

APPRAISAL

The Journal of the Society for Post-Critical and Personalist Studies

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10th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

Hans Popper

Heidegger and Greek thought

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The ontological personalism of Luigi Pareyson

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God as an incorporeal person

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Lucian Blaga: metaphysics and beyond

Krzysztof Gutowski

Different personalities, one person?

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Noise versus dialogue



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- P Please see inside rear cover regarding references to the works of Michael Polanyi.
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- P **Please ask for the Style Sheet or save or print it from our web site: www.spcps.org.uk.**

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Notes on new contributors:

Krzysztof Gustowski (born: 1962) is Professor and Chairman of the Dept of Christian Personalism at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin. He mainly concentrates on studying the Polish personalism of K. Wojtyła, W. Granat, Cz. Bartnik, and others. He also works on his own concept called 'prophetic personalism'. He is a member of the International Association of Communitarian Personalism based in Madrid and an editor of an Italian personalistic magazine *Prospettiva Persona*.

Ionut Isac is a Senior Researcher, Doctor in Philosophy at the Institute of History George Barit, Department of Philosophy, Romanian Academy, branch of Cluj-Napoca. He conducts two research projects: one is on some unpublished philosophical manuscripts in 19th century Transylvania; the other one is focused on the problem of social values, political mythology and transition in post-communist countries (Romania and the Republic of Moldova). Also, he has received two grants from the Romanian Academy: for the *Encyclopaedia of personalities of the 1848-1849 revolution in Transylvania* and *Romanian values and*

ideas within the European cultural-philosophical paradigm. Specialisations: history of Romanian philosophy, philosophy of science.

Dan Lazea is about to complete his PhD at the Universities of Babes-Bolyai in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, and Turin. He is an Associate Lecturer in the Department of Political Science and Philosophy of West University of Timisoara, Romania, and is a member of the Romanian Societies of Phenomenology and of Political Science, and an Associate Junior Fellow of International Institute of Hermeneutics, Toronto. He has edited, with C. Ciocan, *The Metamorphosis of an Idea: Intentionality from Plotinus to Levinas*, Bucharest University Press: Bucharest, 2005 [in Romanian], and has contributed articles to books published in Romania and Bulgaria.

Neil Manson is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the University of Mississippi. He held the positions of Gifford Research Fellow in Natural Theology at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland and Postdoctoral Research Associate at the Center for Philosophy of Religion at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana. He is author of several articles concerning the contemporary design argument and edited the anthology *God and Design: The Teleological Argument and Modern Science* (Routledge, 2003). His interests include metaphysics, philosophy of religion, philosophy of science, and environmental philosophy.

Henrieta Aniþoara Ýrban (née Mitrea) is a researcher at the Institute of Political Science and International Relations of the Romanian Academy and a PhD student at the stage of defending her thesis on 'The Paradigms of Difference in the Philosophy of Communication'. Her field of interest is media studies and ideologies. She has published articles on this theme in journals in Romania and in a book in the USA, and also 'Gendered Speech in Society and the Academy: a consideration of the "Principle of Reversibility" and its application', *Higher Education in Europe*, Vol. XXV, No. 2/2000, England.

EDITORIAL

It is now 10 years since the first issue of *Appraisal* appeared. Since then, we had one period when one issue was very thin and the next thinner than usual. Otherwise sufficient contributions of quality have appeared to provide 40 to 48 pages of what, I hope, has been interesting reading.

As well as a steady flow of articles relating to Michael Polanyi, we have revived or introduced thinkers of the 20th C., broadly convergent with Polanyi, who, in Britain at least, have been unknown or unduly neglected: John Macmurray, Lucian Blaga, Irving Babbitt, Aurel Kolnai, Borden Parker Bown and Ludwig Fleck, plus articles on a wide range of topics.

This issue continues that mix, except for the absence of anything relating to Polanyi (for the first time): Hans Popper continues his reviews of leading Existentialist and Phenomenological philosophers with his examination of Heidegger and Greek thought; in the first of three articles from Romania, Dan Lazea introduces us to the personalism of the Italian philosopher, Luigi Pareyson, none of whose many works unfortunately appear not yet to be translated into English; Neil Manson (USA) tackles the unfashionable idea of incorporeal personhood; Ionut Isac, (Romania) returns to Lucian Blaga and his view of metaphysics; Krysztof Gutowski (Poland) introduces the personalism of Wincenty Granat; and finally Henrieta Ýrban (Romania), somewhat outside of our usual scope but, we trust, still of interest to the readers of this journal, reports on a project studying changes of attitudes and terminology in the Romanian press before and after the great events of 1989.

The international character of our contributors reflects also a certain change in the composition of our subscribers (and hence members of the SPCPS). As I reported at last year's SPCPS AGM, we have lost some home subscribers and gained an equal number from overseas (the very latest being an Australian living and working in Argentina). The latter often find *Appraisal* on the internet (an unforeseen advantage of the alphabetical priority of its title). We are grateful for their interest (and money!), but I for one am a little disappointed at our failure to attract greater interest at home. If you know a friend or colleague ...

Finally a reminder about our Annual Conference on April 7th & 8th in Nottingham (another change of Hall of Residence, but definitely for the better this time): places are still available and it would be a delight to see further new faces. We are a friendly group, with many interests, and there is no need to feel shy. So if you can come, please give serious thought to joining us at what will be an international event. Full details on p.39. If you can also offer a paper, then please do so: there is still room for at least 2 more.

HEIDEGGER AND GREEK THOUGHT

Hans Popper

Abstract

Has Jonas shows up the fundamental divergence between Biblical, personalist theology and Heidegger's Greek search for an impersonal Being which he finds in Pre-Socratic thought, more especially that of Parmenides. Any attempt at harmonizing Biblical and Pre-Socratic thinking is based on illusion.

Key Words

Being, fundamental thinking, Heidegger, metaphysics, Parmenides, Plato, philosophy, theology, truth.

In a lecture, *Heidegger and Theology*,¹ addressed to an audience of theologians, Jonas warns that audience against interpreting biblical theology in terms of the late thought of Heidegger²; he goes back to Philo,³ whose etymological interpretation of the name 'Israel' changed its meaning from 'God fights' (Gen. 32,28) to 'He who sees God' (*De Ebr.* 82; *De Mut. nom.* 5; et al). The Jacob of the biblical text who hears, answers, fights God, is made into the Platonic seeker who beholds God, the ultimate reality. Jonas warns biblical theologians, devoted to God's prophetic voice,⁴ against an enterprise which is essentially *optical* Greek and pagan. He praises Bultmann for confining himself strictly to early Heidegger's philosophical, discursive enquiry as a useful tool for his own philosophical enterprise which uses conceptual language and does not transgress the limits of rationality; and then he attacks the late Heidegger,⁵ who uses quasi-devotional language⁶ in connection with his account of Being, which had been the central theme in his thought, at least as early as *Sein und Zeit*⁷ (and, as discussed below, brings him particularly close to Parmenides). He introduces the latter work quoting and commenting on Plato's *Sophistes* (244A):

you have long been familiar with the meaning which you want to ascribe to *on* (being) when you use it, we used to believe that we have this understanding as well; but now we have become perplexed.

We must, he says, arouse once more 'an appreciation of the significance of this question' ('ein Verständnis für den Sinn dieser Frage').⁸ Heidegger refers to Aristotle's *Metaphysics* III, III (998b 17 ff) and III, IV (1001a4 ff) and Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* 11,1 (Quaestio 94), as if there were a harmony between Aristotle's *archai*, first and governing principles of being-and-unity, and Thomas' basic matter, the medium through which man, in a primal state of innocence, could see God ('visio Dei per essentiam et qua videtur Deus sine

medio et sine maculo' – Artic. 1,3). But Jonas is surely right, Heidegger's Greek-based purely conceptual account of reality, derived from the Aristotelian *archai* of unity and being, is remote from Thomas' personalised vision of God whom man, in his primal state, might apprehend through the macrocosm. A welding together of the two will involve a complete overhaul of Greek metaphysics and Augustinian theology – as the above-quoted Augustine-based passage from Thomas shows. Instead, Heidegger veers away from Augustinian personalist language and towards the strict conceptualism, first of the Platonic search for being, then, more and more, to the revelation, through (howbeit impersonal) speech, of truth unveiled.⁹ The absence of explicit dialogue between an I and a Thou points again in the direction of the goal of his search, i.e. pure Being which constitutes cosmic unity, for 'it is prudent to say that the All is One, as Heraclitus says'.¹⁰ Meaningful, yet impersonal cosmic unity is epitomised supremely in the character of Parmenides who confronts his young student¹¹ with three alternatives for pursuing his researches (*diz-sis* = inquiry in gen., here intellectual search): (1) Being *is*, there is no Nothing ('*esti gar einai, meden d'ouk estin*'): thus it is necessary ('*chri-*') to say and to think ('*noein*'); (2) keep away from affirming the existence of Nothing, but also (3) from the ones for whom Being and Not Being is the same thing: they veer from side to side, manifestly stupid and dumb and blind. Why, therefore, should it be important to attack them? Here we may appropriately picture the *agora* of a Greek city-state, where unscrupulous sophists will sway gullible voters into disastrous decisions which might even put an end to their own city's life and independence. It is therefore necessary to be knowing and wise; the professional, the genuine sophist must be truthful and not an unscrupulous deceiver – hence Plato's analysis of the sophist who studies and teaches Being and distinguishes individuals and classes and the true from the false.¹² But necessary as this is, it is insufficient, for the moral dimension is lacking – hence the search for *true justice* (*Rep.* I), as against Thrasymachus' evil alternative of defining justice as the law of the strong against the weak.¹³ But for this moral dimension, both the wisdom of a true *sophos* is needed, and the sensitivity and firm orientation from which, as it seems to me, Heidegger at times lapsed. Thus, during a lecture tour in Italy, when visiting his Jewish friends, the Loewiths,¹⁴ he was so clueless as not even to take off his Nazi party badge.¹⁵ But by then, he was already a troubled man; he did not find it

easy to survive – indeed, he gradually fell out of favour with the party, which he also criticized,¹⁶ but, again and again, courage failed him. Thus, when his erstwhile friend and mentor, the distinguished phenomenologist Edmund Husserl, was on the point of death, even his anti-Semitic wife, Elfride Heidegger, had enough of a heart to tell her husband to go and visit him, he shammed illness. On the other hand, he refused to take out his dedication to Husserl, when *Sein und Zeit* was reprinted.

Such oscillating between paying lip service to Nazi pagan immorality and opposing it is condemned by Jonas in his firm stand on total biblical commitment;¹⁷ this precludes being deceived by Hitler,¹⁸ regarded by Jonas, Marcel and others as *the* major scandal of contemporary philosophy; in fact, a state which does not accord absolute priority to justice is a degraded state / in a state of utter degradation.¹⁹ Purely Greek pagan philosophy²⁰ falls short of conceiving the praxis of a just social structure unless it transcends the confines of its purely conceptual framework, rising, with Plato, into prophetic myth,²¹ or entering the universe of discourse of the theological students whom Jonas is addressing²² and vis-à-vis whom he wants to make clear that biblical, experiential and Greek abstract metaphysical discourse move on entirely different plains: Heidegger chooses Greek metaphysics, making the problem of Being the central problem of his search, as his quoting *Sophistes* 244A for his motto immediately preceding the introductory section of *Sein und Zeit*²³ shows. Indeed, *Sophistes* and Aristotle's *Metaphysics* open up to him Pythagoras, Empedocles, the Pythagoreans and especially Parmenides,²⁴ central to this search for Being which, he claims, had largely fallen into oblivion, having been blocked out because a 'dogma' had arisen which not only makes the search for the meaning and significance ('Sinn') of Being superfluous, but indeed also sanctions the neglect ('Versäumnis') of this question.²⁵ Thus, he used Plato's *Sophistes* and Aristotle's *Metaphysics* to guide him to the pre-classical thinkers, supremely Parmenides, for it is here that he hopes to find what is ultimate; what will this be, in Greek terms? Most obviously the *arch* – with its double meaning of beginning and basic structure, later to be adopted by the *Septuagint*, hence John I, where the *Word* of Gen. I and Heraclitus combine to become the foundational Logos as a personalist creative speaker. Heidegger's above-mentioned analysis of *logos* is non-personal, in stark contrast to such religious thinkers as Buber, to whom Jonas makes explicit reference.²⁶ But removing the logos from the realm of creative personal speaking creates a moral vacuum, filled – in contrast to his friends and colleagues, Jaspers and Bultmann – with a radical nationalism, hence the scandal of his Nazi membership, which, however, was extremely common

(and not only in Germany!) in the first half of the 20th century.

But what is the *arch*–? It is, surely, the foundation of the *cosmos*, the ordered, rational, well-proportioned part of existence, which has emerged from the dreaded limitless ('apeiron') chaos, and which lacks all definition of either space or time. What, then, is Being (*to on*)?

Parmenides, as we have seen, avoids the stupidity of those who cannot distinguish between Being and Non-Being; clearly, therefore, Parmenides is heading for *cosmos*: but can we avoid going with him – and with Plato after him – all the way: towards intellectual sanity and, further, moral sanity, thus avoiding, not only the false – what is not the case – but also the deliberate lying and the wilful suppression of the truth?

But how will Heidegger find it, if he wants to discard Plato and his successors down the ages? Is this the reason for his later stretching philosophy beyond what Jonas regards its legitimate area of operation,²⁷ and, in his late works, exalting the 'principal', 'essential', or 'fundamental' thinking of metaphysics above all other disciplines,²⁸ including theology, until, pressed by theologians, he concedes its special type of 'principal' thinking, which it then shares with poetic art. Poetic, theological and metaphysical thinking are 'principal', 'essential', or 'fundamental' types of thinking. And are they, one way or another, successful in attaining their objective, an apprehension of Being?

If we compare this quest with that of Plato's cave myth, a big problem arises. Plato's seeker is after the Idea of the Good, that is, the idea which makes all other ideas function according to the nature of their respective types of being; when reaching this point, Plato leaves the language of discursive thought behind, and we are, instead, treated to a vision with which the philosopher-king is favoured. But, being compassionate, the philosopher-king returns to the cave, in order to help his fellow-mortals to ascend to the Idea of the Good, as he also had done.²⁹

Now, Heidegger in 1942, treats the Idea of the Good as supremely sovereign, ruling *existence*, as it were a closed system, so that truth is no longer *a-l-theia*, the opener-up of all that is. What has happened, as far as I can see, is that, in Heidegger's reading, the myth-dimension has been absorbed by the discursive part of the story, and man, now at the centre of attention, is in charge of thinking the structure of existence. Where is *a-l-theia*? Where, indeed, is Being, *to on*? Are we in a totally different universe of discourse, or is it possible to regard this metaphysical structure as in some way belonging within *to on*, the result of truth having opened up: *a-l-theia*? And why? Because now a compassionate Being is in some sense an agent, *favouring man* with

the ability to practise essential thinking?³⁰ If so, then Being is here characterized as a dimension confronting man and imparting to him this special ability of *fundamental essential thinking*.

If this were in some sense analogous to a biblical model, according to which a gracious God endowed man with a special quality, so that, like Adam in the Genesis story, he had the ability to give correct names to all beings – because, by implication, he understood their basic character – as witness also the Name-giver in Plato's Cratylus:³¹ in that event, Heidegger would, in fact, have rejoined the classical Platonic – biblical tradition. And that would make the 'scandal' of his Nazi period even more inexplicable.

We must also remember that, despite his turning away from believing in Nazism, he played the survival game and never left the party; his main disagreement with Nazism was his disappointment at its embracing modern mass-technology: there is no mention of its inhumanities and atrocities. In this he was at one with many of his contemporaries.³²

In the opening sections of *Sein und Zeit*,³³ Heidegger explains the cause of Being's having gone into oblivion. He does this by referring to the long tradition of thinkers who took Being strictly as a technical term of logic, that is, as the ultimate universal which, encompassing all other universals, is completely empty of specific predicates of its own. But in process of doing so, the other meaning of the term, Being, had gone by default, that is, of Being which, as Parmenides has it, *actually is!*³⁴ The reason for that is that the Western philosophical tradition had, so to speak, ceased to be ideological – or, to call a spade a spade, its existential praxis was now that of religious faith, so that God had become the supreme Thou, confronting each individual or group of persons. And this supreme Thou is not only supreme as Creator, but also intensely concerned with the beings that he has created: this God is the loving, therefore also the just and the moral God. The Being – aside from logic – is now the supreme Thou, the centre of theology and of personal spiritual life. If therefore, it appears to be absent from metaphysics, this means that the Western philosophical tradition no longer needed it. But when Heidegger went back behind the post-Platonic-biblical alliance, very obviously, this moral dimension was missing from the character of this Being of Beings – not surprisingly, because Parmenides set himself the task of exploring and teaching truthfully that which is: the anatomy of the Universe, 'its becoming and its destruction, its being and its non-being'.³⁵

I think that, because Heidegger felt this lack of a moral dimension to Being, he came himself to endow it with the moral dimension which he found in the biblical praxis – howbeit, in a

non-personalized guise – and in the parts of classical and post-classical Greek tradition which he had overthrown.

Swansea

Notes:

1. Originally in English, publ. Dec. 1964, in: *Review of Metaphysics*, vol. 18, No. 2, pp. 207-33; German version in *Zeitschr. f. Evang. Theologie* 24 (1964), pp. 621-42, repr. in G. Noller (ed.), *Heidegger und die Theologie, Beginn u. Fortgang einer Diskussion*: München, Kaiser, 1967, pp. 316-40, now repr. in: Dietrich Böhler u. Jens Peter Brune (ed.), *Orientierung und Verantwortung, Begegnungen u. Auseinandersetzungen mit Hans Jonas*: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2004; pp. 39-58.
2. *Ibid*; pp. 41ff.
3. *Ibid*; pp. 40-41: *Philonis Alexandrini Opera*, ed. L. Cohn and P. Wendland et al.; de Gruyter, 1962 (repr. from 1896-1930) II, 185; III, 164; 21.
4. cf. further for the primacy of God's Word in: Rudolf Bultmann, *Faith and Understanding I*, ed. Robert W. Funk, transl. Louise Pettibone Smith; S.C.M. Press, London, 1969: from: *Glauben und Verstehen I*, 6th edn; 1966, Tübingen: 12. *The Concept of the Word of God in the New Testament*, esp. pp. 287-92, 300-303; esp. 302: Christianity is in the same tradition: hence Christians are 'called' ('kl-toi').
5. General biographical survey: Winfried Franzen, *Martin Heidegger*: ser.: Sammlung Metzler 141; Metzler, Stuttgart, 1976; esp. sec. 4.3 (pp. 57-77).
6. Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* (publ. Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt a. M., begun in the autumn 1974: cf. Winfried Franzen, op. cit. in above note 5, pp. 1-10), *Grundbegriffe* (vol. 51) 1941, esp. III, 164. Abschnitt, paras. 8-16, pp. 49-77; but in *Über den Humanismus* (1946: pp. 20-21) he warns against identifying theological with philosophical language; thus 'Verfall' is to be strictly distinguished from 'Sündenfall'! – on Plato's cave parable (*Republic VII*) cf. vol. 34, 64-79.
7. First appeared in Spring 1927, vol. VIII in *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung*. ed. E. Husserl, and as separate publication; vol. 2 in *Gesamtausgabe*. 'to on', 'to einai' (Being), 'h-ousia' (Substance, Being), although consistently nouns in Plato and Aristotle, are clearly derived from the verb 'einai' ('to be').
8. *Sein und Zeit*, p. 1.
9. cf. esp. the discussion of *logos* in its revealing function ('d-loun'), emerging from hiddenness ('al-thes'), in *Sein und Zeit* pp. 43-45; the link between 'legein' and 'logos' is also the basis for his discussion of Heraclitus: cf. fragment 350 in Diels-Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (Weidmann, Zurich, 1996: 6th edn. repr. from 1st edn. 1951) 1, 161: *Logos* (*Heraklit*, Fragment 50); and in Jonathan Barnes, *Early Greek Philosophy* (Penguin, 1987) p. 160. – *Gesamtausgabe* (1954, 9th edn., 2000) vol. 7, pp. 214 ff; – from a biblical standpoint, non-personalist speaking does not really make sense: cf. Jonas, op.cit., p.

