its characteristic totality of everyday events. This twofold nature of the *haiku* helps expand the artistic space of this laconic poetic form and by means of a complex sequence of images, associations, and suggestions unite its temporal and eternal levels.

During the early stage of artistic development in the Edo period the tendencies that had formed during the Momoyama period were still powerful. In painting the work of masters of the Kyôto school (Kôetsu, Sôtatsu, and Kôrin) became a significant phenomenon of 17th-century city culture. Full of artistry and love of nature, Kôetsu's painting became an important link between painters of the Momoyama and 17th-century Edo periods. His aesthetic tastes were influenced by the styles dominant at the end of the Momoyama period.

Japanese polychrome decorative painting reached its apogee in the work of Kôrin, who was active during the Genroku period in the fields of monochrome painting, calligraphy, ceramics, lacquer ware, and the modeling of clothes. This artist was famous for his decorative works in the genres of "people" and "flowers and birds" and won the reputation of an unsurpassed designer of clothing. Unlike his predecessors, whose reflective works focused on inner values and sought to revive the poetic flights of spirit of the Heian period, Kôrin was more closely connected to the utilitarian, pragmatic worldview of the cities of his period and their characteristic attention to the outer, physical world. Although Kôrin is one of the most decorative masters of traditional Japanese painting, in many of his works he remains faithful to the poeticization of the beauty of nature characteristic of the tradition of landscape painting.

As a counterbalance to the tendencies of decorative painting, under the influence of a renascent interest in calligraphy, there was a parallel growth in the spontaneous painting styles *haiga* and *zenga*, in which improvisation is most important. In these synthetic styles the distinctive native features of Japanese painting are most clearly revealed; the tendency emerges to conciseness of artistic form and the revelation of the inner essence of the phenomena being depicted. These styles evolved from the increasingly influential and ever more visual styles of monochrome painting and calligraphy.

The most characteristic feature of *haiga* painters is perfect mastery of the expressive means of the three great arts (calligraphy, painting, and poetry). Not by accident, the greatest masters of this school were famous poets, painters, and calligraphers – Kôetsu, Shokado, Bashô, Keroku, and Issa. Their works stand out for a condensation of style unseen in earlier Japanese painting, for emotional expressiveness, for wealth of associations, and especially for a poetics of reticence.

At the beginning of the 18th century one can see the gradual transformation of the spontaneous aesthetic principles of *haiga* painting into the new synthetic style of *zenga* painting. This change was greatly influenced by Ikkyu's work, which fascinated many masters of this new school. The most eminent masters of this school – the Zen monks Takuan, Hakuin, Jiun, Sengai, and Ryôkan, who were noted for the poetic structure of their spirit – united elements of painting, calligraphy, and poetry in their work. By opposing spontaneity to the ossified aesthetic principles of decorative painting, they sought to highlight the freedom of their creative flights of spirit as well as their artistry. *Zenga* masters drew inspiration from Zen philosophical aphorisms, whose content is expressed by the emphatically economical means of artistic expression.

In the work of *zenga* masters, as in that of the closely related *nanga* school, attention is mainly directed not to the reality of the object being depicted, but to its idea, the vision of the individual artist, the rendition of its echo in his soul. This echo is expressed by means of a maximally compressed expressive drawing. A calligraphic brushstroke, graceful as if it were flying, skillfully conveys the essence of the object being depicted. Here, first place is occupied by a surprising conciseness of artistic form, by the receptiveness of the image. In comparison to *haiga*painting, the works of *zenga* masters stand out for their greater inner drama, concentration, and richness of poetic and philosophical subtext.

In *zenga* painting, which is suffused with the spirit of Zen, the main principles of painting are taken from the extremely popular calligraphy of that time. The aesthetics of *zenga* painting exalts the immediacy of the creative act, lightness, artistry and technical skill in controlling the calligraphic brush. In the works of *zenga* masters the boundary between painting and calligraphy actually disappears because these artists consciously choose motifs in which the role of the subject is slight. All attention is focused on the artistic treatment of a detail or motif depicted in close-up.

The calligraphic works of *zenga* masters affect the imagination, first of all, with the pulsating energy of their simple yet also very receptive lines which reflect the mysterious energy of nature and the rhythms of its life. Their works highlight the harmonious balance between an expressive mark and the empty space surrounding it; here, straight clear lines drawn by a firm masculine hand strangely intertwine with soft curved feminine ones. Masters skillfully change the thickness of lines and introduce expressive twists and turns in their brushwork. Here, marks are often very large, painted emotionally, in one spiritual breath. They drastically invade a blank space and emotionally control it, thus giving the viewer visual aesthetic satisfaction.

In the best works by *zenga* masters one can discern the psychological state of the artist, i.e., regard these works as the authentic expression of a pure flight of the artist's poetic spirit. From this fact arise the concentration of *zenga* painting, the significance of each line and brushstroke, and the intimacy and inner drama of the images. Calligraphic structures consisting of marks are extremely receptive. Their essence is conveyed by means of several contrasting – accidental, as it were – ink spots, expressive brushstrokes, and dramatic broken lines full of energy and tension. They drastically invade space and demand balance.

After the death of Ogata Kôrin in 1716, when the tendencies of decorative painting were exhausted, the school of spontaneous *bunjinga* (*nanga*) or intellectual painting moved on to a new stage, which was related to fascination with the wonderful works of Chinese intellectuals (*wenrenhua*) and masters of the Southern Ch'an school of painting. Followers of *bunjinga* sought close spiritual communication, created works inspired by classical poetry, and were interested in Chinese poetry, calligraphy, and painting. The *bunjinga* school reached the heights of true art in the work of Taiga, Buson, Gyokudo, Chikuden, Kazan, and Tesai.

The respectful attitude of intellectuals toward tradition did not seek its blind imitation and did not block the way to innovation or the establishment of a personal style (Linhartova, 1996, p. 519). They shifted their creative emphasis from the technical means of artistic expression (the dominant feature of academic painters) to conveying the pulse of life and the inner echo of the artist's soul. This approach opened up broad perspectives for the expression of individual style. As in *zenga* painting, the most important matter here was not the object being depicted or technical subtleties, but the expression of an emotional echo of the object under contemplation in the concise language of emotional calligraphic lines.

In their effort to elevate painting to the intimacy characteristic of poetry and calligraphy masters of *bunjinga* are similar to painters of the *haiga* and *zenga* schools. The main difference

between the aesthetic principles of *nanga* and *zenga* is one of dramatic quality, which is much stronger in the works of *zenga* masters. In addition, the works of *bunjinga* painters, in comparison to those of the *haiga* and *zenga* schools, are noteworthy for having a richer cultural, especially literary, context and employing a broader spectrum of means of artistic expression, creative approaches, and themes.

The spontaneous *haiga*, *zenga*, and *bunjinga* schools had their own distinctive aesthetic principles as well as favorite motifs and means of artistic expression and consistently passed their discoveries on to one another. Their work reveals, in condensed form, the best qualities of Japanese art as it has been cultivated over the centuries. *Haiga*, *zenga*, and *nanga* painting is undoubtedly one of the most refined and aesthetically valuable phenomena not only in Far Eastern art but also in that of the entire world.

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Chapter X

The New Paradigm of Order: From the Comparisons of Kitarô Nishida and Maurice Merleau-Ponty to the Search for Strategies for Lithuanian Philosophy

Arunas Gelunas

Introduction

Why should a Lithuanian author be concerned with comparing the thinking of Nishida and Merleau-Ponty, representatives of the traditions seemingly very remote from his own? Could s/he employ the popular myth that Lithuanian and Japanese "love of Nature", reflected in the similarities between the indigenous pre-Christian Lithuanian pagan religion and Japanese Shintô, can bridge the mentalities of two nations? Or, perhaps, s/he could decide that belonging to the realm of "Western Christendom" both of Lithuania and of France could be a more promissing "common ground" for comparison? Beyond any doubt, such an enterprise would be interesting, yet, not without some naivete, for closer examination reveals obvious cultural differences. There is also a third way: to hope, as Merleu-Ponty had hoped, that there is such thing as "a unity of the human spirit" and that by comparing them s/he is not dealing with traditions that are remote and superficially known, but participating in what Nishida called "the world philosophy".

When I try to reflect upon my own experience of two years of living and learning in Japan, I find myself thinking that my communication with the Japanese was most of all successful on the very common everyday level of human relationship or professional relationship and not on the level of "the contact between the representatives of cultures". Sharing together the beauty of nature, the taste of food, the pleasure of travelling together, the excitement of professional activities were, it seemed to me, the very true keys to mutual understanding. My ability to speak Japanese was by far not the only way to experience the warmth of Japanese *kokoro*. Yet, when we had to return to the relationship "between the representatives" of the nations or the countries, the ideologies, the economies, etc., the previous harmony vanished without a trace. I am constantly reminded of the experience of my Lithuanian friend, a student in econonomics in Japan, who at the beginning of each school-year was asked to repeat aloud the indicator of the gross output of Lithuanian economics in front of his Japanese fellow students. In this way his true place in the hierarchy of nations as the representative of a developing country was established and, in a way, the mode of communication determined. Here the economical indicator served as a universal objective measure of the level of development. In a similar fashion and in most cases "international relations" are doomed to be thoroughly ideologized, based on prejudice and cliché.

Can it be otherwise? Could my positive experience with the Japanese somehow relate to what Stephen Toulmin calls "the communication on the non-national levels", labeled by him the true feature of the third phase of Modernity? How are we to understand his call "to disperse authority and adapt it" "to the needs of local areas and communities" and "to wider transnational functions?"[1] In what way can we abandon the conceptions of the order of society and nature, "dominated by the Newtonian image of massive power, exerted by sovereign agency through the operation of central

[1] Toulmin, S. *Cosmopolis: the Hidden Agenda of Modernity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990, p. 206.

force"?[2] These are the urgent questions to be answered not only by Lithuania's intellectuals and politicians, but by the major part of its population which has emerged from nothingness to the world community ten years ago and has to localize itself in it in a meaningful way. These are also issues at stake for everyone who dares "to write on philosophy" at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Engaging in a comparative enterprise, I believe, can be of some help on the way to the search of the solutions.

I find the present situation of the Eastern European countries comparable, at least in some aspects, to that of Meiji Japan back in 1860s, when Japanese society faced the challenges posed by the much more technologically advanced western world. Japan had to reorganize its politico-economical structure and the system of education, it was suffering from the need to define its identity in the face of the New World of which it was becoming a part. This painful process even involved such radical moves as the suggestion to baptize the Emperor – for it was fealt that Christianity came hand in hand with the technological progress! The rigor of the western Euro-centric rationality of the end of the nineteenth century could hardly be translated into the "non-western" traditions that were treated as inferior (for instance, by Herbert Spencer). Japan had either to learn to be rational in a western way or find an alternative.

However, along with scientistic positivism there existed a different philosophy in the West itself. Nishida Kitarô,[3] frequently called "the first Japanese philosopher", was among those Japanese intellectuals who welcomed the move from rational to experiential justification in philosophy, initiated by James and Husserl. This tendency Nishida felt related to his own, Zen Buddhist background. As contemporary Japanese philosopher Kazashi Nobuo puts it, "James ¼ transformed the very design of modern Western philosophy in such a way as to, without knowing it, open its stage to the Eastern philosophical tradition".[4] There are also numerous accounts of Husserlian philosophy as bearing strong similarities to Zen Buddhism.

Western philosophy with its iron-clad paradigms of world order has been dominated by rigorous concepts, which have communicated themselves into Western intellectual habits, and by the expectation of total and adequate intellectual possession of world and self that seems to haunt its pursuit. In this situation both Nishida and Merleau-Ponty aim at "opening up of the concept without destroying it" and at confirming that "unity of the human spirit"[5] can serve as a basis for the dialogue between Western and Eastern philosophy. My concern here is to show how this radical revision of Western philosophy can be best understood by treating it as an emergence of the new paradigm of order.

By "the new paradigm of order" I understand such treatment of the relationship between individual consciousness and reality which takes into account the position of the observer or the subjective dimension of this relationship. Another aspect of the new paradigm of order is its attempt to overcome the strict dichotomy of subject and object, a problem, which contemporary philosophy has inherited from the modern science and philosophy.

Though subjectivism in philosophy is by no means a new thing (its beginning is usually associated with the name of Descartes), it is only with phenomenology of Husserl and the "radical empiricism" of James that it acquires its completely new meaning and position. The emergence of

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[2] *Ibid*., p. 209.

[3] Japanese names here are presented in the Japanese way: family name first.

[4] Kazashi, N. "Bodily Logos: James, Merleau-Ponty, and Nishida". In *Merleau-Ponty, Interiority and Exteriority, Psychic Life and the World*, ed. D.Olkowski and J.Morley. New York: State University of New York Press, 1999, p. 108.

[5] Merleau-Ponty, M. "Partout et nule part". In *Eloge de la philosophie et autres essais*. Paris: Gallimard, 1953–1960, p. 167.

the new paradigm of order would be unthinkable without the fundamental changes in contemporary physics and microbiology, and, first of all, the creation of the quantum mechanics by Max Planck and the "uncertainty principle" discovered by Werner Heisenberg. These changes – or the shift in perspective from the deterministic theory of the "unobserved observer" towards the statistic one of the "participating observer" – mean a much higher degree of complexity in the perception of reality and thus the inability of the theoretician to present an easy systematic description of nature and to provide a prognosis Newtonian in type. It is not, however, a solipsism under new disguise: such a position does leave room for certainty and the hope of being understood by the Other. It only makes the position of a thinker less God-like and more humane.

The thought of such contemporary philosophers as Husserl, Whitehead, James, Nishida and Merleau-Ponty is profoundly influenced by the changes in contemporary science at the same time in many ways anticipating the scientific ideas to come. "Going to the truth of things," says Nishida, "is neither to conform to traditions in a conventional manner nor to be guided by subjective feelings. It necessarily includes the scientific spirit".[6] Nishida asserts such an approach to be inherent in Japanese culture long before its contacts with the West. In the passages to follow I will try to demonstrate how the new paradigm of order emerges with striking similarity in the early writings of Nishida and Merleau-Ponty, philosophers free of each others influence.

Nishida's "cosmological project" could perhaps be best called a search for the logic of the East as different from that of the West and an attempt to formulate it in the language that would be acceptable in the western philosophical tradition. Merleau-Ponty had the task of fighting back the reductionist attitudes and *la pensée objective* of, what he later called "small rationalism" – the scientific positivist ideology of the end of the 19th and the turn of the 20th century that claimed to be able to give the scientific explanations to all the spheres of humanity and also the intellectualism of the philosophers like Brunschvicg and Lachelier, both strongly influenced by Kant.[7] With the collapse of the influence of the absolute idealism of Hegel, the philosophical scene witnessed the opposition between the philosophy of positivism and empiricism and their rivals *Lebens-Philosophie* and existential philosophy. Both Nishida and Merleau-Ponty were in the situation of the search for a third alternative. It had to be neither positivist science nor Bergsonian vitalism. For Nishida it had to be also the search for a way to synthesize the Eastern and the Western thinking in such a way that the Eastern values were preserved, while at the same time the progressive march of "Western techniques" was justified and properly contextualized. Nishida had a basically favorable view of modernity while rejecting its positivistic self-understanding.[8] Merleau-Ponty had faced the need to establish his position between or opposed to the French intellectualism and scientific psychology of his day, represented particularly by "stimulus-response" and "Gestalt" schools. The answer for both early Nishida and early Merleau-Ponty seemed to lie in the realm of experience that is direct for us.

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[6] Quoted from: Feenberg, A. "Experience and Culture: Nishida's Path 'To the Things Themselves'". In *Philosophy East and West*, 1999, vol. 49, no.1, p. 2.

[7] Bannan, J. F. *The Philosophy of Merleau-Ponty*. Harcourt: Brace & World, 1967, p. 27.

[8] Feenberg, 1999, p. 275. For "Nishida and Modernity" also see Kasulis, Th. P. "Sushi, Science, And Spirituality: Modern Japanese Philosophy And Its Views Of Western Science". In *Philosophy East & West*, Apr 95, Vol. 45 Issue 2, 1995, pp. 227, 22.

Nishida Kitaro

The ways the two thinkers have arrived at the intuition that experience is the primary source of philosophy must have been totally different. Nishida, at the time when he was writing his first independent philosophical work *An Inquiry Into the Good* (1911), was a practicing Zen Buddhist. It is almost beyond any doubt that Zen meditation provided him with the intuition of "pure experience" as the vantage point for reflections on reality. Readings of William James must have supplied him with the language he could use as an instrument for an attempt to translate his experiences into verbal form close to the Western philosophical discourse though, as we will see later, notable differences exist between James and Nishida. What for Nishida was Zen Buddhism, for Merleau-Ponty must have been the writings of Edmund Husserl. Though he was also influenced by such thinkers as Max Scheler, Jean Wahl, and Gabriel Marcel, the doalogue with Husserl was of profound importance to Merleau-Ponty throughout his career. Merleau-Ponty has himself stated his philosophy to be the prolongation of the Husserlian project, especially the later ideas of the German thinker usually referred to as *Lebensphilosophie*,. However, both Nishida and Merleau-Ponty can be considered as having followed Husserl's call "Zu den Sachen Selbst", "to the things themselves".[9]

Let us examine closer the central concepts in the early theories of Nishida and Merleau-Ponty for grasping the essence of their works and thus being able to see the similarities.

Experience

The word for "experience" (*keiken*), as so many other words, became a philosophical concept in Japan rather late, at the end of the nineteenth century.[10] Later it came to be employed as a conceptual bridge between modern Western thought and the Japanese (especially Buddhist) tradition. The most profound and systematic treatment of experience in modern Japan owes a great deal to Nishida: "pure experience" (*junsui keiken*) was to become a grounding notion of Nishida's early philosophy thus marking the beginning of original philosophy in Japan. In the preface to his first work *An Inquiry into the Good* (*Zen no kenkyu*) Nishida calls "pure experience" "the foundation of my thought" and confesses his long-time wish "to explain all things on the basis of pure experience as the sole reality".[11] The first chapter of the book is dedicated to and starts with the explication of the concept:

by *pure* I am referring to the state of experience just as it is without the least addition of deliberative discrimination. The moment of seeing a color or hearing a sound, for example, is prior not only to the thought that the color or sound is the activity of an external object or that one is sensing it, but also to the judgment of what the color or the sound might be. In this regard pure experience is identical with direct experience. When one directly experiences one's own state of consciousness, there is not yet a subject or an object, and knowing and its object are completely unified. This is the most refined type of experience.[12]

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[9] *Ibid*.
[10] *Ibid*., p. 276.
[11] Nishida K. *Zen no kenkyû.* Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1987, p. 89.
[12] Nishida K. *An Inquiry into the Good* (Zen no kenkyû), trans. Masao Abe and Christopher Ives. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990, pp. 3–4.

It was characteristic for Nishida to overview and correct his philosophical views many times so that they have undergone considerable changes later on, but the notion of pure experience was not to lose its importance throughout his whole life. Twenty-five years after *An Inquiry into the Good* was first published Nishida wrote in the preface to its third edition: "The world of action-intuition – the world of *poiesis* – is none other than the world of pure experience".[13]

In quite similar fashion with the other philosophies "of radical doubt", for instance, those of Descartes, Kant, or Husserl, Nishida aimed at rethinking philosophy systematically himself and thus answering the question of how we are to understand True Reality. The answer is to become a grounding principle for Nishida's new philosophical system: "we must discard all artificial assumptions," writes Nishida, "doubt whatever can be doubted, and proceed on the basis of direct and indubitable knowledge".[14] In contrast with Descartes who arrives at certainty when he discovers the evidence of ego as the subject of reflection and who thus makes *cogito ergo sum* the first principle of his philosophy, Nishida finds certainty in a fundamentally different way. There is no deceitful Demiurge for Nishida:

From the perspective of direct knowledge that is free from all assumptions, reality consists only of phenomena of our consciousness, namely the facts of direct experience. Any other notion of reality is simply an assumption generated by the demands of thinking. ¼ Assumptions regarding such a reality are abstract concepts formulated so that thinking can systematically organize the facts of direct experience.[15]

The systematic and the strict order is possible in thinking only. To quote Ueda Shizuteru, contemporary representative of the Kyto school of philosophy founded by Nishida, here "certainty is found in that which is given us by breaking through reflection in such a manner as would overwhelm reflective thinking that doubts thoroughly.[¼] (Generally speaking, experience is at once the *knowledge* of experience and the *fact* of experience.) This being so, the knower and the known are one from the very start in the 'fact of direct experience' and as 'direct experience'".[16] This direct knowledge of experience is a primitive fact, which is a fundamental basis of all Nishida's thinking. He is searching for it by "methodically doubting", though this method is overwhelmed by direct experience. Thus this source is existing in a place not to be reached by reflection, it is a pre-reflective and pre-dichotomical state.

This is the assumption that Merleau-Ponty makes the starting point of his own philosophy. Nishida is well aware of the classical treatment of perception as passive and thinking as active. For Nishida pure experience as "direct knowledge" is an active and dynamic state, for this experience is not some passive phenomenon *in* our consciousness but a phenomenon *as* our consciousness, a process rather than a thing. In this way, the concept of time as duration of pure experience in Nishida's philosophy is similar to Edmund Husserl and his "inner perception of time" (*innerenZeitbewusstzein*).[17] Time in pure experience can in no way be treated as the abstract *chronos* of the natural sciences but only as *kairotic*, inner perception of time as duration.

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[13] For the comments on *action-intuition* see the footnote by Masao Abe, *Ibid*., p. xxxiii.
[14] *Ibid*., p. 38.
[15] *Ibid*., p. 42.
[16] Ueda, Sh. (1991) "Experience and Language" in The Thinking of Kitarô Nishid*a*, trans.T. Nobuhara. In *Zen bunka kenkyûjô kiyô* dai 17 go nukizuri, 1991.05.31, p. 110.
[17] Quite possible that Nishida's "pure experience" is analogous to Husserlian "primary impression" (*Urimpression*).

"A truly pure experience has no meaning whatsoever; it is simply a present consciousness of facts just as they are".[18]

So pure experience is the way of being firmly rooted in the present moment, but different from *thinking* of the present moment; as soon as we start thinking about the present moment, it is no longer present. Referring to Jamesian definition of the present consciousness Nishida states that "for a present as a fact of consciousness there must be some temporal duration".[19] This temporal duration can not be perceived in any other way than as some inner dynamism, some flow, for otherwise it gets objectified and will be cast away into the chronological scale. Time is called by Nishida "nothing more than a form that orders the content of our experience," but this is not enough, because "the content of consciousness must first be able to be joined, be united, and become one in order for the idea of time to arise."[20] One of the most important aspects of pure experience is its being an important base for a non-dichotomic, dialectical thinking that Nishida will develop in his future works.

From the above quotation we see: "there is no yet an object or a subject" in pure experience. It is prior to any deliberative discrimination or "one's own fabrications" – it is perceiving the reality "exactly as it is." Is reflection in such a way of giving it a pejorative attribute of "one's own fabrications" denied or deprived of its status of a philosophical method? Nishida has to deal somehow with the dichotomy that is experienced after the original unity of pure experience is broken. For Nishida it is not a question of a duality as a dichotomy of the kind stated above, but a*double perspective* to view the experience that has unfolded: the object-side and the subject-side of one and the same experience. Nishida explains it as follows:

It is usually thought that subject and object are realities that can exist independently of each other and that phenomena of consciousness arise through their activity, which leads to the idea that there are two realities: mind and matter. This is a total mistake. The notions of subject and object derive from two different ways of looking at a single fact, as does the distinction between mind and matter. But these dichotomies are not inherent in the fact itself.[21]

This is a crucial though difficult place of Nishida's work, and many scholars find an inconsistency here; the opposition between immediacy and reflection is called undialectical, and the tendency to identify the Absolute with a particular state of mind – psychologistic. This can be observed in a passage, where Nishida explains the relationship between consciousness and reality:

the so-called objective world does not come into existence apart from our subjectivity, for the unifying power of the objective world and that of the subjective consciousness are identical; the objective world and consciousness are established according to the same principle. For this reason we can understand the fundamental principle constitutive of the universe by means of the principle within the self. If the world were something different from the unity of our consciousness, we could never make contact with it. The world we can know and understand is established by a unifying power identical to that of our consciousness.[22]

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[18] Nishida, K. *An Inquiry into the Good* (Zen no kenkyû), trans. Masao Abe and Christopher Ives. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990, p. 4.
[19] *Ibid.*, p. 5.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 60.
[21] *Ibid.*, p. 49.
[22] *Ibid.*, p. 62.

In the chapter called "Nature" Nishida radically rejects the idea of a "purely objective nature".[23] In a quite similar fashion to the *Lebenswelt* phenomenology asserting the inescapability of the "horizon" of experience, he calls the conception of nature without a subjective aspect in it "the most abstract and most removed from a true state of reality".[24] If the unifying activity of consciousness is removed from concrete reality, what remains is "nature" that is "moved from without according to the law of necessity, and it cannot function spontaneously from within."[25] The linkage of natural phenomena, if the subjective aspect of the consciousness observing them is erased, is an accidental unity in time and space. Merleau-Ponty asserts a similar thing in *The Structure of Behavior*, especially in the chapter, "Structure in Physics", to which we will return later.

Order

Now let us see how the Nishidean concept of *"pure experience"* (*junsui keiken*) leads us to his concept of *order* (*chitsujõ*). To put it briefly, *order* in this early stage of Nishida's writing can be understood as the "strict unity (*tõitsu*) of experience," the unity of experiencing consciousness. In the chapter of *An Inquiry into the Good* called "Pure Experience" he wrote: "The directness and purity of pure experience (*junsui keiken*) derive not from the experience's being simple, unanalyzable, or instantanious, but from the *strict unity* of concrete consciousness. Consciousness does not arise from the consolidation of what psychologists call simple mental elements; it constitutes a *single system* (*taikei*) from the start." Further in the same passage Nishida proceeds:

The consciousness of a newborn infant is most likely a chaotic unity in which even a distinction between light and darkness is unclear. From this condition myriad states of consciousness develop through differentiation. Even so, no matter how finely differentiated those states may be, at no time do we lose the *fundamentally systematic form* (*katachi*) of the consciousness. Concrete consciousness that is direct to us always appears in this form. " Like any organic entity, a *system of consciousness manifests its wholeness through the orderly, differentiated development of a certain unifying reality* (*tõitsuteki arumono*)"(italics mine).[26]

This sense of "unifying reality" bears some semblance to the famous fragment 54 of Heraclitus ("Rubbish scattered in higgledy-piggledy – perfect harmony (*cosmos*)"). Indeed, until the unity of perception is undivided by thought and coincides with the sphere of attention no discrimination arises – rubbish is not yet "rubbish" but simple *this*, which is perceived as unity by experiencing consciousness. At this stage reality is by no means experienced as "elements" or "objects" and thus cannot be ordered in a traditional mechanical sense of "order" as the order of elements or distinct parts. It is the "pre-objective," "pre-elemental" and "pre-discursive" stage of the relationship of the consciousness with reality. In this stage there is even no "consciousness" and no "reality" but only two poles of the same *relationship*. Here another parallel with Heraclitus may be instructive. In the fragment 44 he says: "The road leading upwards and downwards – one and the same road."

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[23] *Ibid..*, p. 68.
[24] *Ibid.*
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 69.
[26] Ibid., pp. 6–7.

It is interesting to compare Nishida and James here. For James his own philosophy is "a mosaic philosophy" in which "the pieces are held together by their own bedding" instead of, as David Dilworth puts it, the connections being guaranteed by Substances, transcendental Egos, or Absolutes.[27] Whereas James says that his "description of things" starts with the parts and makes of the whole a being of a second order," For Nishida "What James considers to be the relation between experience and experience seems somewhat external." In his own opinion, "the way in which experience develops might not be so much a gradual combination of fragmental elements as something like a gradual differentiation / unfolding of the one".[28]

However, one of the most important questions remains unanswered: Is the state of pure experience a nebulous, nondiscriminating condition similar to that of an animal or has it something to do with the "more human" realm of meanings and judgements? Such thinkers as Wilhelm von Humboldt or Ernst Cassirer maintained that words were the only key to reality (which is, according to them, totally symbolic). In a quite different manner Nishida asserts that "meanings and judgements derive from distinctions in the experience itself" and that "these distinctions are not imparted by the meanings or judgements: experience always includes an aspect of discrimination".[29]

Further he is even more radical: "Meaning or judgement does not add anything new to experience."[30] They mark the moment of disunity in the experiencing consciousness: when the strict unity of pure experience is broken "and a present consciousness enters into a relation with other consciousness it generates meanings and judgements".[31] The latter aspect notwithstanding, the consciousness never loses its profoundly systematic character; it is implicit in the nature of consciousness to develop in such a systematic manner. Nishida calls this "the great network of consciousness" which is the condition for meanings and judgements to arise as the connection between the present consciousness and "other consciousness" – the previous one. This process of definition of the position of the present consciousness within the network of consciousness generates meaning: "meaning is determined by the system to which consciousness belongs. Identical consciousness yields different meanings by virtue of the different systems in which they participate." The Great Network of Consciousness varies in degree of unity. According to Nishida's observation, "there is neither completely unified consciousness nor completely disunified consciousness".[32] However, there is a correspondence between the sphere of judgements and the sphere of pure experience. When a judgement is refined and "its unity has become strict, the judgement assumes the form of pure experience."[33] Nishida's example here, in a quite similar fashion with Merleau-Ponty, is a person who matures in an art: for him "that which at first was conscious becomes unconscious".[34] A contemporary example could be a driver and his/her driving experience. Further Nishida calls the most unified state of consciousness "intellectual intuition." It can be observed not only in fine arts, "but in all our disciplined activity".[35]

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[27] James, W. *Essays in Radical Empiricism*, p. 86, quoted in Dilworth, 1996, p. 108.
[28] Nishida quoted in Ueda, 1991, pp. 125–126.
[29] Nishida, 1990, p. 8.
[30] Nishida, 1990, p. 8.
[31] *Ibid.*, p. 9.
[32] *Ibid.*
[33] *Ibid.*
[34] *Ibid.*, p. 10.
[35] *Ibid.*

Consciousness

Nishida does not agree with the treatment of perception as passive and thinking as active. For him perception is active and a constitutive activity with a higher degree of unity than that of thinking. Nishida refutes the assumption of psychological theories of his time that thinking is necessary to provide links between one representation and the other. For example, in the judgement "The horse is running" there is only one representation of "the running horse" with a fact of pure experience underlying it, and it is only for this reason that we can connect subject and object representations in it. The relationship between experience and thinking is described by Nishida in a following passage:

Consciousness, as stated earlier, is fundamentally a single system; its nature is to develop and complete itself. In the course of its development various conflicts and contradictions crop up in the system, and out of this emerges reflective thinking. But when viewed from a different angle, that which is contradictory and conflicted is the beginning of a still greater systematic development; it is the incomplete state of the greater unity. In both conduct and knowledge, for example, when our experience becomes complex and various associations arise to disturb the natural course of experience, we become reflective. Behind this contradiction and conflict is a possible unity.[36]

The systematic character of consciousness is reported by Nishida throughout all of his first work. What is the conclusion to which it would seemingly lead? A first important conclusion concerns the problem of truth (*shinjitsu*). The relationship of pure experience with truth helps us to understand better his concept of order as well. Truth is again linked by Nishida with unity. "There are various arguments about what truth is, but I think," writes Nishida, "truth is that which comes closest to the most concrete facts of experience."[37] This statement sounds almost identical with the statements of great Indian Buddhist logicians, Dignâga or Dharmakîrti,[38] though in the early stage of his creative career Nishida hardly refers to Asian philosophical traditions.

Truth has nothing to do with abstract commonality, but is something abstracted and constructed out of the facts of pure experience, and its true unity lies in direct facts. Therefore, "Perfect truth pertains to the individual person and is actual." That is why "it cannot be expressed in words".[39] Even in such abstract disciplines as mathematics, the foundational principles lie in our intuition, in direct experience. Thus the standard of truth is not some external fact, but lies in the state of pure experience. However, humans are not usually satisfied with just direct experience – they demand a universal system of consciousness that transcends the individual person. These demands are called by Nishida "demands of reason." He is reluctant to see the laws of reason and the tendency of the will as completely different or even contradictory. "when we consider them carefully," says Nishida, "we see that they share the same foundation. The unifying activity of the will functions at the base of all reason and laws".[40] This unifying activity, "the intuitive principles

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[36] *Ibid*., p. 32.
[37] Ibid., p. 32.
[38] Ibid., p. 26
[39] TH. Stcherbatsky in his "Buddhist Logic" puts it as follows:"Only the present, the "here", the "now", the "this" are real. "Ultimately real is the present moment of physical efficiency". In Stcherbatsky, 1994, pp. 69–70.
[40] *Ibid*.

at the base of reason," are unexplainable, because "to explain is to be able to include other things in a single system. That which is the very nucleus of a unity cannot be explained; thus it is blind".[41]

Intuition is proclaimed by Nishida a *conditio sine qua non* for any order as it lies at the base of all relations. But, even when the act of pure experience is over, and reason is at work in search of a greater unity, such an activity of reason is possible only with some basic intuition of unity beneath it: "However far and wide we extend our thought, we cannot go beyond basic intuition, for thought is established upon it".[42] This intuition is "the power of thinking, not simply the static form of thought".[43] This point is crucial for understanding the phenomenon of "order" itself or, to be more precise, the possibility of any order. Such a view, though seemingly lacking in exactitude, is somewhat closer to reality (as supported by contemporary investigations in psychology) than the Kantian table of categories with a fixed and limited number of *a priori* unifying agents behind perception.[44]

Another important aspect of Nishida's theory of pure experience is the problem of solipsism. If the only reality is the activity of consciousness is there any bridge guaranteed to other consciousnesses? Nishida answers this classical question in the following way:

That consciousness must be someone's consciousness simply means that consciousness must have a unity. The idea that there must be a possessor of consciousness above and beyond this unity is an arbitrary assumption. The activity of this unity – apperception – is a matter of similar ideas and feelings constituting a central hub and as such unifying consciousness. From the standpoint of pure experience, this unity of consciousness (*ishiki no tõitsu*) never entails absolute distinctions between itself and other such unities of consciousness. If we acknowledge that my consciousness of yesterday and today are independent and at the same time one consciousness in that they belong to the same system, then we recognize the same relationship between one's own consciousness and that of others.[45]

At the same time Nishida rejects the application of the law of causality[46] to explain the phenomena of consciousness. "That a specific phenomenon accompanies another," says Nishida, "is the fundamental fact given directly to us, and contrary to expectation, the requirements of the law of causality are based on this fact".[47] He calls the law of causality "a habit of thinking that derives from changes in our phenomena of consciousness".[48] This tendency to abandon the law of causality when addressing the problem of consciousness matches well the overall tendency of contemporary science to abandon strict causal laws for *statistical laws*, less strict but closer to the workings of reality. To paraphrase the words of Hans Reichenbach, a scientist should say "I don't

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[41] *Ibid.*, p. 28. This statement is followed by an interesting reference to Schiller: "As Schiller and others have argued, even axioms originally developed out of practical need; in their mode of origination, they do not differ from our hopes." (*Ibid*.)

[42] *Ibid.*, p. 29.

[43] *Ibid.*, p. 33. One would be tempted to apply Nishida's theory of unity only to the sphere of art and religion (which is frequently done by the Japanese philosopher himself), but his insights in many ways remind us of the Husserlian search for the firm base for exact sciences – the same symptom of the crisis of rationality.

[44] *Ibid.*

[45] For a critique of Kant see Jaspers, K. *Kant [from The Great Philosophers,* Vol. II. San Diego: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1962, pp. 26–27.

[46] *Ibid.*, p. 44.

[47] For the differences between modern conception of "causality" andthat of Aristotle see Richard Cole, "The Logical Order and the Causal Order," in *The Concept of Order*, pp. 111–121.

[48] *Ibid.*, p. 45.

know" where he or she does not know instead of providing a fluent but false theory – "a credible story", a sort of Platonian *Timaeus*. In a chapter dedicated to his concept of physics – "Nature" – Nishida, in a very Humean manner, points to the vacuous character of the causal explanation of natural phenomena: "The laws of nature, attained through the law of induction, are simply assumptions that because two types of phenomena arise in an unchanging succession, one is the cause of the other. No matter how far the natural sciences develop, we obtain no deeper explanation than this one, which becomes ever more detailed and encompassing".[49]

Harmony

Nishida's work *An Inquiry into the Good* can be treated as a treatise on order for one more reason. The problem of the unity of consciousness is carried by him into the realm of ethics. "The Good" itself is understood by Nishida as

primarily a coordinated harmony – or mean – between various activities. Our conscience is the activity of consciousness that harmonizes and unifies the activities. Simply saying that the good is the harmony or the mean, however, does not sufficiently clarify its meaning. What meaning do harmony and the mean have here? Consciousness is not an assemblage of sequential actions but a single unified system. Accordingly, harmony or the mean does not carry a quantitative connotation; it must signify a systematic order.[50]

The activity of reason is very important in this system – at the point of "articulation of non-differentiation"[51] – however, it does not acquire its true meaning as "human reason" if it is conceived in the abstract, as a "device" that provides "merely a formal relationship with no content whatsoever."[52] In other words, "pure reason" is a rather vacuous concept without an idealistic element in it – the indefinable volitional center, the intuitive unifying activity of the consciousness which guarantees the processual character of the reason. Instead of being a rigid mechanical structure (its function powered by "biochemical reactions in the brain") and conceived of in spatial terms only, this system always contains an unexplainable energetic residue – an intuitive element that is precisely the "unifying power" at the base of consciousness. This applies even in such seemingly rigid discipline as geometry; even "geometric axioms are not elucidated solely through the power of formal understanding; rather they derive from the character of space. The deductive inferences of geometry result from applying the laws of logic to a fundamental intuition of the character of space".[53]

Algis Mickunas comes very close to the above point when he states that "the studies of lived worlds manifest, at the very least the following principle: permanent compositions are describable in their essence while flux, also in its essence, cannot be delimited without *residua.* "full description of flux would reduce it to a structure".[54] However, the inclusion of movement or flux

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[49] Dilworth, D. "The Initial Formations of 'Pure Experience'". In *Nishida Kitaro and William James*, Monumenta Niponica, XXIV, 1–2, 1969, p. 465.

[50] *Ibid.*, p. 69.

[51] *Ibid*., pp. 128–129.

[52] Ueda, Sh. "Experience and Language" in The Thinking of Kitarô Nishid*a*, trans. T. Nobuhara. In *Zen bunka kenkyûjô kiyô* dai 17 go nukizuri, 1991.05.31, p. 125.

[53] Nishida, *ibid*., p. 130.

[54] *Ibid*., p.113. For a similar concern of "later" Husserl with "the origin of geometry" see Husserl, E. *L'Origine de la Geometrie*, Traduction et introduction par Jacques Derrida. Paris: PUF, 1962.

into the description of the world is an extremely difficult task very often contradicting firmly established thinking habits. One of the well-known critics of Nishida's philosophy and one of the earliest proponents of phenomenology in Japan[55] – Tokuryû Yamanouchi – is right to observe that "Philosophers in quest of a system, however finely honed their idea of development and however the key role they give to movement, are still thinking of system in terms of spatial modes of completeness".[56] According to Yamanouchi's point, any philosophy that seeks to be systematic is doomed to face the problem of "rigid order," that is system without energetic residue that would guarantee its closeness to lived reality. This is a far cry from Cartesian obsession with "the enumerations so complete and the reviews so general that I should be certain of having omitted nothing".[57]

The motive of the open system, the "infinite openness", comes more and more to the fore in Nishida's later philosophy. This circumstance notwithstanding, *An Inquiry into the Good* remains a work of utmost importance as a first attempt in Japan to formulate an original philosophical system. In the words of Nishitani Keiji, this work "is an original *tour de force* that would have assured it a place among other great systems of thought even if Nishida had not developed further".[58] But this book was to be followed by more than thirty years of an extremely productive philosophical career with a major piece of writing appearing every year or so. In his later development Nishida did not give up his idea of unity, but only sought to overcome the difficulties posed by his "philosophy of pure experience," which was blamed as being too psychologistic and mystical, and to give his philosophy a more solid epistemological grounding. Some researchers assert that he "radically transformed" his religious philosophy "in the later stages of his career",[59] but one might rather say that the main themes of his philosophy remained very close to his initial intention throughout the whole of his life.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty

Against the background of Nishida's early ideas, let us proceed to address the philosophy of another important thinker of the 20th century in whose theories the new paradigm of order emerges, the French phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty.

Merleau-Ponty once said the philosophical problem of his time was "to explore the irrational and to integrate it with the enlarged reason." The philosophical development of Merleau-Ponty is remarkably consistent in trying to fulfill this task. "Officially," his first important work *La structure du comportement* (*The Structure of Behavior*), published in 1942, is treated as a point of departure, "the first step in Merleau-Ponty' phenomenological program".[60] From this very first

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[55] Mickunas, A. "Permanence and Flux". In *Phenomenology: Japanese and American*, ed. Burt C. Hopkins. Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1990, p. 258.

[56] Refer to footnote 4, page 198 in Nishitani Keiji, *Nishida Kitarô*, trans. by Yamamoto Seisaku and James W. Heisig. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.

[57] Yamanouchi T., *Taikei to tensô [System and Development]*. Tokyo, 1937, pp. 6–7, quoted from Nishitani Keiji, *Nishida Kitarô*, trans. by Yamamoto Seisaku and James W. Heisig. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991, p. 199.

[58] Descartes, R. "Discourse on the Method". In *Key Philosophical Writings*, trans. E.S.Haldane and GRT.Ross, ed. E.Chavez-Arvizo, Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 1997, p. 83.

[59] Nishitani, K. *Nishida Kitarô*, trans. Yamamoto Seisaku & James W. Heisig. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991, p. 96.

[60] *La structure du comportement* (*The Structure of Behavior*), published in 1942.

philosophical book, Merleau-Ponty makes his point clear: his aim is to look for an alternative in trying to overcome the *natural attitude*, which he calls *la pensée objective*, or "objectivist thinking" – the same "object logic" that Nishida was also struggling with. In the introduction to *The Structure of Behavior* Merleau-Ponty describes the situation in which his work is to be carried out as follows:

among contemporary thinkers in France, there exist side by side a philosophy, on the one hand, which makes of every nature an objective unity constituted vis-à-vis consciousness and, on the other, sciences which treat the organism and consciousness as two orders of reality and, in their reciprocal relationship, as "effects" and "causes".[61]

Given all the differences between the empiricist position of the natural sciences and the intellectualism of the French philosophy of his day, Merleau-Ponty nevertheless asserts these positions to be similar in sharing the same natural attitude, the function of which, he says in his later work, is "to reduce all phenomena which bear witness to the union of subject and the world, putting in their place the clear idea of the object as in itself, and of the subject as pure consciousness. It therefore severs the links which unite the thing and the embodied subject."[62] What then is the alternative?

The first step is the reduction of the natural attitude. The most common example of reduction concerns a visual experience: for instance, seeing a cube.[63] The natural attitude takes it for granted that a cube before me is a completely separate and independent entity, as a set of juxtaposed and self-contained features. But, Merleau-Ponty argues, only a completely disembodied and unlocated consciousness would actually take a cube as an independent six-sided figure. A concrete, embodied consciousness sees it as a profile, which announces the cube in its entirety, but without actually revealing it all. Thus our perception of thing is a "thing spread out in time," to use Nishida's term. The various profiles of a thing get fluently united in time and thus "thing" arises.

The power of the natural attitude is well demonstrated in the practice of art; for instance in the way people learn to draw. The strongest temptation for a beginner is to depict the object as if "inside out" – with all the invisible sides to be seen, which result in a complete distortion of perspective. Learning to draw is a good example of the power of the thinking habits, the same ones that phenomenologist's reduction aims to overcome. True, the everyday standpoint of treating things as objects and manipulating them for our needs seems "normal" – it is useful and not to be ignored, but Merleau-Ponty aimes to show that the reduced, "artistic" standpoint of seeing things in many profiles, instead of abstract *in themselves*, is capable of restoring the links which unite the things and the embodied subject.

The analogy with drawing a still life or a landscape from nature allows us to proceed further with clearing up his point. For an embodied consciousness the object never appears in isolation, we always grasp the whole set, the "situation" instead of just a tree or an apple. Both a tree and an apple are inevitably affected by other things in their context: lighting, or a neighborhood of other things big and small, or movement, etc. The crucial thing is the physical position that a perceiver takes in relation to things – that is, the first person position is irreducible to the subject-object relationship. That is why a bad drawing or painting is characterized by the lack of unity of its

[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.

elements, it is as if falling into pieces. In experiencing something in nature, we always sense a unity in what we perceive.

There is a notable difference in the language that is used by Merleau-Ponty and Nishida in describing the similar phenomena of the relationship between consciousness and nature. In *The Structure of Behavior,* Merleau-Ponty is using the language of science; the philosophical presupositions of which he criticizes, though later, according to Gary Brent Madison,[64] he sometimes sounds like a "mystic of nature." Nishida, on the other hand, launches his project as a religio-philosophical one, though he does not hesitate to make use of the scientific, particularly the psychological, findings of his contemporaries in the West. However, in *The Structure of Behavior* Merleau-Ponty uses the arguments of the science itself to demonstrate the invalidity of the objectivist standpoint of scientific psychology. The systematic and the active character of perception is what Merleau-Ponty is arguing for from the very first pages of *The Structure of Behavior*. The intertextual resonance with Nishida's early position here is more than evident.[65]

Particularly notable here is the concept of form.[66] "Form" is to become the central notion in which Merleau-Ponty defines the "indecomposable structure of behavior." According to Merleau-Ponty, forms are "total processes whose properties are not the sum of those which the isolated parts would possess there is form whenever the properties of a system are modified by every change brought about in a single one of its parts and, on the contrary, are conserved when they all change while maintaining the same relationship among themselves".[67] Thus form is the spontaneous but systematic arrangement of the consciousness never loosing its unity.

