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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Articles

Book reviews

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Articles

BIOTECHNOLOGICAL CREATIONS, LIFE AND THE STATE OF INDISTINCTION

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Abstract:

Humanity is at crossroads of evolution. Modernity has established its omnipresence through science and technology. The impact is so significant that now it has penetrated our genetic structure through biotechnological creations. This brings into question the very foundation of the ideological life on which the edifice of the social structure is built. These new modalities raise unprecedented issues, such as: what is our understanding of life in relation to biotechnological creations, where is the original biological life positioned in such circumstances, why is life in a "state of indistinction" (as identified by Giorgio Agamben in the homo sacer), and is it a compromise at "being human"?

Key words: Biotechnological embryo, homo sacer, state of indistinction, zoe-bios, Agamben.

1. Introduction

> Any cell – man, animal, fish, fowl, or insect – given the chance and under the right conditions, brought into contact with any other cell, however foreign, will fuse with it. Cytoplasm will flow easily from one to the other, the nuclei will combine, and it will become, for a time anyway, a single cell with two complete, alien genomes, ready to dance, ready to multiply. It is a Chimera, a Griffon, a Sphinx, a Ganesha, a Peruvian God, a Ch'i-lin, an omen of good fortune, a wish for the world.[1]

Pan, Horus, Apollo, Wolverine; such "unique humans"/"human-animal hybrids" and their distinctive identities have been part of culture, dreams, and fantasies in mythologies, folk-lore, and science fiction. They were associated with either divination or damnation, as they were outside the framework of the "common," the "normal," or the "real world." Once unreal, now these "enhanced humans"/"trans-humans" can be "created" in an ideal lab situation through science and technology without any hindrance by their cell barriers.[2] "Life," a natural phenomenon, has a new technological dimension, for now it is a biotechnological creation (hereinafter "BTC").

Humans are an "industrious and ambitious species" who utilize tools of technology for their development and enhancement through the "known-unknown" knowledge of science. For the industrial man, nature's sphere and evolution are gradual and restrictive. He utilizes the independent source of science-technology to speed the process, mould himself into what he aspires to be. The industrial and digital revolutions are a part of this process. And now "industrial tinkering" has reached the genetic level, the level of "life." In this emerging age of

[1] Harris H, *Roots: Cell fusion*, 2 BioEssays 176, 179 (1985).

[2] Regaldo A, *Human-Animal chimeras are gestating on US research farms*, MIT Technology Review, 2016.

"reprogenetics," whose purpose is to enhance the "genetic qualities" of the human species, BTC is such an attempt.[3]

Although knowledge in life-sciences is conceptual and experimental, growth and development in science-technology in a lab is neither isolated nor restricted to a mere lab existence. Life sciences gradually spill over into the society, challenging the existing civil structure. Social science struggles to accommodate these new permutations and combinations. These new modalities strain the existing complex, intimate, and unusual relationship between them.

Consider the biotechnological premise of surrogacy and in-vitro fertilization (hereinafter "IVF"). An embryo is fertilized either in-vivo (biologically, inside the womb) or in-vitro (outside the womb in a lab).[4] During the pre-IVF period, the "mother" was the one who gave birth or adopted a child. In the post-IVF period, the definition of "mother" is not restricted to the above, but has multiple signifiers, such as "genetic mother" (one whose genes the fetus carries), "surrogate/gestational mother" (one who carries the fetus to term), adopted mother (one who legally adopts the child if surrogacy is not recognized) and legal mother (the one who has the legal authority to enter into a surrogacy contract). [5] BTC resulted in splitting and altering the traditional "mother" in the socio-politico-juridical sphere.

The social sciences are now tasked with adapting this biotechnological "tinkering of life" to their own ideology of "life" in the existing socio-politico-juridical structure. This is no easy task, considering that both the social and life sciences visualize life in separate spatial-temporal dimensions.

Life sciences, especially biology, have conventionally viewed life as a natural process within the "birth-metabolism-reproduction-death" structure. BTC, a product of human ingenuity and knowledge, has now positioned life in the "creation-invention-biological-technological" bracket.

For the social sciences, especially political philosophy, "life" has been seen as going beyond the "birth-metabolism-reproduction-death" definition. This "going beyond" was the distinctive feature which separated humans from other species, thus becoming one of the most recurring, intriguing, and debated themes in the social sciences. The concept of life, the understanding of life, the definition of life, the quality of life, the science of life, political life, sheer life, mere life, bare life, naked life, and the political power dynamics of life are but a few of the subjects debated by philosophers from antiquity to modernity.

From the standpoint of political power dynamics, from a man's birth till his death, life has been viewed as political (animal to man: Aristotle), biopolitical (politics of life and living beings: Michael Foucault), and thanatopolitical (politics of death: Giorgio Agamben). The scope of these ideologies is focused on life, living beings, and death, but not creation. BTC is a creation which ideologically shifts these existing norms. It challenges the core foundation of modernity, in which the permutation and combinations of political life were centered on biological life. The concern of this inquiry is to understand and interpret this "shift" through the construal of a life-biology-sovereignty state of indistinction as articulated by Agamben. Hence it focuses on such questions as: What is the understanding of life in the wake of the BTC? How are the original biological life and the created BTC positioned? Why is life in a "state of indistinction"?

This piece initiates the discussion through the conceptual framework of the human embryo (Part 2), then differentiates the biological and the biotechnological embryo (Part 3), reflects on the BTC in the socio-politico-juridical dimension (Part 3), analyzes life in antiquity and modernity through states of indistinction and sovereignty, understands homo sacer through the set theory of mathematics (Part 4), discusses modernity, economy, biology, and law through the ideologies of Aristotle and Foucault, with an analysis of Agamben's ideologies of life-death, power-politics, law-norms, sovereignty, and the state of indistinction (Part 5), and finally understands the BTC within the biotechnological horizon through reflection on the set theory of mathematics (Part 6).

In conclusion it contemplates the implications of the idea that:

i. BTC displays its dominance over biological life.
ii. "Created life" represents the totalitarian nature of the State through biology challenging

[3] Silver L M, Remaking Eden: How Genetic Engineering and Cloning will transform the American Family (Avon Books, New York, 1998).
[4] Schenker J eds., Ethical Dilemmas in Assisted Reproductive Technologies (Walter de Gruyter, 2011).
[5] Points K, Commercial Surrogacy and Fertility Tourism in India: The Case of Baby Manjhi, Kenan Institute for Ethics (Duke University, 2009).

the foundational principles of the socio-politico-juridical framework in modern politics.

iii. The biopolitical horizon accommodates life.

2. The human embryo: Biological and biotechnological

Biologically, the human embryo is a product of in-vivo fertilization of the ovum and the sperm through sexual reproduction.[6] The development commences from a state of a mass of cells which begins without form. This is the "pre-embryo" stage.[7] Eventually this develops into an embryo with a physical form through the process of cell division and multiplication.[8] Once the embryo stage is attained, no cell division occurs, and the embryo enters a new stage of development. [9] The fetus completes its term, and a baby is born. [10]

A biotechnological embryo is a "BTC" created through interference or manipulation of the natural process by human-developed techniques.[11] Fertilization takes place in-vitro in a lab, and the fertilized egg is then placed in the womb.[12]

The significance of the BTC is its physical distinctiveness from the womb. This is a change from the traditional position in which the fetus/embryo had an identity related to the womb. Due to this distinctiveness, scientists are able to harness the "wet life" characteristics of the embryo. These are essential for high-tech research and development, which has the ability to manipulate human evolution. Possible applications include: embryonic stem cell research (ESCR),[13] designer babies,[14] surrogacy,[15] creation of chimera-hybrids,[16] cryopreservation of embryos,[17] cloning,[18] three-parent babies,[19] a cure for Parkinson's disease,[20] and modification of the

[6] Warnock Report of the Committee of the Inquiry into Human Fertilization and Embryology (UK Parliamentary 1984).
http://www.hfea.gov.uk/docs/Warnock_Report_of_the_Committee_of_Inquiry_into_Human_Fertilisation_and_Embryology_1984.pdf

[7] *Id.*

[8] *Id.*

[9] *Id.*

[10] *Id.*

[11] Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity, (2000) *available at*
https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/2000/01/20000129%2008-44%20PM/Ch_XXVII_08_ap.pdf
"Art 3 (g): 'Living modified organism' means any living organism that possesses a novel combination of genetic material obtained through the use of modern biotechnology;
(h): 'Living organism' means any biological entity capable of transferring or replicating genetic material, including sterile organisms, viruses and viroids;
(i): 'Modern biotechnology' means the application of:
a. In vitro nucleic acid techniques, including recombinant deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) and direct injection of nucleic acid into cells or organelles, or
b. Fusion of cells beyond the taxonomic family,
that overcome natural physiological reproductive or recombination barriers and that are not techniques used in traditional breeding and selection …"

[12] Wang J & Sauer M, *In vitro fertilization (IVF): a review of 3 decades of clinical innovation and technological advancement*, 2(4) Therapeutic Clinical Risk Management, 355, 364 (2006).
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1936357/

[13] Monroe K, Miller R B & Tobis J, Fundamentals of the Stem Cell Debate: The Scientific, Religious, Ethical, and Political Issues (University of California Press, 2008).
ESCR is a sensitive topic leading to ideological confrontations between fundamentalists and the liberals. Opinion differs between States. Few have attempted to ban it, but a few states/provinces within US and the UK have restricted such research.

[14] Gallagher J, *Designer babies' debate should start, scientists say*, BBC News (Jan. 19, 2015),
http://www.bbc.com/news/health-30742774.
The latest technology permits parents to choose the genetic characteristics of their offspring.

[15] Trimmings K & Beaumont P, ed., International Surrogacy Arrangements: Legal Regulation at the International Level (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013).

[16] Taupitz J& Weschka M, CHIMBRIDS – Chimeras and Hybrids in Comparative European and International Research: Scientific, Ethical, Philosophical and Legal Aspects (Springer science and business media, 2009).

[17] Chian R & Quinn P, Fertility Cryopreservation (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[18] Brownsword R, Cornish W & Llewellyn M, Law and Human Genetics: Regulating a Revolution (Bloomsbury Publishing, 1998).
Ian Wilmut of the Rosalyn Institute, Scotland was the first to successfully clone a mammal. Dolly the sheep was the first adult vertebrate,cloned from another adult vertebrate.

[19] Knapton S, *Three-parent babies: House of Lords approves law despite fears children could be born sterile*, The Telegraph (Feb. 24, 2015),
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/science/science-news/11432058/Three-parent-babies-House-of-Lords-approves-law-despite-fears-children-could-be-sterile.html.
This procedure is considered to be highly controversial. It involves two women and one man, with the ovum of the donor woman being used to correct the genetic mitochondrial defects of the newborn. Due to the impact of multiple strains, it increases the possibility that the newborn might be born sterile.

[20] Brown R, *Stem cells successfully injected into Parkinson's disease patient, in trial treatment*, ABC News (Sept.17, 2016), http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-

human embryo.[21] Manipulation and intrusion at the genetic level—including fusion of a human cell with an animal cell—is quite possible.[22]

3. The embryo in the state of indistinction

The issue with the manipulation of the human embryo is the involvement of "ideological" life, animal life, human life, and the perceived sanctity of these distinctions. This imparts a sensitivity, complexity, and volatility to its conceptual, scientific, and pragmatic interpretations, which are quite visible in the socio-politico-judicial realm.

Consider the judgment in the *Davis vs. Davis* case.[23] The Supreme Court of Tennessee had to decide the legal status of cryogenically preserved embryos in the absence of a pre-nuptial agreement.[24] The issues were whether the embryos were persons or property, or had any other designation as per law.[25] In its judgment the Court expressed that there exists no specific State legislation in regards to the status of embryos. Acknowledging this, it deliberated on the concept of public policy, categorizing pre-embryos/embryos under the conceptual premise of the unborn child. It proclaimed that pre-embryos are neither person nor property, but rather belong to an "interim category that entitles them to special respect because of their potential for human life."[26] They are in a space between person and property. Although personhood cannot be attached to them, they cannot be attached to an inanimate concept like property, either. They are to be afforded a greater respect than mere property because of their potential to develop as a human being. The Court also cautioned that they have to be distinguished from other human body parts, such as hair or nails, a distinction based on the embryo's capacity for new growth if separated from the body.[27]

The European Court of Justice also has adhered to similar stance. In the *Oliver Brustle vs. Greenpeace* judgment, it held that research leading to the destruction of the human embryo is not patentable.[28] Also, in *Adellina Parellio vs. Italy*, the court upheld the Italian Court's judgment that embryos are not possessions.[29]

In the UK, the Warnock Committee (hereinafter "committee") was established to address issues such as experiments on the human embryo and the status of their life and personhood. The committee noted,

> Although the questions of when life or personhood begins appear to be questions of fact susceptible of straightforward answers, we hold that the answers to such questions in fact are complex amalgams of factual and moral judgments. Instead of answering these questions directly we have gone straight to the question of how it is right to treat the human embryo.[30]

The socio-politico-juridical sphere is indecisive in imparting a status to the BTC. It is unable to decide their life status within the dichotomies of the person-property, human-animal, potentiality-actuality, experimental-non-experimental debates. The BTC is placed in a state of indistinction, a situation similar to the 'homo sacer'/ 'Muselmann' visualized by Agamben.

4. Life and the state of indistinction

Agamben articulates the position of the homo sacer as the "zoe stripped of its bios."[31] In order to comprehend this proposition, it is essential to examine the primary concepts of life as it was understood in antiquity, and those of Aristotle and Foucault.

4.1 The bios-zoe distinction

Life in ancient Greece was not a single concept, but had two distinct forms: "bios" and the "zoe."[32] Bios was the politically "proper" life. This is the "good" politically legitimized social life in relation to the "polis," the group of men forming the society.

09-14/parkinson's-disease-trial-injects-stem-cells-into-brain/7844674.

[21] Cyranoski D and Reardon S, *Chinese scientists genetically modify human embryos*, Nature (Sept. 19, 2016), http://www.nature.com/news/chinese-scientists-genetically-modify-human-embryos-1.17378.

[22] Harris, *supra* note 1.

[23] *Davis vs. Davis* 842 S.W.2d

[24] *Id.*

[25] Smith Iltis A, Johnson S H & Hinze B A, Legal Perspectives in Bioethics (Rutledge 2008).

[26] *Id.*

[27] BBC Archives, Potential humans, potential rights, BBC (Oct. 3, 2016), http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/abortion/child/potential.shtml

[28] *Oliver Brustle v. Greenpeace*, C-34/10.

[29] *Adelina Parrillo v. Italy*, 46470/11.

[30] *Id.*

[31] Agamben G, Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life (Stanford University 1998).

[32] Pangle T L, Aristotle's teaching in the "Politics" (University of chicago press 2013).

Zoe is "bare life." This animal life is the biological life common to humans, animals, and gods. As it is biological, it indulges in biological activities such as survival, reproduction, sleep, and food.[33]

Every citizen led these two distinct lives: the political man-made life which dealt with his existence in society, and the other sacred life as it was given by God. The bios-zoe distinction also spilled over into spaces and people. The "oikos"—the domestic and household life—was believed to have no political purpose, hence it was zoe. A similar belief existed for women, children, and the senile—they had zoe, but no bios.[34]

Plato further divides life into *bios theoretikos*, *bios apolaustikos*, and *bios politikos*. These are understood as the philosopher's life, the life of pleasure, and the political life, respectively.[35] The prefix 'zoe' is absent, and the usage of 'bios' is quite pertinent. Aristotle conceptualizes the distinctiveness as *to zen* (simple living or mere living or animal living) and *to eu zen* (political living or qualified living), further addressing man as a *political zoon*, as his life was not limited to pleasure-pain, but also to good-bad and just-unjust.[36]

4.1.1. The Homo Sacer

In ancient Greece, "homo sacer" or the sacred man was the one who was punished and banished from society, from the sphere of law. Banishment meant losing existence in the world of men and losing the privilege of being sacrificed to the Gods. Although the banished man could not be sacrificed, he could be killed with impunity. Ideologically, it meant he was stripped of his bios, and all that remained in him was zoe, his bare life. However, "bare life" zoe should not be confused with "natural" zoe in antiquity. When "political rights" are subtracted from the bios, the remnant is bare life. [37]

4.1.2 The sacred that cannot be sacrificed: the inside-outside situation

The inside-outside situation of the homo sacer is a paradox in itself. For here is a man who is a sacred man, yet cannot be sacrificed, and can be killed with impunity. Such a situation could be perceived through an analysis of the modalities of the societal structure.

Society is a system with a division between the "man-made" and what is thought to be "God-made." The former is the "profane" and latter "divine." Man-made things are "inclusive" or "inside," while that which is not is "exclusive" or "outside." Gods, hermits, and sacrifices are outside the man-made, hence divine. But a homo sacer who has been banished from profane society does not become divine. He is neither divine nor profane. A homo sacer lies between the inclusion-exclusion distinction. [38]

Let me explain the homo sacer through the set theory of mathematics, a branch dealing with logic.[39] This theory deals with the relationship between sets (groups) and the "membership" of the elements (objects) in it. If there are two independent sets with independent member elements, then in certain situations elements of one set would be "part" of the other set, although they are not "members" of it. The relationship of the homo sacer to society is explained through the following postulates accompanied by the Venn diagram underneath.

Postulate 1: "X" is a citizen. If "Y" kills X, then Y is guilty of homicide, because X is part of the society (on the "inside") (Figure 1).

Postulate 2: "X" is a citizen sacrificed to the Gods. This is "outside" society (Figure 2).

Postulate 3: "X" is banished from society. The polis takes away his rights, including his right to be sacrificed. In this case, he is not "inside" the system. However, as he cannot be sacrificed to the divine, he is also not "outside." Y kills X. Y is not guilty of homicide, for X can be killed with impunity. This is the "inside-outside" (Figure 3).

Figure 1 "Inside" | Figure 2 "Outside" | Figure 3 "Shaded Area = Inside-Outside"

Homo sacer, although addressed as "sacer," is not sacred, for his sacredness has been taken away. Sacrificing him to the divine would be sacrilege. He oscillates between the divine and the profane, the inside and the outside, and lies in a state of indistinction.

[33] *Id.*
[34] *Id.*
[35] Aristotle, Bartlett R C & Collins S D, Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics(University of Chicago Press 2012).
[36] Agamben, *supra* note 30.
[37] *Id.*
[38] Agamben, *supra* note 30.
[39] *Id.*

4.1.3. Sovereignty

One might ask: who imparts legitimacy to the killing of the homo sacer? Who puts him in this situation? It is the sovereign, the one who has the right to kill his subjects.

In the classical triangle of power, the king was the apex, his position legitimized by God. God the king-maker was the divine (the outside). The king, the apex of the profane, was the subject who acted upon "others" as object. His rights as the sovereign included the right to kill.

With the advent of modern democracy and charters on equality and human rights, the King's right to kill was taken away. Every "other" became both a subject and an object, with sovereign powers distributed equally. The hierarchical triangle was transformed into a circular structure with everyone member of the society, individually and jointly, responsible for its functioning. As sovereignty includes the right to kill, therefore everyone can kill and be killed. The members are all subjects and the objects, reflections of each other, the sovereign and the homo sacer.[40]

5. Modernity: Biology, Economics and Law

In modernity the redundancy of the king also made God redundant. In this era of rationalization, man believes he is responsible for his own progress through science and technology. Biology which deals with life and living beings is one such discipline. It is through biology that man is able to discover life, understand creation, map genes, create life, modify life, and uncover "Godly" secrets.

Although Foucault and Agamben agree that biology constitutes the emergence of modernity, as it questions that which is "sacred" and reasons through rationalization and logic, the further development of their ideologies is disparate. Biology for Foucault is constructive through "biopolitics," while for Agamben it is destructive, "thanatopolitics."

Foucault's "man" is not Aristotle's political animal, but an animal whose existence as a living being is governed by politics.[41] Man is subjectified through biology. The State uses bio power, where political strategies are built around his status as the human species.[42] Death is considered a limitation, hence life is enhanced through various techniques. Through biopolitics, the State envisages "life" and the "living being" as those core concepts around which political battles are fought and economic strategies are planned.

Foucault deviates from Aristotle's conventional zoe and bios. While articulating that the zoe is eclipsed by the bios, as in modernity the bios is directed towards the zoe.[43] The human body and the body of the population are conceived as biological subjects, political subjects, and ethical subjects rather than as subjects of the law. The former is called "biopolitics," and the latter "anatomopolitics." The edifice of such a structure is built on power and knowledge, where power is intervention and knowledge the control. Biology introduces "norms," and due to the structure of power-knowledge, the façade of law is replaced by norms. These norms are used to regulate and discipline life, inciting Foucault to comment that we are in a "juridical regression."[44]

Agamben acknowledges Foucault's analysis on biology, economics, and norms-law. He acknowledges that biology and life are political issues, but disagrees that the State enhances life through biopolitics. For him the State uses biology in a totalitarian capacity, in a capacity of death. It unleashes against its citizen the "state of exception," and places them in a "state of indistinction," like the homo sacer who is in constant fear of being killed with impunity.

In this unusual "state of exception," the sovereign acts beyond established law. Ironically, there are provisions for such acts in the laws of modern democracies: the declaration of a "state of emergency." In this situation, the state suspends the rights of its citizen at its will. These are the homo sacerii of modern democracy, people deprived of their rights, a paradox for a society whose foundation is rights. The state through its actions declares that a citizen does not have a "right" to have rights, but is "permitted" to have rights. These can be taken away during a state of exception, or when the state believes that a citizen is a threat to the system. The Muselmann (i.e. homo sacer) in the camp represented such a situation.

This is the situation through which Agamben analyzes biology and biological life: through the politicization of biological life in the reign of the

[40] *Id.*
[41] Foucault M, History of Sexuality 1: The will to knowledge (Vintage Books, 1990).
[42] Binkley S and Capetillo J, eds., Foucault for the 21st Century: Governmentality, Biopolitics and Discipline in the New Millennium, (Cambridge Scholar Publishing 2009).
[43] Foucault, *supra* note 36, 37.
[44] *Id.*

Third Reich, where biology was entwined with economy. During the Third Reich, population was seen as "living wealth" with an economic worth of "one thousand and sixty million marks."[45] The State became biological and economical, as it was the manifestation of its people, the "living wealth." In a bid to protect and develop itself, it expressed its biopower over the "biological body of the nation," its people. This Agamben addresses as "biopolitics," the politicization of life.[46]

However, biology is a totalitarian and omnipresent discipline with control over life and death. It measures man in biological terms and controls biological norms, the distinction between the biological "normal" and "abnormal." In addition, its clinical and objective nature reduces man to a species, a mere beast, the zoe. Politicization of life also means politicization of death, "thanatopolitics." Biology through its totalitarian nature creates a totalitarian situation. States themselves become totalitarian, controlling life and death.

Agamben illustrates the politicization of life and death through the relationship between deep comatose patients,[47] "neomorts,"[48] and organ harvesting.[49] Deep comatose patients are those whose "relational life functions" and "vegetative life functions" have ceased, and who are kept "alive" only through life support systems.[50] Neomorts are "legal corpses" which are kept warm and pulsating for the purpose of organ harvesting. These two situations challenge the traditional and legal concept of death, which was "defined" as heart failure or the termination of breathing. However, in these situations the heart pumps and breathing continues through life support system in a controlled environment. Therefore the ideology of death is redefined through "brain death." Biology creates a situation with comatose patients and neomorts that represents its totalitarian nature and that of the State. This is quite visible when brain death and organ donation supporters reflect on the decisive power of the State claiming "…Organisms belong to the public power: the body is nationalized…"[51] In a man-made biotechnological environment, comatose patients and the neomorts are the homo sacerii who oscillate between life and death, and can be killed with impunity without their deaths being considered homicide. This is the stark reality of the contemporary world, a world that concerns itself with this biological manner of the "being."

6. The BTC: A biopolitical world and a biopolitical horizon

Agamben voices his concern with the modern biopolitical world. Here humanity thrives in a biopolitical horizon where the "exception" is the "normal." He notes that "…what concerns us most of all here, however, is that in the biopolitical horizon that characterizes modernity, the physician and the scientist move in the no-man's-land into which at one point the sovereign alone could penetrate…"[52] This is the no-man's-land where life, through the BTC, locates itself in oblivion under the sovereignty of the scientist and the physician.

Let me explain the position through Venn diagrams and set theory (as was done in section 4). As stated earlier, set theory deals with the binary relationship of sets with its elements (objects). For an element to be "included" as a member of the set, it needs to fulfill certain criteria. Occasionally there are situations when a member of a certain set can be a "part" of another set without being a "member" of that set. The embryo/BTC in the below postulates represent themselves as members of sets, while the Venn diagram is the graphic representation of their binary relation to the set. Life in these sets is understood as two distinct forms: the zoe and the bios.

Postulate 1: "X" is a biological-natural embryo. This is an embryo of a living human, animal, or god. This is the zoe, the divine, the "exclusion" (Figure 1).

Postulate 2: "X" is a biological-natural human embryo with certain "rights" which are allotted by the "polis." Any "killing" of the embryo amounts to feticide. This represents the "bios," the profane, the "inclusion" (Figure 2).