- 55: ‘.. .die schrecklich Anonymität von Heideggers Sein...’
10. cf. Diels-Kranz I, 161, referred to in above note 9.
 11. Parmenides, fragment B6, in Diels-Kranz I, 232-34, Barnes 132-33 (his important analysis, esp. in: *The Presocratic Philosophers*: Routledge, London and New York, 1979, 1982, esp. pp. 157 ff)/ text and commentary also in: A.H. Coxon, *The Fragments of Parmenides. A critical text with introduction, translation, the ancient ‘testimonia’ and a commentary*: Van Gorcum, Assen / Maastricht and Wolfeboro, New Hampshire 03894, USA., 1986; Coxon’s numbering: 5 (text and translation: pp. 54-55; comm.: pp. 181-87); close link with fragment 3 (Coxon) / 2 (D/K): pp. 52-53; (comm.: pp. 172-79).
 12. Contrast between the true and the false sophist, advocate of *tyrannis*: cf. the *Thrasymachus* episode in *Rep.* I whose account of what is just consists in ‘nothing else than what is advantageous to the stronger’ (338c-344c); this is unmasked by Socrates. The true sophist, as investigated in the dialogue of that name, is one whose business is personal excellence (‘aret-’): cf. more especially 224C ff (this discussion begins at 218B).
 13. cf. above note 12.
 14. Karl Loewith, pupil of Heidegger and an important philosopher of existence in his own right, wrote: *Jakob Burkhardt* (Lucerne, 1936); *Kierkegaard und Nietzsche, oder philosophische und theologische Überwindung des Nihilismus* (Frankfurt / M, 1933); *Martin Heidegger : Denker in dürftiger Zeit* (Frankfurt / M., 1953); et al. – cf. Joanna Hodge, *Heidegger and Ethics* (Routledge, London and New York, 1995), esp. pp. 13 7-40, 151-52.
 15. cf. Rüdiger Safranski, *Ein Meister aus Deutschland: Heidegger und seine Zeit* (Hanser, München und Wien, 1994), pp. 369-70, quoting Loewith: ‘Es war ihm offenbar nicht in den Sinn gekommen, dass das Hakenkrenz nicht am Platz war, wenn er mit mir einen Tag verbrachte.’ Joanna Hodge (op. cit. in previous note 14), p. 130, links this episode with his ‘affirmations in the 1943 paper of a destiny unique to the Germans as inheritors of the Greek tradition, taking up and transforming the relation between poetry and philosophy’. To me, that would demonstrate Heidegger’s cluelessness in his attitude to real life – an attitude shared by many of his contemporaries!
 16. cf. Winfried Franzen, *Martin Heidegger*; series: Sammlung Metzler 141 (Metzler, Stuttgart, 1976), pp. 81-85: an aspect not well-known; cf. Gabriel Marcel, *Entretiens Paul Ricoeur Gabriel Marcel*: Association Gabriel Marcel, Gallimard, Paris, 1998, p. 110 but we note Marcel’s guarded language (‘.. .à un moment donné... plus que de l’indulgence...’).
 17. cf. Jonas, op. cit., esp. pp. 46-47.
 18. In the face of this danger, Ricoeur commends Marcel’s attitude of ‘philosophe vigile, ... veilleur’ (p. 110 in Marcel, *Entretiens...*, op.cit. in above note 16); in these dialogues, Marcel characterises himself as a Christian Socratic thinker; the first impulse had come from being confronted with the Dreyfus affair which caused a crisis in his reflections about justice (pp. 96-98); cf. further (pp. 111-118) his veneration for such philosophers, who are also men of integrity, as Leon Brunschvicg, despite differences in philosophical outlook in general; on his agreement with Heidegger regarding the danger of technology and regarding the sense of the ‘dignité sacrée de l’être’ cf. pp. 104-5. But the big divide between them, as Ricoeur (p. 92), remarks, like Jonas, consists in Heidegger’s Greek as against Marcel’s biblical language (p. 92; p. 89: ‘Heidegger est un grec!’). In Heidegger’s thought it results in the ‘indulgence à l’hitlerisme naissant’, due to a philosophical weakness (‘une certaine déficience au milieu philosophique’ (p. 110). But this has been part and parcel of a more general, ‘scandalous’, betrayal of philosophy: cf. the Allied inertia in the face of the rearmament of Germany, or earlier, the French share in the responsibility for World War I (pp. 98-99).
 19. ‘... one would have to accord, in a certain manner, full agreement to Plato and [say] that a state which did not keep justice in the place of supreme importance which is its absolute due would be a degraded state / in a state of utter degradation’ (*Entretiens*, p. 102).
 20. cf. Jonas (op. cit.) p. 47.
 21. e.g. that of Er in Plato’s *Rep.* X, 614B ff.
 22. cf. Jonas (op. cit.), *ibid.*, p. 47.
 23. p. 1. For a valuable general survey see Charles Bambrock, *Heidegger’s Roots: Nietzsche, National Socialism and the Greeks* (Ithaca and London, Cornell U.P., 2002), esp. ch. IV, ‘Heidegger’s Greeks and the myth of autochthony’, pp. 180-246.
 24. quoted on p. 4-5: Aristotle’s *Metaph.* III, IV: 1001a4-34 (esp. 21) and III, II: 998b 22.
 25. *Sein und Zeit*, Introd. Ch. I, p. 4
 26. p. 56.
 27. cf. Rudolf Bultmann, *Faith and Understanding I* (op. cit.), 13; *The Problem of ‘Natural Theology’*, p. 327: although philosophy and theology coincide ‘in certain statements’, they still ‘treat different things’; cf. the whole discussion, pp. 337 ff.
 28. cf. Jonas (op. cit.) p. 52.
 29. 511A ff; the mythos starts at 514A; their civic duty: 519C-E.
 30. cf. Jonas p. 53.
 31. cf. more esp. 388E ff.
 32. cf. *Die Frage nach der Technik* (1954): *Gesamtausgabe* vol. 7, esp. pp. 26-29. Gabriel Marcel, *Entretiens*. op. cit, p. 105.
 33. *Sein und Zeit, Gesamtausgabe*, pp. 3-6
 34. Diels-Kranz, fragm. 6,1.1 (I, 232, 21/Jonathan Barnes, *Early Greek Philosophy*, op. cit, p. 132/A.H. Coxon, *The Fragments of Parmenides* (Van Gorcum, Maastricht, 1986) pp. 54-55; Diels-Kranz, fragm.8, 1. 2 (I, 235,1.3)/Barnes, p. 134/Coxon, pp. 60-61.
 35. *ibid.*, fragm. 8, 1.40/Barnes, p. 135/Coxon, pp. 74-75.

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THE ONTOLOGICAL PERSONALISM OF LUIGI PAREYSON: FROM EXISTENTIALISM TO THE ONTOLOGY OF LIBERTY¹

Dan Lazea

Abstract

One of the few philosophers of the last century who revived the Socratic ideal of the Mentor-Philosopher, was Luigi Pareyson (1918-1991). In the present study, I shall follow the main stages of Pareyson's thinking with the aim of emphasizing the recurrence of the personalist theme, which cut across the various interests of the philosopher.

(1) The first part of the study will be focused on the 40s, when the explicit conceptualizing of the concept of person is developed by Pareyson starting from his studies on the existentialist philosophers.

(2) Beginning with the hermeneutic period, the personalist theme becomes less evident and has to be reconstructed through the main writings of those years.

(3) By the end of the 70s and the beginning of the 80s, a new apparent distancing from the personalist theme occurs, turning his philosophy of interpretation into a philosophy of liberty. Consequently, we have carefully to read the texts of this period in order to highlight the personalist interests of the author which are intersected and sometimes even covered by other themes.

Key Words

Pareyson, personalism, existentialism, hermeneutics, ontology

Introduction

One of the few philosophers of the last century, who recall the old ideal of the Master-Philosopher, was Luigi Pareyson (1918-1991). Founder and main promoter of one of the first centres of hermeneutical thinking in the '50s, Pareyson was a genuine 'professor of Philosophy': he delivered memorable lectures at the University of Turin and conducted, among others, the first research projects of Umberto Eco and Gianni Vattimo. Apart from his teaching activities, the originality of his philosophy gradually begins to reach the public, through the publishing of the first volumes of the projected *Complete Works* in 39 volumes, and to be acknowledged once the number of translations and studies on his works increases.²

Developing a path of thought whose unity could hardly be observed at a first look, Pareyson has never in his life ceased to reflect over the same core of ideas and problems. The idea of re-evaluating the concept of person was one of them. In this context, it is important to note the philosopher's lack of interest for the majority of the authors self-declared personalists, while the authors placed among his constant dialogue partners were Hegel, Fichte, Schelling, Kierkegaard, Jaspers, Heidegger, and

Dostovoiesky. Based on the constant dialogue with these authors, criticising them or developing their ideas, Pareyson built his own philosophical vocabulary. A closer look into this matter will reveal how this vocabulary preserved its key concepts regardless the research fields studied. Marco Ravera presents Pareyson in his anthology of hermeneutical thinking:

In the different stages of his philosophical activities (...) as well as in the different fields (...) in which he carried out his research activities, Luigi Pareyson developed a philosophical perspective in which hermeneutic is seen as the most coherent continuation of existentialism, while existentialism is a key moment in the dissolution of Hegelianism.³

In this study I will focus on the main stages of the Pareysonian thinking with the aim to emphasize the recurrence of the personalist themes, themes which crosses the various interests of the philosopher. (1) The first part of the study will focus on the '40s, when the explicit themetizing of the concept of person is developed on the background of the study of the existentialist philosophers. (2) Beginning with the hermeneutic period, the personalist theme becomes less evident and has to be reconstructed through the main writings of those years. (3) A new apparent distancing from the personalist theme occurs with the new turn of his philosophy of interpretation into a philosophy of liberty in the end of the '70s and the beginning of '80s. Consequently, one has to carefully read the texts of this period in order to find the personalist roots covered by other themes. I will conclude by presenting the results of his studies and their originality for the philosophical scene.

1. Ontological personalism

In the Italian philosophical scene dominated by prominent figures like the neo-Hegelians Benedetto Croce and Giovanni Gentile, the novelty of the problems approached by Pareyson and of the conceptual milieu used by him was immediately observed after the publication of his first book, *Karl Jaspers*,⁴ in 1939. The book played a pioneering role in the philosophic establishment of that time by introducing the Italian public into the new Existentialist movement and by breaking with the manner of dialectical systematization. The studies from the same period on Karl Barth, Kierkegaard or Heidegger had the same propedeutic role, accompanied

however by genuine theoretical intuitions and reflections.⁵

There are two main ideas I will develop in this section in which I will examine the period starting with *Jaspers* in 1939 and ending with the first Pareyson's theoretical book *Existence and person* in 1950. On the one hand, the fundamental intuition through which Pareyson read the whole historical development of the existentialist movement is that *existentialism is a reaction to the dissolution process of Hegelianism*. On the other hand, the hesitation between a *spiritualist* perspective and a *personalist* one was soon followed by a strong affirmation of the ontological openness of the concept of person as the only way to meet the existentialist exigencies. Between them, I will interpose a short analysis of Pareyson's reading of Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*, in order to show how the first encounter with this book influenced the whole Pareysonian critique approach to existentialism.

As a proof of the outstanding position for the early Pareysonian thinking of the ideas previously exposed is the whole chapter from *Studies on Existentialism* on the German philosophy of existence. The chapter proceeds from the clear statement:

To understand the existentialism in its meaning and in its significance, we have to insert it in that dissolution of Hegelianism, from which the existentialism does not make anything else but take back certain implicit possibilities.⁶

to the question, temporarily with no answer, which concludes the investigation of the philosophy of Kierkegaard:

If the philosophy of existence started from a reevaluation of the individual, does it really contain the elements for a philosophical justification of the person?⁷

1.1. Existentialism as a reaction and part to the dissolution of Hegelianism

One could better understand the complex relation that interweaves Existentialism and Hegelianism once the radical rejection by different philosophers of the Hegelian system immediately after its elaboration will be revealed. Indeed, the reactions of Feuerbach or Kierkegaard, for instance, came very soon, almost at the same time with the development of the Hegelian philosophical system. However, another idea is more important to Pareyson than the chronological quasi-simultaneous process of affirmation and reaction. This idea is that in this corrosive critique of those philosophers to the Hegelianism we can find the comprehensive range of possibilities for the future development of philosophy, not only for the 19th century but also for the next one. As long as the huge legacy of

Hegelianism can not be ignored, there is no other way for a philosopher than to confront with it and, consequently, with its dissolution. The term 'Hegelianism' in this context is used to merely indicate that peculiar way of scholastic reading of Hegel's philosophy as an attempt to theorize within the thought the synthesis between thought and reality, and, by using the dialectical method, to think the reality itself into the philosophy.⁸

By contrast, Kierkegaard and Feuerbach opposed this grandiose perspective through a series of breaks, ruptures, and overthrows of the terms apparently conciliated by Hegel. Facing the genuine Hegelian theocentrism – conceivable as a kind of mediation between the finite and the infinite through the final annihilation of the finite into the Absolute – Kierkegaard proposed the radical disjunction of the finite and the infinite, while Feuerbach overthrew the relation between the two terms, finally asserting the dilution of the infinite into the finite.

The whole history of Existentialist philosophy (and not only) after Hegel could be rewritten starting from these two perspectives opened by Kierkegaard and Feuerbach in their attempt to amend/reject the Hegelian system: 'The man in front of God and the Man-God, (...), theism and atheism.'⁹ Pareyson analyzed the way in which Hegelianism is assumed/dissolved by Kierkegaard and Feuerbach through different themes such as: the critique of 'philosophy of Absolute' embodied in the 'professor of philosophy', the problem of the evacuation of time from the 'system', the conciliation of religion with politics and religion, and the question related with the fate of Christianity.¹⁰

Both philosophies (of Kierkegaard and, respectively, Feuerbach) claim to be total and exclusive, obliterating the deeper Hegelian roots, which they share. This unrevealed ambiguity will cross the dissolution of Hegelianism through the philosophies of its critics and will be taken as such by existentialism. In these conditions, the philosophy of existence finds itself in the same situation as the first critics of Hegel, participating unconsciously in the same process of dissolution of Hegelianism and showing the symptoms of the same crisis. This is the interpretative paradigm through which Pareyson will read existentialism, whose German representatives will be the most important: Barth, Jaspers, and Heidegger.

The case of the last one is typical for what Pareyson called the unrevealed belonging of existentialism to the context of Hegelianism dissolution. The book *Being and Time* contains only few references to Kierkegaard, which are however very significant for his influence on the Heidegger's first philosophy (v. commentators). From this perspective it seems to be difficult to understand why Pareyson placed

Heidegger among the descendants of Feuerbach, and therefore in opposition to Kierkegaard. Pareyson's understanding of this situation is the following:

The dialectical tension placed by Kierkegaard between time and eternity, finite and infinite within 'subjectivity' – which relates to itself since it relates to God – will be disintegrated by his epigones. Precisely because Kierkegaard dissociated in his theandricism the Hegelian conciliation between human and divine it was possible to emphasize the dissociation isolating the two terms even further, and therefore arriving to the absolute theism of Barth and to the absolute humanism of Heidegger. (...) Precisely because Kierkegaard belongs to the dissolution of Hegelianism and thus stands so close to Feuerbach, it is possible to find echoes of Feuerbach's in the Heideggerian thinking, despite the lack of any direct connections. The man of Heidegger also relates to himself in the same manner in which he relates to the other, his anthropology also presents itself as an atheistic one, his Christianity also is non-Christianity.

Even justified in this context, this perspective seems to be an oversimplification of the complexity of the Heideggerian thought. Anticipating the future reevaluation of his judgment on Heidegger, Pareyson is conscious that other interpretations could be valid; for instance, he knew that Barth considered Feuerbach a better introduction to theology than Schleiermacher, and that Heidegger was carefully read by the dialectic theologians.¹¹ For the purpose of this study, it is important to figure out the central role of the first encounter of Pareyson with Heidegger's *Being and time* as a key moment in understanding the limits of Existentialism in sketching the lines of a philosophical foundation of the person.

1.2. Heidegger and the limits of the existentialist programme

Formulating a positive definition of existentialism is a difficult task and this situation has to be approached from different perspectives.¹² On the one hand, in a broad cultural perspective existentialism has been seen as a 'fashionable' way of thinking for different intellectual groups during the interwars period, a part of the *Zeitgeist*, and a sign of the general crisis of the spirit of Europe. The frights and disillusionments provoked by the First World War and its consequences account for the situation described. On the other hand, from a more philosophical perspective, Pareyson defined existentialism as a moment in the history of philosophy, connected to the general situation but not reducible to it.

As I previously indicated, existentialism has to be placed within the Hegelianism's dissolution. Pareyson also detects the urgent demand of the present situation in the necessity of a new attention to the concept of person. Existentialists and other philosophers tried to respond to this demand in different

ways, but existentialism has a better position and, at the same time, a huge responsibility in regard to it:

Existentialism aims to establish philosophically the person. The metaphysical resonance of the situation in which the Self is thrown to live, the liberty through which the individual forms himself and transforms himself in his spiritual features, the dignity with which the person is affirmed beyond changing and ephemeral particularities in a non-repeatable and essential validity: these are the motifs in which existentialism embodies its personalist exigency'.¹³

However, diverse and even opposing solutions grew up from the same historical and thematic roots despite the common vocabulary. In fact, each philosopher attached to the key-concepts used in their writings different connotations and even different meanings. As a consequence, each philosophy fulfils with a greater or lesser degree the needs of personalist philosophy, and in this sense Pareyson scrutinised Heidegger's projected analytic of *Dasein*. *Being and Time* is to Pareyson even more intriguing because of its multiple philosophical roots: Kantian transcendentalism, *Lebens-philosophie*, and Husserlian phenomenology meet old Greek, early Christian, and Kierkegaardian themes. How could be determined the degree to which such a rich philosophy might respond to the personalist exigency?

To Pareyson the answer comes together with the result of the analysis applied to the Heideggerian terms 'existential' and 'existentiell'. The elaboration of the concept of person depends upon this conceptual couple. Following the first of them, the problem of person relates with another Heideggerian concept, which is 'meiness' (*Jemeinigkeit*). For at the ontological-existential level, *Dasein* disclosed his character of being any time *mine* – at the same time, not distinguishing *yours*, *his*. To Pareyson only at the another level, at the ontic-existentiell one, the problem of individual is adequately thematized, for only at this level the look revealed *Dasein* in its concrete and determined way of being *mine* or *yours* or *his*. Therefore, Pareyson concludes that:

(...) while the theoretical problematizing of the pure relation with Being and the explicit discussion of the possible modes of Being, far from any concrete determination, and, even more than this, a priori conditions of it, are existential, only the living and concrete determination each individual gives to him is existentiell.¹⁴

In this distinction the Heideggerian thought finds to Pareyson its peculiarity inside the general existentialist branch. Highlighting the ontological facet means to shade the ontic one and, therefore, to forget the real issue at stake, which is the Personalist exigency. Pareyson warns also about the unnecessary immersion into the realm of the ontology of

Dasein and interprets the Heideggerian existentialia (*existenzialien*) as just another name for Kant's transcendental conditions of experience. Along with the terminological alternative existential/existentiell another Heideggerian conceptual couple, authenticity/inauthenticity, provides new proof for his critique. However Heidegger was aware of the erroneous interpretations his vocabulary could generate. In this case, he carefully prevents a moral interpretation of the terms 'authenticity'/'inauthenticity', insisting on the neutral character of them. From a certain point of view, he even tried to attach a positive meaning to the term 'inauthenticity':

As modes of Being, authenticity and inauthenticity (these expressions have been chosen terminologically in a strict sense) are both grounded in the fact that any *Dasein* whatsoever is characterized by mineness. But the inauthenticity of *Dasein* does not signify any 'less' Being or any 'lower' degree of Being. Rather it is the case that even in its fullest concretion *Dasein* can be characterised by inauthenticity - when busy, when excited, when interested, when ready for enjoyment.¹⁵

And again

Dasein's average everydayness, however, is not to be taken as a mere 'aspect'. Here too, and even in the mode of inauthenticity, the structure of existentiality lies *a priori*.¹⁶

Although Heidegger's efforts to save the methodological neutrality of these terms are more than problematic,¹⁷ Pareyson considered another consequence to be more important. Thus the concrete condition of *Dasein* at the ontic level of analysis is less important to Heidegger than the neutral, ontological, and *a priori* structure that makes it possible. For Heidegger guides his research not toward a concrete individual – in a specific condition: 'proper' or 'improper' – but toward that faceless '*das Man*', whose inauthentic condition is the typical mode of being of *Dasein* caught in everydayness.¹⁸

In this early period of his reflection, Pareyson criticizes this 'Kantianism' of Heidegger's research and finds in it the limits of the existentialism of *Being and Time*. To Pareyson the true task of philosophy starts in the same place where Heidegger stops his project. The Italian philosopher thinks that the only way of fostering research is to withdraw the priority of the Heideggerian terms existential/existentiell. Heidegger's descriptions of the existential level of *Dasein* in terms of 'impersonal, anonymous, non-subjective basis'¹⁹ for the possibility of the individual, proves, for Pareyson, the incapacity of *Being and Time*'s project to respond to a series of problem.