It has to be noted here that form in this context has nothing to do with the stable spatial formation that can be easily contemplated as "separate" by an abstract consciousness (that is, the consciousness that is detached from the concrete situation); it is a pattern (or a profile, to use Merleau-Ponty's term) rather than a firm structure. What is clear from the above quotations is the author's refusal to treat consciousness as a mosaic of different and separate "psychic elements" – the attitude that would be brought about by the objectivist standpoint (that at the time when Merleau-Ponty was writing was that of a "stimulus-response" school of psychology) maintaining the reality to be a collection of facts, or objects, or psychic elements, external to each other and bound together by causal relationships. Here the call of Descartes to "divide each of the difficulties "into as many parts as possible"[68] would prove inefective for what Merleau-Ponty proposes is a system of a totally different kind. For him order is like "in a soap bubble" or "in an organism, what happens at each point is determined by what happens at all the others".[69] Perceiving self is not an observer and a divider of it, but rather an integrated and inseparable part of the process of perception or, in Nishida's case, of "the pure experience."

The fact that reality appears as "art, mirage, optical illusion" and that all life is based on "the need for perspective and delusion" was stressed by Nietzsche already in his early work *The Birth of the Tragedy*, such a statement being a direct opposite to the strictly "fact-bound" philosophy and

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[64] Dilworth, D. "The Initial Formations of 'Pure Experience'". In *Nishida Kitarô and William James*," *Monumenta Nipponica*, XXIV, 1–2, 1969, p. 465.

[65] Madison, G. B. *La phénoménologie de Merleau-Ponty. Une recherche des limites de la conscience*. Paris: Klincksieck, 1973, p. 23.

[66] Form (Jap. *katachi*) is also the term that Nishida uses in the similar context to define the way in which "concrete consciousness which is direct to us" appears.

[67] Merleau-Ponty, M. *The Structure of Behavior*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1963, p. 47.

[68] Descartes, R. "Discourse on the Method". In *Key Philosophical Writings*, trans. E.S. Haldane and GRT.Ross, ed. E.Chavez-Arvizo. Wordsworth: Classics of World Literature, 1997, p. 82.

[69] Merleau-Ponty, M. *The Structure of Behavior*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1963, p. 131.

science in general of his own time. The link between the philosophy of Nietzsche and that of Nishida or Merleau-Ponty is questionable, but one thing is quite common: the idea that only a change of standpoint can result in gaining new insights into the structure of reality. Nietzsche chooses to look at science from an artistic standpoint – his "artistic metaphysics" is the shift of attitude driven by the intuition that "it is impossible to conceive of science from within the science." Nietzsche juxtaposes to Socratic rationalism a much more ancient form of Greek culture which he calls "Dionysian" – a unifying artistic experience through which humans can feel one with reality. Rationalism, on the other hand, is "the offence against nature" condemning us for the "suffering of individuation."

Neither Nishida nor Merleau-Ponty have developed anything of this kind of "artistic metaphysics", but the way they are use metaphors derived from art for explaining their notions of the unified structure of consciousness is telling. We have seen that Nishida deliberately chooses first to examine Western rationality from within Western rationality itself; only in the latest phase of his creative work does he make use of the Eastern religious sources. However, the examples from the world of art are reported throughout both by Nishida and Merleau-Ponty. Their common example is that of the state of consciousness of the musician performing the piece of music.[70] Thus art comes to be an important sphere of human activity where the unity of perception is best demonstrated. Nobuo Kazashi calls the way both philosophers deal with "'dialectical' interpenetration between the immanent and the transcendent" artistic. According to Kazashi, we can "recognize an "art-model" for understanding socio-historical reality" in the philosophies of later Merleau-Ponty and Nishida.[71]

All these themes begin to resonate first in the pages of *The Structure of Behavior,* which climaxes in an assertion of the philosophical primacy of perception.

According to Brant-Madisson, in the pages of *Structure,* Merleau-Ponty does not yet engage in examining the everyday ("normal") reality, but addresses the problems that arise from its treatment by science. However, the conclusions at which he arrives are productively employed by Merleau-Ponty in his later works and are important for our problem of "order." In his criticism of "physiological atomism", the scientific psychology of his day, he refuses to treat consciousness as "parts" and attempts to restore the unity of the organism. The atomistic explanation of the functioning of the brain fails to explain such complex phenomena as learning. From the standpoint of phenomenology, learning is the capability of one to react to certain situations as wholes, to recognize their structure and not the sole formation of reflexes. For instance, in the above mentioned example of a musician, the unity of the musical instrument, the musical piece, and the musician is not of mechanical character. It is instead in harmonious unity in which all three "components" interpenetrate; every situation of stimulus-response is subsumed in a dialectical whole. They are the poles belonging to the same structure. Here, according to Merleau-Ponty, behavior is not a thought or a thing (as in the classical division of reality), but a form. You could even say, that the discovery of the form is the discovery of the phenomenon as their definitions come to be very similar. According to Merleau-Ponty, the notion of form is capable of integrating various levels of reality without loosing the originality of the orders that it integrates. To demonstrate his argument Merleau-Ponty analyses the levels of inanimate nature, animate nature, and that of humans, discovering the constellation of relationships typical for each. In every case form is expanded more and more to be able to englobe those types of relationships. When it

[70] Nishida, 1990, *ibid*., p. 6.

[71] Kazashi, N. "On the 'Horizon' Where James and Merleau-Ponty Meet". In *Analecta Husserliana LVIII*, ed. A-T. Tymeniecka and Shoichi Matsuba. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1998, p. 5.

approaches the human level it increasingly becomes a structure for a consciousness; finally, it becomes clear that intentionality is one of the dimensions of the form that increasingly approaches the status of phenomenon.

The three levels of reality that Merleau-Ponty examines are called by him *orders*: physical, vital, and human.

On the physical order one of the main insights of Merleau-Ponty is that all the laws of physics are the expressions of "structure and have meanings only within this structure".[72] For instance, "the law of falling bodies expresses the constitution of a field of relatively stable forces in the neighborhood of the earth and will remain valid only as long as the cosmological structure on which it is founded endures".[73] The following quotation will help to elucidate what he means by structure on the physical level.

Without even leaving classical physics, corrected by the theory of relativity, one can bring to light the inadequacies in the positivist conceptions of causality, understood as an ideally isolable sequence even if de facto it interferes with others. What is demanded by the actual content of science is certainly not the idea of a universe in which everything would literally depend on everything else and in which no cleavage would be possible, but no more so is it the idea of a nature in which processes would be knowable in isolation and which would produce them from its resources; what is demanded is neither fusion nor juxtaposition, rather it is structure.[74]

The law that demonstrates the physical structure does not suggest any clear ontological foundation implicit in it. Neither law, nor structure are possible without each other; they are only moments in a transpositional movement, with the consciousness of a physicist that has discovered the law participating in this movement. Thus the "post-Heisenbergian" principle of participation is postulated.

The set of relationships operating on the level of the vital order are goal-oriented. "The unity of physical systems is *correlation*, that of the organisms a unity of *signification*. Correlation by laws, as the mode of thinking practices it, leaves a residue in the phenomena of life which is accessible to another kind of coordination: coordination by *meaning*".[75] Thus it enables us to say that the behavior of an animal has meaning (*sens*). The world for this organism becomes the world that poses problems to be resolved. However, the integration of the organism into the world-order can by no means be treated mechanically – in this way it would come to coincide with the formation of causal reflexes. The organism constitutes the environment suitable for its living itself. Meaning is here understood by phenomenology as given for the consciousness.

The human order is marked by the symbolic character of behavior. Here we find the above-mentioned example with the musician, the musical instrument, and the piece of music dialectically participating in one structure and encounter the first definition of perception: "Perception is a moment of the living dialectic of a concrete subject; it participates in its total structure and, correlatively, it has as its original object, not an "unorganized mass", but the actions of other human subjects".[76] This moment has the dimension of intentionality and is more a lived experience rather than objective knowledge; it is the generator and the provider of meaning. The notion of form again proves useful; for instance, the baby perceives its mothers face not as a collection of qualities, but as an active centre of expression as some *form*. The capacity to grasp this form is not pregiven

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[72] Merleau-Ponty, M. *The Structure of Behavior*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1963, p. 138
[73] *Ibid.*
[74] Merleau-Ponty, M. *The Structure of Behavior*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1963, p. 140.
[75] *Ibid*., p. 156.
[76] *Ibid.*, p. 166.

as some Kantian *a priori,* for a baby first conceives meaning and not separate sensory data which are ordered and organized by some agency in consciousness.

Instead, consciousness is a network of meaningful intentions helping us to spontaneously structure the perceived "here and now" reality. Consciousness is closely intertwined with the structures that are "structures for consciousness," the phenomena, but is not identified with them. It returns to itself and seeks to break through, to transcend the phenomena. Such consciousness is called perception by Merleau-Ponty, a *conditio sine qua non* of all phenomena.

Merleau-Ponty summarizes his theory of three orders as follows:

Aided by the notion of structure or form, we have arrived at the conclusion that both mechanism and finalism should be rejected and that the "physical," the "vital" and the "mental" do not represent three powers of being, but three dialectics.[77]

When Merleau-Ponty examines his theory of perception against the background of "classical solutions", those of Descartes and Kant, he arrives at the conclusion that the inability to articulate perception adequately by these philosophers leads to the separation of body and mind. However, the perceptual consciousness postulated by Merleau-Ponty turns out to be nothing without the situation perceived. He has to face the question that sounds meaningful also in the context of Nishida: is it possible to conceptualize perceptual consciousness without eliminating it? This question, it would seem, is not yet answered, at least, not in a positive way.

Concluding Remarks

It is quite obvious that the path of experience alone, "the path leading to the things themselves", cannot solve all the greatest problem of our times that was called by Fritjof Capra "the crisis of perception". However, it could be one of the strategies in contemporary philosophy and in every other sphere of human life helping one to avoid becoming blind "to the unavoidable complexities of concrete human experience".[78] It could help to avoid too rapid solutions and decisions to the human problems based on prejudices and guided by "the small rationalism" Merleau-Ponty was combating. The revised rationality could also help us to discover "the musicality of the Other", instead of just subscribing to the ideologies showing the Other as "this" or "that", "American", or "Muslim", "progressive" or "underdeveloped". The recent writings of Lithuanian philosophers such as Arvydas Sliogeris, Tomas Sodeika or Rita Serpytyte, or the younger generation, Dalius Jonkus, Rasa Davidaviciene and Nerijus Milerius, shows a strong tendency towards "experiential perspective". This can be expected not to cease in the future.

[77] *Ibid*., p. 184.
[78] Toulmin, S. *Cosmopolis: the Hidden Agenda of Modernity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990, p. 201.

Chapter XI

Experience and Context: Cross-cultural Approach to the Epistemology of Mysticism

Audrius Beinorius

There is no need of spiritual progress nor of contemplation, disputation or discussion, nor meditatation, concentration or even the effort of prayer.

Please tell me clearly: What is supreme Truth?

Listen: Neither renounce nor posses anything, share in the joy of the total Reality and be as you are. (*Anuttarâsthikâ* of Abhinavagupta, 11 century)

Contemporary debates about the nature and significance of 'mysticism' often ignore the shifting meanings and contexts of the category of 'the mystical' throughout its history. Almost no attention has been paid to the way in which the construction of the number of stereotypical images of the East have been pressed into service as token representatives of the global phenomenon of 'mysticism'. These stereotypes have been used to make a variety of competing claims about the mystical, spiritual or otherworldly nature of Eastern culture and the limitations of human experience. Such debates also serve to locate certain aspects of Asian and Western culture within a modernist and psychologized framework that misreads the phenomenon of mysticism on a number of levels.

Fundamentally, the problem with this entire debate is that that the historical and comparative study of mystics has become skewed by the contemporary construction of 'mysticism' in exclusively experiential terms. The experiential emphasis in most contemporary characterizations of mysticism reflects the influence of post-Kantian epistemology and the seminal work of the philosopher, psychologist and early scholar of 'the mystical', William James. The dominant trajectory within the contemporary study of mysticism, following William James, has conceived of its subject matter as the study of 'mystical experiences' or 'altered states of consciousness' and the phenomena connected with their attainment. However, exclusive emphasis upon the experiential dimension of the subject matter not only misinterprets the spiritual traditions of the East, but also misrepresents pre-modern usage of the term 'mysticism' within the Christian tradition itself.

Indeed, is there something we can meaningfully refer to as 'the mystical' in various world religious traditions? Could mysticism be the common core underlying the world's religious traditions as argue perennialists? How should we treat the claims of Indian mystics on possibility of achieving an unmediated awareness of reality?

The Mystical

The modern academic study of mysticism began in earnest towards the end of the nineteenth century. The term 'mysticism' derives from the same time period and, as Michel de Certeau demonstrates, is an offspring of *la mystique*,[1] a term that first comes to the fore in early seventeenth

[1] Certeau, M. '"Mystique' au XVIIe siecle: Le probleme du langage 'mystique'". In *L'Home devant Dieu: Melanges offerts au Pere Henri du Lubac*, vol.2. Paris: Aubier, 1964, p. 267.

century France. ‘Mysticism’ was initially coined by Western intellectuals to refer to that phenomenon or aspect of the Christian *traditio* that was understood to emphasize religious knowledge gained by means of an extraordinary experience or revelation of the divine. This has remained a constant theme in he academic study of the subject. For instance, Margaret Smith describes mysticism as ‘the most vital element in all true religions, rising up in revolt against cold formality and religious torpor ... The aim of mystics is to establish a conscious relation with the Absolute, in which they find the personal object of love".[2] Evelyn Underhill, an important early figure in the study of mysticism, argues that the one essential feature of mysticism is "union between God and soul". Underhill suggests that "The mystic way is best understood as a process of sublimation, which carries the correspondences of the self with the Universe up to higher levels than those on which our normal consciousness works".[3] For Underhill, the experience of the mystic is "communion with a living Reality, an object of Love capable of response". This language is, of course, uncompromisingly Western and Christian, but it is applied by Underhill to all forms of mysticism throughout the different world-religious traditions.

This is an astonishing statement to make – that the notions of God, communion, the soul and the themes of a loving relationship between the two can be found in all non-Christian religious experience. Actually such notions and themes are imposed upon them. Underhill and Smith, of course, are not alone in this regard. It has been a presupposition of a great deal of scholarship in the study of mysticism that one can apply Christian categories (including the category of mysticism itself) to religions, cultures and experiences beyond their original context. As the study of mysticism has developed along the lines of the comparative study of religion, theistic definitions have become increasingly problematic. Indeed, mysticism suffers from the same problems of definition as does the equally problematic term ‘religion’.[4]

All contemporary studies of mysticism fail to appreciate the sense in which notions of the ‘mystical’ are cultural and linguistic constructions dependent upon a web of interlocking definitions, attitudes and discursive processes, which themselves are tied to particular forms of life and historically specific practices. Just as these various meanings and applications of ‘the mystical’ have changed over time, so too have the variety of attitudes towards them and evaluations of their importance differed according to circumstance. Grace Jantzen therefore argues "the idea of ‘mysticism’ is a social construction and that it has been constructed in different ways at different times. Although ... medieval mystics and ecclesiastics did not work with a concept of ‘mysticism’ they did have strong views about who should count as a mystic, views which changed over the course of time ... The current philosophical construction of ‘mysticism’ is therefore only one in a series of social constructions of mysticism ..."[5]

Definitions shift over time, of course, and modern notions of mysticism differ significantly from the early and medieval Christian understanding of ‘the mystical’. On this point we may agree with Talal Asad when he suggests, that there cannot be a universal definition of mysticism "not only because its constituent elements and relationships are historically specific, but because that

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[2] Margaret Smith, "The Nature and Meaning of Mysticism". In Richard Woods (ed.) *Understanding Mysticism.* London: Athlone Press, 1980, p. 20.

[3] Underhill, E. "The Essentials of Mysticism". In Richard Woods (ed.) *Understanding Mysticism.* London: Athlone Press, 1980, p. 29.

[4] See McGill, B. *The Foundations of Mysticism*. London: SCM Press, Vol. 1, 1991, p. 265.

[5] Jantzen, G. *Power, Gender and Christian Mysticism.* Cambridge: Cambridge Studies in Ideology and Religion, vol. 8, 1995, p. 12.

definition is itself the historical product of discursive processes".[6] Such definitions, however, will never be universally applicable when one addresses different cultural milieux or historical periods. For instance, if we try to translate the term 'mysticism' into Sanskrit by making emphasis on the sense of 'the secret doctrine' we often come across the terms *rahasyavâda, guhyavâda, gudhârtha, gahanavastu, gupta, upanishad, tantra* – depending on the different aspects of this term. But if we make an emphasis on the mystical experience other words from the Indian traditions may be considered and explored: *sâkshâtkâra, anubhûti, yogipratyaksha, samâdhi, samâvesa, anubhava, jîvanmukti, bodhi, pratyabhijñâ, sahaja jñâna* and others.

Let us look at how 'the mystical' has been constructed in the West.

In everyday language the term 'mystical' has come to be used in a rather woolly and ill-defined manner. The adjective is commonly used to describe any object, person, event or belief that has vaguely mysterious aspect to it, religious experiences, the supernatural, the magical and the occult. The term itself derives from the Greek adjective *mystikos* and is said to originate from various mystery cults prevalent in the Roman Empire of the early Christian period. As a number of scholars have suggested, *mystikos* derives from a Greek root *myo*, meaning 'to close' and refers to the noun *mystes,* 'the initiate', and to *mysteria*, the process of initiation as a ritual act, and to *myein*, the 'act of initiation' itself, which must be kept a secret by those to be initiated. Many mystery cults of the Greece-Roman world were esoteric movements and the term is usually taken to denote the practice of either closing ones eyes or of closing one's lips, that is, remaining silent. Both renditions can be seen in the way in which 'mysticism' is understood in contemporary academic usage. On the one hand, the mystical is often understood to denote an experience that goes beyond the range and scope of everyday experiences – an experience that transcendents the sensory realm and perhaps even mental images as well. On the other hand, mysticism is associated with the ineffable or that about which one should not, and indeed cannot, speak. This association is also prevalent in academic literature on the subject and constitutes a peculiarly modern preoccupation of studies of mysticism.

The Greek Tradition

Although classical Greek terms are used in the entire domain of Christian mysticism, the subject does not seem to be a classical Greek phenomenon at all. There seems to be no clear evidence of mysticism in the Christian or the Indian sense of the word before Plotinus.[7] There is no direct link between the Greek mysteries, e.g. that of Eleusis, and Christian mysticism. For in the mysteries the 'mystic' becomes an *epoptes*, someone who sees 'the Holy' in objective shape, not the one who becomes one with it. Plato became the mediator between the antique mysteries and mysticism in his dialogues *Symposion* and *Phaidro* in which he combines the ascent of the soul to the most sublime, truly spiritual vision, with *Eros,* at the same time according considerable space to the language of Eleusis.[8] The absorbtion of the metaphorical language taken from the mysteries in the conception of a spiritual ascent resulted in a model of mystical diction, which was adopted enthusiastically by the Jew, Philo, and whose attraction early Christianity was unable to resist – an influence first documented in Christian Gnosis, then in Pseudo-Dionysius, the Areopagite (c. 500).

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[6] Asad, T. *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam.* London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993, p. 29.

[7] Burkert, W. *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche*. Stuttgart, 1977, p. 413.

[8] Burkert, W. *Ibid*., p.12.

The fact remains, however, that the words ‘mysticism’ and ‘mystical’ do not appear in the Bible.[9] There is no mention of them in the New Testament. In the Old Testament the word ‘mystes’ does occur, albeit only to dismiss the cults of the Canaanites.[10] The adjective *mystikos* is used to term something concerned with the *mysterion*, which in turn designates both human and an eschatological mystery. According to Hans Urs von Balthasar: "In the New Testament the whole emphasis is placed on the axis between revelation and faith; the subjective forms in which the gift of faith can appear are differentiated to some extent, but without any judgment being pronounced or any psychological interest displayed".[11] The Early Fathers and the whole Middle Ages very often used the adjectives *mystikos* or *mysticus* in direct semantic derivation from the word *mysterion*, and in so doing intended not only to introduce a psychological dimension to religious practice, but also and primarily to oust prophecy – which, according to the New Testament, had lost its immediate function after the Saviour’s coming.[12]

Pseudo-Dionysius, the Areopagite, must be accorded the title of the Father of Christian mysticism. He is the pivotal mediator introducing Greek thinking with its formative impact into Christianity. This is witnessed linguistically in his adoption of the diction of the Hellenistic mysteries, in terms of content, in his transposition of the biblical mysteries of salvation into an ahistorical context, ‘timelessness and permanence’. Two points in Dionysius’ understanding of mysticism seem to be important for all of later Christian mysticism. First, he prepared the literary vessel, the treatise *De mystica theologia*, in which mystical experience not only found narrative expression, but also received its coherent logical and theoretical structure. Secondly, this formal structuring of mystical experience on the plane of the *ratio* provides at the very outset both a linguistic and a philosophical framework for mystical theology. Unlike what is often termed mysticism today, Dionysian mysticism is not the description of paranormal states of consciousness, the *gratiae gratis datae* (Thomas Aquinas), in which one’s union with God affects experiential and sensual knowledge of Him. Dionysius has a more fundamental approach: striving for mystical contemplation impies setting out on a path. The goal of this path is "becoming united with what is beyond all being and knowing by unknowing".[13] The process is described as an ecstasy detached from the self, as a radical effacement of self-awareness, and as an exclusive alertness for "the sovereign-substantial ray of Divine Darkness.

The Christian Tradition

The best general account of the origins of the term in the Christian tradition is probably that offered by Louis Bouyer. Bouyer argues that there are three dimensions to the early Christian concept of *mystikos* – all of which very soon become interwined as the tradition develops. These elements are: biblical, liturgical and spiritual or contemplative. The first denotes the idea of mystical hermeneutic of scripture – that is, an understanding of the biblical message rooted in allegorical interpretation. *Mystikos* is also used to describe the liturgical mystery of the Eucharist – the timeless communion with the divine. Finally, the term is also used to denote a contemplative

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[9] Balthasar, H.U. "Zur Ortsbestimmung chistlicher Mystic". In *Pneuma und Institution, Skizzen zur Theologie* IV, Einsiedeln, 1974, p. 298.
[10] *Book of the Wisdom of Solomon* 12.6 and 8.4.
[11] Balthasar, H.U., *Ibid.*, p. 300.
[12] Lampe, G.W.H. *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*. Oxford, 1978, pp. 891–893.
[13] Lossky, V. *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*. London, 1957, p. 17.

or experiential knowledge of God. For the Hellenized Church Fathers all three aspects were inextricably interwoven.[14]

In early and medieval Christianity the mystical denoted the mystery of the divine. For Origen the mystical represented the key for unlocking the hidden meaning of scripture and denoted the way of interpreting the Bible that unfolds a timeless and eternal message that remains relevant for the whole of Creation. Christian liturgical practices such as the Eucharist were also described as mystical, being that which transforms a mundane activity (taking bread and wine) into a religious sacrament of cosmic and eternal significance. Although there was a place within the Christian tradition for an understanding of the mystical in terms of religious experience as the direct apprehension of the divine, this was not divorced from the other dimensions of the term. Thus, for Origen, the mystical interpretation of scripture and participation in the Eucharist cannot be divorced from the mystical experience of the divine. For him the mystical exemplifies that which is preeminently universal and is to be contrasted with the particularity of the historical and psychic dimensions of scriptural exegesis. The separation of these various aspects of the mystical and the elevation of one aspect – the experiential – above all others is a product of the modern era and the post-Enlightenment dichotomy between public and private realms.

In the medieval period, the mystical continues to be used in this threefold manner. More specifically, *mystica theologia* under the influence of Pseudo-Dionysius, the Areopagite, came to denote the science of investigating the allegorical significance of biblical truth – that is, the discerning of the cryptic and hidden meaning of scripture. A distinction, perhaps first drawn clearly by Augustine, was made between linguistic allegory (*allegoria in verbis*), when linguistic signs are used to refer to something other than their usual referents, and historical allegory (*allegoria in factis*), which denoted the hidden and subtle meanings underlying the objects, persons and events of history as created by God. One of the traditional functions of theology, then, was to examine God's rhetoric – as manifested in the unfolding pattern of historical events – and thus intuit the mystical meaning of history. This, no doubt, is something of the mening behind the phrase. 'God moves in mysterious ways'.

However, when we come to the Protestant Reformation, we find Martin Luther as the arch-critic of mystical or allegorical hermeneutics. He argued that: "The Holy Spirit is the simplest writer and speaker in heaven and earth. This is why His words can have no more than the one simplest meaning which we call the written one, or the literal meaning of the tongue".[15] Luther dismisses the 'twaddle' (*merissimae nugae*) of mystical theology, which he condemns as being more Platonic than Christian. This relates to Luther's emphasis upon the transparency of the Bible's meaning and the importance of individuals having access to, and being able to read, the Bible for themselves. Thus, in the post-Reformation period the mystical and allegorical approach to biblical exegesis came increasingly under fire and we see a gradual decline in the status of the mystical within Western Christendom.

The Secularization of the Mystical

From the seventeenth century onwards we see the gradual secularization of 'the mystical'. The category now becomes closely associated with the metaphors and mysteries of poetry and literature – cultural forms that became defined during this period in strict opposition to the alleged

[14] See Bouyer,L. *The Christian Mystery: From Pagan Myth to Christian Mysticism*. Edinburg: T. & T. Clark, 1990.
[15] *Luther's Works*, Vol.39, p.178, from Gerald L.Bruns, *Hermeneutics, Ancient and Modern*. Yale University Press, 1992, p. 143.

transparency of meaning to be found in prose in scientific writing. Thus in the seventeenth century, as Certeau argues, Western science established its own distinctiveness – its cultural and political identity, though the exclusion of more expressive modes of thought and the construction of a category known as 'literature'.[16] In this way, oppositions were set up between the opacity of rhetoric and allegory and the plain transparency of prose. Fiction becomes opposed to factual writing, subjectivity to objectivity, the metaphorical is contrasted with the literal, and the multivocality of 'literature' was seen as distinguishing it from the unvocality of science.

One consequence of the secularization of the mystical, so Certeau argues, is that the distinction between the two types of allegory becomes blurred. Thus, the divine allegory of historical events becomes subsumed by the general category of linguistic allegory and we have see the confutation of 'mystical hermeneutics' with the human use of linguistic allegory. Mystical hermeneutics no longer refers specifically to the intuition of the timeless divine truth of scripture, but rather comes to denote merely a particular mode of speaking, a specific literary genre – the 'mystical text'. This constituted a major shift in the understanding of texts. *La mystique*, therefore, came to represent an important aspect of the seventeenth century construction of the distinction between science and literature and therefore between 'the sciences' and 'the humanities'.

By the middle of the seventeenth century, 'the mystical' is increasingly applied to the religious realm alone, and the term disappears from the emerging scientific literature of the day. Before this period, of course, the term had been used to denote the hidden meaning of God's universe and natural philosophy was seen as one way of uncovering this hidden meaning. Such usage of 'the mystical' in scientific works, however, died out as the gradual secularization of the natural sciences displaced the mystical – locating it firmly within the separate realm of the religious. In other words, the association of 'the mystical' exclusively with a realm denoted by the term 'religion' is a product of the process of secularization, which 'filters out' the religious dimension from other aspects of human cultural activity.

In the modern era, as Certeau suggests, the traditional hagiographies and writings of the saints become adapted and designated 'mystical'. Thus one finds the invention of a Christian mystical tradition. Emphasis shifts from a focus upon the virtues and miracles of the saints to an interest in extraordinary experiences and states of mind. It is at this point in European history, "that already existing writings were termed 'mystic' and a mystic tradition was fabricated".[17] The seventeenth century usage of the term 'mystical' appears to have become increasingly pejorative. The claim of the apologists for the mystical to access the 'secret' meaning of scripture was always likely to be seen as a threat to the Church's institutionalization of biblical meaning if made by those outside its auspices. We find the predominance of a second strategy, namely the invention of an ancient mystical tradition within the orthodox walls of Christianity. This involved a selective colonization of classical Christian authors – in particular the early church fathers and a variety of medieval Christian writers and saintly figures. The consequence of this strategy, of course, was that it tied the newly sanctified mystic and their apologists to the established tradition of exegesis and the overreaching authority of the Church, as well as binding them to a canon of acceptable and orthodox ecclesiastical literature. It would seem then that the birth of 'a Christian mystical tradition' also coincided with its domestication by the ecclesiastical authorities.

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[16] Certeau, M. *The Mystic Fable*, Vol.1. *The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, translate by Michael B.Smith. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992, p. 95.

[17] Certeau, M. 'Mystic speech' in *Heterologies: Discourses on the Other*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986, p. 82.

'The mystical', however one characterizes it, always represents a site of struggle, a conflict for recognition and authority. For instance, the power struggle over the definition of the authentically mystical is reflected in the medieval tension between the visionary and the apophatic dimensions of Christian mysticism. The anonymous fourteenth century English author of *The Cloud of Unknowing* explicitly rejects the authority of visionary experiences in comparison to the path of negation derived from the negative theology of Pseudo-Dionysius, which rises above the discursive intellect and rejects all images of God. For the author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*, as indeed for Pseudo-Dionysius, John of the Cross, Meister Eckhart, visionary experiences are valid but only at a lower level. Such visions can be sources of attachment and intellectual narrowness, since they involve the visual or aural embodiment of God.

However, such 'privatization of mysticism' (idiom of Grace Jantzen) – that is, the increasing tendency to locate the mystical in the psychological realm of personal experiences – serves to exclude it from such political issues as social justice. Mysticism thus becomes seen as a personal matter of cultivating inner states of tranquility and equanimity, which, rather than seeking to transform the world, serve to accommodate the individual to the *status quo* through the alleviation of anxiety and stress.

The Mystical as Experimental and Individual

Modern conceptions of the mystical have increasingly become divorced both from the originally Christian context of the term and from the scriptural and liturgical dimensions that the notion implied in ancient and medieval Christianity. The center of gravity in religion has shifted from authority and the scriptural/liturgical dimensions to experience. Already in 1938, J.M. Moore observed: "No term has been more frequently employed in recent religious discussion than the phrase 'religious experience".[18] The mystical becomes overwhelmingly experiential in the discourses of modernity. As a result, the contemporary study of mysticism, operating within a post-Enlightenment context, provides an overwhelmingly psychological construction of the subject area. An excellent example of this is the seminal work of William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, where we find the statement that "personal religious experience has its root and center in mystical states of consciousness".[19] For James, organized or institutional religion was 'second-hand' religion. True religion was to be found in the private, religious and mystical experiences of individuals.[20] In criticizing this psychologized orientation, Grace Jantzen points out that: "Philosophers writing about mysticism after James regularly cite and accept his description of mysticism as a basis for their evaluation of it; but do not notice its provenance. Perhaps because of the empiricist strand in James' writing, and his liberal citation of sources, subsequent philosophers too readily take for granted that his description of mysticism is reliable, and, contrary to the spirit of James, do not investigate actual mystics for themselves".[21]

W. James's own approach to the study of mysticism was heavily influenced by Schleiermacher and the Romantic reaction to Kantian philosophy. One dominant trajectory in the contemporary study of mysticism since James has been the study of 'altered states of

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[18] Moore, J.M. *Theories of Religious Experience.* New York: Round Table, 1938, VII; H-G. Gadamer declares also: "It seems to me that the concept of experience is among the least clarified concepts which we have." In H-G.Gadamer *Truth and Method*. New York: Continuum, 1985, p. 310.

[19] James, W. *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, The Gifford lectures 1901-1902. Glasgow: Collins, 1977, p. 370.

[20] Smith, J.E. "William James's Account of Mysticism: a Critical Appraisal". In Steven Katz (ed.), *Mysticism and Religious Traditions.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1983, p. 247.

[21] Jantzen, G. "Mysticism and Experience". In *Religious Studies,* 25, 1989, pp. 295–315.

consciousness' and the phenomena connected with their attainment. James suggests that although such states are inaccessible to the ordinary rational mind, such experiences may impart exceptional meaning and truth-giving quality to the agent. Thus "our normal waking consciousness, whilst all about it, parted from it by the filmiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different".[22]

The point is, of course, that contemporary Westerners do not normally take these states as 'normative' if they consider them at all. When such experiential states are discussed they usually are rejected as delusory, subjective and hallucinatory, or are described as 'altered' states of consciousness – a phrase that presupposes the normative nature of so-called 'everyday' experiences.[23] In some religious traditions, however, especially in Buddhism and classical Yoga, such 'altered states' are sometimes taken to be the normative and 'natural' state of mind, and it is the everyday states of waking and dreaming, etc., that are somehow as 'alteration' of, or an aberration from, that norm. Thus in the *Yoga sûtras* of Patañjali, yoga is defined as 'the cessation of the fluctuations of the mind'.[24] The 'normal' status of the seer is to abide in this own form (*svarûpa*), as pure consciousness (*purusha*).

William James was, of course, a man of his time. The exclusively experiential emphasis reflects not only the emerging discipline of psychology, of which James himself was an important figure, but also general features of modern Western culture, such as a clearly defined distinction between the public and private realms, the rise of anti-clericalism and modern political and philosophical trends such as liberalism, democracy and the notion of the 'individual'. As the subject area of religious studies developed in the nineteenth century, it was influenced, and to some degree absorbed, by the emerging psychological discourse that was developing at that time. All these factors have contributed to the marginalization of religion and classification of mystical and religious experience firmly within the realm of the private and the individual as opposed to the public and the social domain. The dichotomy between public and private spheres and the post-Reformation distinction between institutional/organized religion and private religion have had a large part to play in the psychologization of mysticism.

Nevertheless, the communal rather than the individualistic dimension of *mystikos* is seen in the description of Christian liturgical practices, such as the Eucharist, as mystical. The mystical is that which transforms a mundane activity (consuming bread and wine) and sacramentalizes it, i.e. transforms it into an event of cosmic and eternal significance. As Bouyer's work suggests, there is a place in the early Christian tradition for an understanding of the mystical as a form of contemplative experience (the direct apprehension of divine), but this is not to be divorced from the scriptural and liturgical dimensions of the mystical. There is, of course, a clear experiential dimension to be found in most of the traditions and individuals usually described as 'mystical'.

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[22] James, W. *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, The Gifford lectures 1901-1902. Glasgow: Collins, 1977, p. 374.

[23] As Tart, C. notes: "Within Western culture we have strong negative attitudes towards Altered States of Consciousness (ASC): there is the normal (good) state of consciousness and there are pathological changes in consciousness. Most people make no further distinctions ... In broader perspective it is clear that man has functioned in a multitude of states of consciousness and that different cultures have varied enormously in recognition and utilization of, and attitudes towards, ASCs ... It could be expected that within psychology and psychiatry there would be far more exact terms for describing various ASCs and their components, but exept for a rich (but often not precise) vocabulary dealing with psychopathological states, this is not true". (Tart, C. *Altered States of Consciousness*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1969, pp. 2–3) On page 2, Tart defines an altered states of consciousness for a given individual as "one in which he clearly feels a *qualitative* shift in his patern of mental functioning, that is, he feels not just a quantitative shift ... but also that some quality or qualities of his mental processes are different."

[24] '*yoga-citta-vrtti-nirodha'*, *Yoga Sûtra* I.2.

Teresa of Avilia, Julian of Norvich, Meister Eckhart, Shankara, Buddhaghosa, Dogen, etc., all show a great deal of interest in the experiential dimension of the religious life. However, to study pre-modern mystics (whether Christian, Buddhist or Hindu) without recognizing upon the experiential bias of modern accounts of mysticism will result in an inevitable distortion of the material.

The privatized and narrowly experiential conception of the mystical results in a peculiar preoccupation in academic literature on the subject with indescribable and largely inaccessible experiences of an extraordinary nature. The suggestion that 'mysticism' is somehow antithetical to rationality, and that it is emotional in contrast to a detached and dispassionate intellectual sphere remain to be argued for and cannot be uncontroversially assumed. Theologian Paul Tillich argues, for instance, that 'Mysticism is not irrational. Some of the greatest mystics in Europe and Asia were, at the same time, some of the greatest philosophers, outstanding in clarity, consistency and rationality'.[25] Indeed, many of those figures who are frequently described as mystics, such as Plotinus, Augustine, Ibn Arabi, Kûkai, Asanga, Shankara or Abhinavagupta have produced intellectual systems and literary works of a highly sophisticated and erudite nature. Although such historically influential works may not figure prominently in university courses these days, the intellectual integrity and cultural importance of such figures and traditions can hardly be questioned.

The Mystical as Irrational

Why is mysticism so frequently claimed to be irrational and subjective in modern Western culture? In fact, 'the mystical' has tended to be defined in post-Kantian thought in direct opposition to the 'rational'. Mysticism comes to represent the pre-eminently private, the non-rational and the quietistic. As such it represents the suppressed 'Other' that contributes to the establishment of and high status of those spheres of human activity defined as public, rational and socially oriented in the modern Academy. The denial of rationality to the 'Other' has been a common strategy in subordinating the 'Other' throughout human history and is by no streach of the imagination simply a Western phenomenon. Within Hindu Brahmanical texts we find a similar tendency to construct a largely undifferentiated category to represent foreign 'barbarians' (*mleccha*). Having constructed a largely homogeneous category based upon exclusion and deficiency it becomes a comparatively simple move to portray such groups as inferior and lacking in the essential qualities characterized by one's own particular community. Attribution of irrationality is thus one of a number of oppressive strategies adopted by xenophobes throughout history and has also proven a useful weapon in the subordination of women in a variety of cultures.

Since the seventeenth century those elements of Western culture that have been classified as 'mystical' have generally been marginalized or suppressed in mainstream intellectual thought, despite a resurgence in Romantism and a comparable resurgence with the rise of a variety of New Age philosophies in the late twentieth century. But the fundamental paradigm that dichotomizes the rational and the mystical has remained largely unquestioned.

Specifically the characterization of Indian religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism as mystical has also tended to support the exclusion of Hindus and Buddhists from the realm of rationality. Western philosophers (especially in the Anglo-American analytic tradition) have tended to construct a secularized image of their discipline as the exercise of 'pure rationality'. In contrast, Indian forms of 'systematic thought' have usually been excluded from the realm of

[25] Tillich, P. *Dynamics of Faith*. New York: Harper and Row, 1957, p. 60.

philosophical debate on the grounds that they are tained with 'theological' assumptions that are culture-specific (as if this were not the case in the West). Indian philosophy, we are frequently told, tends towards the mystical and the otherworldly and thus does not maintain the high standards expected of Western philosophy as the pursuit of truth though the exercise of pure rationality. One hardly needs point to the political consequences of such attitudes towards non-Western philosophies and cultures. It is notable that the word 'experience' became very conspicuous and important in the encounter between India and the West. According to W. Halbfass this is because: "'Experience' seems to refer to a category transcending the dichotomies of science and religion, the rational and the irrational. It promises a reconciliation of the ancient and the modern. It appeals to the modern fascination with science, but rejects its commitment to objectification and quantification. It is device of reinterpretation and cultural self-affirmation, which serves to defend the Indian tradition against charges of mysticism and irrationalism".[26]

Postcolonial critics have pointed to the ethnocentricity of much Orientalist historiography. The most influential example being James Mill's *A History of British India* with its periodization of Indian history culminating in the 'liberating arrival' of the British. Eurocentric bias, however, is also apparent in the various histories of philosophy that continue to be produced, with their pointed exclusion of any intellectual thought from non-Western cultures. Such works are generally characterized by a questionable appropriation of Ancient Greek culture under exclusive rubric of the 'West' and the limited (if any) discussion of the importance of Egyptian, Islamic and Indian thought in the development of European philosophy and science. What is of particular interest is the absence of reference to the role played by Egyptian and Oriental 'mystery traditions' in the formulation of Greek philosophical ideas and approaches.[27] The significance of these mystical influences upon important early figures in Greek thought such as Plato and Pythagoras has been largely suppressed by modern historians of philosophy, who have remained intent upon drawing a sharp distinction between philosophy (the rational) and mysticism (the irrational).

Immanuel Kant has been an enormously influential figure in the development of modern Western intellectual thought. His own 'Copernican Revolution' involved the realization that our experience of the world is preconditioned by certain *a priori* categories that provide the framework through which human experience the world. For Kant, knowledge of things as they are (*noumena*) remains strictly beyond rational human apprehension. This recognition of the impossibility of any unmediated cognition of reality has had such a lasting influence upon Western intellectual thought since the Enlightenment that it is often simply taken for granted. As Kevin Hart notes: "From the institution of philosophy as an autonomous academic subject in the Enlightenment to the later half of the twentieth century, philosophers have shown little interest in the problems generated by the claims of mystics. It was common enough before Kant for philosophy to define itself against poetry or theology; but it is Kant who, more vividly than any before him, introduces mysticism to this role: 'supernatural communication' and 'mystical illumination' become, for Kant, 'the death of philosophy".[28] Given the relative lack of antagonism between 'philosophy' and 'religion' in non-Western contexts, the exclusion of apparently religious of mystical thought from the realm of

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[26] Halbfass, W. *India and Europe: An Essay in Philosophical Understanding.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1990, p. 401.

[27] The neccesity to rethink the fundamental bases of 'Western Civilization' and also to recognize the penetration of racism and continental chauvinism into all Western historiography is emphazised in the study of Bernal, M. *Black Athena. The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization.* London: Vintage, 1991.

[28] Hart, K. *The Trespass of the Sign: Deconstruction, Theology and Philosophy.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 210.

philosophy provides one of the most obdurate obstacles to a postcolonial and cross-cultural dialogue between Western and non-Western cultural traditions.

We may note, that the prevailing attitudes and presuppositions we have about mysticism are culturally specific and ultimately derive from philosophical presuppositions of Western thought since the Enlightenment. Just as the West has tended to construct images of India as its 'other', modern Western philosophy (upheld as the ideal of universal and objective rationality based upon pure argumentation) has constructed a reverse image of 'mysticism' as its shadow-side. Thus it is precisely the mystical and religious aspects of Western intellectual thought that have been most systematically ignored by philosophers and academics since the seventeenth century.

Orientalism and the Mysticism of Hindu Thought

There was an increasing tendency, however, from the late eighteenth century onwards to emphasize the 'mystical' nature of Hindu and Buddhist religions by reference to the 'esoteric' literature known as the *Vedânta*, the end of the Vedas – namely the *Upani·ads*. The classical *Upani*sh*ads*material was composed over a period of almost a thousand years, and reflects, even in its earliest stages, a movement away from the ritualism of the *Samhitâs* and *Brâhmanas* and the development of an increasingly allegorical interpretation of Vedic sacrificial practices. Ancient Vedic sacrificial practices are universalized in their meaning (*artha*) by establishing of a series of homologies (*bandhu*) or 'correspondences' between the microcosm (the ritual event) and the macrocosm. Interestingly, this is reminiscent of the phenomenon of mystical hermeneutics within Christianity where similar allegorical interpretations of biblical events were seen as representative of the 'hidden' meaning of the divine plan. Perhaps the most characteristic example of this phenomenon within the *Upani*sh*ads* is *prâmâgnihotra* – the transformation of the fire sacrifice (*agnihotra*) from an external, ritualized act into an interiorized yogic practice involving the control of one's breath, vital life-force (*prâma*).

The philosophical orientation of the Upanishads and *Gîtâ* seems to have appealed to Westerners with a variety of interests and agendas. The texts appealed to anti-clerical and anti–ritualistic sentiments of many Western intellectuals and proved amenable to abstraction from their own context via an emphasis upon interiority. The allegorization of Vedic ritual found in the Upanishads could be applied to all religious practices and institutions, proving amenable to the growing interest in non-instutionalized forms of 'spirituality'. On the other hand, for Christian missionaries the Upanishads could also be used as evidence of an incipient monotheism within the Hindu tradition. For the liberal Christian this provided a platform for inter-faith dialogue between Christianity and Hinduism and a recognition of some commonality between faiths. Max Müller, for instance, was interested in the comparability of Indian religion and his own liberal version of Christianity and became increasingly preoccupied by the possibilities of a 'Christian Vedânta' in his later years.[29]

For Christians with a more evangelical zeal, the Upanishads represented a way into the 'Hindu mind-set' which opened up the possibility of converting Hindus to Christianity. J.N. Farquhar, missionary and Indological scholar, for instance, saw Vedânta as the apex of Indian religious thought and precursor for the Christianization of India. According to him "The Vedanta is not Christianity, and never will be, but it is avery definite preparation. It is our belief that the living

[29] See Halbfass, W. *India and Europe: An Essay in Philosophical Understanding*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1990, p. 134.

Christ will sanctify and make complete the religious thought of India".[30] Furthermore, the allegorization of ritual in the Upanishads suited missionary critiques of Vedic ritualism as well as providing an indigenous source for the critique of Hindu polytheism and idolatry. Thus, under fervent pressure and criticism from Christian missionaries and increasing interest from Orientalists, one finds an emphasis among the various Hindu 'reform' movements on the repudiation of idolatry, particularly in the cases of Dayânanda Saraswati and Rammohun Roy. Both the Arya Samaj and the Brahmo Samaj promulgated an uncompromising monotheism as the essence of the Hindu religion. Sarasvati argued that sm was present in the ancient Vedic *Samhitâs* and Roy argued strongly for a monotheistic interpretation of the Vedânta. Both movements, of course, reflect the influence of Western constructions in their exposition of the core of Hinduism.

We should note also that the construction of 'Hindu mysticism' and the location of a spiritual essence as central to the Hindu religion is bound up with the complexities of colonial politics in the nineteenth-century India. The Romantic interest in Indian culture frequently focused upon the question of its apparent pantheism. J.G. Herder was himself deeply involved in debates about the validity of Spinoza's philosophical system and saw a similar pantheistic monism as the core of Hindu thought. Similarly, F. Schlegel associated Hindu and Buddhist thought with pantheism and F.W.J. Schelling provided a spirited defense of pantheism and its implications for moral life. A. Schopenhauer, being himself an influential figure in nineteenth-century European thought, inspired the interest of many in the 'spiritual' philosophies of India and, perhaps influenced by Anquetil-Duperron, propounds a form of perenialism when he notes that "Buddha, Eckhart and I all teach essentially the same"[31] Schopenhauer's association of Buddhist and Vedântic thought with the apophatic theology of Meister Eckhart has become a recurring theme in Western representations of 'the Mystic East' from the late nineteenth century onwards and continues to this day. For P. Deussen the Vedânta philosophy of Shankara represented the culmination of Hindu thought, providing evidence that idealisms that were in vogue in nineteenth-century European thought were already present at the core of the Hindu religion. In particular one finds an increasing tendency within Western scholarship not only to identify 'Hinduism' with the Vedânta (thus establishing an archaic textual and canonical locus for the Hindu religion) but also a tendency to conflate Vedânta with Advaita Vedânta. Advaita, with its monistic identification of Atman and Brahman, thereby came to represent the paradigmatic example of the mystical nature of the Hindu religion.

