

APPRAISAL

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

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God, quantum fields and distant responsibilities

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Heidegger, Derrida, Blaga on metaphysics



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This issue's new and less recent contributors:

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EDITORIAL

From the first year of publication, we have held annual conferences which have provided a forum for our readers and others to meet, and to try out and to exchange ideas. They have also provided a source of interesting articles for *Appraisal*, such as the first two in this issue. It would be a pity to discontinue them.

But in future we shall be charged for the use of the conference room and well as for accommodation, and the same policy prevails in most other places. For 2007 (details below), we can just about contain the cost, but afterwards we shall need to attract more participants in order to cover the extra expense. In any case, it would be much better for all if we could increase the attendance to at least 20 to 25, see fresh faces and hear new voices. Some of the members of the SPCPS (all individual subscribers) have been asked for suggestions about this. Some of those received, such as moving elsewhere to attract a local audience, holding an inexpensive one-day conference, choosing a particular theme, inviting one or more 'big names', have been tried, separately and together, already but without making any appreciable difference. Nevertheless, we should make another effort.

I cannot do it by myself, but need your help, especially if you are able to attend yourself and have contacts who may be interested in coming. We are a friendly and mixed group; we allow the maximum time for discussion and so you will not be lectured at; and the papers are like (and usually become) those published in *Appraisal*, so that they will not pass wholly over your head. Those of you who receive the electronic version will be able to print fliers and posters from the website, and printed ones are included with the printed version – more are available if you can use them.

Especially welcome are offers of papers and suggestions for persons whom we could invite to give them, and, even more so, offers to help to organise future conferences, such as one-day ones on particular themes. Please think carefully about this: the future of our conferences, and with them *Appraisal* and the SPCPS, is in your hands.

Finally, in the next issue we hope to feature Monia Manucci's paper on 'Epistemology and knowledge-management in businesses', which she was unable to give at this year's conference, along with a variety of comments upon it. The tacit dimensions of commercial and other organisations and training are a growing field for the exploration and application of Polanyi's ideas and we should contribute to it.

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NEO-KANTIANISM, CONSUMERISM, AND THE WORK ETHIC

R. J. Brownhill

Abstract:

We examine how the rhetoric of Kantian individualism has been taken into a modern work and education ethic and in the process transforms individual and state relationships, while challenging the traditional distinction between education and training.

Key Words

Autonomy, capability, commerce, competence, democracy, education, Hirst, Kant, knowledge, learning, Oakeshott, Peters, Scheffler, self-direction, skill

The archetype and myth of the modern ideal person is of one who is autonomous, rational and capable of making decisions for himself and taking responsibility for his actions. This ideal was foreshadowed in the writings of the eighteenth century moral philosopher, Immanuel Kant¹, and developed in the twentieth century by a group of liberal educational theorists led by R.S. Peters in Britain² and in the United States by John Dewey.³

1 Kant, and a neo-Kantian theory of education.

Kant developed the notion of a rational, autonomous individual in his *Metaphysics of Morals*.⁴ This individual was primarily a moral creature, who overcoming all emotional distractions, could act impersonally and impartially for the sake of morality. This individual could act independently of any authority and make his own decisions and choices but this capacity meant that he was therefore responsible for his actions, and with this sole responsibility, accountable for them. This notion contained the idea of freedom to do what one rationally desired but within the proviso that the action remained within the realms of morality. Indeed, one had a duty to carry out the moral law. But what was the moral law? It was his responsibility to legislate into effect the moral law with universal intent. It is a concept of a rational individual who ought to act impersonally and impartially, ruling out all emotions and personal self interest or of the group to which he may belong, for the sake of acting rightly in an unbiased way. Kant is arguing, of course, that this 'ought', although difficult to carry out, is nevertheless possible as ought implies can. It would be ridiculous to state someone ought to do something if one simply cannot do it. It is an individualistic theory but theoretically if everyone acted in such a way, acted rationally for the sake of the moral law, then all would agree and a 'kingdom of ends' would

come about with everyone in agreement- a case of perfect democracy. However, any one who has read the decisions of the Supreme Court in the United States where there is a majority and minority decision will realise how difficult it is in practice to arrive at the perfect rational decision, as both sides seem to develop their decisions perfectly rationally.