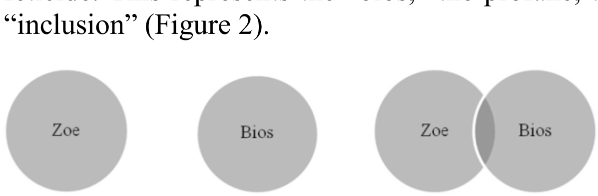

Figure 1 Outside | Figure 2 Inside | Figure 3 Shaded Area = Inclusion-Exclusion

Postulate 3: "X" is the biological human embryo whose "allotted rights" are taken away. There-

45 Agamben, *supra* note 30, at 92.
46 Binkley, *supra* note 37.
47 Agamben, *supra* note 30, at 92.
48 *Id.*
49 *Id.*
50 *Id.*
51 Agamben, *supra* note 30, at 94.
52 *Id.* at 91.

fore the embryos can be "killed" in impunity. This is the "zoe striped out of its bios," the position of the homo sacer, the "inclusion-exclusion" situation (Figure 3).

6.1 Postulate 1: The Zoe

The philosophical underpinning of the embryo is the ethical principle of "sanctity of life." It states that since "God created life," sentient life is sacred, holy, and inviolable.[53] Zoe represents nature, animals, gods, and humans alike. It is the divine, and hence is placed outside the man-made polis. This is the "exclusion."

6.2 Postulate 2: The Bios

The polis politicizes the embryo, especially the human embryo. The society imparts certain legitimacy to it by awarding it social, political, and legal rights. One of the significant rights is the "right to live." Consider the Hippocratic Oath, which prohibited pessaries from being given to pregnant women.[54] This norm was institutionalized when sovereigns prohibited and criminalized abortion through codified criminal laws.[55] Multiple constitutions and legislations which support "pro-life" choices support the "right to life" of the embryo. Any person who harms the embryo inside the womb is guilty of feticide, and hence liable to criminal prosecution. This is the "inclusion."

6.3 Postulate 3: The Inclusion-Exclusion situation

The polis takes away the embryo's "right to live," and the "zoe is stripped of its bios." Consider the "pro-choice" argument in abortion cases. *Roe v. Wade*[56] politically strengthened this stance.

In the modern world, biology in its totalitarian aspect monitors life and death. Through biology and technology it is possible to visualize the different stages of growth, from pre-fertilization up to the birth of the child. Biology creates norms at different stages, such as pre-fertilization, fertilization, pre-embryo, embryo, fetus, and so on. It influences the socio-politico-juridical structure through power and knowledge to reinforce these norms. The trimester framework in abortion laws is a representation of this premise.[57] Through taking away its rights, the embryo slips into the no-man's land zone where it oscillates between the divine and the profane. The physician and the scientist are the sovereigns who decide the fate of the embryo. This is a thanatopolitics in which the embryo can be killed with impunity. Such a position is quite different from the bios that is being protected through biopolitics in the socio-politico-juridical dimension. The banishment of the bios from the polis positions itself as the homo sacer facing the threat of death.

The complexities escalate when in this "no man's land" life is altered, modified, restructured, cut back, or supplemented. Life now has stepped beyond the "birth-metabolism-reproduction-death" structure as it has entered the "creation-invention-biological-technological" phase. Now life is about genes, chromosomes, creations, discoveries, inventions, and intellectual property. Through the stages of pre-fertilization, fertilization, pre-embryo, embryo it charts the course of evolution, where reprogenetics has a significant role to play. Technology is utilized to create, use, manipulate, or store gametes or embryos with the purpose of ensuring that offspring do or do not inherit particular genes.[58] A gene could be manipulated, a gene could be added, or mitochondrial genetic material could be inserted.[59]

If need be, an *animal* gene could be manipulated or added, or animal mitochondrial genetic material could be inserted.[60] For biology as a clinical stream has a species-outlook towards the man and the beast. It subjectifies both so that no differentiation exists between them. Its economic perception in modernity views both species as "living wealth."[61] The sanctity of life argument specifically targeted to humans loses its appeal with speciesism in the discussion.[62] Life locates itself in the oblivion of the biopolitical horizon where the tenets of modern politics such as dictatorship-democracy, private-public,

[53] Singer P, A Darwinian Left: Politics, Evolution and Cooperation (Yale University 2000).
This position is strongly criticized by thinkers like Peter Singer who argue that this is a bias against non-humans and animals. Peter Singer terms this "speciesism," a term similar to racism in which one species, here humans, has an upper hand over the others.

[54] Langer O, The Diabetes in Pregnancy Dilemma: Leading change with proven solution (2nd PMPH-USA 2015).

[55] *Id.*

[56] *Roe v. Wade,* 410 U.S. 113, 164 (1973).

[57] *Id.*

[58] *Knowles L P & Kaebnick G E,* Reprogenetics: Law Policy and Ethical Issues *(JHU Press 2007).*

[59] Silver, *supra* note 3.

[60] Harris, *supra* note 1.

[61] *Id.*; See also Foucault, *supra* note 41.

[62] Singer, *supra* note 53.

life-death, human-animal, and person-property become obscure.[63]

7. Conclusion – The Ship of Theseus

And so in the obscurity of the biopolitical horizon emerge these conclusions from this inquiry:

i. Biological life is gradually transforming into variants of BTC.
ii. The ideologically socio-politico-juridical framework struggles with "created life." Modernity observes the totalitarian nature of science-technology through the decisive power it yields over "life" and "death."
iii. Life is now in the biopolitical horizon. It is in a state of indistinction oscillating between the dichotomies on which modern politics was founded.

The first conclusion reflects on the viability of humanity's pursuit for knowledge which is rooted in advancements of science and technology. One has to pragmatically accept the totalitarian nature of science and technology. The second conclusion is that the biological body is gradually transforming into a biotechnological body, and that there is no returning back to the biological body. Simultaneously the political body has transformed itself to a biopolitical body. There is no returning back to the political body.[64] One has to accept the biotechnological being-ness of the "being" in modernity. The third conclusion reflects on this biopolitical horizon. No distinction exists between law-fact, juridical rule-biological life, dictatorship-democracy, and animal-human.[65] One has to accept that the exception has now become the rule.

Humanity now faces a paradox in relation to life and technology. Consider Plutarch's reflections on the ship of Theseus and the paradox it represents.

> The ship wherein Theseus and the youth of Athens returned from Crete had thirty oars, and was preserved by the Athenians down even to the time of Demetrius Phalereus, for they took away the old planks as they decayed, putting in new and stronger timber in their places, in so much that this ship became a standing example among the philosophers, for the logical question of things that grow; one side holding that the ship remained the same, and the other contending that it was not the same.[66]

In the event of gradual replacement of each part of the ship with a new part, would the ship still be the "ship of Theseus"? This is a paradox of essence and existence. One faction reflects that although the planks are changed, the ship would always be the ship in essence, while the other faction argues that the "existence" is what is significant due to its tangibility, therefore the ship is no longer the "ship of Theseus."

The biotechnological world of the being represents this paradox. Consider that the ship represents the being, while the "replacement of planks" represents the technology. Now if gradually genes in humans are replaced, modified, altered, subtracted, added, inserted, would we still be humans? How much of technology alters too much of the "human" in us? Does the "biotechnological" compromise the "biological"? Does its "existence" compromise human "essence"? Is the essence more significant than the existence? The lab has spilled over into society, dissolving the dichotomies of politics, and through it the socio-juridical structure. Yet these activities need to be considered through a political lens. The biopolitical horizon, the place of obscurity, is where humanity will have to locate identities, including that of "being human."

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[63] Agamben, *supra* note 30, at 10.
[64] Agamben, *supra* note 30 at 105.
[65] *Id.*
[66] Pratt M G & Ravassi D, eds. The Oxford Handbook of Organizational Identity (Oxford University Press 2016).

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NATURE VS. HUMAN: A MODERN TRAIL. ADDRESSING LUC FERRY'S ECOLOGICAL DISCOURSE TO THE SOCIAL-CRITICAL THEORY OF MODERNITY

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Abstract:
The main aim of this article is to examine the contrast between humanism and anti-humanism as two different modern paradigms of considering the individual's relationship with nature. My thesis is that ecology, as an ideological discourse, reshaped the both the democratic and totalitarian perspectives on humanism and anti-humanism by addressing liberties, self-care, and authenticity in terms of normative laws for environment, health, and the idea of naturalness. Reconsidering Luc Ferry's analysis from The New Ecological Order: Tree, Animal, Human, I will explain how a social-critical theory of modernity might be conceived in the terms of humanism and anti-humanism, represented by different ecological discourses whose main contribution was to add to the modern social contract the value of non-human beings, including animals, plants, and natural objects as subjects of law (in their most democratic versions) or to discount the value of humans (in their totalitarian structures), viewing racism, for example, as a clinical, biopolitical, and hence "ecological" discourse. I will argue that this condition is a cultural symptom of the anti-natural attitude of the modern individual.

Key words: nature, humanism, antihumanism, modernity, subject of law, L. Ferry, R. Descartes, individual.

I. Introduction

The French renewal of humanism is focused on the cultural trend of imposing a "revolutionary new biocentric world order," combining a "suspicion of technology" and a "preference for nature" (Bratton 1999, 3). Nevertheless, these premises express a conciliation between the exigencies of modernity—the era of Reason, opened by the Cartesian thought—and the rise of postmodernity, as a period defined by the humanist crisis of regaining an equilibrium of relationship between nature, reason, and technology that has aggressively been industrialised and falsified within the capitalist society.

Could the clash between *modernity* and *postmodernity* be interpreted through the rivalry between *humanism* and *anti-humanism*? Moreover, is the distance between them the result of an ideological contrast between the authoritarian and democratic traditions that each operate as primary political regimes for their representative societies? My article focuses on Luc Ferry's criticism of the deep ecology movement as a "post-communist critique of capitalistic Western civilization" (Warner 1997), arguing that ecology is an ideological construct, and that this very specific perspective lies at the core of a potential social-critical theory of modernity. Inspired by Luc Ferry's work, *The New Ecological Order,* I will try to integrate some classical ecological oppositions into a social-critical theory of modernity, based on the following four arguments:

(1) *The argument of the anti-natural individual and the confusion of species*, which will serve to interpret the opposition of humanism vs. anti-humanism through Cartesian vs. anti-Cartesian thought.

(2) *The argument of the mechanism as a formula of the anti-natural being*, which engages the differences between human and animal in the terms of the following oppositions: humanity vs. animality, indeterminism *vs.* determinism, liberty *vs.* instinct.

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(3) *The argument of determinism*, according to which the individual is produced and determined by a social and a biological structure.

(4) *The argument of the liberation of nature* as an anthropological, ethical, and existential liberation of the individual.

One of the most important outcomes of this research will be represented by the attempt to adapt ecological language to the critical theory of modernity, following their ideological interdependencies. Based on this lecture, I will discuss the model of animal liberation, proposed by Luc Ferry in his work, as an alternative model for human liberation from the auspices of the industrial society as a technological domination of nature. Therefore, my intention is to analyse to what extent Ferry's new ecological order—represented by a hierarchy of *the tree*, *the animal*, and *the human*—can also suggest an ideological order—a *democratic* or *totalitarian* one—for modernity and postmodernity.

II. Two Steps in the Rise of Anti-Humanism: the Natural Contract and the Social Contact

Ferry's assumption that the interaction between nature, animals, and humans should be reconsidered in the age of juridical norms and laws that puts humanism in brackets can be reduced to three main premises. First, the French philosopher observes that the isolation of non-humans from humans is sustainable in the terms of *practical reason*, but not *theoretical reason*. Animals have the status of minors: they cannot legally represent themselves, but they do have rights, and therefore they should be represented by advocates. Hence, animals and humans are equal by law in terms of their rightful interests and liberties, and it is this equilibrium that allows for trials between humans and animals. Ferry reminds us of, among other legal cases, the trial in Saint Julien from 1545 and 1587, in which locals sued a group of weevils for ravaging their vineyards, requesting "animal excommunication" and, implicitly, their damnation. Initially interpreted as a question of ecclesial justice, since the damage created by the animals was regarded as punishment for the people's sins, the conflicts between humans and non-rational beings soon embraced the formula of trials produced in secular courts:

> The case of the weevils of Saint Julien illustrates the strictness with which the human participants adhered to procedural rules guiding animal trials. In this case, the court appointed counsel—at least three lawyers during the course of the dispute—to represent the defendants. These lawyers raised complex legal arguments on behalf of the insects, and whether the lawyers believed their words or merely argued for pay is irrelevant: they built a framework of ideology that firmly included animals within human justice. (Cohen 1986, 26–27; Girgen 2003, 104–105)

My hypothesis is that the clash between ecclesial and secular acceptances of the relationships developed between human and non-human beings is based on the primary difference between theoretical and practical reason. At the time of the Saint Julien trial, this pre-modern paradigm of solving conflicts between human and animals is fundamentally prehumanist. Ecclesial commandments state that "God had created animals before human beings and had blessed all the animals upon the earth, giving to them every green herb for food. Therefore, the weevils had a prior right to the vineyards, a right conferred upon them at the time of Creation" (Evans 1987, 43), while secular courts argue that both humans and animals have legal rights, but they are not necessarily based on first arrival. In fact, the right to a possession—in this particular case, the vineyards—was hardly debated in social contract theory: from the Hobbesian formula to the supplementary Lockean clause, the status of the first comer on a domain that becomes personal property has been largely changed. Hence, the shift from the natural right to the social contract might be interpreted as a pre-humanist paradigm. Nevertheless, the isolation of human from nature created, according to Ferry's second statement, modern humanism, which is often associated with the Cartesian movement.[1] Bringing into play a Cartesian humanism, based on the "metaphysics of subjectivity" (Ferry 1995, 49), the object of the French authors becomes highlighting the rational component of ecology somehow presumed by "humanitarian" republicanism "from Michelet to Hugo" inspired by Descartes' influences on Enlightenment. In fact, Ferry contrasts the Cartesian idea of transforming individuals into masters of nature with both the Kantian acceptance of humanism as a primary, and historical concern for "respecting the diversity of the orders of reality" (52).

[1] "Ferry agrees with environmentalist arguments that human well-being requires alternatives to 'metaphysical humanism' (Cartesianism), which he believes is at the origin of our current 'unprecedented colonization of nature'" (Cuomo 1996, 768).

> The essence of modernity, since Descartes, is nothing but Ratio, which can be defined either as the functional rationale of capitalism in its quest for economic profitability (Marxist version) or as the world of technology (…) Foucault said that "reason is a torture whose subject is the agent." Similarly, Elisabeth de Fontenay speaks of "rational despotism," free of all compassion, of the "work of the Ratio under the surveillance of the Cogito," for which "nature is nothing but the substratum of domination." (Ferry 1995, 49)

Ferry fights with the Cartesian modernity that equates "humanity" with "Cogito," which isolates humans from animals animals, when in fact they are species of the same nature. To this hypothesis the French philosophers add a third and final one: it is clear that, as human vs. animal trials evolved, nature became a juridical subject, in its non-animal form. As an example, in the U.S. Supreme Court case *Sierra Club* v. Morton, 405 U.S. 727, concerning Walt Disney's proposed 1965 ski resort construction project in Mineral King valley, the Court opined that individuals, as well as nature itself, have their own legal standings. Significant is the fact that individuals and nature gain their juridical rights at the same time:

> The day of the rights of nature has now come, after that of children, women, blacks, Indians, even prisoners, the insane or embryos (with the context of medical research, not to mention abortion legislation). (Ferry 1995)

Based on these considerations, my argument is that *antihumanism* became the expression of the anti-natural human, as one of the consequences of the renegotiation of the natural contract between individuals and the environment. The new subject of law is the *bio-sphere* and the *eco-sphere*, as the human being was previously. They can initiate juridical actions for their own benefit; they can have legal representatives; the harm brought to them can be publicly evaluated by courts; and they can benefit from legal compensation. The fact that animals or trees can lose a trial, as unconventional as it is, becomes the thing that separates the humanist tradition—according to which humans are the only ones who have legal standing—from the anti-humanist movement which argues that the new contractualism must take into account that the ecosphere and the biosphere can be subjects of law.

These societal challenges have imposed a radical shift from humanism to antihumanism, that argue reflects (1) a transition from totalitarianism to democracy, based on the manner in which these two political paradigms understood ecological sensibilities as prescribing a certain *quality of life*, *standard of authenticity*, and *self-care*, (2) a critique of modernity, from its "pre-" to its "post-" stages, understood in the terms of Ferry's "premodern postmodernity," meaning the transition from a humanist to a cosmic conception of law, (3) an ideological effect based on a sense of *uprooting* that coincides with *innovation*; this was the challenge brought by German Romanticism, as well as by Fascist and Nazi discourses, confronting national identities as altered cultural constructs. According to Ferry, they expressed an anti-humanist attitude, aiming to return nations to their cultural roots, while exhibiting a great attraction to ecological statements. According to this logic, the need of the Nazi state to protect natural environment becomes understandable: as Ferry argues, with Marcel Gauchet, a love of nature masked a hate for people. The political evolution of ideology can easily be connected to the most significant modern models of governance, from the totalitarian tradition to the democratic one. Ferry sticks to three main paradigms: the French one, based on the anti-Cartesian critique, the Anglo-Saxon one as the most liberal, providing the most extensive laws for environmental issues, and the German one, with its militant biopolitical structure. It is not the objective of this article to investigate the particularities of each of these models, but mentioning this taxonomy is significant in order to demonstrate that ecology has advanced in modern societies as an ideological construct.

The main challenge, here, is to understand that ecology, in its ideological form, was profoundly shaped by the conciliation of two forms of social order, the *natural right* and the *social contract*. This made possible the consideration of both nature and humans as subjects of law in some cases, while at other times nature remained outside of this normative domain of legal rights and interests. Ferry notes the existence of three ecological positions that I will briefly discuss in order to summarize their relevance for this "contractual challenge." The first is the *humanist position*, an anthropocentric position in which nature is not considered a subject of law, but falls under the incidence of different normative constructs. Within this paradigm, protecting nature is a manner of protecting the individual; hence, it is a context for revisiting the ethics of care and authenticity, confronting nature in itself with the nature of the individual. The second position is the *utilitarian position*, which aims to reduce the suffering the environment. According to this paradigm, anyone who can experience pleasure and pain can and must be a subject of law. Such an argument implies, in my opinion, the transition from the ecclesial measures to secular ones in solving conflicts between nature and humans. The third and last position is the *anti-humanist* or *anti-anthropocentric* paradigm that views the ecosystem and the biosphere as subjects of law alongside humans. The specificity of this third version is very important, since it involves, in my opinion, the return of the social contract to the natural one. In other words, anti-humanism created a circular movement, a sort of *dialectics*, that fulfils the transition from a vulgar and primitive society to a civil, hence normative society, and, finally, to the renewal of humanity's authenticity, behind and beyond its technological and industrial instruments of creating and controlling the welfare of its society. Regaining nature equates with *liberation*.

Ferry observed that "feelings of compassion for natural beings" are always "accompanied by a critique of modernity – designated, depending on the name of reference, as capitalist, Western, technological, or, more generally, consumerist" (Ferry 1995). Nevertheless, modernity confronted two main approaches to political authority: anti-democratic and democratic regimes that engaged nature and technology in their discourses as instruments of salvation which increase productivity and maximize welfare, creating the hedonism of consumption. The democratic passion for health and self-care was a continuation of political perspectives on security, inspiring the figure of the protector state in the same way it sustained the production of the New Man as naturalization. Ideologically, ecology became attached by antidemocratic traditions in its "deep" form. Whenever it expressed a desire for the replacement of the entire system, or was developed as an outsider-discourse that criticized the system from above, it attempted to replace cultural one-dimensionality (after a Marcusian expression) with national versions. It enhanced Fascism and Communism, as well as sustained the discourse of the Nazi regime.[2] Whenever ecology was used as a tool to reform or to renew the system, its main tendency was an environmental one: self-care, respect for an authentic existence, and progressive self-conversion (both of the individual and his society) are paradigmatic examples of principles, values, and feelings enacted by democratic ecology. Given both the democratic and anti-democratic attraction to ecological discourse, I will try to examine them in the following section as possibly constituting *a critique of modernity* in which the natural contract is renegotiated.

III. Classical Ecological Oppositions and Their Role in a Critical-Social Theory of Modernity in Four Arguments

Modernity, as it appears in Cartesian thought, isolates the individual and the animal in a new scheme of species. In brief, according to Ferry, the Cartesian model of anthropocentrism "accords all rights to men and none to nature, including animals" (Ferry 1995, 21). The solution would be to dismiss the Cartesian distinction with the assertion that human beings represent only one species of beings among many. As a consequence, what I would call the anti-natural human argument and the confusion of genus lies on the following assumption: the classical opposition between humanism and anti-humanism could be restored, for contemporary thought, as the polemics between Cartesians and anti-Cartesians. Ferry's observation that love for

[2] "In *The New Ecological Order*, Ferry accuses the Nazis of being antihuman, and then by analogous definition of the deep ecologists as antihuman, he links the two movements together." (Bratton 1999, 4). As a matter of fact, Ferry observes that the central theme of the deep ecological movement inspires the biocentric Nazi legislation: the natural world is worthy of respect per se, due to its intrinsic value. Nevertheless, some critiques remarked that "there is no continual historical chain between Nazism and deep ecology. Nazi ecology does not linger on in the guise of Næss and his followers. On this (…) Ferry misses the point *en masse* when he claims that 'some of deep ecology's roots lie in Nazism' (Stolpnessæter 2011, 99). Such an argument stands on the fact that there is no continual historical interdependency or connection between Nazism and deep ecology. "The biocentric commonality between Nazi and deep ecology is just a casual resemblance. (…) After detecting the casual resemblance between Nazi and deep ecology, there is less reason to assume that the deep ecology of Arne Næss is crypto-totalitarian" (Stolpnessæter 2011, 118). It is not the object of my paper to criticize the distance that Ferry takes from Naess' arguments, nor to explain his main thesis on Nazism. However, it is important in this context to keep in mind the affinity between the ecological discourse promoted by Nazism and deep ecological discourse, as discussed by Ferry, in order to strengthen my theory that deep ecological movements will favor the rise of anti-democratic traditions.

animals progressed consistently in the country of the *Metaphysical Mediations* and the *Discourse on Method* comes in the context of contrasting the Aristotelian argument for natural slavery with the Cartesian affinity for the fundamental distinction between human and animal described as a machine. Descartes' humanism can help us to understand the manner in which one of the most significant inheritances of philosophical modernity—its ultimate principle, the *Cogito*—created, in order to strengthen the rational nature of the individual, its most radical split from nature. And on the heels of this hypothesis a second argument arises, that of the mechanic metaphor as a formula for the anti-natural being.

> The animal, like all well-built machines, "functions" better than man: "I know," writes Descartes, "that animals do many things better than we do, but that doesn't surprise me, for even this serves to prove that they act naturally and automatically, like a clock that tells time better than our own senses. Thus when the swallows arrive in the spring, they are no doubt acting as clocks." (Ferry 1995, 22)

The analysis that the author of *The New Ecological Order* undertook of Cartesian metaphysical and physical perspectives is grounded on two main theses: the *essentialist* one, which stresses that the modern discourse on essences becomes a matter of naturalness, and the *anti-naturalist* one, which argues that the opposition between instincts and liberty is merged into the tension between nature and liberty. Regarding the first thesis, there is no doubt that the *essence* of one particular object represents, in fact, its *nature*. The second thesis should be discussed, since it considers instincts to be a part of a mechanical and native scheme of the body belonging to non-rational beings. When Descartes confesses that he sees in every animal only an ingenious machine "to which nature has given senses in order to revitalize itself and guarantee itself, to a certain point, from all that tends to destroy or upset it," it becomes clear for Ferry that modernity did nothing else than add to the antique perspective on liberty the free and conscious option to choose the bad or the wrong. Hence, the thesis of the anti-natural being might be synthesized in the following formula: the individual has the capacity to rationally and voluntary choose what is worse, even though he sees, knows, and understands the good. In this paradigm, we can say that the individual goes *against his nature*, since it is in the nature of any individual to fight for his good.

> On the surface, we are looking at an opposition between nature and freedom. This means, first of all, that the animal is programmed by a code which goes by the name "instinct." Whether a grain- or a meat-eater, it cannot liberate itself from the natural rule controlling its behaviour. Determinism is so strong it can even bring death, where an infinitesimal dose of freedom with respect to the norm would allow for easy survival. The situation of the human being is the opposite. He is indetermination par excellence: he is so oblivious to nature it can cost him his life. (…) His *humanitas* resides in his freedom, in the fact that he is undefined, that his nature is to have no nature but to possess the capacity to distance himself from any code within which one may seek to imprison him. In other words, his essence is that he has no essence. (Ferry 1995, 5)

Liberty contrasts with nature here, the main question being whether or not the individual is produced and determined by a biological and social body. To this question there can be only two answers, somehow included in the question itself. The first is the biological one: how is determinism evolving in this case, from animal to human or vice-versa? Ferry is convinced that both animals and humans can escape to their naturalness. Whales that commit suicide or trained dogs are perfect examples of non-human beings that perform unnatural actions. Consequently, if both humans and animals can act against their nature, the only issue that remains is to clarify to what extent the value of a being, *in extenso*, depends on its biological complexity. In an ecological discourse, plants and natural objects, such as rocks, for example, should be equally protected, as well as plants from different species, regardless of their complexity and contribution to nature. The sociological answer concerns the manner in which nature and culture can cohabitate, examining the extent of the latter's interference with the former, and the possibility of nature's dissolution. Is culture what makes us unnatural? When it comes to freedom, it is the only way to measure the presence of nature: "I can't jump as high as a tiger. Does that mean that I am less free than he?" (Ferry 1995).