In colonial terms, of course, the conflation of Advaita Vedânta, representing the paradigmatic example of the mystical nature of the Indian religion, and 'Hinduism' also provided a ready-made organizational framework within which the Western Orientalist and their colonial ruler could make sense of the fluid and diverse culture that it was their job to explain, classify, manage and control. For the Hindu intelligentsia of the nineteenth century, the philosophical traditions of Vedânta seemed also to typify the ancient, noble and ascetic 'spirituality' of the Hindu people well. Rammohun Roy, Dayânanda Saraswati, Swâmi Vivekânanda and Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan were all unanimous in a rereading of Vedânta (however differently conceived) that rendered it compatible with social activism and worldly involvement. Quite remarkably therefore, Vedânta – the renunciate philosophy that exemplified for Western Orientalist a passive mysticism and

[30] Farquhar, J.N. *The Crown of Hinduism*. New Delphi: Oriental Books Reprit. Corp., 1913, p. 54.
[31] Schopenhauer, A. *Senilia*, 1858; from Halbfass, W. *India and Europe: An Essay in Philosophical Understanding.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1990, p. 111.

otherworldly quetism – became a vehicle for anti-colonial and revolutionary protest through the Gandhian principle of *satyagraha*. As Richard G.Fox notes: "Gandhian cultural resistance depended on an Orientalist image of India as inherently spiritual, consensual and corporate ... Otherworldliness became spirituality ... Passiveness became at first passive resistance and later nonviolent resistance ... Gandhian utopia reacts against negative Orientalism by adopting and enhancing this positive image. It therefore ends up with a new Orientalism, that is, a new stereotype, of India, but an affirmative one, leading to effective resistance".[32]

From a scholastic point of view, probably the most influential example of the association of Vedânta with Christian mysticism is Rudolf Otto's *Mysticism East and West* (1932), now generally acknowledged to be a classical work in the comparative study of mysticism. Otto's study reflects an important feature in the Western 'discovery' of Vedânta as the central philosophy of the Hindus: namely, the projection of Christian theological debates and concerns about the nature and status of Christian mysticism onto an Indian canvas. One of the central concerns of*Mysticism East and West* is to redeem the mysticism of Eckhart in the eyes of Otto's predominantly Protestant circle. Otto provides a comparative study of the theologies of Eckhart and Shankara and avoids a simplistic perennialism that confutes the two thinkers, though this is not surprising since his work is a clear attempt to establish the superiority of the German mysticism of Eckhart over the Indian mysticism of Shankara. Otto's critique of Advaita Vedânta as detached, amoral and world-denying, therefore, allows him to displace contemporary Christian debates about the status and implications of Eckhart's mystical theology. Through this process, Eckhart becomes redeemed or absolved of precisely those characteristics for which he has been so frequently criticized.

Otto archieves this through a demonstration of Eckhart's Christian allegiance and superiority to the quietistic illusionism of Shankara's Advaita. Eckhart's system is alive and dynamic, while Shankara's tends towards abstractions. Shankara's goal is "quietism, tyaga, a surrender of the will and of doing, an abandonment of good as of evil works",[33] while Eckhart's quietism is in reality an "active creativity". Shankara rationalizes the paradoxes of mystical language while Eckhart "exites his listeners by unheard of expressions". Unlike Shankara, Eckhart's theology "demands humility". Shankara's Brahman is a static and unchanging absolute, while Eckhart's is a God of "numinous rapture". Towards the end of his study Otto places a great deal of emphasis upon what he sees as the antinomian implications of Shankara's system. The charge of amoralism – of mystical antinomianism, is, along with pantheism, probably the most consistent criticism made of Eckhart's writings by subsequent Christian theologians. Indeed, the Papal condemnation of Eckhart's writings (*In Agro Dominico*) explicitly censures Eckhart for implying that soul's emptying of self-will leads to a renunciation of works. Otto's concern, however, is to demonstrate that this representations of Eckhart is inaccurate and he arrives at this conclusion by contrasting Eckhart's "dynamic vitalism" with what Otto sees as the amoral and static quietism of Shankara. "It is because the background of Shankara's teaching is not Palestine but India that his mysticism has no ethic. It is not immoral, it is a-moral. The Mukta, the redeemed, who has attained *ekata* or unity with the eternal Brahman, is removed from all works, whether good or evil ... With Eckhart it is entirely different. 'What we have gathered in contemplation we give out in love'."[34] Shankara's amoral quietism is seen as a product of his Indian backgruond.

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[32] Fox, R.G. 'East of Said'. In Spinker, M. (ed.) *Edward Said: A Critical Reader*. Oxford: Basil Blachwell, 1992, pp. 151–152.

[33] Otto, R. *Mysticism East and West: A Comparative Analysis of the Nature of Mystic.* London: Quest English edition, 1987, p. 173.

[34] Otto, R. *Ibid.*, p. 205

Otto's representation of Shankara's Vedânta system, therefore, becomes a useful foil, a theological cleansing sponge, which purifies Eckhart of heresy while at the same time absorbing these heretical defects into it. Otto never really questions the normative characterization of 'mysticism' as quiestistic, amoral and experientialist. What Otto attempts in Mysticism East and West is a displacement of the negative connotations of 'the mystical', which he relocates or projects onto a 'mystic East' exemplified by Advaita Vedânta of Shankara. Thus Otto declares in the conclusion that "Eckhart thus becomes necessarily what Shankara could never be".[35] The contrast between these two representatives (Shankara and Eckhart) can be universalized to demonstrate the differences between East and West in general. This elision is subtle but effective. The universalization of a single representative of Indian religious thought creates a caricature of Indian culture that is then shown to be inferior to the normative standards of Christian examples.

The Mystical: Perennial and Cross-Cultural?

Let us look at the other problem. A prevalent, one might even say perennial, theme within modern writings on mysticism is a theological position known as perennialism. According to this doctrine there is an essential commonality between philosophical and religious traditions from widely disparate cultures. The notion of a *philosophia perennis* that runs through the philosophical and religious traditions of the world is also a major theme in the works of René Guénon, the Theosophical Society, and undergirds much of the New Age appropriation of 'Eastern' religions, within contemporary Western culture. This perceived commonality is often given what its proponents have described as a 'mystical' content. In a popular and widely read work on mysticism by F.C. Happold, the author suggests that: "Not only have mystics been found in all ages, in all parts of the world and in all religious systems, but also mysticism has manifested itself in similar or identical forms wherever the mystical consciousness has been present. Because of this it has sometimes been called the Perennial Philosophy".[36]

In terms of the modern study of mysticism the most influential work of this genre is clearly *The Perennial Philosophy* by Aldous Huxley (1944). Huxley describes the *philosophia perennis* as: "The metaphysic which recognizes a divine Reality substantial to the world of things and lives and minds; the psychology that finds in the soul something similar to, or even identical with, divine Reality; the ethic that places man's final end in the knowledge of the immanent and transcendent Ground of all being".[37] In this anthology of excerpts from a variety of religious and philosophical texts from around the world no attempt is made to provide a sense of social, historical or cultural location of these religious expressions. This is no surprise since the perennialist position tends to underplay the significance of sociohistorical context. Beside, Huxley was heavily influenced in his description by Vivekânanda's neo-Vedânta and the idiosyncratic version of Zen exported to the West by D.T. Suzuki.

In 1957 a direct response to Huxley's *The Perennial Philosophy* was published in the form of R.C.Zaehner's *Mysticism Sarced and Profane.*[38] Zaehner's work involves an explicit repudiation of Huxley's perennialist claim that 'mysticism' represents a 'common core' at the center of all religions. Instead, Zaehner argued, there are three fundamentally different types of 'mysticism':

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[35] Otto, R. *Ibid.*, p. 213.
[36] Happold, F.C. *Mysticism: A Study and an Anthology*. Harmondsworth: Pelican Books, 1963, p. 20.
[37] Huxley, A Introduction. In *The Perennial Philosophy.* London: Harper & Row, 1944, p. VII.
[38] See Zaehner, R.C. *Mysticism Sarced and Profane, An Inquiry into some Varieties of Preater-natural Experience.* New York: Clarendon Press, 1957.

theistic, monistic and panenhenic. For Zaeher, the theistic category (which includes most forms of Christian and Islamic mysticism, Hindu theologians like Râmânuja the Vishistâdvaitin) is superior to the other two. The monistic category, which Zaehner describes as an experience of the unity of one's own soul, includes Buddhism (despite its rejection of both monism and belief in a soul), Sâñkhya (which has a dualistic ontology) and Advaita Vedânta. Panenhenic or 'nature' mysticism seems to be something of ragbag collection of those mystics not easily classifiable in terms of the 'world-religious traditions'. Theistic mysticism is said to be superior to the other forms, most notably because it is the only type of mysticism that has a firm moral imperative as a fundamental and constitutive aspect of the experience itself. This claim belongs to a much older Christian theological strategy, which is to suggest that non-theistic religions lack a proper moral foundation since they do not believe in the existence of a benevolent deity in which the notion of a moral goodness can be grounded.

A number of scholars, notably Ninian Smart and Frits Staal, have criticized Zaehner for the theological violence his analysis does to a variety of non-theistic religious perspectives, forcing them into a framework defined by Zaehner's own brand of 'liberal Catholicism'.[39] Zaehner's distinction between theistic and monistic mysticism was challenged by Walter Stace as well. Replacing Zaehner's threefold typology, Stace distinguished between two types of mystical experience (cross-culturally) – introvertive and extrovertive mystical experiences. The introvertive mystical experience is a complete merging of everything and constitutes for Stace not only the superior of the two types of experience but also the mystical core of all religions. The extrovertive experience is only a partial realization of introvertive union – and amounts to a sense of harmony between two things. For Stace all mystical experiences have the following characteristics: they provide a sense of objectivity or reality, a sense of blessedness and peace and a feeling of the holy, the sacred or the divine. Both mystical experiences are of an underlying unity and also characterized by paradoxicality and are alleged to be ineffable by mystics.[40]

Furthermore, Stace argued that Zaehner and his predecessors had failed to make a distinction between mystical experiences as such and the interpretations placed upon them. Following James' emphasis upon mystical experience as ineffable, he urged scholars to be much more skeptical of the interpretations offered by mystics of their experiences than had hitherto been the case. What we have is an unmediated and ineffable mystical experience that is then understood according to culturally conditioned interpretations. For both Stace and Smart, therefore, we can set aside doctrinally loaded interpretations in order to get closer to the phenomena of the experience itself. When we do this, we shall see that the various world religions have a pure experience in common which is interpreted differently according to specific sociocultural norms and expectations of that religion. Thus, when a Hindu and Roman Catholic experience a vision of a young woman walking towards them, the Catholic might interpret this as a vision of the Virgin Mary, while the Hindu is more likely to see a Hindu figure like Pârvati or Kâli.

The question may arise "How is an unconditioned or unmediated experience of reality possible?". In 1978 a collection of influential articles written by contemporary scholars of

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[39] See Smart, N. 'Interpretation and mystical experience'. In Woods, R. (ed.) *Understanding Mysticism.* London: Athlone Press, 1980, pp. 78–91, and Staal, F. *Exploring Mysticis.* Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975, pp. 73–75. In the later book F.Staal, by asserting that mystical research is just a variant form of the profane enquiry into the nature of consciousness, vehemently pleads in favour of opinion that the mystical experience should be explored solely as a mental state. In his view, explorations of this kind should be forbidden to philologists, historians and phenomenologists of religion.

[40] Stace, W. *Mysticism and Philosophy.* London: Jeremy P.Tarcher Inc., 1960, pp. 131–132.

mysticism was published in a single volume entitled *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis*. This was followed in 1983 by a companion collection entitled *Mysticism and Religious Traditions*. Together both anthologies provide a sustained critique of the perennialism of such authors as A. Huxley and W. Stace. The primary focus of the approach of the editor of these collections, Steven Katz, is a consideration of the question "What is the relationship between a mystical experience and its interpretation?". Katz argues that there is no such thing as unmediated or pure, free from interpretation, experience.

The experience itself as well as the form in which it is reported is shaped by concepts which the mystic brings to, and which shape, his experience ... The forms of consciousness which the mystic brings to experience set structured and limiting parameters on what the experience will be ... This process of differentiation of mystical experiences into the patterns and symbols of established religious communities is experiential and does not take place in the post-experiential process of reporting and interpreting the experience itself: it is at work before, during, and after the experience.[41]

Katz, like R. Gimello, H. Penner, W. Pruodfoot and numerous others agree in rejecting attempts to drive a wedge between interpretation and the experience itself. The very nature of the experience is itself socially constructed according to the culture, beliefs and expectations of the mystics having the experiences. Hindus do not experience a vision of young woman that they then interpret as the Mother Kâli – they experience the Mother Kâli. It is not just the language of mystical reports that is culturally conditioned but the experience itself. On this view, mystical experiences are radically contextual and the pluralistic account offered by Katz invites us to respect the richness of the experiential and conceptual data avoiding any reductionist attempt. The social constructivist position of Steven Katz has now become the mainstream philosophical position within the study of mysticism, and the historicist repudiation of the possibility of a 'pure experience' has become an increasingly popular and dominant trend within Western culture and scholarship. Works, such as Emile Durkheim's *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1912) demonstrates an increasing tendency not only to interpret religious phenomena in terms of their social context, but also to explain religion as a product of those sociological conditions and relations. According to Durkheim, religion, despite what its adherents might claim, is really the idealization of each given society's image of itself.[42] This trend, of course, provided a useful corrective to the tendency to treat religion as an experiential and private phenomenon in the work of scholars such as E.B. Tylor and W. James. From post-structuralism (Michel Foucault, Hans George Gadamer, Jacques Lacan) and postmodernist relativism (Jean Baudrillard, Jean-François Lyotard, Richard Rorty, Jacques Derrida) to contemporary work within 'the sociology of knowledge' (Max Scheler, G.H. Mead, Peter Berger, Thomas Luckmann), one finds an almost universal rejection of the possibility of an unconditioned or unmediated experience of reality. All knowledge is conditioned by, and firmly embedded within, linguistic and cultural forms. We also see a rejection of universal 'grand narratives' in favour of a multiplicity of localized histories and

[41] Katz, S. 'Language, epistemology and mysticism', in *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis,* S.Katz (ed.). New York: Oxford University Press, 1978, pp. 26–27.

[42] "Thus the collective ideal which religion expresses is far from being due to a vague innate power of the individual, but it is rather at the school of collective life that the individual has learned to idealize ... For society has constructed this new world in constructing itself, since it is society itself which this expresses". Durkheim, E. *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. London: Allen&Unwin, 1976, p. 423.

a reputation of a variety of essentialisms. As a result 'the mystical' also represents the conceptual site of a historical struggle for power and authority.

However, since the late 1980s a number of critical responses have been made to the social-constructivist position. Most of this work has involved questioning Katz's 'single epistemological assumption' that all experiences are medited by cultural, historical and religious factors. Robert Thurman, for instance, makes a distinction between two alternatives: complete constructivism and incomplete or partial constructivism – the view that concepts and beliefs are not the only factors involved in experiences, there being other factors such as sensory input, etc.[43] Thurman states that partial constructivism will not suffice for Katz's analysis to be proven – that is, to demonstrate that there can be no common core to mystical experiences, since perennialists could argue that the common feature is to be found in the non-conceptual or unconstructed aspects of those experiences.

Anyway, as time has gone by it has become clear that the position one takes with regard to the problem of mystical experience is bound up with the type of epistemology one accepts. Katz, as we have seen, bases his stance upon the presuppositions of neo-Kantian epistemology that 'there are no pure, unmediated mystical experiences'. According to Katz, mystics are wrong to think that an unconditioned experience of reality is even possible. From his neo-Kantian perspective, mystics recondition themselves with a new conceptual mind-set rather than attain a release from cultural and conceptual conditioning as some traditions and texts proclaim. Is is clear that Katz's account creates problems for the non-dualistic and monistic traditions in particular. Mystical experiences of a 'unitive-absorptive nature', that is, precisely those forms of mysticism that tend to presuppose some kind of unmediated experience of ultimate reality, can be found in Buddhism, Advaita Vedânta, Yoga and Sufism. Testimony to such an experience can even be found, as Katz notes, in Christian mystical tradition, but 'is absent from its Jewish counterpart'.[44] As Richard King points out, Katz's analysis safeguards his own Jewish beliefs in a transcendent reality and the inherent limitations of human beings.[45]

Let us take a look at the texts of Mahâyâna Buddhism. For Buddhist philosopher Dignâga (400-480 CE) sense-perception (*pratyak·a*), although immediate and non-conceptual in itself, is mediated in human experience by conceptual constructions (*kalpanâ*). What we apprehend with our senses, in its unmediated givenness, is the particular instant (*svalak·ana*) that characterizes what is really there. However, the picture of reality that we, as unenlightened beings, construct is the product of an association of our 'pure sensations' with linguistic forms – acquired from our linguistic and cultural context.[46] These result in a misapprehension of reality since they derive from the construction of universals (*samânyalak·ana*) in a world in which only unique particulars exit. The goal of Buddhist system of thought, of course, is to liberate the practitioner from attachment to these linguistic and cultural forms through meditative cultivation of the mind (*citta-bhâvanâ*), ethical discipline (œ*ila*) and the development of analytical insight (*prajñâ*). Dignâga's constructivism, therefore, postulated a way out of the web of cultural and linguistic conditioning through the cultivation of the perfection wisdom (*prajñâpâramitâ*) and the development of a non-dual (*advaya*) and unconstructed or non-conceptual awareness *(nirvikalpa jñna*) of things as they

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[43] Thurman, R. 'Introduction: mysticism, constructivism and forgetting'. In Forman (ed.) *The Problem of Pure Consciousness: Mysticism and Philosophy.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 13.

[44] Katz, S. 'Language, epistemology and mysticism'. In *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis,* S.Katz (ed.). New York: Oxford University Press, 1978, p. 41.

[45] King, R. *Orientalism and Religion. Postcolonial Theory, India and the 'Mystic East'.* Oxford*:* Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 176.

[46] Dignâga's *Pramânasamuccaya* I.3.

really are (*yathâ bhûta, tathatâ*). Beside, Dharmakîrti (c.650) and other Buddhist schoolars discuss in detail the potential deceptiveness of states of awareness, including Yogic states, and they try to determine criteria such as *sphutatva*, 'clarity', which can help distinguish true Yogic perception (*yogipratyak·a*) from mere hallucinations.[47] For most Buddhist traditions the non-conceptual nature of enlightenment is the result of a long and often arduos path of mental activity.

The examples of Dignâga, Dharmakîrti, Kamalaúîla (700-750 CE) and Tibetan Ge-lugs-pa tradition of Buddhist scholastism illustrate acceptance of the conditioning role of cultural, mental and behavioral factors in the eventual attainment of enlightenment. This position is in an agreement with Katz in acknowledging the role of conditioning factors as the constitutive of the final experience of enlightenment. Where Buddhist version of constructivism tend to diverge from Katz is in the recognition that the enlightenment experience that results from such conditioning processes is an event of such transformative proportions that it propels one beyond the wheel of conditioning (*samsâra*), thereby resulting in a transcendence of cultural particularity. Therefore, the Buddhist position is to be sharply contrasted with epistemologies of limitations that restrict the potential of human beings to achieve some form of unmediated awareness. In other words, Buddhist constructivism is based upon what one might call an epistemology of enlightenment. Exploring what she calls a 'Buddhist-phenomenological epistemological model' as an alternative to the Katzian position on the possibility of unmediated awareness, Sallie B. King argues, that not only do many examples of our secular experience reveal the possibility of the 'primitive' mode without the presence of verbal functions, but that turning off of this linguistic function is the very purpose of many forms of meditation.[48] Indeed, in the classical Sâmkhya-Yoga tradition, a progressive path is outlined also for overcoming the fluctuations of mind (*citta vrtti*) and attaining the a state of unconstructed and concentrated awareness (*nirvikalpa samâdhi*), where one perceives reality as it is and the seer – a transcendental and immaterial pure consciousness (*puru·a*) – dwells in its own pure form, untouched by the vicissitudes of worldly existence. In Advaita Vedânta tradition of Shankara, the realization of enlightenment is described as piercing the veil of illusions that constitutes our illusory experience (*mâyâ*) and achievement of an unmediated awareness of reality (*aparok·a jñâna*).

All this reveals that Western epistemologies of mysticism reflect the sociocultural and political changes that have occurred in the West since the Enlightenment and thus remain peculiarity of Eurocentric in orientation. As Anne Klein points out, when we examine the claim to an unmediated awareness in Asian traditions: "we confront some of the fundamental issues that divides us, as contemporary Euro-Americans, from the worldview in which it was conceived. How are we to understand a literature whose fundamental theses are anthema to most contemporary Western intellectual traditions? For example, both dGe-lugs-pa and Rnying-ma-pa, and Buddhism generally, claim that one can become a knower or self whose agency is free from the constraints of language (compare Lacan), who gains some form of unmediated knowledge (compare Kant), and – most antithetical of all – that this knowledge and its object are unconditioned by

[47] On sphuatva, see McDermott, Ch. "Yogic Direct Awareness as means of Valid Cognition in Dharmakîrti and Rgyal-tshab". In *Mahâyâna Buddhist Meditation: Theory and Practice*, M.Kiyota (ed.) Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1991, p. 151.

[48] See King, S.B. 'Two epistemological models for the interpretation of mysticism'. In *Journal of American Academy of Religion*, 56. 2. 1988, p. 277.

particularities of history and thus accessible in the same form, albeit through different means, to all persons regardless of cultural or psychological particularity (compare Foucault)".[49]

Asian epistemologies of enlightenment are likely to be viewed with a great deal of skepticism by contemporary Westerners since they conflict with modern, secularist presuppositions about the nature of reality and the possibilities of human experience. To accept modern Western epistemological theories without highlighting their cultural and social particularity is to remain within a long and well-established tradition of Western arrogance about the superiority of Western ways of understanding the world. It is evident that the study of Asian cultures requires a much greater sensitivity and engagement with indigenous forms of knowledge.

[49] Klein, A.C. 'Mental Concentration and the Unconditioned: A Buddhist Case of Unmediated Experience'. In Robert E.Buswell Jr. and Robert M.Gimello (eds.) *Paths to Liberation: The Mârga and Its Transformation in Buddhist Thought*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1994, p. 270.

Chapter XII

Situationality as the Main Principle of Chinese "Aesthetic Being"

Loreta Poskaite

"Is not the highest point of reason to realize this glide under our foot, to view this pompous interrogation as a state of continuous astonishment, this pursuit of progress as a circle, this being as something that is unfulfilled?" M. Merleau-Ponty asks this at the end of his reflections on the perception of the work of art, or, in a broader sense, on the experience of its timelessness and temporarity, as it emerges out from the holistic, psychosomatic insight into the momentary spread of being.[1] Almost at the same time, a similar idea flashed across M. Heidegger's mind, after he turned to the poetic, situational interrogations on being, though evading any conclusive answers, and searching for the authentic existential experience in the process of artistic creation. Since then, the thinking process is conceived by him as a way leading forward by moving backwards, thus opening many paths to the true.

Perhaps, the same was intended by F. Nietzsche in his enlightening as well as frightening idea of the "eternal return". Its originality and "lifelikeness" was perceived exceptionally by M. Heidegger, who conceived of it as continual self-creation, self-extension, and "repeatable unrepeatability", rather than the simple recurrence or moving in a circle which drove F. Nietzsche mad. It means the highest affirmation of life in its fullness and variety as it makes its way through the moments of eruption of creative energy, which cannot be determined by any logical discourse, nor conceptualized by the means of abstraction or universalization. This is the way in which the unity of philosophy and art, of art and life is achieved in the concrete "meeting" of time and space, namely, in the particular situation.

Heideggerian thinking, like the Great Boundary (*taiji*) in Chinese philosophy, seems to reveal the complete return of Western philosophy to the roots of forgotten being. Also, it manifests a turn (or return?) to Oriental wisdom, which speaks of the rising of the mysterious *yin* power, into which *yang* power transforms itself naturally, after it is exhausted and degenerated. The Heideggerian concept of language, as well as its direct manifestation, may be interpreted as a culminating point of the process of orientalization (namely, ontologiation and aesthetization) of Western thought that began with the "literary" philosophical reflections and aphorisms of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. Later on this process took on an increasing interest in postmodern "language games" and its obsessive inclination for the construction and deconstruction of implicit meanings in search of multiple perspectives for textual reading and interpretation, without giving preference to any one of them.

However, is not such a characteristically postmodern decentralization of the world and its points of view. Its breaking up into numerous perspectives is just another ominous extremity, which pursues Western thought like an unavoidable fate? Does playing endlessly with "hermeneutic situations", being obsessed with fragmentary realities and accidental formations in demonstrative opposition to any stable structure (essence, phenomenon) give any hope of developing a "positive vision of a hypothetical whole"[2] by which this chaos and relativism of semantic structures, this infinity of spontaneous statement would be justified? What place is

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[1] Merleau-Ponty, M. *L'OEil et l'Esprit*. Paris: Gallimard, 1964, p. 92. The translation into English is mine.
[2] Iljin, I. *Postmodernizm: ot istokov do konca stoletija*. Moskva, 1998, p. 52.

assigned here, in the world of mental collages and "simulacra", to authentic being experienced in a psychosomatic way, or to life itself with its real time and space, things so ardently discussed by S. Kierkegaard, F. Nietzsche and M. Heidegger? Finally, is there any distinction between accidental and situational phenomena?

These questions may be discussed by looking at Western "post-classical" thought and its permutations, in short, at postmodernism from its own perspective. There is also another way, namely, to look at it from China's cultural perspective. This way once was chosen by F. Jullien, the great French sinologist, who revealed an original and interesting way the peculiarity of the strategy of meaning in Greek thought through the analysis of Chinese strategy.[3] China is mentioned here not only on account of some associations between the words of Merleau-Ponty (cited above) on the circular return of being, on the one hand, and the cycle of hexagrams in the Chinese *The Book of Changes* (*Yijing*), which formed the basis of situationality as the main principle of Chinese thought and life (that is, Chinese culture at whole), on the other hand. The image of the circle first relates to "irregularity", indeterminacy, openness, and indirectness. It is exactly this path to the true (truthfullness) that is chosen by Western post-structuralists and maintained by Chinese strategists as well for more than two thousand years. Situationality, in contemporary Western as well as traditional Chinese thought, functions as a substitution for the rational, rigid systems of thinking, and as a means by which one enters into the direct, aesthetic relations with reality. However, in both cultures, it has different ontological backgrounds, perspectives, usages and meaning.

The aim of this article is to unfold the peculiarity of the principle of situationality in Chinese thought and practice, namely, the "mechanism" of its function and application in the ethical, as well as the aesthetic realm. The main focus of my investigation falls on the process philosophy of*Yijing*, and its further transformations in Chinese art, in practice as well as theory. (As applied to the martial arts, diplomacy, politics and language it was analyzed in an original and exhaustive way by F. Jullien,[4] and to Confucian ethics – by Tu Wei-ming, H. Fingarette, Li Chenyang, R. Ames and D. Hall.[5] It is supposed, that the universality and "lifelikeness" of this principle manifests itself through the conformity to the immanent laws of nature, whereby the peril of confining oneself exclusively to the problems of language is evaded, and the relation to ontological reality from an anthropocosmic perspective is maintained. It will be argued, that the Chinese principle of situationality, based primarily on *Yijing*, has prevented Chinese thinkers from succumbing to the disassociative fragmentation and artificial deconstruction of the world as has happen in Western postmodern culture.

The Functioning of the Principle of Situationality in *Yijing*

[3] Jullien, F. *Detour and Access. Strategies of Meaning in China and Greece* (transl. By Sophie Hawkes). Zone Books, New York, 2000. My notes on this book are taken here from the Russian translation: Zhuljen, F. *Putj k celi*. Moskva, 2001.

[4] Jullien, F. *Detour and Access*. Also another his book on the propensity of things and a history of efficacy in China. Here, my notes are taken from Russian translation of his second book on this subject (originaly *Traite de l'efficacite*, 1996): Zhuljen F. *Traktat ob efektivnosti.* Moskva, Sankt-Peterburg, 1999.

[5] Hall, D. L., Ames R.T. *Thinking Through Confucius*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987; Fingarette, H. *Confucius – the Secular as Sacred*. New York, Evanston, San Francisco, London: Harper & Row, 1972; Li Chenyang. *The Tao Encounters the West. Explorations in Comparative Philosophy*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999; Tu Wei-ming. "The Creative tension Between *Jen* and *Li"*. In *Philosophy East and West*, 1968, vol. 18; Tu Wei-ming. "*Li* as process of humanization". In *Philosophy East and West*, 1972, vol. 22, no. 2.

I would like to begin by pointing out one important feature of Chinese traditional worldview, which contrasts with the Western outlook (as exemplified by the Greek philosophers), namely, the unity of the human and nature. The differences of its interpretation in both cultures were indicated and adopted with foresight by F. Jullien.[6] He observed that for the Greeks, the main attribute and function of nature were transformation and spontaneous change, whereas those of human – were action, which is the result of its separation from nature. In contrast, for the Chinese the activity of human and that of nature consist in mutual reciprocity, according to which the functions of the former are conceived of as in correspondence (response) to the latter. From this follows the difference between the Western and Chinese understanding of the creativity and creation (including artistic one), its principles and forms.[7]

In this context we should mention also a third point of difference: the conception of time in ancient Greek and Chinese cultures. As F. Jullien points out, for Greeks time was divided between, on the one hand, the "theoretical" (*chronos*) that is regular, measurable, knowable and controllable, and, on the other hand, "practical" time (*kairos*) that is chaotic, accidental, uncontrollable, irregular. From the standpoint of *kairos* the individual moment (event, situation) is perceived as accidental, as something that cannot be retrieved, repeated, predicted, rationally comprehended, and therefore is filled with drama and tragic. Such an accidental moment must be "practiced", and hence is related to the cult of action. In contrast the Chinese regard time not as an object of knowing or acting, but as a process that is in one sense unrepeatable, i.e., defying control, yet also repeatable, i.e., able to be predicted in the sense of waiting for the favorable moment.[8] Such a conception of time generates specific problems for Chinese philosophy. It was concerned with investigating ontological principles, the "ordinary order of things", and with taking advantage of the knowledge gained in defining the strategic purposes of life, rather than in searching for the ideal, timeless forms, or essences of things, or for the ultimate cause of the universe.

Such an attitude has been the basis of the *Yijing*, the most important compendium of Chinese "strategic" wisdom. The main point of this wisdom, as well as of the Chinese understanding of life and of the world's development, way be summed up in one sentence: "The successive movement of the inactive (*yin*) and active (*yang*) operations constitutes what is called the way (*dao*)" (Xcz, I.V.24).[9] *Yin* and *yang* are the forces and energetic states rather than the substances, helping through their continual transformation and interaction to maintain the continuous process of "production and reproduction", "creation and reproduction" (*sheng sheng*), or of the natural current of things. It was being-in-process that for the Chinese constituted the particular "logic of nature" as an alternative to the "logic of thinking" and metaphysics.[10]

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[6] Zhuljen, F. *Traktat ob efektivnosti*. Moskva, Sankt-Peterburg, 1999, pp. 63, 77–78.

[7] My special comparative study on the concept of creation in the Chinese classical and Western "post-classical" philosophy is written in Lithuanian: Poskaite, L. "Kurybingumo suvokimas klasikineje kinu ir "poklasikineje" Vakaru filosofijoje". In *Liaudies kultura*, 2000, 6, pp. 37–44.

[8] Zhuljen, F. *Traktat ob efektivnosti*. Moskva-Sankt-Peterburg, 1999, pp. 91–92.

[9] The Chinese classics with their abbreviations: Xcz – *Xi ci zhuan* ("A Great Commentary" from *The Book of Changes*): *Yijing* (transl. by J. Legge). The Chinese-English Bilingual Series of Chinese Classics, Hunan chubanshe, 1994.

[10] The polysemanticality of the *Yijing* have influenced a great variety of its interpretations, some of which are in opposition one to another. For example, the Russian sinologist from the "structuralist" trend negates a widespread idea on the absence of formal logic in China, taking as an example of it not other one but the *Yijing* and even treating it as the particular manual of Chinese logic. See Krushinskij A.A. *Logika "I szina*. Moskva, 1999. The rudiments of abstract, rational thought in this canon book were pointed to by the famous Russian "yijinist" Shctutskij J.K. See:

How does this "logic of nature" unfold, or, to put in other words, how do *yin-yang* powers "bring being into being" and at what stages of reality do they manifest themselves?

The way of *yin-yang* is one of the continual "going away" and "coming back", "disclosure" and "closure", caught in-between the state of latent equilibrium (called the Great Boundary or Emptiness, *taiji*), and that of actualization. The interaction of *yin* and *yang*, when they are in the state of phenomenal being, is reflected in the changes of the sun and the moon, day and night (from the point of view of time), of higher and lower position (from the point of view of space), masculinity and femininity, strength and weakness, activity and passivity (from the point of view of depth). A special coincidence of those threefold measurements of reality gives rise to a particular situation that must be understood not only as the "actualization" of some circumstances but also as a boundary between past and future events. In other words, it is conceived as a result and a potential for a particular interaction of the *yin* and *yang* powers, a source of efficacy by which the possible future "current of things" is indicated. It is a sign that evokes a reaction (though not necessarily an active one).

This sign has a visual, graphic, symbolic form. It is said in *The Great Commentary of Yijing:* "Therefore in "*Yi*" there is the Grand terminus (Great Boundary), which produced the two elementary Forms. Those two Forms produced the Four emblematic Symbols, which again produced the eight Trigrams." (Xcz, I. 9) The symbol, thus, being a combination of two lines (*yin* and *yang*, the so-called two elementary Forms or "primordial signs") and revealing the movement of all things under Heaven (*Tianxia*, which refers to sensitive, lifelike, human and concrete rather than to divine reality), acts as a visual suggestion, not a concentration, of some idea.[11] It is not a source of any independent meaning, but the dynamic state of vital energy (*qi*), leading to the figurative, symbolic, numerological, and deeper dimension of the relationship between the human and the universe. The trigrams, as well as hexagrams, should be seen of as the result not only of the interaction of Heaven and Earth (namely, the universe), but also of the creativity of three components – Heaven, Earth and the human.

It is the human person (whose ideal is the sage, *shengren*) who is "settled" between Heaven and Earth (but not on Earth) as a unifying axis. His purpose is to look in two directions, upwards (to Heaven) and downwards (to Earth), and to grasp the correlation between heavenly and earthly phenomena that is expressed by the symbols of the trigrams and hexagrams. He has to bring them closer instead of setting them apart from him (in his mind), thus making them not an object of one's reflections, but the driving force of one's life and creativity. Or, as it is said in*Xicizhua*", the sage of antiquity produced trigrams, hexagrams and their aphorisms as a means not only to reflect on the universe, but also for the management of daily affairs and the betterment of his or her destiny. No wonder that these symbols, as configurations of lines and ornaments (*wen*), were used by later aestheticians in explaining the main Chinese cultural forms (the system of writing, the art of painting, literature, since they are all based on the line as a common expressive means). Thus, Chinese traditional culture and art is understood, for example by V. Maliavin, the famous Russian sinologist, as the "repertoire of typical forms", namely, of the particular states of the concentration of vital energy (*qi*), which reveal the coincidence of the image (*xiang*) and transformation (*hua*),

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Shctutskij, J.K. *Kitajskaja klassiceskaja Kniga peremen*. Moskva, 1993, p.38. A. Kobzev, another great Russian sinologist, treats it as an example of the particular Chinese logic, namely, numerology. See Kobzev, A.J. *Uchenije o simbolach I chislach v kitajskoj klassiceskoj filosofii*. Moskva, 1994.

[11] It is some confusion in usage of the word "symbol" here, as for some scholars it means "four emblematic symbols" (*xiang*) – the compositions of two lines, whereas for others – the trigrams (and even the hexagrams).

the relation between eternality and its situational manifestation.[12] The cycle of hexagrams, based on the perpetual, yet hardly noticeable of the "soft" and "strong" (*yin* and *yang*) lines, reveals, first of all, the changing character of reality and the variety of its forms, while their aphorisms show that this changing character cannot be determined in any theoretical way. They hint but do not instruct us how to locate the "exit" on all sides of our surrounding when activity has no single purpose.

The question may arise: are there any "supporting points" and "directing lines" that would help "tying together" all situations and conceiving them as variations of one theme? Originally, four mantic formulas (*yuan, heng, li* and *zheng*) were used in mantic practice of *Yijing* and exhibited some of the characteristics of the dynamic phases of symbols. It is important to note here, that these mantic formulas were called four virtues (*si de*), also that virtue (*de*), in the broadest sense of the term, refers to the main quality or the concentration of qualities that contribute to the best way of life accessible to a particular creature. Thus, the mantic formulas may be conceived as guiding, supportive points in the movement of the *yin-yang* powers, points that show the direction of further action or appropriate reaction to situation and therefore prevent from the "scattering" of situations, namely, from their becoming chaotic, meaningless "chance". Like one line, they "concentrate the space" and "energize" the aphorism that brings into relief the emptiness between the words by its polisemous allusions.

It is this emptiness exactly that connects things for it is the functional, moving entity (*xu*), not an ontological one (*kong*). It is associated with the spontaneous current of events (things), and it brings out their fullness, namely, the efficacy of their activity (like silence for the sound of music, or the unfilled space of a painted scroll for the picture represented). Here the emptiness may be conceived as the waiting for, or as a means for connecting situations and regulating their natural development, thus as a means by which they should emerge as variations of one theme (that is, of *Dao* or the correlative process of nature and human culture). The end of every phase (situation) coincides with the beginning of the next one, since the situation is a particular result of the interaction of *yin-yang* powers and a potential for their further development.

Because of this, the Chinese strategists gave primary attention to the origination, inclination, and energetic inception of the situation (called *shi*, and translated as moment, impetus, driving force, sign, situation) rather than to the "vortex" of events. As is said in *The Great Commentary*: "The I is a book in which the form (of each diagram) is determined by the lines from the first to the last". There is difficulty in knowing (the significance of) the first line, while to know that of topmost is easy; they form the beginning and the end (of the diagram). The explanation of the first line requires calculating (the markers), but in the end they had (but) to complete this." (Xcz, II.9) There lies a hidden end in the explanations of the first line, just as in the "seed" of a plant, or in the motive of an action. Thus, their realization leads naturally to that end, or, to be more precise, further on to the beginning of another situation. Such a concentration on the impetus or "the root" (as the most important element in Confucian ethics, and Daoist ontology, cosmogony, and cosmology as well) once again reveals an effort to avoid determinism and finality (not only in structural and hermeneutic sense, but also in strategic one).

Thus, the wisest way to act is to take advantage of the "potentiality" of the situation and of the further course of events (namely, changes) implied in it rather than of one's deeds or rational considerations, since there exist only mutations and transformations without any strict rules. Such an advantage is neither action nor non-action, but some mean in-between. For the action or non-action implies the presence of the purpose (object), an agent (subject), and their mutual

[12] Maliavin, V.V. (ed.) *Vozhozdenije k Dao*. Moskva, 1997, p. 393.

distinctness, as the result of "transcendental logic", namely, by assuming the view from outside. On the contrary, *Yijing* speaks about how to "act-without-acting" (*wei wu wei*) when any distinction between (or even existence of) subject and object vanishes and everything proceeds according to "immanent logic": the human person is "overcome" by the energetic impetus and carried away by the current of events driven by the pulsation of cosmic vitality and natural change. Then the problem of action or non-action as such, its motivation and boundaries disappears, and all activity takes on the form of continual adaptation to changes (*hua*), "production and reproduction" (*sheng sheng*). This concept also underpins the interpretation of artistic creation that focuses on the process itself rather than on the result. That is why *Yijing* says that changes reveal "without gaps" the way of Heaven and Earth.

Such "acting-without-acting" as spontaneous adaptation to the changes of nature has the characteristic of effortlessness that is another meaning of the word *yi* (from *Yijing*). It refers to one's ability to penetrate and regulate everything without any effort in a simple and clear way. Such is the quality of Heaven (*Qian*), which, according to *Xicizhuan*, operates with ease and is followed by Earth (*Kun*), representing the most docile of all things under the sky. Thus, the sage has to link together the characteristics of the activities of Heaven and Earth, starting with whatever is at hand and acting in an invisible way by simply making the hostile powers to serve his good. That is why such activity comes so easy to him.

Effortlessness and readiness to start with whatever is at hand is related to the ordinariness that is the third meaning of the word *yi* in *Yijing*. As stated above, the symbols (trigrams, hexagrams) of *Yijing* are considered as visual suggestions of the ordinary situations rather than of ideal forms or ideas. R. Wilhelm aptly observed this feature. According to him, it is impossible to grasp adequately the whole system of the book if one is searching but for the "dark" and the "mysterious" in it, since its meaning lies in what is light and understandable for everyone.[13] We can now see how this meaning of *Yijing* is absorbed all too eagerly by contemporary Western "esoteric" literature that stresses its usefulness for all the spheres of human life and of various people (from women to men, from business to love) and thus tends to the other extreme of vulgarizing its meaning. In my opinion, here (as well as in most cases of interpreting Chinese ideas in light of Western thought) some mean, so peculiar to Chinese mentality and the way of life, must be found, namely, something between the simplicity (ordinariness) and complexity (mysteriousness) of its meaning. It must be recalled that mysterious spirituality (*shen*) is characteristics of *Dao* (as well as of the shifting of *yin-yang* powers), which is the manifestation of the universality and inexhaustibility of *Dao*.

Secondly, another important idea, based on Chinese polar thought and developed by Daoists and Confucians, is that the most subtle things are hidden in the most obvious ones, and the greatest deeds in the smallest ones. They are hidden in what is nearby. This approach, however, can be understood and realized not by everyone:

The successive movement of the inactive and active operations constitutes what is called the course (of things). That which ensues as the result (of their movement) is goodness; that which shows it in its completeness is the natures (of things). The benevolent see it and call it benevolence. The wise see it and call it wisdom. The common people, acting daily according to it, yet have no knowledge of it. Thus it is that the course (of things), as seen by the superior man, is seen by few (Xcz, I.5).

[13] Vilhelm, P., Vilhelm, G. *Ponimanije "I czin*. Moskva, 1998, p. 186.

The ordinariness of the meaning of *Yijing* was inexhaustible not only in an ethical but also in aesthetic sense, thus forming a background for Chinese "aesthetic being" as an intercourse of human person and the universe in a direct, intersubjective, holistic way, and giving meaning to his or her contextual, authentic self-cultivation and self-creation in accordance to the immanent principles of the macrocosm. Ordinary action, mentioned in *Yijing*, was first of all conceived in ethical terms, as the generative process of the goodness (*shan*) which, according to Confucians, is realized through the cardinal human virtues, namely, humanheartedness (*ren*), righteousness or appropriateness (*yi*), ritual propriety (*li*) and knowledge (*zhi*). These virtues are exactly the "supporting points" for the behavior of "the gentleman" or "exemplary person", *junzi*), and the invisible (since they are constant, everyday) guidelines of his self-transformation and situational interaction with the macrocosm. They help strengthening one's inclination to "go with the flow", to be obedient to the laws of nature (or destiny, *ming*) and also to bear responsibility, which is the creative way of his destiny.

In addition, the main ideas of *Yijing* which speak about the transformation of *yin* and *yang* powers (namely, about reality as a field of their interaction) and the human person's need to follow situationally their "force impulses" have influenced greatly Chinese artistic imagination as well. The realization of such a "situational strategy" in Chinese artistic creativity and aesthetic worldview will be analyzed below.

Situationality in Art Creation and Aesthetics

One of the most appreciated arts in ancient Chinese culture was music. Confucius assigned it the highest position in the hierarchy of arts, conceiving it as the most suitable means for the person's self-cultivation and the harmonization of all things under Heaven (the state, humankind, the universe). Music was valued no less by Daoists. Zhuangzi, for instance, could hear its sound and harmony in the most ordinary and strange things – the dancing of the butcher's knife, the murmur of the trees, joy and anger, the mutability and stability of the universe. Confucius appealed to the contrasting examples of music of the Wei and Chu states, while Zhuangzi to the sounds of the flute of Earth and Heaven, and of the human in order to show the perfect character of music. The music of Heaven for Zhuangzi seemed to arise from emptiness and arrange itself spontaneously into perfect ornament without the help of any visible conductor.

The interpretations of the genesis of music may be found in the first treatises on music – *Yueji* (later included into the *Liji*) and *Lushi Chunqiu*. Here they repeat almost word-for-word the scenario of the origin of ritual (as presented in Confucian canons) and cosmic changes (as presented in *Yijing*), thus the origin and evolution of the whole universe. As is said in *Lushi Chunqiu*: "The origin of music is in the very remote past. It was born of equal measurement and rooted in the Grand Unity. The Grand Unity gave birth to the Counterparts (heaven and earth). The Counterparts gave birth to *yin* and *yang*. The *yin* and *yang* transformed and stratified into higher and lower levels. These came together and formed regular patterns".[14] In other words, the musical sound is conceived of as the concentration of the vital energy (*qi*) or the various arrangement of its "firm" forms and energetic waves, corresponding to the dynamic movement of the sun and the moon, the stars and the planets, the rhythmic alteration of seasons, the cycles of the day and the night. However, music (*yue, yinyue*) does not consist of a single sound (*yin*). It is the harmonious concord of several sounds, namely, a sounding ornament (*wen*) that was copied and "translated"

[14] Cited according to: DeWoskin Kenneth J. *A Song for One or Two. Music and the Concept of Art in Early China*. Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, The University of Michigan, 1982, p. 56.

into the language of human communication by the legendary cultural heroes Fuxi, Yao, Shun, Huangdi, the inventors of the main musical instruments. Due to their authority, at least in part, music acquired a cosmological function, becoming a means for unifying the universe.