The Kantian theory has both political and educational connotations. It means that at all humans, as potential autonomous individuals, are equal and therefore shown respect. This notion of being 'shown respect' is important for it means that all individuals should be treated as 'ends in themselves', and not used for some other purpose and treated as a 'means to an end', for instance, not used for the good of the economy or for the glorification of the state. Richard Peters⁵ developed this notion in the educational sphere with his concept of 'the educated person' who had the capacity to understand things not by practical use or vocational training but by recognising the principles that lay behind them. It was a picture of a fully rounded person, who was steeped in culture and able to make rational choices decisions based on both evidence and argument.

The model of teaching these neo-Kantian ideas was developed and expressed by Israel Scheffler⁶ in what he called the 'rule model' of education. The emphasis in this model was on reason, and reason is achieved by following rules and principles. In the cognitive realm reason can be called justice to the evidence, which means a careful weighing up of the evidence and argument for and against a particular proposition with an interest of arriving as close as possible to the truth. In the moral realm reason is action on principle which is freely chosen by the moral agent. It is impartial and without prejudice. It includes the moral notion of respect for other people, as like oneself they are autonomous law-makers. A rational person is consistent in thought and in action, who abides by impartial principles which can be made general, and are freely chosen and therefore binding on oneself. The aim of the educational model is to build up individuals, who have an autonomous and rational character, which in fact is the underpinning of science, morality, and culture. This picture of such a individual leads to the concept of a self-directed learner which has become an important concept in education but also in our post modern concept of the individual.

Some criticisms can be made of this model. It appears to be too individualistic, although certainly not a selfish individualism, and perhaps puts to great

a stress on cognitive ability while down grading the affective side of personality. Yet a Kantian would argue that Kant does put great stress on individual emotion but sees it as something to be overcome by struggle for the sake of impartiality and truth. Nevertheless, Peters⁷ argued that the aim of education was to produce this sort of educated person, and that it could be seen that this sort of education therefore had intrinsic value with no need for further justification. He also used this argument to denigrate industrial and commercial training, which he saw as using people for the immediate good of the economy, and thus using them as a means to an end rather than treating them as an end in themselves.

Another side to this liberal tradition was expressed by the educational and conservative political philosopher, Michael Oakeshott⁸. He argued that finding it too difficult to understand the world we examined it in a restricted way, and looked at it through 'modes of experience'. He saw these modes as the cultural achievements of mankind. For instance, in science we looked at the world through the category of quantity and were concerned with measurement, we had also chosen to look at the world from the poetic point of view, the historical, etc. These modes of experience had developed their own language, concepts and methodology. This enabled us to immerse ourselves in them, and sometimes, with sufficient application, become a connoisseur within a certain realm. Oakeshott recognised that the process of learning would be a long one, as at school we could only scratch the surface and maybe just learn some of the language of a particular mode. It also included a theory of authority and control, where practice within the modes had to be learned from the master practitioners until one gradually became an adept oneself. The excesses of individualism were controlled through the framework of the culture.

This argument of Oakeshott, originally produced in the 1930s, in some respects was repeated in the 1960s by the post-Wittgenstein, philosopher of education, Paul Hirst.⁹ He no longer wrote of modes of experience but 'forms of knowledge', which he claimed were substantiated by 'linguistic intersubjectivity'. The intention was to give greater stability to our knowledge base as Plato had done in classical times with his theory of forms, but of course, for Hirst Platonic metaphysics was no longer available, so hence his 'linguistic intersubjectivity' as a substitute for the Platonic forms. Hirst had a number of forms and each had its own language, concepts and methodology. He argued that they were separate and could not be mixed, and that they should become the basis for the curriculum in academic schools. In order to become educated a pupil had to become conversant with a fair number of the forms. In fact this meant that the new educated individual became completely bound within the parameters of the

favoured disciplines and received culture.

2 Self-directed learning and the development of a neo-Kantian concept of autonomy.

Even though there was a strong conservative element in liberal educational tradition¹⁰ the notion of a self-directed learner, which was derived from the Kantian notion of an autonomous individual, began to challenge the traditional structure of schooling. This notion of a self-directed learner is an essential notion if a person is to take control of his own learning and progress through life by grabbing educational opportunities that may arise which may prove useful to this progression. He needs to know how to learn and how to put the learning into practice. An emphasis is at first placed on a student's developing independence, and his own responsibility for obtaining this learning. Ultimately the aim of education should be to give the student the ability to stand on his own feet and be able to make decisions in not only the educational sphere but other spheres as well. Ideally the self-directed learner should move from autarchy, the normal ability to make decisions, to autonomy, which in such a sense is a much heightened ability to make independent decisions and choices.¹¹ Education for a self-directed learner should also aim at fostering the ability to make clearer rational decisions not only for the individual but for a group to which he may belong. Included in this is a notion of being positive, of taking active steps to achieve one's goals, rather than being passive, and waiting with the hope that something may turn up or even be provided by a benefactor.