Ferry's argument is that culture should cause nature to evolve, or, in other words, to maximize its potentiality in an actual form. But what kind of liberty is this? Ferry distinguished three ideas of it: an anthropological, an existential, and an ethical one. Anthropologically, human nature is defined by perfectibility, meaning not remaining identical with oneself. *Perfectibility* signifies, in the end, *detachment from nature*. For Rousseau, this is an intrinsic consequence of education, but Ferry observes that the modern take on perfectibility is to highlight progress in terms of hierarchy. Therefore, over the humanism vs. anti-humanism dichotomy we might overlay the tension of nature vs. state: perfectibility means also acknowledging inferiority, as a point of departure or a milestone. This very specific perspective is what led to, in Ferry's opinion, the ideological discourses on racism and the status of sub-humans as the classical figure of the primitive. Quoting Philolenko's "Untermensch" and Buffon's acceptance of the savage as a sub-human and a super-animal, Ferry believes that this liberty of progress also confronts an ethical and existential version: the human as an anti-natural being is a being for the law and a subject of law. In trying to protect the Other—whether it is a human being or a non-human—we become anti-natural individuals:

> The most fundamental ethical requirement among Moderns, that of altruism, is in its very principle antinatural, since it requires a form of disinterestedness. It presupposes "good will" and is inevitably expressed in the form of an imperative. (Ferry 1995)

Therefore, empathy—which is the basis of the entire ecological discourse—means, at first glance, to stray too far from your roots.

In the light of these four arguments, I believe that the critical-social theory of modernity might be reconfigured in the terms of some correspondences of its main principles and concepts with ecological discourse, as follows. Humanism must be deconstructed in order to rationally ground ecological imperatives, and at the core of this deconstruction, we find the antinomy between *respect for nature* and *care for culture*. *Liberty* becomes detached from naturalness, while *authenticity* might be understood as remaining loyal to your essence or nature—meaning, as I have previously argued, *not having an essence*. Ferry's formula of the non-essential human condition involves accepting that indeterminism is specific to individuals, while the freedom of animals and nature still remains questionable, at least in a metaphysical sense. The antinomy of human vs. animal leads to a confrontation between the disposition of humans to imitate (*mimesis*) and the mechanical (and Cartesian) perspective on animals as perfect machines.

In the end, the problem of liberation must be understood as a withdrawal from a natural or unnatural hierarchy. Modernity receives, in this equation, three critical perspectives on *liberation*, which Ferry presents as: the *anti-Cartesian* one, according to which nature is disenfranchised and should become a subject of law; the *utilitarian* one, according to which subjects of law should become any beings susceptible to feeling pain and pleasure, their liberation depending on this capacity; and the *republican* and *humanist* one, which ensures the liberty of the individual by guaranteeing him rights, as well as the obligation of not producing needless suffering in nature and animals.

In this context, was the rise of democracy owed to the love of nature? Or, in other words, was the problem of liberties, in the renegotiation of the modern individual with nature, an element that created the democratic passion for nature, health, care, and authenticity? If modernity upsets the first two stages of the dialectical movement discussed at the beginning of my article—a natural state and a civil, contractual society, the latter being confronted with the rise and fall of the democratic traditions, often destroyed by totalitarian regimes—postmodernity fights to reconcile the individual with nature, and with himself, as the being he used to be prior to his alienation, to which technological rationality and industrial society contributed. Transferring to nature and animals the condition of being subjects of law, the individual finds a way to make this reconciliation viable and sustainable. Ecology opened a path for considering the humanist and anti-humanist tradition as a critical discourse devoted to modernity and a possible manner of accommodating the contemporary individual to the challenges of postmodernity, in which the evolution of high-tech industry and the rise of a lifestyle based on authenticity are equally desired.

IV. Final Remarks on Humanism and Anti-Humanism Inspired by Ecological Discourse

In conclusion, Ferry argues that modernity, as an epochal dispute between humanism and anti-humanism, is characterized by the following four elements that are inspired by his lecture on Singer's ethical considerations on ecology. Ferry reformulates them in his own words, arguing, in the first instance, that ecology inspired the appearance of standings (legal interests) conceived as grounds for moral respect for beings, that became criteria for the subject of law. In my opinion, Ferry's rephrasing of Singer's argument might be best understood as a modern argument for *the limits of sensibility as a measure for legal interests and standings.* Contractualism was shaped by different acceptances of legal rights, properties, and interests that both human and non-human being must have, prioritizing, in the case of the latter, their protection from *needless suffering.*

Second, Ferry reinforces Singer's argument on *anti-speciesism or the formal equality between all the beings that feel pain and pleasure.* It is true that Cartesian thought reconsidered the species in the context of its intimate polemics with scholastic philosophy. Nevertheless, I think that *anti-speciesism* might be easily rephrased and understood as the possibility of ensuring formal equality between human and non-human beings through their affects. The variety of similar affects is what predisposes these two main classes—humans and non-humans—to a formal equality ensured by their value as subjects of law.

Third, Ferry points to the difference between animals and humans as one of the fundamental parts of modern philosophical discourse; but, in the light of ecological considerations developed mainly in the last part of the 20th Century, I think that this difference should be reevaluated and assumed as the antinomy of human vs. non-human. By "non-human" we can mean animals, plants, and natural objects such as rocks, this formula being more adequate for post-Cartesian thought because it gathers both rational and non-rational actors of this world on the field of nature, overcoming the Cartesian *Cogito* as a primary differentiator.

Last, but not least, Ferry notes that the end of the anthropocentrism was brought about by the transition from modernity to postmodernity. This movement could be also regarded as the liberation from the anti-natural human attitudes, restoring the relationship between nature and society, animals, plants, and humans. In other words, this end represents the new ecological order: *tree, animal, human,* following Ferry's formula, based on the main premise that both human and non-human beings have an intrinsic value that argues both for their status as moral subjects and as subjects of law.

Why are these four elements representative for the ecological reshaping of the social-critical theory of modernity? The main answer is that it provides a different perspective on how questions of natural and civil order, liberty, culture, health, care, and authenticity were instrumentalized by both democratic and anti-democratic modern societies in two ecological discourses: the shallow and the deep ecology movements. Both humanist and anti-humanist discourses analyze ecology in a metaphysical, moral, and political key of interpretation, showing that ecology is, in fact, a manner of reconciliation between natural and social contract, between human and non-human beings, as rational and irrational subjects of law, with certain capacities for feeling, interacting, and changing themselves. In this regard, Ferry's arguments could provide a new perspective on what Arne Naess calls, in the terms of environmentalism (to apply a more rigorous and systematic approach) "long-range deep ecology" and "the shallow ecology movement." This distinction, introduced in Naess' lecture at the 1927 Third World Future Research Conference in Bucharest, argues that the word "deep" should express, in this paradigm, "the level of questioning of our purposes and values when arguing in environmental conflicts," while "shallow" expresses environmental interventions through technology, but starting from the intrinsic values of non-human beings involved in such causes. In fact, my point here is that human and non-human beings are grouped together, in different ecological discourses, not only because of their rational or irrational status, which involves certain duties or (im)possibilities of protection, but because of their intrinsic value. This concept—which shapes the moral and the political discourses lead to a shift from natural right to social contract—is also significant in the two different ecological discourses, as follows:

> The short-term, shallow approach stops before the ultimate level of fundamental change, often promoting technological fixes (e.g. recycling, increased automotive efficiency, export-driven monocultural organic agriculture) based on the same consumption-oriented values and methods of the industrial economy. The long-range deep approach involves redesigning our whole systems based on values and methods that truly preserve the ecological and cultural diversity of natural systems. (Drengson 1995)

This argument reflects two different modern trends of experiencing the ecological diversity or its new order, as Ferry would put it, by perceiving the limits and insufficiencies of a hierarchical model of conceiving human and non-human beings as subjects of law, as well as their relationship intermediated by technology, and its contribution in strengthening their mutual interactions from an axiological perspective. This is relevant in explaining why Ferry believes that the deep ecological movement has the capacity to synthesize traditional subjects of the extreme right with futurist motifs or perspectives of the extreme left, while the shallow ecological movement will always have a conservative outlook, placing man at center-stage.

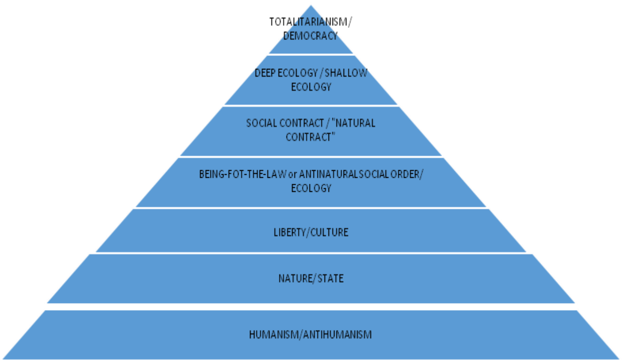

Fig.1. *The hierarchy of the ecological oppositions within the social-critical theory of modernity*

These arguments were used in this paper to explain how a social-critical theory of modernity might be conceived in the terms of humanism and anti-humanism, represented by different ecological discourses whose main contribution was to add to the modern social contract the value of non-human beings—including animals, plants, and natural objects—as subjects of law (in their most democratic versions), or to exclude the value of humans (in their totalitarian structures), leading to racism, for example, as a clinical, biopolitical, and hence “ecological” discourse. In the end, an analysis of ecological discourses, in their humanist and anti-humanist versions, and in their democratic and totalitarian structures, has revealed that nature itself can be as vulnerable as the nature of the human being.

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WHY CAN WE NOT SIMPLY MOVE 'FROM ETHICS TO ONTOLOGY AND BACK'? AN ATTEMPT AT RETHINKING THE ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS OF ARNE NÆSS

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Abstract:

This article discusses the methodological problems in justifying gestalt ontology at the expense of environmental ethics, as displayed by the father of deep ecology, Arne Næss. As one of the main reasons for underrating the role of ethics in building environmental philosophy, I point out Næss' theory of narrowing morality to moralization, which can be traced to the way he examines the impact of moral intuition, duty, and beautiful actions in Kant's sense. On a macro methodological level, the main objective of this paper is to show why rehabilitating the role of ethics in Næss' conception necessitates rethinking his move "from ethics to ontology and back" within the framework of ontological ethics.

Key words: Environmental ethics, deep ecology, gestalt ontology, intrinsic value of nature, right to live and blossom, Arne Næss.

1. An Overview of the Topic

In 1972, Arne Næss participated in a conference in Bucharest which was devoted to the problems of future development of third world countries. At the conference, he discussed the role of ethics in analyzing common attitudes towards nature with respect to principles of bioegalitarianism. The following year, Næss published an article called "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-range Ecology Movement" in which he introduced the term "deep ecology movement."

Conceptualizing deep ecology was driven by the impossibility of solving ecological problems by adopting ecological means alone. In this context, deep ecology could be defined as focused on revealing the philosophical entity of ecology understood as a "science of home," as a way for one to find his/her "natural" place in the biosphere, and thus avoid facing environmental crisis.

According to Næss, there is a distinction between a "deep ecology movement" that searches for long-term solutions and a "shallow ecology movement" that focuses on finding short-term solutions. Referring to his explanation, the differences between both movements can be described as deriving from two different modes of thinking, namely: problem-solving vs. decision-making. While the shallow ecology aims to restrict the overrated role of anthropocentrism in general, since it questions the balance between man and biosphere, deep ecology strives to avoid further problems by rethinking the normative validity of the whole frame. In other words, if shallow ecology relies on an inductive way of restricting the side-effects of an anthropocentric paradigm to both nature and society, the deep one functions the other way around, i.e. as deductively justifying bioegalitariansim for the purpose of avoiding possible ecological concerns as side-effects of humankind's development. The philosophical implications concern not only the ontological prerequisites, but also the ethical premises of environmental analysis, because deep ecology aims not only to achieve the planet's good in the name of man, but also in the name of nature itself (Næss 1973, pp. 95–100).

Næss' deep ecology is grounded on two main principles: the interrelatedness of all ecosystems, which inherently argues for a reconsideration of the anthropocentric perspective as only one of many possible perspectives, and the need for the process of self-realization to be examined as a process of identifying with different living forms, which leads to identification with the whole ecosphere. Since living organisms are recognized as “knots in the biospherical net” (Ibid), Næss provides a system of eight principles whose incorporation into a platform illustrates different levels of genealogical analysis. The principles of the so-called deep ecology platform are the following:

1. The well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman Life on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent value). These values are independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes.
2. Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realizations of these values and are also values in themselves.
3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital human needs.
4. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of human population. The flourishing of nonhuman life requires such a decrease.
5. Present human interference with the nonhuman world is excessive, and the situation is widely worsening.
6. Politics must therefore be changed. These policies affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present.
7. The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher status of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between big and great.
8. Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation to directly or indirectly try to implement the necessary changes.[1] (Næss 1989, p. 29)

One of the significant implications of the aforementioned platform is the problematization of anthropocentrism, which is built on utilitarian ethics. One reason to reconsider the role of utilitarian ethics in favor of ontological ethics lies with the idea of intrinsic value. It is in rethinking the latter that we can justify the internal relationships between the human and nonhuman world outside of the paradigm of moral objectivism. In this context, I argue that if we continue to recognize this interrelatedness via principles of moral objectivism, we would end up either continuing to support anthropocentrism or falling into the trap of radical bioegalitarianism, which in turn would be an obstacle for adopting the methodological benefits of ethical gradualism. The need for gradualism is formulated in point three of the deep ecology platform, although what constitutes “vital human needs” and how the principle can be applied to other species still requires clarification.

2. What Is Wrong with Narrowing Morality to Moralization?

2.1. The Role of (A)Moral Intuition

In this context, one of the main problems in Næss’ writings concerns the way he underrates the role of ethics, which is narrowed to a process of moralization. Næss also discusses the impact of a genuine ethics of conservation, which, in my view, partly meets the requirements of ontological ethics, since the requirements in question can be beneficial in understanding how living beings could be treated as genuine fellows. In turn, distinguishing between ethical relativism and ethical relationism, as Næss suggests (Næss 2008, p. 137), would not necessarily help us to clarify the issue (Ibid, p. 100). On a macro methodological level, the aforementioned difficulty can be seen as resulting from the ambiguous definition of so-called “moral intuition.” Related problems derive from Næss’ statement that confronting intuitions is part of the process of development, because this is not always the case, e.g. when discussing the impact of contradictory moral intuitions. The origin of this misunderstanding can be traced to the fact that in Næss’ system, moral intuition is “something more” than having a value—it somehow precedes the latter, both ontologically and ethically, in a way that is not clearly articulated.

According to Næss, the idea that all living beings have the right to live derives from intuition (Næss 2005, p. 67). However, there are at least two main concerns about this thesis. First, there is no necessary and sufficient condition for initially contradictory intuitions and morals, as Næss suggests (Næss 2008, p. 93), since they function either as

[1] This later version of the platform was composed after the discussions and exchange of papers between Stan Rowe and Næss. For the first version of the platform in *Trumpeter* 13(1) (1996), and the way it was contextualized in the works of B. Devall and G. Sessions, see Drengson’s article “Ecophilosophy, Ecosophy and the Deep Ecology Movement: An Overview” (1999).

moral intuitions in practice or as a certain kind of epistemological intuition. This brings us back to the question of whether we should give priority to the criterion of verification (and somehow to refer these intuitions to it) over the criterion of normative validity. Second, arguing that some other intuitions with unclear normative validity can change a norm (Ibid, p. 109) is a highly questionable statement. Furthermore, a paradox results from the fact that he unilaterally equates morality with moralization, presuming that our intuition is supposed to work both as a moral intuition *and* as something “initially higher” (in Næss’ words) than the intuition in question.

2.2. Næss’ Theory of Duty

Some other consequences of narrowing morality to moralization affect the understanding of duty, insofar as Næss considers it an important issue while moving from “ethics to ontology and back” (Ibid, p. 77). He points out that clarifying differences in ontology may contribute to revealing the function of different policies and their ethical basis. One of the problems here is that so-called ontology of contents is not a sufficient argument in denying the relativism of sensualism, taking into account that the way of feeling is also axiologically determined. Another ambiguous issue is the difficulty of explaining why spontaneous experience is irreducible to a form of sense experience (Ibid, p. 201). Judging by the aforementioned investigations, I argue that in his attempts to identify the world with a set of contents (not with structures), which are to be conceived as contents of gestalts, Næss underrates the move from “ethics to ontology and back,” remaining focused on the specifications of the ontological level alone.

Furthermore, relying on what Næss calls intuition is only a necessary condition for justifying the role of moral choices, although I agree that moral intuition is irreducible to the moral duty, and that cultural setting is important for how we define felt closeness with different living beings.[2] Duty is determined as relational rather than relative (Næss 2005a, p. 125), but this definition does not explain why acting from inclination is “superior” to acting from duty. The latter is an ambiguous statement because it does not take into account the normative validity of ethics. In turn, it would be problematic to postulate an ethical system based on superior and inferior relations, since this system would revive the appeals for moral objectivism.

2.3. The Role of Beautiful Actions in Næss’ Theory

What is Næss’ suggestion for avoiding the pitfalls of deontological ethics? He discusses the need to reconsider the role of so-called “beautiful actions” (Kant). Thus we can provide arguments against deontological ethics in Kant’s sense, which is described as an illuminative example of moralization. In this context, I would argue that denying the role of deontological ethics stems from Næss’ intention to simplify the role of duty at the expense of so-called deepened realism.

In particular, Næss analyzes the “supremacy” of environmental ontology and realism over environmental ethics that comes from “nature” and man’s natural ability to act beautifully (Næss 2005b, p. 527, Næss 2008, p. 93). If we follow his line of thought, however, we end up with a model meeting the requirements of a form of radical biocentrism that is as questionable as narrow moralization.

Næss emphasizes the role of Kant’s theory of beautiful actions as benevolent ones (Næss 2005a, p. 122), but benevolence is no guarantee against a conflict of feelings. Such an interpretation still raises the question of how to evaluate two contradictory beautiful (benevolent) actions in Næss’ sense if both of them are purely benevolent, but are driven by two contradictory motives.

Another ambiguity in Næss’ theory is in how a moral action could be transformed into a beautiful one[3] (Næss 2008, p. 136), especially in the process of habituation, which is supposed to make the moral action look “morally natural.” Næss misleadingly identifies habituation with the state of “feeling natural.” On the other hand, it is of crucial importance for him that we still have an inclination that comes “directly,” i.e., in a “natural” way (Ibid). If we accept such an interpretation, however, then every habit can be misrecognized as having a moral value by default. On a macro methodological level, it would mean that by extending the normative validity of the concept of beautiful actions, more and more desires would be easily habituated as vital needs.

In turn, if these beautiful actions are moral by default, how can we compare and evaluate their normative validity? Furthermore, if they embody two

[2] Næss relevantly points out that it is better to talk about living beings than organisms (Næss, Equality, Sameness and Rights, p. 69).

[3] According to Næss, if a moral action forms a habit, it starts feeling natural and inclination occurs. Thus the moral action glides into a beautiful one.

contradicting intuitions, how can we judge which normative validity matters more?[4] It would be also problematic to accept the three different strategies proposed by Næss (French 1999, p. 132), namely, to discuss the usefulness of ecologically positive actions, moral obligations, and inclinations, recognized as three separate spheres of life (Næss 2008, p. 135).

It is questionable to argue that experienced reality can also become a crucial factor of environmental ontology, which presumably helps us to avoid the traps of ontological relativism. In this context, some of the issues that arise are as follows: How can we claim that every single subject objectively experiences the objective contents of reality? If so, how can we recognize self-realization as a top norm in Næss' sense? If we all naturally produce "beautiful actions," how does the cultivation of the intuition in question "derive" from the reality itself? Judging by his explanations, I would point out that it also remains unclear what constitutes a "strict" environmental ethics and "strict" egalitarianism for Næss. The understanding of the process of transformation from *being in the world* to *being in nature* does not contribute to revealing how nature is "outside of the world" (Ibid, p. 93).

In turn, eco-impartiality—which is defined by Næss as a choice of interests that are conceptualized as intrinsic opportunities (regarding the decision-making process)—both blurs the definition of vital needs and makes clarifying moral engagement within ontological ethics more difficult. Another aspect of the problem results from Næss' literal interpretation of "intrinsic value," because his reductionism provokes the justification of moral objectivism.[5]

3. Some Consequences of Underrating the Role of Environmental Ethics

Næss' attempts at giving preference to gestalt ontology over environmental ethics drew strong criticism due to the fact that underrating the normative validity of morality leaves many questions about deep ecology unanswered. Espen Gamlund emphasizes two main concerns, first arguing that it is unclear how deep ecology's focus on the processes of identification and self-realization is dissociated from anthropocentrism, since the ideas of identification and self-realization are anthropocentric in their nature (Gamlund 2012, p. 236). Second, he argues that identifying with nature and feeling deep concern for all living beings do not necessarily lead to self-realization and happiness (Ibid). Such a life does not appeal to everyone, because many have no experience of it as a good life, nor anticipate that it will (Ibid, pp. 236–237).

Starting with the first argument, I would argue that even if we accept that the concepts of identification and self-realization are anthropocentric ones, such a stance does not necessarily question how they contribute to rehabilitating the intrinsic value of nature, especially if these concepts are incorporated into the process of cultivating sensitivity towards others due to the principles of ethical gradualism. On a macro methodological level, it means that certain types of biocentrism do not necessarily exclude all forms of anthropocentrism. In turn, ethical gradualism shows why we should avoid the extremes of both radical anthropocentrism and radical biocentrism, while striving to cultivate sensitivity to both ourselves and other living beings. In other words, if we face problems in this context, they are due to reducing ethical gradualism to ethical anthropocentrism, rather than mistakenly believing that identification and self-realization are non-anthropocentric concepts.

Regarding the second critical argument, before asking what constitutes a good life, we should keep in mind the distinction between quality of life and standard of living. If these concepts remain interchangeable, then persuading people to identify with nature may not necessarily provoke different attitudes, as Gamlund argues. Thus the question of what constitutes a "good life would not be understood as a normative question.

The origin of most of the contradictions mentioned above can be found in what Gamlund defines as Næss' obsession with environmental ontology at the expense of environmental ethics (Ibid, p. 239). Gamlund's arguments against reducing ethics to gestalt ontology again concern the issues deriving from failing to clarify morality's normative validity. According to Gamlund, gestalt theory leads to "sub-

[4] Analyzing Næss' theory of Ecosophy T, Glasser poses the question of how can we be sure that "the right intuition" will supersede other interests and obligations (Glasser, Næss's Deep Ecology Approach, p. 380). Presuming that this intuition has a higher normative validity than any wrong obligation is only convincing within the framework of moral objectivism.

[5] Some researchers go even deeper in their evaluations, saying that Næss' ontology of deep ecology raises many questions due to the fact that it differs from contemporary liberal accounts of morality (See M. Humphrey), i.e. that the misunderstandings stem from contradicting given ontology and a given type of morality. However, such an analysis does not reveal the origin of the problem, namely, how the latter arises from contradicting ontological ethics and a form of moral relativism which is typical for postmodern culture.

jective relativism," which we cannot use as a firm grounding of environmental ethics (Ibid).[6] One of the reasons is that Næss' gestalt theory cannot be justified as a normative theory, since "none of us can make a mistake"[7] (Ibid, p. 240). The other critical argument refers to the impossibility of solving conflicts of interests between man and nature unless environmental ethics is based on a critical moral way of thinking (Ibid, pp. 240–241).

I agree that even if we cannot have "wrong" gestalt experience, it does not follow that such experience is unquestionably valid in normative terms, because the criterion of verification cannot be equated with normative validity. I also agree with Gamlund's second statement, insofar as the process of solving conflicts from the perspective of "Whose justice? Which rationality?" does not lead to satisfactory explanations.[8] Furthermore, the methodological connection between ontology and ethics cannot be defined by adopting the hypothetic-deductive method[9] alone, according to which the former is a "reason," and the latter a "consequence" of it. Ontology is not a premise of ethics in the sense that the latter comes "next," because then there would be ethics without ontology and vice versa: it would be unnecessary for ontology to have axiological connotations. If so, the following question arises: which ontology provides whose ethics?

Næss' skepticism of ethics can be seen as coming partly from some unsolved problems in Sylvan's land ethics, which he criticizes. Sylvan's ethics[10] is focused on denying the role of ontology at the expense of ethics, claiming that values depend on the existence of choice-making preferences.[11] Another aspect of the problem is that the preferences in question do not reduce concerns about the definition of the so-called "nature's way," whose first and most apparent representation is that we simply may be wrong about what is good for the planet (Watson 1999, p. 116). Such a concern raises the problem of defining what is good in itself.

There is one more "dangerous" prerequisite which could again lead us into a paradigm of ethical anthropocentrism: the idea of conceptualizing the ontological stance on impartiality (eco-impartiality in particular) as moral neutrality in Næss' sense. This crucial issue provokes another contradictory conception, namely that the normative validity of moral engagements be simplified to choosing between different types of interests which should guide people in the process of interaction. Last but not least, it is the theory of moral neutrality that supports applying the ideology of evolutionism within the framework of moral objectivism.