It must be recalled that music is primarily a temporal art, expressing itself not only through the arrangement of the sounds, but also (and first of all) through the movement that responds to cosmic changes and affects these arrangements. Therefore, according to the Chinese, music should not be played in any arbitrary fashion, but in accordance with the time of the season, the occasion, the balance of natural powers, and the inner state of the person and that of the universe. A similar situational strategy of *Yijing* is maintained in the process of playing music. Two points from what was discussed above are very important here, namely, foreseeing the concrete circumstances that are the most favorable for playing and "catching" the initial energetic impulse or driving force (*shi*).

It is this purpose that all technical instructions serve. For instance, in some treatises by later Chinese intellectuals we find the enumeration of typical situations that are most favorable for playing the *qin*, one of the most intimate instruments of Chinese artists, which helps in the best way to reveal the vibrations of the human soul and turn them into the vibrations of nature. Therefore, it is favorable to play it while meeting an expert in music, sitting at the top of a tower or on a stone, sailing in a small boat, resting under the shadow of a tree, and so on. This helps to tune up one's mind appropriately and create (re-create) the particular mood or atmosphere.

The technique of playing the *qin* reveals in the most evident way the synthesis of movement (time) and visibility (space) as a means for making the aesthetic experience "soundlike". The early notation system for instrument players is characterized by the holism that is also evident in the Chinese characters. It is used for recording the manner of producing sound (fingering, the positions of hands – *shou shi*) or for describing certain movements of the performer rather than for marking the pitch of a sound. The position of hands (*shi*) may be conceived of as the incentive or moment of the movement of the natural energetic forces (*yin-yang*) that is revealed in polisemous way by *Yijing* aphorisms. The same polysemy may be found in the "theory" of music in which the imaginative metaphors, taken from the life of nature, are used for enunciating the positions of hands and the movements of playing. These are, "the flying dragon is buried in the clouds", "the pilgrim insect catches the cicada", and the like (similar metaphors are employed in characterizing brushstrokes in calligraphy as well). Metaphors like the ones, as well as the aphorisms of*Yijing* served as references not to only one right way (to play or produce a sound), but to many ways leading to all the directions, or the general atmosphere of the way by which the creative energy is unleashed. At the same time, attention is focused on the meaning between the lines or the inner vibrations perceived as the most subtle and barely heard sound.

This helps to disclose another characteristic of playing the *qin* (and of Chinese aesthetics and art in general). It is a species of minimalism that was developed as a result of attributing great importance to the subtle variations in details (observable, for example, in the "minimal" changes of the lines in the circle of hexagrams of *Yijing*). The ideal of minimalist expression is best satisfied by playing the *qin* which has only few strings. In consequence, the beauty of its music consists in the variety of its timbres, in striking subtle semitones and shades rather than whole tones and intervals. Of even greater importance is the power of statement that a pause or silence can exert in music (like that of ink washes or white space in a painting). The effects of *qin* music are produced through a special interplay of visible hand movements and sound, which sometimes passes into a disconnection of the visible and the audible. As Kenneth J. De Woskin observes, "there are moments in a *qin* performance when the left (stopping) hand is apparently still and a number of

subtly distinct tones are played. There are other moments when the performer's hands dance through a series of complex shapes and motions, rendering nothing audible, especially to the ears of the non-initiate".[15] For example, a special technique of vibrato is presented in some handbooks, that should evoke the image of "fallen blossoms floating down the stream" or "the cry of a dove announcing rain". Sometimes no movement of the finger is required, letting the timbre be influenced by the pulsation of blood in the fingertip.

One may hear absolute silence at certain moments of absolute silence. Such an experience does not serve just the purpose of relaxation; it rather facilitates the retention of the sound just heard in one's memory and enables the apprehension of all its nuances. Such moments, called "after-tone" (*you yin*), actually are the most expressive and meaningful (just like an "after-taste" in drinking tea or "after-image" in the looking at a picture). For it is they that reveal the infinity of every situation (as a certain coincidence of time, space and depth) by "tying together" its separate impulses and inviting the listener to enjoy the play of its overtones, while interfering as little as possible with the process of change.

As has been mentioned above, the most beautiful music for Zhuangzi was the sound of the flute of Heaven, namely, of "the same wind that makes different hollows produce different sounds", producing and sounding so by itself (ZZ, p.17).[16] It is the sound of nature itself, embracing the human voice as well. Once more, it reminds us of the landscapes of Chinese painters in which the human person is represented as if being lost in nature. No wonder, then, that the sound of the flute of nature for Daoists seems more beautiful than that of the human voice.

The reminiscences of this approach may be found in subsequent literature. For instance, Zhang Chao (the XVII century intellectual, who wished to become an old unuseful tree, the butterfly or a big free fish Kun, once described so picturesquely by Zhuangzi) in his collection of aphorisms "The shadows of the deep sleep" referred to such natural sources of the most subtle music as water, wind or rain. As he observes, the nuances of their music vary according to situation: a ripple of the water sounds in one way, and its quiet stream in a ravine – in another; the sound of rain, when it is falling on the leaves, is of one kind, and when it is flowing in the bamboo vessel, of another kind.[17] The pleasure of listening to human music varies, too: one kind of music ("mood") is produced by playing the *qin*, another by the tapping of checkers or the rustling of playing cards, and all of these "kinds" may be enjoined in different ways – in solitude, in the company of two or more people. Such an enunciation of the various nuances of music rests on the same principle of the "typification of situations" of cosmic change was based the strategy of *Yijing* as well as Chinese ethical and aesthetic self-consciousness. It is the dynamic states of things, or the particular and the ordinary moments of their mutations that are enjoyed, not their substantiality.

The same principle is important for the art of drinking tea. In the treatises on tea aesthetics one can find the enunciation of certain temporal moments (situations), favorable to tasting tea. Such moments may be: reading boring poetry, stopping the sound of music, chatting at midnight, taking rest in the bedroom, watching the boats drifting in the channel, sitting in the shadow of a lotus on a sultry day, visiting a temple in a lonely place. Here attention is given not so much to the subtle ritualization of every moment and the purification of the senses that are too important for Japanese tea masters (who turn tea drinking into a highly refined, aestheticized, and ritualized

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[15] Ibid., p. 123.

[16] ZZ – *Zhuangz* (transl. into English by Wang Rongpei). China: Hunan People's Publishing House, Foreign Languages Press, 1999.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 123. Maliavin, V.V. (ed.). *Kniga mudrych radostej* (A Book of the Wise Joys). Moskva, 1997, pp. 403–404.

process in which time is stopped at the moment of its "boundary perfection", namely the purity and silence, and removes one from the outside, chaotic and ever-changing world). Chinese tea masters gave more attention to the visual and audible aspects of the tea making process itself (for instance, by indicating certain stages of the process of water boiling: first, when the fizzling of the small bubbles is heard, second, when the big bubbles appear, and third, when the water boils in full swing), as well as the nuances of its taste – unfolding experiences in the course of time, namely, the sensations and other perceptual occurrences inside the human body after drinking the first, second, third, or sixth cup of tea.

Enjoying both ordinary and extraordinary experiences along with their subtle "semitones" is like reading long, unending Chinese novels that allow the reader to "sink" slowly in the fine details of events, to be drawn into the particular rhythm by awakening his or her "spiritual ears" and opening his or her eyes to the fascinating moments of ordinary life. It is true that the cultivated Chinese intellectuals of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries took delight not so much in penetrating the soundless, formless *Dao* or silence as in watching the bright moon in the clear sky, a vase with flowers, a hazy landscape, enjoying the moments of picking tea and mandarines, and the like.[18] As may be seen from the examples above, the same "logic of nature" was upheld until the culmination and the ending point of the history of traditional Chinese culture. This "logic of nature" was based on arresting (although quite passively) the changing aspects of nature and turning them into typical situations (which may be conceived of as repeatable in their rhythmical movement, yet unrepeatable in their subtle nuances).

Nevertheless, it is the art of painting that may be considered as the most perfect way for "responding" to natural changes both in a temporal and a visual fashion. It is said in the aesthetics of painting that the line as its basic expressive means takes its origin from the same Great One (or *Dao*) that is supposed to be the source of changes in *Yijing* and of musical sound in *Lushi Chunqiu*. In the process of painting we find a subtle combination of "acting according to the situation" and "natural penetrating the alterations of things" (considered as non-action, *wu wei*). The starting point of the act of painting itself implies choosing the favorable moment or consulting the course of cosmic time, as has been shown by Gao Jianping,[19] the famous contemporary researcher of Chinese painting, aesthetics and culture. According to him, such moment of the "impetus of natural change" (*shi*) is the embodiment of the vital energy (*qi*) that turns a painted landscape into a response to natural changes or to a spontaneous moving direction (*ziran zhi shi*). Therefore, not only lines but also things must be arranged in a certain sequence, since every thing (form) emerges in its proper time just like in nature. Thus every brushstroke or image is a response to previous one, as well as to its context, and the creation of new possibilities and new contexts (expressed by a phrase like the "strokes give birth to each other", "the objects are in need of each other").

Gao Jianping makes an interesting comparison between the art of painting and playing *go* (a game with stones, highly enjoyed by Chinese intellectuals since the third century) whereby he wants to elucidate the "playful" relation of the moment and the whole, or show the importance of the particular situation (as a configuration of forces) to the dynamism of the whole current. He cites some thoughts by Chinese aestheticans about the closeness of the principles of these two arts. And so, what do painting and *go* have in common? First, both take into account the general context, namely, in *go*, the player tries to occupy the largest territory possible, in painting the artist tries to produce the broadest space possible. In one of the manuals on painting it is said: "In painting, one must begin with a few strokes to form the general situation. This is exactly like*go*-playing. If the

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 425.

[19] Jianping Gao. *The Expressive Act in Chinese Art*. Uppsala, 1996, pp. 93–103.

player concentrates on only one corner, he can occupy a small territory but lose the match". A good *go*-player can decide the situation of the whole match with only a few stones. A good painter must be able to do so, too".[20]

In other words, the first strokes, just as the first stones, serve as a means for the initiative momentum (*shi*) or indicating the situation, the sensation of the movement of spiritual vitality. The skillfulness of the painter, as that of the *go* player, manifests itself primarily in his or her ability to "inspire with spirit" or broaden the space in order to give more freedom and power to action or the creative self-expression. The more extensive is the space, the more meaningful is the role of its every "active element", namely, the brushstroke, form or the stone of *go*. As a consequence, they can not be arranged in any arbitrary way: "In *go*-playing, even if only a single stone is laid in the wrong place, the whole situation will be destroyed. A painting contains a certain principle even though there are no definite positions marking the relationships between the upper, middle, and lower parts".[21]

In the process of painting any thing, one must follow a certain sequence of representing its details that corresponds to the natural development of life (for instance, painting the bamboo from the bottom, the way it grows up). This is why the use of the brush (*bi fa*) was later considered as one of the most important technical skills and virtues (*de*) of the painter, and highly prized by the Chinese painting school of "literati" (*wenrenhua*). The contact of the brush as *yang* power and the ink as *yin* power becomes the first transformation of *Dao*, implying a "changing changeability" (*hua hua*). In coming into contact with the silk, the ink transforms itself into the *yang* (active, giving, creative), and the silk becomes *yin* (passive, receiving) power. Thus, brushwork is interpreted as the recurring process of *Dao* vitality or cosmic creation and change.

The cosmogonic and cosmostructural conception of the process of painting was formulated and summarized in Shi Tao's (Yuan Ji's) theory of painting. According to him, painting is the great way for changing (*hua*) the universe. Its essence lies in One stroke (*yi hua, yi bi)* that was conceived by Shi Tao as the sign of the transformation of being and non-being, embracing all the universe and bringing out the idea or principle (*li*) nurtured inside. The One stroke is the microcosmic embodiment of the macrocosm, as it reveals what is great through what is small. The One may be associated with Dao, the absolute, which was talked about in *Laozi*, *Zhuangzi*, *Yijing*. It is hidden in and beyond every thing, giving birth to the two (*yin* and *yang*, the strong and weak line) wherefrom ten thousand things spring up. The variety of their configurations is expressed through the sixty-four hexagrams of *Yijing*, understood as the transformations of the One stroke (*yi hua*).

Thus, the painter has to be a great sage who gathers within himself all the immense variety of the universe and conveys it in the painting, – conveys what in principle cannot be conveyed. Also, he must be a great strategist who follows the method of non-action, discussed above, as a means for the "situational dynamization" and "differentiation" of the image into many perspectives. The main rule of his creation is the "absence of any rule" so that the world can be presented (represented) as it really is for itself (*ziran*) in its boundlessness and "repeatable unrepeatability" without suggesting a more subjective meaning of the world represented by the painter.

The mutability and inexhaustible virtue of being and the creative spirit is represented in the most imaginative way by the dragon, an especially complex and polisemous symbol of Chinese culture and visual art. It may be recalled that in Western culture the dragon was conceived as a monster and was associated with the conservative and unrestrained fury, while in Chinese culture

[20] *Ibid*, p. 66.
[21] *Ibid.*, p. 67.

it is related to masculinity (*yang* power), the Eastern direction which implies inexhaustible vitality and productivity (*sheng sheng)*. According to *Yijing*, it was the Yellow Dragon that appeared to the legendary Fuxi and revealed the ornaments that became the basis of the Chinese writing system, of its visual, linear culture and situative thinking in general. Thus, the dragon symbolizes the spirit of the life and mutability itself, for sometimes (if necessary) it becomes invisible and decreases to the size of cocoon of silkworm; sometimes it becomes enormously big and covers up all of Heaven and Earth, while disguising its real size.

However, the tip of its tail, seen from the shroud of clouds, and the other parts of its body, resembling different animals, refer to the presence of the one, same, whole and entire body that is able to regenerate itself and preserve the power of all the other creatures. It symbolizes not only benevolence but also perfect wisdom and its power manifests itself through the ability to take advantage of the continual "renovation" of the situation, or "to act-without-acting". It has no fixed shape, for it moves continually, thus harmonizing itself with the natural course of life and becoming as invisible and elusive as water, the symbol of *Dao*. Finally, the strategy of dragon is revealed through moving in a circle that implies continual non-finality and constancy as well (that is, spinning around the inner axis).

Conclusion

Chinese situational thought arouse as a consequence of experiencing directly the harmony between the human person and the universe rather than as a result of opposing any theoretical systematization of the world and its phenomena that ultimately leads to a cleavage between the human person and the universe, as it happened in Western postmodernism. It served as a means for relating knowledge and action. Situational thinking helped to conceive human creativity (culture) as a continuation of Heavenly (cosmic) creativity and a response to its transformations.

Situationality was based on the "logic of nature" that called for reliance on time and its changes. It supported the idea that every transformation will be repeated after some time; only the configuration of powers will be different, as every situation is neither totally accidental nor fully predictable.

Situationality in Chinese traditional thought was free of the chaotic. The change of situations is based here on the all-permeating immanent principle (*Dao*), which like the "situational rule" and "all-bending spring" prevents its elements from chaotic scattering. Thus, the main purpose of Chinese artists and strategists was to experience and reveal indirectly the working of this inner principle through the situational activity. In situational activity (creativity), concentration on the impetus (*shi*) of the situation rather than on its "culminating point" confirms the fact that the relation of situation to its source, as well as of situation to the general current of events (or, to put in postmodern language, "the text" and "context") is more important than the situation itself considered in and of itself.

This inner principle prevented isolating the human person from the rhythmic course of nature and from imprisoning it in the world of independent meanings, as it has happened in postmodernism (particularly, in its "esoterically formalistic" movement). The principal value in Chinese situational thought is given to the all-embracing anthropocosmic power or virtue (*de*) rather than to some conceptual meaning, and this virtue is a means by which meanings arise spontaneously and transform themselves into another stage of configuration. Thus, the main purpose is to take care of its continuation, preservation, and transformation in the process of perpetual changes (the so called cycle of "production and reproduction", *sheng sheng*).

With this in mind we come to see how the situationality of Chinese thought is realized through the paradigm of ritualism and traditionalism of Chinese culture (that is not a characteristic feature of Western postmodernism). It was the ritual (*li*) that grounded the mantic practice of *Yijing*human relations in Confucianism, but also Chinese artistic creativity and self-expression. Thus, it may be conceived of as a means – inward, as well as outward – for regulating human life by which the situational behavior and creativity was maintained in harmony with the universal process of changes, and the fragmentation of the "situational configurations" and unprecedented circumstances was avoided.

The focus of interest for Chinese strategists and artists was not the result of their activity (creativity) but the process itself that maintained (through the ritual) the direct relationship of the human person with being and time. A similar significance is attributed to the creative process by Western postmodern culture. However, when compared to the Chinese conception of process, it seems to attach too great an importance to it and therefore tends to another extreme, namely, the separating of being and time and enforcing the cult of speed. Hence, it is no wonder that many Westerners feel frustration or desperation while listening to "silent" pieces of music or looking at "empty" paintings that are inspired by the Oriental (Daoist, Buddhist) idea of emptiness. They feel frustrated because of an inability to connect in their memory one note with another, as they are interrupted by too long a silence which separates the present from the past. Perhaps this is the reason why many Westerners are traveling these days to the East not only in search of spiritual light, but also in pursuit of that peace of mind that helps to recover the natural harmony of the human person and being.

A similar emotion may be evoked by looking at an empty canvas (presented as a painting) that may convey a very profound intention to reveal that zero-point, that moment of the absolute beginning from which all being spreads out and to which it returns. I personally think, however, that such emptiness seems too challenging and destabilizing when it appears without any context. It comes nobody knows where from and leads nobody knows where to. The last painting in the cycle of Chinese Chan-Buddhist paintings known as "The Taming of the Buffalo" may be approached in quite a different way. Emptiness in here represented in the shape of the circle. It is the same circle that was described at the beginning of this paper as continual, irregular, indirect movement in a certain direction. The emptiness may be conceived of here as the result of the previous being and process, a new point of support, hinting (only from another standpoint) to the same being. As it is said in the commentary on this painting: "Both the human being and the buffalo have disappeared without any trace, only the moonlight illuminates the deserted world. However, if somebody wants to disclose the meaning of this painting, let him or her look at the wild flowers that grow so-for-themselves".[22]

[22] Cit. from: Maliavin V.V. (ed.), *Molnija v serdce*. Moskva, 1997, p.176.

Chapter XIII
Divine Light in Plotinus and Al-Suhrawardi

Algis Uzdavinys

In the ancient solar theologies of the Near and Middle East, "light" is regarded not simply as a God-given symbol (wherewith, for instance, Allah is compared *per analogiam* by the famous Islamic theologian and Sufi al-Ghazali and now called the Sun, now the Light of lights) but as the direct theophany, manifestation and self-revelation of the Divine. They constitute a sort of providential divine presence since Helios (or the eye of Zeus) sees everything and hears everything, according to Homer (*Il.*III.277). But the Sun worship habitually ends by rationalizing itself as the elaborate metaphysics of the noetic cosmos. A hierophany is turned into an idea due to the equation of both visible and invisible light with the fire of intelligence and the demiurgic and anagogic principle in the hieratic superstructure of the Whole (*to pan*).

Hikmat ishraqiya, or the Oriental wisdom, of al-Suhrawardi, the great Islamic sage, is developed in the framework within which existence itself is regarded as light. Like his remote predecessors from the ancient Egypt, Iran and Syria, he deals with not simply a symbolism of light but an ontology of light which is at the same time a kind of the animated metacosmic mythology, literally accepted and analogous to that displayed by the Chaldean Platonists in the III century A.D. But do words mean what they say?, asks W.H.T.Gairdner, the translator of al-Ghazali's *The Niche for Lights (Mishkat al-Anwar)* into English, and answers: not precisely with al-Ghazali and other Muslim mystics, clinging desperately to ortodoxy.[1] Thus the Sufis, according to F.Schuon, seek to combine two tendencies, Platonism and Asharism. Therefore Sufism "approaches pure gnosis to the extent that it is Platonic, – which does not mean that sound doctrine necessarily comes to it from Plato or Plotinus, – and it departs from it to the extent that it capitulates to Asharism".[2] F.Schuon observes that from defining God and man as "will" to believing that one is "inspired" because one abstains from thinking, there is only one step. Consequently:

Innumerable detours and endless discourses result from the fact that Sufi metaphysics is linked with the anti-metaphysical and moralizing creationism of the monotheistic theologies, and from the fact that, as a result, it is unable to handle in a sufficiently consequential way the principle of relativity; radicalism with regard to the essential goes hand in hand with inconsequentiality with regard to detail.[3]

But Shihabuddin Yahya ibn Habash ibn Amirak of Suhraward, the Persian philosopher who is considered the founder of the Illuminationist school, himself was imprisoned in Aleppo and put to death in the year 1191, because his metaphysics of light was regarded by the vulgar '*ulama* to be at variance with their exoteric dogmas and Islamic faith. However, his follower Shahrazuri related the real or invented story which acquits al-Suhrawardi and makes him a holy man of Islam:

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[1] Gairdner, W.H.T "Introduction". In Al-Ghazzali's *Mishkat al-Anwar (The Niche for Lights)*, tr. W.H.T.Gairdner, Kitab Bhavan. New Delhi, 1994 (first ed.1923), p. 35.

[2] Schuon, F. "Paradoxical Aspects of Sufism". In *Studies in Comparative Religion*, vol.12, no. 3 and 4, Summer-Autumn 1978, p. 144.

[3] Ibid., p. 138.

In a vision that Shaykh Jamaluddin al-Hanbali had, the Prophet of God was seen gathering bones and placing them in holes (or, as is also said, in a sack) and saying, "These are the bones of Shihabuddin" I have heard that some of his companions used to call him Abu'l-Futuh (Father of a miraculous apparition), and God knows best as to the veracity of this.[4]

The Emanation of Intelligence

The Neoplatonic theory of light, inherited by al-Suhrawardi from the *Aristotalic Uthulujiya*, al-Farabi, al-Ghazali and Ibn Sina, does not simply serve as a symbol of divine manifestation, but is regarded as the fundamental reality of all things. As E.J. Jurji pointed out, Plotinus had already called this diffusion "irradiation" (*ellampsis*) which corresponds to the Arabic word *ishraq:*

Al-Suhrawardi uses a kind of Platonic induction whereby the lowest possible may be used to reach the highest possible, that is, a process that leads from this world to another of which this is only a mere reflection. Plato he often confuses with Plotinus.[5]

Irradiation may be understood as an *ekstasis* (the word literally means "standing aside") towards being and Proclus compares this process with the issue of bees from a hive. Even the sensible smells should be regarded as images of diffusion of God"s potency from one ontological level to another. The archetypal Living Being *(autozoon*) of Plato (*Tim*. 30b) contains within it the prototypes of the four elements and Ideas of all living creatures. It is regarded as completelly coherent, timeless, ungenerated, immaterial and the perfect matrix of the physical cosmos. As a well-rounded whole of the Middle Platonists, it is composed of a vast number of individual intellects arranged in hierarchies of genera and species. This Platonic *autozoon* of archetypal Forms (or Lights) may be likened to "a globe of faces radiant with the faces of all living", according to Plotinus (*Enn.*VI.7.15). For the Neoplatonists, all noetic entities (which constitute their own orders, *taxeis*) and all henadic entities are "gods" (*theoi),* or transcendental principles, arranged in families and groupings. Since the noetic cosmos contains in itself an articulated pattern of all phenomena (the intelligible Earth, for instance, is the living archetype and eidetic principle of the manifested material earth with its mountains and valleys, deserts and gardens) Plotinus is even prepared to speak of a sort of sense perception (*aisthesis*) in the noetic realm.

The ineligibles represent a level at which Platonic category of "sameness" predominates over "otherness". According to Proclus' master Syrianus, the structure of the world of transcendent Forms must be understood as follows:

In general one would say that the divine and intellectual Forms are united with one another and pervade one another in a pure and unmixed fashion, but they could in no way be said to participate in one another as secondary and more remote natures participate in them.[6]

As J.Dillon pointed out, the Sun Simile of Plato's *Republic* (507a-509c) since Alexander of Aphrodisias had been brought into conjunction with Aristotle's doctrines of the Active Intellect

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[4] Thackston, W.M. "Introduction". In *The Mystical and Visionary Treatises of Shihabuddin Yahya Suhrawardi*, tr. W.M.Thackston. London: The Octagon Press, 1982, p. 3.

[5] Jurji, E.J. *Illumination in Islamic Mysticism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1938, p. 14.

[6] Gersh, S.E. *From Iamblichus to Eriugena. An Investigation of the Prehistory and Evolution of the Pseudo-Dionysian Tradition*. Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1978, p. 95.

in *De anima* III.5 and of the Unmoved Mover in *Metaphysics* XII, and had then been incorporated in a coordinated Peripatetic and Platonic doctrine of God as Pure Activity *(energeia*) and as the noetic analogue of the Sun, bestowing both intelligibility and existence on all things, as well as knowledge on rational souls.[7] Thus Damascius likens our cognition of the intelligible to the reception of a sudden flashing trace from above. But Aristotle's doctrine of the bodilessness of light is not satisfactory for the later Platonists who prefered to view light as a pure Form. Therefore Plotinus, following Alexander of Aphrodisias, compares light with the Active Intellect, describing *Nous* as holding the One's light within itself. The One's light is broken into fragments by Intellect, resulting in the multiple unities, which are the Forms. The metaphor, or symbol, of light radiating from the Sun was clarified and dematerialized by Plotinus in a response to the Stoic materialism. Light is regarded not as a modification of the air (in Aristotelian sense), but as a substantial and incorporeal power, which constitutes the visible manifestations in the physical cosmos of the invisible noetic being and life.

Plotinus combines the Platonic account of the Good as illuminating power (*Rep.*508d 4-6) with the Aristotelian doctrines of thought. However, all things come from the One because there is nothing in it (*Enn.*V.2.1.1-5). This radical disjunction between the One and its products acquits Plotinus of the popular charge of propounding pantheism and an emanationist theory in its literal sense. The positive descriptions of the One are used only for the sake of persuasion with the necessary phrase "as if" (*hoion*) added. The irradiation is inseparable from the creative contemplation (*theoria):* all things are in the great contemplative return, which is the other side of the creative outgoing from the One. As A.H. Armstrong maintains:

The direct spontaneity of the production of the reflection-or-shadow-image by the archetype is certainly a most important reason why Plotinus prefers it to the picture painted by the artist as a representation of the relationship between the Platonic archetypal and image-worlds.[8]

The dematerialization of light is accompanied by despatialization. The light no longer springs from a center but is simply present throughout the sphere. The term "hierarchy" (coined by Dionysius the Areopagite) is unknown to Plotinus: the reality is a non-spatial structure of reflections, the posterior depending on the prior, being constituted by the prior which can exist without it and is more unified and more perfect. The "mirror" does not just passively receive the reflection, because "erotic" contemplation plays its part in creating the mirror-image and gives it the character appropriate to its ontological level. Since the prior is both immanent in the posterior and transcends it, the One, which is "everywhere" and "nowhere", paradoxically cannot be mirrored or imaged. Plotinus is not original either in calling the first principle the One and comparing the irradiation (*ellampsis*) of its infinite power (*dunamis*) to light, nor in making Forms internal to Intellect. He follows the established Middle Platonic and Neopythagorean tradition. The originality of Plotinus manifest itself in the selective interpretations and corrections that he introduces, based on the texts of commentators that he used (such as Severus, Gaius, Atticus, Alexander of Aphrodisias, Adrastus of Aphrodisias, Aspasius, Numenius, Cronius) and in his careful rereading of Plato's *Parmenides* in accord with the oral tradition (*paradosis*) of the Neopythagorean esoterism represented by his master Ammonius. For Plotinus, the term "One"

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[7] Dillon, J. "Pleroma and Noetic Cosmos". In *Neoplatonism and Gnosticism*, ed.R.T.Wallis, J.Bregman. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992, p. 220.

[8] Armstrong, A.H. "Platonic Mirrors". In *Eranos* 1986, Jahrbuch, vol. 55, Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1988, p. 156.

(*hen*) does not indicate the One as a distinct entity (*Enn*.II.9.1.1-8): it is false even to say of the first principle that it is one. The simplicity of the One is based on the claim that it is non-composite. Therefore J. Bussanich regards Plotinus as a "mystical empiricist" who is committed to the view that ultimate principle, as the source of the divine light, is reached in a mystical union that transcends the duality of subject and object:

Thus, philosophizing about the One has the concrete aim of nullifying itself, an attitude that is neither nihilist nor antiphilosophical, but which points towards a "soteriology".[9]

The One produces eternally without deliberation and without knowledge of its products. The One's freedom is beyond necessity, but its final causality operates both as the actualization or perfection of Intellect and the mystical return of the soul to its source. Therefore the One is a "generative radiance" (*Enn*.VI.7.36.20) but not an intellect. The derivation of being, goodnes, beauty and life from the One to Intellect, through efficient and final causality, does not make the One a formal cause of Intellect. Plotinus tried to reconcile a contradiction between the Pythagorean doctrine of the first principle as a radical unity and the Peripatetic doctrine (going back to Anaxagoras) that the first principle is an Intellect thinking itself. Thus Plotinus equated the first moment of Intellect on proceeding from the perfect and therefore productive One with the Infinite Dyad of Platonic tradition and described this indefiniteness as an "intelligible matter". For the didactic and pedagogic purpose the multi-dimensional structure of reality (which basically is one) is regarded both as vertical and concentric, with the One (which is beyond Being and without external relations) at the core of reality, like the center of a circle. Every new level, or ring, of reality creates itself by reverting in contemplation on its immediate source. This process repeats itself at various lower levels until it reaches an end in the production of matter, which can form a substratum on which the images of the next lowest degree can be projected, but itself is unable to revert and therefore is deprived of any real existence.

The transcendental center of the luminous circle cannot be viewed too literally as a central point of geometric body, because the light no longer springs from a center but is simply present through the sphere. This manifestation and irradiation is non-spatial: the light in the sphere comes from a source but the source is not located in one single point. The light itself is immaterial and indestructible. The hypostasis of Intellect (both as a whole and pluralized into Forms, as its component parts, which also are intellects is established through the illumination of the intelligible matter by the One, just as the sensible realms is established (following this archetypal precedent) by the illumination of the sensible matter, though the light streaming from the Soul is dulled as it mixes with matter. In some respect, Intellect is the One viewed through the intelligible matter as the "dark" element in the noetic realm, taking light from the One. Matter explains the ontological distinction between archetype and image. According to J.H. Fielder:

The resemblance of archetype and image is found in the likeness of the higher reality to the same reality present within the conditions of the lower levels of reality. Thus the comparison is between the light principle and the light principle as illuminating the sphere. Such a comparison requires that we be able to separate the light principle from its presence in the sphere so that the immanent reality can be related to the illuminated sphere, which is its image. For Plotinus this means that we

[9] Bussanich, J. "Plotinus's Metaphysics of the One". In *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus*, ed. Lloyd P. Person. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 42.

must undertake philosophical dialectic in order to be guided to a direct experience of the higher realities.[10]

Since our "concern is not to be free of sin, but to be god" (*Enn*.1.2.6.2-3), all metaphysical investigations of the noetic realm and dialectical exercises are inseparable from purification, contemplation and return to the sphere of pure intelligible lights. Iamblichus also agrees that light in its pure state is incorporeal and associates the incorporeality of light with the gods of the noetic sphere. But from the divine realms into the sensible world light comes through the visible sun. For Proclus, contrary to Plotinus, perceptible light is corporeal, although the purest among bodies. Thus he directly follows Plato who states that light is corporeal (*Tim*. 45b 2-d3). Only the light that shines among the intelligibles is incorporeal. The sensible, perceptible light is extended and corporeal. On this subject Proclus disagrees with Plotinus, Iamblichus, Simplicius and other Neoplatonic followers of Aristotle who argued that the sensible light is incorporeal (*De anima* 418b 13-17).

According to Proclus, each level of being radiated by the One has its own kind of light. Therefore there are noetic and psychical lights, as well as the pure light of cosmic space and the visible light in the heaven and earth. Corporeal light begins with the first body of the World-Soul which is an immaterial body in its pure state, equated to place (*topos*). It is imperishable and invisible Fire perceived solely by the intellect (*In Tim*. II.8.14-16). But the first mode of light is the primordial divine light of the One, or God, and it penetrates to all the levels of reality, bringing goodness and beauty. This light insures salvation of the manifested cosmos and its return to the luminous sources, to the invisible Suns, which lie behind the visible Sun. About this divine light L. Siorvanes argues as follows:

In every entity lofty or lowly, eternal or temporal, rational or irrational, living or inanimate, there is a unity which is the center of its being. In every such unity there is a light: the light of God in every one.[11]

Proclus recalls the remark of Plato that light which resembles a rainbow is space (*Rep*.616 b) and the Chaldean oracle about the primal Soul which "on high animates light, fire, aether, the worlds". This light is the light above the empyrean (*huper to empurion*), understood as the divine peak of the worlds, the monad prior to the triad of the empyrean (noetic), eatherial (psychic), and material (hylic) regions (*In* Tim. I.454.23). This light, according to Proclus, was the first to take over the eternal dwelling places of the gods, and reveals its spectacles of divine visions to those who deserve it. The shapless things acquire shape in it, therefore this light *(phos*) is called place (*topos*) as being a certain shape *(tupos*) of the entire cosmic body. Proclus describes two spheres, one made of light and the other of many bodies, both equal in volume. One of them is placed at the center of the world and the other is immersed in the first sphere. The whole universe is moving in its place in the immobile light.

Proclus' discussion of light is based on the Platonic analogy of the Good and the Sun in the *Republic* (507a6-509c2). He says that Plato calls the light from the One "the brightest of all realities" because it is the cause of the light everywhere and the source of all noetic, noeric, hypercosmic, and encosmic gods. For Proclus, each monad of the hierarchy exists both in the realm

[10] Fielder, J.H. "Chorismos and Emanation in the Philosophy of Plotinus." In *The Significance of Neoplatonism, ed*. R. Baine Harris. Norfolk, Virginia: Old Dominion University, 1976, pp. 111–112.

[11] Proclus, L.S. *Neo-Platonic Philosophy and Science.* Edinburg: Edinburg University Press, 1996, p. 242.

before its order and in its own realm and illuminates the entities below (*In Plat. Theol*. II.7.44.17-45.13). According to H. Lewy, the eternal and infinite light, this is created by the Iranian god Ahura Mazda and in which he dwells is also called place.[12] Philo of Byblus explained the name of the Phoenician god Iao (*Aion*) as indicating the noetic light (*phos noeton*), which may be regarded as an archetypal "place". There are other testimonies which connect the Procline doctrine of *phos* and *topos* with the ancient Near and Middle Eastern theological and mythological systems. However, the first principle of light for Proclus is neither the visible Sun, nor the Soul and the divine Intellect, but the ineffable One itself.

Plotinus also applies the analogy of the Sun to the procession of Intellect thus describing the One as "by its own light bestowing intelligibility on the things that are and on *Nous*" (*Enn*.VI.7.16.30-35). Having in mind the analogy of the Sun to the Good in Plato's *Republic*, Alexander of Aphrodisias, the Peripatetic predecessor of Plotinus, invokes the Aristotelian analogy of the Active Intellect to light (*De anima* 430a14-17) in order to explain how it functions as cause of intelligibility and intellection. Illumination is a joint effect which proceeds both from the source of illumination and from the illumined object when these are brought into juxtaposition. Being eminently visible, light is the cause of the visibility of everything visible: everything else that is visible is less visible than light. We are born with the potential intelligence, which is called material intellect (*hulikos nous*). After this material intelligence has been instructed, it is the form and perfection (*eidos hai entelecheia*), or actuality (*energeia),* of the uninstructed intelligence and therefore is called acquired (*epiktetos*) intelligence. Due to the productive intellect (*nous poietikos*), which is pure, immaterial, changeless and transcendent (*choriston*), the acquired intellect is able to perceive the noetic realities (*ta noeta*) even in the absence of corresponding sensibles. This Peripatetic doctrine, set forth in *De anima liber cum mantissa* of Alexander of Aphrodisias and reinterpreted by Plotinus, produced the Neo-Aristotelian version of mysticism. Among the immanent forms, or Platonic Ideas made immanent, Alexander of Aphrodisias assumes immaterial and transcendent *noeta*, later combined with the Unmoved Movers by Muslim Neo-Platonists on the further assumption that the *nous* of which Aristotle speaks in *De anima* is simply one of the Unmoved Movers of his astronomical theory.

"In brief", summarizes P. Merlan, "with one exception, the whole intricate system of intelligences emanating from the first intelligence is already anticipated in the *Mantissa*. The exception is that many Muslim philosophers cap the world of intelligences by the Neoplatonic One".[13]

Plotinus and the Philosophy of *Ishraq*

"What is distinctly Plotinus' own contribution is the doctrine of the unconscious explaining the present absence or the absent presence of the divine *nous* in us. The mystical union consists in making conscious what is unconscious in us".[14]

The union of the transcendent, active, and illuminating *nous poietikos* (which is the cause of the material intellect turning into acquired intellect) with the transformed, or rather awakened, human intellect constitutes "the Neo-Aristotelian counterpart of the *unio mystica"*, as P. Merlan

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[12] Lewy, H. *Chaldean Oracles and Theurgy. Mysticism, Magic and Platonism in the Later Roman Empire*, nouvell edition par Michel Tardieu. Paris: Etudes Augustiniennes, 1978, p. 409.

[13] Merlan, Ph. *Monopsychism, Mysticism, Meta-consciousness. Problems of the Soul in the Neoaristotelian and Neoplatonic Tradition.* The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963, p. 47.

[14] *Ibid.,* p. 83.

pointed out.[15] Whenever our material intellect becomes transformed (*ginetai)* into the productive intellect, we become like gods, according to Alexander, and Ibn Sina follows this view by arguing that the *intellectus possibilis*, in receiving the illumination of the active Intellect, receives a guarantee of immortality.

"This is because here the human intellect is not a mere disposition to intelligible knowledge", says H. Corbin, "it is the partner of the Angel, the "traveling companion", who is guided by the Angel and whom, on this side, the Angel needs in order to solemnize his divine service – that is, to irradiate Forms and thereby to rise toward his Principle".[16]

The Peripatetic God with whom we are eventually united is not the ineffable Neoplatonic One who transcends any thought-thinking-itself (though it may be compared partly with a first God of Numenius, who is simple, indivisible, self-directed *nous* in a sort of self-founded contemplation). It is rather the divine Intellect, regarded as the second hypostasis by Plotinus (or a second God of Numenius, who is initially unified but who divides in the process of coming into contact with preexisting matter. This results in a third God, equivalent to the rational World Soul). Human intelligence (as a prolongation or manifestation of the divine light) having become united with the *nous poietikos* returns to its primordial condition and acquires its quality of incessant intellection (*noesis)* and omniscience, knowing everything on the level of principles without knowing of particular ephemeral details. In short, by realizing the eternal noetic element (tantamount to the real self of Porphyry which is nothing other than *nous*) man is illumined and divinised. Or, in Plotinian terms, since *Psyche* is an image of *Nous*, it becomes *Nous* and realises its noetic identity (permanently witnessed by the undescended part of the soul) when it turns to *Nous* in contemplation.

Thus the divine intelligence can be regarded as the *eidos* of the human intelligence, according to the *Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics*, in a view of J. Freudenthal wrongly attributed to Alexander of Aphrodisias.[17] And since every *eidos* or Form exists in an atomic now *(atomon nun*), in the moment in which human intelligence is awakened or illuminated by the active divine intelligence which it comes to know and with which in certain respect it is "united", it participates in the same atomic now which can be interpreted as the eternal now. Therefore in the later Islamic tradition the Sufi is regarded as a "son of the moment" and identified with the uncreated Intellect. As F. Schuon pointed out, "it is Knowledge which, by definition, will bring about the most perfect union between man and Good, since it alone appeals to what is already divine in man, namely the Intellect".[18]

The problem of the union with the active Intellect, which the Peripatetic version of the Platonic *homoiosis theo* ("likeness to God") doctrine introduced, has been discussed in Islamic philosophy and Sufism in connection with the theory of prophecy and revelation. Ibn Sina criticised Poprhyry for maintaining that *nous poietikos* becomes the form of the human soul and himself was criticised by al-Suhrawardi for rejecting it. Al-Suhrawardi regarded it as one of the basic marks of his *hikmat ishraqiya*, the Oriental wisdom. Some Western followers of Ibn Sina (such as Ulrich von Strasbourg) used the term *sanctus* ("holy") to designate the condition of the human *nous* after its transformation. This *intellectus sanctus*, in turn, becomes *intellectus*

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[15] *Ibid*., p. 19.

[16] Henry Corbin *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, tr. W.R.Trask, Bollingen Series LXVI. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988, p. 73.

[17] Merlan, Ph. *ibid*., p. 36.

[18] Schuon, F. *The Transcendent Unity of Religions*, tr. P.Townsend. London: Faber and Faber, 1953, p. 29.

illuminus and intellectus *divinus*.[19] In Suhrawardian theosophy, both Peripatetic immaterial transcendent intelligibles (*kurios noeta*, already turned into the Unmoved Movers of cosmology and reduced by some Muslim philosophers from 55 to 10) and Platonic Forms have given place to angelology. According to the remark of H. Corbin, "perhaps the entire difference lies in this".[20]

In the view of Ibn Sina, the human intellect does not abstract Forms in an Aristotelian manner, but only prepares itself for the Angel to illuminate the noetic Form upon it. In his explanations of the *Theology of Aristotle* (excerpts of Plotinus' *Enneads,* unanimously attributed to Aristotle in the Islamic world), Ibn Sina already argued that the active Intellect (as an Angel) takes care of the soul, which is its child, in order to lead it to its intellectivity *(aqliya*), or pure and luminous angelic state. Therefore the active Intelligence (which in Islamic tradition is equated with the lowest of the ten Unmoved Movers) for al-Suhrawardi is no less than the Angel Gabriel of the Quranic revelation, both Holy Spirit and the Angel of Humanity, also personified as the shaykh and mysterious guide *(murshid*) of the *Ishraqiyun.* The philosophers of *Ishraq* are designated as "*les platoniciennes de Perse"* by H. Corbin who argues that Hermes, Zoroaster, and Plato are three great figures which dominated their horizon.[21] Al-Suhrawardi interpreted the theory os Platonic Ideas in terms of Zoroastrian angelology and mythologized (in terms of the angelic lights displayed through the Peripatetic astronomical cosmos) the Neoplatonic metaphysical hierarchies, already elaborated by the Athenian school of Syrianus and Proclus in the V century A.D. and their predecessor "divine" Iamblichus from the Syrian town Apamea. Despite certain reservations, imaginary "Aristotle" is still regarded as the mystical authority by al-Suhrawardi who believed that *al-hikmat al-'atiqah*, or ancient wisdom, which entered into Islamic world, existed in various forms among the ancient nations, including the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Persians, Hindus and finally Hellenes. However, as S.H. Nasr pointed out:

In fact, Suhrawardi considered his most immediate predecessors in the Islamic world to be not the well-known philosophers but the early Sufis, and writes of a dream in which he saw the author of the *Theology of Aristotle* – whom he thought to be Aristotle, but who in reality is Plotinus – and asked him if the Peripatetics like al-Farabi and Avicenna were the real philosophers in Islam. Aristotle answered, "Not a degree in a thousand. Rather, the Sufis Bastami and Tustari are the real philosophers".[22]

The convinction that the Hellenes (generalized under the archetypal mask of Aristotle) limited this "ancient tradition" to a sort of rationalistic *falsafah* is due to the limited acquintance with the Hellenic philosophy (which is reduced to the Peripatetic tradition alone) and the particular conditions created by the Islamic religious context which makes impossible any true revival of the Neoplatonic mystagogy in its Hellenic metaphysical or Chaldean theurgic form. However, certain branches of Sufism may be regarded as an indirect prolongation of the Hellenic philosophy and "spiritual way of life" put on the revealed and therefore obligatory Quranic foundations.

The Metaphysics of Light

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[19] Merlan, *ibid*., p. 18.
[20] Corbin, *ibid*., p. 116.
[21] Corbin, H. *En Islam iranien. Aspects spirituels et philosophiques,* tome II: *Sohrawardi et les Platoniciens de Perse*. Paris: Gallimard, 1971, p. 25.
[22] Seyyed Hossein Nasr. *Three Muslim Sages. Avicenna-Suhrawardi-Ibn "Arabi."* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1964, pp. 61–62.