Concluding his critique of Heidegger, Pareyson formulated some fundamental questions: Does the ontological level suffice for founding ethics? Who is

responsible for the actualization of the authentic condition, and respectively of the inauthentic one? If the responsibility belongs to *Dasein*, what kind of *Dasein* is it about? That anonymous 'mineness' (*Jemeinnigkeit*)? Or that concrete human person, which is each time (*je, jeweilig*) my real human person: always an *I*, or an *you*, or a *he*, or a *she*?²⁰ In sum, the Heideggerian framework of concepts cannot meet the personalist exigency that guided Pareyson in this period and therefore a new path of thought had to be shaped.

1.3. The elaboration of ontological personalism

From the end of the 40s, Pareyson gradually gave up the hope that his historical studies on existentialism and his critique of it could form the grounds for his philosophical project. Consequently his works became more and more original and his thought started to tailor his own way through a series of articles and studies, collected then in his first theoretical book, *Existence and Person* (1950).²¹

The background of the first article from the series, *The Task of Philosophy Today* from 1947,²² prolonged the theme of Hegelianism dissolution. The novelty of the approach proposed here by Pareyson relies upon the following idea: philosophy needs not only to avoid the unreasonable claims of the Hegelian system, but it also needs to avoid the dangers of relativism and historicism.

From the previous studies on the existentialists, Pareyson will try to use the idea of 'existence' employing the genuine Kierkegaardian meaning, and not the Heideggerian one. For the existence reveals itself only at the existentiell level, pointing to the concrete, individual, and historical situation in which the person finds itself 'thrown'. Here the reflection on the task of philosophy encounters the problem of the person, because the philosopher is a person too, and shares the same status with all other human persons. He risks his whole person with each personal interpretation of Being, his person being at stake not in an abstract way but in its factual concreteness. Despite the fact that philosophy can not but be a personal interpretation and an expression of its time, it will never cease to claim a speculative value for its results.

To Pareyson the non-objective character of Being implied by the ontological difference does not prevent philosophy from claiming its access to Being, nor condemn it to mere relativism. The formula proposed here by Pareyson is apparently paradoxical: only a philosophy that is in the same time *an absolute, historical, and personal* one could appropriate its task.

(i) Affirming the *absolute* character of philosophy means to maintain that a genuine relation to Being is possible beyond any material, ideological, historical, cultural, and psychological limitations and against

the claims of the 'great demystifiers' of conscience, Marx, Nietzsche, Dilthey, and Freud.

(ii) Affirming the *historical* character of philosophy means to admit the inescapable character of the situation, which surrounds the person of philosopher, so that any philosophy is also an expression of its time and not the full possession of truth outside history.

(iii) Affirming the *personal* character of philosophy means placing the human person at the core of philosophy, and to make from this character a positive one. The human person is not a simple mirror on which *Zeitgeist* reflects itself, nor a temporarily moment in the advancement of Absolute spirit towards its complete awareness, but an active agency with his own will and force.

After several years, Pareyson explained that his insistence on the ontological character of the person has to be correlate with the new interpretation he made of the existential term 'situation':

By 'situation' I intend *die Stellung der Menschen im Kosmos*, with the words of Max Scheller, the place of man in cosmos, not only his historical location, but also his ontological location. (...) Therefore the situation has not only a historical side, but also an ontological one: the situation is not only 'the boundary' of existence, but also an openness to the Being; it is not a limitation but a way to enter; it has a historical-personal and ontological character (...) and represents the solidarity of person and truth, of person with truth.²³

Now we can better understand why Pareyson has chosen the two terms which sum up his thinking – *existentialist personalism* and *ontological personalism* – and the successive order of them. Even though Pareyson used them as synonyms, the former is more connected with the existentialist period, while the later helps us to foresee the forthcoming stages of his thought. *Existentialist personalism* means: to re-examine what seems to be for most existentialists a pure negativity, i.e., the fact that any act of thinking, any human action, as well as any philosophy, is a result of *Dasein's* thrownness into existence. *Ontological personalism* means: to found the concept of the person upon the basic nexus of existence and Being, upon the original existential openness of human person toward Being, upon the genuine ontological intentionality of person.²⁴

I will conclude this chapter by referring to the essay called just *Philosophy of the person* (1958), written as a self-presentation for a collective volume focused on Italian contemporary philosophy.²⁵ Explaining once again what he intends by 'the personality of philosophy', Pareyson writes:

Reaching truth and multiplicity of philosophies: this is not a problem belonging to theory of knowledge or to historiography, but to metaphysics. It falls within the fact that affirming Being cannot but personal be, and

so, it cannot be but historical, because I am an affirmation of Being, and my own being is a perspective on Being: to be – to me, that who I am – means being a perspective on Being, and my philosophy is nothing else than an interpretation of this living perspective which I am.²⁶

The dynamic character of Pareyson's thinking will move the philosopher to new territories of philosophy in a process of verifying the results already achieved by a permanent revisiting of his own ideas. The next stage of his thinking could be called the hermeneutic period, with, first, an aesthetic preamble.

2. The concept of the person and the philosophy of interpretation

Due to the publishing of new Heideggerian works and especially due to the extraordinary effect of *What is Metaphysics?* and *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, Pareyson gradually adjusted his earlier narrow existentialist reading of Heidegger's *Being and Time* as expressed especially in his first 1939 book on Jaspers. By criticising Heidegger for his insistence on the finitude of human condition, Pareyson risked his encounter with the genuine Heideggerian question, which concerns not man but Being. As the Italian philosopher himself showed,²⁷ the comprehensive reading of new Heideggerian works effectively determined his turn toward an increasingly ontological philosophy.

2.1. The human person: the basis of the theory of formativity

Although from the 50s almost the entire theoretical interest of Pareyson switched from the studies on existentialism to those concerning aesthetics, this does not mean an abandon of his personalist philosophy project. On the contrary, aesthetics will offer the philosopher an excellent opportunity to carry on his previous insights regarding the openness and positive nature of the human person, and to combine them with the new understanding of Being as source of innumerable perspectives.

His *Aesthetics: The Theory of Formativity* (1954)²⁸ is more than a systematic treatise of aesthetics: it is also a first test of the forthcoming theory of interpretation, which received a mature form in *Truth and Interpretation* (1971). This fact proves not only the independence of Pareyson's hermeneutics from Gadamer's, but also its chronological priority. The concept of person is an important element in his theory of interpretation and receives new determinations as in the following quotation that seems to foresee the future dialogical philosophy proposed by Gadamer:

The person carries its secret: if one wants to know it, it is not necessary but mandatory to question it. To know a person is always 'an encounter' that implies

exchange and reciprocity: it is colloquium and conversation, and I can not say I interpret a person if between that person and me did not exist that correspondence of questioning and answering, saying and hearing in which communication consists.²⁹

Knowing a person as a process of interpretation will gain a paradigmatic value for Pareyson and he will expand its consequences to the encounter between a person and a work of art. The 'reader' has to preserve the work of art in its independence and originality, as if the work of art were a human person, for only in this way the 'silent colloquium' between a human person and a work of art is possible. Otherwise, if the work of art is considered as a mere 'object', the encounter with it will fail and, similarly, the encounter between two human persons could fail, too. For objectifying works of art belongs to the general process of reification, which can corrupt the very capacity of human persons to communicate with each other, because it reduces the world of humans to the simple mode of the being of objects.

Nevertheless, the human person, by his 'nature', has no nature and cannot be identifiable as an object. Using the Heideggerian vocabulary of *Being and Time*, we cannot speak about *Dasein* in the same way as we describe something as present-at-hand (*Vorhandenes*) because of the special status of *Dasein*: it has its Being-what-it-is (*Was-sein*) in its existence, living in the world opened by its potentiality-for-Being (*Seinkönnen*).³⁰ Retaining these clarifications, I will come back to the Pareysonian concepts used in his *Aesthetics* and I will take more closely into consideration the term 'formativity'.

The term 'formativity' coined by Pareyson has its root in Goethe's work on the concept of 'form'. 'Form' means to Pareyson 'an organism, living its own life, and endowed with an unrepeatable legality in its singularity, independent in its autonomy' and, therefore, non-reducible to a simple counterpart of 'matter'. On the one hand, Pareyson abandoned the term 'form' in favour of 'formativity' taking into account the danger to be 'labelled' as a 'formalist'. On the other hand, the term 'formativity' has by itself prolific perspectives; it suggests the fact that the form is the result of a process, stresses 'the dynamic character of the form', and finally leads Pareyson to advance an aesthetics of production, rather than one of contemplation.³¹

Hence the concept of 'formativity' aims more beyond aesthetics and it can be applied in any other human undertaking as long as it implies a process of producing 'something'. This formative capacity of human person pervades the whole spiritual life regardless of its theoretical, moral, or practical modes, in such a manner that production and invention become the same thing. In other words, any

human undertaking advances through a succession of sketches, attempts and strivings towards accomplishment, producing ideas, novels, paintings, buildings, philosophies, moral actions, scientific theories, and so on, which are 'forms'. Artistic activity is, however, more than one of these modes. The exemplarity of the artistic experience comes from the fact in it formativity follows its own law, in the same time autonomous but not totally independent by moral or theoretical values.

Thus, *artistic activity is a pure exercise of formativity*. This statement has to be carefully analyzed and Pareyson investigates it from different perspectives in order to defend the unity of the human person, on the one hand, and the autonomous values of aesthetics, on the other. The person of the artist is a permanent unity even in the process of artistic 'formativity' and hence all other facets of a human personality are always present in the work of art. Nevertheless, the work of art is not judged through the theoretical or moral values consciously or unconsciously expressed by the artist, but through its own aesthetic value, which means the law of its formativity. This is the meaning of the term 'pure' in Pareyson's definition of artistic activity as pure exercising of formativity.

Based on the considerations previously expounded, Pareyson asks us to take a look at the human person 'paused' for a moment from his never-ending transformation and evolution: the person becomes a 'form', unique, total, and non-repeatable, the only 'form' that can form and transform itself. This is the reason for Pareyson's affirmation of the transcendence of the person over the forms produced by himself, even though, once freed by their authors, the works live their own 'lives' and, consequently, we have to consider them as 'persons':

Any of these works has its own, unique, and exemplary independence due exactly to its character of personality, thus due to the fact that it results from a personal activity, done by a person, as form. Exactly because the person is a self-work - and therefore, a form - the works, which are the results of his activity, are forms on their own: concluded, unique, and exemplary.³²

Once the formative character of the artistic process has been exhibited, the other side of the artistic experience has to be scrutinised: the encounter with the work of art. The concept of formativity used in the first part will show now its entire richness and flexibility. To Pareyson experiencing does not differ essentially by performing a work of art for both suppose the same process of formativity. Until the work of art to be completed, to perform means a permanent process of choosing, by selecting a form - one, and only one - between a whole range of possible forms. Any draft is therefore the

result of the author's attempt to the concluding form. Similarly, to interpret means to view the work of art as a result of a formative intention, to look to the work of art in its dynamism which rendered it possible, and thus to follow the artist in his process of 'forming' and 'performing' it. The interpretation is the result of the encounter between a person – the only form which can form and trans-form itself – and a form – which has to be considered as a person with a personal history if one wants to properly disclose it.

Hence 'the personality' of interpretation received a universal and positive significance: no interpretation could exist but through the person who interprets the work of art (whoever could be that person: a simple reader, a professional reviewer, or, a performer-artist). The Pareysonian personalism is confronted with the challenge of subjectivist perspective. Pareyson tries to preserve the autonomous value of the work of art by underlying the difference between the concept of person and that of subject:

Personality does not mean 'subjectivity': 'the subject', as it was conceived by a whole philosophical tradition, is closed in itself and solves in its own activity all other things having a contact to; on the contrary, the person is open and disclosed in any moment toward something or someone. The best guarantee against all dangers of subjectivism is offered by the concept of person.³³

And again:

The person of the performer is not a prison in which he would be captured for ever; he is not a fix and non-overcoming standpoint, from which a single perspective – determined and unchangeable – would be opened.³⁴

The next theoretical volume of the Italian philosopher, *Truth and Interpretation* (1971),³⁵ will signal a new universalizing of the theme of interpretation beyond aesthetic experience confines.

2.2 The concept of the person and the task of hermeneutic philosophy

In 1988, one of Pareyson's former students, Marco Ravera, published the anthology *The Philosophy of Interpretation*,³⁶ with the intention to gather in a single volume all his professor's contributions to the defining and promoting of hermeneutic philosophy. The anthology includes texts gathered from Pareyson's volumes published over a period of 40 years. The most important achievement of Ravera's work is that it manages to convey the unity of the philosopher's thinking, which seems to unfold as a spiral, always coming back to the initial insights of the first period in order further to develop them. Thus, if this anthology's pledge is the hermeneutical issue, it is even more significant that the apparent repetition and coming back to the problems of interpretation

are constantly intersecting the personalist themes. Similarly, any attempt to reveal the Pareysonian personalism would have to cross the ontological and hermeneutical themes.

One of the major themes of the book *Truth and Interpretation* encompasses the theoretical quarrel between hermeneutic and ideology, which made up the subject of the dossier of a famous theoretical dispute, the same year, but in a different cultural context. The Pareysonian approach apparently ignores the theoretical dispute between Gadamer and Habermas in order to settle this argument in terms of his own thinking.

Ideological thinking thus appears as a result of the historicizing of thought and transforming reason into a mere technique. Hence obliterating the positive character of the existential situation leads to conceiving the act of thinking as a pure *expression* of the historical moment, reduced to and determined entirely by the historical situation within which the thinker is placed. The *expressive*, and only expressive, character of ideological thinking is opposed by both the *expressive* and the *revealing* character of hermeneutical thinking: within the same movement in which the truth is revealed, the person of the one revealing it is also expressed. Once again, Pareyson opposes the ontological positivity of the person to the negative valuing of the situation specific to ideological thinking. Hermeneutical thinking has its starting point in 'the initial solidarity between the person and the truth, thus being ontological and personal at the same time'.

The unobjectionable character of hermeneutical thinking should not lead to the end of metaphysics in general, but it should lead only to the end of ontic and objective metaphysics. It is precisely here, on the ruins of the latter, where Pareyson locates ideological thinking – with a purely pragmatic and instrumental destination – as a natural consequence of the abdication of philosophy facing the new task of building an ontological and indirect metaphysics. The possibility of ontological and indirect metaphysics consists of the acknowledgment of the indivisibility between the revealing and the expressive facets of thinking.

Certainly, hermeneutic, understood as a set of concrete rules, has to prescribe to the interpreter an absolute fidelity to the text subjected to interpretation. However, from the point of view of philosophical hermeneutic, believing in the possibility of completely 'depersonalizing' the interpretation would be an illusion hiding misleading consequences.

Although a comparative analysis exceeds the scope of this article, I must however mention here the obvious similarity between this point of Pareyson's reflection and Gadamer's reflection in *Truth and Method* on the fore-structure of understanding.

To return to what I have already mentioned at the beginning of this section: it is clear that, even in the absence of a direct influence between the two philosophers, they have a common Heideggerian descent, which can be easily seized at this point. Explicitly or not, the positivity of the personal character of interpretation has its roots in the famous description of the hermeneutical circle in *Being and Time*, §32:

But if we see this circle as a vicious one and look out for ways of avoiding it, even if we just 'sense' it as an inevitable imperfection, then the act of understanding has been misunderstood from the ground up.³⁷

To return to the standpoint of the Pareysonian vocabulary: the personal character of the interpretation is not reducing in any ways its relevance. On the contrary, the personal character of interpretation is the unique condition of the possibility of reaching the truth. Once again, it is important to note the distance that separates philosophical hermeneutic from classical hermeneutic, in other words the difference of levels between the two discourses.

Philosophical hermeneutic describes a process rooted in the ontological structure of understanding instead of prescribing rules in order to eliminate misunderstanding as classical hermeneutic does. From the perspective of classical hermeneutic, there is a constant danger of providing a too 'personal' interpretation, residing in the fact that an excessive 'personality' of the reader may cast a shadow on the meanings of the interpreted text. In order to avoid this danger, rules *must* be prescribed to ensure as 'objective' an understanding as possible. From the standpoint of philosophical hermeneutic, understanding belongs (it does not *have to*, it *does*) each time *to* the person who interprets, and on this personal possession rests the only positive possibility of reaching the truth.

3. From existentialist personalism to the ontology of liberty

I chose the title of this section, which is focused on the last stage of the Pareysonian philosophy, following the suggestion of Pareyson's study published in 1984.³⁸ Philosophical autobiography, critical review, as well as research project for the next years, the study stands as an excellent proof for the awareness Pareyson employed in conducting his philosophical reflection. Therefore, in order to proceed from hermeneutical to ontological themes, this text will explain why a prior hermeneutic of the myth is needed.

The aim of such a hermeneutic is neither to rewrite mythical discourse into a rational one, otherwise an impossible task, nor is it related to the 'demythologization' proposed by Rudolf Bultmann.

A hermeneutic of religious experience has precisely this task: to extract from mythic discourse

universally human meanings, beyond their particular background. Once again, 'beyond' does not mean a result of a certain proceeding of reason, for the philosopher has rather to apply a kind of 'transversal interpretation'. And this is so because myth is already an interpretation of the world, the original one. Moreover, Pareyson never underestimated the context and the cultural background of myth and for this reason he tries to interpret the 'myths' of his own tradition, the only one in which he can hope to discern the original meanings and the veiled truths. The main texts of this period to which Pareyson comes again and again are *Old and New Testament*, and Dostoievski's novels. In these texts Pareyson finds an original key to understanding Being which he attempts to recover through an adequate hermeneutic.

In a text from 1986, Pareyson expressed his inquiry relative to the contemporary philosophy that confines research to the technical problems of language and science rather than to face the immense challenges generated by the Second World War. Such challenges are to Pareyson the problem of evil, the responsibility of thought, the respect for human person, and the foundation of human liberty.

Beyond the historical conditions for thematizing problems like those previously enumerated, Pareyson considers that the whole history of philosophy has a permanent inadequacy in front of such topics. This situation has to Pareyson philosophical reasons as he explained in his last lecture in 1989:

Philosophical reason hardly consents to what escapes from its complete comprehension, and tends to neglect and to diminish, even to forget and to suppress all that disturbs it in that undertaking.³⁹

Along with the text that the quotation belongs to, the other essays collected in *Ontology of Liberty: Evil and Suffering* (1995) show Pareyson's determination to face the neglected themes of philosophy. Moreover, Pareyson finds the adequate way to confront these themes, proposing an hermeneutical approach to myth as a genuine intuition into the realm of evil and suffering.

The links, which connect previous stages of Pareysonian thinking with the last one, are not immediately visible. However, his profound unity of thought can be highlighted if one takes into account the following elements, which I have ordered from the last stage toward the first:

- i) The hermeneutic of myth is necessary to balance the limits of Reason in front of themes such as human suffering, evil, and liberty (capitalized 'Reason' points to the modern philosophy of the Subject);
- ii) Liberty, as principle from which derives the other themes of evil and suffering, was thematized by Pareyson in the previous stages of his thinking. For

example, in the aesthetic and hermeneutic period Pareyson understands the act through which one interpretation is chosen from a (theoretically infinite) number of possible alternatives, *an act of personal liberty*, otherwise interpretation interests mechanics, and not philosophy. The person is the only form which has the liberty to choose his future form.

iii) To return to the first theoretical Pareysonian formula: 'ontological personalism' means also a form of protest against any infringement of the fundamental right of liberty: the human person is not a passive mirror of his time and place in which he was thrown. Paradoxically, the human person has his fundamental condition in his liberty, which, as part of his 'situation in the world', is inescapable. Hence the ontological opening to Being of the human person is rooted beyond the historical, material, ideological, psychological, and cultural conditioning of liberty.

Therefore, we can assume that, despite the diversity of themes he faced in his long activity, no real boundary divides the thinking of the Italian philosopher. If one takes into account all researches he has undertaken in various philosophical areas, then his thinking shows a constant balance between the two terms – existential personalism and ontology – stressing gradually the importance of the latter in an attempt to challenge the forgotten and neglected themes of philosophy. Under the influence of the later Schelling and his philosophy of the Absolute, which is liberty due to its internal possible negativity,⁴⁰ Pareyson proposed a radicalization of Heidegger ideas exposed in the famous essay *Was heißt Denken?*:

May be one could extend radicalization even further, so that the place of liberty is to be found not only in the deepest region of the relation individual-Being, but in the Being itself. Then it would be more than to speak about the relation between liberty and truth, between liberty and fate, between liberty and fundamentals, even than to speak about the relation between liberty and necessity, which is the highest question reached by the modern reflection on liberty. Then it would be about thinking Being itself as liberty, that is leaving aside the centrality of Being and replacing Being with liberty itself.⁴¹

The title of Pareyson's last volume has to be understood in this context. *Ontology of Liberty* means exactly this attempt to thematize further the Heideggerian conceiving of 'Being' in a non-foundational way (*Ab-grund*), by conceiving liberty as being more 'fundamental' than Being itself. 'Prior to Being', if one could take this phrase in a non-chronological meaning, liberty has chosen itself in the first founding act through which Being was chosen and non-Being remained for ever as a non-activated possibility. Human liberty is possible

because it was originated by liberty itself and the echoes of the genuine choice persists in every act in which *the human person is obliged to be free and to choose between Being and non-Being*.