Concerning Næss' critiques of ethics in favor of gestalt ontology, I would argue that in many respects, his definition of gestalt ontology implicitly meets the requirements of an ontological ethics that makes it possible to talk about the holism of man's experience. Holism in Næss' sense is determined by adopting a set of gestalt shifts which are incorporated in what I would call moral experiential gestalts.[12] These shifts contribute to understanding how through cultivating sensitivity towards otherness, man's self-realization is inseparable from nature's realization.[13]

Regardless of the different theories of how the critiques of deep ecology can be overcome, most researchers[14] see the pitfalls in what I would call a

[6] Gamlund refers to E. Katz's skepticism of basing an ethical obligation to protect nature on favorable natural experience (Ibid, p. 240).

[7] He gives the example of a mountain's characteristics. A mountain has characteristics x and y in relation to man, while the same mountain is recognized as having characteristics z and æ in relation to the cabin constructor (Ibid).

[8] Analyzing this problem is of crucial importance, especially when some vital needs are at stake.

[9] Gamlund argues that according to Næss, "should" and "must" do not have to be interpreted as a matter of ethical order, but rather as a hypothetical imperative in Kant's sense (Ibid, p. 235). But if we consider them to be a form of hypothetical imperative, it would mean that we can keep proceeding only from the perspective of our own intrinsic value as a value in itself. Taking such a stance, however, would lead to egoism, which is against Næss' principles.

[10] The problems in Sylvan's conception are emphasized by Grey, who argues that a principle affirming that all living things are of equal value is of no help in establishing preference-ranks (Grey, A Critique, p. 49). In other words, the axiological approach can be defined as a necessary but not sufficient condition for justifying the need of adopting ethical gradualism.

[11] See Grey's comments on Sylvan's axiology (Ibid, p. 48).

[12] I conclude that finding an explanation in favor of ontological ethics rather than moral objectivism is concerned with examining the normative validity of the question *What does it mean for a living being to have a value "by nature"?* If the latter is literally understood, we should establish a certain form of moral objectivism as an explanatory paradigm.

[13] Otherwise, man's gestalt would be simplified to the number of given experiential actions presuming that the coherence is a result of their sum. Thus the process of man's self-realization would be justified as a self-sufficient one which strengthens the anthropocentric mode of thinking.

[14] According to Plumwood, Næss' treatment of ethics is strongly influenced by his positivist background (Plumwood, Comment, p. 206).

problem of normative validity, i.e. how ethical commitment to the biosphere can be justified through clarifying so-called ontological commitment (E. Katz). Katz points out that the extension of the principles of deep ecology means extending the idea of ontological commitment, which in turn has much to do with broadening the visions of environmental ethics (Katz 2000, p. 28). Crucially, Katz also sees the methodological advantage of applying deep ecology to the socio-political context (Ibid, p. IX).

On the other hand, the thesis that the theory of deep ecology has not succeeded in eliminating ethics, but rather in distinguishing its assumptions as psychological ones (Reed and Rothenberg 1993, p. 70) can also be accepted to a certain extent. Otherwise, it would have contradicted psychology and ethics. Næss still gives some "positive" definitions of ethics, but they mainly concern its practical role, i.e. ethics is determined to be a "supplementary" means of paving the way for a gestalt ontology. He argues that it is the ontological framework that is the container in which we make our ethically based choices (Næss 1999, p. 142).[15]

Judging by the aforementioned investigations, I conclude that Næss recognizes the role of ethics to the extent that he presumes that the process of identification depends on the variations of the intensity of subject's affection. If we remain on the level of affection, however, it would mean that the whole process would be reduced to a behaviorist "stimulus-reaction" model, which could also serve for the purposes of the egoist self. That is why I argue that only the moral experiential gestalt can "widen and deepen the effect of identification" in Næss' sense (Næss 2005c, p. 466). Furthermore, what I called moral experiential gestalt can be partly compared with Næss' gestalts of action, or gestalt units constituting the problem-solving processes (Næss 2005d, 508).

In this context, one of the questions which arises is whether every single unit is equivalent to gestalt. We can examine them as synonyms, but only to a certain extent, since they both counter the process of the fragmentation of our experience. Every single gestalt presumes a form of unity because it is based on a given (subjectable to structuring) interaction with the world. However, it does not follow that every single unit is a gestalt.

Gestalts can rather be described as what Næss calls "greater wholes of action and living" (Ibid). Furthermore, they can be defined as such because according to him, commitment to life comes from nature itself. However, the commitment in question can be seen as a moral one only if it does not encourage moral objectivism. Næss provides some arguments which make the contradictions even more complicated. He emphasizes that two opponents may share the same ethical prescriptions, but disagree about an environmental decision because the object of moral attention is perceived through relying on radically different ontologies (Cavazza 2014, p. 24).[16]

The problem is that this would mean that the "access" to different paths can be evaluated as deriving from the access provided by the ontologies in question, rather than from ethics. Concerning the issue of different realities, the superlative form "furthest" signifies whether we will experience a given reality as one or another. It has much to do with specifying whether the experience is considered to have value in itself or value for itself, which is also an argument in favor of the idea that ontology is inseparable from ethics. Regarding ontological differences, we should first clarify why some people can have similar views on different things, i.e. on seeing different realities, as Næss suggests. This is why it is important to outline the risks of simplifying ontology, lest we reduce it to a way of seeing reality.[17]

4. Solving the Puzzles of Intrinsic Value of Nature

Næss' conception of equal share does not significantly contribute to understanding the idea of intrinsic value,[18] insofar as it brings us back to spec-

[15] A proof of his thesis is that the norms of ethically responsible communication are the same as those of effective communication (Næss, Gandhi, p. 49). In this context, one of the methodological risks is evaluating moral responsibility based on its effectiveness.

[16] Næss' misconception of knowledge about ethics derives from his claim that people have "access" to different parts of reality due to the specificities of their different backgrounds. If so, it would mean a revival of subject-object dualism, as well as the reduction of ontological relativism to social relativism.

[17] A related difficulty is defining value as objective (Cavazza, Environmental Ethics, p. 40), i.e. value is to be understood as being entangled with emotional tones (Ibid). However, from the fact that "objectivity is loaded with value" (Ibid), it does not follow that the value itself is objective, nor does it mean that values are naturally colored with so-called emotional tones.

[18] Another argument in favor of this interpretation can be seen in Næss' claim that a right is not an unconditional norm, but rather a guideline (French, Against Biospherical Egalitarianism, p. 130). Næss approves of the idea of value

ulating about the idea of "more" or "less" value in respect to the capabilities of different species. If we interpret the view "equal share" in the sense of see intrinsic value as "by nature," then the next question is how we can justify the "sameness" beyond its reduction to its quantitative or qualitative embodiments?

My suggestion regarding Næss' definition is that "the same" can be interpreted as a generic term,[19] since it is intrinsic, but not "one and the same" in terms of its qualitative embodiments. Otherwise, humans *should have been* birds, animals, etc., i.e. this criterion would have had no normative validity at all. Supposing that human beings have the "same value" as living beings would mean giving them an equal right to live and blossom.[20] However, such an interpretation would not provide us with a clue about how to decide what an equal share is when two rights are at stake. That is why I would argue that equality concerns the role of rights, while sameness concerns the role of values, taking into account that "equal" and "same" are not ontological synonyms.

4.1. Evaluating "Realistic Egalitarianism"

Attempts at examining biospherical egalitarianism as a "qualified realistic egalitarianism" (Ibid) can only be successful if the egalitarianism in question is explored within the framework of ethical gradualism. Furthermore, such an interpretation cannot be simplified to the specification of the vital needs as basic ones, because we cannot clarify their normative validity without contradictions.

French relevantly claims that deep ecology is normatively inconsistent, insofar as moral principles cannot be separated from moral practice. Otherwise, "strict egalitarianism" as an abstract ideal may turn into a justification for wrong actions, as Næss himself argues (French, 1999, p. 132). However, rejecting a system of ranking does not necessarily lead to a loss of regret, so the problem is whether regret causes agents to develop alternative ways of avoiding similar situations in the future. In this context, French argues that without a moral ranking of various vital interests, we simply have a ranking of assertion of power in a conflict situation (Ibid), which also increases the difficulty of apply this principle to tragic situations. On the other hand, without a ranking of species, it would be also impossible to ground Næss' position, as French emphasizes.

This means that clarifying the connection between the intrinsic value of all living things and universal rights presumes analyzing what a valued interest in Næss' sense is (Ibid, p. 135), as well as whether the latter can be defined beyond the framework of utilitarian ethics. The principle of minimum wrong does not change the anthropocentric perspective determining which interests are basic and which ones are not (Ibid). Interests which are basic should have "moral weight" regardless of whether they are human interests or not. Another important point in French's interpretation is that Næss at least outlines that his form of biospherical egalitarianism still accepts that vital human interests can outweigh non-human ones (Ibid).

A significant problem which arises is how to provide one and the same classification deriving from the presumption that not all species have duty, because accepting the latter may lead to imposing radical anthropocentrism. Furthermore, it may also turn out, as French points out, that highly valued but non-basic interests can be ascribed "greater moral weight" than the basic interests of animals and plants. Since humans are the ones who can be defined as moral agents, the principle of self-defense in Taylor's sense (Ibid, p. 136) can be used as an excuse for imposing non-vital needs as vital ones. However, if some "non-basic" interests outweigh some basic ones, why are the former not classified as basic interests as well? This problem takes place against the background of the questionable definition of the so-called high level of a civilized life (Ibid).

as deserving equal concern (Ibid, p. 131), but the latter does not say something new to clarify the issue of equal share.

[19] The idea of interpreting value in itself as a generic term comes from Wetlesen (Wetlesen, Value in Nature, p. 406) who argues that "intrinsic" and "inherent" should be considered as its specifications. "Intrinsic value" could refer to certain "states or achievements of living beings" as understood within teleological ethics, while "inherent value" could apply to these beings as interpreted in deontological ethics (Ibid). Furthermore, inherent value is justified as concerning moral subjects towards whom moral agents have directed moral duties.

[20] As French points out, this specification remains on a theoretical level, but it is not applied in practice. Against the background of Næss' investigations of the principle of equal rights for all beings, which is recognized as only one norm among others (French, Against Biospehrical Egalitarianism, p. 130), French argues (referring to Taylor) that moral weight can be examined as an "equal share" (Ibid, p. 135). However, claiming that a value is the same for all, which does not require excluding the possibility of additional arguments for respect and protection (Ibid, p. 133), does not significantly contribute to clarifying the aforementioned definition of equal share.

The same problem arises from the premise that not all the interests are "equivalent." That is why we should accept that under certain circumstances, the life of one person should be preserved at the expense of someone else's. In turn, the explanation of this decision is not necessarily an evolutionary one, although it implicitly entails a certain form of biological gradualism. The definition of value, recognized by finding proofs of rationality, or other "higher" capabilities of living, brings us back to the debate of how to justify the vital interests of living beings when we cannot find clear evidence of their consciousness. If we keep giving preference to sentience "in proportion to living beings' interests," it would mean that we refract the principle of distributive justice through the lens of objective naturalism. This, however, makes genuine respect of the "interest of well-being of all living beings" a subject for theoretical speculation alone.[21] Related problems arise if we give preference to so-called additional need over moral value, insofar as the former cannot be a sufficient criterion of moral evaluation.

Judging by the aforementioned investigations, I conclude that the proponents of ethical gradualism should take into account not only the complex relations between basic and non-basic needs, interests, etc., but also the ones between the subjects they are applied to. Ethical gradualism requires the principle of moral differentiation (e.g. the differentiation between moral subjects, moral agents, and moral discussants) to be recognized as a guiding principle. In this context, the problem of how to define the normative validity of equality derives from the fact that basic and non-basic needs and capabilities are determined on the principle of contaminated vessels. Even if we introduce concepts such as equal concern and consideration, this does not significantly help when the idea of "actual duty" is at stake (Ross in French 1999, p. 138).

According to Næss, adopting so-called ethics of ecosystems, or environmental ethics, means to accept the philosophy of Natural Right (Næss 2005e, pp. 388-389). However, he does not specify how to understand the latter so as to avoid moral objectivist speculations—namely, how to avoid identifying "natural" with "intrinsic"—nor does he clarify the aspects of potential dependence of natural right on the law of nature. In this context, another issue is how to define the universalizability of vital needs (Næss 2008, p. 294). Næss looks for a solution by prioritizing "what serves the vital needs of humanity" when special ethical obligations to fellow beings are made. The double bind implications of the interpretation in question arise from the hesitation to practically apply ethical gradualism—namely, to preserve the biospherical equilibrium without underrating human vital needs at the same time.

5. Conclusion

Revealing the genealogy of the pitfalls in Næss' conception of environmental ethics would helps us to understand why the accusations of bio-fascism (M. Bookchin) are ungrounded. The origin of the aforementioned problems can be traced to the influence of the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle, which Næss joined at the beginning of his philosophical career. One of the most apparent projections of the influence in question can be found on the level of ethics, understood as a part of a total premise-conclusion pyramid. Accepting Næss' theory, however, would lead to simplifying the normative validity of ethics to outlining logical connections that do not necessarily imply ethical ones.

Generally speaking, the influence of the Vienna Circle can be outlined in two main points, namely: underrating the role of ethics, and the privileging of the criterion of verification over that of normative validity. It is the latter aspect that makes Næss introduce some ambiguous definitions, such as the one that the vital right to live and blossom is a matter of a-moral intuition. Investigating how Næss defines the latter, I argue that what he calls intuition is not a sufficient condition for recognizing the role of moral choices, although I agree that moral intuition is irreducible to moral duty, as well as that the cultural setting affects how we define felt closeness to different living beings. In this context, I question Næss' statement that duty is "relational" rather than "relative," because it does not contribute to understanding why acting from inclination should be "superior" to acting from duty.

Going back to the embodiments of "the first direction," we may argue that despite proclaiming the "move from ethics to ontology and back," Næss is focused on the initial stage of the process, i.e. on the one of moving to ontology. This makes him formulate some problematic solutions to how to define the intrinsic value of nature in a non-contradictory way by avoiding the concerns of both ethical anthropocentrism and biocentrism. Judging by the aforemen-

[21] Distinguishing between moral consideration and moral significance does not provoke a vicious circle (Ibid, p. 139) if we keep the idea of "different moral importance" untouched (Ibid, p. 140).

tioned investigations, I argue that rethinking the role of ethics as ontological ethics within Næss' theory can positively influence the understanding of why we need ethical gradualism. It could be done by specifying the complex relations between intrinsic value and the right to live and blossom beyond the restrictions of moral absolutism and moral relativism.

In turn, some methodological problems arise from discussions of whether deep ecology can be interpreted as a holist metaphysics or a holist ontology alone, as Næss suggests. Such an issue raises two other concerns. First, if deep ecology is recognized as a holist metaphysics, it would still leave the question of the normative validity of man's and nature's self-realization open, because defining the intrinsic value of all living beings presumes cultivating environmental awareness that can be achieved simply by moral understanding and moral learning. Overrating the role of holist metaphysics would mean neglecting the complex role of morality, and thus encouraging one to go back to the paradigm of ethical anthropocentrism. In turn, defining deep ecology as holist ontology alone raises similar difficulties, insofar as gestalt shifts are a necessary but not sufficient condition for specifying one's moral experiential gestalt. Furthermore, following Næss' line of thought about our natural ability to act beautifully, the ethical model he provides would meet the requirements of a self-sufficient form of radical biocentrism that is as questionable as the narrow moralization is.

If we keep anticipating the interrelatedness of human and nonhuman world as a form of moral objectivism, it would mean either continuing to support ethical anthropocentrism, or again falling into the trap of radical biocentrism, which would become an obstacle for evaluating the methodological benefits of ethical gradualism. Judging by the aforementioned investigations, I would argue that the latter is implicitly formulated in point three of Næss' deep ecology platform, although the term "vital human need" still requires further clarification, as well as how ethical gradualism can be applied to other species in practice.

In analyzing why Næss underrates the role of ethical gradualism, we should pay attention to at least two questions. First, how can we guarantee that the intergenerational perspective is a necessary and sufficient condition for establishing sustainable communities in Næss' sense, especially for building local communities whose development is inseparable from the development of unsustainable communities? Next, what would prevent the idea of sustainability from being replaced (deliberately or due to a lack of knowledge) with unsustainability, which might be disguised as fulfilling the ideal of a sustainable community in the name of future generations? Last but not least, I would argue that the latter interpretation would bring us back to the vicious circle of ethical speciesism, since we would neglect the fact that other living beings have offspring as well.

One of the main methodological problems with Næss' unsuccessful attempts at establishing ethical gradualism is the way he leaves the definition of vital needs deliberately vague, which in turn provokes the question of how to interpret the statement that all living beings are equal in worth. I suggest that Næss' definition (due to which "the same" can be described as a generic concept) does not have to be understood in terms of contents alone. Otherwise, it would have meant that the value of all living beings has the "same content." Such a specification would have made it impossible to take a stance when the lives of two different individuals (belonging to one and the same or two different species) are at stake. On the other hand, there are some typological differences regarding the issue of equal value when the right is embodied in life. I conclude that equality, which concerns the general level of rights, affects the one of the intrinsic values, taking into account that "equal" and "same" are synonyms, but not ontological ones. In contrast to what Næss suggests, the "same" can refer to the value of having a universal right, but not to the exertion of the latter, because the definition of a universal right may still provide a non-contradictory differentiation treatment.

Exploring the origin of the aforementioned issues, I conclude that introducing ethical gradualism should be based not only on the complex relations between vital and non-vital needs, interests, etc., but also on the relations between the subjects they are applied to.

If we agree with Næss that adopting environmental ethics means accepting the philosophy of natural right, we cannot avoid moral objectivist speculations—namely, avoiding the identification of "natural" with "intrinsic." Nor does Næss clarify the aspects of the potential dependence of natural right on the law of nature.

Going back to Næss' preference to gestalt ontology, I conclude that one of the main methodological problems of Næss' environmental philosophy arises from his unwillingness to examine gestalt ontology within the field of ontological ethics, although he refers the normalization of the gestalt shifts to the intrinsic value of nature. Furthermore, I would argue that if Næss has explicitly stated that some aspects of gestalt ontology meet the requirements of ontological ethics, his contradictory expression of "being normative by nature" could have been successfully replaced by the expression of being "intrinsically normative."

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ARISTOTLE: THOUGHT AND LANGUAGE

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Abstract:

This paper aims to argue the idea that, by analyzing the relationship between thought and language, Aristotle decisively contributed to the foundation of the philosophy of language. Researching language in its relations with thinking and existence, the Stagirite demonstrated that the language is not just a communication tool, but a method of knowledge or of "deciphering" the world. The word reflects the reality throughthought and, in this situation, is not a slave of ideas or concepts. On the contrary, it even represents a decisive factor in their elaboration.

Despite its authority, Aristotelian thinking about language, along with the whole tradition that it generated, met with a strong critical reaction among contemporary philosophers, especially among those of the analytic school.

My conclusion is that even if some Aristotelian theses about language are criticized by modern thinkers, this falls under the normal evolution of science. It seems excessive to hold Aristotle responsible for not providing solutions to contemporary problems. As for the rest, the Stagirite continues to be present among us and teach us extremely difficult and enlightening lessons.

Key words: Thought, language, knowledge, existence, concepts, philosophy of language.

Although language has always been an environment for philosophizing, it has been said that in the twentieth century, language was for the first time considered not only an "object" of philosophy, but a "condition of possibility" for philosophy, in the Kantian sense[1]. Every thought, every idea cannot be present outside of language. Not only that, but philosophizing itself implies *ab initio* the situating in "language."

But beyond the ambivalent position of language, as medium and object of philosophy, something even more profound draws our attention—namely the idea that, as a whole, the themes of the philosophy of language are closely linked to that of a "first philosophy." In dealing with language, philosophy does not consider it primarily as a "special object." On the contrary, starting from language, philosophy seeks to explore thought in its relation with existence.[2] In that perspective, philosophy of language relies on tradition, at the beginning of which Aristotle is one of its most prestigious representatives. He demonstrated the unity between thought and language in their relation to existence in an exemplary attempt to discover the general principle of being of all things, as well as developing the idea that "the supreme good is one, incorporeal, indivisible, incomprehensible, unsearchable, indefinable,"[3] as the ancient commentator Ammonius remarked. By thus defining the science of logic, the Aristotelian approach reunites the ontological, gnoseological, and linguistic horizons in a vision helps to spur novel solutions to problems in both philosophy of language and semantics—subjects which have today become so refined and complex that sometimes it seems that they have completely forgotten their beginnings, where their foundations lie.

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[1]K.-O. Apel, *Idee der Sprache in der Traditio des Humanismus von Dante bis Vico*, 2 Aufl., Bouvier, 1975, p. 22.

[2]Cf. Alexandru Boboc, *Limbaj şi ontologie*[Language and Ontology], Editura Didactică şi Pedagogică R.A., Bucureşti, 1997, p. 20.

[3]"Prolegomena la cele zece categorii după cuvântul filosofului Ammonius"[Prolegomenato the tencategories following the word of the philosopher Ammonius], in vol. *Porfir, Dexip, Ammonius. Comentarii la Categoriile lui Aristotel, însoţite de textul comentat* [Porfir, Dexip, Ammonius. Comments on Aristotle's *Categories*, accompanied by the text commented], Translation, foreword and notes by Constantin Noica, Editura Academiei, Bucharest, 1963, pp. 227–228.

Naturally, in this study we cannot explore the full thematic range of Aristotle's work on philosophy of language. Our interest will be mainly oriented around the search for a response to two basic questions: first, to what extent did Aristotle conceive of language as a mode of "deciphering" the world? Second, how does he understand the relationship between a linguistic expression and its referent? Given the multitude of approaches to language in contemporary thought, I want to state now that I be using the concept of *natural language* as it appears in Aristotele's works.

In his famous treatises, the *Categories* (*Katēgoriai*) and *On Interpretation* (*Peri Hermeneias*), included in the *Organon*, but also in other fundamental works such as the *Metaphysics* (*Metaphysica*) and *On the Soul* (*Perì Psūchês*), Aristotle, following the vast space of logic, directs his philosophical reflection to language. In this founding approach, which focuses the ideas that permeate his entire philosophy, he conveys a superior vision of language, discovering in it the insertion point of man into the world. Therefore, it seems to me to be reductionist to assert that Aristotle conceives of language "prevailingly" as an instrument or a tool,[4] and nothing more. Perhaps such a critique is focusing on the instrumental function of logic. There is also another fact, far more plausible, which could induce such considerations: contemporary scientific discourse, departing from ancients' logos, often separates thoughts from words, and reason from language, and considers thought to be an instrument from which ideational content disappeared. In any case, criticism of this kind does not stand, because such instruments are neutral in relation to human purpose/intentionality. Also, Aristotle does not consider language to be an amorphous tool; examining it in connection with logical thought in the *Organon*, he considers it in the ontological horizon, reserving a fundamental role for it in the dramatic and continual effort of man to perceive, know, and interpret the world in which he lives.

We must also add that Aristotle does not deal with language as an instrument that governs acts of communication; he insists that language be understood as a faculty common to all men, in which speech and language are reunited, the philosophical utterance and the word whereby we convey meaning to those who stand in front of us, but also to those that we re-signify on the measure of knowledge advancement. Thus, the philosopher researches the capacity of language to facilitate our access to the world, or to know and express reality according to the exigencies of logical thought. In this perspective, he first analyzes words, but not all words, because that is not philosophy's task. He first focuses attention only on simple words that "bear" on things, thus engaging the ontological discussion.

The relationship between things and words—or "referent" and "expression," as they are often called today—was a major theme of reflection for ancient Greek philosophy. From Heraclitus to the Sophists, various theses about the function and value of language have been formulated, including the controversial issue of "the significance of significance," many of which are still argued over today. In this context, it is sufficient to remember that Plato insisted on discussing nature versus convention in connection with the essence of language, as well as other themes like the correct matching of the names, the relationship between thoughts and words, the sense of the word in knowledge,[5] etc., trying to shed light where everything was dark and confused. Naturally, Aristotle could not avoid these issues of philosophy of language that were so heavily discussed his time. Therefore, he has prioritized them from the beginning of his philosophy. Thus, he examined words not as being linguistic entities in themselves, but in relation to individual things that offer themselves to sense knowledge. Because, in Aristotle's conception, the existence is a given, previous to the word. Being given, things exist in full anonymity; they do not mean something; they do not signify anything. People classify things and give them meaning through words and names. So words indicate things and name them, which entitled an ancient commentator to say that "words, similar to a messenger, announce things."[6] But words have the miraculous power to name the unnamed not by itself, but by receiving it from thought, in which is projected the image of the thing. As he maintains in his treatise *On the Soul*, Aristotle conceives of thought as being the reception of the image of what is thought,[7] the fact of making it acces-

[4]Vezi: Geert Keil, "Limbajul" [Language], in vol. *Filosofie. Curs de bază* [*Philosophy. Basic Course*], Editura Ştiinţifică, Bucharest, 1999, p. 441.

[5]See Platon, *Cratylos*; *Letter VII*.

[6] Porfir, *Comentarii la Categoriile lui Aristotel* [Comments on Aristotle's *Categories*], in vol. *Porfir, Dexip, Ammonius. Comentarii la Categoriile lui Aristotel,însoţite de textul comentat*. [Porfir, Dexip, Ammonius. Comments on Aristotle's *Categories*, accompanied by the text commented], Translation, foreword and notes by Constantin Noica, Editura Academiei, Bucharest, 1968, p. 46.