In the islamic tradition, the metaphysics of Light is primarily based on the Quranic sura of Light (XXIV: 35). Therefore when al-Farabi prays for a conferring of "an emanation from the Active Intellect (*faydan min al-'Aql al-Fa'al*), he designates God (understood as the necessary First Being, *al-Mawjud al-Awwal*, and the First Cause, *al-Sabab al-Awwal*) Quranically as the "Light of the earth and heaven" (*Nur al-ard wa'l-sama'*). Thus al-Farabi prays for purifying his soul from the stuff of matter (*min tinat 'l-hayula*). Since the Peripatetic God must be "thought thinking itself" *intellectus intelligens intellectum*, or an "Intelligence who is intelligent in understanding His essence" (*yakun 'Aqlan wa 'aqilan bi-an ya'qila thatahu*), according to al-Farabi, it follows that God is Intellect in action *('Aql bi'l-fi'l*). The Tenth Intellect, later regarded by al-Suhrawardi as the Holy Spirit and Angel of humanity, is the last in the astronomical hierarchy of those "separate things" (*al-ashya' al-mufariqa*) that are both intellects and intelligibles *('uqul wa ma'qulat*) in their essence and that require no substrate for their existence. It is through those intelligent spheres, accompanied by the souls of heavens and their proper bodies, that celestial pilgrim of Ibn Sina and al-Suhrawardi travels vertically in the hope of reaching the transcendental East (*mashriq*) whence the rays of the Sun, regarded as God and the Prime Intellect, radiate. For Ibn Sina (who agrees with Plotinus that God is *huperousia*, beyond substance, though the Plotinian term *hupostasis*, employed for God, is paradoxically rendered as substance, *jawhar*), He is the True First Light (*al-Nur al-Haqq al-Awwal).* But, according to I.R. Netton, Ibn Sina "did not Neo-Platonize that light image": it was left to al-Suhrawardi "to provide a full Neo-Platonic dimension for the basic Quranic metaphor".[23]

Following the *Theology of Aristotle*, al-Suhrawardi designates God as the Light of Lights (*Nur al-Anwar*) and deals with ontology of light, regarding manifestation (*sudur*) as illumination (*ishraq*) of the pure lights. God for al-Suhrawardi is One and His essence and existence (*mahiyyatuhu ayn al-wujud*, the terms not regarded as meaning different things by Aristotle, but separated in Porphyry and later monotheistic traditions) are merged. As is required by the *Qur'an,* God has neither associate (*nidd, mithal*), nor attribute (*sifa*), and man never becomes the same as the God of Gods (*Ilahu'l-Alihati*). But the monotheistic conception of God the Creator, when interpreted philosophically, in many cases comes close to the Middle Platonic God as Father and demiurgic Intellect. In this sense the Arabic equivalent of Intellect would be not *'aql* but*ilah*, god, whence Aristotle's *Metaphysics* is designated in Arabic by the name *Ilahiyat*, that is *Divinalia*.[24] However, though "the totalitarian emphasis of the Divine Oneness in Islam slants the whole perspective", according to F. Schuon, "the inward mover of Muslim mysticism is, basically, more moral than intellectual, – in spite of the intellective character of the Shahadah".[25]

The First Intellect *(al-'Aql al-Awwal*), which is the second entity after the *Nur al-Anwar* in Suhrawardian hierarchy, is called the First Light (*al-Nur al-Awwal*), thus making the *Nur al-Anwar* close to the ineffable One, or Good, which transcends the light-like noetic (or angelic) cosmos while being the supreme source of it. Al-Suhrawardi discerns a three-fold system of pure angelic lights. Like the *Nur al-Anwar*, the First Light, equated with the Mazdean Bahman, is one without any multiplicity, but from it all other lights, or intellects, designated as "the Mothers" (*al-Ummahat)*, Victorious Lights *(al-Anwar al-Qahira*), and Sources (*al-Usul*), come forth. The whole hierarchical structure of various longitudinal and latitudinal orders with the Nearest Light

[23] Ian Richard Netton. *Allah Transcendent. Studies in the Structure and Semiotics of Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Cosmolog.* Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 1989, p. 158.
[24] Corbin, H. *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, p. 50.
[25] Schuon, F. *Paradoxical Aspects of Sufism*, pp. 141–142.

of the outermost sphere of the universe (*al-Muhit*, or the Highest Isthmus, *al-Barzakh al-A'la*, similar to the membrane of Hecate of the *Chaldean Oracles*) generally reflect, although in rather simplified manner, the post-Iamblichean Neoplatonic cosmos, transformed and superimposed on the Peripatetic astronomical universe of Islamic thinkers. Consequently, an illuminationist epistemology and theory of knowledge is created in which knowledge and perception depend on an intuitive illuminationist presence (*ishraq huduri*), or the activity of *nous poietikos.* Thus it is no wonder that even the astronomical conception of the Moon's eclipse is presented in a solemn tone as an "esoteric knowledge" of somewhat mystical order, revealed by the *shaykh al-ghayb* who personifies the Tenth Intellect, the Angel of humanity.

The entities belonging to the longitudinal order of angelic lights (*Tabaqat al-'Ard*) emanate from each other, but the angels of the latitudinal order come forth from the longitudinal order and "bear a marked resemblance to Plato's world of ideas and archetypes", according to I.R. Netton.[26] The active Intellect *(al-'Aql al-Fa'al*) of the Peripatetics, equated with the Holy Spirit (*Ruh al-Qudus*) and the last angelic *Logos,* belongs to the latitudinal order of lights. The actual power of these lights (called by a name derived from the Pahlavi word *espahbad,* meaning a species of military service: *al-Anwar al-Isfahbadiyya*) reaches the spheres (*al-aflak*) of planets and moves them.

In Plotinus, every level of being is constituted by means of departure from the principle immediately superior and return to it. In Proclus also the higher loves the lower providentially, and the lower loves the higher as converted towards it with an ascending love. According to al-Suhrawardi, each inferior light (*nur safil*) loves the higher light (*al-nur al-'ali*) to a degree that transcends its own self love. This sort of ontological relationship ultimately is based on Neo-Platonic interpretation of Plato's *Phaedrus.* The erotic return (*epistrophe*) to the contemplation of the generating principle means that the conversion of intellect upon itself is a conversion upon the principle (*eis heauton gar epistrephon eis archen epistrephei: Enn*.VI.9.2.25). Since "everything that is capable of returning upon itself is incorporeal" (Procl.*ET* 15), by transcending our ordinary empirical self we realize that we eternally are *Nous*, a sort of divine light itself. As the Plotinian Intellect is turned towards its external transcendent cause for activation and the realization of its possibilities and sees not the One itself (because it is beyond being and form), but a certain primordial and archetypal "image" of the One (thus establishing the actuality of pure *noesis* and producing the multiplicity of pure noetic Forms), so the Suhrawardian First Light is blessed by the most direct vision (*mushahada*) and radiance (*shuruq)* of the *Nur al-Anwar* and is subsumed in the overwhelming love for God. The One has a simple concentration of attention on itself, being in a nondualistic way pure supranoetic actuality (*Enn*.VI.7.37.15-16). In itself the One's existence (*hupostasis*, with the subtle reservation "as if", *hoion*, added) is one with its actuality (*energeia*) and its essence, though the first activity is without substance (*ousia*). The Suhrawardian God (the Self-subsistent Light) also is a separate and self-centered unity (*wahda*) into which both essence and existence are merged. For al-Suhrawardi, as E.J. Jurji pointed out:

All phases of darkness are shadows of the phases of ideas (*jami'al-hay'at al-zulmaniyah zilal li-al-hay'at al-'aqilah)*. Through ascetic exercises one comes to perceive the world of might (*alam al-jabarut*) and the royal essences (*al-dhawat al-mulukiyah),* the lights once witnessed by Hermes and Plato, the clearity of ideas (*al-adwa'al-ma'nawiyah).*[27]

[26] Ian Richard Netton, *ibid*., p. 263.
[27] Jurji. *ibid.,* p. 14.

Strictly speaking, in Suhrawardian theosophy the dualism is not between light and darkness, but rather between the luminous entities and things obscure, designated as screens and barriers (starting from the Highest Isthmus, *al-Barzakh al-A"la)* in the way of light. The human body is just such al-barzakh. According to Plotinus, in one way, matter is generated by that aspect of Soul, which descends, or illuminates, what is below, but in another way, it is tantamount to the darkness at the edge of this illumination as a by-product of the illumination close to a sheer nothingness.

I.R. Netton rightly concludes that Suhrawardian ontology of angelic lights (constituted by symbiosis of principle of dominion, *qahr*, and the principle of longing, *shawq*, or passionate love, ‘*ishq*) "presents a schema in which the old terminology of *al-‘Aql al-Kuli* and *al-Nafs al-Kulliyya*has been supplanted by that of anwar in all their complex manifestations and interdependent relationships. Aristotelian concepts of substance have also given way before his light cosmology.[28]

This ontology of light in its advanced form became possible on the Islamic religious and the Mazdean mythological ground through the philosophical (or rather theosophical) adaptation of the Peripatetic noetics united with its astronomy and the Neoplatonic (basically Plotinian, though paradoxically attributed to Aristotle) metaphysics of light that passed into the Arab world and charmed it. As if following an example of the famous *Chaldean Oracles*, the entire Suhrawardian universe is described in the terms of light and personified or mythologized as a community of luminous entities, thus reviving the pre-Islamic solar metaphysics within the contemporary philosophical context. Ibn Wahshiya perhaps was partly right (at least in principle) when he connected the *Ishraqiyun* with the ancient Egyptian priests, called "children of the sister of Hermes".[29]

[28] Netton, *ibid*., pp. 267–268.
[29] Corbin *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, p. 38.

Chapter XIV
The Word of Honor

Alphonso Lingis

To Say "I"

When we awaken and open our eyes, we cannot help seeing and hearing things: they forcibly impose themselves on us. It might seem that when we talk about them, all we do is report or represent them in language. But words also have force: they have the power to make things look different. When we talk about things, they stand out more, they become clearer, they break apart or connect up differently; words may even make things and situations first appear. Here I want to speak about just one word, the word "I", about the force that there can be in that word.

Linguistics has labeled the word "I" an empty "shifter"; it just designates the one who is now speaking this sentence, and so in the course of a conversation it designates first this person, then that person, and then that other person. Literary criticism has pointed out that the word "I" in a text can designate the author of that text, or else the narrator in a novel who puts himself forth as having seen these events or lived through them, or else a fictitious speaker whom the author has invented and to whom he has ascribed these thoughts and feelings.

What I ascribe to the word "I" when I use it can be the same as what anyone else ascribes to it. "He is the thirteenth in line waiting at the post office." "I am the thirteenth in line at the post office." "He is the doctor's first patient of the day." "I was the doctor's first patient today." "He is wearing a red coat." "I am wearing a red coat."

But there are other cases where the word "I" has a special force. "I am a mother." When, alone or in the presence of others, she utters "I," she impresses it upon herself, and her substance retains it. She is committed to it, and the next time she utters "I" this subsequent "I" corresponds to and answers for the prior one.

"I am on my own now." Already to say "I a man ..." is to commit oneself to manly behavior; to say "I a woman" is to commit oneself to womanly deeds. To say "I am still young" is to put one's forces outside the roles and role models.

The "I" that seemingly only reports her past commits her to it. "I got mad when my petition was just ignored ..." "I am so happy I quit my job." With these words the present I puts the past I in the present I. The I that quit or that got mad is the I that is now speaking.

The utterance "I say ..." "I do ..." "I am a ..." is not simply a report of a commitment, but the actual enactment of the commitment. The power to fix one's own word in oneself is a power that leaps over the succession of hours and days to determine the future now. One day, deep in the secrecy of my own heart, I said "I am a dancer," and it is because and only because I uttered those words that I am now on the way to becoming a dancer.

The remembering of these words one implants in oneself is made possible by a brushing off of the thousands of impressions that crowd on one's sensory surfaces as one moves through the thick of the world. The I arises in an awakening, out of the drowsy murmur of sensations. It especially requires an active forgetting of lapses, failures, and chagrins, which persist as cloying sensations that mire down one's view into the past and into the open path ahead. There is a fundamental innocence in the I, which stands in the now, and from this clearing turns to the time

ahead and the time passed. To say "I" is to commence. "Now I see!" "I will go!" There is youth and adventure in the voice that says "I."

"Now I see!": these words, once I fixed them in myself, leave me free to observe the passing scene without tentatively arranging it around one center and then around another. "I will go" leaves me free for whatever interruptions, distractions, and momentary amusements the day brings. Through innumerable interruptions, contraventions, invitations, and lures to do other things, I felt the uncanny power of these words. I felt the power in them which was the sole evidence that they would prevail.

Word of Honor

"Now I see!" "I am still young." The word "I" is a pledge to honor those words. Nobility characterizes, in someone in high station or in low, the man of his word, the woman of her word. Noble is the man who is as good as his word, the woman whose word is a guarantee.

One's word "I" "I say ..." "I am going to ..." "I am a ..." is the first and most fundamental way one honors oneself. Saying "I am a dancer" one will seek out dance classes, one will train every day with exclusive resolve, one will endure being left out of company selections, dancing in troupes that got miserable reviews by the critics, one will never act on the basis of failure. It is oneself, and not dance, one dishonors if one does not do these things.

The word of honor one has fixed in oneself is the real voice of conscience. Already "Now I see!" "I have no idea what to do with my life" are words of conscience. These words remain in me, an inner voice that orients and pledges.

One's dancer conscience is not at all a critical function, a restraining force, like the daimon of Socrates which speaks only to say *no* to the instincts. One's artist conscience does not torment one with guilt feelings. In the words "I am a dancer!" "I am a mother!" "I am young still!" one feels instead upsurging power, and the joy of that power. One's pride in oneself is a trust in the power of these words. There is a trembling pulse of joy in those words, and a foretaste of joy to come. One trusts one's joy, for joy is expansive, opening wide upon what is, what happens, and it illumines most broadly and most deeply.

The word one has fixed in oneself is fixed in one's sensibility, one's nervous circuitry, one's circadian rhythms, one's momentum, and one's tempo. It vanishes from the conscious mind, which can fill itself with new words and scenarios. One no longer has to recall, in the midst of morning concerns that require one's attention, that word *dancer* uttered in oneself; one instinctually heads for the dance studio and feels restless and tied down if one is prevented from going.

The Important and the Sublime

In the measure that we become intimate with persons, other animals, ecological systems, artworks or buildings, we develop perceptual and conceptual sensitivity, logical acumen, breadth and depth of comprehension, and the capacity to distinguish the important from the trivial. Understanding is all that.

There is no understanding, no compelling insights, foresight, purposive thought, causal thought, calculative thought, no thought in general, without the capacity to distinguish the important from the trivial. It is part of the understanding of the nurse in the emergency room, the automobile mechanic, the pilot, and the Scuba divemaster. It is part of every practical

understanding. It is also part of all theoretical understanding–that of the nuclear physicist, the astronomer, the microbiologist.

It is not an act of will to make whatever happens to oneself and about oneself necessary to oneself that makes one commit oneself to one's own word. It is instead compelling insight into what is important, urgent, and immediate to be done and to be said that makes one's word of honor necessary to oneself. It was the epiphany of the transcendent importance of dance, the grandeur of the wilderness, the majesty of the oceans that first called forth the word that said: I will be a dancer, I will be a forest ranger, I will be an oceanographer! But it was this word that gives me the power to distinguish the important from all the lures of the fatuous concerns illuminated on neon signs and television screens.

Martin Heidegger replaced a substantive account of things with a relational account; things, he said, do not have "properties", that is, traits that belong to them; instead they have appropriatenesses, concrete ways they fit into or resist other things about them and fit into our projects. But the sublimity of things and events is recognized in the way they exceed concepts that measure their appropriateness to our projects. Their size, force, beauty, wild freedom, nobility make them insubordinate to the uses we may devise for them. "That's not just timber, that's a sequoia forest!" declares the utter disproportion between the concept which subordinates the trees to human uses and the perception of all their reality. "Hey, put that broom down; that's a hummingbird that got into the living room!" Things and events reveal themselves as sublime when they demonstrate that before them man is not the measure of all things.

To be struck by the importance of dance, of mothering a child, or of freeing the rivers of pollution is to see the urgency of what has to be brought about, protected, rescued, or repaired, and to see that I am the one who is there and who has the resources. It is then that the noble heart gives his word of honor, to them and to himself.

"I am a dancer" or "I am a mother: these words position my body in the field and position myself in that body. To say "I am a dancer" is to commit one's body to travail and labor and pain and injury. To say "I am a mother" is to commit one's body to sleepless nights and exposure to diseases one's child picks up at school, and to anguish worst than incarceration when one's son is arrested. To say to oneself "I am a doctor" is to commit one's body to total mobilization for hours and at any hour and to the daily proximity to deadly diseases.

And how much more strength is required to say "I am an explorer of myself by being an explorer of a hundred towns and lands!" How much more rigorous is the conscience of the one who affirms: "I am one who risks all that I am in every new land and adventure!" But to be really a dancer is to be a runaway youth on an unknown road, to be, like Martha Graham, a beginner at the age of eighty. To be really a mother is, like Celia de la Serna, to be dragged out of the cancer ward to be thrown into prison in Buenos Aires for being the mother of her son, being the mother of Ernesto Ché Guevara.

The Word that Generates Understanding

This power to fix one's own word in oneself generates the power, Nietzsche said, "to see distant eventualities as if they belonged to the present, to decide with certainty what is the goal and what the means to it, to distinguish necessary events from chance ones, to think causally, and in general to be able to calculate and compute."[1] How many are those about us who do not distinguish what is essential to them and what incidental, who do not see what possibilities are

[1] Nietzsche, F. *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage, 1969, p. 58.

within reach and do not even see goals! How many are those who do not think, whose minds are but substances that record what baits and lures the mass media broadcast at large! They do not commit themselves to the systems of thought that track down the causes of injustice and sociopathic behavior, the causes of environmental deterioration, the causes of literary and artistic achievement.

Compelling insights, foresight, purposive thought, causal thought, calculative thought, thought in general, then do not arise from contact with the regularities of nature passively recorded by the mind. The rows of trees and the daily movement of clouds overhead, the birds that chatter in one's back yard, the landmarks and the paths one takes every day, the tasks that are regularly laid out for one, the patterns of conversation with acquaintances, the concepts that exist to classify these things and the connections between them – these lull the mind which glows feebly in their continuities and recurrences; they do not make it thoughtful. Instead, thought results from language, thought arises out of the word one puts to oneself – a word of honor. This word interrupts the continuities of nature and silences the babble of others in oneself. It is the power one feels in oneself when one fixes oneself with a word, stands and advances in that word, the feeling that one is making one's own nature determinable, steadfast, trustworthy, that makes one look for regularities, necessities, calculable forms in the flux of external nature. Once I have said "I will be a dancer," I begin to really determine what the things about me are, I begin to understand anatomy, the effects of exercise, of diet, the effects of great teachers and grand models, the workings of a whole cross-section of urban society. It is the man or woman of his or her word who is thoughtful. How thoughtful Ernesto Guevara became when, saying "I am a soldier of America!" he left medical school to hitchhike the length of the continent, earning his food by doing manual labor on plantations in Argentina, spending nights in ranchhand shacks in Chile, in Indian hamlets in Peru, in miner's shanties in Ecuador, in jails in Colombia, in leper colonies in Venezuelan Amazonia!

Singular and Secret Word

To say "I" is to disconnect oneself from the others, the crowd, the company, the system. It is to disconnect oneself from their past and from their future. "For my part, I think ..." "Here is what I am going to do ..." Throughout our lives, something in us understands that certain ways of action, certain ways of speaking, certain ways of feeling are just not ours. It may well not come from a sense of the continuity of our lives; it may instead come from the sense of youth, the newness of our lives. To sense one's youth is to sense all that one has to do that is not found in the role models of adult society nor of youth culture, not found in what can be learned by lesson and paradigms. The runaway youth, dropped out of school, hitchhiking, refusing to anesthetize the poet in himself and become a notary, understands the imperative urgency of *what **I** have to* do and *what **I** have to say*.

Because the utterance "I" is a commitment, it is also the power to disconnect oneself from a past experience, undertaking, or commitment. "I didn't see what was going on." "I was drunk." "Oh I was so much older then. I'm younger than that now." And it is also the power to disconnect oneself from one's own future. "I shall not answer or even read the critics of my book." "I will leave college next week, and have no idea what I will do next."

To say "I" is to disconnect oneself from the others, and from discourse with others. "Now I see," I say in the middle of a discussion, and I may stay in the discussion to argue for what I see and try to affect the subsequent movement of their thoughts and decision. But more likely the main effect of my insight will be to determine the line of my thoughts and decisions after I leave the

others. My word of honor does not get its meaning from a dialectic and its use is not primarily in a language game with others.[2] In fact the one who goes around saying to everyone "I'm going to be a dancer" is seeking their permission and support, and there is cause to suspect that he has not really or not yet fixed these words on his heart. There are those who have never told anyone, and who are driven by their secret intoxication with this word. Secrecy sets this word apart from the profane common talk; it sacralizes it. Secrecy also maintains for oneself a space for giving free play to doubts, second thoughts about what one has said to oneself, as well as giving free play to fantasy about it.

The walls of secrecy fragment our social identity. The one who has said in his heart "I am a dancer" will not be the same person among his fellow pre-law students in the university, before his parents, when seeking private lessons from a renowned teacher, when playing football with cousins at the family reunion. The secrecy of the words can function to preserve affable and nonconfrontational relations with others who have different commitments and those who have different plans for oneself. To say "I am a dancer" is not to impose upon oneself a molar or molecular unity. In my heart I am a dancer; but the whole of what I am is a singular compound of fragmentary systems of knowledge, incomplete stocks of information and discontinuous paradigms, disjointed fantasy fields, personal repetition cycles, and intermittent rituals. Inner walls of secrecy maintain a space where quite discontinuous, noncoordinated, non-communicating, psychic systems can coexist.

How do I understand that I came to believe that I am a dancer, am destined to be a dancer? How do I explain it out of the chains of information I acquired about the social environment about me, the successive role models that I fixed in memory, the fantasies of my childhood, the resentments and rebellions I accumulated against my parents, the ways I came to disdain pragmatic judgments and occupations? But I may wish to maintain a nonconfrontational coexistence of different sectors of myself. I may value an affable relationship with the Dionysian demon within myself. I may not want to penetrate behind those walls about my dancer destiny; I may choose to be astonished at the primal dancing drives contained within me. Let this word "dancer!" be separated and secret – sacred. I may want the enigmas and want the discomfiture within myself.

To Honor Another's Word

The word of honor one puts on oneself is not a term of a dialectic; it is not a response to a question or a demand another puts to one, and it is a word not essentially addressed to anyone outside. Yet the "I" of "I am a man," "For my part, I think ..." makes itself understood.

When they hear me say "I say, I tell you ..." they turn to an instance that will answer for what is being said, that can and would answer the questions and objections they put to it. The power to fix a word in oneself, to fix oneself with a word makes one responsible, able to answer for one's word, able to answer for what one says and does. It is what makes one also able to make promises, to undertake commitments to another.

"I will be right over ..." I say to a friend in distress, putting forth my resources and my loyalty in that word "I." "I will take care of your mother ..." "I am going with you on the search ..." "I am

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[2] "*How best to promise.* When a promise is made, it is not the words that are said which constitute the promise but what remains unspoken behind the words that are said. Indeed, the words even weaken the promise, in as much as they discharge and use up strength which is a part of the strength which makes the promise. Therefore extend your hand and lay your finger on your lips – thus will you take the surest vows." Nietzsche, F. *Daybreak*, trans, R.J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 350.

your lover and I say ..." Whenever I say "Here I am," I expose my body, put it at risk, give it to others, sacrifice that body.

How the words of the interlocutor go to the heart of the speaker! How "Hey man!" "Hey buddy!" cut through the image and role I had been holding up! I may well sense immediately that the one who stands before me and addresses me has a mistaken idea of what I am and what I have done, but how his word "you" touches the real me to arise behind that mistaken idea!

I address, in the human body before me, someone who says within himself "For my part, I think ..." "What I see is ..." This someone is not an *alter ego*, is not simply another mental being like I am that is capable of viewing things and situations and reporting on them in statements. "You" are for me a power that can deny, refuse and can assent, confirm, consecrate. The you I address is an instance that addresses the me who says "Let me tell you ..." questions the me who says "I will go" makes demands on the dancer I say I am, contests the youth I say I still am, puts me and my situation in the midst of the common world in question. The response I make to someone as *you* I address to him or her for his or her judgment.

The one I address disconnects himself from the view I have of him and the image I have constructed of him, and from the interpretation I have elaborated of what he said. The one I address also disconnects himself from my past encounters with him. "Yes, I did say I would clear up the place before the social worker got here. So what?" "I am no longer the suburban housewife you knew." He also disconnects himself from his own future. "The troops are already shelling the village and you say they are going to level it? Well, I am a doctor and I am staying right here to tend to the dying."

Our eyes are not turned to and held by a man or woman of honor only in order to call upon him, question her, and make demands on him. Our eyes are turned to and held by him and her to honor him and her. To turn to the one who says "For my part, I think ..." is to honor the one who is as good as her word. The attention paid to the one who says, "I am a dancer" is an honor paid to him. That is why it is with words that one dishonors someone.

The one I address can also disconnect himself from his "I" from his "I think ..." "I am telling you ..." as I can, when speaking with him, likewise disconnect myself from what I am saying and from the "I" that is saying "I think ..." "I am going to ..." My interlocutor can be insincere, as I can, can dissimulate, can lie. It is the one who stands in his words when he says "Let me tell you ..." that I will answer when he questions the me who says "I will go"; it is the one who is a dancer whose demands on the dancer I say I am that I will recognize; it is the one who has never sold out – Che Guevara at 40, Nelson Mandela at 80 – and who contests the youth I say I still am that I recognize I have to answer.

A man or woman of honor will not tolerate insult; he or she will stand with his or her body, his or her life against one who impugns his or her honor. It is with her body on the dance floor that the dancer will answer the sneers of critics. It is with his body in the rioting slums, and not with arguments in the clubs and salons, that the doctor answers the insults of racists. But she and he disdain to answer those who do not stand in their words.

Servile Self-Consciousness

"Here I am." "I am dancer." "I saw, I heard, I did.": here the I arises, with its strengths, takes a stand. Its word of honor, become instinctual, is a password which opens a path and a destiny extending to remote distances ahead. It is the most unself-conscious of utterances.

Self-consciousness is depicted as an inner mirror upon which the processes of the mind are reflected. But that is only a metaphor. In fact one becomes self-conscious with words, by carrying on an inner dialogue: I am bored with this lecture, I am going to try to make a good impression, I am hungry, This traffic is getting on my nerves, I really feel stressed out, I really should not be watching this television trash, I wish I could start studying and pass the exam. The language of self-consciousness is a language of intentions, appetites, and volitions. It is not an observation of something else behind all that, which would be one's "self." Instead, it reports intentions, appetites, discomforts, volitions, and boredom and ascribes them to the "I." This "I" is something quite different from the "I" that arises as a power to determine the future, the "I" that is a word of honor.

It is only the "worst and most superficial part of ourselves," Friedrich Nietzsche said, that could be formulated in the language of self-consciousness.[3] Self-consciousness is the inner dialogue with oneself about one's needs and wants that formulate the self as a bundle of needs and wants. It only concerns what is intermittent and superficial in oneself.

This inner dialogue is not formulated, however, in a private language. How is it that one's own intentions, appetites, and volitions are articulated in words, general terms, which others can understand?[4]

As infants we needed no words for our romping animal energies and exuberances, accompanied with cries and laughter. The words we had to learn were words for our needs, our hungers, and our discomforts – words others could understand. We learned to formulate our own needs, hungers, and discomforts in the general words of public language, so that others could understand them and attend to our needs and wants. It was the original form of self-consciousness. Self-consciousness formulates our life for ourselves as needy and dependent.

And the one who engages in this language ends by making his words true. In expressing oneself as a bundle of needs and cravings an individual makes himself common, and dependent, parasitical. One lives to acquire commodities, with which to nourish, refurbish, and protect oneself, and to fill up the space and the time. One feels threatened by all that is ephemeral, transitory, fragmentary, cryptic, all that eludes the rapacious nets of common reason and utility.

And the others do understand and want to hear about our needs and lacks. Our needs and wants are apprehended by the others as appeals to themselves, expressions of dependence on them, declarations of subservience, invitations to subjugation. "You're bored? You're tired. Then come up to bed," says the mother, looking forward to an uninterrupted movie on television. It is through our needs and lacks that we appeal to the will in the others – the will to power in the others, the will to dominate. "You want to get out of the house – you want a motorcycle? Then go get a job."

Their words of blame isolate an action or an omission, which they identify to be voluntary: You could have done otherwise. Blame singles out our carelessness, our lack of deliberation, our impulsiveness, our thick-headedness. It assumes that we had a reason to act otherwise – a reason available in the discourse of the community, which we had already made a reason for ourselves.

Self-consciousness is a consciousness turned back from the world to what is needy and wanting in oneself; it is critical and guilty. Despite Socrates and his slogan "An unexamined life is not worth living", despite Kierkegaard replacing love with the unending examination of the intentions involved and motives for love, we do not admire and do not trust actions that issue from a critical and guilty self-consciousness. We do not trust our children, or even her own, to a mother who pursues an interminable psychoanalysis of her conscious and unconscious motives. It is that woman with the big heart, the farm woman beaming over calves, piglets, chicks, the aging

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[3] Nietzsche, F. *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage, 1974, 354.
[4] *Ibid*.

prostitute longing for nothing more than to give tenderness and love, the woman in the old folk's home watching the children play in the park across the street and caring for her old cat, that we trust.

Believing One's Own Word

The word one implants in oneself – "I am a dancer", "I am an adventurer" – is not put there by critical self-consciousness. Is it implanted by pure force of will? Is the content of the term "I" prescriptive rather than descriptive?

One will not become a dancer unless one says "I am a dancer"; one will not become an adventurer unless one says "I am a adventurer." But one will not become a dancer or an adventurer unless one believes what one says in one's heart. By an act of will one may want to be a dancer; but one does not by an act of will make oneself believe that one is a dancer.

Is not belief in oneself one of those states that cannot be brought about intentionally or willfully? I can make myself eat with an act of will, Leslie Farber pointed out, but cannot with an act of will make myself hungry; I can make myself go to bed, but cannot make myself sleepy; can willfully bring about self-assertion or bravado, but not courage; meekness, but not humility; envy, but not lust; commiseration, but not sympathy; congratulations, but not admiration; reading, but not understanding; knowledge, but not wisdom. One cannot by an act of will make oneself be amused; one cannot make oneself laugh by tickling oneself.

To believe something is to believe that one is compelled to hold that belief because there is evidence that it is true. And the word of honor that one fixes on oneself that makes one thoughtful also makes one insightful. In uttering "I" I make myself present – present to things and events where and as they are. To say "I," to say "Here I am" is to see lucidly where and what here is; to say "Now I see ..." is to see something in the clear light that illuminates what it really is; to say "I am a dancer" is to know what dance is, is to know dance taking possession of oneself and activating one's nervous circuitry and musculature with its own rigorous dynamics.

Deluding Oneself

It is because she said I am a dancer, and believed it, that she could become a dancer. Can she be deluded? Can she even be lying to herself?

Doubt depends on an experience of the reliable, the credible, and in order to really doubt one needs reasons to doubt. If doubt arises, it is because I find reasons and evidence for those reasons to think that I cannot be a dancer. Out of fear of the truth, one can hold back from looking for those reasons and that evidence. Later, one says one was deluding oneself.

One does not really knowingly mislead oneself. That is, one does not make oneself believe what one also believes there are no adequate grounds for believing. What is possible is that one may lack evidence, and lack the ability to evaluate the evidence. What could count as decisive evidence that I will never be a dancer? One can fail to draw the logical conclusion from one's own beliefs. One can, selectively scan the evidence, selectively weight it, evaluate new pieces of evidence separately rather than cumulatively, and fail to take in negative evidence.

Yet do we not honor the word of honor of someone who lives by his word, though totally deluded? It is not only historians, who work to recuperate the honor of all the losers of history – Brutus and Moctezoma, Gandhi and Ché Guevara. It is also the victors themselves, who do not

desecrate but bury in military graves their fallen enemies and receive with full military honors the officers who, their cause lost, come to surrender.

In reality there is no honor in delusion. One will not be able to continue, having one day recognized that one has no talent, that one is not a dancer, that one has been dishonest with oneself. One will not be able to continue, having one day recognized that the leader or the party for which one has been fighting is corrupt and that its slogans and program merely deceitful propaganda. If one continues to fight a cause one knows is lost, one does so to demonstrate to oneself and to one's comrades and to those as yet unborn that the cause that is winning is ignoble.

Chapter XV
Ordained by the Master's Hand

Vytautas Rubavicius

Humans duties are simple to describe; at first sight, they are: work, raising and educating your children and, powers permitting, to try and know oneself and the world around one and to find the meaning of the life granted to us by our Lord. At the very outset of our search for the meaning of life we began imposing demands onto ourselves. We generate that meaning in our stride, permanently; not just passively comprehending, but also actively generating it. Comprehending forces us to keep inventing and this creative potential grows into a self-imposed mission, which it is not entirely appropriate to reveal publicly. An artist is always a creator, but also an individual who has been blessed with creative potential, occasionally to the extent that fulfillment of the potential power turns to be the only responsibility for which the artist is accountable not to his fellow beings but to the Almighty God. Yet the ultimate goal of creativity is to serve people.

The question is: what kind of worldly productivity should this be; is it related through duty to the highest spheres which in their turn reign over our daily life; and also is the burden of creativity's responsibility being fully conceived. This latter point nowadays is hardly ever touched upon in discussions. Particularly, because the individual, the artist and/or the thinker feels liberated from tradition and considers social background and all binding duties or similar ties as limiting creative productivity. Jean Baudrillard ironically admits that we feel – being in confusion as if after an orgy – that everything has been unleashed: politics, consciousness, women, children, industrial power, consumption, art, rationality; now we remain capable only of simulating orgy and freedom. One can simulate creativity as well, posing in the role of an artist or a creator, while divorcing oneself from the responsibilities that are vital to artistic creativity, particularly, from the duty to observe some value hierarchy and to support or strive for truth and liberty.

After the completion of liberation truth is not really crucial, nor is freedom or the Higher truth. But this sort of liberation may easily be understood as a substitute for the demanding and compelling freedom that does not play or simulate life, but tries to provide the core meaning and shape the existential space for an individual. Present liberation is a freedom to promote oneself, a freedom to be bought. It would be a mistake to cast any doubts on the necessity and value of this sort of freedom for the community. However, this freedom also requires a self-creating meaningful basis, at least for the mere reason of avoiding glorification of the act of buying and selling. This could define the principles of "creativity" and its essence, and, through this, the artist's social functions.

Within the last few decades huge cultural shifts have taken place: the world started getting "westernized" very rapidly. (However, it does not seem that it will ever be entirely "westernized"). The style of international mass culture is being enforced and the ways and standards of the cultural industry bond the states much more firmly than the web of wild capital, highlighting one universally acknowledged purpose, i.e. that of financial interest. After the collapse of the Soviet empire, having just recovered from hard labor in the socialist camp, we are in the field of this new binding force. The most powerful at the moment is the stream of commercialized culture and the values and standards emerging from this state which sweeps all before it. Yet, the world of Western culture that we usually refer to as postmodern is not as homogenous as may appear on the surface of commercialized culture.

Meanwhile, one thing is obvious, i.e. culture becomes commercialized very quickly. Commercial success very often serves as the impetus for creativity. This is especially true for such a very expensive and luxurious area of creative expression as architecture. However, commercial success in itself is not to be disdained, especially when it facilitates the implementation of the artistic drives that could otherwise be defined as the artist's mission. So what are the features of the present situation and its controversies when the artist more intensely than ever before is faced with the problems of the existential meaning and the duties of his or her own creative life?

Jean-Francois Lyotard holds that the essence of postmodern condition is the fact that traditional standards have crumbled, as well as the value orientations. The great narratives of human life and the power of authorities that provided a framework for human life have expired. He maintains that this offers unprecedented possibilities for freedom and creativity in all spheres of life and culture. However, disruption of traditional values and social ties make human contacts inevitably superficial, short-lived, non-committal, devoid of essence. This does not allow for the personality to mature and the individual fails to create a stable identify. Daniel Bell, in the 80s, forewarned that the traditional bourgeois value depreciation will inevitably threaten the basis of communal stability. As a compensatory measure he recommended religious education. Yet, many contemporary artists and thinkers treat present fragmentation of the society and culture, and the flow of unpredictable transformations as a liberation from totalitarian theories and ideologies which is bound to become universal once religious "fundamentalism" capitulates.

However, what is most important is that an individual is liberated from oneself since there is no stability in the "l" structure. The individual presides ones a constant state of change called forth by the social situation, the momentary context and financial forces. An individual is a twofold function of the situational context and the pleasure principle. Baudrillard attempts to prove that postmodern society is postindustrial with newly acquired possibilities to multiply without discretion both objects and images. These possibilities turn traditional capitalist society into the hyper-real where the difference between real and non-real is blurred by the endless flow of signs and simulations. Everything is a talk-show, everything is short-lived; one can take a close-up of anything and demonstrate everything. The main thing is to produce an impression since there is no time allotted for feelings, sympathy, love and creation; all these activities are too time-consuming.

An individual traditionally is bought up on the "images" of being functional in a particular culture. When philosophers make predictions that the "human being" is bound to die then the concept of the individual sooner or later is bound to undergo alterations. Liberal humanity though supported by the protestant ethics, gradually constructed the image of the non-religious individual. While later, devoid of transcendental backing, this image crumbled. When the cultural image starts decomposing, together with the educational system built on it, the individual "I" that was fostered or cultivated within that context deteriorates as well. Postmodern culture is of the opinion that the "I" is only an illusion, a grammatical category, a side-product of discourse. Therefore it becomes problematic to talk about moral and social orientations since they are disconnected from a "stable" individuality. Truth and responsibility become the issues of consensus which consensus rests mainly on the situation. Since the situation is changing the subjects in the situation, agreements to hold to something or to adhere to the same thing lose their binding force. Thus, creation becomes an act of momentum: a commodity or a choice. The moment allows for depiction of both angels and scenes of violence. Commercially it is best when these extremities are blended into a whole. Then the individual is incapacitated from making a volatile decision and consciousness is free to enact the most secret dreams. Many contemporary artists and thinkers in their attempt to liberate and describe the sphere of subconsciousness have devalued consciousness entirely. An individual

is not a bearer of "mind", but a blend of language, desire and the sub-consciousness that emerges through a non-personal grammar, since neither the language nor desire (powers of nature), nor the subconscious are subjective or individual matters.

Humanitarian disciplines in their attempt to gain scientific objectivity, without a conscious pursuit of their purpose, have encouraged the deteriorations of the "human" image since they seek the essence of a human being outside of human consciousness. When addressing the sub-consciousness, subjectivity was replaced by the objectivity of subconsciousness. This empowers commercial mass-culture through the production of images that address the universal subconsciousness, especially of that part of the people whose consciousness is not cultivated. This could be discussed further, yet, I would like to emphasize here that an individual always has a possibility to choose, always has a possibility to argue with the culturally established stereotype of a "human" being. The very postmodern condition with all the fragmentation of the individual, leveling of cultures, disintegration of traditional values and the commodification of culture emphasizes the existential drama of the artist's dilemma, i.e.: am I powerful and liberated enough to make myself into a responsible person, with clear vision of the mission of art to enforce universally meaningful values and ideals. This enforcement is understandably sought not through enslaving other people and subjugating their freedom. Formerly there was a need to liberate oneself from forcefully imposed values, from pressing and enslaving social bonds, and presently from – valueless, desanctified, and dehumanizing tendencies. At the same time there is a need to resist the lure of an enchanting cocktail of irony and deceptively attractive evil. In both cases the choice leads to a path of responsible obligation in creation.

In what instances does the artist bear responsibility? When the artist is asserting something with his work, maintaining something or when he expresses his position he is responsible for the essence of his work. When the artist becomes an executive the responsibility lies mainly with the technological processes. Yet, this is not an existential responsibility for the overall situation, nor encouragement of spirituality, preservation of nature, or the possibility of creating a human dwelling place as a clearing and *Lichtung of being*. Hard as it is to define this sort of responsibility still it is different from the responsibility, say, for the quality of a production, for the success of advertising or of a presentation. If still we consider artistic creativity that it is only to the extent that it may express existential liability and vitally impact the power and responsibilities of an individual. How does the function of the architect come in here?

Human life is so interrelated with architecture that an individual can hardly comprehend the extent to which the built environment shapes his outer and inner life since the closest things are scarcely felt or contemplated separately from ourselves. This closeness is well grasped in Lithuanian. Existence /*butis* lith./ and residence /*busta*s lith./ is essentially the same in their lexical definitions indicating that the language has its own means of defining human existence through one's dwelling. We live in a place that, according to Martin Heidegger, connects earth and heaven, gods and mortals. This place is a visible form of life, the shape of a space where a human being feels secure, where there is a bond between the births and deaths of your kin.

An individual builds a Dwelling and the architect is the guru to consult on what type of dwelling they need, what space is best for the human abode. Thus an architect is the primary caretaker of human life. A human being lives in the structures imposed by the architect be it palaces or prisons. The problem here is that an individual needs to live in a suitable dwelling place. An architect may create a milieu that elevates the individual, making his spiritual life more intense and also enhances the ties with the neighborhood, making the dwelling place more meaningful. But also an architect can create only on the assumption that he is expressing himself, then the

people and their lives are adjusted to the existing environment and they are turned into multi-purpose functional entities. It is not the dwelling for the individual, but the individual for the imposed structure. Another extremity is possible too when the architect is concerned only with the requirements of the client and indulges the client's taste. This in itself helps to imprison the individual in his or her personal near-sightedness.

The architect, as any other artist, educates himself or herself through adherence to some established authorities and set examples. The authorities not only serve for training professional skills, but also help to realize the existential mission of the architecture. All the major constructions of the great masters speak of this mission. The greatest architects of XX century, from "intuitivists" and to "technologists", all speak about human space and the mission of the architecture. One famous architect and philosopher, Frank Lloyd Wright, who provided the basic principles for modern architecture, also responded to the postmodern architectural striving that fuses phenomena of different cultures, thereby affirming human spirituality and the existential meaning of architecture. In his works this master attempted to bind the Western and Eastern (Japanese) traditions of space conceptions. He contemplated the relations between individual and mass production and wanted to foresee the human fate. Envisaging the threat created by the machines for the living space, in his works he attempted to promote humanized forms for an individual (and civilization) that would allow a human being to escape the bias of "dire artificiality" and rediscover one's natural basis.

To be able to supply appropriate shape or spatial structure for the dwelling space the architecture must be alive and harmonious. The architect's duty is connected with the harmonious results of the architect's activities and to how it responds to the existential needs of the individual. Machines and technologies are mere tools; it is impossible to apply mechanical or functional images to a human being and in accordance with that to shape his environment. Scientific inventions should be applied appropriately to facilitate further spread of life but not to squeeze it into a framework drafted arbitrarily. However, the distinctive feature of our civilization is that the machines, technology turn the individual into a supplement of the overall technological processes, and this trend also captures artists.

Wright emphasized: "Architecture must be intrinsic to Time, Place and Man" with insistence on the existential aspect of architecture. In a very poetic form (poetic expression here becomes a form of philosophical forbearance) Wright speaks about the stone structures in his native land. The structures protect an individual that stands firmly on his land because this is the very individual that will be constructing a home for himself. The description of masonry, correlations between nature and buildings breathe energy that recalls Heidegger's descriptions and reflections on his native land. This comparison of a philosopher to an architect should not strike one as odd because they both were concerned with human existence and with the ways the individual finds one's place in the world. Wright, in ingeniously using technological novelties, was supporting his argument not by invention or inventiveness, but by the nature and sanctity hidden in it. On the assumption that there are no profane things in nature he insisted on the sanctity being expressed through the structured forms of architectural design and thus reinforcing the effectiveness of sanctity.

The feeling and features of sanctity have almost entirely disappeared from the contemporary Lithuanian architecture, through I do not mean to mention here the churches constructed or still in construction throughout recent period. Architects as any other masters of their craft used to be ordained into their guild. The act or ritual meant that they were aware of the significance of their mission and would act on it. Architects help to construct the world. Now the ceremony, probably, is performed in the solitude of one's own soul when the harmony of the world and the duty to it

become lucid for a moment. The buildings speak to people in all clarity of whether the creator is a mere executor of the someone's orders or is the bearer of the intimate image of *La Sagrada Familia* in his or her heart of hearts. All, I am sure, would like to dwell in the dwelling place crafted by the ordained master's hands.

Chapter XVI

The Concept "Information Society": Counterfactuality, Ideology and Public Discourse

Marius Povilas Saulauskas

Today, it seems that theories of social change, at lease those most recognized and abundantly discussed, especially in unprofessional public discourses, dwell on the presupposion of the information society as a real phenomenon and its unmatched importance. Here consciously or not, two things of methodological importance are carried out. Firstly, an ontological assumption of some special social entity, i.e., of the existence of unprecedented information society, which exists in status nascendi. Following the famous herald of the present revolutionary changes Manuel Castells, one would insist even more resolutely that we have encountered not the reality of a loosely defined information society, but that of a highly idiosyncratic informational society (Castells 1996; 1997; 1998). Second, following the logic of a hundred-year-old social philosophy and eo ipso theoretical thematization of social change, the understanding of "information society" as a fundamental social term is also volens nolens moulded by axiological (first of all ideological) assumptions. These are enacted in multifarious "information society" discourses, ranging from highly professionalized metaphysics and science of journalism and politics. Thereby this existential presumption is articulated also in terms of mainstream (modern) ideological discourse and thus turns into a fundamental existential-axiological attitude.

The "soft" and the "hard" forms of such existential axiological presupposition should be distinguished (Saulauskas 2002). They correspond to the distinction between the de jure and de facto information society theses introduced by Alistair Duff (Duff 2000) from the point of view of modus of existence only. The former would claim "only" the hitherto unseen, but comparatively continuous processes of information of the whole fabric of social

Habitat; the latter would proclaim a qualitatively novel social condition, a new era, historical period, particular social formation, etc. Both the soft and the hard version assume a process of radical and unique transformations and/or their prediction, only the intended range of changes and the level of the accomplished or possible progress are different.

However, not a single noteworthy theory, already articulated in academic discourse and based on this existential-axiological presumption, proves flawlessly either the reality of such progress or the good or evil of its results. Moreover, the most academically valuable sections of information society discourse consist mostly not only of attempts to prove the correctness of some version, but also the slashing criticism of such attempts. The polemic zest is only heightened by the fact that many concepts that are trying either to prove the hard presumption of the existence of the information society or just accept it uncritically do not succeed in escaping from sheer pomosophic (post-modern-philosophy) pessimism (Schiller 1973; Roszak 1986; Sardar 1996) and utopianism (Illich 1971; Masuda 1980; Toffler 1980; Naisbitt 1982). Thus the superstitious and dreamy spell of Homo informaticus has long since become the dominating force in both the academic discourse and mass culture (Saulauskas 1999; 2000).