3 Conclusions

At the end of my study I would like briefly to review some recurrences of Ontological Personalism in the last philosophical undertaking Pareyson was engaged in. In his hermeneutic of myth, Pareyson seems to go even further than detailing the ontology of liberty and towards a genuine history of liberty. In this cosmological and theandric history of liberty, the human person occupies that unique position Pareyson was in search of for starting with his first review on existentialist philosophy.

The novels of Dostoevsky (on whose thinking Pareyson wrote an entire book), *Old and New Testaments*, are texts to which Pareyson applies his hermeneutic and through which he surveys the history of liberty. The last idea suggested by the Italian philosopher was that only religious experience can give suffering a meaning, and this meaning discloses itself by placing suffering in its correct relation with sin. For the meaning of suffering will reveal itself only if suffering is understood not as punishment but 'as expiation and redemption'.⁴²

The interpretation of religious experience, myths, and tragic literature helped Pareyson to propose a philosophy neither rationalistic, nor irrational, a hermeneutic that tried philosophically to interpret the religious consciousness. Recovering an idea which goes back to Plotinus and Gianbattista Vico, Pareyson understood myth not as invention nor as mere arbitrary narrative, but as 'possession of truth in that unique form in which the truth allows itself to be caught, that is by a kind of sheltering which, precisely as such, is also brightening and revelatory'.⁴³

To conclude: the ontological personalism of Pareyson was explicitly thematized in the first period of his thinking but it crosses the main themes of the following stages. The ontological personalism proves to be the result of continuous verifying under diverse perspectives: from existentialism, through aesthetics, hermeneutic, and interpretation of religious experience, to the final ontology of liberty.

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Notes:

1. A previous version of this essay was first published with the same title in *Revue Roumaine de Philosophie*, Tome 49, Nos. 1-2, 2005, pp. 249-266. I would like to thank the editors for the permission to republish the article. I also presented this paper to the 8th International Conference on Persons (Warsaw, 9-12 August 2005) and I am grateful to those who expressed remarks on it.

2. For a comprehensive bibliography of Pareyson and the structure of *Complete works*, see: Fr. TOMATIS, *Pareyson. Vita, filosofia, bibliografia*, Brescia: Morecelliana, 2003. For an introduction into the history of hermeneutical school of Turin, see: F. LEONI, 'L'Ecole de Turin. De L. Pareyson à Gianni Vattimo: entre existentialisme et herméneutique', *Le Cercle Herméneutique*, No.1, 2003, pp. 65-73.
3. M. RAVERA (ed.), *Il pensiero ermeneutico: testi e materiali*, Genova: Marietti, 1986, pp. 215-216.
4. L. PAREYSON, *La filosofia dell'esistenza e Carlo Jaspers*, Napoli: Loffredo, 1939.
5. The studies where collected for the first time in L. PAREYSON, *Studi sull'esistenzialismo*, Firenze: Sansoni, 1943, and then with the same title in L. PAREYSON, *Opere Complete*, vol. 2, Milano: Mursia, 2001.
6. L. PAREYSON, *Studi, Op. Cit.*, p. 51.
7. L. PAREYSON, *Studi, Op. Cit.*, p. 79.
8. Fr. TOMATIS, *Pareyson, Op. Cit.*, p. 38-39.
9. L. PAREYSON, *Studi, Op. Cit.*, pp. 52-53.
10. To Vattimo the problem of Christianity after the dissolution of Hegelianism seems to be the main intuition of Pareyson's book. See: G. VATTIMO, 'Ermeneutica e secolarizzazione. A proposito di L. Pareyson', in *Etica dell'interpretazione*, Torino: Rosenberg & Sellier, 1989, pp. 49-62.
11. L. PAREYSON, *Studi, Op. Cit.*, p. 57, especially footnote (b).
12. For a comparison between L. Pareyson and E. Mounier definitions of existentialist philosophy: 'L'esistenzialismo rappresenta la ribellione della coscienza contemporanea a certe forme di pensiero, ch'erano sorte con il preciso compito di vanificare temi speculativi che ora la filosofia dell'esistenza dimostra essere profonde e ineliminabili esigenze della natura umana' (L. PAREYSON, *Studi, Op. Cit.*, p. 22). 'En termes très généraux, on pourrait caractériser cette pensée comme une réaction de la philosophie de l'homme contre l'excès de la philosophie des idées et de la philosophie des choses.' (E. MOUNIER, *Introduction aux existentialismes*, Paris, Gallimard, 1962, p. 9).
13. L. PAREYSON, *Studi, Op. Cit.*, p. 22.
14. L. PAREYSON, *Studi, Op. Cit.*, p. 150.
15. M. HEIDEGGER, *Sein und Zeit, Gesamtausgabe Band 2*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1977, p. 43. For the English edition see M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, English trans. by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson, San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1962, p. 68.
16. M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time, Op. Cit.*, p. 44 / *Being and Time, Op. Cit.*, p. 69.
17. T. EAGLETON, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*, Oxford: Basic Blackwell, 1990, p. 294.
18. 'What Heidegger calls its 'thrownness' [of Dasein], its condition of simply finding itself propelled willy-nilly into the midst of reality, designates both its non-mastery of its own being and its reliance upon others.' T. EAGLETON, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic, Op. Cit.*, p. 293.
19. L. PAREYSON, *Studi, Op. Cit.*, p. 155.
20. L. PAREYSON, *Studi, Op. Cit.*, p. 156.
21. L. PAREYSON, *Esistenza e persona*, Genova: il melangolo, 2002.
22. Now in L. PAREYSON, *Esistenza e persona, Op. Cit.*, pp. 135-151.
23. L. PAREYSON, *Ontologia della libertà: il male e la sofferenza*, Torino: Einaudi, 1995, p. 10.
24. I addressed the problem of ontological intentionality in Pareyson's thinking in the essay 'Ontological intentionality in Luigi Pareyson's philosophy', in C. CIOCAN, D. LAZEA (eds.), *The Metamorphosis of an Idea: Intentionality from Plotinus to Levinas*, Bucharest: Bucharest University Press, 2005 [in Romanian]
25. L. PAREYSON, 'Filosofia della persona', in *La filosofia contemporanea in Italia. Invito al dialogo*. Asti: Arethusa, 1958, pp. 303-317. Now in L. PAREYSON, *Esistenza e persona, Op. Cit.*, pp. 201-213.
26. L. PAREYSON, 'Filosofia della persona', in *Esistenza e persona, Op. Cit.*, p. 205.
27. L. PAREYSON, *Heidegger: la libertà e il nulla*, Napoli: ESI, 1990, p. 12-13.
28. L. PAREYSON, *Estetica. Teoria della formatività*, Torino: Edizioni di 'Filosofia', 1954. I will use in this essay the 3rd Edition, Firenze: Sansoni, 1974.
29. L. PAREYSON, *Estetica. Teoria della formatività, Op. Cit.*, p. 208.
30. 'That entity which in its Being has this very Being as an issue, comports itself towards its Being as its ownmost possibility. In each case Dasein is its possibility, and it 'has' this possibility, but not just as a property [eigenschaftlich], as something present-at-hand would.' In M. HEIDEGGER, *Sein und Zeit, Op. Cit.*, p. 43 / *Being and Time, Op. Cit.*, p. 68.
31. L. PAREYSON, *Estetica. Teoria della formatività, Op. Cit.*, p. 8.
32. L. PAREYSON, *Estetica. Teoria della formatività, Op. Cit.*, p. 184.
33. L. PAREYSON, *Estetica. Teoria della formatività, Op. Cit.*, p. 226.
34. *Idem*, p. 227.
35. L. PAREYSON, *Verità e interpretazione*, Milano: Mursia, 1971.
36. L. PAREYSON, 'Dal personalismo esistenziale all'ontologia della libertà', in *Giornale di Metafisica*, 6, 1984, pp. 283-314.
37. M. HEIDEGGER, *Sein und Zeit, Op. Cit.*, p. 153 / *Being and Time, Op. Cit.*, p. 194.
38. L. PAREYSON, 'Dal personalismo esistenziale all'ontologia della libertà', in *Giornale di Metafisica*, 6, 1984, pp. 283-314.
39. L. PAREYSON, *Filosofia della libertà*, Brescia: il melangolo, 1989, p. 15.
40. See L. PAREYSON, 'Lo stupore della ragione in Schelling' in *Romanticismo, Esistenzialismo, Ontologia della libertà*, edited by G. Ricconda, G. Vattimo, V. Verra, Milano: Mursia, 1979, pp. 137-180.
41. L. PAREYSON, *Heidegger: la libertà e il nulla, Op. Cit.*, p. 42.
42. L. PAREYSON, *Filosofia della libertà, Op. Cit.*, p. 29.
43. L. PAREYSON, *Ontologia della libertà: il male e la sofferenza, Op. Cit.*, p. 163.

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GOD AS AN INCORPOREAL PERSON

Neil A. Manson

Abstract

Many philosophers think God could not be both incorporeal and a person. This paper addresses three specific arguments for this claim. According to *the semantic argument*, it is part of the meaning of the word 'person' that a person has a physical body. According to *the personal identity argument*, in order to be a person, a thing must possibly satisfy criteria for re-identification, but there could be no criteria of re-identification for incorporeal things. According to *the argument from perception and agency*, an incorporeal thing can neither perceive nor act in this world, so being incorporeal is inconsistent with being omniscient and omnipotent. After clarifying these arguments, it is concluded that none of them provides a good reason to think there cannot be an incorporeal person, and so none of them succeed in showing that theism is incoherent.

Key Words

God; theism; philosophy of religion; philosophical theology; coherence of theism; incorporeal; personal identity; perception; agency.

1 Introduction

A central project in analytic philosophical theology is to establish the coherence of theism – the bare logical possibility of the existence of God. Arguments against the coherence of theism are many. To give just two examples, the Paradox of the Stone is said to show the impossibility of omnipotence, while an array of arguments try to show the incompatibility of omniscience with immutability. Obviously, rebutting these arguments should be a matter of great concern for the theist. If God's existence is not even logically possible, then arguments for the existence of God and questions about the rationality of belief in God in the absence of evidence are cut short. When it comes to impossible beings, there can be no question about evidence for them or the rationality of belief in them.

This paper seeks to contribute to the project of defending the coherence of theism by rebutting three standard arguments against the coherence of the claim that God is an incorporeal person. According to *the semantic argument*, 'is corporeal' is part of the meaning of the word 'person', and so the predicate 'is an incorporeal person' cannot possibly apply to anything – including God. According to *the personal identity argument*, nothing could make it the case that an incorporeal person persisted over time, so no incorporeal thing could be a persisting person. According to *the argument from perception and agency*, no incorporeal person could perceive the world or act in it, and so incorporeality is incompatible with the divine attributes of omniscience and omnipotence.

2 The semantic argument

Anthony Flew (at least, the *old* Anthony Flew!) has been a leading proponent of the semantic argument. Although he directed the argument against the possibility of a human being surviving death by becoming an incorporeal person, it applies just as well to the bare idea of an incorporeal person. Here are his clearest statements of it.

...it would be quite possible to imagine all sorts of bizarre phenomena which we should feel inclined to describe as 'the activities of disembodied people'....[but] we shall be attaching sense to an expression – 'disembodied person' – for which previously no sense had been provided. We are thereby introducing a new sense of the word 'person'. Yet it may appear to us and to others as if we have discovered a new sort of person, or a new state in which a person can be. Whereas a disembodied person is no more a special sort of person than is an imaginary person, and....disembodiment is no more a possible state of a person than is non-existence. (1956, pp. 248-9)

...we can put the crucial point this way: in expressions such as 'bodiless person' or 'disembodied person' the adjectives are alienans adjectives; like 'positive' in 'positive freedom', or 'People's' in 'People's Democracy'. (1987, p. 106)

Person words are quite manifestly and undeniably taught and learnt and used by and for reference to a certain sort of corporeal object...This was the point which I tried to epitomize in the possibly misleading slogan: 'People are what you meet'.

Wherever we may end quite certainly this is where we have to begin. Perhaps it will prove to be possible to construct a sense for the expression *incorporeal person* such that there would be sufficient resemblance between persons and incorporeal persons to justify us in using the same word to denominate both...Perhaps at the same time we might show how, and how many of, the innumerable words which are now applied only or distinctively to persons – and the meanings of which are at present taught and learnt with reference to the doings and sufferings of these familiar beings – could be predicated, either unequivocally or analogously, of such putative incorporeal persons. But it is at least not obvious that these intellectual projects could be brought to a successful issue. For it is as members of a class of material objects, albeit a very special class, that persons are identified and individuated. (1965, pp. 25-6)

Flew's argument has two basic premises. The first is an empirical premise about how we come to know the meaning of and how we typically use the word 'person' – namely, that, as Flew says, 'person words are quite manifestly and undeniably taught and

learnt and used by and for reference to a certain sort of corporeal object.' The second is an unstated philosophical premise, one I suspect is derived from so-called 'ordinary language philosophy.' The unstated premise is that the meaning of a term is fixed by its acquisition and standard usage, so that we violate the rules for proper use of 'person' if we apply the term 'person' in a non-standard way or in a way that deviates too far from its original realm of application. From these premises it follows that we cannot meaningfully use the term 'person' to refer to an incorporeal thing. Because 'person words are quite manifestly and undeniably taught and learnt and used by and for reference to a certain sort of corporeal object,' it is part of the meaning of the term 'person' that a person is a corporeal thing. Flew allows that we can 'construct a sense for the expression *incorporeal person*,' but he is sceptical that much of the core meaning of the original term 'person' would transfer over to this new-fangled linguistic creation. To state the conclusion of this semantic argument bluntly, the statement 'God is an incorporeal person' is nonsense *if* we are using the term 'person' literally.

A similar line of argument grows out of P.F. Strawson's characterization of personhood (1959, Ch. 3) as a status involving the applicability of both personalistic, or P-predicates (e.g. 'is angry,' 'thinks hard,' etc.) and material, or M-predicates (e.g. 'weighs 100 kilograms,' 'has black hair,' etc.). As we acquire and use P-predicates, we are always pointed to things such that M-predicates apply as well. Strawson takes this to suggest that if M-predicates do not apply to a thing, then neither can P-predicates. Richard Swinburne (1977, pp. 106-7) responds that this is only a problem for the coherence of theism if M-predicates could not apply to an incorporeal thing. It may seem obvious that they could not, but if we allow that an incorporeal being can control and know directly the physical world, then perhaps M-predicates can apply to that being. For example, 'parted the Red Sea' is arguably an M-predicate, insofar as it predicates activity in the material world. Likewise, 'heard the cries of the Israelites' is arguably an M-predicate, insofar as it predicates knowledge of the material world. Thus even if Strawson is right that where M-predicates do not apply, neither do P-predicates, it still does not follow that P-predicates could not apply to an incorporeal being. That would only follow if nothing incorporeal could perceive this world or act in it. This points us to the argument from perception and agency – an argument I will address at the end of this paper.

In my opinion the semantic argument faces a fundamental problem: the unstated philosophical premise is false. It is not true in all cases that the meaning of a term is fixed by its standard usage and its

standard method of being taught and learnt, and it is not true that we cannot extend the application of a term beyond these standards unless we (a) use the term in a non-literal way or (b) explicitly change the meaning of the term. Specifically, this premise is not true when it comes to theoretical or technical terms. William Alston makes this point in his essay 'Can We Speak Literally of God?' (1989). He says the question of whether terms can be applied to God literally is not equivalent to the question of whether terms, in the senses they bear outside of religious discourse, can be applied to God literally. It is not generally true, Alston says, that theoretical or technical senses of terms cannot be applied literally.

I do not want to contest [the] claim about the necessary order of language learning, though there is much to be said on both sides. I will confine myself to pointing out that even if this claim is granted, it does not follow that terms can be literally applied to God only in senses in which they also are true of human beings and other creatures. For the fact that we must begin with creatures is quite compatible with the supposition that at some later stage terms take on special technical senses in theology. After all, that is what happens in science.' (1989, p. 45)

If Alston is correct, and if religious uses of language count as theoretical or technical uses, then it will be possible that the statement 'God is an incorporeal person' is literally true – in which case, on this count at least, theism is not incoherent.

To illustrate Alston's point, let us consider some cases. Is there any reason to think we cannot apply the term 'work' *literally* to refer to the product of the force applied to a body and distance the body has moved? This is the technical meaning of 'work' in physics, but that is not the traditional, everyday meaning of the word 'work'. If a man in a quarry spends an hour trying but failing to budge a two-ton rock, the man has done work in the ordinary sense of 'work' but has done no work in the physicist's sense of 'work'. Does this show that, when the physicist says 'The man in the quarry did no work,' the physicist was not using the word 'work' literally? I do not see why.

I will go even further and say that the way in which people learn and use theoretical and technical terms oftentimes is irrelevant to the meaning of those terms. For example, the term 'adrenalin' refers to a very specific bio-chemical. To know what 'adrenalin' means, one needs to do some science, not consult the linguistic practices of everyday people. Only a relatively small, bio-chemically literate group of people knows what 'adrenalin' really means. Yet everyone uses the term, and hardly anyone learns how to do so by studying bio-chemistry. They learn how to use it by watching sports on television, getting instructions from their personal trainers, and so on. Would these facts about how

'adrenalin' is learned and used warrant the conclusion that, for example, no dog could possibly produce adrenalin? After all, in the course of learning how to use the term 'adrenalin', most people never encounter anything with adrenalin pumping through it that does not also wear athletic apparel and sweat profusely (two things dogs do not do). The answer is obviously 'no.' Dogs, like many other mammals, produce adrenalin naturally. Yet this is exactly the kind of argument we would be allowed to make if the hidden premise of the semantic argument were true. The solution here, I suggest, is to abandon the idea that the meaning of a term is necessarily fixed by its common usage.

Is 'person' a theoretical or technical term? Philosophy is theory, and there certainly is a lot of philosophy being done nowadays in bio-ethics about what things are and are not people (although this work has little to do with possibility of incorporeal personhood). Are frozen embryos people? How about foetuses? Are beings in persistent vegetative states people? The bio-ethics literature on these questions is vast. Whatever the answers are to them, I do not think they can be determined simply by consulting ordinary usage of the term 'person'. Otherwise, along the same lines as the semantic argument, we could make easy arguments for answering 'no' to all of these pressing questions in bio-ethics (e.g. 'Person words are quite manifestly and undeniably taught and learnt and used by and for reference to things with body temperatures above freezing, for things with body masses of more than several pounds, and of things that respond to their environments.') If 'person' is a theoretical term, then just because we do not ordinarily talk of incorporeal people is not a sufficient reason to think that the claim 'God is an incorporeal person' is incoherent. Of course, 'God is an incorporeal person' may be false; perhaps God does not exist. But whether or not 'God is an incorporeal person' is *true* is not the issue. The issue is whether it is *possibly* true. The conclusion of the semantic argument is that this core theistic claim is not possibly true. For the reasons stated, I think the semantic argument fails.

3 The personal identity argument

This argument against the possibility of the *existence* of an incorporeal person derives from an argument typically given against the possibility of the *survival* of corporeal people as incorporeal beings after their bodies are destroyed, so we will begin with a brief examination of this latter argument.

For Terence Penelhum, a claim of incorporeal survival amounts to a claim that there exists an incorporeal person in the afterlife identical with some embodied person.

...we need some way of understanding the identity of the disembodied being through various post-mortem

stages, and some way of understanding the statement that some such being is identical to one particular pre-mortem being rather than with another. We shall not be able to understand either unless we can also understand the notion of the numerical difference between one such disembodied being and another one. (1970, p. 54)

Penelhum thinks we can make no sense of these ideas because the criterion of bodily continuity is our primary criterion of personal identity, whereas continuity of memory and character is not (because memory claims are logically dependent on physical, bodily checks). [The criterion of bodily continuity is roughly that person X at t_1 is identical with person Y at t_2 if and only if X and Y are parts of the same spatio-temporally continuous body; the criterion of memory and character is roughly that person X at t_1 is identical with person Y at t_2 if and only if Y remembers being X and has the same character as X.] Penelhum concludes that our criteria of personal identity cannot apply to any putative incorporeal people.