[7] In this work, Aristotle called the imagination "passive intellect"; it "processes" what the sensations bring to it

sible. On these grounds, he names thoughts as resembling "things." Understood in this way, a thought is an image of a thing in mind, an image objectified in a word. Accordingly, the word encapsulates the thought in the form of a thing in the world with which we are acquainted.

In the two short treatises the *Categories* and *On Interpretation*, the thing, the thought, and the word are related in an indestructible triad or "semantic triangle," configuring a route for knowledge which starts from existence and ends with the uttered or written word. This idea is sustained also by another philosopher's thesis, according to which we acquire knowledge based on the preceding existence of things.[8] Thus, first there must be something knowable, namely the things, and then the words that express them. The existence of things is given and constitutes an object of knowledge, while words are instituted in order to fulfill a cognitive and communicational function.

In construing language this way, Aristotle, like the whole of Greek philosophy from its inception, had an excessive faith in the magical power of words, which primitive man invested with "natural and even supernatural force." Furthermore, the Bible begins with a known phrase in which a word is synonymous with the supreme Divinity, is *causa sui*, and, implicitly, the cause of the world: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."[9] Discovering in another sense the link between existence and language, "the magic function of the word has been eclipsed and replaced by the semantic function."[10] The word no longer has a physical influence for modifying the world; instead, its logical nature propels it to the highest level. Demonstrating the unity between words, thoughts, and reason in all things, Aristotle places the problems of language in the sphere of the Logos, which became "the principle of the universe and the first principle of human knowledge."[11]

Advancing the idea of the precedence of things over words as determiners of knowledge, Aristotle envisages not the Being as being, which he later theorized in *The Metaphysics*, but being as entity [as presence in a particular way] or the modalities of being, which find representation in concrete spoken words. This does not mean that the ontological status of the language is diminished. Rather, the philosopher implicitly maintains the role of language as a condition of reflection itself, of being, knowledge, and universality.

Thought and language are conceived by Aristotle as being fully unified, a unity from which language draws its cognitive force, its capacity to contribute to "the deciphering of the world," as we say today, surpassing the role of a simple instrument for communication. If we accept this assertion, another question arises: how is the word reported to reality?

This question moves the discussion into the realm of semantics, which was a practical approach to the study of language long before the adoption of the term. In this sense, Aristotle's example is conclusive. His theory greatly influenced philosophical reflections on the relations between words and referents—or, in a broader sense, between language, thought, and the world. It created an Aristotelian tradition in Western philosophy, especially in English empiricism, that continues to be influential today.[12]

Amid all this, Aristotle analyzes simple words versus combined words, demonstrating that although they convey the objectual reality which we perceive through our senses, they are not directly related to reality as an object of knowledge. Even in the beginning of *On Interpretation*, he says: "... the sounds articulated by the voice are symbols of moods, and the written words are symbols of the spoken words."[13] Therefore, the uttered words or "the sounds articulated by the voice" are symbols of thoughts (moods).[14] Words primarily signify thoughts. To the extent to which they harmonize themselves with the things, or

about the things known as exterior. Thoughts appear par excellence inherent to the soul, being also a form of imagination.

[8] This thesis refers to subsisting things which can be known by the senses, which Aristotle distinguishes from intelligible things created by the human mind. Concern the latter, knowledge is simultaneous with their creation.

[9] *Sfânta Evanghelie cea de la Ioan* [The Gospel of John],in *Sfânta Scriptură* [Holy Scripture], translated according to the Greek text of the Septuagint faced with the Hebrew text, Tipografia Cărţilor Bisericeşti, Bucharest, 1936, p. 1295.

[10] Ernst Cassirer, *Eseu despre om. O introducere în filosofia culturii umane* [An Essay on Man. An introduction to the philosophy of human culture], translation by Constantin Coşman, Humanitas, Bucharest, 1994, p. 156.

[11] Ibid, p. 157.

[12] See John P. O. Callaghan, "The Problem of Language and Mental Representation in Aristotle and St. Thomas," in *The Review of Metaphysics*, vol. L, No. 3, March 1997, pp. 500–502.

[13] Aristotle, *Despre Interpretare* [On Interpretation], in *Organon*, vol. I, Editura IRI, Bucharest, 1997, p. 158.

[14] In Aristotle's view, "the soul is somehow all the realities," or "the realities" are "either sensible objects or intelligible objects." – *Despre suflet* [On the Soul], Editura Ştiinţifică, Bucharest, 1969, p. 97.

faithfully reflect them, the thoughts are images of the things in the mind. Between thought and thing, Aristotle excludes the existence of any intermediary, whereof were speaking about the Stoics' successors, calling it enunciable (*lekton*) and assigning it the feature of being true or false. Primarily signifying thought, a word only secondarily refers to an object outside of our subjectivity. Consequently, the word signifies the thing, but indirectly, through thought. It is possible that these Aristotelian ideas led Ernst Cassirer to assert that, unlike the animal, man does not relate himself directly to reality, but only through symbols. As such, he lives in a symbolic universe that synthesizes human experience in the modalities of culture forms.[15]

As a sign or linguistic symbol, between which Aristotle makes no distinction, a word has ideational content that captures and holds the image of a thing. On the one hand, words signify and symbolize the images of things and their perception in mind, not the things themselves. On the other hand, by their form and content, words—which differ from insignificant sounds—testify to the unity between thought and language. We will turn to the latter idea in the present study; but before doing so, it seems important to note that the Aristotelian understanding of the relationship between language and existence, or between signifier and signified, has generated a theoretical tradition that we rediscover, albeit in a somewhat different treatment, in the criticism of language undertaken by Humboldt. According to Humboldt, the word, as an expression of the subjective perception of reality, "is not a copy of the object in itself, but of the image of it, born in our soul."[16] This means that subjectivity is involved in any objective perception, and as a consequence, any human individuality expresses its own viewpoint on its own "becoming more" through language. Developing these ideas, Humboldt develops the concept of the "inner form of language" (*innere Sprachform*), which says that language is not just a simple instrument of communication, but the "constituent organ of thought." It thus fulfills an active role in the deciphering of the world and in the process of knowing. Starting from the Aristotelian conception, Humboldt reflects on language and concludes that "...language comes equally little as the knowledge from the object as a given, in order to «express» I tultimately in-self; on the contrary, It hides in-self a spiritual way of inclusion, that enters as decisive moment in our wholerepresentation of the objective."[17]

Affirming that the uttered words are symbols of thoughts, and that written words are symbols of uttered thoughts, Aristotle continues with another particularly fertile idea for the philosophy of language. He says that "And then, as not all people have the same writing, likewise not all people have the same sounds of speaking, whereas the moods, that the sounds symbolize directly, are the same for all, as, in turn, are also the things, whose images are our representations."[18] Aristotle highlights here a different aspect of the relationship between language, thought, and the world, one that has become commonplace today, but of profound philosophical significance at the time. He distinguishes four basic elements: things and thoughts, words and writing.[19] According to the ontological criterion, these elements are ordered as follows: there are first things and thoughts, and then words and writing. The first two are given by nature (thoughts are identified here with the ability to think, which is a natural trait) and are common to all people; the last two are human positings (creations) for expressing thoughts and things. Since "sounds articulated through the voice" or words are not the same for all, writing is likewise a phenomenon that explains the differentiation of languages.

Based on this Aristotelian argument, it became generally accepted that language, understood as a common faculty to all men, has a universal dimension, while individual languages are "particular realities, whereby the general faculty called language is updated."[20] From the perspective of the cognitive function of language, language differentiation led to the formulation of the principle of relativism, according to which particular languages determine different ways of seeing the world, as Humboldt argued,

[15] Ernst Cassirer, *op. cit*.

[16] Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Fragmente lingvistice* [Linguistic Fragments], in vol. Alexandru Boboc, *Semiotică şi ontologie. Texte de referinţă* [Semiotics and Ontology: Reference Texts], Editura Didactică şi Pedagogică R.A., Bucharest, 1998, p. 34.

[17] E. Cassirer, *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*, I, p. 102, Apud: Alexandru Boboc, *Confruntări de idei în filosofia contemporană* [Confrontations of ideas in contemporary philosophy], Editura Politică, Bucharest, 1984, p. 61.

[18] Aristotle, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

[19] See Amonius Sthepanus, *Comentarii la tratatul Despre interpretare al lui Aristotel* [Comments on Aristotle's treatise *On Interpretation*], Translation by Constantin Noica, Editura Academiei, Bucharest, 1971, p. 52.

[20] *Tratat de lingvistică generală* [Treaty of general linguistics], Edited by Al. Graur et al., Editura Academiei, Bucharest, 1972, pp. 32–33.

or configure "worldviews" that do not allow for comparison between them. Consequently, speakers of a language would be isolated in an impenetrable epistemic circle. It is an idea on which some thinkers have built the conviction that we live in "different worlds" (Kuhn, Feyerband). Such theories, sometimes placed under the syntagma "the dogma of empiricism," are the target of some tough criticism, which calls them "incoherent." In this context, it is estimated that natural languages contain sufficient resources to be translated or to express the sense of our thoughts from an idiom in one language into another language, rendering meta-language superfluous.[21] Considered in the context of a broader horizon, this discussion leads to the conclusion that language makes access to world possible, since language itself embraces a world, and the world that it constitutes is always a part of the world or a "shared world," as Donald Davidson says.[22]

Researching the ways in which language is related to the world, Aristotle considers words to be human creations meant to designate the reality. In this regard, he analyzes them in two ways. Firstly, he deals with the first positing of words that sheds light on things, and secondly the second positing that bears on the types of words in "sense giver" expressions.

The first positing refers to the first use of utterances for the presentation of individual things through expressions and names. People assign expressions and names to things, and thus words acquire a double hypostasis: they are expressions indicating the sounds articulated by a voice, which in turn symbolize the thoughts that reflect the things. At the same time, however, a word is name for a thing. So, the first positing designates the invention process of simple words to express not Being, but an entity ("that which is"), not indeterminate Existence, but existences, a concrete individuality. In this perspective, the sense of a word is the designated thing itself, but not in its accidental qualities, rather "its reason for being" or its essence. So, every word gives one sense to reality.

In concert with this idea, Aristotle does not fail to specify that every word must have "a determined sense," otherwise it has no meaning. It is the *sine qua non* that makes knowledge and communication between people possible. Moreover, having a determined sense, the word permits not only the communication of an individual "with others," but also the communication of "each individual with himself"; it facilitates the structuring of thoughts. You cannot think if you do not think about a thing, which is evoked by a word.[23] It follows that Aristotle does not understand the relationship between thought and language in a univocal sense. Although he does not state it explicitly, he notifies there through activity of language on thought, which means that he does not limit the role of language to being a "slave" of thought or a mere "instrument" for communication. Here we encounter another very difficult problem: if a thought reflects the thing expressed by the word, is the word really a precise "copy" of the thing? Is not the word too narrow of a form to render exactly the essence of the object synthesized in thought? And if so, should not the sense of the word as intentionality concern us? Naturally, we cannot accuse Aristotle that he has not asked such problems. However, some ancient commentators, among them the Neo-Platonist philosopher Dexippus, have noted that "since names are not equivalent to things, and those which signify do not possess the same nature and structure as those signified," it follows that "the meaning of words is much inferior when compared to things themselves."[24] I believe that Dexippus is right here, because the limits of words and of language in general embody the limited ability of humans to perceive, describe, and express reality.

The contribution of language to the perception and interpretation of the world, or more precisely to "the formation of knowledge," can be expressed through the concept of categorization.[25] In this ideational horizon, Aristotle, through his treaty *Categories*, inscribes contributions of reference for philosophy, especially for philosophy of language. He is interested in outlining a general and comprehensive image of the empirical content of knowledge expressed through language, leaving aside everything that does not harmonize itself with this objective.

Research into the mode in which we utter thoughts about existence spurs Aristotle to appeal to the procedure of categorization, i.e. the passing from a word which designates an object to a general signification through an expression. Because the world of things is infinite (and likewise the words that designate them), and because things can be classified by

[21] This theme involves a broader and more explicit approach; in the present context we merely mention it.
[22] See Geert Keil, *op. cit.*, pp. 446–448.

[23] Aristotel, *Metafizica* [Metaphysics], *A–E*, Translation from Greek and notes by Gheorghe Vlăduțescu, Paideia, Bucharest, 1998, pp. 44–45.
[24] *Dexip's bewilderments and solutions, a Neo-Platonist philosopher, concerning Aristotle's* Categories, in *op. cit.*, p. 151.
[25] See Geert Keil, *op. cit.*, p. 442.

genus and species, Aristotle found that things, as well as the expressions that signify them, can be delimited into ten ontologically differentiated genera. Unlike Parmenides and Plato, who consider existence having a single sense, Aristotle maintains the plurality of its senses, an argument appreciated as being a great theoretical contribution to the evolution of philosophy.[26] According to Aristotle, "being itself can be taken in as many different senses as there are different categories of things. Equally many are the meanings of being."[27] Consequently, there is no single supreme genus, but more than one, and each of them bears a name that is, in fact, a notion. The categories are simple, general notions, through which the higher genera are enunciated, i.e. the fundamental kinds of existence of things. As significant expressions of existences differentiated by genus, the categories are words are isolated, "without any connection,"[28] and as such "do not imply in themselves an affirmation or negation," from which results the true and the false. They are only categories in which words and existences are gatehred together.

As an introduction to his analysis of the categories, Aristotle examines a series of special situations concerning the relationship between language and reality, implicitly highlighting the active role of thought in knowledge and the development of language, the stimulative reaction of language to thought, and contribution of language to the understanding of existence. In this regard, he deals with homonyms, synonyms, and paronyms, insisting mainly on the former ones, since only they are useful for the study of categories. What do they mean?

Usually, each thing becomes known through a name and definition which signifies its reason for being. But there are situations in which different things have the same name (homonyms), while at other times a single thing has multiple names (synonyms), and, finally, there are things whose names are derived from other names (paronyms).[29] In these circumstances, the thought goes beyond a simple reflection of the image of a thing and manifests itself as an "active intellect." It analyzes the relationships of resemblance, the difference between things, captures the general elements of these relationships, and then utters them through a word. In turn, the word, through being spoken or read, stimulates thought to represent for itself the corresponding statements of reality, thus leading to knowledge of the world.

By first dealing with homonyms, synonyms, and paronyms, Aristotle thus fully justified his approach to categories. In his view, categories may be considered homonyms, since they express the modalities of Being. In turn, the synonyms show that each thing is uttered synonymously, according to the corresponding genus, for the subordinate species.

Besides the mentioned demarcations, Aristotle considers it necessary to make other essential distinctions before describing the categories, distinctions inextricably linked with the categories. First, Aristotle specifies that utterances are based either on words related to each other (e.g.: the man runs, the man defeats), forming sentences that engage the judgment, or on unrelated or simple words[30] (man, ox, runs, defeats), which include the categories as shown above.

Another division which is essential in order for language to contribute to the understanding of the world, but also for the whole of Aristotleanism, refers to substances and the words that refer to them as a special class of reality. How is it possible to say something about something else? The answer comes, according to Ammonius' observations, from the fact that amongst realities, some are universal substances, while others are particular accidents; some are universal accidents, while others are individual substances (particular). This is a truth expressed by Aristotle in the next division. Amongst things, some are enunciated about a subject, but are never in a subject (universal substance); others are in a subject, but are never enunciated about a subject (particular accident); some things are enunciated about a subject, and are in a subject (universal accidents); other things are not in a subject, and are not enunciated about a subject (individual substances).[31] Through this division, Aristotle captures the relationships between universal and individual; implicitly sustains the idea that we can only assert what is universal about things, their essence, not their accidental attributes; that what is said about a subject as a predicate is inherent to it, whether universal or accidental.

After this first division of the realities, Aristotle moves to categorial classification, considering what is uttered without any connection. "The words without any connection are substance, quantity, quality, relation, place, time, position, possession, action, and

[26] Cf. Mircea Florian, „Introducere la categorii" [Introduction to categories], in Aristotle, *Organon*, vol. I, *ed. cit*., p. 52.
[27] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, *A–E*, *ed. cit*., p. 62.
[28] Aristotle, *Categories*, in *ed. cit*., p. 97.
[29] Ibid., pp. 93–94.
[30] Ibid., p. 94.
[31] Cf. ibid., p. 95.

passion."[32] These are the ten categories to which he devotes separate research, believing that these categories imply the attribution, predication, and enunciation of something about something, "calling into play the universe of possible predicates."[33] Amongst these categories, the first is substance (*ousia*), since only it subsists in itself, while the other categories subsist by it. In other words, substance, signifying simple existence, is the fundamental category, and all the others exist in relation to it. Therefore, substance is not a predicate or attribute of something else; it is "the subject or the 'substrate' of the other attributes or predicates."[34]

In Aristotle's conception, "substance" has two senses,[35] the first being primary substance (*prote ousia*), which expresses individuality, the concrete essence. Because Aristotle believes that only the individuals have independent existence, substance in the proper sense is the individual, the concrete. The second sense of "substance" is the secondary (*deutera ousia*) or universal substance, which bears on a certain subject. Expressing the universal, the secondary substance designates the common classes of individuals, the species and genera, but not any kind of species, only those in which there are primary substances. According to Aristotle, these are called secondary substances because, by nature, they are primary substances. It follows that the predication of substance is done both from the inside and the outside. Therefore, substance will be enunciated, both substantially and accidentally, both in essence and in appearance; both synonymously and homonymous, as Noica remarks. "We are, therefore, in front of a logos – says the same commentator – that could not register the world as a unitary assembly of individual substances, about which are to be predicated only the universal substances, but as an assembly of ten classes of distinct realities, which allows the essential predication inside them and the accidental one outside them."[36]

Through this string of categories, Aristotle describes the genera of existence derived by thought from the sensible world and uttered in words. These ideas will be developed further in the treatise *On Interpretation*, where he analyzes names and verbs from the perspective of the second positing of words; the utterance of combined words, which raises other issues of language, will be not examined here.

It seems appropriate to mention that not even Aristotlean thought about language, despite its authority, remained unswerving in the face of time and history. It generated a strong critical reaction among contemporary philosophers, especially in the analytic tradition. It is thought that Aristotle's theory and the whole Aristotelian tradition are fundamentally vulnerable. From Aristotle to Locke and later philosophers, the individual word is signified by its power to express simple "ideas," and combined words as expressing "complex ideas." Such a style of speaking, some say, is unclear, since it does not take into account an essential distinction: that between "combinations of words that form a sentence and those combinations that make up expressions that may be only a part or parts of the sentence."[37]

But more important, says Michael Dummet, is the attack on the theory of the "imagist or associationist." The first remarkable breach in the tradition that starts from Aristotle and culminates in the British empiricists is realized by Frege. He launched an offensive against the theory according to which the meaning of a word or expression consists in its capacity to determine, in the listener's mind, the associated mental image. This criticism has been further advanced by Wittgenstein in his famous work *Philosophical Investigations*. The effect of the offensive, says Dummett, is the death of "imagist theory," without hope of revival.[38]

Another contemporary philosopher, Hilary Putnam, believes that the Aristotelian theses in the treatise *On Interpretation* have made a significant contribution to the characterization of significance and reference. But he rejects recent approaches based on the so-called "Aristotelian viewpoint" about meaning, considering them fatally vulnerable. He associates these approaches with those belonging to Mill, Frege,

[32]Ibid., p. 97.
[33] Constantin Noica, „Pentru o interpretare a Categoriilor lui Aristotel" [For an interpretation of Aristotle's Categories], in *Probleme de logică* [Problems of Logic], vol. I, Editura Academiei, Bucharest, 1968, p. 112.
[34] Mircea Florian, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
[35] Commenting on the Aristotelian theory concerning the division of substance into a first and second sense, Mircea Florian identifies a third meaning, the essence. That is, in Aristotle substance also has the meaning of "essence," since the essence is all that is general, and from a logical perspective stands before the individual and determines it (see *op. cit*., p. 86).
[36] Constantin Noica, *op. cit*., p. 112.

[37] See Michael Dummett, *Philosophy of Language*, second edition, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1981, p. 638.
[38]Ibid.

Russell, and Carnap, extending the references to Chomsky, Fodor, and Searle.[39]

Without continuing with other critical exemplifications, I maintain that the problem of subordination of language to ideas or mental representations, viewed as "internal objects," animates a lot of discussions about language and the philosophy of mind in contemporary thought. They constitute another argument that Aristotle is still alive and continues to provoke philosophical analysis of language.

In conclusion, we can state that in examining language's relations to thought and existence, Aristotle demonstrated that language is not just an instrument of communication, but a mode of knowledge or of "deciphering" the world. The word reflects the reality through thought, and is not a slave of ideas or concepts. On the contrary, it represents a decisive factor in their elaboration.

Analyzing the possibilities of language for knowing and expressing a reality according to the requirements of logical thought, Aristotle has decisively contributed to the foundation of the philosophy of language, creating a long prestigious and prolonged tradition. If some Aristotelian theses about language are the target of the criticisms formulated by contemporary philosophers, this the natural evolution of science in general. It is excessive to blame Aristotle responsible for not providing solutions to contemporary. The Stagirite continues to be among us and teach us.

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[39] See Hilary Putnam, "Meaning, Other People, and the World," in *Representation and Reality*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1988; Idem, "Aristotle after Wittgenstein," in *Modern Thinkers & Ancient Thinkers*, editor Robert W. Sharples, Westview Press, Boulder, 1993, pp. 117–137.

THE *A PRIORI* AS BRIDGE BETWEEN KANT'S THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract:
Kant's philosophy revolves around the concept of a priori, a term meaning not only that something happens before any experience, but that some cognitions of ours are necessary and universal. His fundamental question was in his first Critique of how synthetic a priori judgments are possible. The a priori also plays an essential role in the second Critique, such an important role that the idea of the categorical imperative is impossible to understand if one does not understand how the a priori is involved in Kant's practical philosophy.

Key words: Kant, *a priori*, reason, categorical imperative, moral end.

Unlike the ancients, Kant does not ground morality on the idea of happiness or the supreme good. He even avoids starting from the presupposition that there is such a supreme good in which pursuing morality would consist. Morality in Kant is not grounded on wisdom as a practical attitude, or on knowledge of the means leading to happiness, but on respecting moral duty and moral law. By proceeding in this way, Kant is actually embodying a Christian way of thinking, under which real happiness cannot be found here on Earth, but only in Heaven. This is one of the fundamental reasons why it makes no sense to search for the content of (heavenly) happiness—the sole goal is to be moral, which makes us *worthy* of happiness.

But what kind of action could make us worthy of happiness? In Antiquity, wisdom was a practical knowledge that aimed to find concrete formulas for earthly happiness, or at least earthly well-being. In one of Cicero's dialogues, one of the characters expresses the following stoic viewpoint, which in our context can be considered as expressing the general ancient understanding of wisdom: "It is perfectly clear that if one does away with the notion of choosing between what is in accordance with nature and what is against, then that highly sought after and hallowed virtue of practical reason will be completely abolished. Hence we eliminate the positions I just set out and any like them. *What remains is that the supreme good is to live applying one's knowledge of the natural order, selecting what accords with nature, and rejecting what is contrary.* This is what it is to live consistently and harmoniously with nature" (Cicero, 2004, 75).

Since for Kant, as a Christian thinker, heavenly happiness is impossible to conceive, we are unable of performing actions that would lead to this happiness. Therefore a moral action cannot be thought of as an action that leads to heavenly happiness. We can hope that such an action would be rewarded with such happiness eventually, but we cannot be sure. Therefore, moral action needs another standard for us to set a goal for what we consider happiness. We could then ask what this different standard is. Where is it to be found? If happiness is not the reason to behave morally, then what is? In Antiquity, as we saw, morality was the means to reach earthly happiness. Being moral, one thought, would lead to this happiness. Because such reasoning is not possible in Kant, moral action seems to have lost its goal. What should we aim at with our moral actions when we cannot strive to achieve heavenly happiness through it? Kant says that morality is based on duty (Kant, 2002, 47), on the idea that I must unconditionally fulfill my duty (this means that I must not expect some kind of reward, to experience happiness).

Duty is an action that does not aim at attaining happiness. Each action pursues a certain goal, but in the case of moral action, there is no such concrete goal. Kant shows that a duty is an action that lacks any material goal and any personal interest. Despite this absence of a material finality, the maxim of that action commands that the action be done, without any consideration of its consequences or any damage that it could bring to the person who undertakes it. Another step in his argument is to explain how such a command is possible, from where the command appears. And his answer is that the command arises from impelling reason that ignores all sensible content, as if the action would be done by a purely rational being that lacks any sensible condition. However, "according to Kant," observes A. MacIntyre, "the rational being utters the commands of morality to himself. He obeys no one but himself. Obedience is not automatic because we are not wholly rational beings but are compounded of reason and of what Kant calls sensibility, in which is included all our physiological and psychological make-up" (MacIntyre, 1998, 124). We cannot actually ground reason's decisions—a most important idea that must be emphasized—and Kant does not want to ground the categorical imperative. Actually, it would be impossible to ground it, because that would mean grounding something that belongs to a "noumenon," and because the noumenon is transcendent, it would contradict the whole of the Kantian conception. As in his theoretical philosophy, where Kant only described the unconscious actions of thinking that lead to the schemes of the intellect, in his moral philosophy Kant does not want to explain or ground anything with regard to reason's decisions. He proceeds in moral philosophy as a phenomenologist, as it were, only describing the pure decisions of reason.