Counterfactual Definition of Information Society

As to the ontological underpinnings of new, informationized social habitat, I do believe it could be satisfactorality defined in strictly counterfactual terms. In my opinion, the information society should be linked not with information (and even less with knowledge, news or otherwise knowledgeable insights), but only with the digital-communicational implication of social interaction. Telematics inexorably penetrates the fabric of the social habitat becoming a constitutive component of social life. This means that a society, where four fifths of all the work force are involved in stamping chips or assembling personal computers, but which does not have a free circulation of information and where personal telematics equipment is not available for some reason (for instance, political or religious), should by no means be considered as an embodiment of the information society, although it satisfies the conditions of the employment structure characteristic of the information social habitat as indicated by Machlup-Porat. On the contrary, a society, where four out of five jobs produce butter and crisps, but heavily practice digital networking as their everyday mode of life, is an unquestionable example of the genuine information society. Or a society, where all adults have PhDs, are employed in services and possess all human rights, including the right to a free exchange of information, but for some (let us say religious or cultural) reasons do not use telematic technologies, does not live yet in the epoch of informationized social habitat. Yet a society, where not a single member has secondary education, but almost everyone spends a large amount of their work and leisure time in the digital network, could, perhaps, be considered as a full-fledged member of the information age.

It is clear from this, that a form of social habitat based on digital-communicational social interaction is a necessary constituent of the concept of an information society. This means that the information society should be considered as a configuration resulting from the fundamental transformation of social, and not technological structures of social habitat. If so, then it is impossible to define such a society only by quantitative sociometric methods: not only because the results obtained in this way do not themselves say that they really mean, but also because it is ex definition impossible to quantitatively calculate the complicated hierarchical systems of values, i.e., to unveil basic axiological structures of any social habitat. A society becomes an information society if, and only if, telematic technologies become a decisive constituting component of daily interaction. An information society is that variety of social habitat, which – in general, morphological and functional terms – is determined by the social implementation and working of digital communicational technologies. That is, it is not just the existence of such telematic technologies into the economic, cultural, political and stratificational fabric of the social habitat.

Consequently, in general, an adequate criterion for an information society cannot be only sociometric, based on quantitative criteria – it should be at least also or even only qualitative. Furthermore, it should take into account a counterfactual dimension as its last resort: we will live in an information society not when there will be fifteen personal computers in each house, connected into a perfectly functioning global network, but only when a significant decrease in telematic interactions or a massive disorder in their functioning would trigger the inevitable collapse of the actual odder of the social habitat. Thus the necessary criterion for the existence of an information society can be only formulated in qualitative and/or counterfactual terms by proving that telematic penetration already acquired the social status of conditio sine qua non such that if it suddenly stopped functioning properly it would necessarily and radically destroy the current configuration of the social habitat and/or cause its essential conversion.

Quantitatively, and even more so normative arguments, to prove such an importance of telematic technologies are too weak. Due to the lack of empirical evidence, they cannot be satisfactory without (a) the ontological concept of informationization and by the same token of the

information society, (b) a counterfactual grounding of the critical degree of informationization making such a society possible and, finally, (c) a precise theoretical and empirical specification of both the info-social habitat itself and its inevitable collapse.

Thus an adequate concept of an information society should be qualitative, that is ontological, based on counterfactual criterion. It cannot be only quantitative, based on sociometrics and/or just normative, most often ideological, as inter alia is clearly shown in the criteriological typology suggested by Duff (Saulauskas 2002). Only such a qualitative conception could serve as a foundation for the necessary, though perhaps not sufficient legitimation for information society studies molded along Aristotelian lines, studies based on the existing specific realm of being posited as subject for an idiosyncratic scientific research.

Considering the fundamental nature of such theoretical derivatives as social habitat, information society, collapse, etc., there depend upon the most general methodological presuppositions which therefore necessarily are based more or less on ideological assumptions. Hence, it must be presumed that there is no, and cannot be any, general concept of an information society. By the same token there can be no "basic" theory of an information society grounded on such a concept unanimously accepted in the academic human and/or social science discourse – at least until it itself continues to enjoy a mature condition filled with sharp controversies. Thus, due to the ex definitio controversial nature of qualitative formulations, information society studies will also remain not only multi- and interdisciplinary, but also methodologically heterogeneous. At the very center of this new field of study the question of the preconditions, possibilities and perspective of an information society's existence will continue to hover. The old methodological wineskins, sewed in socio-theological discourse and already tested by time, perhaps, will not be essentially changed at all: the conceptual scaffolds, controversially articulating the nature of social structure and change will have only to continue patiently to hear the fermentation of new info-studies; the numbing inertia of the over-institutionalized academic discourse cannot yet overcome, thank God, the vivid plethora of the ever changing social habitat, its real as well as virtual challenges, daring essays and promises (Saulauskas 2000).

Infor-Pessimism and Info-Utopias: Character and Origins

The beginnings of technological pessimism are altogether found in the famous manifesto by Rousseau, *Discours sur les Sciences et les Arts*, which in 1750 proclaimed the inevitably malign nature of science and technology. Contemporary argumentation for info-pessimism has not changed a great deal: it is still based on romantic idealization of the past, conservative fear of any slightly more daring innovation, moral weakness of human nature branded so painfully by experience, and pessimistic evaluation of the hazardous potential of social engineering. Authors living in modern welfare states often ground info-pessimism by combining the analytical principles of the Marxist Frankfurt School targeting the exposure of prevailing interests with the assumptions of leftist sociology of control. This overemphasises what we could all, following Jack Gibbs, "trichotomy of control," that is, a modus of state administration, system of education and mass communication (Gibbs 1989, 436-438). Thus, the info-pessimist point of view sees the triumphant Information Revolution as a fierce promise of further concentration of capitalist evil necessarily embracing economic, political and social, as well as educational layers of social life (Robins 1999).

On the other hand, contemporary info-utopias are cemented by an uncritical reception of technological utopianism promoted by the Enlightenment. Here, we can presume: (a) that

innovations, technologies and machines are altogether a virtually sufficient condition for social eudaimonia; (b) that the fundamental institutions of the good social order, including normative assumptions, should be defined by technological innovations and their right application; (c) that, as delineated already by the Enlightenment, the proper development of humankind is defined by the inexorable march of progress, sketched out by the development of technologies, etc. (Segal 1986).

A typical expression of info-pessimism is Ziauddin Sardar's attitude, which sees the telematic (or informational-communicational) medium as a new, especially powerful and, by the same token, too dangerous form of colonization as if "particularly geared towards the erasure of all non-Western histories. Once a culture has been 'stored' and 'preserved' in digital forms, opened up to anybody who wants to explore it from the comfort of their armchair, then it [the digital form] becomes more real than the real thing," and "hypertext generates hyper individuals: rootless, without a real identity, perpetually looking for the next fix, hoping that the next page on the web will take them to nirvana" (Sardar 1996, 19). Here, we are talking not about the fact that info-technologies are not yet and, perhaps, will never be accessible to everybody and always, that is, not about the obvious lack of equality in global information society, but about the pandemic nightmare of the sneaking "information age."

In its own turn, an especially useful substantiation of info-utopianism are the noisy declarations of John Perry Barlow, although, to tell the truth, they have only radicalized the predictions of Marshall McLuhan – the father of current info-enthusiasts, who like his enigmatic aphorisms as much as they hate his sober-minded argumentation. McLuhan was relentless in declaring the forthcoming argumentation. McLuhan was relentless in declaring the forthcoming death of the state, large business and strong governments. Not accidentally, these insights of McLuhan's are frequently quoted: "if it works, it is obsolete"; "one can stop anywhere after the first few sentences and have the full message, if one is prepared to 'dig' it"; finally , this one, perhaps most of all resounding in the enquiring ear of the incredulous specialists and gullible amateurs – "Heidegger surfs along on the electronic wave as triumphantly as Descartes rode the mechanical wave" (McLuhan, 1962, 248). Barlow's formula is much clearer, although it is nonetheless quoted no less frequently; "we are in the middle of the most transforming technological event since the capture of fire. I used to think that it was just the biggest thing since Gutenberg, but now I think you have to go back farther" (Barlow 1995).

It is not surprising then that the quality of the classic info-enthusiasts' argumentation does not always meet the highest standards. Of course, if the number of those working in the field of new technologies should include, as happens quite often, carpenters producing computer desks, drivers using, say in Belarus, telematic meters for long distance voyages, and even nurses (as was resolutely and fearlessly done by Marc Porat, the follower of Fritz Machlup, who so liked scrupulous accounts (Porat 1977), then not only the information era, but also the "post-information" era predicted by the popular Nicholas Negroponte (Negroponte 1995) will seem like a most vivid reality by now willingly accessible at arm's length.

Moderate Attitude: The Need of Information Society Studies

All the same, the discourse thematizing the transition of the information society is abundant with much more careful evaluations, cautiously avoiding the radical oratory of utopian enthusiasm and the nostalgic rhetorical of despair. A good example of the most moderate version of the existential presuppositions of the information society is the carefully worked through formula

suggested by Wolfgang Hofkirchner: "The emergence of societies centered around national states, and the covering of the earth's surface with communication and information technology networks, may be the material preparation for a leap in quality affecting the highest levels of societal organization, but will not necessarily bring this about" (Hofkirchner 1999). While interpreting the "Information Revolution" as a rational spread of capitalist practice and its intensification, Krishan Kumar points out succinctly that "current changes are seen according to a model derived from (assumed) past changes, and future development are projected following the logic of the model. So just as industrial society replaced agrarian society, the information society is replacing industrial society more or less in the same revolutionary way) (Kumar 1995, 13). In general, the voice of the supporters of moderate attitude is heard much more better in present academic debates, which avoid radical one-sided fortissimos. Perhaps this otherwise hopeful state is caused also by the fact that the information age is being pressed more and more by the newfangled up to date assortment of bio-geno-psycho-para-technologies.

In fact, the results of generously financed and abundant research shows not what was expected: although the information industry and the industry of "higher" technologies have in many ways influenced the growth of the US economy in the last decades of the 20th century, it has not been yet proved, convincingly and unambiguously, that computerization and informization could even slightly improve the general level of welfare or at least raise the efficiency of the economy. Social differentiation and the costs needed to create one workplace are only growing, the predicated economic leap has not happened and so far does not appear to be happening (Chomsky 1996; Mishel 1944). This radical critics' evaluation is confirmed by the famous Solow paradox, namely after the Nobel Prize winner, and professor of economics: "you can see the computer age everywhere these days except in productivity." Moreover, there is abundant research based on statistical data that demonstrates, that in realty during the last decades of the preceding millennium social differentiation, calculated according to the income on the bottom and top deciles, has grown approximately 20% (Garnham 1997, 63). The same applies to the "economic disparities between regions" even in most informationally developed countries (Moss and Townsend 2000). It seems that at least the moment the information society – like all previous societies – meets best the interests of the flourishing minority leaving the unfortunate majority in even more aggravated condition. This proportion is apparent both at the national and international level: the interests of traditional political and economic elites are similar everywhere – to increase the power of their states with regard both to its own citizens and other countries, as well as to raise the business potential and its profits thus building an integrated global market (Kular 1995).

Both Peter Drucker's vision, which attracted much attention but perhaps is still not properly appreciated, and Daniel Bell's concept of the post-industrial "knowledge society" have not yet proved correct. The latter inter alia claimed that universities will replace banks as large holders of capital – besides, it is based not so much on the significance of knowledge, but on the importance of its political management, that is, it follows the all too familiar, barely modified, out-of-date Marxist principle of the primacy of the means of production and not, let us say, the far more subtle and reasonable understanding of economic processes of Joseph Schumpeter.

All the same, the evidence shows rather the contrary. By the end of the 20th century it had become clear that academic institutions are more and more dependent on commissions coming from external capital. This is obvious in Japan and the US, as well as in EU and Lithuania. There are more and more studies demonstrating that the proud homo academicus nowadays experiences and suffers from, following the far reaching phrase of Albert Henry Halsey, "polarization" (Halsey 1992), and not the much desired "elitization." In other words, academic community and

universities are rapidly transforming into more and more obedient, according to celebrated Ostap Bender's (a manipulative character from Soviet fiction) saying, proletarians of mental work, and not into unhampered and sovereign decision makers, enlightened kings of the study info-elites. Without a doubt, here as in every other corner of academic discourse, we have also opposite opinions. In the end, even if the status of the academic community has diminished, it is still higher than, let us say, the position of the wearers of blue and white collars in all the social hierarchies of liberal democratic societies.

So that is the raison d'etre of the constantly repeated and not factually substantiated statements, which turn into mantras persistently declaring the end of the old production era and the beginning of the unseen era of knowledge (in Lithuania – only the era of information and news)? More precisely, why do these statements, which are of modest value from the scientific point of view as well as with regard to common sense, receive so much attention across all hemispheres? Why are they already included in the standard weaponry of political populism and why are dissimilar people, living in such different societies prone to believe them so willingly? Why, let us say, in Lithuania are the miraculous power of information believed not only by those who are at least basically is all about (Saulauskas 2001)? These questions are as important task of information society studies as the critical scrutiny of the above information society itself or a sober enquiry into futurological involutes of impending future.

The need for information society studies could be grosso modo outlined in the following argumentation. First, up till now we do not know, whether there is or ever will be what we could substantially call information, knowledge, network or a netted, etc., society. Second, it is not clear whether to expect – good or bad. Third, we know that despite the first two points, the concept of an information society is becoming a more and more influential factor forming the changing patterns of social habitat, including the local social habitat and global international politics.

This is so because it is already an important structural component of everyday populist folklore as well as of the ideological, literary and academic discourses; and also because huge private and public funds are abundantly allotted for the multifaceted institutionalization of this far from coherent conceptual entity in almost all the fields imaginable – education, business, politics, culture, sports, etc. If so then we should not doubt that the phenomenon of the information society is a worthy subject of study. Even if it does not yet have any loci that could be determined empirically, this does not mean that it will not have them in the ear or far future. Finally, its coming could be evoked also by the obviously powerful self-fulfilling prophesy mechanism, whose effective action and, unfortunately, the unpredictable nature of the repercussions of such action, which we have repeatedly observed so many times. In this sense, the information society is an already empirically recorded form of social habitat – it suffices to start counting words, papers, departments, money and people involved in the whirlpool of the new global information society campaign. Thus, the need for interdisciplinary information society studies, from social informatics to social psychology and art history, is obvious.

Finally, since the information society studies are first of all studies of society and only then of the forms of information and knowledge as they are instituted throughout the complexity of social habitat, it is only natural to expect that social theory will always remain its true spiritus movens. This, however, does not precludes the more loosely defined scope of information society studies, which implicitly gravitate towards philosophical discourse (Duff 2000; 2001).

The Triple Topology of the Information Society Concept and Lithuania

It is not completely clear until now, to whom the authorship of the concept of information society and its derivatives should be ascribed. This is gratefully not the case with the notion and elaborate paradigm of information society studies, whose author is already referred to Duff. However, it seems that more and more authors agree that the first to formulate the social problems in the field of informatization and also of the present information society studies were not Americans, but Japanese. As far back as in 1960 the basic categories of informatization (johoka) and information society (johoka shakai) were registered – the latter belongs to a professor of Kyoto University, Umesao Tadao, and was publicized in 1963 by a popular magazine that launched a discussion on the perspectives of information technology industry (Takagi, 1997). Only quite recently Manuel Castells popularized more widely (Castells, 1996) the term bunshu shakai (segmented society) coined already by Yonouchi Ito, which demonstrates the proliferation mechanisms of information streams. The new media is not treated here any longer as traditional mass media; the latter supplies its audiences with one and the same information, whereas the former operates with information individualized up to its maximum, i.e., specialized for different audience groups (Ito, 1978). The voice of Europe became audible in the discourse on information society much later, at the end of the 1970s (Duff, 2000). However, it acquired here original features and influence – first of all because the development of information communication technologies and the analysis of their social effects have, doubtlessly, become a priority for the European Union: this immediately resulted in the high funding and substantial public attention in EU countries and, although to a lesser extent, throughout the continent.

This topological specificity could be easily demonstrated by comparing concepts used in Japan, USA and Europe. The new world traditionally observes individualistic, liberal, sometimes libertarian and even daring anarchist attitudes – although this does not mean that it lacks concepts, zealously defending the values of American liberalism, that is, of the European tradition of critical social democracy. Hence the fearless of offspring of the bohemian flirt between two proud neighbors – the pragmatic Silicon valley and the romantic sacred grove of dreams, Hollywood: the famous "Californian Ideology" (Barbrook, 2002). The ecstatic spirit of this creature is most precisely revealed in the 1994 manifesto, titled no less pretentiously: "Cyberspace and the American Dream: A Magna Charta for the Knowledge Age," this was signed by four conservatives, following civil concerns: Esther Dyson, George Gilder, George Keyworth and Alvin Toffler. It states not only that "the central event of the 20th century is the overthrow of matter" and the advent of "a Third Wave economy," that is, the information age, as the true savior of all. It speaks also about "the death of the central institutional paradigm of modern life, the bureaucratic organization" and about the fact that "unlike the mass knowledge of the Second Wave – public good knowledge that was useful to everyone because most people's information needs were standardized – Third Wave customized knowledge is by nature a private good." (Dyson, 1994).

The old continent, on the contrary, emphasizes (of course, not unanimously always) the communal, social and therefore guided nature of the informatization processes. Here the most important categories in understanding the information society are social differentiation, digital divide, global computer literacy, e-government programs and, of course, maximizing the penetration of telematic access points, called to realize the most daring desires of egalitarian eudaimonia. For instance, the Lithuanian, in perfect accord with European directives "scientifically grounded" finds approved by the governmental vision of the bright info-future – the National Information Society Development Strategy "Lithuania – a Country of Global Possibilities" (NISD Strategy). It reads as follows: "Development of information technologies has

opened essentially new possibilities of global communication and interaction – it has created the space for world communication without usual time and space restrictions… When the NISD Strategy is successfully implemented, Lithuania will become a full-fledged member of the global informational society (knowledge society), and conditions will be created for every citizen to realize his or her needs by using resources accumulated all over the world" (LRS, 2001). Thus, the famous Bangemann report is repeated almost word for word (Bangemann, 1997).

The official ideological attitude of the European Council is stated in detail, here as in many other successive national and international documents, sometimes supported also by more trustworthy academic accounts. Didactically, they point out that, although information technologies might alleviate the fate of the suffering humanity, they will at first only enlarge intolerable social inequalities. They maintain that uncontrolled technological expansion incipiently contradicts Christian precepts and thus necessarily requires the most careful moral supervision and support from the firm loving hand of the sate (Hamelink, 1986). Thus, in accord with the moral imperatives of the French revolution, the priority not of personal freedom and individual welfare, but of equality and brotherhood is conspicuous not only in the statements of academics and spontaneously formed groupings of intellectuals, but also in strategic projects, tactical documents and colorful visions officially approved by various bureaucratic instances.

Besides, in the beginning of the third millennium, two info-utopian clichés have finally taken root in Lithuania: "Informational society" and "knowledge society" following vigilantly and imitating, though not very skillfully, the fashions propagated by EU bureaucracy.

The spread of the concept of informational (in Lithuanian: informacinis) and not information (informacija) society and news-society could be explained by the simplest, and therefore most viable preparation of our post-Soviet elites. The conception of informational society as opposed to information society was introduced and popularized by Manuel Castells in the last decade of the 20th century. In Europe the completely different – much more loose – concept of information society was and is still in use. The latter by no means emphasizes the syncretic transfigurations of global capitalism such as managemental, urban, military, related to transport, crime control, etc. In contrast, according to Castells' paradigm of informational society the prominence of these phenomena constitute the gist of his informational parlance. In Europe one speaks, and hence, for that matter, it would appropriate to speak in Lithuania, only of the information society, which first of all consists of the rapid development and massive penetration of telematic technologies as well as of the need to democratize and socialize these processes, that is, here information society is concerned with the appropriate growth of new high-tech potential and its accessibility to everybody everywhere and always.

In turn, the category of knowledge society was suggested by the famous new management maestro, Peter Drucker, as far back as the 1960s (Drucker, 1969, 247-355). He claimed that in such a society the business management should change radically its relationships with hired knowledge workers, for they are far less in need of business institutions and even traditional knowledge management than the latter are in need of them. However, in the ideologized tradition of European information society this category has never been and is not interpreted as the quintessence of the new management. It was treated neither in the spirit of Japanese school, that is consistently quantitatively and technically informational. All program documents of the uniting Europe insist not on information per se and its structures as in the johoka shakai school of information flows, which will be discussed shortly, but on human knowledge and, what is especially important, on a special, that is constantly modified – renewed and developed quality of knowledge, more precisely understood as a condition of knowing, not of bits or petabydattes. As

far back as in 1995 the European Union distributed *The White Book*, entitled resonantly *Teaching and Learning: Towards the Learning Society*. It only added to, but did not change, the already existing notions of the information and knowledge society according to the present political conjuncture of affairs. The addendum to knowledge society here was perceived rather specifically – and this understanding served as the basis for many promptly prepared and undertaken programs of informatization – as information society plus lifelong learning. The latter is considered as first of all flexibility and advancement of qualification and as proficiency in three European languages, which should make social mobility possible, when the labor market will be finally liberalized in the coming European Union.

It seems that the only way to avoid not only terminological, but also conceptual confusion is to ask at least the numerous and otherwise proactive Lithuanian linguists to remember that Lithuanian informacinis can also be the equivalent not only to the English word "informational," but also "information"; that zinios can stand not only for information units and news, but also for knowledge and, most importantly, knowing, i.e. for a dynamic plexus of epistemic competences and open readiness to care that for their consolidated promotion (and in case of knowledge society – to do that on an intentionally institutionalized societal footing). Or, much easier and perhaps even better, simply to admit honestly that the semantic potential of political rhetorical and ideological claims are and, perhaps, have to be not of propositional-cognitive, but of performative-ritual in nature. The most numerous, and therefore not at all necessarily more intelligent team, wins as always, and so far none of the rules of human interaction are designed effectively to equalize the number of those playing to take account of the intellectual minority, if at all needed.

We can only comfort ourselves that even the strangest neologisms, when they began their lives, continue to change and become more customary. We were close to using today's tolimatis (for or distance-seer, an equivalent of German Fernseher) not only to call a measuring tool a range-finder, but also, as suggested by the pre-war linguists of Lithuania, television. We are already used to ziniasklaida (news-spread, an equivalent of English mass-media). Thus perhaps we will also get used to ziniu ukis, ziniaukis or ziniaverslas (economy of news, news economy or news business) as an equivalent of the English knowledge economy.

Unlike in Lithuania, official documents of the Japanese government use not rudely imported, but original rhetoric that have that any changes, and especially those of revolutionary scope, demand gigantic concentration, patience and selflessness. Such sober prudence or, more precisely, politically considered cautiousness do not restrict the scale of info-utopian vision: "An advanced information and telecommunications society is a new socio-economic system whereby people can realize free creation, circulation, and sharing of information and knowledge (the products of human intellectual activities) and harmonize daily life, culture, industry, economy, nature and the environment." Its main task is "to make a transition from a post-industrial-revolution economic society, which attached the greatest importance to mass production and mass consumption, to an economic society which is based on the creation and distribution of information – processes made possible by the digital revolution." Besides that, it is stated that Japan has already started this transition: "We are in the midst of a paradigm shift that will create a whole new set of values." (AI&TSPH, 1998). Later documents of 2000 emphasize also that e-Japan should irrecably enter the new era until 2005: catching up with USA, surpassing it, and thus finally becoming the absolute global leader. (This rhetorical is used despite the fact that Japanese economy has been seriously troubled during the last decades).

The Concept of Information Society and Rational Choice Ideology

Despite obvious ideological differences, any country where informatization initiatives of this kind are carried out implicitly or explicitly refers to the principles of rational choice theory. First of all, at the basis of such an action lies the alloy of personal benefit and idealistic values, realized by "calculating" the effects of actions according, on the one hand, to the logic of economic benefit and its acceptability, and on the other hand, according to the logic of public benefit and its correspondence to a accepted deontological norm. Precisely in this way – by underscoring institutionalized and thus generally recognized and accepted values – the effectiveness of one or another public campaign and its possible success is warranted. This means that both the basis of action and the structural components of the principle of choice are mostly determined not by the logic of everyday behavior, based on common sense, but by norms, mediated by the long historical experience of ideology, religion and culture – this is especially clear in the reconstruction of the rational choice model suggested by Zenonas Norkus (Norjus, 2000, 31-32). Therefore, it is not strange that the Japanese informatization campaign has acquired a unique shape – conceptualized by the terms of informatized society (johaka shakai). It emphasizes not the priorities of social equality legitimized by utilitarian thinking of the homo politicus typical to Europe; not the liberal values of an individualized benefit as it often happens in USA; but a normative complex of homo sociologicus and homo economicus not widely accepted in Western culture and thus uniquely combining decontextualized and a-historical duties with the goal of personal welfare. Thereby the Japanese ideology of the segmented society of information flows (bunshu shakai) and the popularity of its principles. Contrary to a European or American, a Japanese repairing cars, raising rice or working as a hospital attendant will not be surprised if called an industrious hand on the information front, constructing straw by straw the upcoming reality of national info-welfare.

After all, the information society per se is not the source of good or evil. Like any other human invention, the global penetration of telematics might become the most zealous maid of both feared oppression and desired freedom. Even the abundant campaigns of the European Union promoting the vociferous vision of a federal info-utopia, serve as a good example for this statement: obviously there is a reason, why they are filled not only with incitements to develop, explore and otherwise support the birth of the information society, but also with a simple word of everyday political rhetorical declaring the, although fragile and patched, yet still irreplaceable values of the liberal democracy.

Thus despite the understandable wish not to pour the young wine of information society studies into old, and therefore until wineskins the warmth of the mature vessels is not only result, but also doubtlessly useful; whatever one might say, it feels good to discover familiar and thus more easily captured notions under the unrestrained rhetorical of info-newspeak.

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Chapter XVII
The Place of Ecological Ethics in Culture

Ceslovas Kalenda

Ecological Problem and Ethics

The questions of ecological problem and the security of the environment are some of the most urgent problems in the present world. The pollution of weather, water and soil, climate changes, the disappearance of bio-species and the destruction of the ozone layer and other similar negative processes cause great anxiety with regard to the preservation of life on our planet and hence the future of the humanity. The decline of the world's ecological situation forces us to take all possible measures in order to stop the slide of civilisation into ecological catastrophe. A report "Factor Four" (1997) of the Club of Rome stresses that the one of the most important moral priorities is to preserve the systems for physically safeguarding humanity.[1]

In recent decades many organisations and institutions were founded which care for the world environment, representatives of various states arrange conferences and public debates, accept and ratify important conventions that oblige them to preserve biological variety, natural resources, and an environment suitable for living. Unfortunately, the ecologic situation does not become better in the world. The technology favourable for the environment is spreading very slowly. The human concern for nature lags behind the achievements of the science and industry. The ecological-anthropological crisis in turn is increasing social and psychic stress, so that, alcoholism and narcomany is spreading, the number of suicides and crimes is increasing, human aggression is rising as are favourable conditions for religious fanaticism and xenophobia. A big part of the humankind regards globalisation with distrust as people are not sure of its positive influence on their lives and environment.

Modern industrial society develops into a post-industrial one, which in another way is called the information society. The human intellect, science, knowledge and creative work are the main impetus of progress, indeed, the essence of this process. Now there is a place for the ecological information, i.e. for the data about the state and quality of nature's environment, in the general torrent of information. However, the information itself does not solve the problem of protecting the environment. Troubled data about the critical state of natural systems do not become at all or only on a very small scale the basis of self-determination stimulated by the self-directed purposeful action. In other words, ecological information does not hold a position in daily consciousness and morals. There is an impression that other problems, and not the most essential things, suppress the factors on which the vitality and the survival of the humanity depend. In other words, the discussion about the ecological crisis becomes in some part banal so that people psychologically adapt themselves to it as to a life standard. This may not be actual passivity, but it is an ecological problem, despite some exaggerations and tendencies to radicalism.

On the other hand, it would be too one-sided and incorrect not to notice positive improvements in the culture. The crisis is not only a negative phenomenon, but a process wherein the contradictions become aggravated and the problems that need solution come to light. Namely, the

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[1] Weizsacker, E, Lovins, A.B., Lovins, L.H. *Factor Four. Doubling Wealth-Halving Resourse Use. The New Report to the Club of Rome.* London: Earthscan Publications LTD, 1997.

ecological problem encouraged looking in a new light at many aspects of human existence and provided some impulse for the restoration and development of such traditional disciplines as ontology and ethics. Philosophers more willingly consider the moral problems, think over the content of humanism and other principles of the worldview, and correct the criteria of moral assessment. Besides, the representatives of other professions, especially scientists, now are more interested in ethics, especially in such categories as fault, conscience, duty and responsibility. In the presence of the ecological crisis, when bio-species are rapidly vanishing and ecosystems are damaged, problems of life and death, war and peace, collaboration and solidarity become extremely important. It has been apprehended that the specie of humankind could vanish as well. Many discussions have concluded that humanity needs a new ethics and a new world order. Taking all that into consideration, it is possible to speak about the beginning of the renewal of the moral world and about a certain renaissance of the philosophy of the morality.

Ethics' actually enhanced the prestige of philosophy itself, as ethics belong to the field of philosophy. According to nature and tradition the ideal of morality, echoing in the contradictory essence of human existence, in the fight between good and evil, and in the weighing of the significance of the individual and collective subjects, is the kernel of philosophy. The problems of ethics are like a drawbridge by which philosophy escapes the walls of academic bastion, keeps in touch with the practical life and reaches more extensive strata of society. Not accidentally, the raising and consideration of the ethical questions in the 20th century acquired new features as theoretical reflection was significantly supplemented by applied research. First of all it was influenced by the social and practical factors that arose with the broadening of modern civilisation, the complication of the life of society, the formation of specific spheres and the development of their importance. In such conditions man is forced to classify and to ground in a new way the moral guides of his activity as it is more often necessary to follow specialised standards in the professional field as well as in other spheres of social life.

The formulating, substantiation and codification of specialised standards is the task of applied ethics. However, the philosophers and specialists in ethics cannot alone resolve this problem. The applied ethical codes "are founded not simply as from scientific and official orations. They must be involved into the spheres of sciences and life by the help of the people who directly come into collision with special problems and who first of all are responsible for the nature and humanity".[2] So if today ethics would properly fulfil its role as regulator of culture, it is necessary to involve as much as possible the members of society and specialists in the discussion and solution of moral problems. Otherwise, the deficiency in the attention to ethics would mean the self-destruction of society.

The Formation of an Ecological Ethics

Ecological ethics as a separate field of research is a 20th century product. Actually, there were ideas and the considerations about the moral meaning of the interaction between the nature and man before, practically during the whole history of humankind. And all that was integrated into philosophical and religious systems. Nature is the environment with which a man inevitably and constantly comes into collision and has to respond to and know in order to live and act. In the interaction between a man and the natural reality of the environment these began to develop the system of the prohibitions (taboos), which had mainly ecological meaning: namely what to hunt and how, what plants and their fruits it is possible to collect and to eat, or to use for the treatment

[2] Pieper, A., Thurnherr, U. (Hrsg.) *Angewandte Ethik: eine Einfuhrung*. Munchen: Beck, 1998, s. 13.

of the wounds and diseases, how to live with kinsfolk and to pass on the experience to one's descendants, and so on. Various rituals and standards of people's relationships and the regulation of their activities, i.e. the so-called normative culture, has developed from the ecological culture, i.e. adaptation to the natural environment. Later almost all ecological culture was integrated into the normative culture.

Today many standards of the natural benefits have social (legitimate, administrative, religious, hygienic and other) character, i.e. mainly they are guided by the social and individual requirements and not by those of nature. The sphere of the material culture, achieving an unprecedented scale of development correlated with the expansion of humanity, has the same reference. Ecological culture has become impoverished; the relationships between the nature and a man have been deformed and changed into a factor that destroys natural reality because of the above-mentioned processes. The rise of ecological ethics was inspired by the reaction of a consciousness that is not indifferent to nature and to the development of humankind. This could be called an historical challenge by the historians, namely, the reaction to the unfavourable ecological situation in the development of civilisation.

The formation of ecological ethics is without doubt a remarkable event in the history of philosophy. Today the importance of this ethics in the system of the ethical disciplines and in the culture of the humanity is on the rise. However this discipline is still rather young and developed on a small scale; its conception and structure has not yet been set. There are different points of view to its content and limits in the literature.

Ecological ethics has developed the ideas of a universal ethics, which had been raised already in the end of the 19th and in the beginning of the 20th centuries. The scientific work of A. Schweitzer, *Culture and Ethic*, appeared in 1923 and drew a strict limit between the ancient traditional European culture and the new one which the author named "the ethics of the great honour to a life".[3] Although it was not an ecological ethics in the present sense of this word, Schweitzer's model of morality (the inclusion of all forms of the living creatures in the sphere of moral regulation, neanthropocentre) doubtlessly supposes such.

The researcher of Schweitzer's manuscript heritage C. Gunzler has published fragments which make clearer a renovation of adhered views to this important sphere of culture:

Die Ethic ist nicht ein Park mit planvoll angelegten und gut unterhaltenen Wegen, sondern eine Wildnis, in der jeder sich, von seinem Pflicht – und Verantwortungsgefuhl angetrieben und geleitet, seinen Pfad suchen und bahnen muss.[4]

Schweitzer supplements the metaphor of a park with another – the metaphor of a cultural space (town):

Die fortgeschrittene Ethik ist nicht mehr eine Stadt, in Walle und Tore eingeschlossen.[5]

Schwetzer's expressive metaphors not only show author's concept of ethics as a rather perfect instance of a rate-fixing of the people' relationships, but stresses his resolution to enlarge considerably the sphere of the moral activity. Schweitzer discusses the differences between the

[3] Schwetzer, A. *Kultur und Ethik. Kulturphilosophie* II. Munchen: Beck, 1923.
[4] Gunzler, C., "Der "Park" und die "Wildnis": Albert Schweitzers Modell des Grenzuberschreitenden Denkens". In *Zeitschrift fur Didaktik der Philosophie*, 1992, no 4, s. 217.
[5] *Ibid.*

ancient ethics and the one projected in a new way on the plane of cultured (*der Park*, *die Stadt*) and wild (*die Wildnis*) nature as though foreseeing future ecological collisions and inviting people to take the initiative to humanise new spheres of life. Actually, Schweitzer treats the broadening of the ethical space as a process stimulated by inner necessity, the content of which consists of giving sense to the actual discoveries (natural science) in the context of the spiritual science, trying to answer the question who is a man and where does he go, led by responsibility and the feeling of love. As the ecological problem itself as a task of humankind's survival, the integrity of natural systems and the preservation of the biological variety were not very urgent in the beginning of the 20th century Schweitzer hardly discussed it. The motivation of his planning of a humanistic morals was different from contemporary that of ecological ethics'.

At the same time when Schweitzer was creating and realizing practically by his own behaviour the ethics of the great honour of living creatures in Europe and in Africa, a similar stream of the ethics appeared in USA where the greatest technological progress was located. This thought was based on the laws of the ecology as a natural science and on the principles of evolutionary ethics (Ch. Darwin). Here it takes into account an ethics of the land, created by the ecologist A. Leopold. An ecologist and representative of the forest science Leopold has already used the concept of a land ethics in 1924; he stressed the moral need to consider carefully regulations with respect to wild nature. Nature is treated as an organic integral reality in this ethical concept and the dependent state of man to it is stressed. The wealth of the Earth is the highest criterion to which a man has to pay attention. One's right to live is the same as the other members of the Earth: soil, water, plants and animals. All are objects of nature and with man constitute one biotic and moral community. Land ethics guarantees that the Earth will survive integral, stable, beautiful and of great vitality in the conditions of the activities of mechanized man.[6]

Leopold's land ethic was the first professionally developed conception of the ecological ethics. It was a clearly formulated and founded thought system that if man wants to survive and to preserve other species he has to change his own behaviour, get rid of the pretension to be the king of nature and cultivate new habits that help to care for the natural environment.

We have already noted the historical cultural process in the beginning of the 20 century evolving moral consciousness to a new stage of development, where man's moral duties are increased and behaviour is formed that blocks the rise of the ecological disbalance between man and nature.

The Purpose of Ecological Ethics

This ethical' investigation became intensive and its subjects expanded. The rapid development of science and technology, the penetration of the new technologies into various human spheres and frequent ecological violations raised many moral questions. Their analysis also signified the formation of new branches of applied ethics, among which was bioethics.

The first to mention the term "bioethics" was an American biologist R. van Potter in a treatise published in 1971 *Bioethics – Bridge to the Future*. He describes this branch of science as the synthetic product of biological knowledge and humanistic values, its aim being to analyse the problem of how to preserve humankind and its culture in the natural environment.[7] In other words, he treated bioethics as the sphere that today is called ecological ethics.

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[6] Leopold, A, *A. Sand County Almanac.* New York, 1949.
[7] Potter, R. *Bioethics – Bridge to the Future*. New York, 1971.

The consequences of the penetration of nature by technical knowledge were such that it was important, indeed inevitable, to evaluate and regulate them. However, the process of locating these specialised functions in one or another ethical sphere, depended on various practical requirements of man's activities, on the founding of institutions for controlling the quality of the environment's and on creating alternative models for development and systems of value. The content and rate of this process differed in various countries, which meant that their configuration of the ethical process was different as well. Apparently, according to these circumstances, it would be possible to explain why the names of the ecological branches, especially ecological ethics, and the treatment of their relationships vary.

Life, beyond common laws, distinguishes its own features based on peculiarities of the existence of living creatures and on the traditions of culture in different spheres of reality (human society, domestic animals, etc.). This determined the interaction of branches of ethics connected with the moral protection of life, and their hierarchical arrangement. Ecological ethics, on the one hand, is considered a component of a wider branch of science, even the whole normative-estimating complex called bioethics:

Bioethik ist keine Specialethik fur Biologen. Sie zielt vielmehr auf eine umfassende Neuorientierung der menschlichen Verantwortung gegenuber allen Formen der belebten Natur. In diesem Sinn betrifft Bioethik nicht nur den engeren Bereich des Natur – und Umweltschutzes, sondern auch die Frage der Technologie – und Wissenschaftsorientierung einerseits und andererseits so verschiede Handlungsfelder wie Artenschutz, Tierschutz, Biotopschutz, internationale Umweltschutz-programme, Entwicklungsperspektiven fur die Evolution der Organismen auf der Erde.[8]

On the other hand, the development of applied ethics in recent decades exposed another tendency as well. Applying the humanistic principle for the regulation of different spheres of the relationships between man and the natural world, has increased the differentiation between the branches of ethics. The catalyst of this process was the increase of the global ecological crisis that stimulated the intensive research of ethical ecological problems. Science and the technological revolution made other ethical problems urgent (misappropriation of cosmic space, broadening of nuclear energetics, genetic plants modification, cloning and others), because of non-traditional influence upon life and the environment. In this way, taking into account the requirements of specific moral regulations of various activities and relationships, there appeared a whole system of related ethical branches: bioethics, ecological ethics, science and technological ethics, cosmic ethics, nuclear ethics, medical ethics, psychological ethics, ethics of human behaviour with animals.

Bioethics has already been understood in a narrow sense of the word in this classification – as a branch of science, determining life's value and discussing the dangers that arise in medicinal and in biochemical sciences, where there could be a manipulation of human health and life, using the methods of genetic engineering. Ecological ethics receives a rather coherent determination of its research object, most of all corresponding to the name of this applied branch: it pays attention to human behaviour with the natural environment, especially to the preservation of bio-variety and to the responsible use of natural resources for the sake of future generations. Scientific and technological ethics, nuclear ethics, cosmic ethics analyse some other ethical problems that have

[8] Altner, G. *Naturvergessenheit: Grundlagen einer umfassenden Bioethik*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1991, s.1.

ecological meaning and arise in the specific spheres of technological activities. These latter branches of science extend and specify ecological ethics, explaining questions that are most urgent to the representatives of certain professions. This why they have close connection with professional ethics. Meanwhile, ecological ethics includes the considerations of conditions, structures and processes that stimulate every individual and society itself to treat nature responsibly. Since every member of society is connected with the nature and has an effect upon it in one way or another, directly or indirectly, ecological ethics is like a universal moral theory for the activity of modern man. It includes not only people, nature and their interrelations, but all existence as well that forms an integral system or the socio-biospherical complex with its various elements, manifold structures, complicated scientific and technical, social and economical, political and cultural processes correlated among themselves. The ecological ethics comprehended in such a way theoretically grounds significant rules of moral consciousness that combine individualism with holism, egoism with altruism, hedonism with asceticism, care of what is close with care of what is distant, etc.

Ecological ethics especially stresses the priority of human values: nature as unique and integral on a planetary scale and the preservation of nature is a common task and care for all humankind. In this sense, it is possible to say, morals is transformed into a certain phenomenon of the global culture. The increasing attention of culture to ecological themes (the manifold usage of ecological term and the appearance of various "ecologies" witness to this) manifest modern man's desire to reconsider his place in the world of living creatures in terms of various environmental factors. Undoubtedly, the rise of such fundamental questions is connected with changes in the human worldview. Modern man has to answer the questions: who is he, what is nature in the context of has acquired knowledge and experiences, and when to decide how to treat it? The most essential thing for the ecological ethics, of course, is human self-consciousness: how does man treat himself in nature and what are his aims – to rule the nature or to seek the agreement with it? It is the so-called "crossing" or moral choice problem: which way must humanity chose for the development of civilisation?

Ecological ethics fulfils the function of nature's preservation and culture's integration, besides its scientific-research and educational functions that are characteristic of every ethics. C.P. Snow raised the problem of conflict between "two cultures" – the traditional humanitarian one and the new scientific one as far back as in the 6th decade of 20th century. The emergent development of ecological ethics in recent years is evident recognition of these dimensions.[9]

[9] Snow, C.P. *Two Cultures and Scientific Revolution: the Red Lecture*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1962.

Chapter XVIII
Nothing and Isness

Arvydas Sliogeris

What is the place of a man in the universe and what is the difference between man and nonhuman beings? It is hypothesized that man is the only being persecuted by Nothing and indirectly experiencing Nothing as a special givenness, called "Being" in traditional metaphysics. Because man is persecuted by Nothing, he feels an irremovable lack of Reality (the author identifies Reality with sensible intensiveness and calls it "Isness") and tries to compensate for this lack in various ways, first and foremost by way of language: what is really lacking is compensated virtually. Since man can partially compensate for this lack of Reality only by way of usurpation and appropriation of sensible masses, he is destined to annihilate nonhuman things and bring Nothing into the realm of the nonhuman sensibles. Yet, in contrast with other living beings, the specific difference of man is a redundant drive to annihilate and a redundant negativity transgressing the boundaries of natural necessity and measure. Man's exceptional place in the universe is conditioned by this redundant annihilation drive whence arises man's natural nihilism.

All man's relationships with what is different from him and is not himself – and even with himself – are nihilistic. Therefore the word "nihilism" here expresses not an appropriate theoretical position, but man's fundamental place and status in the realm of living beings. Man cannot help being a nihilist, since continual standing in the presence of Nothing that causes the lack, or anaesthesia, of Reality makes him annihilate more than is necessary in terms of his bodily, i. e. biological, needs. Man's relationships with the world are dictated not by needs, but by desire that desires the desire to not desire, that is, the desire to terminate desire itself. Therefore, it is the kind of desire that, in contrast to concrete need, cannot be satisfied and appeased in principle, since it is caused by Nothing, the infinity of which turns into infinite desire. The metaphysical nucleus of man, in the author's opinion, is constituted by what is called incarnation of Nothing that takes place in the neck of the ontotopic clepsydra. In that neck Nothing occupies the sensible "material" and transforms it into language.

The incarnation of Nothing proceeds discontinually, by way of what may be visualized as quanta of nihilation. The process of incarnation breaks off every moment and renews itself again; therefore a dotted line may be invoked as a prototype or an analogy of this incarnation. In the neck of the ontotopic clepsydra takes p1ace, as one might call it, a synthesis of Nothing and Isness, the result of which is a unique metaphysical givenness that is called by the author "Am I?"–wave. This "Am I?"–wave is constituted of the two semiwaves, one of them nihilative (representative of Nothing) and the other – isential (representative of Isness. The term "isential", though similar to the usual word "essential" has to be distinguished from it, since the word "essential" invokes the connotations of "essence", the word that one would use to speak of Being, not of Isness). These semiwaves come into contact with each other in the alpha-point (this term is purely conventional and given by the author). The alpha-point at the same time separates and connects the metasensible-nihilative and the sensible-isential slopes of the "Am I?"–wave. It means that a configuration of "particle" as well as that of wave is characteristic of the "Am I?"–givenness, since this givenness lives not only as a kind of genesis, but also as a kind of structure. The alpha-point has no fixated and permanent place on the "Am I?"–wave and can move either to the side of Nothing or to the side of Isness.

In the author's opinion, it is worth distinguishing these three positions of the alpha-point on the "Am I?"–wave: 1) when the alpha-point is located at the bottom of the nihilative slope and, consequently, almost all of the "Am I?"–wave is constituted by the isential slope; 2) when the alpha-point is at the bottom of the isential slope and, as a consequence, almost all of the "Am I?"–wave is constituted by the nihilative slope; 3) when the alpha-point is on the ridge of the "Am I?"–wave and, consequently, the two slopes become equal. Depending on the position of the alpha-point on the "Am I?"–wave, a change of relationships between the sensible intensiveness and the nihilative intensiveness takes p1ace.

These relationships, in turn, give rise to a greater or lesser lack of Reality and manifest themselves in a greater or lesser anaesthesia, thus increasing or reducing both man's desire to compensate for the lack of Reality and., along with that desire, man's potential of nihilistic annihilation. The rule is the following: the larger the nihilative slope of the "Am I?"–wave, the greater the lack of Reality and, consequently, the more intensive desire to compensate for this lack by way of appropriating ever larger masses of the sensible, and vice versa. The "Am I?"–wave every moment of its life merges with language, yet always retains its relative independence before language, therefore the author calls this wave freely floating protozoic singularity or, to put another way, protospeak. The "Am I?"–wave connects the interior, or inner man, with the exterior, which is sensible, evidently apprehended – visible, audible, touchable, smellable and tastable – nonhumanity, i. e. with the exterior sensible masses. This connection manifests itself on several metaphysical levels, and the totality of these levels is called alpha-structure. It consists of these components: "Am I?" – "language" – "my" – "I" – "it "is".