Without the possibility of recourse to the bodily presence of the person at some past time we are unable to understand what it would be like to determine that some event or action is, or is not, part of this person's past life. So we would have no standard of identity to use of a disembodied person at all. (1970, p. 56)

Now if Penelhum is right, then it seems we can generalise the argument to one against the possibility of identifying over time a non-embodied person (a person who not only does not now have a body, but never did). Augustinian theists (theists who think the divine incorporeal person does not persist over time, but rather exists outside of time) may be unconcerned about this result. Yet theists who think God is sempiternal (theists who think God exists in time, at every moment of time, and that God's life divides into past, present, and future) should care to respond to Penelhum's argument.

Swinburne responds that authors like Penelhum fail to distinguish the metaphysical issue of what personal identity consists in from the epistemological issue of how we can identify and re-identify persons. With respect to metaphysics, Swinburne thinks the diachronic identity of a person is 'something ultimate, not analysable in terms of bodily continuity or continuity of memory and character' (1977, p. 110). Even though we use a combination of facts about memory, character, and bodily features as *evidence* in determining personal identity, that does not mean that personal identity *consists* of these factors metaphysically. Hence Swinburne thinks it is coherent to claim that an earlier non-embodied person is identical to a later non-embodied person, even if we can have no evidence in support of this identity claim. Hence 'God is a persisting incorporeal person' will also be coherent. Again, whether this claim

is *true* is a separate issue from whether this claim is coherent – that is, from whether this claim is *possibly* true.

Swinburne's approach is openly anti-verificationist. He uses the term 'empiricist theory of personal identity' (1977, p. 113) for any theory that claims personal identity does consist, metaphysically, of some combination of memory, character, and bodily continuity. His main objection to empiricist theories of personal identity is that they will always be such that it is logically possible for there to be no right answer to the question whether two persons are the same. Also, most of the popular empiricist theories of personal identity allow for duplication (i.e. that persons Y and Z at t_2 are both identical with person X at t_1) or allow for extrinsic considerations to have a bearing on personal identity (e.g. that whether person Y at t_2 is identical to person X at t_1 will depend on whether or not person Z at some remote time and place does or does not survive a surgical operation). Since he thinks empiricist theories of personal identity never work, Swinburne concludes that metaphysical identity is ultimate and unanalyzable.

Penelhum, however, explicitly states that he is not confusing a metaphysical issue with an epistemic issue, and that verificationism plays no role in his argument against the metaphysical possibility of incorporeal personhood. In the very beginning of his book Penelhum states that he will assume verificationism is false.

...I therefore make the methodological presumption that it might be possible to make and to understand statements about disembodied persons even though we would not be in a position to specify a way of ascertaining their truth, and consider only problems that still remain if this assumption is made. (1970, p. 21)

He also is sensitive to the charge that his problems with the identity of incorporeal people are merely epistemic in nature.

...our argument is couched in terms that suggest it is at bottom an epistemological one. It seems to amount merely to the claim that we could not know whether a disembodied being was or was not identical with some past disembodied or embodied being. But we have put aside parallel epistemological considerations in dealing with problems about predication, in order to avoid making conceptual decisions hinge upon issues of very high philosophical generality. Might they not be put aside here? Surely the question is whether we can understand the belief that disembodied persons last through time, not one about how we would know that one had done so? (1970, p. 21)

Penelhum, then, is aware of the sort of charge Swinburne levels. Yet he still thinks the notion of incorporeal personhood is incoherent.

...the arguments [about the logical priority of the bodily criterion] do not show merely that we need physical tests in order to know whether men's memories can establish their identities. They also reveal that without availability of these physical tests there could be no reason for the application of the concept of personal identity. (1970, p. 68)

His basic argument for thinking that, in the absence of a body, there is no reason to apply the concept of personal identity is an argument from elimination. First, he denies that memory is the basis of personal identity; it is never the case, he thinks, that person Y at t_2 is identical to person X at t_1 just because Y remembers being X. [The arguments against memory being the basis of personal identity are familiar; I will not repeat them here.] Second, he assumes that sameness of body cannot serve as the basis for personal identity in the case of an incorporeal thing, simply because an incorporeal thing lacks a body. Third, he claims that nothing else could serve as the basis for the identity of incorporeal things. In support of this third claim he attacks 'the venerable doctrine of spiritual substance'.

Beyond the wholly empty assurance that it is a metaphysical principle which guarantees continuing identity through time, or the argument that since we know identity persists some such principle must hold in default of others, no content seems available for the doctrine. Its irrelevance to normal occasions for identity-judgments is due to its being merely an alleged identity-guaranteeing condition of which no independent characterization is forthcoming. Failing this, the doctrine amounts to no more than a pious assurance that all is well, deep down. It provides no reason for this assurance. (1970, pp. 76-7)

In short, Penelhum will not allow souls as the bearers of personal identity for incorporeal beings. Penelhum will demand an 'independent characterization' of souls, and since he thinks there can be none to give, he thinks the very notion of an incorporeal person is incoherent.

In this debate I side with Swinburne over Penelhum, because I think Penelhum's argument proves too much. Penelhum's demand of any identity-guaranteeing condition that holds between two entities A and B that there be an independent characterization of it would lead to absurdities regarding physical objects. For example, we will be forced to conclude that we have no reason whatsoever to apply the concept of persistence to fundamental physical particles (henceforth FPPs).

Suppose a physicist said 'That FPP went from here to there.' This claim presupposes that the self-same entity – the FPP being referred to – persisted over time, because it takes some time for an FPP to get from one place to another. And this presupposes that we could have some reason for thinking that some FPP Y at t_2 is identical to some FPP X at t_1 .

For the physicist rightly to apply this concept of persistence to FPPs, however, Penelhum (if he applies to FPPs the same standard he applies to souls) will demand that there be some identity-guaranteeing condition which can be 'independently characterized.'

I think this demand cannot be met, but since it is coherent to suppose FPPs persist over time, the demand is unreasonable. The problem is that there are no good candidates for that in terms of which the identity conditions of FPPs can be independently characterized. First, since FPPs are *fundamental* particles, it cannot be that what makes some FPP Y at t_2 identical to some FPP X at t_1 is the fact that X is *composed* of the same particles of which Y is composed. Second, since FPPs are qualitatively identical particles countless in number, it cannot be *qualitative* similarity between X and Y that makes Y identical with X. There will be countless FPPs all alike in their properties; that is part of what makes FPPs fundamental particles. Third, it cannot be that what makes some FPP Y at t_2 identical to some FPP X at t_1 is that a spatiotemporally continuous path can be traced from X to Y, because it is possible that FPPs do not move in spatiotemporally continuous paths (as modern quantum physics has shown us).

There do not seem to be any candidates for that which *makes* some FPP X at t_1 identical to some FPP Y at t_2 . It looks like X at t_1 *just is* identical to Y at t_2 – the identity relation is brute and unanalyzable, just like Swinburne suggests is the case with persons. It looks like there is no 'identity-guaranteeing condition' capable of 'independent characterization.' So either we accept that there just is a brute identity relation that holds between FPPs-at-times or, following Penelhum, we conclude that we have no reason for applying the concept of persistence to FPPs. To be consistent, Penelhum will have to say of the physicist's claim that FPP X at t_1 is identical to FPP Y at t_2 that it rests on a 'pious assurance that all is well, deep down.' Now perhaps contemporary physics does face a fundamental philosophical problem here. Maybe souls have as companions in guilt FPPs, along with many other kinds of entity. But maybe the problem is that Penelhum demands too much when he asks that the 'alleged identity-guaranteeing condition' be capable of 'independent characterization.' If we reject Penelhum's demand, we reject the key premise of the personal identity argument against the coherence of the idea of incorporeal personhood. As with the semantic argument, the personal identity argument misses its target.

4 *The argument from perception and agency*

The conclusion of the argument from perception and agency is that no incorporeal person could perceive

the world or act in it. Hence the argument is not directed against the possibility of there being an incorporeal person, but if successful it would show that no incorporeal person could have the divine attributes of omnipotence and omniscience. A verificationist might argue that, if no incorporeal person could perceive the world or act in it, then no evidence could possibly confirm or refute the claim that an incorporeal person exists. By verificationist criteria, then, the claim that there exists an incorporeal person would be meaningless and the concept of an incorporeal person would be incoherent. Since verificationism is false, though, there seems to be no threat that the argument from perception and agency will show the concept of an incorporeal person to be incoherent. What the argument could show, though, is that nothing could be incorporeal, omniscient, and omnipotent. That is a conclusion of obvious concern to the theist. Hence the argument from perception and agency deserves attention.

Let us begin with perception. Here is Alasdair MacIntyre on the topic of incorporeal perception.

If the dead survive and continue having visual experience, it is presumably visual experience detached from the causal conditions which in this life are necessary to sight. This is admitted in principle by the proponents of the hypothesis....but I do not think they see how much they are admitting... presumably for the dead, who possess no retina, sight is causally independent of light waves. Hence we can have no grounds for believing that with the dead it is either light or dark, and, in an important sense, to speak of sight without light is to speak incomprehensibly...in predicting survival one is involved in predicting the occurrence of light independent of light waves and this is an odd prediction.

...the prediction of visual experience after death is meaningless. And similar arguments will apply to the other senses. (1955, pp. 397-8)

MacIntyre claims that it is incoherent to speak of perception – seeing, tasting, feeling, hearing, smelling – that is independent of the causal conditions for perception (e.g. the existence of and interactions between ears and sound waves, retinas and light waves, noses and gases) which obtain in this world. Such talk 'is meaningless,' says MacIntyre.

Note MacIntyre thinks this objection to the idea of incorporeal perception applies equally to all forms of perception. In this he seems to be at odds with Terence Penelhum, who writes

I have no doubt that the hypothesis of disembodied touch is much more uninviting than that of disembodied hearing or vision. The reason for this is that touch is one of the senses that normally affects not only the percipient but also what he perceives. (1970, p. 34).

Yet all senses affect the world outside of the percipient, not just touch. Photons get absorbed in the

process of seeing. Sound waves are dampened during the process of hearing. The concentration of a gas in a room is diminished slightly in the process of smelling. Here I agree with MacIntyre. Claims about disembodied perception are in the same boat no matter what sensory modality is under consideration. The issue is simply whether it is a conceptual truth that perception requires causal interaction between the perceiver and the perceived. According to those who run the argument from perception and agency, it is.

A similar argument can be made against the possibility of disembodied agency. It seems that acting in this world requires both an energy transfer from the actor to the acted upon and there being a spatiotemporally contiguous path between the actor and the acted upon. Being non-physical, a disembodied being could not transfer energy to a bodily being. Being non-spatial, a disembodied being could not share a spatiotemporally contiguous path with a bodily being. Hence the very idea of a disembodied being acting upon the world is incoherent, just as is the idea of a disembodied being perceiving the world. Those, at least, are the allegations, and of course they should be very familiar ones to philosophers, for they are basically the standard objections to Cartesian dualism.

I respond by offering a model of disembodied perception and agency. As always, providing this model will in no way show that there is, in fact, a disembodied person somewhere. It will only show that the concept of disembodied personhood does not run into the sort of incoherence problem alleged by those running the argument from perception and agency. Before setting out this model, we must note what is *not* being challenged by the argument from perception and agency. The argument is *not* denying the possibility of non-material states of mind. It is merely denying the possibility that any non-material state of mind could count as a perception of a material reality or a cause of change in a material reality. And the basis for this denial is that no mental state could stand in the right sort of causal relation to a physical state for the former to count as a perception of the latter or for the former to count as having brought about the latter. I stress this point because otherwise we risk confusing the argument from perception and agency with a very different sort of argument. This would be an argument that necessarily minds are embodied – that the concept of a disembodied mind is incoherent. This argument explores very different territory and is not the argument being made by MacIntyre and others.

Having clarified just what the argument from perception and agency is, we can ask a fundamental question. Why should we think perception and agency require that a causal relationship holds between the perceiver and the thing perceived, the

agent and the thing acted upon? Alternative, reliabilist models of perception and agency seem plausible alternatives to causal ones here. [For a classic exposition of what reliabilism is, see (Goldman 1979).] According to the reliabilist, what would make the experiences of an incorporeal person count as perceptions of the physical world is that those experiences are *reliable guides* about what is happening in the world. The bare fact that the right sorts of mental states are reliably correlated with the right sorts of physical states is, for the reliabilist, sufficient grounds for counting the former as perceptions of the latter, or for the former to count as bringing about the latter. According to the reliabilist, it is not necessary that we know what grounds the reliability. Indeed, it is not necessary that there even be a causal mechanism grounding the reliability. So my very brief response to the argument from perception and agency is that it presupposes a causal theory of perception and a causal theory of agency. Since there are plausible theories of perception and agency other than causal ones, it seems to me we cannot judge the concepts of incorporeal perception and incorporeal agency as incoherent. These concepts may be incoherent *if we assume causal theories of perception and agency*. But why should we do that?

Now I realise that I am bringing in philosophical considerations of a very general nature here in rebutting the argument from perception and agency. I hardly pretend to establish conclusively the coherence of divine incorporeal personhood in particular, much less Cartesian dualism in general. I only seek to show that there are respectable philosophical resources available to those who would defend the ideas of incorporeal perception and agency, and that if these individuals are to be convicted of believing something incoherent, the accusers have more work to do. And the same is true more generally of those who conceive of God as an incorporeal person. I hope I have shown that even if the concept of incorporeal personhood is incoherent, neither the semantic argument nor the personal identity argument nor the argument from perception and agency establishes it.¹

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LUCIAN BLAGA – METAPHYSICS AND BEYOND

Ionut Isac

Abstract

The Romanian philosopher Lucian Blaga created very valuable works in poetry, drama and philosophy, all of them penetrated and coagulated by the same brilliant spirit, reflecting an admirable desire of reaching a philosophical consciousness. During the attempts to make his own way in metaphysics (i.e. a philosophical system whose aim is to deal with the problem of transcendence), Blaga criticizes some of the most famous and influential philosophical positions (criticism, positivism and phenomenology) in all the points he considers as inconsistent. The meaning of his philosophical endeavor could be interpreted briefly, as follows: each and every philosophy worth of its name has to be a metaphysics (i.e. a system based on creative thinking). But, beyond metaphysics is the philosophical consciousness, always able to make critical evaluations and to point to the right direction for a whole culture.

Key Words:

Romanian philosophy, metaphysics, philosophical conscience, criticism, positivism, phenomenology.

Lucian Blaga (1895-1961) has held over time a unique position within Romanian culture. He has created a monumental philosophical system – the most imposing and original one until today in the whole our history. Also, he was a very gifted artist, whose modern, abstract and profound poetry considerably influenced the cultural sensibility of posterity. And, last but not least, as a playwright, Blaga completed a very complex spiritual universe whose author remains always at the highest level possible for its time.

Therefore, to speak about Blaga as philosopher means nevertheless to take into account his personality as a whole. In this respect, another important philosopher, C. Noica, has written that ‘We do not know, even beyond the borders of Romanian culture, a modern creator who would be alike great in three creative fields: poetry, drama, philosophy’.¹

At 110 years from his death, we still try to deal with the huge cultural inheritance he has left to us. From the philosophic point of view, it is about a very valuable lode, centred on the idea of *philosophical consciousness*, inside the option for philosophy as a system. As it is known, Blaga’s 1959 will places the work, *On the Philosophical Consciousness*, at the head of his metaphysical system. The thinker expresses his *credo* concerning the meanings of philosophy, its specific and fulfilment through *metaphysics as a system* as well as its relationship with other kinds of the human culture (science, religion, morals and art).

Lucian Blaga’s work exemplarily illustrates the élan and enthusiasm of the system’s creator, even beyond the borders of Romanian philosophy. Through its particularity, Blaga’s philosophy offers both a basis and a standard of assessment for other systematic philosophical constructions within the space of our culture.²

The triple demarcation between philosophy and philosophical consciousness, philosophy and metaphysics, philosopher and metaphysician appears to be particularly significant and actual for the way Blaga did understand the structure and the meaning of philosophical consciousness.

In the way he understands the *philosophical consciousness*, Blaga proposes us a *meta-philosophy*, widely opened to *metaphysics*. He identifies the meaning of philosophy with its creative function of metaphysics, as the metaphysician is the author or creator of a world. Each and every one of these ‘worlds’ is the outcome and expression of a cultural *époque*, of a community and of the unique spiritual individuality of the philosopher’s personality. Despite the fact that they are intimately linked to the historical moment of their elaboration, this does not diminish their value. Because of human desire to grasp the mysteries of existence, the knowledge contained by these ‘worlds’ does not forbid but, on the contrary, urges to the creation of new ones.

Obviously, this view about metaphysics as fulfilment or coronation of philosophy in a ‘closed’ spiritual world aiming to interior perfection and harmony, finds itself under the influence of romanticism and historicism of German school, especially that of W. Dilthey. At this point, Blaga clearly indicates the primordial meaning of philosophy:

In metaphysical creation we see therefore not only the coronation of philosophical thinking... The metaphysician is the author of a world. A philosopher who does not keep becoming the author of a world suspends his vocation; he could be anybody, sometimes even a thinker of genius, but remains a follower of the unfulfilment. A metaphysician’s world is in the first place a world of his own...³

Thus, philosophy (understood as *metaphysics*) is not a discovery, but a view about the world (*Weltanschauung*), an act of creation or invention belonging to some historical beings living in a given cultural space and time. The metaphysical ‘buildings’ are alike to the works of art – self-consistent and closed universes, each and every one of them reflecting the personality of its creator.

According to this option, Blaga analyses many of the great philosophical theories and paradigms in all

the history, especially those belonging to the 18th, 19th and the first half of the 20th century. In fact, he puts almost the whole history of philosophy under the mark of ages of 'inflation' and 'deflation' regarding specific problems. The first situation occurred in the Middle Age, when philosophical problems have been exaggeratedly increased and debated by various authors; thus, those problems have lost in time the correspondence with empirical reality (facts). The second occurrence is the preferred case Blaga deals with: i.e. an excessive reduction of philosophical problems – an attitude specific to modern and contemporary philosophy in some apparently very different currents or systems such as *criticism*, *positivism* (including *logical empiricism*) and *phenomenology*. They will be criticized one by one in all the points the Romanian philosopher considers as inconsistent.

Therefore, Kant's *criticism* is the first to draw Blaga's attention. The philosopher of Königsberg believed himself to have demonstrated once and for all the impossibility of *metaphysics as science* – at least in the manner as it has been understood by his forerunners, the philosophers of 'pure reason' – but, however, as Blaga claimed, Kant has remained the prisoner of an undeclared metaphysics. Obviously, the criticism preserves over the time the merit of having formulated an explanation for the possibility of Galileo-Newtonian science as well as of performing the most devastating examination of classical metaphysics. Nevertheless, it does not succeed in providing the promised arguments, necessary for a future metaphysics. For instance, in the problem of Kantian antinomies, Blaga builds three counter-arguments:

1. Metaphysical thinking does not lead every time and inevitably to antinomies;
2. Even if it were so, the outcomes of thinking would not get annulled, because there remains the possibility that the antinomic content be positively useful for the knowledge;
3. To accept the impermanence of metaphysical conceptions does not necessarily entails to give up to this kind of spiritual creations, structurally rooted in human beings.⁴

The ontological distinction made by Blaga between the human existence in the practical-empirical world with the scope of auto-conservation and the so-called 'existence in the horizon of the mystery and for its revelation' has as result two types of knowledge ('*paradisiac*' and '*luciferic*'). Kant's epistemology, with the intuition, categories and principles *a priori* belongs to the first horizon. The second one contains the theoretical creations which aim at the *transcendent*; these are orientated and modelled through *stylistic categories* and a

stylistic matrix of local and historic-ethnic characteristics as well as actuated by what Blaga called the 'luciferic knowledge'. Beside Kant's categories, stylistic categories shape the science as shown by its historical kinds.

... knowledge of objective and universal value is possible only within the horizon of the existence with the view in auto-conservation and perpetuation of the human kind. On the contrary, the 'high' knowledge, which overtakes experience's borders, is oriented by forces and trends that have the centre in the deepness of the sub-consciousness. This will be, inevitably, a subjective knowledge and have a relative value... An ontological distinction between the two horizons of the existence sustains the epistemological distinction between the two kinds of knowledge. Epistemology does not found, but legitimates the metaphysical engagement.⁵

Another major philosophical theory that Blaga criticizes is *positivism*. From A. Comte until E. Mach and Blaga's contemporary logical positivism (i.e. the 'neo-positivism' of Vienna Circle), this trend has shown itself as an explicitly anti-metaphysical tendency, an even more radical one than Kant's criticism. For instance, the logical positivism has settled for scientific knowledge the objective of facts description, ignoring the subtle dialectics between the given and the 'constructive' elements of knowledge. Thus, Blaga has seen favourable conditions to start the 'decisive battle against the extremism of pure positivism', particularly concerning logical empiricism's claim to found scientific propositions on sense-data as well as to assume to the philosophy only the role of clarifying the problems of scientific language. Blaga becomes ironic and maybe sarcastic when he speaks about the claim of neo-positivism to 'overtake' metaphysics – Carnap used the term '*Überwindung*', translated into English by '*elimination*' – in the aim of reaching the 'scientific conception about the world'; thus, the Romanian philosopher invokes the image of Don Quijote as a modern 'positivist' knight who tears spears to pieces against metaphysics. Philosophy will have a similar condition as that in the Middle-Age: then, it was the servant of theology; now, it has to be the servant of science.