One could say that Kant thinks of morality more in terms of relationship, in the sense that he was interested in how someone should behave toward another being, whether it is another person or even oneself, but considering it from a different point of view. In Antiquity, such a relationship was not important. Rather than focus on the behavior of a person toward another person, the emphasis was on what a person feels, and what the person thinks about himself/herself. We could extrapolate this idea also upon the idea of wisdom: in Antiquity wisdom was more of a way of inner being than about a relationship toward something exterior. This idea should be emphasized with respect to the functionalism involved in the Kantian conception of morality: the human person, from a moral viewpoint, is in Kant emptied of any individual content, but it receives an exterior, universal value: the value of being a person. This condition is not an individual one; it has nothing to do with what the individual does or thinks or desires. It is a condition that is added from the outside, so to speak, to the individual contents. Being a person adds nothing to my individual way of being, to all that I know about myself. It is a formal property, not concrete content that can be found within one's mind or conscience. On the contrary, wisdom, in its ancient meaning, involves a continual inner activity of attaining and keeping an inner balance and an inner harmonious self-conscience, control over all individual urges, desires, thoughts, etc.; and all these contents can be found and sensed as such within oneself. These contents were also accompanied by a general conception about the world and human beings that grounded the activity of maintaining inner balance.

A wise person would search for a way of being in harmony with himself and, if possible, with society and nature, harmony being the highest good or the highest moral end. All that the wise man had to control and to direct within him was immediately accessible and almost touchable. Contrary to this conception, Kant ignores the pursuit of an inner balance, grounding happiness exclusively on the concept of duty, i.e. on the idea of moral behavior. But this behavior, unlike the moral behavior of the ancient wise man, is not coordinated by the criterion of finding an ideal inner mental and emotional state, but by the criterion of being a person. Ancient wisdom consisted in aspiring to attain the highest good, i.e. inner balance and serenity, whereas in the Kantian conception, the highest good is the criterion that already coordinated behavior, because the highest good was being a human person—a fact that was already given, and not something to be strived for.

The functional model consisted arose from Kant's theoretical attempt to subsume a diversity of sensations, intuitions, and representations under a common heading (Kant, 2000, 211). The functional approach to morality is, from this point of view, an attempt to create an accord between one's own behavior and the idea of humanity, which is a personality. Personality, conceived as being the highest good or highest value, the highest ontological content, is then the concept under which all behaviors are to be assessed, and the concept that could give to the entire diversity of human behaviors a way of being united into a single concept, that of morality.

Every behavior, whatever its content and orientation, is to be brought under a common term and then assessed with respect to that concept. The action of lying, for example, could be evaluated as being moral or not, simply by relating it to the idea of one's personality: if lying promotes the human personality by being beneficial both to liar and to those who are lied to, then lying is a moral behavior, whereas if it is harmful to either party, then it is to be avoided as an immoral action. We can investigate from the moral point of view every other human action, even those that seem to have nothing to do with morality. For example, we could ask if telephoning someone is moral or not, or listening to music, or cooking, and so forth. In the end, every human action can be evaluated from the angle of promoting or harming personality, and (if there is no harm done) they can be accepted as being either neutral or moral.

One could object that in Antiquity the wise man also evaluated each action from the point of view of whether or not it was useful for attaining inner balance (wisdom). But in the Kantian conception, actions were not only assessed with respect to their subject, but also (and perhaps primarily) with respect to their object, i.e. other human beings: one had to respect the humanity and personality of all other people when acting, not just himself. In contrast, the ancient wise man coordinated his decisions mainly by evaluating the consequences to his inner balance, to his way of feeling. And even if one said that harming others could affect this inner balance and therefore should be avoided, the central point lay not on how others were conceived, but on how one would feel after such an action.

We could add that in Antiquity the wise man also had to have life experience; he had to know what would benefit or harm the human body, soul, and mind, and such knowledge could only be acquired through experience. In contrast, a man who grounded his decisions on the Kantian categorical imperative only needed to make a generalization, and then ask whether a society grounded on such an action could maintain itself or would disintegrate.

In Kant's philosophy, every thinking process is ultimately grounded in the activity of the transcendental imagination and in understanding. Therefore, when Kant wanted to ground his morality on thinking (i. e. reason), and not on feeling, he had to ground it on both of these faculties. The transcendental imagination has schemes that order the diversity of sensations, impressions, and even representations that enter into the human mind from the outside. These schemes allow us to have theoretical knowledge. But in the case of moral action there is nothing coming from outside; on the contrary, our action must be accomplished in the outside world, so the human individual must have a direction, a goal towards which he orients the action. Such a goal is given or chosen by reason. Such a goal can be *a posteriori*, i.e. we chose to do something because we know from past experience that this action will lead to positive results. The goal can also be an *a priori* one, i.e. when we know what actions are good or bad prior to enacting them, and what *must* be done. It sounds paradoxical that we could anticipate what will happen before experiencing it: this is called *a priori*. But in Kant, the term *a priori* actually refers specifically to universal and necessary cognitions, and only when a sentence meets these criteria can it be considered to override any possible experience. All scientific sentences (especially those belonging to the mathematical sciences of nature) are considered by Kant to be *a priori* cognitions. They overcome any possible experience, because they involve a kind of universality and necessity that cannot be grounded merely on past experience. Experience can only give us limited knowledge, because we can never say that the way our cognition presents a thing is *necessarily* reflective of reality in all cases, but only that on the grounds of our past experience we believe that a process evolves in that way. Universality and necessity were for Kant the true criteria for any *a priori* sentence. However, in a way all *a priori* sentences are generalizations for Kant, and it could not be otherwise, since—as he says at the beginning of the Introduction to his first *Critique*—our knowledge begins with experience (Kant, 2000, 136), i.e. we cannot have any cognitions that have no relationship whatsoever with our experience. In his first *Critique*, Kant addressed the question of what the ground was for overcoming our past experience and obtaining *a priori* cognitions. His idea was that the "information" that we receive from outside is filtered through our pure forms of sensibility, then ordered by the synthesizing activity of transcendental imagination and made into a concept (i.e., a conceptual meaning) by our understanding. Therefore the outer world does not exist as we perceive it, but is a product of these three levels of organizing information, and is not a "thing in itself," but only a phenomenon or a totality of phenomena called "nature." Science is the human activity of discovering the unconscious ways of processing the information that leads to the constitution of nature (or "appearances," as Kant says). On the other hand, because science is the activity of knowing not things in themselves, but rather unconscious synthesizing processes, science can be thought of as the sole depositary of truth, with "truth" now being conceived as the correspondence between scientific cognition and the way that those unconscious synthesizing processes take place. Therefore all true knowledge has to be scientific knowledge, which means it has to be composed of *a priori* sentences. This is why Kant wanted to ground his morality on *a priori* sentences: because truth can only be found in necessary and universal sentences.

But in the case of morality, there is no previous diversity that had to be unconsciously synthesized in order to obtain a moral action, i. e. a duty. However, natural science can offer us a means to discover which actions are moral and which are not: the *a priori* model. This is why Kant says that one must use natural science as a model in searching for the ground of morality. Natural science belongs to our spontaneity/thinking, our schemes of transcendental imagination, schemes that stay at the ground of our relationship with nature.

The schemes of transcendental imagination are developed by Kant into axioms and principles for how we understand and perceive nature. As axioms and principles, all these sentences have a universal character. Therefore, when modeling nature in the moral realm, one has to imagine all other people performing one's own actions, and then observe the result of such a generalization. If it results in a benefit for the human kingdom of ends (i.e., the kingdom of human persons), then that image and action can be thought of as allowable and acceptable. If it results in harm to that kingdom, then it must be denied and censored. For example, when we think of lying as a possible moral action, we must imagine lying as being the usual behavior of all humans, in the same way as the axioms of nature count for all natural phenomena, or the principle that each phenomenon must have a cause in the causal scheme. In this last case, we cannot think of a phenomenon without conceiving it as being caused by another phenomenon situated earlier in time. We are constrained by our own thinking to conceive phenomena in this way. We have a universal understanding or perspective when looking at phenomena as being caused. This causality is a universal law of nature or a universal dynamical structure of nature, a structure that repeats in the case of each phenomenon. Nothing can escape from this principle, and we apply this universal "grid" to everything. Upon perceiving any concrete phenomenon, we immediately apply the grid of causal thinking to it, assuming that this is the way things really work and that they cannot be different. We just cannot experience phenomena otherwise, we cannot conceive any phenomenon as appearing without cause, out of the blue. This constraint is the result of our thinking, of our intellect. The power of our transcendental imagination is manifested in this constraint. It synthesizes or unifies the field of our experience, unifying all phenomena according to its transcendental schemes. Our experiencing of nature thus involves a necessity of thought (grounded in the synthesis of the transcendental imagination).

In this necessary way of interacting with nature, the ordering scheme of the transcendental imagination operates spontaneously, often without our conscious involvement. As we have seen, in Kant the role of science is to make us aware of the way the transcendental imagination unifies sensible diversity, an awareness that actually equates to knowledge. In this sense, the sentence "All phenomena are causally determined by other phenomena located earlier in time," expresses the conscious knowledge of the unconscious act (brought about by the transcendental imagination) of uniting all perceived phenomena together. Such a sentence has an *a priori* character, i.e. it applies to all phenomena (universality) and there is no phenomena that can escape from this principle (necessity).

Kant distinguishes between the negative meaning of freedom and the positive meaning of it (Kant, 2006, 52). The negative meaning consists in the capacity of a (rational) being to not be causally determined by another being. The positive meaning, on the other hand, consists in its capacity to act, that is to initiate an action and thus to be the sole cause of that action. In this respect, Ernst Cassirer notes that freedom in its positive meaning is not only an action that starts from itself, but an action that has its goal in itself (Cassirer, 1918, 227).

Too often freedom is mistakenly understood as not being determined or influenced by another person or institution to do something. Though such an explanation eliminates external determinations, it cannot be an adequate explanation of freedom because it ignores inner determinations. It thus does not define freedom as such, but what Kant calls "power of choice" (*Willkür*), i.e. our capacity to choose something without being constrained by something external. But choosing, in general, is always determined by our internal inclinations, by our incentives or desires. Therefore, the power of choice cannot mean real freedom, because it involves a causality that doesn't belong to thinking or to reason. Therefore it is a mistake to identify freedom with the power of choice: we believe that grounding an action on "inner" causality is enough to make us free. But (in Kant at least) the word "inner" has a twofold meaning: on the one hand it refers to our sensible nature, to sensibility (in Kant's terms) as a capacity of desire, and on the other hand it refers to our intellectual nature, to our capacity for thinking and reasoning. From the Kantian point of view, only the latter meaning involves real freedom, because only thinking is "spontaneous," while sensibility is by definition "receptive," i.e. it is our capacity for receiving external affection. Therefore, whenever we exert our power of choice (which is grounded on sensibility), we are actually reacting to an outside influence, to an exterior object that we wish to possess because its possession is attended by a pleasant feeling. By reacting, we are always dependent on outer objects impelling us to act. If such objects vanish (that is, we are no longer aware of them) our reaction disappears also. This dependence Kant calls *heteronomy*. What would an action look like if every such dependence were to completely disappear, if we were not impelled to act by any exterior object (and thus by no inner emotional reaction to that object)? In neurology, it is a known fact that people with severe brain damage who are unable to feel any emotion are also unable to act. If such a person is asked to choose between two things, he or she is unable to choose. It is clear, then, that the absence of emotion means the absence of action (and the power of choice). However, Kant does not refer to this situation when he requires that moral actions be free and accomplished without any emotional influence. He is talking about real and ordinary people, whose capacity to choose is intact, and who have no mental illness. But how could such a person act without being impelled to action by emotion, and thus not freely? What kind of action would it be? The absence of any emotional influence together with the absence of any outer determinations consitutute the negative meaning of freedom. What remains if we remove those conditions is reason (or thinking in general) as the sole factor in initiating an action.

Of course, we cannot say that our action is determined by another phenomenon, if we want that action to be considered moral (of course, one can also explain an action as being determined by another phenomenon, but in this case that action would only be an effect of the previous phenomenon, and it would result inevitably from that cause, in which case we can no longer call it moral). Therefore, its necessity cannot lie in its relationship to a previous cause. However, actions must be thought of as being caused; they do not appear out of the blue. What kind of cause does a moral (i.e. free) action have? The Kantian answer is that moral action is caused by reason, specifically by the *a priori* sentence that reason establishes with respect to a possible action, by imagining it as universalized.

We might say that Kant intends to ground morality on thought (i.e., on reason) because grounding it on feeling would not lead to any necessity and universality: it would lead to a situation in which someone could feel that an action was moral, whereas another person would feel that it was immoral. Therefore, Kant maintains that a different criterion must be found that can remove the uncertainty of sensibility. This superior criterion would be the ground of moral action. But the problem that arises is that we do know immediately if an action is moral or immoral. Therefore, we must resort to the theoretical approach of transcendental philosophy, in which reason (thinking in general) is explained as being grounded on the schemes of the transcendental imagination. How, then, can we ground an action on reason? In the first instance, we can ground it on reason by looking at the goal that we pursue and examining whether this action is conducive to it, and thus useful or not. If it is useful, then we can choose to do it. But reasoning in this way ties our actions only to their usefulness, i. e. to their being conceived as means for exterior goals and ends. But all these goals can in their turn become means to other goals, requiring other actions that would be then pondered in the same way. Kant claims that there are also different goals that, in their turn, can never become means for other goals. Only actions that are oriented toward such goals can be taken into consideration when inquiring whether an action is moral. We know what counts as ends in themselves: human persons. Therefore only actions oriented towards human beings can be investigated as being moral or not. Of course, there are innumerable types of actions, therefore we need a criterion by which we can distinguish between moral actions and the immoral ones. Feeling cannot be taken into account because it is fluctuating and has no universal quality. We must be find something that belongs to reason, to thinking, a criterion to evaluate an action as being moral that belongs only to thinking. But how could we find such a criterion? The way to find it is to see what thinking actually is, especially what *a priori* thinking is, because when evaluating the moral quality of an action, one must know *a priori*, that is before accomplishing it, if an action is moral and must be enacted, or is immoral and must be avoided. By relating reasoning in the case of the human action with theoretical *a priori* reasoning, one finds that this last is grounded on the schemes of transcendental imagination. All these schemes are both necessary and universal; we cannot understand any phenomenon without applying them to it. Therefore, we must take these criteria of necessity and universality from the theoretical realm and apply them to the moral realm. Necessity results from the fact that the action is done by a free human subject, i.e. it is accomplished according to the causality principle. Universality results from taking nature as a model, because the way nature is structured is actually the result of the synthesizing activity of reason. Therefore, we must conceive a prospective action as if it was a natural phenomenon that had to be inserted in a universal network of identical phenomena, as is the case in all real natural phenomena, that are all synthesized according to the same schemes of transcendental imagination. Therefore Kant requires that in order for an action to be called moral, it must be imagined as being done by all human persons, as if it was a law of nature, and then we must ask whether nature or society could sustain itself by the universalization of such an action. If the answer is positive, then the action is moral; if not, then it is immoral.

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HEGEL'S VIEW ON "PHILOSOPHY AND ITS VARIETY" BASED ON THE PREFACE OF *PHENOMENOLOGY OF SPIRIT*

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Abstract:

Hegel's overall method is to offer his own theory not by rejecting rival philosophical theories, but by adapting them, or at least finding room for some of their elements in his own theory. In his view the human mind develops continuously throughout history in spite of the differences at various stages, and that the truth emerges from the whole.

According to Hegel, philosophical schools not only are not mutually exclusive, but also supplement each other and indicate the progress and maturity of the human mind throughout history, with each stage becoming visible from within the previous stage.

Hegel's main purpose is to propose philosophy as a science, so that philosophy is united with science instead of being a love of science (filo + sofia), because for him the philosophy in his time in the West had been indebted to science.

Key words: Hegel, spirit, philosophy, phenomenology of spirit, science.

Preface

In view of many thinkers, Hegel is one of the most influential European philosophers of recent times. Both his opponents and proponents acknowledge his importance. Among Hegel's philosophical works, certainly *Phenomenology of Spirit*—and its introduction in particular—thoroughly reflects his thought.

In this short essay, my intention is merely to undertake a short and concise discussion of "philosophy and its variety," with particular emphasis on the fundamental goals and message of Hegel's important preface to his book *Phenomenology of Spirit*. According to some, *Phenomenology of Spirit* is Hegel's most important philosophical work (Hegel, 1980, 5). The "introduction" and "preface" of this book are not only literary and philosophical masterpieces, but also an abstract of his philosophy as a whole, and are important for understanding his thought (Hegel, 1998, 5). It has been also been said that Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* is one of the few exceptional Western philosophical works of modern times (Mojtahedi, 2001, 30).

Hegel's main message in the preface was that philosophy should be seen as a science in order to unify all the philosophical schools and philosophers; such a task may appear contradictory, but of course Hegel was aware of this contradiction not only as virtual and formal, but also considered his view to be "the highest stage of the spirit." In other words, Hegel has interpreted the term "phenomenology of spirit" as referring to a science of methods for creating human knowledge.

It should be noted Hegel's thinking is rooted in Plato and Kant's philosophy. Accordingly, he recommends that Plato's philosophy be read from the point of view of Kant's critical philosophy; of course, he pays great attention to Christian theology and the whole history of spiritual human development. He wrote the preface to *Phenomenology of*

Spirit after the rest of the book was completed, but the novice reader should it at the end and as a result of the book.

Philosophy: unity or dispersion

In the preface to *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel says that an introduction usually explores the work's objectives, but that for a philosophical work this is not necessary, but rather redundant. The historical narration of philosophy cannot be useful in the same manner as the generalization of philosophical; philosophy proceeds based on a generality that in itself includes the particular. In addition, the brief information is not worthy of the name *science*, because it causes a kind of incompatibility and we need to know details; to content oneself with mere generality may create the suspicion that philosophy is not equipped to know and understand the truth. He also believes that the introduction at the beginning of the book should not cause the reader to feel needless in knowing the subject, and also that philosophical goals will be more perfect only by stating one's goals and results (Hegel, 2003, 15–18).

In the first part of the book, Hegel explores the development of individual consciousness with the goal of elevating general and primary consciousness to the level of philosophical knowledge and making "mediated" what is apparently "immediate," so as to clarify descriptions of "self-consciousness" in its different dimensions (Mojtahedi, 2001, 29).

For Hegel, the usual belief in the opposition between truth and falsity and the incompatibility of various philosophical systems is false. He believes that the simple differences among the various philosophical systems should not be seen essential, because these simple differences not only do not violate the various systems, but also supplement them, and are necessary for their evolution. For example, Hegel notes that a bud degenerates as a flower blooms, and the flower likewise fades as a fruit emerges from it, but this does not mean that the bud is in opposition to the flower, nor that the flower is in opposition to the fruit, rather the bud is necessary for the blooming of the flower and the flower is necessary for the creation of the fruit. He then argues that philosophical systems have an organic unity; they are not in opposition with each other, but are all necessary for achieving truth. Therefore, for Hegel the wholesale rejection of any particular philosophical system is a mistake (Hegel, 2003, 15–18).

In his preface to *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel declares that he intends to unite philosophy and science, and that he believes that real knowledge should be replaced with the love of knowing. Put another way, philosophy in the sense of "philosophia," loving knowledge, should be promoted the real knowledge. To achieve this purpose, he proposes a systematic explanation of philosophy and believes that the time has come for philosophy to promote itself to a science (ibid, 17–18) which, according to him, embodies the real form of truth (ibid, 41).

Hegel believes that in philosophy conceptual interpretation is insufficient; we should feel and intuit the absolute. He believes that the task of philosophy is not uncovering the secret behind the nature of substance, but bringing order to consciousness out of chaos. To accomplish this, he believes we must avoid the usual sensory concerns, and turn our attention from the material world to the divine world (ibid, 20–21). This interpretation of Hegel makes him appear very Platonic, but he is not a simple Platonist.

Hegel aims to promote the philosophy to the level of the real knowledge and elevate it to the level of science. At the same time, he inhibits philosophy from manifesting and opposes with the topics like "magnanimity or servitude" and prefers precise and purposeful discourse to ambiguous and aimless discourse. For Hegel the recent era is the era of transformation of the spirit, and from quantitative changes into qualitative ones; this time belongs to philosophy, which must find a scientific foundation and exit the monopoly of elites. However, the language of preface of *Phenomenology of Spirit* is so difficult that even specialists feel helpless in understanding it, and so Hegel's expression of this point seems ironic; but it may be said that Hegel has not invited the popularization of philosophy, so such a criticism is rejected (ibid, 20–24).

Hegel sees two factors as preventing education in philosophy: the argumentative approach and the thinking non-relying on argument. He says: some believe that truths have been established and do not need to review, and that "philosophizing" must be turned to serious matters. He notes that some deem it necessary to be knowledgeable in all of areas of science, but in philosophy they consider knowing the innate reason for teaching it to be sufficient. But why does even a shoemaker need training, while training for philosophy is unnecessary? He concludes that the modern age is too easy-going in its acceptance of unmediated and intuitive knowledge. He sees "philosophizing" as the manifestation of the common sense, and believes that the time has arrived for his philosophy, and that philosophy should be promoted as a science (ibid, 114–121).

Hegel emphasizes that the "phenomenology of spirit," i.e. the science of experiencing consciousness, is organized by logical rules. "Philosophical truth" for him is not a truth in which a statement is established, nor a coin that can be used for himself, because philosophical truth cannot be expressed in formulas that have been learned by heart or quoted (ibid, 72).

In Hegel's view the end of philosophy is to communicate that the world is rational; i.e., reality itself is not something that is doubtful, incomprehensible, contradictory, or unexplainable. In his view, if we receive such an understanding of the world, we receive "absolute knowledge," otherwise our knowledge will be : limited" and "conditioned." If we do not look correctly at the world, the world will be incomprehensible and contradictory, which will make us feel hopeless; the task of philosophy is to save us from this hopelessness by providing a new way of conceiving reality. Done correctly, the world will seem reasonable, and we will "feel at home." In other words, the goal of knowledge is to de-alienate the objective world so that we "feel at home." Philosophy must correct viewpoints that make the world appear to be full of unsolvable puzzles, and show that these are deviations in thinking (Memarian, 2005, 50).

Hegel criticizes Kant, saying that he is like one who carefully investigates scientific instruments and tools before applying them; because he begins by investigating his cognitive faculties. He regards skeptical non-rationalism as resulting from "infancy" and "empty formalism," of which philosophers before Kant were guilty. In his view this non-rationalism results from the assumption that before finding reason in the world we should study the ability of our intellect to understand the world; this assumption not only is not natural, but is a unjustified trick (ibid, 50-1).

Generally, two basic principles of Hegel's philosophy are as follows: an emphasis on the unity and conformity of the intellect, and that the human intellect is able to discover this conformity without any help from outside of it. He aims to close the gap between the subject and object, or between appearance and the noumenon which Kant so emphasizes. Unlike Kant, Hegel says that the antinomies of the pure reason do not prove that our reason is limited to the realm of appearances and phenomena, and the assumption that the "thing in itself brings with it an extreme incompatibility and contradiction; the necessary elements and conditions for understanding the unity between the universe and reason are within our reason." Of course, the meaning of reason for him is not individual human reason, but rather typical human reason in historical context (ibid, 53).

Hegel rejected the idea of writing any introduction to his philosophy, and believed that philosophy does not necessarily mean a love of knowledge, and that we cannot be always on the verge of Temple truth; he sees philosophy as a science absolutely (Mojathedi, 2001, 33).

In Hegel's system, existing philosophical positions not only have not been excluded in favor of others, but they have been considered as complements and supplements. He tried to obtain the truth of philosophy in its inherent movement and historical course, and for this reason his philosophy is the result of his reflection and thinking about the whole history of philosophy (ibid, 10).

Hegel says: the purpose of philosophy is "the attainment of actual knowledge about what really is" (i.e., attainment of knowledge of the absolute), but at the same time, before making a judgment about "what there is," it is better thinking the knowledge itself? Because he considers every bit of knowledge to be a tool through which we perceive truth, a defective tool will lead only to error!

The question becomes whether the tool (i.e. knowledge) changes the reality, so that what we perceive is something very different from the actual reality? In response to this question, Hegel says that even if knowledge is not considered to be a tool for understanding reality, but a merely a passive mediation through which we can see reality, it still must be accepted that we have not seen reality itself, but a mediated reality (Singer, 1990, 2-101).

For Hegel, although knowledge cannot guarantee an undistorted image of reality, this does not mean that knowledge cannot approach reality. Skepticism is not a remedy for our problems; instead of doubting everything, we should doubt the claim that we cannot know anything. Moreover, the defense of skepticism is based on presuppositions that the person arguing for it claims to know, e.g., "reality exists" and "there is a difference between us and reality." Here Hegel's criticisms are directed toward Kant, because Kant believed that we cannot know reality as it is (ibid, 102–3). In addition, Hegel emphasizes that fear of error should not make us afraid of truth or lack confidence in science (ibid, 125).