Within the boundaries of this structure man appropriates the sensible landscape of the "exterior" and settles therein as a metaphysical master of a sensible ellipsoid which is called by the author Plato's cave. Only by way of turning the directly manifesting sensible things into his metaphysical and even social property, can man to some extent overcome the lack of Reality and assure himself of at least minimal certainty. "My" things confirm the existence of "Am I?", and "my" relatives and close friends acknowledge the reality of "Am I?" by way of letting it enter into the sureness of the protozoic "I", which is constituted by language; yet this sureness never becomes sufficient. "I" is in the process of overcoming one's nothingness in so far as his things confirm him and in so far as his relatives and close friends acknowledge him. Because the alpha-point on the "Am I?"–wave can occupy the three aforementioned extreme positions, man's relationships with nonhuman things and with himself are determined by the three metaphysical syndromes that express man's efforts to have done with Nothing and the lack of Reality caused by Nothing.

The first syndrome is called by the author syndrome of Nirvana: that is a desire and effort of the protozoic "I" to shake off his individuality and to melt in the "interior" or "exterior" inarticulateness. The structure, genesis and results of this syndrome are most exactly and simply defined and embodied by Siddhartha Gautama and Buddhism. That is why the desire of virtual self-annihilation which is inherent in every human being is called the syndrome of Nirvana, i. e. an effort to melt in the inarticulate indeterminacy that structurally does not differ from Nothing itself.

The syndrome of Caligula is a desire, also inherent in every person to compensate for the lack of Reality by way of endlessly expanding the boundaries of one's property, real and virtual, that takes the form of appropriation, via action or language of ever larger sensible realms. Putting into practice the programme defined by the syndrome of Caligula, the protozoic "I" becomes an imperialistic "I" who is not satisfied with any finite givenness and transgresses all possible sensible horizons.

Finally, the author calls the third syndrome syndrome of Ithaca and considers Odysseus to be a prototype of its actualization. This is because Odysseus desires to return at any price to his homeland, that is, the articulated territory of familiar things and people who confirm and acknowledge the reality of the protozoic "I". He desires to return namely to Plato's cave which has become "my" property, namely that sensible ellipsoid stretching below the lid of that Sky defined by the pit of that Earth. The need of a 1ocality of familiar things and people is also caused by the lack of Reality and the uncertainty that "Am I?" feels with respect to his existence, because man who is a finite bodily being can compensate for this lack and uncertainty only with the help of evident, intimately familiar, "domesticated" masses of the sensible that put a veil on Nothing and aided man in overcoming the metaphysical fear of Nothing.

It is argued that space is not an objective givenness that exists in itself and is absolute. With the help of the entire alpha-structure it is demonstrated that space is constituted by the "Am I?"-wave that at the same time is in the "interior" and the "exterior", so it establishes the depth of Plato's cave. Therefore a claim is substantiated that a primary intuition of space, which is called protospace, is constituted by the isential slope of the "Am I?"-wave. This slope establishes an ellipsoid that has the form of a cave which, in the author's opinion, was very precisely described by Plato in his a1legory of cave. Yet, contrary to Plato who considers man's existence in the cave of the sensible to be illusory, not real, allowing one to meet only shadows, the author of this book thinks that in the sensible protospace and nowhere else man as a bodily being is capable of meeting the most real things and even the Reality itself, the nucleus of which consists of the directly visible sensibility of things.

The existential space of Plato's cave, in the author's opinion, is the condition of the possibility of all the other notions and imaginings of space, either subjectivist ones (for example, Kant's) or objectivist ones (for example, Newton's). In addition to that, space is not three-dimensional but multidimensional. Only the geometrization and simplification of the space of Plato's cave leads to the notions of three-dimensional space, thus veiling and distorting the primeval phenomenological situation. Time also is neither the pure subjective intuition, as Kant thought, nor objective reality that exists in the physicalistic coordinates. Here we would substantiate a claim that the intuition of time appears for the first time along with articulated language: consequently, it is not that language exists in time, but that time exists in language that for the first time makes it possible to divide time into the three relatively autonomous linear segments – the past, the present, and the future.

Finally, the author asserts that the condition of the possibility of both time and space is Nothing itself, therefore space and time are mere avatars of Nothing that are fixed and hypostasized by language. If man had not had the ability and desire to open himself to Nothing, neither the intuition of space nor the intuition of time would have been possible. Moreover, it is asserted that the intuition of Nothing is the condition of the possibility of man's freedom. Freedom is the possibility to move in Nothing and detach oneself from the determinism of the "objective" world.

Depending on the position of the alpha-point on the "Am I?" – wave, the author distinguishes the three main "p1aces" of freedom and the three modes of freedom:1) instatic freedom as a possibility to be immersed into the "interior", or the inner self, thus becoming independent from language and the exterior world; 2) ecstatic freedom as a possibility to transgress any really given situation defined by things and thus to become able to create new situations in the world; the ecstatic freedom and nothing else is the main condition of the possibility of creation and the creative ability; 3) instatic-ecstatic freedom that allows man to open himself to the Other, be it a thing or a human being, as an accumulation of Sensible Transcendence, and thus becomes a condition of the possibility of political freedom, autonomy and the civil community.

Man unconsciously holds Dream to be a paradigmatic prototype of Rea1ity, because the images of Dream have the greatest sensible intensiveness. In addition, since the landscape of Dream is governed by the rhythm of metamorphoses that are utterly unrestrained and proceeding at very great speed, Dream gives man the greatest nihilative intensity, thus satisfying the desire of nihilistic annihilation. The activity of man who is awake, also unconsciously and as far as it can rise above the struggle for survival and the pragmatic needs of practical existence, is governed by a desire to create accumulations of artificial Reality which, even if their intensity is not as great as that of Dream, are oriented to nothing else but the sensible intensity of the latter. To put it simply, what is called arts, religions, metaphysics, sciences and technologies, appear and live first of all as the means of an artificial Dream. Those means are called machines of Transcendence, or machines of Rea1ity. The main and often the sole raw material, fuel, engine and even product of the machines of Transcendence is language. Therefore in the end all the machines of transcendence create the worlds of language, or myth. So myth can be considered to be an artificial Dream that unites and brings to a common denominator the separate areas of man's practical and theoretical activity and directly coincides with what is usually called culture.

The nucleus of culture is constituted by myth, that is, endlessly variegated worlds of language that express and crystallize man's relation to what is not himself and man's relation to himself. To put it simply, any kind of human relation to nonhuman reality is mediated by myth, and even what is usually called Reality, firstly and for the most part is myth; that is, any relation to the world is clothed in myth. Non-mythical contact with the world is totally impossible solely on the grounds that any relation takes place and evolves in the medium of language.

There is an infinite number of concrete forms of myth, but, in the author's opinion, taking into account the observed facts, it is possible to mark out three main types, or styles, of myth that are determined by the position of the alpha-point on the "Am I?" – wave. It dominates a metaphysical situation when the alpha-point is at the bottom of the nihilative slope of the "Am I?" – wave and almost all of the wave is constituted by the isential slope, that is to say; if the "Am I?" – wave is as if immersed in the masses of the sensible, there emerges and dominates the savage myth; if the alpha-point is on the crest of the "Am I?" – wave, so that the isential slope of this wave becomes equal with the nihilative slope, there dominates the logical myth; if the alpha-point is at the bottom of the isential slope of the "Am I?" – wave and the nihilative slope constitutes almost all of the "Am I?" – wave, which becomes immersed into Nothing, there dominates the technological, or digital, myth. All three myths do not constitute a harmonious chain the links of which are united by the relationships of causal or chronological sequence. Therefore, it is not the case that some nation or culture necessarily passes through the phases of all three myths as distinct and relatively unconnected, epochs, according to the principle of history, or the principle of progress.

No one of these three myths is more "progressive" than, or superior, to the other two; every one of all three myths has its own advantages and, disadvantages, although they differ in their epistemic (gnostic) potential. The technological myth has the greatest gnostic potential, but, on the other hand, this particular myth, which dominates the present epoch, most significantly strengthens man's nihilistic power, thus putting in danger the very survival of man as a biological species.

But, if one views this issue from a different perspective, one can notice that the existence of man, irrespective of his chronotopical situation, evolves in the medium of all three myths. Therefore the elements of the savage myth survive even in the epoch of the technological myth, and these elements, in comparison with the situation in the epoch of the logical myth, become even stronger.

The specifics and structure of all three myths, as well as their similarities and differences, are discussed in depth and detail in the second volume of this book. The general methodological rule is such: the specifics of each myth are determined by the type of language which dominates this particular myth. That type, in its turn, depends on the position of the alpha-point on the "Am I?" – wave.

The specific character of the savage myth is determined by the fact that the language which constitutes the medium of this myth is not separated from the evident masses of nonhuman sensible things, but, rather, merges with these masses, establishing a peculiar existential medium called Green Mass, or pure – but sensible field. The paradigm of field and metamorphic process dominates the savage myth. This means that in the medium of this myth, neither the individual and "I" nor any other individualized givenness which has a form and is defined as a thing, neither subject nor object, neither thing nor person, separates from the Green Mass and becomes an independent metaphysical givenness or theme. The individual melts away in the inarticulateness of the metamorphic process and field, dissolves in the Waves of the Green Mass which is dominated by the configuration of "wave", but not of "particle".

The logical myth is closely connected with the separation of language from the masses of nonhuman sensible things and the emergence of writing as an autonomous territory of language. Writing not only enables language to exist as an independent metaphysical region, but also fundamentally change man's relationships with nonhuman reality and himself. Writing pushes one into the territory of total and complete individuation where not "wave", but "particle" or, to put it another way, the individual, becomes a paradigmatic givenness. This "particle", or the individual, appears on the nonhuman side as a thing having a sculpturally distinct form. On the human side it appears in the form of "I" or person, and in language – in the form of nuclear, or pivotal, words which have no sensible referent (such as "Being", "Idea", "God", "Substance", "the One", "Everything", "Atom", "the Good", and so on).

In contrast to the savage myth, the logical myth is dominated by the principle of the sculptural self-identity of the individual, his exceptionality and substantiality. The exemplary forms of the logical myth are metaphysics, so-called world religions, art, and gnostics. In addition, the logical myth, in contrast to the savage one, establishes so-called History, that is, a virtual medium of interrelationship and interplay between nonhuman sensible givennesses and the logical language that has been separated from these givennesses.

Finally, the nucleus of the technological myth is constituted by the language of equations which in its own peculiar way, in the medium of language itself, again returns to the configuration of "field", restores the paradigm of priority of Mass and Field over the individual, the paradigm of priority of "wave" over "particle". That was the particular paradigm which dominated the savage myth. As a medium of the technological myth there emerges techno-science. That is, mathematical and experimental natural science and, first of all, its avant-garde expressions – quantum mechanics, the physics of subatomic particles, quantum field theory, and astrophysics. Since the idea, or intuition, of "infinity" and the existential experience governed by this intuition become established as a center of the technological myth, the language of this myth, becoming increasingly abstract, approaches Nothing and the self-destruction of language itself.

A moment comes when man cannot believe in language. We should emphasize that it is not that he does not believe in one or another particular language world, but that he does not believe in language as such. This radically skeptical attitude towards language is indicated by what is called here a "scandal of ends": "the death of God", "the death of man", "the death of author", "the

end of History", and even "the end of the world". All these "ends" are reduced in this book to what is called "the end of myth".

For the first time there appears a possibility of man returning from the worlds of Myth to his own real existential locality-on-this-side-of-the-sensible-horizon, to Plato's cave, or the so-called cosmopolis, to things themselves, to things which are not clothed in myth and do not wear the masks of language. This process is called the Return. In the author's opinion, we should not overly dramatize the end of Myth, let alone fall into despair in the face of all "deaths" and "ends". On the contrary, by way of overcoming the spell of myth, man as a mortal and finite being who chooses to return to a limited space of his existence in the cosmopolis, for the first time becomes able consciously to limit his nihilism which is natural yet idealized and sanctified by all myths. The end of Myth and a determination to consciously limit the power of Myth in the cosmopolis gives man a hope that eventually he will limit his drives according to measure, curb his infinite desire arising from Nothing and thus reduce the potential of nihilistic annihilation concealed in that desire.

With the help of each myth man tries virtually or really to compensate for the lack of Reality, by way of producing an artificial Reality as artificial Transcendence. Yet in the medium of the savage myth the lack of Reality is relatively small and insignificant, therefore the savage man still has no need of creating powerful machines of Transcendence and is satisfied with the machines which annihilate Transcendence, that is to say, the so-called technology which is, of course, very primitive. Only in the medium of the logical myth, when the anaesthesia and lack of Reality become very strong, does man begin to create powerful machines of Transcendence, the basis, "raw material" and "fuel" of which is constituted by language. In the medium of the logical myth such most powerful machines of Transcendence are religion, metaphysics, gnosis, and art, but first of all religion which accumulates and uses the products of all the other machines of Transcendence, namely metaphysics, art, and gnosis.

Therefore the emergence of the logical myth as a dominant force accounts for the fact that for the first time there appears civilization (as a totality of powerful machines which annihilate Transcendence) and culture (as a totality of the machines which produce Transcendence). Culture as a machine of Transcendence compensates for the lack of Reality which is increasing because of quantitative expansion and qualitative growth of civilization, that is, the totality of the machines that annihilate Transcendence.

But the most powerful machines of Transcendence are created by the technological civilization. This is because only in the medium of the technological myth – because of the growth of anaesthesia and the lack of Reality stimulated by very powerful modern technology, that is, the most perfect machine which annihilates Transcendence, have to be created and are indeed created, the most powerful machines of Transcendence. The apogee of these machines is the mass media created by the TV/PC Screen. The specific character of the medium of the technological myth is the merging of culture with civilization which is reminiscent of the medium of the savage myth. The machines which annihilate Transcendence at the same time become the machines that produce Transcendence. The modern technology realizes the synthesis of culture and civilization. Therefore in the medium of technological myth the traditional culture, that is to say, the machines of Transcendence which worked in the medium of the logical myth, namely religion, art, and metaphysics, become redundant and useless. The TV/PC Screen performs the functions of art, metaphysics, and religion much more effectively than do the traditional "cultural" machines.

It is not difficult to notice that the technological machine of Transcendence even now has completely phased out and supplanted art, religion, and metaphysics. In the author's opinion, this uselessness of traditional culture and even a certain death of culture should be assessed with neither

undue pessimism nor undue optimism, that is to say, without going to either extreme. Of course, the excessively growing production of Transcendence which tends to become an end in itself has its own dangers: for example, one could hardly approve to the imperative, which in the medium of the technological myth becomes increasingly dominant, that wherever possible man should at any price create an artificial reality. This process approaches the absurd when man begins to produce "naturalness" itself and makes not the product, but hysterical production for production's sake an end in itself. Such production for production's sake becomes a narcotic of a kind and may have catastrophic consequences. Yet on the other hand, the absolutization of the principle of production can lead to a need for a rehabilitating the "rights" of the nonhuman sphere and naturalness. Such a scenario would make it possible to harmonize the existence of man according to the principle of ontotopic and ecotopic equilibrium which sets a limit to man's natural nihilism.

What are the possible ways of limiting man's nihilism? Maybe it is possible to follow an ideal of moderate nihilism. A partial achievement of this ideal can only be secured by a return from the medium of myth to things themselves which are located in the mortal man's living space, that is, in Plato's cave, in the cosmopolis, in the locality-on-this-side-of-the-sensible-horizon.

Chapter XIX

The Pragmatics and Analytics of Philosophical Anthropolgy

Gintautas Mazeikis

Contemporary neo-Pragmatism as represented by R. Rorty, and I. Kant's pragmatic anthropology are related by at least several common arguable theses: a) discipline of willpower, and the problem of rendering it in proper form; b) the question of loyalty and consensus, the discussion of which determines the relation between the empirical political dialogue and the pretensions of the mind; c) Kant's anthropology raises a pragmatic question: "what does the human being as a free agent make, or can and ought to make, of himself?". This question is directly related to Kant's anthropological question: "What is the human being?". In a parallel manner, pragmatism considers utilitarian, ethical and political problems of the human's developmental process.

To both Kant and pragmatism, the human in its broad sense is what he makes of himself, rather than being made by nature. Such an anthropological or human project raises doubts about the focus on willpower. Aiming to overcome irrational voluntary and authoritarian human pretensions, neo-Pragmatism resets the criticism made by representatives of subsistence philosophy in the twentieth century. In order to restrain the infinite pretensions of willpower and to construct the world, M. Heidegger emphasizes, that in creating himself the human is finite and must collaborate with other persons who are different from himself. This accentuates the transcendental, empirical and pragmatic aspects of the human essence. The transcendental view explains the way a limited human is determined by the Other and by infinity; the empirical view explains the capacities of willpower and cognition for self direction; and the pragmatic view indicates the most suitable objective social-hopes. In all these cases criticism of mind, emotions and willpower is essential. E. Levinas extends this work.

Kant's Philosophical-Pragmatic Anthropology

R. Rorty in his work *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* notes that the word "Mind" (*Nous*, Reason, *Vernunft*) is indefinite in denotation and does not define a distinct object. It is like an idea with a long history and plenty of mutations; it is a symbol signifying the whole history of the philosophy as well as the mythology of "mind". Such considerations could be named rational reasoning, deep mind, identification of mind and brain, as well as the preparation and essences that stimulate thinking, etc. Mythology here is not a matter of fiction, but the underlying *mythos*which gradually connects with the pre-Socratic *physis*. The mythology of mind, like earth, reveals new possibilities of brain activity, interpretation of consciousness and explanation of emotions.

The Age of Enlightenment is one of the passages of such a mythology when the symbolic cosmic or theological concepts of *Logos* and *Intellectus* are replaced by analytically lucid reasoning about the concept of *Cogito*. Today complex explanation of the symbol or idea of mind are being attempted while their separate functions are being distinguished. It is defined in terms of complex interactions discursive and mythological, poetical and creative. Analytic philosophy in most cases distinguishes cognitive functions. Here cognition is perceived as the ability to reason, to draw conclusions and to evaluate.

Hermeneutics, having extended the conception of cognition and related it to perception, begins to discuss the ability to perceive the emotions as well as such various existentials as concern,

compassion, love, worry, reprehension, comprehension – *verständlich.* M. Heidegger relates comprehension directly to the topic of *Dasein's* as the finite human in understanding his essence relates depth to surface, tradition to the actual language in the desire to express his or her ideas.

In his work *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysic* M. Heidegger responds to Kant's question "What is the human being?" with a question about the historic and ontic basis of such reasoning. He notes that history of metaphysics is completed with the main problem of philosophy as stated by Kant and G.W.F. Hegel: to understand cognition and the development of cognition in both historico-logical and empirical and psycho-physiological terms. However, the aim of "understanding cognition" is here construed in terms of the old metaphysical view, which basically is identical with "understanding reason", i.e. the logic of the development of this symbol, without questions about subsistence.

Comprehensibility is related to the finite, dramatic human subsistence, which constantly is determined not only by language and traditions, but by the consciousness of body, rituals and customs as well. Consciousness of the body is revealed in the landscape of its own experience and instrumental activities, in social and creative time and space. According to J.P. Ricoeur, quite often this pre-predicative consciousness turns into a basis for belief in common reason. *Cogito* functions because it is based on an impenetrable *physis* and *arche* in F. Nietzsche's and M. Heidegger's sense. Here Apollo's lucidity of mind is possible only with lively ecstatic dramas.

Such reasoning, related to the criticism of willpower and the anthropocentric project, as well as to changes in metaphysics and philosophical anthropology, motivates one to reread the anthropologies of J.G. von Herder, W. von Humboldt and Kant, as well as F. Nietzsche's psycho-physiological reasoning. These authors, while analytically and empirically in different ways opponents, highlight the psycho-physiological and ethical *physis,* and they emphasize the dependence of transcendental apperception and transcendental reason (consciousness) on the weakness and strength of willpower.

In his review of J.G. von Herder's book, Kant criticizes the author's anthropological views. Here Kant's thought responds to the moralistic, utopian "proto-anthropologic" tradition of the Age of Enlightenment, which paid most attention to drawing cautionary, didactic comparisons between wild and civilized countries, weighing their degree of "rottenness".

J.G. von Herder, Kant and simultaneously W. von Humboldt's anthropologic considerations are directly related to the moralistic reflections of J.-J. Rousseau and Voltaire on the *Noble Savage* and utopias of a geographical travellogue genre, depicted in works of T. Campanella and T. More. Even in his youth Kant was greatly influenced by such romantic geographical travel descriptions and, according to his biographers, liked them tremendously. Moreover, he enjoyed reading works by J.-J. Rousseau and corresponded with W. von Humboldt, who compared the customs and languages of different nations. This was later depicted in Kant's *Anthropology*. On the other hand, considering his own critical method and the principles of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, he nevertheless criticizes the metaphysical historical speculations of J.G. von Herder's which he used to regard as an example of dogmatic metaphysics. In his opinion, anthropological metaphysics is determined by unrestricted, wild imagination that exceeds any limits of possible experience.

Kant's personal relationship with his own wild and unrestricted imagination was discussed by J.-B. Botul[1] and M. Mamardashvili.[2] J.-B. Botul accentuates Kant's constant physical and sensual practices in his fight against personal hypochondria, as well as his superstitious beliefs in various

[1] Botul, J.-B. *Das sexuelle Leben des Immanuel Kant*. Leipzig: Reclam Verlag, 2001.

[2] Mamardasvili, M.K. "Kantianskije variacii". In: *Etyika Kanta i sovremenost*. Riga: Avots, 1989, cc. 196–225.

mucus and secretions. For example, Kant directly relates the waste of saliva, perspiration, sperm and other body liquids and secretions to a waste of speculative energy and restriction of the field of experience. Besides, according to both, J.-B. Botul and M. Mamardashvili, he was constantly fighting hypochondria, wild imagination, his own well-developed gourmet taste, night visions, dreams, etc. All this turned Kant's life into constant supervision of his body and imagination, where none of E. Swedenborgh-like visions, exceeding empirical experience, could penetrate. In his early creative period Kant admired the mystic's creation and visions, although he criticized them in his early work *Träume eines Geistersehers* (1766, "Dreams of a Spirit-Seer"). His criticism is related to the need to control wild and in no ways restricted imagination, as well as the bodily actions stimulated by it. Later on, this criticism became one of the bases to his last work, *Anthropology*, issued in his lifetime and edited by Kant himself.

The power to control dreams and desires, as well as the ability to be moral, requires constant sensual and social confirmation. Rhythmic work, pragmatic motor movements, nutrition and sleep comprise essential but insufficient pre-predicative presumptions for a person's *a priori* and *aposteriori* reasoning. That is why in his *Anthropology* Kant pays much attention to human activity, practice and, mainly, to reasoning activity. Other conditions are dictated by moral and social rules. Obeying these rules forms the basis that depolarises pragmatism and Kant's philosophy.

Kant in his work *Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht* shows that the human character and one's attitudes result from one's activity or inactivity. Morality and character are related by the ability to overcome natural urges (initial egoism) and to develop a unified inner principle of lifestyle. Thus, the idea of inner lifestyle is related to empirical human activity and bodily discipline. The second part of Kant's *Anthropology* attempts to relate the empirical observation of human reality to the problems of applying practical principles. Actually, here Kant starts what we now would call analytical anthropology and its applied, pragmatic aspect. His analysis lacks many social and communal elements, although physiological, psychological, conscious, social and political human and social developmental conditions are considered in both their purposive and natural aspects.

Kant's philosophical anthropological reasoning partly meets J.G. von Humboldt's research of that time, was is proven by Kant's letter about J.G. von Humboldt's work to F. Shiller *Über den Geshlechtsunterschield und dessen Einfluâ auf die organische Natur* (1794, "About Sexual Differences and their Influence on Organic Nature"). Kant himself reasons how sex influences human's reasoning and moral choice, although he criticizes W. von Humboldt in the same way as he criticized J.G. von Herder: because of non-critical transcendental reasoning about the consistency of the two different sexes as if it were typical in nature. According to Kant, this opens the door to infinite fantasies about naturalism.[3] W. von Humboldt responds that such transcendental reasoning is related to reflection on the human character.

Later on, W. von Humboldt elaborates Kant's ideas from the *Critique of Judgment (Kritik der Urteiskraft)* and *Anthropology* even more intently and consistently and emphasizies the principles of a human's inward activity and imagination, developing Kant's principles of "self-making" and "activity". W. von Humboldt relates these ideas to his pragmatic reasoning about *Bildung*. He presents his main principles of philosophical anthropology in the article "Über den Geist der Menscheit" (1797, "About the Human Spirit"). The article was to become a preface to a book he never wrote, *Philosophical Anthropology*. The essential idea of the article is that a human is able to control everything, provided he can measure infinity with his ideas. However, as the empirical

[3] Kant, I. *Traktaty i pisma*. Moskva: Politizdat, 1980, c. 599.

world does not make such comparison possible, such judgment is possible only when developing man's inner nobleness: his ideological ability to reason about infinite things and turn them into practical projects. On the other hand, J.G. von Humboldt pays much attention to language, psychology and custom studying the nations of his time; this is reflected in his work *Plan einer verglechenden Anthropologie*. He notes that language and its inner form (*innere Sprachform*) is related to nation and determines the individual's self-identity. On the other hand, the human power of will and spirit provides the poetic possibility to develop language and thus release creativity. He notes that "inward ability" (*das geistige Vermögen*) becomes reality due to "activity" (*in seiner Tätigkeit*).[4]

W. von Humboldt's anthropological reasoning opened the door to a contemplation of the interactions of human language and human discourse. Eventually that was elaborated by many philosophers of the twentieth century who were of quite different beliefs: E. Cassirer, M. Heidegger, L. Althusser, M. Foulcault, R. Rorty, etc. The subject of reasoning and behaviour is mediated by certain discourses in the althusserian sense. These discourses represent political ideologies, ethnic customs and normative institutional reasoning. The human imagination and desires represent both poles of desire and institutional standards; one voluntarily controls his behaviour as well as develops his fantasies, ideas and projects. J. Butler, in response to L. Althusser's reasoning about the discursive subject's interpellation, notes that a person himself decides about his own discursive impeachment, comparing various discourses and symbolic institutions, choosing them by his own autonomic conscience, *libido* or socialized forms of fear. Comprehension is related to worries that direct us to tradition, current problems and the existential experience of Nothingness. Hence we can say that Kant sustains his discursive, institutional obligations that overwhelm both his consciousness and sub conscious dimensions. This discursive anthropological consistency gives him cause for the three critiques of reason.

Philosophical Neopragmatism and Socio-Cultural Anthropology

Rorty, discusses Kant's moral views from a neo-pragmatic point of view, for which the first question is "what the human being as a free agent makes, or can and ought to make, of himself?" He indicates specific comprehension of relativism that we find in Kant's works. R. Rorty recalls Kant's assertion that he is not a skeptic but an "empirical realist",[5] that is why the "make of yourself" strategy is discussed from an empirical and even empiricist point of view. R. Rorty interprets Kant as considering very pragmatic philosophical questions: R. Brandon's approach to social practices and relation of this approach to D. Davidson's theories.

Kant typically states that fairness derives from mind, and loyalty derives from sentiments. Sentiments, in their turn, are related to affections. Fairness and mind are related to implicit principles and loyalty is related to empirical, social experience. However, M. Waltzer, with R. Rorty later, views the concept of pure mind and "universal moral commitments" sceptically. Waltzer notes that moral commitments from the very beginning are related to cultural integration, assimilation and perception of moral language, with the peculiarities of cultural and psychic cases. A. Bauier in her book "Moral Prejudices" reasons analogically, although from the point of view of cultural anthropology. She states that morality begins not with strong commitments or

[4] Humboldt, W. "Über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues und ihren Einfluß auf die gestige Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts". In: Humboldt W. *Werke*. Bd. 3. Schriften zur Spraschphilosophie. Berlin, 1963, s. 464.

[5] Rorty, R. *Truth and Progress. Philosophical Papers.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 133.

responsibility, but with mutual confidence among close persons, who are related by practical links first of all in family, clan or tribe. Analogically, with regard to modern society, in a manner similar to R. Putnam and V. Kavolis explain the problem of confidence like R. Rorty. Kant describes the conflict between mind and loyalty as nothing else but conflict between one type of loyalty and another which is weaker and unacknowledged.[6]

Anthropological pragmatics and anthropological analytics makes possible the neo-pragmatic approach to philosophical anthropology. Passive anthropological analysis turns into never-ending action of human development, pragmatic collaboration and interactive dialogical projects, during which principles of loyalty, social collaboration, consensus and fairness are being realized. This interactive pragmatic action of human development is directly related to procedures of bodily discipline and its liberation. Pragmatic action here is understood not only as *mythos, libido* or analysis of personal creative reasoning and discursive interpretation, but as constant actual and meaningful correlation of *mythos* and *ratio*. This is the action that has to ensure constant interface between the existential and roots, the rhythmic or atonal harmony of body, the landscape and consciousness. All this is presented not in spiritualistic language, but as a constant empirical project, intervening in *Dasein'*s sphere of specific worries.

The difference between analyses and the pragmatic project could be illustrated by comparing L. Wittgenstein's conception of language games to R. Rorty's "final vocabulary", which is followed by the presumption of a constant development of vocabularies. The development of final vocabularies is not just fiction or fantasy; it also is not satisfaction of *libido* related to phantasm. Creativity here is understood in the sense of social loyalty as well as literary criticism, analogically to Harold Bloom's approach to the idea with his principle of "creative misreading". Bloom represents the deconstructive method of literary criticism and perceives misreading, in Derrida's view, as a certain existential difference (*arche*), which enables one to involve the interpretation of the Other into one's own world of concerns and instrumentality. Here distinct boundaries between literature and philosophy, intellect and imagination, analytics and the practical project disappear. They give way to discussion with socio-cultural anthropology, where R. Rorty and J. Derrida get involved. It is definitely not enough to consider this discussion as only philosophical interpretation of socio-cultural anthropology. Here the topic turns into a constant problem of the relationship between localizatum and globalization and other relevant questions constantly discussed by R. Rorty, J. Clifford and Cl. Geertz. Poetical imagination and creative misreading regularly appears here while explaining and developing (mobilizing, stimulating, introducing new ideological possibilities) specific problems of social expectations and ideas of the "New Left". That is reflected in the dialogue between RRosaldo and R. Rorty's followers, who interpret the issue from a post-modernistic point of view. Eventually, all these interpretations and discussions are related to the pragmatic philosophy of subsistence, developed in M. Heidegger's and P. Ricoeur's works.

Thus, pragmatic anthropology is, at the same time, also philosophical anthropology (a name given primarily by Kant). It analyses the question "What is the human being?", explaining it by other question "what can the human make of himself?". In its turn, it enables us to consider the limits of our fantasy and imagination, the public and private character of mind, the relation between social loyalty and cooperation, and the relation of autonomic moral choice and political consensus.

Nowadays socio-cultural[7] anthropology pays ever more attention to the analysis of social discourses, criticism of willpower and fantasy, as well as to the related applied and action

[6] Rorty, R. *Critical Dialogues.* Oxford: Polity, 2001, p. 226.

[7] The term socio-cultural anthropology is used to join cultural and social anthropologies. The term of cultural anthropology is more common in the USA, and the term social anthropology is used in Great Britain. These two

anthropology. Applied anthropology carries out research related to social politics, environment protection, the effect of technological innovations on communal and human development, health and hygiene, trans-cultural problems, change of values and identities.[8] These identity mutations are directly dependent on processes of personalization and individualization, social expectations, i.e. the whole complex of "dreams" and socialization, which is discussed by philosophical anthropology, primarily by Kant. Action anthropology helps to realize projects seeking to solve problems indicated by applied anthropology, e.g. to reduce the influence of ethnocentrism and racism, the harmful effect of xenophobia, to strengthen the motivation and activity of local communities, to justify or criticize local forms of cognition, social confidence and cooperation. References are often made to the matter of social groups and individual fantasies.

On the other hand, the development of the feeling of identity or the feeling of self-identity, the inner cosmos of an individual, is an important source of social motivation and activity. On the other hand, these visions often conflict with official institutionalised discourses. Applied anthropology seeks to tackle these conflicts, define the terms of legitimating social fantasies and encourage dialogue. Applied anthropology links to criticism of philosophical anthropology and to philosophical anthropology by commenting on and reforming the modern cultures of a city. It points out the modern phenomenon of mobile identities, different "neo" movements and subcultures, modern festivals, and initiatives. The representatives of this discipline most often appeal to the interdisciplinary attitude, integrating sociological, psychological and political science research and theories. Local case studies are being undertaken or interpreted in these terms or are linked to the more common holistic attitudes or processes of globalisation.

Applied education encouraged a convergence of socio-cultural anthropology and pragmatic philosophy. This in turn has influenced changes in philosophical anthropology by pointing out not so much holistic, *Weltanschauung* principles, or the development of the entire conception of the human (A. Gehlen, H. Plessner), but factoral dialogue with research in socio-cultural anthropology (W. Y. Adams,[9] A. Lingis). This approach can be observed in the studies which in the USA are most often termed "Service-Learning" or "Service Education" or at least C.A.S.E (Citizenship and Service Education), all of which is sometimes interpreted as Cooperative Education.[10] Applied anthropology solves new questions of social welfare, paying special attention to the analysis of mechanisms of social extrusion/inclusion in the health of communities, ecology, etc. For this purpose new socio-cultural links are being initiated; intercultural mediation is being developed, seeking to safeguard the decrease of interethnic and interconfessional conflicts. Programs of neighbourhood, trust and solidarity are being developed in city communities. Here, for example

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disciplines differed mainly by their methodology till World War II. For example F. Boas idea of historical particularism and critics of evolutionism (R. Benedict, M. Mead) were predominant in the USA at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, while in Britain it was functionalism (B. Malinowski) and later of structural functionalism as well (A.R. Radcliffe-Brown). But after the world war II American and British anthropological schools began to develop similar principles and the difference between cultural and social anthropology in many cases depended upon only the respect to tradition. Having in mind that neither of these traditions is common in Lithuania this book appeals to both of them. Hence, an artificial term *socio-cultural anthropology* will be used here.

[8] The classical example of applied anthropology, where the indicated topics are analyzed, would be: Ervin, A. M. *Applied Anthropology*. Boston: Allyn Bacon, 2000.

[9] Unlike A. Lingis, W. Adams pays more attention not to philosophical contemplation on everyday life, local knowledge and experience, but accents rather the general methodological problems of the development of socio-cultural anthropology, e.g. he disputes the parallels of indianology to Egyptology and Chinese studies. Adams, W.Y., *The Philosophical Roots of Anthropology*. Stanford: CSLI Publications, 1998.

[10] The reasoning of cooperative studies is stated in G.Mazeikis, "Program of Cooperative Education". In: Mazeikis G., Sidlauskiene V., Karveliene R., *Cooperative Education.* Siauliai, 2003, pp. 7–66.

neighbouring ethnic and religious communities are introduced to myths and legends, festivals and rituals that differ. Shared voluntary activity is organized that consolidates trust-building economic, ideological, confessional, mythological, leisurely and other interests and potentials to enhance these interests. The intent is to make them open to community and controllable as well. In other words, a positive transformation is being generated and inevitably this has to take into consideration the needs of today's consumer society and the peculiarities of local thinking, in analysing the forms of local knowledge and economic cooperation. All this has an inevitable element of pragmatism and anthropology, philosophy and applied social education.

Applied socio-cultural anthropology emphasizes cooperation with national, confessional, as well as local communities, non-governmental organizations (hereafter NGO) and clubs, specialized groups of consumers and subcultures. During such cooperation specific civil problems are being solved. Quite often applied and practical anthropology is associated with participatory democracy. The leader of contemporary pragmatic philosophy in the USA R. Rorty links participatory democracy with the Cultural left. The primacy of the political power of the citizens over the tradition or juridical precedents is promoted. The movement of participatory democracy implies a gradual liberation of people from alienated, dogmatised and canonized bureaucratic norms.[11] The ideas of participatory democracy, cooperative education and practical anthropology are based on a philosophy of pragmatism, which is why it is necessary to speak about modern pragmatic philosophical anthropology.

On the analytics of philosophical anthropology our approach is broader than Kant's. Anthropologic analytics covers all the analytic instrumentation. This is reasonably used by socio-cultural anthropology and its different branches such as political anthropology, psychological anthropology and poetic anthropology. Plenty of analysts encourage speaking methodically about analytical anthropology. This emphasizes the development of analysis, in some contrast to pragmatic anthropology which accents practical actions. First of all, I would mention the originator of the representatives of French political anthropology, Ch. Geffray. In 1968 he started his works connecting philosophy and socio-cultural anthropology and developed the objectives and methods of analytical anthropology. He appealed at that time to the methods of structural anthropology and psychoanalysis, as well as to reasonable Marxian critics close to the outlook of the Frankfurt social critical school. His main theses were connected with the issues of political anthropology. He understands analytical anthropology as a mediate discipline between social philosophy and anthropology, which is based on complex analytical attitudes and methods.[12]

Ch. Geffray analyzed the political organizations of Rwandan tribes', forms of abuse in the lives of Mozambiquan rebels and relationships between those who grow narcotics, drug peddlers and village communities in Africa who grow these products.[13] Ch. Geffray explored political

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[11] Rorty, R. *Achieving our country*. *Leftist thought in Twentieth–Century America*. Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1998, p.104. First of all Rorty stresses the liberation of the USA electional system giving up the specialized institution of "electors" and providing more and more rights to all the citizens of the USA.

[12] Christian Geffray (1954–2001) was a professor of the department of sociology at *Universite Laval* (Quebec, Canada). He analyzed political problems of citizens in Africa and the Amazon region, appealing to the researches of political anthropology, used the methods of Z. Freud and J. Lacan. A short bibliography of Ch. Geffray is: *Ni père ni mère. Critique de la parenté: le cas makhuwa*. Paris: Seuil, 1990; *La cause des armes au Mozambique. Anthropologie d'une guerre civile*. Paris: Karthala, 1990; *Chroniques de la servitude en Amazonie brésilienne*. Paris: Karthala, 1995; *Le nom du maître. Contribution à l'anthropologie analytique*. Strasbourg: Arcanes, 1997; "État, richesse et criminels". In *Mondes en Développement*, 2000, pp. 15–30; *Trésors. Anthropologie analytique de la valeur*. Strasbourg: Arcanes, 2001.

[13] Guillaud, Y. "La valeur des birens centre les hommes de valeur. Sur 'l'anthropologie analytique' de Christian Geffray". In *Anthropologie et sociétés. Politique, réflexivité, psychoanalyse*, 2001, vol. 25, no. 3.

organizations in primitive tribes in the Amazon, their interaction with broader civilization and analysed the forms of abuse and their symbolic justification. The aspect of analytical anthropology developed by Ch. Geffray, which covers classical issues of socio-cultural anthropology i.e. studies of primitive tribes and radical communities, might be applied successfully to modern society.

The analysis of fantasies and customs and of the symbolic life of communities opens the door to their pragmatic critics and related action. Here I would agree with the representatives of pragmatic cultural anthropology e.g. A. M. Ervin, who links the public activity of an anthropologist and case studies directly with practical, social cooperation:

This case study shows that policy oriented anthropological insights are more usefully communicated at the places in which policy is made rather than through academic outlets. Also, such insights need to be grounded in the contexts of actual community relations, human needs and program realities than in abstract generalizations.[14]

Analytical anthropology does not refuse to give the explanation of subcultures and the beliefs of esoteric and deviational groups, but uses methods of philosophy, psychoanalysis and anthropology to describe the social and cultural problems of modern society. Here the analysis attends to the codes of the semantics of black economy, the symbolic structures of clannish organizations, gift/bribery codes and their social meanings, the relation between social discours and meaning.

It should be noted that different philosophical and anthropological traditions understand differently analytic anthropology and the needs, intentions and wishes of a modern society. First of all, the word analytics determines a language turn, connected with the works by G. Frege, B. Russell, E. Moore, G. Ryle, J. Austin, L. Wittgenstein. Wittgenstein looked into the correlations among the meaning of a message, the particular situation and the language game and showed that the analysis of meaning and language applies not only to cases of symbolic logic and atomic statements, but to explaining a situation and its links with sense impressions, tradition, rituals, with industrial activity and the activities needed to reproduce and continue the life of a group or tribe. The situation engages both an observer and the observed as a unique whole, covers important mute realities (primarily the particular experiences of "tending" and mental undertones/*geistigen Underton*), and presupposes the existence of a particular meaning.

Anyone who observes me will know what I wanted to say something and then thought better of it. In this situation that is. – In a different one he would not so interpret my behaviour, however characteristic of the intention to speak it may be in the present situation.[15]

Two things are of importance here; the first is that mute realities are considered to be a part of the situation and the other one is that such analysis corresponds to what is done by case studies and postmodern anthropology. Of course, it would be naïve to associate traditional analytical reasoning forthright with anthropologic thick description and its hermeneutic interpretation. Writing of these grand anthropologic stories is impossible without the involvement of an anthropologist in the environment under study, without active cooperation. Here, the language

[14] Alexander, M. *Applied Anthropology: Tools and Perspectives for Contemporary Practice*. Boston/London: Allyn and Bacon, 2000, p. 53.

[15] Wittgenstein, L. *Philosophical Investigations.* The English Text of the Third Edition. Translated by G.E.M. Anscombe. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1968, p. 155e (591).

game itself is possible only in the presence of active, participant observation of an anthropologist. Participant observation, a pragmatic attitude and the openness due to initial variations later become a presumption of the next analysis. In this way the pragmatic, creative, poetic attitude and the identification of the relationship with the culture being studied appear firstly, followed by analytical and then pragmatic actions, thereby forming a specific practical, hermeneutic circle.

The linguistic turning point of philosophy, which emerged from logic and the situational analysis of language, hermeneutics and deconstruction, directly influenced the development of socio-cultural anthropology. This language turning–point in anthropology is related with the name of Cl. Geertz and the interpretative anthropology developed by him. He links classical socio-cultural anthropology with modern hermeneutics (H.G. Gadamer, J.P. Ricoeur) and the sociological models by T. Parsons and M. Weber written post-structural anthropology. This changed the explanation of complicated rituals and their symbols by more primitive interpretations of prejudice (J.G. Fazer's animism and fetishism), social Darwinian evolutionary levels (L.H. Morgan, H. Spencer) or simplified structures (e.g. Cl. Levi-Strauss). Avoidance of the hermeneutic attitude had discouraged understanding such complicated phenomenon as shamanism, taboo, propitiatory victims or fear of equality. Cl. Geertz rejects reductionism, and explains the quite complicated myths of primitive communities by substituting explanations through analogical complications which employ structures that are clearer and closer to our understanding, structures i.e. using the interpretative, comparative method of analogies which do not simplify the phenomenon. Cl. Geertz's interpretations are based on definition of culture, which gradually changed in his reasoning:

- it is valuably oriented action; the goal of anthropology then is to comment on the relationship to these values of people's actions and applied symbols;
- it is the whole of differently played games; in that case the most important thing is to describe the rules of these language games;
- it is a cobweb of particular texts, tangled by more and more confused human attitudes.

To that is why integrated research has to reveal a wide field of symbols and their usage. Cl. Geertz's anthropology seeks not to discover steady laws for the development of mankind, but to record and analyse the meanings and significances established in specific cultures, the rituals that motivate them, evidence of the configurations of their changes. He considered "thick description" to be true symbolic analysis wherein an anthropologist collects information and classifies the meanings according to the hierarchies of the attitudes towards these meanings. "Thick description" is the ultimate working out of a semantic field, based on active participation, of the attitudes of the relationship with the investigative culture. However, Cl. Geertz's interpretation clearly lacks a pragmatic project. Participation here stops short of active communication, game, the Wittgensteinian attitude towards language games. It will not be able to take account of the project of cooperation and the common actions of an anthropologist and the community spoken about by neo-Pragmatism.

Cl. Geertz quite often appeals directly to the L. Wittgenstein's philosophy, particularly generalizing the term "local knowledge":

Law, I have been saying, somewhat against the pretensions encoded in woolsack rhetoric, is local knowledge; local not as just to place, time, class and variety, but as to accent – vernacular

characterizations of what happens connected to vernacular imaginings of what can. It is this complex of characterizations and imaginings, stories about events cast in imagery about principles, that I have been calling a legal sensibility.[16]

Cl. Geertz's considerations are related with L. Wittgenstein not only as to situation and language game, but in its emphasis on suppressed or possible realities and form of life. F. Inglis mentions close links between modern anthropology and L. Wittgenstein's philosophy:

The anthropologist not only seizes the Wittgensteinian contention about ideas, passions and beliefs as not being "unobservable mental stuff" but as made manifest in signs and symbols, he also catches up gratefully the attendant figure of a "form of life".[17]

Cl. Geertz studies the "signs and symbols manifested" by emotions and passion using the attitude of *Weltanschauung* in seeking to analyse here the existing symbolical organizations. His follower, V. Turner, explains these symbols as operators of social processes, such that when put in particular order (especially rituals) vital social transformations take place. Symbols and rituals here are tools for changing the identity of social transformations. Turner points out, that symbolic rituals not only safeguard the consolidation of the new status and emphasize the transition, but also confirm existing social identities or the form of social solidarity. So, ritual symbols and rituals themselves are reproductive tools of social order. Turner formulates the main requirements for the conceptual wordbook of symbolic analysis, emphasizing the multiplicity of symbols and the condensation, unification and polarization of different meanings and situativity. Their analysis is the object of symbolic analytical philosophy.

M. Douglas supports Geertz' and Turner's ideas of symbolical and interpretational analysis. She accents the symbolism of body dirtying and cleansing as analogue and expression of social order and the rituals of institutionalism. The solution of sexual dangers (e.g. incest or menstruations) and sexual diversity is the premise of social structuralisation and hierarchisation. Vice versa, social order itself imposes hygienic requirements, which reflect on rituals. Ritual here being not only consecrations, but a part of education and the social reproductive mechanism.

Geertz and Turner point out that the fixation on ritual symbols and analysis changes due to the observer's involvement in the ritual. The observer's position makes the observed event indeterminate and its particular forms are given by the anthropologist himself, dialogue between the anthropologist and the observed, or the commentary of the observed. The indetermination of these relations in anthropology recalls the analogical situation in quantum physics, when the principles of the relationship between indetermination and statistic regularity were formulated academically for the first time when W. Heisenberg wrote about a principle of "indeterminacy", namely, "that it is impossible to determine the place and the speed of the atomic particle together at optional accuracy".[18] Physical measurements of micro-world phenomenon inevitably change the situation of the atomic particles' place and speed. Hence, the scientist cannot explore the micro-world with thorough objectivity, but has to be content with a "statistical regularity" that is conditioned by relationships of indeterminacy. On the other hand, W. Heisenberg points out, awareness of indetermincy and of the role of the scientist make possible other active scientific positions, far from derogating of the potential of science.