The irony of Blaga captures the initial exaggerations of logical empiricism, which couldn't be sustained in their genuine form, even by the authors themselves. On the other hand, even if one did accept that traditional metaphysical problems have become obsolete today, this would not entail that it is compulsory to treat them in the same traditional manner. According to the general idea of what Blaga has written, new metaphysical systems or theories do not make useless the ancient ones, since each and every one of them is a 'world in itself', somehow autonomous of all others.

In fact, Blaga stressed exactly the 'constructive' character of the theoretical knowledge, which has been very different from the way his contemporary philosophical scholars, dominated by the positivist view on scientific knowledge, have seen the history and philosophy of science. Or, science is irreducible to the scheme *facts-explanations*, because the researchers' *scientific ideal of explanation* plays the very important part of *imperative* or *standard* for the theoretical explanation. Furthermore, as if he had anticipated the historical-critical paradigm in philosophy of science, Blaga asserted that even observing and interpreting facts is a process strongly influenced by the stylistic co-ordinates of thinking. By only strictly logical means, very often invoked by especially 'positivist' scientists, one would never reach the creative act of thinking (hypothesis, theories, explanations etc.); it would be like a tautological endless spinning. From this point of view, neo-positivism couldn't have been nothing else than the 'act whereby philosophy commits suicide' as the result of 'fully drying the spirit out of cultural creations'.

Finally, *phenomenology* could not escape from a severe critique; Blaga calls it 'phenomenologism', under this name being included both E. Husserl's transcendental phenomenology and M. Heidegger's existential phenomenology. The Romanian philosopher associates phenomenology and neo-positivism, according to the criterion of 'one-dimensionality', as the outcome of ignoring the duality of knowledge.

From the beginning, the phenomenological process – i.e. to define phenomena in terms of contents of the acts of 'pure' consciousness – attracts Blaga's critique, even if he recognises some of its merits. Within phenomenology, an unprecedented high lucidity of consciousness is attained, however, at the cost of a high 'deflation' of philosophical problems. Rather, these problems are 'exterminated'. Like positivism or logical empiricism, phenomenology identifies through phenomenological reduction a lot of false problems in the history of philosophy. Here Blaga's main idea is that if a phenomenon receives only one 'phenomenological diagnosis', it could, on the contrary, entail more or many 'constructive' comments. His verdict will be, therefore, a predictable one:

phenomenologism with its anti-constructive spirit does not look to us at all as the beginning of a great philosophical movement – as so many people believe. It is rather an end, a conclusion for until today-philosophy. It is a *Sackgasse*, a blind alley that could show landscapes worth to be seen, but it is not a *road*.⁶

But the road Blaga chose was a very different one: i.e. metaphysics as a system based on creative thinking. In his view, the critical dialogue with other major philosophies had to be a necessary 'cleaning

of the ground' allowing later the planting of seeds for a future harvest. The metaphysics of knowledge that Blaga outlined has as a principal pillar the duality *paradisiac-luciferic*, the latter being almost always in the history of philosophy unrecognised and reduced to the former. This has been the common error of criticism, positivism and phenomenology: to consider knowledge as a unidirectional, flat-lineal process. On the contrary, Blaga writes about *two* kinds of knowledge, very opposite by their nature; where luciferic knowledge 'invades' paradisiac knowledge, there arises *something new*.⁷ If paradisiac knowledge realises an 'uninterrupted unhistorical progress', then luciferic knowledge has its rhythm and adventures. At last, Blaga's attitude is also understandable because his metaphysical system has its own history and 'adventures', in the search for the 'true philosophical consciousness' – the untouchable ideal towards which every spiritually gifted human being aims.

Lucian Blaga proposes to us not only a model for practising philosophy, but also a model for culture. For him, metaphysics is not just an end in itself but, on the contrary, is a means of sustaining every kind of spiritual activity and all of them at once. Therefore, 'beyond' metaphysics there is the mankind's destiny to create spiritual goods and cultures as a way of fulfilling the eternal desire of revealing existential mysteries.

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Notes:

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1. See C. Noica, *Filosofia lui Blaga in lumina veacului* (*Blaga's Philosophy in the Light of the Century*), in (ed. A. Marga), *Cunoastere și actiune. Profiluri de gânditori români* (*Knowledge and Action. Profiles of Romanian Thinkers*), Dacia Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 1986, p. 290.
2. See M. Flonta, *Cum recunoastem Pasarea Minervei. Reflectii asupra perceptiei filosofiei in cultura romaneasca* (*How Do We Recognise the Owl of Minerva? Reflections on the Perception of Philosophy in Romanian Culture*), Romanian Cultural Foundation Publishing House, Bucharest, 1998, p. 35.
3. See L. Blaga, *Despre constiinta filosofica* (*On Philosophical Consciousness*), Facla Publishing House, Timisoara, 1974, p. 20.
4. *On Philosophical Consciousness*, p. 34-35.
5. M. Flonta, *op. cit.*, p. 215.

6. See L. Blaga, *Cunoasterea luciferica (Luciferic Knowledge)*, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2003, p. 104.
7. *Ibid.* p. 226. In Lucian Blaga's metaphysics of knowledge, the relationship as well as the difference between paradisiac and luciferic knowledge is of the utmost importance. *Paradisiac* is the kind of knowledge in which the subject goes unidirectional, from a problem to another, finding solutions to them one by one, all on the same basis. Here, there is no possibility of any 'dramatic' out breaking, something like a discovery of a new way of knowledge, whose consequences would go towards reconsidering the former one. Paradisiac knowledge is specific to classical science, subsequently to classical pre-critical metaphysics and criticism. In contrast, *luciferic* knowledge comes to the surface each and every time when in science or

metaphysics occurs something paradoxical, a kind of a problem insoluble with the usual or standard means of thinking. Therefore, the human mind can no longer operate with the traditional methods, so it has to find something new. Blaga's metaphysics is a plea for the importance of luciferic knowledge as a possible way to account for the contradictions raised by the knowledge in the first decades of the 20th century, e.g. the paradoxes of quantum mechanics. A comparison with Th. Kuhn's theory of paradigms has been made by Dr Angela Botez: paradisiac knowledge would be in some way similar to the growth of knowledge within a constituted paradigm, while luciferic knowledge would be that corresponding to the occurrence of an anomaly which increases until it breaks out of the shell of the old paradigm, giving birth to a new one.

DIFFERENT PERSONALITIES, ONE PERSON? WINCENCY GRANAT'S PROPOSAL CONCERNING PERSONALISM

Krzysztof Guzowski

Abstract

Wincency Granat (1900-1979), a professor at, and Rector of, The John Paul II Catholic University in Lublin, is the founder of personalism in Poland. He presented his ideas in three major works entitled *Osoba ludzka (The Human Person)* (1961), *U podstaw humanizmu chrześcijańskiego (The Basis of Christian Humanism)* (1976), and *Personalizm chrześcijański (Christian Personalism)* (1985). Granat put in order and defined such terms as 'the person' and 'personality', which are too often considered equivalent; he also sketched the vision of integral personalism as the only system of thought which explains the whole existence of man in all its aspects and dimensions. However, he arrives at the definition of the integral person using the empirical and phenomenological method, i.e. first he describes three types (groups) of subjective activities: psychological, ethical and social personality, and then he finds a metaphysical basis for them in the person, which constitutes a synthesis of these personalities. These three distinct personalities are also defined as 'a whole' by psychology, ethics and sociology. However, in Granat's opinion they do not provide a complete and holistic perspective of the personal *universum*. The notion of personality differs from that of the person in that it does not point to the entirety of the individual human nature but to its distinguished scope of activities.

Key Words

Wincency Granat, person, personality, psychological personality, ethical personality, social personality.

Wincency Granat (1900-1979), a professor at, and Rector of, the Catholic University of Lublin is a founder of Polish personalist thought. His trilogy devoted to anthropological and personalist subjects is particularly worthy of note. It consists of three works: *Osoba ludzka. Proba definicji (The Human Person. An attempt to define the concept.)* (Sandomierz 1961), *U podstaw humanizmu chrześcijańskiego (Fundamentals of Christian Humanism)* (Poznan 1976) and *Personalizm chrześcijański. Teologia osoby ludzkiej (Christian Personalism. Theology of the Human Person)* (Poznan 1985). In the first work, which was written as early as in 1952, Granat creates his concept with the awareness that the world of the person is real although it evades ultimate definition and capture in a closed system. Despite that, personalism in the name of the real person, i.e. the living person, should start with empirical and phenomenological descriptions in order not to miss the facts that the subject in question is not an abstract notion, an idea or a made-up theory, and that it is impossible to include it completely into any system of thought. In order to prove that you can talk about the person in philosophy, psychology and sociology Granat shows

that the particular branches of anthropological sciences present *the truth* of the person depending on their own methods, examining specific moments and forms that the person manifests itself in action to the outside world, in its exteriorisation. It can be said that we recognise the person in itself when it *transcends* itself at the level of awareness, existence and action. Therefore we do not get to know man by observing his behaviour (which is mechanical) but by his *creative* action which is an expression of freedom, rationality and subjective self-awareness. Granat believes that only if personalism is based on a definition of the integral person can it become an integrated and open system of anthropological thought and so the very issue of the person will not become an area of philosophical disputes but a meeting place.

1. Integral personalism

Polish Personalists, such as Karol Wojtyła, Czesław Bartnik, Wincency Granat and others believe that personalism is a specific field of cognition because it captures a living reality which always includes a certain unpredictable and mysterious area. On the other hand, this mystery of man is closest to man himself and that is why it should be treated as the most urgent task of human knowledge. At our Chair of Christian Personalism in Lublin the thought of personalism is based on the conviction that this system should not be limited only to anthropological knowledge, because basically it is the knowledge about man that gives us a proper look at the world, at how this world is learned and transformed and how cosmic processes are shared by the subjective, internal and spiritual world. According to Granat the way to the truth of the person leads through a phenomenological and empirical description of three personalities – a psychological, an ethical and a social one which constitute three levels of existence and action of the person 'outside'. The three types of personalities are not three subjectivities but three major parts of the force and personal dynamics in which the person manifests itself in its psychological integrity (I) and its self-awareness (self) in its attempt to create a personal world around itself, in other words in personalisation. The terms 'personality' and 'the person' are usually used interchangeably in psychology. However, Granat uses the former term to mean the 'form' of manifestation of the person in action in relation to ... and in the way. Above all he says what the state of affairs is: the different definitions recognise the features of a certain unity, completeness and integrity in man but instead of

referring to the person they in fact concentrate on the phenomenon of personality. The person constitutes a certain metaphysical *surplus*, a bridge that links spirituality and corporeality, a certain transcendental synthesis.

Wincenty Granat calls his concept 'integral personalism'; it is a material and formal result of the 'integral definition of the human person'. Personalism also constitutes a specific axiology, which makes a thinker assume the attitude of a dialogue and openness for the person's good and in order to capture the reality of the person in the world as completely as possible.¹ The theory of personalism, like none other, is effective in practice. *Ethos* is preceded by *logos* and the truth is reflected in action. It is obvious to rev. Granat that apart from ontology personalism must imply ethics because the 'object' of study is not a thing but the person. For a personalist, ideologies and reductive anthropologies constitute a true challenge. When faced with them, a personalist must prove to be an expert on the subject and a defender of the person.²

Wincenty Granat, just like E. Mounier (1905-1950) and P. Ricoeur (1913-2005), was sure that personalism is not a closed but an open system because the personal world expands and is vibrant with life. Similarly, the role of the definition of the person does not play a functional part only for personalism; it plays a fundamental part: the person constitutes the principle of interpretation of reality and performs a prescriptive function for the ethos of a personalist. Mounier believed at first that personalism cannot be a system but then he changed his mind and accepted the fact that 'personalism is a philosophy and not just an attitude. It's a philosophy but not a system'.³

Granat's personalism means, first of all, a complete vision of man against a background of the physical world and an attitude resulting from accepting the superiority of the value and dignity of the human person to ideas and things. It is an ethical and social type of personalism.

2. The person and personalities

The originality of the concept of the author of *Osoba ludzka (The Human Person)* is seen in the method applied: we can easily distinguish the point of departure and the point of access. On the one hand it is impossible to talk about general nature and, on the other hand, human nature is not included completely in one personality. The author describes the phenomenon of man using the categories of existence, act and possibility, matter and form, soul, substance and powers; these categories were taken from Thomism. However, Granat joined the Thomistic concept of man with Augustinian-type methodology in the work mentioned above. He is also clearly inspired by existentialism and Mounierism.⁴ The

methods used and the manner of carrying out analyses are of an empirical and inductive type and not of the systematic and deductive type typical of Thomism. At the point of departure, the Polish thinker describes man as a psychological, ethical and social personality and it is only at the point of access that he provides a definition of the integral human person.⁵

Why does Granat arrive at the definition of the person by describing different types of personalities? In spite of distinguishing such terms as 'the person' and 'personality', philosophical literature often recognises their semantic closeness of meaning. Since personality is an external manifestation of subjective life and we can access the 'interiority' through 'exteriority' that reveals itself in action; in the case of Granat we deal with a peculiar hermeneutics of 'the person through personality'. In most general terms personality is defined as a set of important features of the person integrated into 'I' as their centre. Personality is perceived either as a closed system (a traditional view) or as a system open to the outside world. Granat is for the second approach thanks to which his concept acquires dynamics and many colours. Personality is not only a phenomenon of the subjective 'I' but its interpretation as well. While providing a definition of the person, one cannot ignore its immersion in nature, in which the person is inscribed in order to transform it. Personality expresses all this: openness, connection, creativity, ability to relate, dynamic reference and concreteness. Thanks to personality, we know that the person is not in static isolation. Personality is simply a dynamics of existence in relation due to which the person expresses itself in its individual, subjective, ethical and social existence as a man or a woman.⁶ 'Personality is a way of expressing oneself, embodying and specifying the fathomless mystery of the person'.⁷

Granat first analyses *psychological personality* using descriptive, phenomenological, philosophical and ontological language.

Psychological personality means all psychological acts centred around the subjective 'I', i.e. it is an integral person in the sphere of psychological acts the person is aware of and connected with the centre called 'I'.⁸

One could ask a question whether philosophy should enter the area which today has been captured by psychology. One subject of philosophical deliberations is justification of stability of 'I' as a subject, contrary to claims of supporters of psychological Phenomenalism (positivists, among others). At present most trends in psychology ignore general and metaphysical concepts. Using the language of Thomistic philosophy, Granat speaks about the substantiality of the human person and he defines the internal 'I' of man as substantial existence. Man's psychological personality is his internal, subjective 'I'

which does not identify itself exclusively with a physical body and a biological life. Although Granat considers relations between the soul and the body, psychological personality does not mean a whole because it ignores the existence of man's somatic and biological elements.⁹

We will find much current content in the description of *ethical personality*, organically connected with values and criteria of their assessment. Using an English term, we would say that 'the acting Person' does not operate in a vacuum but rather in relation to values which do not restrict subjectivity or freedom but provide the necessary environment in which the person recognises ethical standards. Consequently, ethical personality plays an important part in social life and in educational process. The work *Christian Personalism* contains the following definition:

Ethical personality is the integral human person whose scope of action are religious and moral values and who is responsible for its actions.¹⁰

Granat mentions truth, good and beauty as the values of primary importance. This moral action is carried out in relation to the outside world (exteriorisation) and in harmony among people and contributes to the development of the subject itself and of other people (interiorisation). Ethical personality is

a conscious and rational subject which together with the whole human community heads voluntarily and in an organized way for any truth and good developing itself and humanity.¹¹

Man, as a rational and free creature, is able to perceive the world of higher and lower values in which he must make a choice and towards which he must adopt an attitude. Prof. Granat believes that the most important features of such a personality which remains value-oriented in a creative way are: the auto-teleology of man, his freedom (auto-determinism), sensitivity to good, dynamics and development.¹²

To complete his definition of the integral person Prof. Granat describes *social personality* which is the focus of attention of sociologists. Social personality is:

an integral person studied in its numerous relations between an individual and the communities in which he lives.¹³

Acknowledging the social nature of the person, personalism opposes two reductive views of the person: individualism and collectivism. According to the former view persons exist only in themselves without relations with others; according to the latter view, a community creates a person (e.g. The Marxist view among others). Christian anthropology cannot perceive life in a community in a reduced form, only

as an ethical annex to substantially individualistic life. Since, according to Granat, personality means the 'manifestation' or 'acting' of the integral person, the nature of this acting is certainly communal. Sexuality is examined from an ontological point of view; it is definitely a factor that determines the character of the personality and the person's actions.¹⁴

3 The integral person

Having described different types of personalities, Prof. Granat puts forward the following definition of the person:

The integral human person is an individual, substantial, complete, corporal and spiritual subject which is able to act in a reasonable, voluntary and social manner (in order to develop himself and mankind in the whole scope of his existence).¹⁵

Let us analyse the above definition more closely and point out its most important elements:¹⁶

- (1) 'Integral' means the whole number of elements, including the spiritual, corporal and psychological structure and its relation with the community, etc.;
- (2) 'corporal and spiritual subject' – the person as a subject is interiority, indivisibility, life 'in itself'; it is a special subject because it consists of opposing elements: the corporal one and the spiritual one;
- (3) 'Complete subject' – it includes all layers of human existence: conscious, subconscious, hyper-conscious, and a bio-psychological whole;
- (4) 'Individual subject' – the personal subject has its concreteness, individuality and uniqueness. The person is the only one and unchanging;
- (5) 'Substantial subject' – it is 'I' and, at the same time, an existing substance which is self-contained and does not constitute a part of any other subject; it exists 'in itself' and 'through itself'. The substance has existing precedence over consciousness;
- (6) 'Able to act in a reasonable, voluntary and social manner' – thought distinguishes man from the world of nature; it is an activity since it means creating concepts, drawing conclusions and forming opinions. The human subject is free, takes decisions and has the ability of making choices. The human subject also relates to the community through common good;
- (7) 'In order to develop himself and mankind in the whole scope of his existence' – the human person is dynamic, developing, finds fulfilment in action and in developing its humanity.

Although the above description refers to the classical definitions of the person suggested by Boethius and Thomas Aquinas, it also contributes to their development. The author himself, while explaining the particular terms presented above, dissociates himself from their philosophical interpretation. That is why he states that his words characterizing man as a 'corporal and spiritual subject' should be understood in a colloquial and empirical meaning

and not in a philosophical meaning which aims at solving the problems of matter and spirit. Here Prof. Granat shares the opinion of other personalists that personalism is one and although it is found in philosophy, theology, pedagogy and psychology, it should be derived from the integral definition of the person and its description in the broadest possible way.

Personalism as a theory cannot do without the philosophical view of man; however, when we talk about the corporal and spiritual subject in the definition, it is sufficient to accept the empirical facts that point to the fact that he is subordinated to the laws of matter, constituting a complete biological organization and additionally acting on logical, moral, aesthetic and religious plane.¹⁷

Prof. Granat discusses the following structural and material and structural and formal elements of the person: somatic and biological elements, sensory psyche, the sphere of intellectual learning, the issue of ontological freedom of man, spirituality and social life.¹⁸

While creating the background for his definition, Granat first provides aspectual or even reductive descriptions. Wishing to avoid simplifications and ambiguities at all costs, our philosopher has a critical attitude to the two trends that represent extreme views of man: 'spiritualistic' and 'empirical'. Granat's definition is really integral because it contains somatic and biological elements and emphasizes the spiritual dimension of man, which is by and large depreciated in extreme solutions.