For Hegel, reality is only possible for the absolute, and what people say is merely a part of the truth, and a part of the truth is not the whole truth. Of course, the more we recognize these parts of truth, the more successful we will be in knowing the whole truth. Put another way, we slowly learn the truth, and approaching truth is possible for us, not achieving the truth (Malekian, 2000, 209–210/3). Of course, Hegel considers the fear of error to be itself an error, believing that it leads to distrust; when you assume that knowledge of a thing other than the absolute has truth, then such knowledge is contradictory. In other words, knowledge is transformed into error, and fear of error leads to fear of the truth; because it is assumed that the relation between knowledge and truth is in opposition, consequently an error that is opposed to truth will be in equality relation with it. He recommends that we should not trouble ourselves with such useless interpretations and opinions about whether "knowledge" is a tool for "understanding the absolute," or a mediation through which we look at truth, because all these discussions are going to be disillusioned with the science itself and a kind of "false knowledge" and the appearance of truth that are disappeared as soon as the science emerges (Hegel, 2003, 81–84).

Hegel's statements here are aimed at Kant, who emphasized that before entering into discussions of ontology we must investigate epistemological problems. But Hegel see such investigations of the tools of epistemology to be "false knowledge," as they neglect the principles and substance of ontology.

Hegel regards doubt as one of factors moving philosophy, and believes that doubt has a close and specific relationship with philosophy. Put another way, since the philosophy is one, it sometimes appears in the form of doubt and sometimes in the form of dogma; doubt and dogma are only moments or stages of thinking; beyond them and despite them is philosophy itself. For this reason in ancient Greece, some consider Plato to be skeptic, while others see him as dogmatic, because in the Platonic tradition dogma and doubt are espoused equally. In other words, doubt and dogma not only are not opposed to each other, but help our minds to approach the "forms" (Mojtahedi, 1997, 63).

It is noteworthy that the transformation of consciousness by Hegel is not based on Cartesian doubt, but is the beginning of scientific and philosophical reflection, not the beginning of primary surface knowledge. For example, the aim of Socratic skepticism was for Socrates to create doubt in the mind of his audience so that he could guides them step by step towards the forms. For this reason, doubt can be considered to be higher than primary knowledge, and as a transition from one stage of consciousness to another; this transition is called "Aufhebung" in Hegel's philosophy, and indicates "removal" and again position (Mojtahedi, 2002, 35–36).

Hegel distinguished between the nature of philosophical truth and historical realities and mathematical truths. In response to the historical question "in what a year was the Kaiser born?" or mathematical question "how long is a meter?" we can provide simple and straightforward answers. However, philosophical truth is different because it cannot be formulated. Geometric proofs are not essential to geometric knowledge, but philosophical proofs cannot be separated from philosophical truth. Of course in relation to mathematics, Hegel goes further and says that since mathematics deals with things in themselves, it is connected with "unreal truth." In other words, insofar as "the mathematical alive and solid judgments" do not deal neither with the quality nor quantity of matters, they lead never us to the truth (Hegel, 1975, 8–9, and Hegel, 1988, 717–712).

In expounding on the differences between philosophical expression and mathematical expression, Marcuse says that the correctness of the philosophical judgment "human nature is freedom in thinking"—contrary to the geometric judgment related to the rectangular triangle—is in itself incorrect, because the facts that freedom and thinking imply are ignored. In other words, freedom and human thinking happen only at the end of a series of historical transformations, including the removal of servitude and non-rationality (Hegel, 1975, 9).

In fact, in *Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel has taken a kind of exploratory journey; he wants to find the main lines that constitute human logic and the rational aspect of human destiny. In other words, Hegel is in search of what the humankind has experienced and what road it has walked (ibid, 140).

Following the Platonic tradition, and in contrast to the empiricist philosophers of England, Hegel considers "sensible certainty" to be the most abstract knowledge and the poorest truth, because "sense certainty" as an object of knowledge represents something that can be referred as "this," and as a subject of knowledge it signifies just "this I" in which knowledge is knowledge of a particular thing and a particular I. Therefore, the thing that turns out to be "this" in the sense data has in principle multiple and distinctive attributes, just as the "I" is not merely the I that confronts with this external and particular thing, but has multiple distinctive attributes, and its relationship with that thing and itself is also very complicated. So "sense certainty" does not indicate either the thing itself or the knowing I, and though it is apparently immediate and direct, it is achieved in a mediated and indirect way (Mojtahedi, 2001, 47). For Hegel knowledge begins with "sense-perception" (sense consciousness) and then by a gradational critique of the senses it turns into reasonable knowledge. However, finally it leads to the stage of "self-consciousness," which is the highest form of knowledge, and where the identity of subject and object arises (Russell, 1383, 1/1002).

Conclusion

For Hegel science and philosophy are not in opposition to each other, and are not two different ways of knowing the world; philosophy receives what the science says about the world and completes it with fuller insight. Moreover, successive philosophical systems are not in opposition with each other, but complete each other, and as later categories emerge from earlier ones, later philosophical systems absorb and dissolve former philosophical systems. For Hegel, the history of philosophy has a definite course of development through which ideas reveal themselves gradually from behind the veil of the successive philosophical schools. Philosophy continues until Hegel achieves the notion of the "absolute idea" that is the ultimate and completely true notion of the absolute (Stace, 2002, 176–8/1).

Hegel believes that since "different philosophies represent the various stages of the embodiment of philosophy," when a philosopher's attitude does not become compatible with that of the past, then his/her attitude should not be rejected thoroughly (Hegel, 1988, p. 9). Hegel knows the ultimate philosophy as a result of all former philosophies and believes, firstly, that there is one philosophy in every age whose differences represent the determined aspects of one principle; secondly, that the successiveness of philosophical systems is necessary and not accidental; and thirdly, that the "ultimate philosophy" of each period is the "truth" in its highest form at that stage, whose self-consciousness paves its way toward the "ultimate philosophy," which comprehends all former philosophies (Copleston, 2003, 239/7).

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THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF THE CONCEPT OF THE SUBJECT AND THE CONTEMPORARY HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

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Abstract:

It is necessary to seek out the origins of the modern world's problems in their theoretical and intellectual infrastructures, which are based on concepts. This paper aims to study the modern crisis of identity from the viewpoint of the evolution of the Subject. The Subject is one of philosophy's more complex concepts, and its complexity can be analyzed through its historical evolution. It has been connected with meanings such as subjectness, subjectivity, subjugation, and subjection, and each of these meanings contain a part of the Subject's complicated definition. In addition to calling the concept of the human subject into question, this paper demonstrates that we are witnessing a rise in feelings of insecurity and meaninglessness. The paper will analyze three main concepts of the Subject, and an explanation of each with reference to history's great philosophers.

Key words: Identity crisis, Subject, Subjection, Subjectivity, Subjectness.

1. Introduction

The "subject" as a basic concept in the social sciences, and especially in philosophy, has evolved throughout history, and in modern times is equivalent to "human." Considering that in philosophy—and especially in social and political philosophy—the definition of "human" is the basis of thought and social structure, and of the issues that modern people are facing, this definition is inevitably influenced by social scientists and philosophers. Among these issues are the enigma of identity and the existential security of the modern human being. From examining the intellectual history of West and what it wrote about the subject, one can see the semantic transformation of the concept of the subject. The subject begins as an ontological concept in Ancient Greek thought, then changes in Christian thought into a bridge that connects the Ego in its theological and philosophical sense to the sacred and divine, and to the life-world of humans. In modern thought, the concept of the subject witnessed a number of evolutions, concluding in a rejection of early humanism. In structuralist, postmodernist, and poststructuralist opinions, the human and modern transcendental subject has been denied in different ways, and the concept of "structure" (in Marxist thought) and "unfoundedness" (in Poststructuralist thought) has called its effectiveness into question. Postmodernist and poststructuralist theories have divided the various aspects of human identity and the concept of subjection into pieces, leading to the current crisis of modern humanity. In this crisis, the subject faces the security enigma in its ontological aspects, which can be seen in Giddens' definition. If we assume that there are philosophical and intellectual origins for this crisis, it is possible to shed some light on it through research on the semantic transformation of the term "subject." The question now arises for us of how the concept of the subject became so materialistic, and in its historical evolution, how did it lose its philosophical foundations?

In this context, we will begin by discussing Giddens' interpretation of security and identity, then define the concept of Subject in its three original meanings, study the complexity of a modern human's identity, and finally the death of the Subject. We will analyze the evolution of the concept of the subject, and provide references to opinions of history's great thinkers.

2. Theoretical Framework

In this article, we will attempt to study the identity and security crisis based on what Giddens defines as "ontological security" against "ontological insecurity": "Ontological security refers to the need to experience oneself as a whole, continuous person in time" (Mitzen, 2006, p. 342). These issues are deeply involved with identity, and in Giddens's definition, identity and security are completely interchangeable. "Security" here means a lack of fear and concern. "Ontological security is one form, but a very important form, of feelings of security in the wide sense … The phrase refers to the confidence that most humans beings have in the continuity of their self-identity and in the constancy of the surrounding social and material environments of action" (Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, 1990, p. 92). Ontological security is a prerequisite and a precondition for personal identity and self-knowledge. Giddens believes: "Self-identity, as a coherent phenomenon, presumes a narrative: the narrative of the self is made explicit" (Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity*, 1991, p. 76). This self-understanding is a narrative that creates the continuity of a person's existence as himself, which is closely related to ontological security. Identity and self-knowledge have not been given in advance, but rather are the things that we make of ourselves.

On the other hand, reliability and confidence in its broad sense is a condition for the recognition of other persons' and objects' clear identities. Basically, the stability of identities requires a definition in which related identifies are based on one another, as people experience their own existential security in connection with others in their surroundings. If there is no trust, then "the outcome is persistent existential anxiety. In its most profound sense, the antithesis of trust is thus a state of mind which could best be summed up as existential angst or dread" (Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, 1990, p. 100). Substantively, security means freedom from danger, threat, trauma, anxiety, concern, or, on the other side, the existence of serenity, confidence, comfort, trust, and safety. Giddens believes: "To be ontologically secure is to possess, on the level of the unconscious and practical consciousness, 'answers' to fundamental existential questions which all human life in some way addresses" (Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity*, 1991, p. 47). Ontological security implies a sense of stable continuity in a person, which requires confidence in the continuity and durability of the social environment and personal identity; it requires a certain amount of confidence, social trust, and social security.

Ontological security can be obtained through creating trust concerning the accuracy of the narrative or the dialogue, and its construction on fundamental and reliable principles. But this is what the postmodern condition seeks to deconstruct, destroying the structures of each fundamental principal. "The self in high modernity is not a minimal self, but the experience of large arenas of security intersects, sometimes in subtle, sometimes in nakedly disturbing, ways with generalised sources of unease" (Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity*, 1991, p.181). In the case of a person's identity being challenged, and being subsequently overcome with ontological insecurity, he will attempt to turn his personality and his being a Subject into security, and stabilize it out of his own real and practical ego. Giddens believes that in the current world, we human beings, as individual and social activists, are in the car of the world without a steering wheel; the world is something that "we can drive to some extent but which also threatens to rush out of our control and which could rend itself asunder" (Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, 1990, p. 139). This is where the retrieval of identity, subjectivity, and activism are challenged in the modern and postmodern era, and become valuable. Now in concurrence with the historical study and analysis of the concept of the subject, we can seek out the traces of the contemporary identity crisis in the absence of infrastructures.

3. What is the Subject?

The word "subject" refers to an operator or an issue that is up for discussion. Sometimes it is construed as a cognitive subject, a mentality, and as reason in some texts. Unfortunately, none of these can fully convey its meaning, because the term is basically untranslatable.

The English word "subject" has different meanings, but "We can, however, identify three main groups of meanings, dominated by the ideas of subjectness (subjectité in French), subjectivity (subjectivité), and subjection (sujétion). The three notions are not completely distinct, and it is clear that various combinations of them are, to a greater or lesser extent, operative in most philosophical usages of the term" (Cassin, Apter, Lezra, & Wood, 2014, p. 1069).

3.1. Subjectness

"Subjectness" has the richest meaning among the above concepts: "'Subjectness' translates Subjektitdt, a word formed by Heidegger" (Conway & Groff, 1998, p. 130). This term is rooted in Aristotle's philosophical concept of hypokeimenon [ὑποκειμένον]. There is no word in Greek that has the meaning of subject; the word "Subjectum translates the Greek hypokeimenon, 'that which lies under,' 'the substratum.'" (Critchley & Dews, *Deconstructive Subjectivities*, 1996, p. 13). Substratum, or subjectness, is defined with the word substance in English. This word has two parts: "sub," meaning "foundation," and "stance," meaning "posture." In other words, the term Substance means subinstitution, a base on which the whole universe is placed, and the meaning of substance points directly to the ontological sense of the subject. Since Aristotle sought to define the world around him, this ontological approach appears to be natural in ancient Greece, because his teacher Plato also looks for the passage from beings to be, and introduces world of ideas or Eidos; this is where words like substance can show the unity or totality of the universe and nature, a totality on which people can rely to define themselves. The important thing is that in classical thinking, unlike modern thinking, the human being is not abandoned and worldless, and this totality and unison of the universe is the secret to security and identity in the Classical period, the Middle Ages, and Early Modernity according to Descartes, Locke, Kant, and Hegel. According to Aristotle, the human being is a substance that has a purpose, and it is moving toward that purpose which defines a person's identity. However, in that period, the concept of the subject was metaphysical; there was no thought of a human subject, but this metaphysical subject could explain the world's purpose to people, and make the integrity of the world meaningful. In fact, the subject "is the very element of metaphysical thinking. To determine the subject as hupokeimenon is to make a claim to the meaning of Being, meaning being defined with Heidegger as the foundation or that upon which … entities can be grasped as such." (Critchley & Dews, *Deconstructive Subjectivities*, 1996, p. 14). In Heidegger's opinion, throughout the West's metaphysical history, the question of existence itself has been forgotten. Forgetfulness about existence, coupled with absurdity and a lack of identity, define the modern man. In the Old World, there existed a source and reference beyond the human being, such as gods, which answered fundamental questions regarding the origin of universe and human existence, and with their destiny, criteria, norms and values ruling the world and people's lives. This endowed humans with their meaning and identity. Nevertheless, in modern world in which people want to rethink everything and everyone, and consider cogitation to be the center of everything, it is this thinking, instead of that extra-human source, which seeks to achieve knowledge of the universe and people. In the modern era, this extra-human source becomes an object of cognition. Levinas calls this extra-human source "the other or the idea of infinity." Levinas believes: "The idea of infinity is the mode of being" (Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, 1979, p. 26), and the human subject faces infinity from the beginning, in a way that without this confrontation, it will be totally without identity and consistency, and as long as it wants to turn the other into an object of recognition, it cannot achieve freedom. In fact, maintaining distance from the other is the guarantee of the subject's freedom, and the other will not understand the subject. When faced with the other, "I find that I am not the exclusive possessor of the world. What had seemed uniquely mine is revealed as shared with the Other" (Davis, 2013, p. 47). Modernism's first wish was to reject the other, and gain a stable and consistent identity with human thought. In this case, modernism destroys every essential element, as Nietzsche says at the beginning of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*: "This old saint in his woods has not yet heard the news that God is dead!" (Del Caro & Pippin, 2006, p. 5). The divine and metaphysical subject's death is a prelude to the human subject's death, and Giddens says that nowadays "appearance replaces essence as the visible signs of successful consumption come actually to outweigh the use-values of the goods and services in question themselves" (Giddens, Modernity and Self-identity, 1991, p. 198). We will discuss this matter of things being materialized further.

3.2. Subjectivity

"The term 'subjectivity' (subjectivité) appears to have been borrowed from the German Subjektivität … that transforms Aristotle's hupokeimenon into subjectum" (Cassin, Apter, Lezra, & Wood, 2014, pp. 1072-1073). It is possible to translate subjectivity into individuality, a meaning that is more reminiscent of psychological concepts. Augustine believed that as the eye cannot see itself, the mind cannot know itself. In his opinion, "There is no way opened to our eyes to see the soul" (Augustine, 2002, p. 14), whereas the soul makes an image of itself that a person can love. This image of itself is a connection between the soul as metaphysical matter and the person as psychological matter. However, Augustine's comments on this individual psychological explanation are not modern; he is trying to explain the concept of the Christian Trinity. Based on the Trinity (Father, Son, Holy Spirit), he divides the soul into three sections of Ego, Love, and Knowledge, which in his opinion "'are one,' and are one substance" (Vessey, 2012, p. 408). This substance based on essence defines the totality of existence, and the subject comes from the heart of the same substance. In fact, substance creates meaning for the universe. This word represents the world after death in the Middle Ages, and makes it possible to give an identity to the men of that period, because they could explain their identities in a metaphysical manner. The point is that in the modern era, "We have become strangers in a world where we thought we were at home. We experience anxiety in becoming aware that we cannot trust our answers to the questions who am I? Where do I belong?" (Lynd, 2013, p. 46).

Consider that the "human being" as a "person" comes from Descartes. Descartes puts the thinking in the center of man's criteria existence; for him, the fact that one thinks is what determines that he exists. "The importance of Descartes' work was not that he used it to disprove the existence of God, or to turn his back on the idea of religious belief, but that he made belief subject to reason. He did not argue that we can prove, in a final or conclusive manner, the existence of God, but he did suggest that we can examine the process through which we come to claim that God exists" (Evans, 2006, pp. 23-24). This examination became a prelude to scientific experimentalism, without considering the fact that by relying on experimentalism, even "'provable' forms of knowledge and claims cannot be given a completely secure base" (Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity*, 1991, p. 37). To explain human wisdom, Descartes states in his book *Discourse on Method*: "I was a substance whose whole essence or nature resides only in thinking" (Descartes, 2006, p. 29). This means that "substance" is synonymous with "human," and "human" is synonymous with the thinking subject. In other words, "In Nietzsche's opinion, to believe in subject is the foundation of all metaphysical conceptions, because this basic metaphysical concept, i.e. the concept of substance or essence, is the outcome of subject, and not vice versa" (Farhadpour, *The Will to Power*, 1999, p. 22). This means that from the beginning, it was the subject that was under consideration, and not substance. The human subject is now the thinker who understands the world. The subject becomes the world's meaning, while he becomes worldless. Heidegger claims that Descartes considers subjectum to be synonymous with ego, and this is where he is wrong. Heidegger considers him to be the initiator of the evolution of the concept of the subject. The important issue for Heidegger is this evolution of the meaning of the metaphysical subject; why does thinking become the substance of humanity? He believes that this is because "Man has become subjectum" (Conley, 1993, p. 135). Like Descartes, in cognitive matters Kant, too, gave superiority to the Mind, saying that the "mind loads the subject matters on intuition data and understanding takes shape" (Nasiri & Golchini, 2010, p. 43). This definition relies on intuition, and is in fact the foundation of modern wisdom in Kant's perspective, and introduces wisdom as a recognizer of subjects. However, on the other hand, Deleuze states in the critique of modern wisdom: "The mind is not subject: it is subjected. When the subject is constituted in the mind under the effect of principles, the mind apprehends itself as a self" (Deleuze, 1991, p. 31). The problem is, if the subject took shape through a series of scientific ideas, how can this set of ideas can present itself as a unit from the perspective of experimental sciences? These experimental sciences began their work with the purpose of dominating nature, understanding natural laws, and creating a better life for mankind. From the perspective of the hero of the book *Notes from Underground*, Dostoevsky derides modern wisdom, which aims to create identity through knowledge of natural laws, and writes: "Good Lord! What do I care for the laws of nature or arithmetic if, for whatever reason, I don't like those laws or the rule that twice two is four? … It really does contain a single word of peace, simply because it is twice two is four. Oh, absurdity of absurdities!" (Dostoevsky, 2014, p. 15). At this time, nature and its laws became objects of knowledge in the hands of thinking subjects. "According to Kant, the sublime matter (the substance which would be found in nature) in nature finally gives power to the subject, and subject's anxiety is not a thing but a prelude to this empowerment, a power with the help of which, the subject could renounce its natural resources like wealth, status and even life itself" (Emadian, 2013, p. 34). This optimistic and mystical perspective that Kant has about the subject is a bitter irony in human history, because not only has humanity's anxiety not be removed through the domination of nature, but anxiety has become more and more prevalent in human life, and "Rising anxiety tends to threaten awareness of self-identity" (Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity*, 1991, p. 45), so that the mechanical human of today finds himself worldless, rootless, and without identity. In Kant's view, the subject is united and self-conscious; otherwise "I should have as many-coloured and diverse a self as I have representations of which I am conscious to myself" (Critchley, Ethics, Politics, Subjectivity, 1999, p. 56). The mind-based subject means recognizing individual autonomy, his essence, independence, and consciousness. Definitions of this kind of person and his individuality as a whole entity were the start of the emergence of the liberal subject. The first liberals were focused on individual freedom and individualism. But individualism became one of the modern ages' crises, because individual self-interest always leads toward business and profit-seeking. In modern times, liberalism is connected with capitalism, and one of modern capitalism's consequences is the importance of lifestyle. "The notion of lifestyle sounds somewhat trivial ... we all not only follow lifestyles, but in an important sense are forced to do so – we have no choice but to choose. A lifestyle can be defined as a more or less integrated set of practices which an individual embraces, not only because such practices fulfil utilitarian needs, but because they give material form to a particular narrative of self-identity" (Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity*, 1991, p. 81). In fact, this identity is false, and is forged by the capitalist system in the form of consumerism and individualism, which have no authority for the human being. In the Age of Enlightenment, even for a person like Voltaire, everything is fixed, and "we can find in his image of the humans, the Fixisme religion, or the belief in the stability of everything" (Koyré & Bréhier, 1932, p. 311). This stable man can actively take part in capitalist exchanges and make a choice with knowledge and authority. However, consumerism was not the idea of the first liberals, and there was a place for altruism, but it did not happen, and the liberty and authority of the human subject, which were liberals' aims, were thought to be impossible because "Freedom is not a given characteristic of the human individual, but derives from the acquisition of an ontological understanding of external reality and personal identity" (Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity*, 1991, p. 47). On the other hand, critics of liberals criticize the aware and autonomous individuality of liberals. Basically, Marx criticizes autonomy as a result of awareness. In fact, rather than defining individuality based on metaphysical and human aspects, Marx emphasizes the social reality and believes that humans' awareness of material life sublimates. The following story can help us to understand that humans are not beings with total awareness and autonomy.

> "For example, the laws of the market, the sudden economic crisis, certain decisions may be taken in Brussels Economic Commission common market, and the result would be a tragedy in peasant life in southeast India. What is the distance between the story of that person's life and that decision-making, and how can a story reveal that the most important factor in this person's life is basically something that he isn't aware of, and even if you tell him that this disaster occurred in your life because of the increase in price of corn in Europe, and you became poor and you had to sell your daughter to such a wealthy man and later he committed suicide…" (Farhadpour, *The Idea of Drama*, 2013, p. 23)

He does not have an understanding of his awareness and his choice in this matter. In fact, in modern times (unlike in Kant), because "I" am not a united existence, I change and I disappear, and in order to alleviate these bitter realities, I (human) attach myself to a substance that is permanently fixed, and imagine a general matter—constant, unchanging, a fundamental principle to which all are connected. Adorno says that "Subjectivity has no fixed substance or content and imagining any original form of Subjectivity is essentially wrong. The original person is nothing but a copy, an imitation, a play or a play-act. A human being becomes human only through mimicry of others" (Emadian, 2013, p. 59). Nietzsche also defines the lack of substance and origin in the world with other language. In his opinion, the whole concept of the subject is a language game that humans play in order to make sense of the world around them and build values for their lives, but "Now that the shabby origin of these values is becoming clear, the universe seems to have lost value, seems 'meaningless'" (Nietzsche, 1968, pp. 10-11). Nietzsche believes that I or ego is merely "a grammatical unity," and the result of values becoming meaningless, a nihilism that according to Nietzsche is the outcome of the victory and realization of bourgeois-Christian ethics. In his view, substance, origin, soul, wisdom, awareness, spirit, authority, and reality are all useless paranoia. Lukacs compares the social world created by modern humans with the Ancient Greek world and states: “Our world has become infinitely large and each of its corners is richer in gifts and dangers than the world of the Greeks, but such wealth cancels out the positive meaning—the totality—upon which their life was based” (Lukacs, 1971, p. 34). In fact, the question goes beyond the subject, which highlights a gap between the person and himself, the person and nature, the person and the universe, the person and society, the person and his social role. This gap is widening every day, making the subject and the world in which he lives devoid of identity and true meaning. Lukacs believes that “In Homer's time … the transcendent was inextricably interwoven with earthly existence” (Lukacs, 1971, p. 47), but modern man, unlike the man of Homer’s time, does not consider the world to be his home; it is alien to him.

On the other hand, “The ‘individual,’ in a certain sense, did not exist in traditional cultures, and individuality was not prized. Only with the emergence of modern societies and, more particularly, with the difference of the division of labour, did the separate individual become a focus of attention” (Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity*, 1991, p. 75). This idea of Durkheim’s represents the link between the concept of a person and individuality to social matter. Apparently the focus on individuality as something religious and self-analyzing that Christianity was looking for (especially the Catholics of the Middle Ages) has evolved into a more social and earthly focus in the modern age.

However, some Christian missionaries and Jewish theologians tried to define concepts of individuality in detail in order to preserve the origin of the universe. Franz Rosenzweig distinguishes between the soul and its individuality. He says in *The Star of Redemption*: “Seen from the outside, the Self is therefore indistinguishable from the personality” (Rosenzweig, 2005, p. 79). But from an inner perspective, they are different. He believes that personality is the political animal which takes shape in the form of this world’s connections, but the self as individuality is speechless, blind, and introverted, and first attacks humans as love or Eros, and thenceforth is with him for all the hours of his life, until that moment when its mask is removed, and its identity is revealed to him as death or Thanatos. Rosenzweig tries to preserve the transcendental aspect of subject, as well as the psychological concepts and social aspects, and at the same time criticizes the modern subject.