It can be seen that in the sphere of education the neo-Kantian concept of the self-directed learner will have a tendency to de-institutionalise the educational process, for as self-directed learners, students will not need traditional educational institutions, which offered in return for submission to their authority access to their expertise and knowledge. This tendency has been strengthened in recent years by the development of information technology and the world wide web. This in effect not only encourages a person centred approach to learning, where the action of the teacher is to stimulate independence but also gives the teacher a new role as a resource for the student among many other resources.

In such a sense a full blooded self-directed learner can appear frightening to the teacher, as a teacher is no longer seen as an authority but as someone to be used as a purveyor of either useful or useless information and skills, as a mere competent or incompetent technician.

It can be recognised that this idea of a self-directed learner can on the surface appear very attractive to business, industry, and the professions.

It would appear that a person who is able to plan his own career may also be able to estimate the prospects for a company and even see how it can be improved. A person who is able to keep going the momentum of a career development can also benefit a company by keeping them up to date. It is the case that a person who can see what skills and knowledge is needed for his own development, and keep up with developments in information technology, and related fields is a good acquisition for any company.

The apparently liberal concept of an autonomous individual working within this learning framework has become attractive to vocational and professional trainers. It can be seen that the traditional aims of liberal education have been synthesised with arguments concerning the aims and actual needs of vocational and professional training, and modern business practice. Of particular interest is the use made of the Kantian concept of autonomy, and its relationship to the idea of the self-directed learner within what we can call a learning organisation.

3 Competence and capability: towards a business ethic.

The professional notion of 'competence' has become attached to both the liberal and Kantian notion of autonomy and the educational notion of a self-directed learner. It is argued that in order to become competent a person must be able to carry out his role adequately and effectively. It includes the idea that a practitioner has been trained so that he can achieve a level of practical skill acceptable to colleagues who make the assessment. It therefore provides a notion of a standard of performance below which one would be considered incompetent. For instance, at one level it might be the ability of a craftsman to wire a house successfully – a purely practical skill, but at a higher level it might include the ability to understand and apply the theory that lies behind the wiring. The standard of competence is not stable but depends on the judgement of other practitioners and professionals. There is also a moral dimension and often a legal one as well in this, for competent practitioners have a responsibility for their work and therefore can be held accountable for it. It also enables them to be praised for good work and be criticised or blamed for bad work. This means that it can be associated with quality assurance, and the use of standards against which assessment can be made.

The notion implies more than just achieving a standard and then forgetting about it. As a work ethic it implies the maintenance of competency throughout one's working life. A professional under this ethic and work ideology has a duty to maintain his own competence at a high level by continual careful practice, and recognition and use of appropriate innovations in his field.. A duty then to keep

up to date. It is sometimes thought that these concepts are related to the work of technicians rather than autonomous professionals, and that teachers are also looked at in this way rather than as autonomous professionals.¹¹ But, I argue, the ideology does not specifically degrade teachers for under the ideology all professionals and technicians are looked at in this way.

The idea of 'capability' has been associated with the concept of the autonomous professional. It is often considered to be the goal for students in higher education. It again makes use of the concept of autonomy, and its development into the idea of the self-directed learner but it nevertheless remains very much a notion of a highly professional competent manager, who can eventually and at a very high level make decisions in the interests of his employer.

As a commercial ideology the concept of capability and the ideas associated with it are exceedingly attractive to business organisations. It includes the notion of being able to stand on one's own feet and make good decisions, being self starting, and a self-directed learner, of having commitment to one's work, and being prepared to take responsibility, being able to work to an excellent standard, and setting very high standards for oneself. The notion also takes on board the Kantian idea of being a self legislator and therefore having a duty to carry out the moral law but it does this under a commercial guise, as a business ethic unlike a pure ethic is concerned not with universal intent but with reciprocal ethics, that is mutual self interest.