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[16] Geertz, Cl. Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretative Anthropology. Princeton: Basic Books, 1983, p. 215.
[17] Inglis, F. *Clifford Geertz: Culture, Gustams and Ethics*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000, p. 48.
[18] Heisenberg, W."*Atomforschung und Kausalgesetz"*. In *Universitas,* 1954, Jg. 9, Heft 3, s. 228.

Philosophical Neopragmatism and Modern Anthropological Projects

In developing modern anthropologic projects the active role of an anthropologist is very important. The participant observation links exploration with ideology, with the chosen way of interpretation. The indetermination of a situation allows one to speak not about laws, but about statistical regularities. Cl. Geertz, who indicated the change of the role of an anthropologist, nevertheless tried to avoid the positive, pragmatic creative implications that were encouraged by his discovery. The representatives of postmodern anthropology behave in a different way, e.g. Cl. James and R. Rosaldo, not only acknowledge "undetermination principle" in anthropology, but think that an anthropologist can use it in working out his maximally convincing and attractive (literary, artistically, factographycally) project of an observed phenomenon. One can paint and act with its help, offer it to the investigated community. In other words, the pragmatic attitudes nascent here, open the way to interactivity and dialogue, which essentially complement and modify the results of symbolic analysis.

Having mentioned postmodern anthropology it is necessary to identify its difference in comparison to prior anthropological research. E. Gellner describes this difference by pointing out the relationship between "Enlightenment rationalism" and "Postmodern relativism".[19] He criticizes the potential of postmodern relativism considering that neither philosophical consistency nor the natural science accumulation of knowledge are characteristic of it. In contrast to E. Gellner, postmodern relativism pointed out its links not with logic and the accumulation of natural science or information technologies, but with the interaction between new human communities: postcolonial, multicultural and appropriate thinking. Namely, postmodern attitudes not only open the door to the development of globalization, consumer society and restriction of national value validity, but safeguard the minimization of the effect of globalization and the survival of national values. E. Gellner refused to acknowledge the positivism of these characteristics and remained faithful to classical Kantian ideals of education: independence of mind and apodictic certainty.

It might seem that analytical anthropology is balancing between these two positions: a fundamentalism of education and a creative postmodern relativism. I suppose that this provides an excellent possibility to start speaking about a reasonable balance of these positions. R. Rorty's philosophy presents a creative balance of analytics and pragmatics, linking analytical philosophy, pragmatism, poetics and anthropology. If it is impossible to draw an absolutely objective picture of the observed phenomenon, it is necessary to work out its pragmatic project: develop the cooperation with the communities of the observed, strive for mutual benefit, faith and the increase of welfare. The anthropologists of the end of the 20th century in broadly discussing the propositions of R. Rorty and J. Derrida, clearly emphasized their own positions.[20]

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[19] Gellner, E. *Postmodernism, Reason and Religion.* London: Routledge, 1992, p. 12.

[20] There are plenty of examples of this discussion in e-magazine "Anthropoetics". E.g.: *Anthropoetics.* Pvz.: Meeker, S. "Utopia Limited: An Anthropology Response to Richard Rorty". In: *Anthropoetics IV,* no 2, Fall 1998 / Winter, 1999. http://www.humnet.ucla.edu/bumnet/anthropoetics/; Goldan P. "Christian Mistery and Responsibility: Gnosticism in Derrida's The Gift of Death". In: *Anthropoetics IV,* No l, Spring/Summer 1998; http://www.humnet. ucla.edu/ humnet/anthropoetics/.

Chapter XX
Philosophy in Lithuanian Education: Past and Present

Lilija Duobliene

The Problem of Philosophy Teaching

The philosophers who within the academic sphere discuss the didactics of philosophy are unanimous in the opinion that philosophy as a discipline taught at school is exceptional because of its specific features. As regards requirements, this school subject is not to be grouped with social or natural sciences, not even with the humanities, though philosophy belongs to this last set of disciplines. The theorists of didactics for philosophy maintain a sceptical view towards general teaching methods applicable to any subject, as to their mind philosophy in itself is more poetry than science. Though, most of the names given to the different teaching techniques are quite the same: exposition, lecture, analysis of texts, interpretation, and essays, still each of them has its particular philosophical traditions and therefore a specific meaning.

In general terms, one could speak of any philosopher as a teacher. Similarly, the history of philosophy could be defined as the history of how each philosophy teacher transmits his or her ideas to the students, and how the latter in their turn developed these thoughts with their personal contributions and pertinent amendments. Far back in the ancient times, we can see that philosophers of the olden days in presenting their ideas to those around them were already acting as teachers. They not only searched for personal wisdom, but their aim was also educational. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and later the patristic, the scholastic, and finally the modern and post-modern thinkers such as Heidegger, Wittgenstein, Derrida and so on are all considered the teachers and leaders. They are able to enliven the thought of their students, encourage them to follow their master's steps and to observe the truths their teachers have revealed or discovered. The way, in which the philosopher explained questions, sought for new answers to their own queries or to those of others, would show his or her particular teaching style. In other words, the leader's attitude, movement of thought, way of stimulating students' thoughts shaped respective models of philosophical thinking and behaviour. These could be called philosophical methods.

We could compare one of the oldest procedures among the Socratic elenchus of research methods with a Cartesian one: following this method, "walking in the dark" will eventually be made safe and thus one will avoid the danger of stumbling.[1] The Cartesian method differs from the Socratic in the fact that the latter focuses more on the actions (questions) of the leader, allotting less importance to the caution of the follower. The Socratic method would expect the student to answer every question and eventually reach with his own reason the tangible results foreseen by the teacher. Such intimidating behaviour from the part of the teacher would stimulate the student to take an active part in the dialogue. Contrastingly, the Cartesian method would encourage a different search: the student would have to be consistent in verifying every doubtful idea. However, each philosophy and the method of its respective teacher, with the clear aim of presenting an idea in the most persuasive fashion, would appear the best and only acceptable one for the corresponding philosopher. The technique chosen by every teacher to support his thoughts matches the etymological concept of method (*methodos* – a certain path to seek or a conscious way

[1] Platonas. *Dialogai.* Vilnius, 1971; Dekartas, R. *Rinktiniai raštai.* Vilnius, 1978.

of acting towards the achievement of a goal). In this sense, every philosophy teacher has his corresponding and distinctive method.

The analytical philosophy of L. Wittgenstein claims that there can be no one suitable philosophical method, but rather several methods, not to mention a variety of therapies.[2] The contemporary hermeneutist, H.G. Gadamer, draws his attention to and criticizes the groundless pretension of any method that claims to be the way to definitive knowledge.[3] In his opinion, such a claim is doomed to fail by the unavoidable variety of interpretations. According to him, even the Socratic question-answer method takes a very different shape, as questioning requires motivation rather than previously set goals by the teacher. Thus, neither can philosophizing be measured in the same terms entirely comprehensible to all, nor made "safe" by Cartesian proofs. Gadamer aims at individually understood truths. The peculiarities of each individual's understanding will depend on their experience, which always differs between the subjects doing the philosophy. A philosophical method based on such premises becomes an ocean of the most diverse interpretations and variations, which do not match the very concept of method. Even the practical method proposed by E.Husserl for the spiritual sciences, upon which the existentialists subsequently meditated, loses the typical or characteristic features attributed to a method.

Consequently, when referring to the teaching of philosophy, more importance is given to the individual's understanding and his way of retelling, to his authentic sensations, rather than to the original methods of the authors.

One such way is rewriting the end of a text, as suggested by the Lithuanian philosopher, T. Sodeika. Giving professional advice to Lithuanian teachers, he presented his new completion to Plato's allegory of the Cave in book VII of the *Republic*. A.N. Whitehead would wonder whether this is a "talking over marginal notes" of Plato's philosophy; we in turn could argue whether this is rather a post-modernist game. The task is in fact quite different: one is expected not to repeat someone else's abstract path of thought, completely detached from reality, but rather to move ahead, sidewards, or in whatever direction, as long as one goes his or her own way. Or to be more precise, in the case of a teacher, the goal is to show how to move on one's own. According to T. Sodeika, this would mean that no *apriori* division should be made between certain (things) and uncertain (shadows), as such separation would first be threatened by the textual truths.[4] The retelling of the one who has seen the light to those remaining in the Cave is the mere retransmission of a text that emerged and resulted from his experience. For those who have not undergone such vision, the text lacks vitality. Yet, the alteration of the end of a text made by T. Sodeika reveals a different purpose for philosophy, namely, to be in the first place, rather than just to understand how one is; or to see, rather than to listen, to how something is seen.

This philosopher, as well as others sharing an existentialist position, offers an innovative critical view of what a method is, regarding it as a way towards the achievement of an expected result. They do not stick to a unidirectional concept of the method of knowledge, and such a concept in the philosophical literature is sometimes expressed by the terms *way*,[5] or *game*.[6] These concepts are more oriented to the process than to the results of philosophical activity. That is, one thinks of philosophy in terms of a traditional philosophy, and not about the relationship between a

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[2] Vitgensteinas, L. *Rinktiniai rastai.* Vilnius, 1995.

[3] Gadamer, H.G. *Istorija, menas, tiesa*. Vilnius, 1999, Gadamer, H.-G. *Istina i metod.* Moskva, 1988.

[4] Sodeika, T. "Dialogas ir tekstas: pastabos Martino Buberio dialoginiu tekstu parastese". In *Baltos lankos.* Vilnius, 1999, nr. 11, pp. 5–43.

[5] Milerius, N. *Everyday World and the Self, Doctoral Thesis*. Vilnius, 2000.

[6] Derrida, J., Lyotard, J.– F., Foucault, M. and etc. texts.

philosopher and the pupils. Such a concept of teaching is then directed to the very process of authentic experience and singles out philosophy from among the other subjects. At the same time, it arouses some difficulties for the teacher who has to organize his course so as to make it suit other requirements previously set (e.g. analysing this or that text of Plato or Augustine).

There appears a certain concern here over the very meaning of didactics. Why should a student be "awakened" – as phenomenologists would put it – to make him understand and appreciate the world in a different way from the one suggested by Plato or Descartes or others? Why should he see it in his own way when it is known that the string of awakenings is endless? What is the purpose of looking for meanings in the texts of philosophers, if the variety of meanings is countless? Why should young people be taken to the thickets where there is no clear path such as the insights of the Cartesian mind would provide, but rather a scary, undiscovered wilderness? In such a case, who is responsible? Is the teacher supposed to answer by only "opening doors"? With a general look, this would be a question that concerns education, as it has to do with the psychological security of the pupils. The specific characteristic of philosophy is that it does not provide psychological comfort; it does not make one feel at ease. That is why the role of this subject in the school is far from aiming at caring for the student's safety. Rather, it is to take care of their needs to know themselves and shape their lives. Undoubtedly, the school is quite a limited space for the knowledge and contemplation of the experiences which are necessary for philosophical knowledge, unless the experiences of the teacher rather than the student are contemplated. Unfortunately such is the case more often than one would desire. So what is the task of philosophy at school? Is it to arouse an authentic existence or to teach the essences of already known verities, or simply to play text games?

Hermeneutist H.G. Gadamer and postmodernist J.F. Lyotard, who have given thorough consideration to the transmission of knowledge, say that what certainly matters in the process or way of putting thoughts into words and then understanding them is the addressee. If he or she is a particular person, and in this case we are talking about the student (not in the philosophical sense of the word, but rather in its social – institutional meaning), it is possible to keep to pre-planned attitudes with the aim of grasping the very fundamental ideas of the subject taught, which is already legitimated. J.F. Loytard analyses knowledge in didactics and states that didactics differs from any dialectical research game, inasmuch as here we have statements, "the arguments of which are typical of the pragmatic researchers, they are considered as satisfactory and that is why such statements may be transmitted as unquestionable truths".[7] Thereby, the process of education, which legitimates general truths, is disjoined from the process of scientific research. Therefore, it is obvious that in the process of education, despite some new schools of philosophy, usually a conservative hermeneutics is applied, which proposes that a common understanding of meanings is possible and that partly (in the sense of teaching the control of achievement) it might be linked with the conception of J.F. Lyotard's didactics, which suggests the repetition of known truths.

The initial stage of philosophical education is highly significant in shaping the relationship between a questioning or awakening person and the surrounding world. This phase also reveals a spectrum of diverse possibilities of perception. Every philosophy teacher proposes his own method trying in one way or another to apply already established traditions such as existentialism, positivism, postmodernism, and their hermeneutic apparatus. Subsequently, every process of teaching has its own stages and motion during which there maybe alterations in the limits and freedom of the contemplation or textual interpretation, which the teacher determines and the student senses.

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[7] Lyotard, J.-F. *Postmodernus buvis.* Vilnius, 1993, p. 64.

When we speak about a kind of philosophy that arouses the student and leads him to follow the teacher, we can say that the teacher has succeeded in getting through to the audience. This connection or rapport is of great importance in philosophy teaching and its forms may vary. According to A. Nehamas, who studied the phenomenon of Socrates as a teacher, the Socratic group of students was engaged due to two different reasons: his philosophy and his personality.[8] The point of view of contemporary philosophy as regards the rapport or connection established with the aim of *paidea*, stands for more than merely self-expression, discussion, questions and answers from all the participants in the process. The core of a teacher's rapport with his/her audience may be communication that is indirectly (verbally or visually) expressed communication, which brings about a response from the students in the form of attention, openness, mood alteration, etc. That is why the student's involvement in the teaching process, his awakening for philosophy is not only a consequence of self-confidence of the part of the teacher, but also a result of his vulnerable carriage, accompanied by the feeling that, should he make any wrong move, all might go astray. The possibility that the rapport may fail implies the fragility of a teaching model supported by methodological principles, but is then put to the test when authentic action takes over the theory. So the teacher-guide from this contemporary perspective is not only the conveyor of philosophical theories and its methods created by others, but also a guide who follows a path between those methods, the control of knowledge, and, on the other hand, a genuinely philosophical standpoint.

Another side of the problem of philosophical didactics is the preservation of the peculiarity of this school subject within the discipline, as philosophy is becoming more and more a field that integrates all kinds of subjects. Philosophical didactics is very frequently and mistakenly associated with the teaching of critical thinking, civil instruction, ethics, and other subjects, which are also relevant for education. But this leads to confining the real aspects of philosophical knowledge of the world and man to the margins, depriving the student of a closer experience of philosophy. The opinions of experts on the question of the contents philosophy at school are also varied. Some think that philosophy in the school is superfluous or should be integrated into other subjects, while others regard it as an important subject. M. Oakeshott spoke about the importance of philosophy in creating a liberal school, and gave some examples of schools that include this discipline in their curriculum. According to him, even outdated dialogues of philosophers can still be of some benefit, at least for the sake of information, as they show that it is possible to think differently than when studying other traditional subjects such as mathematics or geography. It is possible to unfold the diversity of contexts and worlds as a consequence of thinking. So, "learning to think is not merely learning how to judge, to interpret and to use information, it is learning to recognize and enjoy the intellectual virtues".[9] The author rejects the possibility of only one method, as every mind learns individually depending on the surrounding world and the stimuli it receives. The Lithuanian philosopher J. Baranova presents other equally important arguments for philosophy teaching at secondary school. Agreeing with the neo-pragmatist, R. Rorty, she says, "In an Italian or French lyceum philosophy is part of the curriculum. That is how generations develop an ability to understand J. Derrida. Meanwhile, an English audience, which does not study philosophy at school, is unable to read and understand J. Derrida, since they are unable to understand allusions".[10] Therefore, she hopes that Lithuania will choose the French model.

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[8] Oakeshott, M. *The Voice of Liberal Learning.* New Haven, 1989, p. 60.
[9] Oakeshott, M. *The Voice of Liberal Learning.* New Haven, 1989, p. 60.
[10] Baranova, J. "Pirmoji disertacija apie filosofijos didaktika". In *Problemos,* Vilnius, 2001, pp. 150–152.

After the long period of Soviet occupation, Lithuania started to think about restoring philosophy teaching in the school curriculum, as this subject had fallen into oblivion during that time. Soon the first proposals of Lithuanian philosophers were put forward for new programmes and textbooks. These were the first visions that hid inside methodological drafts. Some proposed that vision as an analytical way towards the knowledge of the world. E. Nekrasas, university lecturer at the faculty of Philology, presented this idea[11] and published a textbook *Introduction to Philosophy*. Another textbook named *The Silence of Transcendence* was written by a torchbearer of existentialism, A. Sliogeris.[12] The relationship with the world and its objects that A.Sliogeris proposes is rather a world of existentially sensed objects and phenomena. However, these two books were assessed appropriate for university studies rather than for secondary school. It is worth mentioning that E. Nekrasas had that audience in mind when he wrote his books, but due to the lack of textbooks, his work was used in secondary schools. The case of A. Sliogeris' book, though originally written for secondary school, was afterwards rejected by experts and considered too difficult and eventually was published for university studies. Some programmes did appear. J. Baranova's and R. Serpytyte's programme suggests the interpretation of philosophy texts, while T. Sodeika's programme offers the teaching of man and phenomenological understanding. The first programme was approved and printed under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, whereas the second one was put onto the shelves for a long time. These were the first attempts of Lithuanian philosophers to spread their teaching and methods in a country going through the very process of formation. Eventually, they were consolidated in further philosophical trends.

Three Models for Philosophy Teaching

In the Lithuanian tradition of teaching philosophy, there are three evident tendencies, judging from the organized seminars, publications and textbooks available. The first one is the teaching of philosophical traditions by textual interpretation, suggested by J. Baranova and R. Serpytyte. The second one, by L. Degesys, is based on critical thinking; and the third one, developed by T. Sodeika, focuses on how to be authentic and behave accordingly. The first is backed up by hermeneutic and existential positions, the second one by a pragmatic point of view from J. Dewey's thought and teaching model, nowadays expressed in the American School of philosophy teaching, founded and developed by M. Lipman and spread over the world. Sodeika's model is based on phenomenological and dialogical view and in some sense on the Eastern tradition of meditation. Why are the two-second traditions less popular in Lithuania than the first?

For a broader understanding of this situation, it is very useful to analyse the philosophy syllabus. There was no general curriculum till now. Teachers could work according to their individual program. The Ministry experts approved only one course outline, written by the two mentioned philosophers R. Serpytyte and J. Baranova. Philosophy students of the Pedagogical University and those on re-qualification programs were taught the same courses, that is, following the approved syllabus. The result was that teachers were trained under the same program they would afterwards apply in their teaching. Therefore, those teachers who graduated having completed these studies of higher philosophical education have used this course outline, whereas others have used their own syllabus. Many of the non-professional philosophy teachers rather impart a course on history of philosophy. The plan of studies offered by J. Baranova and R.

[11] Nekrasas, E. *Filosofijos ivadas.* Vilnius, 1993.
[12] Sliogeris, A. *Transcendencijos tyla*. Vilnius, 1996.

Serpytyte was very certainly based on the discussion of problems or issues. It requires deep understanding of the main philosophical schools from the very beginnings (ancient and medieval philosophy) until contemporary traditions and a certain store of philosophical insights. In a few words, it meant regular philosophy study at the level required of college students. According to the syllabus, this subject is applied in XI – XII classes and its content is presented in eight parts:

XI form: 1. Introduction to philosophy. What is philosophy? 2. Being (questions from an ontological perspective) 3. Cognition (questions from gnosiological perspectives). 4. Where is history going? (Philosophy of history)

XII form: 5. Philosophy of religion; 6. What is goodness? (Philosophical ethics); 7. What is beauty? (Aestethics); 8. Moral and politics (some aspects of the philosophy of politics).[13]

Reading texts and special questions are assigned for each part. Firstly, one can find arousing questions for students, which stir up discussion about their own experience in a particular problem and after that questions for teachers. The latter serve to give teachers some ideas about how to guide students in their work with texts. The aim of this syllabus is, according to its authors, "to foster students self-thinking, their courage and abilities to express their thoughts and to listen to others. Philosophy lessons are a suitable place for conversations and discussions, where no one is either right or wrong, but rather where everyone discusses the questions raised".[14] These discussions lead to formulate many new questions, which eventually will emerge from the living experience, text interpretation and conversation.

The course outline for the history of philosophy is easier than the one offered by J. Baranova and R. Serpytyte, which requires a deep analysis of questions, so there is less place for deviation. Philosophy teaching research has shown that teachers with higher education only choose the syllabus recommended by the Ministry of Education whereas most of the others would follow a self-made program.[15] Thus, one may draw the conclusion that in order to teach the history of philosophy there is no special required qualification. At least that is what teachers think.

Do educational experts want to unify the curricula? Obviously they do, but not a strictly applied curricula in details, but only as frames. Unfortunately, so far there is no systematized scheme of ideas for the teaching of philosophy and experts should be aware of this. Therefore, the only prevailing syllabus in the teaching of philosophy in Lithuania is the outline arranged by J. Baranova and R. Serpytyte. The main problem that teachers working accordingly to this programme face is the lack of teaching means. For instance, there is a selection of texts in ethics, which is only one part of the subject of philosophy. Then there is a methodology of questions for political philosophy,[16] and a serious study based on the philosophy of history, but this last study is only used in universities.[17]

In A Reader for *Philosophical Ethics* for XI – XII forms[18] arranged by J. Baranova there is a series of texts of normative ethics; questions and suggestions to work with the texts are published in a separate book, the same way as was done with the publication on political philosophy. To make the thoughts of the authors more concrete and actual, the author of the compilation recommends starting the studies from ordinary conversational topics, then expressions of opinions on the matters under consideration and exchange of personal experiences. The shift onto the theory

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[13] Serpytyte, R., Baranova, J. "Filosofija mokykloje". In *Mokykla*, Vilnius, 1994, nr. 8.
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 21.
[15] Duobliene, L.*Teaching Philosophy in Secondary School: Formation of Thinking, Doctoral thesis*. Vilnius, 2000.
[16] Baranova, J. *Politine filosofija.* Vilnius, 1995.
[17] Baranova, J. *Istorijos filosofija.* Vilnius, 2000.
[18] *Filosofines etikos chrestomatija XI-XII klasems*, ed. J. Baranova. Vilnius, 1998.

that is presented in the book should take place only when the students are unable to solve a certain question and become interested in what the philosophers think about it. The proposal to raise genuine questions reminds us of the contemporary hermeneutics text on reading the tradition, but the structure of the presentation of questions and the questions themselves indicate that the philosopher's school should be eventually recognised. Since there are questions suggested for almost every paragraph, this gives place to studying and analysing the texts, teaching one to understand them and to identify the ideas of the analysed philosopher. Such a work demands high qualification on the part of the teacher; thus the author has already generated a teacher's book, in which the reader's texts are interpreted.

Teaching thinking, mostly supported by Lipman's style of teaching in his program of *Philosophy for children* is not adopted by Lithuanian philosophers and its methodology is questioned by many of them. So it can be offered only as an alternative. In spite of that, many teachers ultimately took up this method, first implemented in Lithuanian education by L. Jekentaite and continued by other philosophers. Now it has been modified by L. Degesys and R. Askinyte and issued as a method on critical thinking, the application of which has proved successful over all Lithuania schools (mostly in younger forms). This accomplishment can be attributed to the effective textbook they wrote, called *Ethics for 7-9 grades* and to a lot of seminars on how to work with it which were held all over Lithuania. In the preface of this book the authors have written: "The present textbook of ethics invites you to work creatively, but at the same time it requires accuracy in analysing a particular topic, supported by a table provided to check what the problem is (for example, the part and the whole, cause and effect), the level of analysis (for example, I and I or I and They), and what the aspect is (for example, psychological or philosophical)".[19] This shows that their teaching methods emphasize definitions, arguments, searching for criteria, identifying objects, etc. The attractiveness of their method lies in using new technologies as well. They have prepared teaching material on CDs, which is very new in the Lithuanian context.

T. Sodeika's method fails to reach schools directly because it lacks a closer contact with a broader circle of teachers. There is no prepared material for teachers, so the information can be passed on only through oral tradition, by word of mouth. There are no publications, except one foreign magazine, which is unknown to Lithuanian teachers and even professors. In these articles he tries to develop the idea of teaching philosophical thinking as reflection *par excellence* and finally he takes a completely different direction, based on the philosophy of M. Heidegger and G. Steiner. In the last passage he writes: "Experiential contents are not simply to be grasped by our minds. It requires hard work, which, however, can't be reflective in dealing with general notions, ultimate principles, judgements, reasoning etc. The required 'effort' is rather the 'allowing' ourselves to feel the subtle indications of direction where the stream of our consciousness floats in, allowing oneself to drift in that direction, allowing oneself to abandon one's preconceptions about what one is going to find. Such an 'allowing' opens the doors for philosophising as a kind of "learning by heart". Of course, not in the sense of learning philosophical texts by heart, but in the sense of meditative exercise that "generates a shaping reciprocity between ourselves and that which the heart knows".[20] This subtle tradition of T. Sodeika seemed unprepared for teaching and in some case was treated among teachers as a secret, though very often mentioned in educational discussions.

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[19] Degesys, L., Askinyte, R. *Etika 7–9 klasems*. Vilnius, 2000, p. 7.

[20] Sodeika, T. "On Reflection and Experience in Philosophy, Inquiries Concerning Philosophy". In *Teaching, Baltic Sea Colloquium Papers,* 1994, Helsinki, 1995, no. 1, p. 48.

A new textbook called *Philosophy* has been recently issued, following the programme arranged by T. Sodeika,[21] who wrote it in cooperation with J. Baranova. In this textbook a compromise has been found, as work with the text is combined with discussions, and meditations based on personal experience. Textual interpretation, discussion and meditation together make a so-called triangle of movement in which every element complements and consolidates the other. Descriptions of each of the three components are also clearly provided. For a wider understanding of them, texts about interpretation (W. Dilthey), discussion (K. Jaspers) and meditation (J.B. Lotz) are suggested as well. Ten principles are formulated to explicate meditation. Then the book includes texts for analysis with the following structure: anthropology, human phenomena and human institutes. As regards its content, this book should fulfil all needs that previous publications failed to cover. Eventually, the conception of Sodeika will finally reach students and teachers as printed materials.

Retrospectivity of Philosophy Teaching in Lithuania

Philosophy teaching in Lithuanian contemporary secondary school is a relatively new thing. In Soviet times philosophic ideas were kept under control by a state ideology and there was only one way to teach philosophy: teaching Marxism and Leninism. As a discipline or subject in the secondary school under Soviet regime Philosophy was given the name "Science of society".

This fact can be dealt with from two perspectives. On the one hand, it meant a disadvantage, because students were instructed in a materialistic and dogmatic view of the world. On the other hand, this subject provided an opportunity to introduce other philosophical traditions, which were formally considered incorrect, as they did not respond to the only suitable ideology of a socialistic society. Other traditions were interpreted and discussed with the aim of showing their "negative" features. In any case, one could clearly perceive a different standpoint of the understanding of man and the world.

If we try to plunge deeper into the past as far back as to the independent Lithuanian teaching tradition between the two World Wars, we find that philosophy was a compulsory subject in the humanitarian classes of secondary school. The curricula of that time included ontology, epistemology, ethics, aesthetics, religion, logic, psychology, but this list of contents was a mere formality. All that students were taught was basically logic and psychology. Meanwhile, the teaching of philosophy in the school was very seriously discussed by great Lithuanian philosophers of that time, many of whom had taken studies in other European countries and had brought various ideas from famous universities into the Lithuanian teaching context. The great Lithuanian philosopher of existentialism A. Maceina (1908-1987) was involved in this schooling problem as well. He criticized the current syllabus for the discipline of philosophy and arranged a new one, with two different approaches, one for humanitarian classes and another for those taking empirical sciences. Unfortunately, this innovative course outline was not adopted.[22] Nevertheless, his initiative was very important for the formation and further discussion about philosophy teaching among specialists.

That period was quite enriched by the emerging philosophical schools in the world, whose influence reached Lithuanian philosophy as well. But this stage in the history of the development

[21] Sodeika, T., Baranova, J. *Filosofija XI-XII kl.* Vilnius, 2002.

[22] Duobliene, L. "Filosofijos propedeutika tarpukario Lietuvos skirtingø tipø mokyklose". In *Pedagogika*, Vilnius, 2000, Nr. 47, pp.138–148.

of Lithuanian thought in some way reminds us of the Soviet times in the sense that new ideas were kept under tight rein to avoid their spread in secondary schools. This can be easily noticed by studying the Lithuanian press of that time. There were several publications, which expressed their disapproval of new philosophical ideas. They criticized Heideggerian philosophy, as giving a too dangerous and tolerant standpoint of the theory of S. Freud, as a very vulgar philosophy of the *libido*, which was not good for the sound moral instruction of students. Education in those times was based on the neo-Thomistic concept of the world and the human being.

Nowadays the atmosphere in this regard is rather liberal: no strong traditions, but attempts from our philosophers to find the way or even many ways, which would suit our schools. We can discover some frames of a new tradition, step by step establishing a kind of axis for our philosophy teaching. But such openness to others' suggestions from time to time raise unpredictable propositions, which have to be integrated into a whole body of ideas. Other difficulties arise because there is neither a normal status nor the necessary respect for this subject. In spite of that, Lithuanian philosophers are concerned about the educational process in the senior secondary school classes and are trying to systematize the teaching of philosophy at this level. What is being done in this direction?

The first step in order to re-include the discipline of philosophy into the general school curricula was taken by two philosophers of Vilnius Pedagogical University, Jurate Baranova and Rita Serpytyte, who organized re-qualification courses for philosophy teachers and at the same time (1994) prepared a syllabus of philosophy for secondary school classes. This was the beginning of an intensive period in creating a Lithuanian style of teaching and implementing this subject in schools. In 1996 there was founded the Lithuanian Philosophy teachers' association, which gathered Philosophy teachers and professors from Universities. This meant a significant promotion for the pioneers of philosophy teaching, mostly in a psychological sense, because the first teachers started to work in schools on their own initiatives, without any general strategy or reference points.

Such initiatives were a real success and at the same time brought about an uncontrolled situation, which very often resulted in a profanation of this subject. However, it was just a mere beginning and the main thing in this situation was that the first step had been taken. Teachers were used to working with philosophical ethics as an alternative to religion, because philosophy was not a discipline included in the general curricula. In other cases school authorities included philosophy discipline in the curriculum as an optional subject, though there were still few schools that did so. It was implemented as the outcome of a not clearly defined educational reform, made in times marked by eagerness to innovate, as were the last decade of the 20th century (right after the proclamation of the independence in 1991).

In 1997 the Philosophy Teachers Association set up the School of young philosophers. This institution worked closely with the association for a few years, holding three-day seminars about different metaphysic questions twice a year. Students from various towns of Lithuania enrolled in this school, attended the seminars and during the time between these meetings were expected to do self-study on the great philosophers by themselves. Many interesting lecturers, among them, philosophers and newly prepared teachers – were invited to introduce old and new ideas to these inquisitive Lithuanians. A. Sliogeris, A. Jokubaitis, T. Sodeika, R.Serpytyte, J. Baranova, N. Lomaniene, A. Samalavicius, L. Degesys, D. Baceviciute, R. Melnikova, R. Totoraitis, L. Duobliene, D. Karciauskiene worked in these seminars on a permanent basis. So far two schools of this sort have been organized and young philosophers are waiting for others. In the spring of 1997, the first philosophy Olympiads took place and that immediately became a tradition. The leaders of this competition have participated in the international Olympiads of philosophy in

Latvia, Austria, Poland and other countries. The increasing level of philosophy knowledge in our students is an obvious proof of the better situation of philosophical education in Lithuanian schools. Nevertheless, the teaching of philosophy in schools still is in a transitional period.

Current Situation: Teachers' Qualification and Textbooks

How can we give an accurate picture of the subject of philosophy and its problems nowadays? Philosophy is now an optional subject; among the social disciplines, students can choose philosophy, psychology or take up studies on the world religions. Moral education is compulsory, but students still have a choice: either ethics or religion. Very often teachers teach philosophy instead of ethics because of the limited number of teaching hours per week. But in fact what they basically teach is ethics. According to data obtained three years ago, philosophy was taught only in 30 schools in Lithuania. However, there are no grounds to expect that the number of schools and of students who may opt for the study of philosophy will increase, owing to the ineffective experiment carried out by the Lithuanian educational system. There is no point in giving the students the possibility to choose among certain optional subjects if afterwards there are no suitable conditions to study them. A lot of re-qualified philosophy teachers, prepared by several universities, such as Vilnius University, Vilnius Pedagogical University, the University of Vytautas the Great from Kaunas and others, have no job in schools. The main reason is that it is practicably impossible to get lessons, due to the fact that the amount of schooling hours stated and financially supported by the national system does not leave any room for the teaching of philosophy; in other words, there are no financial resources to pay for the extra hours.

We can suppose that the teaching of ethics has become more professional, at least in the senior classes, where ethics means in the vast majority philosophical ethics. In 1991, at the beginning of the reform in our country, most ethics and philosophy teachers were teachers of other subjects (exact sciences, literature, history etc.), who had not attended any special course for philosophy teaching. According to research done in 1998, the average age of all responding teachers was 42 years old and their seniority, 16 years. But their experience in philosophy or ethics teaching hardly reached 4 years.[23] Most of the philosophy teachers were self-taught, about one-third of them had taken courses of re-qualification and only 10 percent were suitably prepared to teach in high school. The situation has changed, as regards specialists, but problems still exist. The present situation can be defined as not very good for the development of philosophy teaching ideas because of two problems. One is the increasing number of re-qualified teachers, because universities are preparing philosophy teachers. Besides it is becoming more and more difficult to find schools where philosophy is offered as a subject or to find a job as an ethics teacher, because the older generation, though neither very competent nor skilled, does not want to give up their places for new teachers. The second problem is the students' interest for philosophy, which is rather low. Often it is seem merely as a subject for sophistication, or as being clear only for a few students. If less than 7 students choose this optional subject, the lesson cannot be taught. Very often this minimum required is reached, but then the school administration does not let this subject be taught because it does not fit in the daily schedule of school hours. Sometimes philosophy exists only as an optional and extra-curricular discipline.

[23] Duobliene, L. "Filosofijos mokymas siuolaikineje Lietuvos mokykloje". In *Acta paedagogica vilnensia*, Vilnius, 2000, nr.7, pp. 153 –162.

From the beginning of the Lithuanian educational reform in the 90s, a lot of new translated textbooks appeared. Such free choice of teaching material has led to a sea of misunderstandings and digressions, as teachers – more often than one would like – have not been able to assess the suitability of the textbooks or felt at a loss when it came to choosing the right one. As a result, they have been working with inappropriate material, even with such as not approved by experts. The problem was not only translated textbooks, but textbooks of Lithuanian authors as well. Some articles about them were written (L. Degesys, L. Jakavonyte, L. Duobliene). A special seminar about newly printed material for philosophy teaching was organized in the Department of Philosophy of Pedagogical University. Students, teachers and professors discussed the issue of textbooks, content and structure and permission to use them in our schools. According to research done in 1998, most teachers preferred M. Furst, *J. Trinks Philosophy*.[24] This textbook of German and Austrian writers is very popular in other countries. It was evaluated by our experts and considered not very well structured. Some expressions lack accuracy (which can be the fault of translators). But the experts admitted that the passages of original texts were very appropriate, as well as those corresponding to the thoughts of the textbook authors. Besides, it contains very modern illustrations and productions of famous painters. Another textbook very often used by teachers is *Through the World of Ideas,*[25] written by British authors W. Reaper, L. Smith. This work is easy to read and understand. The main disadvantage is that this book does not comply with the criteria of a philosophy textbook, because it presents mixed themes of philosophy, psychology and religion (even something similar to parapsychology). The popularity of the book can be explained by the large number of copies in circulation. Most school libraries have this book, even one copy for each student, whereas of other books one hardly finds ten copies on the shelf of school libraries. Many teachers use the books by A. Anzenbacher *Introduction to Philosophy*[26] and Introduction to ethics.[27] That shows rather high qualification in the part of teacher, because this textbook is undoubtedly of high standard. It can be used as a dictionary or mini encyclopaedia to check and clarify some vague ideas. Not so popular is the textbook of the Lithuanian author A. Plesnys *Introduction to philosophy*,[28] as it is "a poor compilation" in philosopher L. Degesys' words. Teachers use for their lessons G. Mikelaitis textbook *Lithuanian Philosophical Thought*[29] and Norwegian, J. Gardner's novel *The Word of Sophia*.[30] Research shows that teachers very often work with original texts.

Now Lithuanian teachers have more textbooks: J. Baranova's textbook of philosophical ethic contains many original texts, presenting different traditions of normative ethic. There is a special textbook with questions for the analysis of texts,[31] and a special textbook, *Ethics: Philosophy as Practice*, written by J. Baranova for teachers, where the author interprets original texts on special problems.[32] We have a translation of M. Lipman's *Mark*[33] (though it is not exactly meant for

[24] Furst, M., Trinks, J. *Filosofija.* Vilnius, 1996.
[25] Reaper, W., Smith, L. *Po ideju pasauli.* Vilnius, 1995.
[26] Anzenbacher, A. *Filosofijos ivadas.* Vilnius, 1994.
[27] Anzenbacher, A. *Etikos ivadas.* Vilnius, 1995.
[28] Plesnys, A. *Filosofijos ivadas.* Vilnius, 1997.
[29] *Lietuvos filosofine mintis,* ed. G. Mikelaitis. Vilnius, 1998.
[30] Gardner, J. *Sofijos pasaulis.* Vilnius, 1995.
[31] Baranova, J. *Metodines rekomendacijos mokytojui, dirbanciam pagal "Filosofines etikos chrestomatija XI – XII kl*". Vilnius, 2000.
[32] Baranova, J. *Etika: filosofija kaip praktika.* Vilnius, 2002.
[33] Lipman, M. *Markas.* Vilnius, 1999.

philosophy, but rather for civic education) and from the same series *Liza*,[34] addressed to younger students (7th form). A similar style can be found in the textbook *Ethics* for younger classes written by L. Degesys and R. Askinyte, but in some sense we can call it a textbook for teaching how to do philosophy. Another good new book, recently translated and which may be suitable for studying at school is *Philosophical Atlas*[35] and some other less popular books. Two new textbooks on philosophical ethics written by J. Baranova appeared just now: *Philosophical Ethics: Me and You* (for 10-11 grades) and *Philosophical Ethics: Meaning and Freedom* (for 12 grade).

Student's Interest for Philosophy and Their Abilities.

As teachers have mentioned, students are not very interested in this subject, which is quite normal, if we bear in mind how pragmatically oriented is our contemporary society. According to a questionnaire for teachers where they expressed their opinion about students' results, their appreciation of students' performance in this subject is good and occasionally excellent (this assessment was done by each teacher with no standardized system, because there are no assessment criteria for this). All optional subjects and moral education (ethics) were also assessed in terms of completion of the course.

The teachers' questionnaire shed light on other interesting facts as well. The students' interest is rather average and the correlation of their interest with their learning level is often paradoxical: high interest, but only regular results. That means that their capacity is rather limited or we can say, that students' expectations for this subject are not realized, so their results are rather low. The same research shows that students' main motivation for choosing philosophy is their wish to discuss, then to understand the world better, and only in the third place to understand philosophy as such. It is possible to treat the second motivation as choosing philosophy for its own sake as well. The first motivation is rather a question of method. The research that has served as grounds for this article was done with correspondents of 11th and 12th forms, who chose philosophy. Their teachers were also surveyed.

Some of these students took part in another survey in 1999, where the main task was to analyse how students understand the original texts of philosophers.[36] The research showed that pupils' reasoning is generally good, and proved that texts are comprehensible for them: they can understand the context, find the presuppositions of the author studied, and comprehend the problem raised in the text. Nevertheless, when students reason, they do not base themselves on previous experience; they cannot adequately make inferences nor distinguish the different philosophical viewpoints. There is a serious problem with the right use of concepts when they come across a more difficult text. They think in a more analytic way when they examine the philosophical text themselves, rather than when listening to what the teacher tells about it. They are able to analyse a text, but are more used to adopting the information provided by the teachers.

The problem is students' abilities to work with modern texts. They manifested understanding in the interpretation of such classic texts as: Plato, Aristotle, A. Augustine, R. Descartes, and other more difficult texts of D. Hume and I. Kant. The most problematic sources were texts by S. Kierkegaard, F. Nietzsche. According to this research, the main gap in philosophy teaching is teaching contemporary philosophy. It is not simple to understand existential experience and the existential standpoint in the world. That should be a reminder of the special attention required by

[34] Lipman, M. *Liza.* Vilnius, 2000.
[35] *Filosofijos atlasas.* Vilnius, 2000.
[36] Duobliene, L. *Teaching Phylosophy in Secondary School: Formation of Thinking. Doctoral thesis.* Vilnius, 2000.

contemporary philosophy in philosophy lessons. Though admittedly classical traditions are worth studying, the school in our days cannot be distinct from a contemporary viewpoint on the world.

As T. Sodeika puts it, this problem arises from incorrect methods. Text interpretation for understanding the author studied is, in his opinion, only one way, and not the best one, to teach philosophy. He suggests a phenomenological or dialogic method that lets the person see things as they gradually appear to him and thus leading students to a better understanding of the existentialists. This means that the path should go not from texts and traditions to the living world, but rather from the living world and being to talking, performing, reading and interpreting.

Efforts to Balance Philosophy Teaching

There is then an air of confusion and difference of opinions, but this is only natural for a nation still in the process of change and at a moment of transition, with no deep traditions of philosophy teaching. Senior classes are now under reform. As schools are being re-organized with a more clear orientation as regards subject choice by areas (exact sciences, humanities, etc.) there was a plan to offer a school where many philosophy subjects would be imparted, such as philosophy of culture, philosophy of language, philosophy of politics, logic and many others. The idea sounds very attractive, but our expectations decreased, because of changes in our educational system, which are unfortunately too dependent on financial support. The meagre allowance for philosophy teaching implies that it is not feasible to arrange lessons for small groups of students, nor is it possible to provide them with premises and textbooks, or to solve the problem of the limited amount of teaching hours available for philosophy teachers.

Efforts now are being made to prepare a general syllabus for philosophy teaching in senior classes, but different opinions are still discussed. The syllabus project for ethics teaching, which is also based on philosophy, has been completed. The philosophical aspects of this course outline correspond to the contents of ethics in the above-mentioned program by J. Baranova. Every theme of philosophical normative ethic: wisdom, patience, forgiveness, love, sense of life (and so on) could afterwards be studied from a psychological point of view and then as an applied ethics. The authors of this syllabus took into consideration the wishes and capacity of teachers, as well as those of their students, who are more willing to deal with topics in a very ordinary way, using different resources from everyday life, mass media and so on. Anyway, this comprehensive syllabus emphasizes the philosophical tradition.

Attempts to re-arrange philosophy teaching require certain standards as well: What is necessary are to be known and what abilities are to be fostered if one expects good results? This is a crucial question nowadays. The process started from creating standards for ethics. May be it will be useful for other branches of philosophy, too. The assessment of students' ability is carried out following the existential, hermeneutic and reasonable thinking standpoints. Standards will allow checking students and even teachers and giving philosophy and ethics the higher status they deserve. Some educators strongly object to systematic teaching, as they disapprove of standardized grades for the evaluation of the acquired knowledge, especially in subjects such as philosophy or ethics. Anyway, we can look at teaching traditions in other countries where philosophy courses are assessed by means of final examinations and marking according to very strict requirements.

All this reconsideration of philosophy teaching and its development has resulted in a tendency to hold new seminars to confirm or to deny the implementation of teaching ideas in schools. Every year there are seminars for schools where clearly defined subject choices are offered by areas. Most often, in such schools philosophy and ethics are included in the curricula. Some seminars are

organized for specific lectures in the educational departments of different towns of Lithuania (traditionally, seminars on ethics). Recently a seminar was held to discuss a very crucial problem: the manner of life of Lithuanian youth. This special seminar was called "Prevention of self-destruction". R. Serpytyte, J. Baranova, N. Milerius, L. Duobliene were among the lecturers. Their presentations focused on fear, suicide, caring relationship with the world, self-control and others. R. Serpytyte and N. Milerius used visual technologies, aids to depict the ascetical life and the relationship between the self and habits in the everyday world. This seminar showed that having a philosophical view is very useful not only for philosophy teachers, but for literature and religion teachers too. Most of the people in the audience were teachers of these subjects.

It is obvious that a deep rapport between schoolteachers and professors is quite complicated, as the former seek very specific and applicable methods, whereas the latter tend to be more theoretical. When this two fronts meet, teachers understand that there is a particular methodology for the presentation of each philosophical trend, as each of them is based on a different tradition. One cannot speak of general methods *valid for all.* As long as Lithuanian philosophy teachers fail to identify their work in the school with their students interests, this gap between professors' expectations and teachers' practical work will remain as deep as it is nowadays. It would not be right to say that a professor knows how to work in the school. It is better to say that professors know what is not philosophy. They are concerned about this subject and allow various modifications of material. But at the same time it is only natural that they struggle to avoid further deviations. In some cases this protectiveness was stirred up by the increasing number of under-qualified teachers.

Finally, we refer back to the thought developed at the beginning of this study: the problem of hermeneutics, which arises when taking into consideration the conception and method of philosophy as a discipline. Nevertheless, there has been a change of focus in the discussion, which has moved from the teacher – student position, to the teacher-theoretic front regarding the solutions that are being sought to this problem. It is obvious that hermeneutical discourse cannot be dissociated from education and is able to help to solve pedagogical problems. A proficient professor who does not work in a school, and a schoolteacher who lacks guidelines, are two sides of a dialogue that is incapable of overcoming the different boundaries of knowledge and experience. So who is the teacher: a person who takes part in the process of teaching, its tradition and its development, or a person who creates his own paradigms? It is a problem that the theorists's and pragmatists of the teaching of philosophy are trying to solve. Thus, we should remember a thought of R. Rorty and M. Oakeshott: "the dialogue of humankind continues".