As far as the contemporary writers are concerned, Wincenty Granat devoted most attention to a French personalist Emmanuel Mounier, finding his concept of personalism as a thought 'engaged' (*engagement*) in transforming the world most appealing. According to Mounier, 'integrity' is rather a balance between spirituality and engagement, man's subjectivity and his relationality, between personalism as a theory and as praxis, ontology and ethics. Mounier, as a founder of communitarian personalism showed that the personal world is never a world of single atoms but that it finds its fulfilment in relations.¹⁹

Enhancing the theory of freedom, following in the footsteps of Mounier and the existentialists, the philosopher from Lublin points out that human action is organically connected with a sense of personal existence and its purpose. The author claims that lack of purpose (meaning) in life would mean pointlessness of human action and vice versa – in order to provide human action with meaning, it is necessary to discover the meaning of life. Action and existential sense are mutually conditioned and supplementary. The attribute of freedom of will makes it possible to show man as a 'creator' and not as 'material'.²⁰ The problem of the meaning of life, although deeply metaphysical in Granat's view, i.e.

hardly discernible in the fragments of experience of life, is close and empirical, accessible to every person who aspires to develop and enrich his personality.²¹

4 Conclusion

The definition of the human person perceived as a whole suggested by Wincenty Granat constitutes a basis and an indispensable tool of 'integral personalism'. This personalism cannot be identified with any philosophical trends and the definition does not constitute the property of any particular philosophy or religious outlook:

The definition of the integral person does not belong to Thomistic personalism or to Christian personalism for that matter. Neither does it introduce in any explicit way any religious element and can, therefore, become a neutral ground of agreement for those who prize all human values such as the sanctity of major rights and of the dignity of man most of all.²²

Wincenty Granat's theory of integral personalism has *realistic, social and axiological aspects*. It is the realism of phenomenological and existential type since Granat describes the person not by means of systematic assumptions but on the basis of the data of everyday, psychological, ethical and social experience referring all the time to empirical data. On the one hand, the purpose of emphasizing the social aspect is to show that personalism renounces extremely individualistic concepts of man. On the other hand, the constant reference to such values as man's dignity, his creativity, truth, good, love and justice points to the axiological bias of the concept.

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Notes:

1. *Osoba ludzka (The Human Person)*, Sandomierz 1961, p. 251.
2. *Personalizm chrześcijański (Christian Personalism)*, Poznań 1985, p. 73-79.
3. Mounier, E., *Il personalismo*, Rome 2004, p. 28.
4. *Osoba ludzka (The Human Person)*, pp. 51, 91 and 189.
5. Bartnik, Cz., *Filozoficzne horyzonty twórczości Wincentego Granata*, w: *Tajemnica człowieka (The Philosophical Horizons of Wincenty Granat's Work, in The Mystery of Man)*, Lublin 1985, pp. 103-108.
6. *Osoba ludzka (The Human Person)*, p. 26n.
7. Bartnik, Cz., *Personalizm (Personalism)*, 2nd edition, Lublin 2000, p. 157.
8. *Osoba ludzka (The Human Person)*, p. 71.
9. *ibid.* pp. 153-184.
10. *Personalizm chrześcijański (Christian Personalism)*, p. 71.
11. *Osoba ludzka (The Human Person)*, p. 193.

12. *ibid.* p. 30n.
 13. *ibid.* p. 204.
 14. *Personalizm chrześcijański (Christian Personalism)*, p. 545.
 15. *Osoba ludzka (The Human Person)*, p. 244. in the book *Personalizm chrześcijański (Christian Personalism)* p. 70 contains the same definition with a change: the human person is to 'develop itself and others in the field of culture'.
 16. Bartnik, Cz., *Personalizm (Personalism)*, p. 155.
 17. *Osoba ludzka (The Human Person)*, p. 244.
 18. *Personalizm chrześcijański (Christian Personalism)*, pp. 87-136.
 19. *Osoba ludzka (The Human Person)*, p. 79-84.
 20. *ibid.* pp. 249 and 251.
 21. *ibid.* pp. 249-150.
 22. *ibid.* p. 251.
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WORKING PAPER

NOISE VERSUS DIALOGUE

Henrieta Anișoara Țerban

1 Introduction: The project – ‘Media and Democracy in Romania’

1 History

In April 2004, a protocol for collaboration between the Institute of Political Sciences and International Relations of the Romanian Academy and the Department of Communication Studies of the Catholic University of Brussels has been signed. This collaboration is focused upon the issue of ‘media and democracy’ (which explicitly includes related issues of media and gender, and the potentially democratic role of ICT).

One of the core objectives of this project is the collaboration to result in the joint publication of an edited volume, supported by a number of workshops to be organised in Belgium and Romania. In this respect, the following planning is proposed:

Phase 1:

Abstract deadline: 15 May 2005

Meeting 1 (second week of June 2005) in Romania:
Discuss drafts;

Meeting 2 (November 2005) in Belgium: Discuss improved drafts;

Phase 2:

New drafts: deadline February 2006;

Meeting 3 (May 2006) in Romania;

Meeting 4 (November 2006) in Belgium: Finalising the collection, Project co-ordinators Nico Carpentier, Ion Goian and Henrieta Țerban.

The project started with a call for abstracts of papers (draft-chapters) of a **maximum 400 words, in English or French**. The papers suggested were accepted, and were at the first project workshop in May 2005 in the frame of a more general discussion concerning the specific and the general characteristics of the Romanian media.

The relationship between media and democracy is extremely complex. In order to structure contributions and future chapter, a typology of media practices to enhance democracy was suggested to be taken as a starting point. This typology was published as a working paper entitled: ‘Coping with the agoraphobic media professional. A typology of journalistic practices reinforcing democracy and participation’, and is online available at:

<http://homepages.vub.ac.be/~ncarpent/workpap/cemeso-02-agoraphobic.pdf>

A Romanian translation (by Henrieta Țerban) was also published in *The Journal of Political Science and International Relations of the Romanian Academy*, no. 4/2004. The four clusters of the typology offer a broad perspective on the media-democracy relationship. In the first cluster the democratic role of information is emphasised, while the second and third cluster focus on the mechanics of representation.

The second cluster deals with representations of the social – the way communities and societal sub-groups are represented and empowered – and the third cluster deals with representations of the political, including both the political system and the societal level of defining and solving problems. Finally, in the fourth cluster, participation in media content and structures is highlighted.

We started with such a prospective methodology in order ideally to bring together chapters that situate themselves in one or more clusters of this typology. The initial modest intention is to include chapters from Romanian authors on Romanian media, gathered in a collection to be published in a western journal of media studies.

Examples of possible cultural and comparative research projects were:

- (a) media representations of the Romanian revolution in Romanian media, and the lessons learned by journalists;
- (b) media representations of corruption in Romania in the Romanian press.

2 Content

The researchers have found that the typology of media practices which would enhance democracy, as suggested above, is useful for organising ideas but they have also declared an interest in a plurality of methods. While most of the researchers have made some reference to the announced typology, all have kept the typology as a background, tacit knowledge. Hence, the area of investigative methods proved wider: **qualitative content analysis** (for the papers of C. Popa, N. Perpelea, A. Bazac, H. Țerban, and to a lesser extent in the article prepared by G. Tanasescu), **comparative method** (H. Țerban, R. Luca), M. Eliade’s **hermeneutic method** (in the

paper of L. Pavalan, on the 'epiphanies' of the Romanian press).

3 Expected results

A range of articles on some very important aspects concerning the contemporary Romanian press to be gathered in a *collection* to be published in a Western journal of media studies.

4 The papers to be gathered in the collection and the researchers interested in the project

1. 'The Meanings of "Capitalism"'

By C. Popa, researcher, Institute of Political Science and International Relations of the Romanian Academy

2. 'Ownership and values: the limits of the democratic media. An analysis of the main Romanian written media'

By Ana Bazac, Polytechnic University, Bucharest

3. 'Noise versus Dialogue. Investigating the Representation Dimension in the Context of the Romanian Media in December 1989 and January 1990'

By Henrieta Țerban, researcher, Institute of Political Science and International Relations of the Romanian Academy

4. 'La construction médiatique de l'imaginaire moral - émotionnel'

By Nicolae Perpelea, researcher, Institute of Sociology of the Romanian Academy

5. 'La construction du langage politique dans la presse roumaine d'après la deuxième guerre mondiale et aujourd'hui'

By R. Luca, researcher, Institute of Political Science and International Relations of the Romanian Academy

6. 'The epiphanies in/of the Romanian Press'

By L.V. Stuparu, researcher, Institute of Political Science and International Relations of the Romanian Academy

7. *Title to be announced*

By B. Popescu, researcher, Institute of Political Science and International Relations of the Romanian Academy

8. *Title to be announced*

By I. Goian, researcher, Institute of Political Science and International Relations of the Romanian Academy

4 Follow-up programme

Depending on the degree of success for the collection of Romanian articles on the Romanian press,

the intention is to find Belgian authors to write on Belgian media, and also Romanians to write on Belgian media and Belgians on Romanian media. Also comparative research (focussing on Belgium and Romania) could be a future assignment.

Examples of possible future cross-cultural and comparative research projects are:

- (a) media representations of the extreme-right in Romania and (North) Belgium;
- (b) media representations of asylum seekers and minorities in Romania and (North) Belgium;
- (c) media representations of corruption in Romania in the Romanian and Belgian press;
- (d) media representations of the EU in the Romanian and Belgian press.

2. *'Noise versus Dialogue. Investigating the Dimension of Representation in the Context of the Romanian Media between December 1989 and January 1990'*

This paper identifies the 'turns' in the contents and ideology, in the discourses and debates of the Romanian press before and after 22nd December 1989 – the Romanian revolution. The methods used in this study are a qualitative content analysis and a comparison between the terms and themes I have followed in the texts of the front page articles in: *Scînteia* which becomes *Adevărul* (*The Future*) after 22nd December 1989; *Informația* (*Information*) which becomes *Libertatea* (*Liberty*) after 22nd December 1989, and *România Liberă* (*Free Romania*) between 15th December 1989 and 15th February 1990. Thus, I have conducted a comparative approach concerning the presence and frequency of the key words before and after 22nd December 1989. I have investigated the editorials – the body text and the titles – and, generally, the front page of each of the above mentioned newspapers, for the stated period, and I have considered the photographic material on the front pages, too.

The terms and themes that I have selected as the most frequent, were then classified as either laudative or critical in their attitude, in order to highlight after the fact the balance or the lack of balance between the relatively democratic and the relatively undemocratic discourses¹ 'agitating' the world of the Romanian press after 22nd December 1989.

To introduce the reader to the atmosphere I shall start by inviting him to imagine the Romanian flag. Today it is a tricoloured flag (with red, yellow and blue). Under Communism it had in the middle symbols of worker's and peasant's power, yet not the sickle and hammer and not solely the red star, but a

landscape surrounded by a crown of wheat spikes and, above all that, the red star. This was the Romanian emblem of Communism on the tricolour. Then, during the days of the revolution, in December 1989, two hundred years after the French revolution, the people made a hole in the middle of the flag. The flag of the Romanian revolution was thus a tricoloured symbol with a hole in the middle. It had an empty and, we can infer from that, a free spot in the middle. That 'nothingness' was a symbol of freedom, silent, yet the most powerful of all the symbols of the noisy Romanian revolution. And, as we can notice, a revolutionary symbol as well. It meant the change of a political regime and it was a violent revolutionary symbol at the same time: the old was not reformed, it was not whitewashed, but it was cut out entirely. S. Žižek talks of it as of a sublime image, indeed, in Kantian terms, of the political movements of the last years. He talks about the scene where the revolutionaries wave the flag of the revolution with the emblem cut off. For him it was an unprecedented concentration of the open character of a historical situation in its becoming.

The two words that have influenced the history of Romania the most immediately after December 1989 are 'revolution' and 'democracy'. These gained the meanings of 'liberation' and 'freedom' in relation with the events of December 1989 and January 1990, but also in relation with all the following events describing transition in Romania. Associated with the hope to guarantee the rule of law, human rights, private property, European integration – in other words, associated with the hope for a free, dignified and decent life – these words have raised the expectations concerning the immediate future of the Romanian people to such high standards that the slow and difficult progress of the Romanian transition to democracy eventually brought disappointment. Such popular bitterness made it so that 'revolution' began to mean 'daydream' and 'democracy' 'riot'.²

'Revolution' is neither the unique nor the most important of the words employed by the all-encompassing dictatorial speech 'hijacked' from its meanings to serve the 'Hosanna!' paid to the General Secretary of the one and only Communist Party. But this word becomes very important in the ideological turn that took place after 22nd December 1989. The analysis shows that 'revolution' and 'democracy' are the only key words promoted from a circumstantial, and metonymic importance, to an essential importance.³ We assist at a propulsion of 'democracy' as main positive rhetorical key word in the Romanian press, as a leading concept of a new political universe of significance. It is the only term uncritically used by the democrats as an entirely positive term and via the same semantic logic, it was used by the those nostalgic for the communist

regime as entirely negative, yet another word for 'disorder' and for the lack of state authority. With wooden tongue, the freedom of speech was transformed into an permission to speak, granted by the Party, and only to talk about a perfection to be considered already attained and which is on the brink of more achievements to come for the people of 'the great leader'. This is the political context for the press documents studied.

Before 22nd December 1989, a metonymic relation was taking place, for instance, between the terms 'revolution' and 'Nicolae Ceaușescu'. Often there were used other terms in such ideological constructions, very high up situated terms in the hierarchy of indoctrination, such as 'party' and 'people'. If the semantic metonymic relationship between two terms like, let's say, 'rose' and 'love', is acquired through a long period of human communion negotiations, that between 'revolution' and 'Nicolae Ceaușescu' was imposed through indoctrination. In fact, the same relation was established between any other term that could be ideologically exploited and the ever ideological superlative represented before 22nd December 1989 by the key words 'Nicolae Ceaușescu'. 'Revolution' was not the most used in this role, abused being, for instance, the words 'party' and 'people' (that only after 22nd December 1989 shall gain back their semantic dignity within the playful political discourse).

The *ideological 'turn'* is to be demonstrated interpreting the frequencies of the key terms from the first page of *Scînteia (Adevărul) Informația (Libertatea, România Liberă)*.

The investigation pointed out the following characteristic themes for an *ideological 'turn'*:

from 'the Press of Dictatorship, Talking to Itself', the Press as a 'mirror of dictatorship', from 'the fear of people' and from repeating the same photographic content over and over again (the dictator, the adulating crowds, the success of the Socialist revolution) to the images of the burst of enthusiasm of 22nd December 1989,

to 'Multiple new realities' (many new political personalities, plural new ideological phrases, the 'normality' of the absence of the cult of personality).

The qualitative analysis of content correlated with a comparison of the propagandistic elements, photographs and themes, *before* and *after* 22nd December 1989 are supportive for the following *conclusions highlighting the ideological 'turn'*.

Communication in the public space was highly ritualised and codified by the party ideology, to the extent that it was impossible to communicate anything other than achievements in all fields, and in

consequence, praises for the party leader and the party. Negative events were either ignored or presented as insignificant exceptions, useful to set an example for increased efficiency in the future. The achievements, said to belong to the people, were to be acknowledged as impossible of attainment without the Party's leader.

Therefore, all the positive terms are put in the service of legitimating the dictator and his actions. Any term that cannot serve such a role, could not be present in the official political language and discourse, and hence it would disappear from the discourse of the press, as well.

All the newspapers from this period that were analyzed proved to be identical in their rigidity, poor and repetitive vocabulary and pathos invoking patriotism. Not only are the discourses of the newspapers similar, but sometimes the articles have almost the same manifest content and the photographic material was the same. Given such minor differences in 'broadcasting' similar or identical messages, the dictatorial press was completing its function as the main instrument of indoctrination.

Under such circumstances, the revolution, as a change of political regime, was a secret desire of the entire society turned into reality with the despair and enthusiasm of a 'now or never' impulse offered by the events in Timișoara (16th & 17th December 1989).

This is the reason why the analysis shows only one latent message in all the texts published in newspapers in the days before the events in Timișoara and Bucharest. Then the analysis highlights a change of tone with the occurrence of revolutionary events as the increasing panic of the party leaders and of the party top rank members.

After 22nd December 1989, the press changed the discourse, modulating it, passing from using a rigid and artificial media political language towards a more 'natural' media political language. In the first place, the revolutionary media diminished the symbolic distances between those who govern and the governed.

The cult of personality of the former dictator disappeared, replaced by the celebration of the revolution of the change, of the heroes of change, of the democracy to-be. The favourite topic, 'building democratic Romania', was underlined also by the tendency to multiply the key terms in synonyms, with a role in the better understanding and defining of such a democratic future of the country.

To a certain extent, the discourse of the press evolves side by side with the public that it informs. The public and the journalistic discourse were influencing each other, in these first days of free journalism, more than ever. From this perspective we can better understand both the effervescence of dialogue and the uproar that

characterized the entire society during the days after 22nd December 1989. While the press attempted at once to define the basic democratic concepts, to form democratic opinions, to investigate truths and backgrounds of high profile personalities of the moment,⁴ to renew society at several levels, at the same time maintaining as much access as possible. Media discourse started to be a very different entity from the former mirror of an invented reality. But, at the same time, there were no norms, no ethical standards, while everything was left to enthusiasm, to (good) intentions.

I interpret the high frequency of this term ('revolution') and its relative replacement in time by the term 'democracy' in the light of the fact that the press needed to clarify the status quo, legitimated by the fact that a revolution took place, that the political regime was changed, as it is everybody's business and duty to accomplish the change completely through democratization.

This was indeed the principal tendency resulting from all the printed media discourses, the orientation of the country towards democracy as its unique future desired by the entire society. A secondary tendency in the printed press though, was to consider democracy more a restoration of the democracy Romanian had between the two World Wars than a work of future construction. Such nostalgia was part of the ideological rout brought about by the revolution, natural as will to recuperate everything valuable from the past that could serve a tradition as a basis for future developments.

Front page media discourse remains as well a political discourse after the revolution, only that the way it approaches 'reality' was gaining complexities and critical accents that did not exist before 22nd December 1989. Enthusiasm was the rule and it brought about an abundance of exaggerations, as well. The press tried without success to bring about an ethical change in politics, to indicate and eliminate all the corrupted characters involved with the former regime from top positions. Given the cult of personality of the dictator, many of the top Communist activists and, of course, security services employees, were practically unknown to the public and to young journalists. Hence, the discourse of the press generally presented things as if society and democracy were seriously menaced and saved every day.

The revolution, changing the political system, has also changed the political discourse from its foundations.

The new world is portrayed in the printed media to a certain extent in a more complex manner in comparison with the discourse of the press before 22nd December 1989 and in a more 'natural', everyday Romanian language. The core of meanings of the political discourse from the press of the revolution,

showed interest in a multitude of political actors, more nuance dichotomies than during Ceaușescu's times.

A 'normality' of the discourse of the press was occasioned and started to take shape. It presupposed as well a dialogue between the numerous political actors and citizens, but also 'riot', 'noise', a lack of 'harmony', disorientation, expressed as loudly as the many new orientations in ideology. Yet, freedom of expression brings about 'noise'. Democratic dialogue consequently emphasises the plural 'noises' of the society. **The press of the Romanian revolution captured both 'noises' such as these and also democratic dialogues.**

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Notes:

1. The expression 'democratic discourse' is for this study more as a benchmark, as a referential, or as an exemplary model that has its inherent limits and simplifications to be found in any theoretical model. As a landmark, the notion is thus very important in describing and assessing how language is developed, used and abused within the democratic discourse. Reality is a complicated mix of discourses of propaganda that, in very diverse ways, either, support and complete each other, or undermine each other, or even confront each other in their competition for the role of the vehicle of power in democracy.
2. 'Revolution' and 'democracy' are two words less used in the press under the dictatorship. When they do appear, their meanings are different from their linguistic meanings and from their meanings in political science, and also from their meanings in popular culture. Thus, 'revolution' meant before 1989 'militancy, the sum of all actions done for the benefit of the party and under its supervision', and was a pretext to talk about the superiority of the Communist regime and its continuous evolution on the basis of the objective and scientific principles that generally rule party activities. This is not a quotation from party documents but it recreates the feeling of the wooden tongue used before 22 December 1989 in the press as in the entire Romanian public sphere.
3. The relation of metonymy among the meanings of some words resides in the fact that 'the part suggests the whole', or in other words, the narrower field of significance of a word points to a larger field of significance of another. For instance, 'flower', points, due to traditional cultural conventions, to terms such as 'femininity', 'fulfilment', and 'love'.
4. It was an ethical obsession of the press that turned itself into a joke to ask the question, 'What have you been doing for the last five years?'. Point 8 from the Proclamation from Timișoara specified precisely that none of the former top Communist activists and secret

service officers would be allowed to acquire top positions in the new regime. The ridiculous spin was given away by its inefficiency – since it was not supported by political will, but by a law to eliminate all top Communist activists from political life, it remained sterile,

just a question to be answered always through a half-truth or a lie. All the persons questioned used to try to convince the journalist of his (rarely, her) past (often non-existent) dissidence.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Michael Oakeshott

What is History? and other Essays

Ed. Luke O'Sullivan.