In order to emphasise the ideology a contrast is often made between the capable,¹³ independent person and the incapable dependent person. For example in the sphere of knowledge and skills, the capable person is self motivated, and the skills and knowledge needed are negotiated with the trainer, and are integrated together so that they become coherent, and as they have been properly understood the learner will have the ability to adapt them to new situations, and also to extend them as the need arises. On the other hand the incapable person is dependent and acquires received opinion determined by others, the knowledge and skills are fragmented, and therefore cannot be adapted or properly extended, and he is told how to do things. The attitudes of the two are also in contrast: the capable independent person is committed, self up dating and exhibits professional integrity, honesty, and an ability to innovate, whereas the incapable dependent person has no commitment, never updates unless told, and will not accept responsibility for his actions.

In spite of the rosy picture framed within the commercial ideology we can wonder what professional capability and competence entail within areas of

ethical concern. For instance, does the notion include the possibility of overriding the corporate interests of the employing organisation for the common interest of the public or alternatively of a person's profession, or even his own interest? Does it include the notion that a person should have the impartiality to blow the whistle on transgressors of the legal or moral code? The questions raise the possibility of potential conflicts between one's duties as a citizen to society or as a moral agent to oneself and one's duty to one's firm or profession. It can only be resolved if the culture of the employing organisation includes the value of the public good within its own culture, and where it is an important component within the learning framework of the organisation.

4 Some political consequences of autonomy, self-directed learning, and commercial ideology

The discussion so far has indicated that the traditional distinction between training and education has been rejected, and is out of fashion. The reason for this is a commercial one. Modern industry and commerce need an adaptable and intelligent work force, and motivated independent managers who can lead firms and the professions in a highly competitive environment. It is believed that we need to get away from the image of the glorious amateur who was able to run the colonies and administer the civil service without a vocational background and educated in the classics and liberal arts. The new man and increasingly woman needs to be highly motivated and committed. The commitment, in part, maybe to an economic lifestyle, but in order for it to be really successful it needs to become a way of life, which gives self fulfilment and can be achieved through work. Paradoxically this commercial vision means that from a moral dimension capitalism has come full circle and has become a mirror image of Marxian utopianism. In the nineteenth century Karl Marx castigated rampant capitalism as alienating men and women from their labour and thereby preventing the possibility of their self fulfilment through work. Marx's future utopia would get rid of alienation and return humankind to a true relationship with work. The capitalism expressed in the new commercial ideology is a vision to be achieved not by the historical process but by commitment and persuasion.

The learning society the commercial ideology desires has another dimension like the Kantian autonomous individual the new work force of self-directed learners has a political aspect, as it demands respect and some say in the development of work. It is a potential democratic force that

expects to be taken into account and listened to but also has the potential with the learning organisations in commerce and industry to improve efficiency and motivate organisations to greater economic progress for their own sake and that of society.

The notions of the autonomous individual and the self-directed learner is also part of the ideology of a democratic society, as it postulates a person who is willing, and indeed has a duty to participate in political action and decision making. Education for citizenship has recently become an important component of modern democracies with the notion of autonomous individuals who as moral agents should be respected. It is also anti-paternalistic as people have the ability to plan and take decisions for themselves and not be treated as children.. This was recognised by J.S.Mill,¹⁴ who provided principles to limit the authority and power of the state, as far as possible the state should not interfere in the lives of individuals, should not be paternalistic or enforce public morality. It is interesting to note that Mill's democratic society was based on an academic community searching for the truth,¹⁵ the ideal of a learning society. Mill also postulated that participation in the political system of a democracy had an educational function as it made it more efficient and understandable, how to be politically active and learn from the activity. Mill also argued that a free society would bring about greater utilitarian benefits not only for the individual but for society as well. A position later taken up in the pragmatic liberalism of von Hayek.¹⁶

We have seen how the learning organisation favoured in what I have called commercial ideology has led or is leading the democratisation, and therefore the internal structural force within the economy. This raises the interesting question of how they are to be brought into the wider political arena? Traditionally in Britain workers and trade unions as well as employer organisations were seen as interest groups that could put pressure on governments to take into account their interests but there have been other proposals. For instance, the corporatism of Moseley and the Fascists, with similar proposals from Harold Macmillan and the Conservatives, and, indeed even the Fabian Society in the writings of Sir Julian Huxley. Of course, because of the corporatism of the Nazis and the Fascists these alternatives appear as non-starters but, nevertheless, a new solution seems to be required of the new democratic forces expressed in the learning organisations of commerce and industry.¹⁷