3.3. Subjection

The dictionary definition of “subjection” is an act or process of controlling or subjugating. We now want to connect this concept with the previous one, i.e. subjectivity. By examining the social, political, and military dimensions of Europe’s Renaissance, the necessary conditions for the formation of cities, states, and new borders were provided. This is where the concept of subjectivity became not only an individual-religious and self-analytical matter which manages itself for self-purification, but the person became a human being defined by cities, and not by churches. The French Revolution brought down feudalism and landlordism, and “in that ‘people’ or ‘subjects’ became ‘citizens,’ a way of describing a population … from the sixteenth century onwards, and very much so in the eighteenth century, what can be seen to be emerging as a political force and a political presence was the ‘voice of the people’” (Evans, 2006, p. 38). In fact, this collective subject refers to the human subject in its modern interpretation, and it can be interpreted as another political subject with all its complexity. The world was a socio-political definition of the individual. Until the Renaissance, managing of oneself and ruling oneself was a religious matter related to churches. But during Renaissance, with the formation of modern states, the managing of self was conjoined with the problem of how to manage others as citizens. Now the managing and ruling of people is a matter for cities, not churches. The formation of modern states established the necessity of creating social contracts in order to rule over others and set up order in new cities, but the important thing is that in modern era, upon violation of traditional social contracts, “What happens is a flooding in of anxiety” (Giddens, Modernity and Self-identity, 1991, p. 37). On the one hand, Jean-Jacques Rousseau in *Social Contract* believes that the government, according to social contract, can guarantee people’s freedom, whilst in practice, government exercised power over people for their own interests. “In fact, government works through its power to put others to action” (Lemke, 2016, p. 102). In this case, subjectivity was not understood as a privilege, but as something which could control the subjects in new city-states. With this understanding, and the presence of governments and alien threats, human subjects became much more important, because in order to defend themselves, governments needed both human and material resources. Distinguishing individuals in connection with the emergence of population was seen as something more or less efficient and deserving of investment. The problem was not just the subsequent subjugation, but also the continuous efforts to increase the usefulness of the population. In his books *Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault demonstrates both psychologically and sociologically that the subject cannot be dominated or repressed, but is an entity created within and through the conceptual and practical performance of a prison, or the conceptual and practical performance of many interferences to one's sexuality. In fact, prison "introduced procedures of domination characteristic of a particular type of power" (Foucault, 1995, p. 231). The methods of punishment are the methods for discovering one's identity. The problem is in trapping individuality, rather than just dominating it, a trapping that is the product of the project of conceptual, institutional, political production and recognition of the individual subject. In fact, psychology, anthropology, sociology, etc. set the pace in the recognizing and governing human subjects. These sciences challenge one's identity with new methods, which causes further subjugation of the human subject. In other words, knowledge of the subject and having power over the subject were moving in one direction. "Foucault indeed invents a concept of 'power-knowledge' in which these two types of relation are understood correlatively" (Kelly, 2009, p. 44). This new position defines the subject according to power structures. These subjects do not have substantial dimensions in the traditional sense, but obtain an objective nature. In other words, they are turned into things that are utilizable. In order to define this situation for the Proletariat, Marx used the term "alienation." A small number have the capital, the production, and the time of the people who work for them, and the workers, instead of naturally producing for themselves, produce unnaturally for those limited number of capitalists, and this causes alienation. "The worker puts his life into the object; but now his life no longer belongs to him but to the object" (Marx & Engels, 1988, p. 72). In fact, the workers themselves become commodities in the hands of the capitalist system, and their force of arms will be used for power's subject, not for themselves. A new form of alienation is the alienation between human beings. A new type of anxiety and lack of identity has taken shape as the result of alienation between humans in the form of war between humans and the horror of the presence of human enemies. "Humans would feel homeless in a world that had become alien" (Eilers, Grüber, & Rehmann-Sutter, 2014, p. 57).

Now we can present a definition of subjection. Subjection can be defined as "making subjects." Subjection had two procedures in history. The first one is the subjugation of subjects, and the second one is destruction of subjugation by subjects who become aware of the world's inequity. For instance, prior to the French revolution, the peasantry was subjugated by kings. We cannot deny the impact of intellectuals and philosophers such as Voltaire and Rousseau, who were interested in the idea of equality and justice. This awareness created revolutionary subjects who wanted the destruction of the king's subjugation. Although today this subjugation no longer has the form of landlordism, and takes a far more complicated and universal form of government and nation, the idea of justice has continued in theories of emancipatory politics. As Badiou says: "Justice … is the philosophical name for the egalitarian political maxim" (Badiou, 2006, p.99).

3.3.1. Subjection and subjugation

In his theories, Foucault searches for a connection between the concept of subjectivity as knowledge of the person and its individuality, and the concept of subjection as a political matter in line with people's subjugation. Perhaps the existence of welfare in advanced industrial societies could justify current conditions, but the truth is that subjugation can be seen most easily in Middle Eastern societies, because they are faced with domestic tyranny on the one hand, while on the other, advanced industrial societies provide them with the means for war and massacre by selling them weapons and segregating them (by focusing on race, gender, religion, and nationalism). Indeed, the rise of ISIS and civil wars in the Middle East cannot be considered a religious phenomenon; ISIS is a direct result of capitalism. Why there are no wars in Russia, America, and Europe, where these weapons are produced? Wars instead happen in a Middle East with tactless and tyrannical rulers, whose people are immersed in poverty, and where there is no possibility for social mobility. In fact, the Middle East is the sale market for advanced industrial countries' weapons.

More complex forms of subjugation can be seen in media and advertising, and in what can be called cultural totality. "Culture industry" is the name given to this totality by Adorno and Horkheimer, based on which those in power control human subjects, "Subjugate them only more completely to their adversary, the total power of capital … Those in charge no longer take much trouble to conceal the structure, the power of which increases the more bluntly its existence is admitted … Interested parties like to explain the culture industry in technological terms" (Horkheimer & W. Adorno, 2002, p. 95). Through technical domination, subjugation becomes more widespread, and abolishes the freedom from human beings; man becomes a slave to technology's rationalism. "Technological rationality reveals its political character as it becomes the great vehicle of better domination, creating a truly totalitarian universe in which society and nature, mind and body are kept in a state of permanent mobilization for the defense of this universe" (Marcuse, 2006, p. 20). In this situation, according to Marcuse, man becomes one-dimensional. This new identity, in the form of luxury and up-to-date goods, determines the value of humans. However, these goods are not eternal, and cannot be accepted as a human value, so they become meaningless. In newer forms of media, the meaning of identity is distorted. In other words, there are no signs which imply meaning in anything, and life is devoid of its meaning. Baudrillard calls this situation hyperreality in media, and derides the apparent peace in the absence of meaning, saying: "We have already seen how, through mass communications, the pathetic hypocrisy of the minor news item heightens with all the signs of catastrophe (deaths, murders, rapes, revolution) the tranquility of daily life" (Baudrillard, 1998, p. 99). With the advent of the internet, methods of subjugation become more and more convoluted in order to avoid the activism of human subjects and encourage consumerism in favor of capitalism. New gadgets, which can be called a microphysics of power, are the new method of subjugation. You can see human beings under control with a simple search in Google. Just open a specific web page, and then, a few hours later, search the same page again in Google. At this moment, you will see this sentence below the link of the web page: "You visited this page on..." In this situation, people under control try to forget anxiety, loneliness, and their lack of salvation by desultorily changing television channels, futilely coming and going in the labyrinth of mobile menus, and aimless circulation on the internet. In *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Horkheimer and Adorno show how progress in medicine and industry, which promised to liberate mankind from ignorance, disease, and hard work, helped to create a world in which humans deliberately acquiesce to fascist ideology, and consciously turn to mass killings and mass aggregation of deadly weapons. Their answer was that the reason turned into its opposite and became irrational. What happened to reason, which humans were employing to dominate nature? "Reason serves as a universal tool for the fabrication of all other tools" (Horkheimer & W. Adorno, 2002, p. 23), which led to the domination on humans themselves, and to the production of tools of mass destruction. The subject in advanced industrial societies is getting away from its true identity, and its freedom is distorted under the influence of things like power, patriarchy, media, technology, etc. "The distinguishing feature of advanced industrial society is its effective suffocation of those needs which demand liberation—liberation also from that which is tolerable and rewarding and comfortable" (Marcuse, 2006, p. 9). Liberation is not limited to having the right to choose; the benefits of real liberation arise when one has the ability to understand and evaluate the things that he should choose. We cannot see the possibility of every choice as a sign of liberation; buying different things or accepting limited jobs are not a sign of liberation from boundaries. Accepting the everyday job in a contemporary society is, in fact, accepting the distance between a person and his body. Giddens believes: "All human beings, in all cultures, preserve a division between their self-identities and the 'performances' they put on in specific social contexts. But in some circumstances the individual might come to feel that the whole flow of his activities is put on or false" (Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity*, 1991, p. 58). In this situation, the body seems like a tool which is controlled by the self from behind the scenes. The separation of self from the body is one of the characteristics of the disruption of existential security which creates anxieties that directly influence personal identity, and we all experience it in today's world.

3.3.2. Subjection and revolution

Political subjects, who have the ability to subjugate or create revolutions, continue their activities until May 1968. Badiou believes "the fourth May 68 was repressed… This has two crucial aspects. The first one is the firm conviction that from '60s onwards, we have witnessed the decline of the old understanding of politics… a classic impression based on which there is something like subject or historical factor which provides an opportunity for emancipation of the whole society – this was the idea that all the political activists were agreed on, and in these circumstances, it was a consensual idea inside the camp of 'revolutionaries.' The historical agent-subject, that was supposed to be the liberation of humankind, had different names: working class, proletariat and sometimes people… and the second one was a limping effort to find a new conception of politics" (Najafi, 2015, pp. 20-21).

This is exactly the death of the subject. Now, God's death is accompanied by the subject's death and has continued with the author's death, and "the subject in the author's figure came out of the semantic implications" (Ahmadi, 2013, p. 318). The subject as a force which could gain knowledge, be a subject, and make changes, does not have power anymore.

Foucault, Lyotard, and Derrida's ideas are replete with the disappointment of not being able to change humans. "By deconstructing the concept of subjectivity, writing it off as one grand narrative among others or presenting the subject as a contingent product of power relations, each contributed to or even explicitly predicted the so-called death of man" (Bax, 2011, p. 3). Thus, humans are not subject to knowledge and cognition anymore, but are subject to language, desires, and the unconscious. Poststructuralists consider the human subject to be a sub-category by highlighting the role of language and meaning. In fact, "structure" replaced the subject. Everything is now defined by its structure. Another question arises: "'Who comes after the subject?/ Yes, after the subject who comes?', presupposes that there is an 'after' to come after the subject, as if an epochal break in the continuum of history had been achieved and that one could leave behind the epoch of subjectivity" (Critchley, *Ethics, Politics, Subjectivity*, 1999, p. 59). In the poststructuralist's point of view, the process of meaning-formation depends on power relations. According to poststructuralist ideas, meaning is never ready, but is always delayed. In this situation, the only thing left in everyday life is repression and meaninglessness. Charles Taylor believes: "We grasp our lives in a narrative… In order to have a sense of who we are, we have to have a notion of how we have become, and of where we are going" (Taylor, 1989, p. 47). However, in today's incoherence of the meaning, these questions and discussions seem meaningless, and will face mockery from the current consumer-oriented society.

4. Conclusion

In the historical evolution of the concept of the subject, it became less metaphysical and more materialistic. In ancient Greece, the concept of the subject contained a metaphysical aspect, i.e. substance, but in the epoch of Christianity (and especially after the Renaissance), subjectivity and the human subject became more individual, and after the formation of modern states, the subject became more collective or political. The subject movements continued until May 1968, and then the subjects were defined as structures, and political and social institutions gained more value. With these changes, modern humanity's meaning and identity were challenged, and the subject's existence was called into question. The death of the subject, our lack of identity, and contemporary man's absurdity show themselves more and more, because they remove the metaphysical aspect from human beings. Humans turned into one-dimensional beings, and became defined by material production. The abstract aspect of humans was forgotten, and according to Heidegger, the question of existence was also forgotten. The contemporary crisis of identity and meaning is the result of this forgetfulness and the semantic transformation of the subject. We can understand the subject in these three meanings: subjectness, subjectivity, and subjection. The subjection is two-way. On the one hand, human subjects are subjugated by the ruling system, and absurdity is intensified. On the other hand, subjects resist subjugation with awareness of the world's situation, and demand retrieval of humankind's true identity.

The following model shows the totality of the subject's meaning in all its ambiguities, even though many combinations can be built with these words.

- Subjectness > substance/essence – ontology – existence's history – subject's philosophy – subject's metaphysic
- Subjectivity > self-awareness – awareness – epistemology – psychology – person and individuality – liberalism's subject
- Subjection > subjugation – power – ruler – vassal – citizen – state's citizenry – politics – rights – law (the settlement) revolution – uprising – resistance

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Book reviews

THE EDINBURGH CRITICAL EDITION OF THE COMPLETE WORKS OF ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD
Series editors: George R. Lucas, Jr., Notre Dame University and Brian G. Henning

[Gonzaga University. *Vol. 1. The Harvard Lectures of Alfred North Whitehead, 1924–1925. Philosophical Presuppositions of Science*. Edited by Paul A. Bogaard and Jason Bell. Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2017, ISBN 978 1 4744 0184 5 (hardback), ISBN 978 1 4744 0185 2 (webready PDF), ISBN 978 1 4744 0468 6 (epub).**]**

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Edinburgh University Press has recently commenced work on a truly formidable project: the publication of a critical edition of the complete works of Alfred North Whitehead. According to the series editors, this critical edition will bring together for the first time, in a series of critically edited volumes, the complete, collected published works and previously unpublished lectures, papers, and correspondence of Alfred North Whitehead. The editors hope that the projected six volumes of unpublished material will illuminate many factors influencing the development of Whitehead's initial and later thought, as well as elucidate, in considerably greater detail than ever before, many of the principal concepts later set out in his body of published philosophical reflection.

The present book is the first in the series, with the others expected to follow. The volume contains a general introduction to the series, a description of its editorial principles, an introduction to the Harvard lectures of Whitehead, and the text of those Harvard lectures (in the form of student notes). The General Introduction begins with a very short biography of Whitehead with an accent on some not-so-well-known facts concerning his years in London and his move to the USA until his death in 1947. A short list of his works at the beginning of the 20th century is given also. What is perhaps new for readers is the surprising conclusion that his works *A Treatise on Universal Algebra* (1898),'On mathematical concepts of the material world' (1906), *An Introduction to Mathematics* (1911), *The Organization of Thought* (1917), *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Natural Knowledge* (1919) and *The Concept of Nature* (1920) "cemented Whitehead's reputation as one of the leading figures in the early development of analytic philosophy, alongside Russell, G. E. Moore and Ludwig Wittgenstein." (p. viii).

The choice of Whitehead's Harvard lectures seems to be a natural point of departure, since they mark Whitehead's transition to philosophy after so many years of devotion to science and mathematics. The volume comprises notes from two parallel lecture courses given at Emerson Hall and Radcliffe College and covered more or less the same material, as well as notes from four sessions of a "Seminary in Metaphysics" which was held in the same year. The existence of lecture notes taken by William Ernest Hocking and Louise R. Heath had been known for some time, and had been partly published elsewhere. What is new for this edition are the extensive notes of Winthrop Pickard Bell. These three sets of notes nicely complement each other: Bell was trying to record virtually everything said, while Hocking was striving to understand it. It seems that the Radcliffe College lectures, documented by Heath, were more easy-going (the audience was smaller, and it seems that Whitehead was not trying to keep the same pace there).

The lecture course "Philosophical Presuppositions of Science" spanned two semesters, and its two parts have more or less the same structure: the first starts with some conceptual clarifications concerning quantum mechanics and relativity theory, while the second provides a basic introduction to mathematics and mathematical logic. After this, Whitehead strove to formulate a complete metaphysical framework that would be sufficient for these disciplines and knowledge in general. This was a truly toilsome task. Quantum mechanics was still in development (some crucial insights appeared in 1925), philosophers still wrestled with Einstein's relativity theory, and mathematical logic, as set in the mammoth three-volume *Principia Mathematica* by Russell and Whitehead was (and still is) a true challenge for students. Moreover, Whitehead was struggling to develop a truly new (and utterly unusual) conceptual apparatus which would mark the deviation of his thought from some well-established ways of thinking (in his own words, he was still "feeling his way into metaphysics"). The only published material which he conceived as relevant to this task were his own recent books, to which he constantly referred: *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Natural Knowledge* (1919), *The Concept of Nature* (1920), and *The Principle of Relativity, with Applications to Physical Science* (1922), all published by Cambridge University Press. In retrospect, these lectures can be seen as the first steps on the road which would eventually lead the mature presentation of these ideas in *Process and Reality* (1929).

What is the general metaphysical outlook that emerges from these lectures? For a start, we can note the fact that already in Aristotle's thought are exemplified two different approaches: 1. the logical approach, which is founded on subject/predicate analysis and takes the exemplification of quality by substance at a moment of time as basic; 2. the metaphysical approach that takes "becoming" or "process" as fundamental (p. 421–422). Through the history of philosophy the first approach dominates, but it is incapable of modeling the all-pervading phenomena of time and change. Indeed, if you start with points of space, moments of time, and external relations between them, then "the point has lost its space, or a moment its time" (p. 308). Thus everything falls apart into a sheer multiplicity of atomic facts, from which it is completely impossible to build wholes. Hence science collapses, unable to answer the question "How can one fact be relevant to another?" (p. 4). Once again, Whitehead lucidly points to the fact that if you start with a host of independent entities, which are complete and existent in and by themselves, you cannot recover their constitutive relations; if the future is not relevant to the present, then induction is impossible (p. 80). If our awareness merely constitutes a "private image" of things, then knowledge is impossible (p. 81). Therefore the traditional metaphysics of substance does not pass the "test of self-consistency of an ontology": it does not provide the much needed elbow-room for epistemology (p. 360).

As is well known, Whitehead has chosen the second approach, whose basic tenet is the claim that "There are no completely autonomous entities" (p. 3), i.e. that the "togetherness of things is fundamental" (p. 5). This implies that the very idea of a "static plurality of self-sufficient reals" is "nonsense" (p. 91). The independently existing entity is just "an abstraction" (p. 92), sanctioned by the fact that a group of certain actual features "is not being much affected by other things in respect to the properties that interest you" (p. 157). This point of view emphasizes the importance of internal relations—it is not just that the "relationships of a real entity modify its essence" (p. 216), but the very concept of existence becomes relative: "it's nonsense to say that either A or B is absolutely real"; the only way of being real is being real for something else (p. 5). Therefore, it is better to view reality as a process of realization, as a gradual establishment of "reactive significance between entities," or even better, as the "becoming of a certain mutuality" (p. 448). This means that, given any particular entity E, the questions "What is E in itself?" and "How is E related to what is beyond itself?" are distinguishable, yet not entirely separable (p. 88). Thus internal relations have finally "knocked out" independent substances (p. 234), and process philosophy is born. As stressed by Whitehead, its specificity stems from the "intimate belief in inherent rationality of things" (p. 4), i.e. in the systematicity of their inter-relations.

That is why it can be viewed as a way to put philosophy back on its feet after Kant's "Copernican revolution," by asking not how knowledge of things is possible, but "How is any entity possible in view of its relation to other things?" (p. 412) or "What is there in the Nature of Things which leads that there is or can be any 'Science'...?" (p. 3). According to Whitehead, the extended answers to these questions are provided by the whole system of spatio-temporal relations linking events into an organic unity.

I hope that the synopsis above proves that this volume is an indispensable asset for any Whitehead scholar. The book shall also prove important for people interested in the history of the philosophy of science and the history of philosophy generally, since it tracks many unexpected parallels between Whitehead's specific outlook and the philosophies of Descartes and Spinoza, Leibniz and Kant, Russell and Wittgenstein, Husserl and Bergson. Last but not least, it documents a significant turning point in the philosophical development of one of the most important thinkers of 20th century.

When finally completed, the *Edinburgh Critical Edition of the Complete Works of Alfred North Whitehead* will encompass the entire collected works of the author, published and unpublished. Perhaps the most useful and exciting aspect of this project to many scholars will be the creation of a fully searchable electronic archive of these primary source materials (p. x).

THE MINORITIES: “LET THEM SPEAK!”

[review of Plamen Makariev’s monograph **The Public Legitimacy of Minority Claims. A Central/Eastern European Perspective (Routledge, 2016)]**

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The very fact that Plamen Makariev’s *The Public Legitimacy of Minority Claims. A Central/Eastern European Perspective* (Routledge, 2016) has been published by as authoritative a publishing house as Routledge is in itself an eloquent testimony to the quality of this book. The reading of it confirms our initial expectation: the problems the author analyzes (and to which he provides solutions) and the theoretical tools he uses to formulate and argue his solutions both show the stature of this work, which holds its own in an international framework of debate.

The concrete dimensions of this general claim can be shown in many ways.

The choice of theme—the conditions and cultural mechanisms that ensure the public legitimacy of minority demands in a specific regional context—demonstrates the author’s humanistic, cultivated research sensitivity no less than his intellectual courage. At a time when in the region under study, but also is in many other places across the world, the social-psychological environment is unfavorable to uttering, hearing, or taking into consideration such demands, Prof. Makariev proposes paths and procedures for the “communicative empowerment” of minorities. Beginning from the introductory parts of the book, he indicates that his study is motivated by the humanistic perspective of peaceful coexistence, which is increasingly being defied today by xenophobic and nationalistic moods, further exacerbated by the migrant crisis.

The author is clearly aware of the theoretical complexity of this task, and that achieving such an important social aim requires a complex and nuanced analysis of the dynamic relations between minorities and society at large. In service to this aim, he undertakes to study conditions and policies that would support better communication between all sides in order to preserve the cultural particularities of minority groups while complying with the moral standards of the macro-society.

In short, this book addresses the large question of dialogue. How is dialogue possible between these two subjects, how can each of them speak and be heard by the other without talking at cross-purposes (due to inadequate reading of the message, manipulation by political leaders or media, or post-traumatic mental accretions). The author links the answer to this question to deliberative democracy, analysed by Jürgen Habermas as a model of legitimate decision-making based on rational discussion of the problems and demands, with equal participation of all parties to the dialogue. The author views the cultural identity of the minority (interpreted through the essentialist paradigm as a closed, impenetrable life-world) as situated within the horizon of constructivism, as produced through dialogue, and as resulting from communicative activity. This approach enables him to situate the minority on the public stage not only as an object, but also as a subject able to take part in rational communication. The mechanism of deliberative democracy presented in this book aims to ensure communicative continuity between the internal self-understanding, the life-world of the minority, its ethical-political discourse, and the moral norms of the society as a whole (p. 17).

In adopting this approach, the author assumes the position of mediator of dialogue, and illuminates the problem areas in that dialogue, which stem from both the minority and the macro society, including its public policies. Thus, Makariev transcends the alternatives frequently encountered in research literature: "pitying" identification with the minority vs. arrogant integration into the majority.

Especially impressive is the differentiated and subtle approach employed for the analysis of these problems and their proposed solutions. This approach is subordinated to the complex and original task of the study: to show that the large-scale mega projects for the defense of minorities—universalistic legal instruments, generalizing normative conventions—are necessary but insufficient for the cultural preservation and dynamic life of minorities. For this purpose, according to the author, ongoing dialogue is needed for the formulation and expression of publicly legitimate demands.

In view of this nuanced approach that takes as central the authentic interests of minorities (as opposed to illusory or manipulatively formulated ones), the author's critical pathos with regard to theories and practices that underestimate or simplify this multifaceted problem seems quite understandable. Among the models of minority policies that he subjects to critical analysis are socialist internationalism, consocialist democracy, presence policy, etc. Naturally fitting within this list is the critical analysis of the Bulgarian ethnic model seen as empowerment of an ethnic party that uses universalist rhetoric.

As an honest theorist with rich practical experience in this field of problems and solutions, the author describes the preliminary conditions that might make it possible and realistic to take the model argued in the book and apply it to the region in question. The preconditions for successful public deliberation that he points out include: the presence of a public sphere that can hear and respect public opinion; a liberal-democratic atmosphere that is resistant to acts of manipulation and discrimination; minorities with developed principles and a display of individuality, autonomy, rational thinking, and independent decision-making.

This complex knot of problems and proposed solutions is tied and untied by Makariev through the application of an impressive erudition with regard to relevant classical and contemporary authors and theories in different spheres of social and humane science, and through discussion on various aspects of the concepts of "identity," "community," "social," "cultural," "recognition," etc. The discussed authors include J. Habermas, Nancy Frazer, Will Kymlicka, John Rawls, Geert Hofstede, Ferdinand Tönnies, E. Gutman, Henry Tajfel, Axel Honneth, Arend Lijphart, A. Phillips, Jonathan Cohen, and many others.

Professor Plamen Makariev's book *The Public Legitimacy of Minority Claims. A Central/Eastern European Perspective* is the rich intellectual result of more than two decades of theoretical and practical study of this topic and its complex set of problems.

We wish the book a successful journey to a wide audience of readers in our country and abroad!