Exeter, Academic Press, 2004, 480 pp., ISBN 0907845-835 (hbk.), £30/\$58

The book contains 30 pieces by Michael Oakeshott most of which have not been published, and covering fifty eight years of his writings. Oakeshott had a reputation for being a brilliant lecturer and an accomplished stylist in his written work, and was much admired by his pupils. He was, in fact, one of the external examiners for my Ph.D. thesis on Michael Polanyi. R. G. Collingwood in his *The Idea of History* (Oxford, 1946, p. 159) stated that he saw the relevant part of Oakeshott's *Experience and Its Modes* (Cambridge, 1933) as representing 'the high-water mark of English thought upon history'. A recent writer, Paul Franco, in *The Political Philosophy of Michael Oakeshott* (Yale, 1999, p. 11) wrote of Oakeshott's theory of civil association, 'as the most sophisticated and satisfying contemporary statement of liberal thought'

In his work, like Collingwood, Oakeshott opposed positivism but completely denies his dictum that the task of the historian is to revive or re-enact the past. He states that the past is dead and not living in the present, and that an attempt to revive it would not be history but 'a piece of obscene necromancy'. He also rejected Collingwood's limitation of history's subject matter to the reflective activities of human beings, as he argues that there is nothing in the human to distinguish it from the non-human past. He also rejects Collingwood's representing historical knowledge as giving us, if not prediction and control, at least a kind of practical wisdom, for he claims that history is without relevance to practical life. Finally, whereas Collingwood regarded the explanatory concept of causation as having a satisfactory historical use, Oakeshott ruled it out of historiography all together as a mistaken use of scientific thinking. Nevertheless, he does state that if Collingwood had lived longer he may have achieved for history what Kant had achieved for natural science.

It can be argued, and it is the case with these new essays, that Oakeshott continued to hold the views he originally expressed in *Experience and Its Modes*. The Hegelian influence on his writing can be clearly seen, and the claim that he was a Burkean conservative is just wrong.

The major thrust of his thought is to make a sharp contrast between what he calls a historical mode of thought and a practical and a scientific one. History he regards as expressing its own system of

postulates or categories. In particular, he is concerned with those of 'the past', 'fact and truth', the 'individual', and 'explanation'. He is a radical constructionist in that he sees history as what the historian constructs in accordance with the categories of historical thought. It is the historian's creation rather than a discovery, although not a free construction. Certain things follow from this position, as it follows that a historical account cannot be said to be a revival of the past which is certain and fixed, in a sense, as it is the historian's creation, it is in the present as it his construction, although he, of course, regards it as past. In the case of a historical truth or fact Oakeshott argues that facts are not the data of historical interpretations but are their conclusions, whereas the criterion of truth used in establishing them is coherence. Truth in this sense means coherence but coherence means more than just the compatibility of facts with each other or with the evidence on which they are asserted. To be a fact is to find a place in a historical world, as isolated facts cannot be allowed. It is tied up with his notion of historical explanation.

Of considerable importance in Oakeshott's theory is his consideration of the historical individual. The subject matter of history, he states, concerns events, institutions and persons, for instance the French revolution, the Roman Empire, and Frederick the Great. He sees such individuals as identified as relative continuities separated from their environment by relative discontinuities. For example, the East and the West maintained the continuity of the Roman Empire. Such individuals, in a sense, are themselves the products of generalisations but are not subject to further generalisations of a scientific kind, as this would deprive them of their specifically historical character.

Of equal importance for Oakeshott is the category of historical explanation. The specifically historical way of explaining change is to give a full account of it, 'the relations between events is always other events'. In order to see all the degrees of change is to be in possession of a world of facts which calls for no further explanation. He fits the criterion of intelligibility in history, in what he calls the principle of unity and continuity in history, 'a structured supposition', but he insists that this is not the same as science's sufficient and necessary links, as historical events are contingent.

He attempts to distinguish and characterise the historical attitude to the past from what he calls the contemplative, the practical, and the scientific. The contemplative is suitable for the artist and evokes images of delight, and events are not caused. Typical of such an attitude is the work of historical

novelists and historical dramatists like Shakespeare. He also thinks that they are often parasitic on other attitudes.

The practical has a goal to be achieved, or we might call it an objective interest. Its concern is not with what happened as fact, but with the extent it makes the world habitable, and references to events by words like 'useful', 'desired', and 'reprehensible' are often used to illustrate a person's attitude to an event or series of events. We see events as a lesson for our present situation or as an authority for some present action or proposal. We therefore study the past in relation to the present.

In contrast a scientific attitude looks at events and the past as independent of our own interests, and sees them rather in their relationship to each other. Typically we look at the past from a quantitative point of view and are concerned with measurement. We also try and relate events through the notions of sufficient and necessary connections. It therefore diverts attention away from actual events to supposed universal laws which can be found in history, and the task of history becomes a search for these non-existent laws.

Throughout his work Oakeshott follows these themes but these essays include not only reviews of books such as Hayek's *Constitution of Liberty* but also essays on 'Europe, the Emergence of an Idea', 'The Character of a University Education', 'Freedom and Power', and many more all thought-provoking and beautifully written. The book is a treasure house for Oakeshottian enthusiasts and also a brilliant taster for newcomers to a philosopher of major importance in twentieth-century philosophical thought.

R.J. Brownhill

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Graham Dunstan Martin

Does It Matter? The Unsustainable World of the Materialists.

Edinburgh, Floris Books, 2005; ISBN 0-86315-533-2; 282 pp. £20 pbk.

Today few have minds more firmly closed than those who think that they have no minds and do not exist. Graham Dunstan Martin tackles this obstinacy head on. He seeks to restore, against materialist reduction, the dualism of mind and matter – the great bogey of our time – and even a form of idealism, that mind is the ultimate ground of the universe. The book is written for the general reader in a clear and lively style, with sectional subheadings and concluding summaries for each chapter. It ranges over many topics, cites ancient as well as modern thinkers, and Eastern as well as Western, and makes several appeals to very natural science,

especially physics, of which materialist reductionism assumes that it is the only possible interpretation.

Most readers of *Appraisal* will know something of the contemporary arguments that Martin adduces against reductionism and materialism, minds as computers or brains, the denial of the reality of experience, subjectivity, sensation and consciousness generally, free will and choice, and which I would endorse. I shall therefore concentrate on his positive case, except to note that he equates Polanyi's distinction between *tacit* and *explicit* knowledge with that between *knowing how* and *knowing that*. But some knowing how can be made explicit, as in medicine and the sciences of engineering, and thus it becomes knowing that, while knowing that can remain or become tacit. Moreover he neglects what would strengthen his positive case, the functional *from-to* relation of tacit integration and the corresponding ontological structure of higher levels determining the boundary conditions left open by lower ones. This, as Polanyi himself deployed it, resolves some of the problems allegedly raised by dualism.

Martin's positive position comes to the fore in Ch. 6. Materialism having been shown to be false, three possibilities remain: a 'dualism' of mind and matter; idealism, that matter is created by mind; and deep monism, that mind and matter are both created by something else. Against 'dualism' he cites the problem of the conservation of energy supposedly raised by any interaction between them, and answers it by reference to quantities that are too small to be detected and the constant emergence and relapse of sub-atomic particles of mass-energy from and into the quantum vacuum. Yet I for one fail to see the problem. Mental operations obviously use existing energy and decisions release stored energy or change its direction, but they require no mysterious additions to the mass-energy of the universe. For the principle of dualism as against monism, Martin presents variations on the thesis that 'one' implies 'two'. But Spinoza would object that it is arbitrary to stop at two, the two substances that we know, and that they are infinite. And the logical generation of the number series does not entail anything about actuality, as Martin himself argues latter on: if so, nothing could be unique.

Matter cannot create mind but perhaps mind could create matter as held by idealism. For this, Martin cites medical evidence of the power of the mind to create hallucinations. But what is experienced in hallucinations is *not* the physical objects and events the subject thinks he is experiencing. Or is Martin here arguing for a 'strong' version of idealism: that the physical world is an illusion that we create for ourselves, there be no such thing as matter at all? He is also inclined towards some sort of deep monism,

either of pure consciousness or a neutral ground from which both mind and matter emerge or of which they are aspects and cites Russell, Raymond Tallis, and Buddhist and Hindu thinkers. He agrees with Berkeley on the fundamental distinction between that whose essence is to perceive, and which cannot be perceived, and that whose essence is to be perceived and which cannot perceive, and as it is reformulated in Sartre's theses that consciousness (*pour soi*) is essentially consciousness of consciousness, transparent to itself, cannot be limited by anything other than itself, and is set over against mere things (*en soi*). I suggest that, as former Lecturer in French, he would have done better to refer to Merleau-Ponty on the primarily 'ecstatic' orientation of our minds to the world and the profound structuring of our experience by our bodily location. As for Berkeley, to define *percipere* and *percipi* as mutually exclusive is unwarrantedly to turn a distinction into a dichotomy and so to beg the question. Likewise to define physical existence as *percipi* is to install idealism by prescription: in these terms it should be defined as *perceptibile* which would leave open the question of whether or not it is actually perceived.

Martin does, however, argue for idealism, and paradoxically bases his argument on contemporary scientific theory, the paradoxes of Quantum Theory. The arguments are too complex properly to be reviewed here, but they do reveal what a strange world we live in, one which has suggested to some scientists that there is some design in it to hide its deeper structures from us (Romanian readers will be familiar with ideas like this from Lucian Blaga and his 'divine differentials'). The paradoxes of quantum physics do show that what scientists use to investigate quantum events and entities is of the same magnitude and necessarily significantly interferes with them. As is suggested by a quotation from von Neuman, this does not prove that quantum phenomena are not real, only that their properties are indeterminate (or indeterminate as far as we can know) until our attempts to observe them make them determinate or determinate in one way and not another. As Martin rightly infers from this, the observing consciousness is no passivity that can be ignored but is an active causal agent in the world. But is this compatible with any 'strong' idealism, that the physical world is not real?

One way of avoiding the functions ascribed to consciousness in Quantum Theory, and also human free will, and the argument to design from 'fine-tuning' (see below) has been to invoke an hypothesis of many worlds. Against this Martin argues that by entailing an infinity of universes coming into existence at every moment, and each splitting in turn, it grossly violates Occam's Razor simply to avoid recognising the reality of consciousness, also

violates on each occasion the conservation of matter and energy, entails that all that could happen must happen, and so sweeps away all problems.

Limitations of space (and of time properly to digest them) compel me to pass over Martin's discussions of the theories of Jacques Charon, John Smythies, Ervin Laszlo and Peter Mercer who seek to locate consciousness in a hype-dimensional space outside the four dimensions of this universe, and thus beyond entropy and death, except to remark that speculative philosophy appears to be resurgent and uninhibited by positivism.

So too are arguments from design. Martin summarises of three sets of problems which have been adduced to show how highly improbable it is, an improbability which can be calculated, that life and consciousness could come into existence. The first set of problems are posed by the constraints of the fundamental structures of the universe; the second by specific features of our planet, such as the anomalous properties of water; and the third set counter, what to today is sacred dogma, the neo-Darwinian 'explanation' of the emergence of new species by the random mutation of genes. [The very term 'random mutation' proves that neo-Darwinism has no explanation of how genes mutate, yet this confession of ignorance is passed off as an explanation.] These last are examples of irreducibly complex organisms and organs, in which, or for the pattern of life of which, all the distinctive ingredients must occur *together* for each one to be of any use or to be able to function, and so to give any adaptive advantage. Martin quotes Michael Behe as quoting Darwin that the existence of such irreducibly complex organs would refute his theory (of emergence). And Martin also quotes Dawkins as invoking a second form of evolution, 'cumulative' evolution, to reduce the improbabilities of all the simultaneous emergence of all the required items and thus to obviate the inference to intelligent guidance of the processes of emergence. Yet this 'cumulative evolution' turns out to be the work, as Dawkins explicitly states, of an observer who chooses that mutation which is most likely to resemble the target.

But to what sort of designer do these arguments point? Martin rightly states that it must be one outside the universe but not necessarily the God of Theism. Dysfunctional results of evolution, such as the exposed position of mammalian testicles, also count against neo-Darwinism, since it claims that organs more complex than what would be required to avoid them have actually been generated by blind processes of evolution. Martin is content to argue to a designer and not enquire that his purposes might be or what limitations are place upon him, except that at the end of the chapter he suggests that the creator's motive is to know himself as if reflected in a mirror. He could have pointed out that the first set

of arguments presuppose that the designer was *given*, and did not himself design, the fundamental structures and constants of the universe. Martin could also have argued, and not merely assumed, that the creator must be one and not many. Indeed, by moving from 'designer' to 'creator' he displaces any limitations that are merely *given* to the mind behind the universe. It is at points like this that one wishes that the book were at least a little longer.

All these arguments presuppose that the universe had a definite beginning. He cites previous arguments for this (but wrongly takes Aquinas' argument to a First Mover in a temporal sense and not a metaphysically hierarchical one: Aquinas held that the question of a beginning was undecidable by reason and answered only by revelation). Martin, unlike some contemporary theologians who have forgotten the embarrassments of those who tied their theology to particular scientific theories of their day, does not rest his case for a beginning on Big Bang for it is possible that that theory may also be superseded. Instead he distinguishes between actual and potential infinity, the latter being that of the number series which cannot be realised, as neither can the infinite sets of mathematics. I am not so sure about another argument: that if the universe had always existed then everything would already have happened, including 'heat death', universal entropy. For what meaning can 'already' or 'by now', etc., have if there has been no first moment from which to count? Also, is it true that in infinite time that everything that can happen must happen? Could not the legendary troop of monkeys continue to type out rubbish for ever or might they even at some moment cease from typing altogether?

In his final chapter Martin enquires into what more can be known of the consciousness behind the universe. As the only being that knows itself, consciousness resolves at every moment the split between *percipere* and *percipi*, and therefore is of

'the Universe's original and basic nature'. Beyond this, the empirical testimony, from all times and places, of mystical experience can point us at least a little further to the unity of all things in a cosmic consciousness, and, at the same time, of pure consciousness itself, without any content, but experienced as timeless and as bliss. Yet, also at the same time, this pure consciousness is not just *my* pure consciousness but that which is, or is the source of, all existence. It is has all qualities and subsumes all contraries, but has no qualities; it is personal yet impersonal; it is creative yet wholly motionless.

These are familiar metaphysical and theological problems, which require extensive treatment in their own right. For my part, I think that Martin, despite the diverse sources that he cites, does insufficient justice to those that are personal and theistic, and to their real difference from those that are impersonal and monistic, and that the paradoxes listed can be resolved if the former are really thought through.

The great merits of this book are its clarity, the breadth of material employed, and its undermining of materialist reductionism by use of the very natural science of which it claims to be spokesman and only valid interpreter. It is curious that Martin should label his position as 'idealism', for idealism historically, in its transcendental, objective and personal varieties (but not as 'subjective' idealism or phenomenalism, which, along with Hume's total scepticism, was the logical outcome of Empiricism) sought to salvage the moral, mental, spiritual and metaphysical dimensions of human life from materialist reductionism by relegating nature and natural science to the 'phenomenal' realm or 'mere appearance', a strategy that, by leaving the interpretation of natural science to the reductionists, gave the latter the benefit its prestige with the general public, and so idealism failed miserably. Martin's strategy, like Polanyi's, is the better one.

R.T. Allen

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CONFERENCE REPORT

*URAM conferences in Toronto:
An important direction in personalist
studies*

In August 3-6, 2005, the Thirteenth Biennial Meeting of the URAM Society – the International Society for the Study of Human Ideas on Ultimate Reality and Meaning took place in Toronto (Canada). The URAM society is a potent and energetic venue for the exploration of the issues of Personality, Identity and Consciousness within the extended interdisciplinary research on finding Meaning of Being in the world. The programme of the 13th Meeting is accessible on the site:

<http://matrix.scranton.edu/uram/program-13th-conference.pdf>

The most interesting research works are included for publication by the URAM Journal (which is preparing the 25th anniversary issue) – its site: <http://matrix.scranton.edu/uram/>

This is mainly a community of scientists working in the humanities. However, the recent meeting in Toronto distinguished itself by organizing a separate biomedical section, trying to examine the

pivotal role of biological sciences in various fields, revealed in the presentations: 'An Inquiry into the Optimal Health' by Stephen Modell, 'The Urgent Needs of Medicine' by Russell Sawa, 'Philosophical Personalist Cosmology' by Konstantin Khroutski and other oral presentations which keenly interested the participants. Among other sessions worthy of mention were: the vivid reasoning of Noel Boulting (Upchurch, Kent) on 'Thomas Hobbes' Conception of URAM' and the brilliant semiotic analysis of Anna Makolkin (University of Toronto) on 'The Lament about the European Cultural Detours: Dante, Machiavelli and Montesquieu'. The URAM Society evidently takes the path of progressive development, inviting all interested persons to collaboration. I am fully confident that the next URAM conference (the 14th, which is likewise planned to be held in Toronto, in the August, 2007) will be an important and successful international academic event in the sphere of studies of Personality and Consciousness.

Konstantin S. Khroutski

JOURNALS RECEIVED

*Members of the SPCPS (individual subscribers to **Appraisal**) can borrow copies of the following for the cost of postage both ways. Please contact the Editor.*

Tradition and Discovery

Ed. Phil Mullins, Missouri Western State College,
St Joseph, MO 64507, USA;
mullins@missouriwestern.edu;
www.missouriwestern.edu/orgs/polanyi/
TAD is now available on line.

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No. 1

Paul Knepper: 'Polanyi, "Jewish Problems" and "Zionism"'

Phil Mullins and Struan Jacobs: 'Polanyi and Karl Mannheim'

No. 2

Phil Mullins and Marty Moleski: 'Harry Prosch: a memorial re-appraisal of the *Meaning* controversy'

Tony Clark: 'Polanyi on religion'

Esther L. Meek: 'Learning to see: the role of authoritative guides in knowing'

Book Reviews include: S. Jacobs and R.T. Allen (eds): *Emotion, Reason and Tradition: essays on the social, political and economic thought of Michael Polanyi*, by Phil Mullins

Polanyiana

Eds Martá Fehér and Éva Gábor, Stoczek u. 2,
H-1111 Budapest, Hungary;
polanyi@phil.philos.bme.hu; www.polanyi.bme.hu/
Alternate issues in Hungarian and English

Humanitas

National Humanities Institute, PO Box 1387, Bowie,
MD 20718-1387 USA; www.nhinet.org/hum.htm

Modern Age

Ed. George A. Panichas.
PO Box AB, College Park, MD 20740, USA
Subscriptions: ISI PO Box 4431, Wilmington, DE
19807-0431, USA

We have now received back issues from Vol. 39 No. 2, Spring 1997 to Vol. 47, No. 3, Summer 2005.

Personalism

Ed: Rev. Prof. C.S. Bartnik, ul. Bazylianówka 54 B,
20-160 Lublin, Poland. personalism@wp.pl.
www.personalism.pl. Separate English and Polish
versions of each issue.

Revue Romaine de Philosophie

Editura Academiei Romane, Calea 13 Septembrie
13, Sector 5, PO Box 5-42, Bucharest, Romania;
edacad@ear.ro; www.ear.ro. Articles in English,
French and German.

Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia

Praca da Faculdade 1, P - 4710-297 Braga, Portugal;
jvila-cha@facfil.ucp.pt; www.rpf.pt.
Articles in Portuguese, Spanish, English, French,
Italian, German.

Vol. 61 Nos. 3-4 July-Dec. 2005: 'Kant's Legacy'
In English: 'Schopenhauer and Kant'

Alpha Omega

Via degli Aldobrandeschi 190, 00163 Rome, Italy;
pubblicazioni@upra.org; www.upra.org.
Articles in Italian, Spanish, English, and French.

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References to books by Michael Polanyi:

Because of the particular interest in the work of Michael Polanyi, and in order to avoid unnecessary repetition, please make references to his books by means of the following abbreviations followed by the page number:

- CF = *The Contempt of Freedom* (London, Watts, 1940; reprinted New York, Arno Press, 1975)
- FEFT = *Full Employment and Free Trade* (London, C.U.P., 1945; 2nd ed. 1948)
- KB = *Knowing and Being* (London, Routledge; Chicago, University of Chicago Press; 1969)
- LL = *The Logic of Liberty* (London, Routledge; Chicago, University of Chicago Press; 1951)
- M = *Meaning* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1975)
- PK = *Personal Knowledge* (London, Routledge; Chicago, University of Chicago Press; 1958)
- SFS = *Science, Faith and Society* (London, OUP, 1946; 2nd ed. U. of Chicago Press, 1964)
- SOM = *The Study of Man* (London, Routledge; Chicago, University of Chicago Press; 1959)
- TD = *The Tacit Dimension* (London, Routledge; New York, Doubleday; 1966; reprinted Gloucester, Mass., Peter Smith, 1983)

Also:

- SEP = *Society, Economics and Philosophy: Selected articles by Michael Polanyi*, ed. R.T. Allen (New Brunswick, NJ, Transaction Publishers, 1997).