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UNIFORMITY AND CONTINGENCY : WHITEHEAD'S PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE ARISTOTELIAN SOCIETY ON 6.11.1922

Hans Popper

Abstract

Induction consists in extrapolating from systematic uniformity of experience to the general structure of nature. Are frequently occurring sequences of events due to causal connections (Hume)? In making life, our feelings participate (ingress) uniformly in sense objects embedded in all-embracing reality, otherwise induction would be impossible. We observe and control the course of ingressed actions; our account of the pattern they follow constitutes an inductive argument.

Keywords

Induction; extrapolation; participation; ingression; uniformity in nature; process; space-time continuum; sense object; perceptual object; sensorium; relatedness; embeddedness; patience; consciousness; sense experience; control.

The theme of Whitehead's lecture is to explore the central problem of induction; is it possible to extrapolate from the character of systematic uniformity, with which we try to understand our portion of experience, to the structure of nature in general?

His starting point is Hume's transition from interpreting the contiguity of two events, or objects caught up in two events, as being causally linked, when this frequently occurs.¹ We do this by virtue of our custom, our mental habit of reading necessary connections into such sequences of one event following another. But are we justified in doing so? Leaving the purely contingent occurrences of a sequence of A following B on one side, we concentrate on events in nature bound together by space and time, working together as a single organic process, viewed by consciousness whose working processes must not, in their turn, be confounded with the events in nature which it seeks to apprehend.²

Both processes, that of nature and that of consciousness, proceed in tandem,³ leaving the past behind them, such that the present assumes pride of place, making possible an enlarged view of its way of proceeding, without, however, being necessarily aware of how the consciousness operates, although knowing that it does so. It proceeds in temporal succession, in step with nature, so that it can have clear awareness of it as a process. Consciousness has a working process of its own, quite distinct from that of nature which it contemplates.⁴ Leaving the

working process of consciousness on one side, Whitehead proceeds to investigate the apprehension of nature as a process. The constitution of the latter is analyzed by the properties of space-time and each of its parts establishes the whole scheme.

Other space-time processes are conceivable – in fact, only one of these receives attention here, that of dreams,⁶ with space-time processes of their own, completely separate from those of waking actuality. Dreams have an internal imaginary system of space-time of their own, entirely separate from that of waking life, hence also what happens within dreams constitutes an imaginary world of its own. Trying to understand it, we must carefully distinguish between our process of apprehending dreams and the apprehended process. Interestingly, Whitehead does not discuss the distinction between dreams and their interpretation, and that it is not always possible to draw a sharp line of distinction between them; nor the fact that the world of dreams consists not only of stories with plots of their own, but also of a sort of meandering akin to such free association, as is used in psychoanalysis.

So he distinguishes strictly between the world of dreams and that of nature, each with its autonomous system of space and time. But in the long term, only the experiences of waking life fit into the space-time continuum that is our true reality. It is into this continuum that our knowledge of nature, its sense objects, gets projected, both within and outside our bodies.⁷

They are the containers of our feelings, more especially of the bodily feelings which he calls sense objects. These, together with the sensorium, the sensory apparatus of the body, produce what we actually experience: the *event*, located anywhere in space and time.⁸

Summing up what the process of projection involves, he first states that it is a relation; we are aware of this relation, in fact, we participate in it; the term he coins for this is *ingression*,⁹ and it refers to the interaction between a bodily feeling, which he calls *sense object* and the apparatus for receiving the sense-impression, which he calls the *bodily sensorium*.

They operate within the space-time continuum, but this is stratified into layers of simultaneity. 'Accordingly', he writes, 'I would say that we are aware of the *ingression*' – the participation – 'of sense-objects amid the events of a dominant space-time continuum, that this awareness

constitutes our apprehension of nature'¹⁰.

Accordingly, our awareness constitutes our apprehension of nature, and this awareness, this ingression, must be *uniform*. Any part of this space-time continuum settles the scheme of relations as a whole irrespective of the particular part which the participation of sense objects may exhibit. The scheme of relations must be exhibited with a systematic uniformity.¹¹ He now approaches uniformity along another line of thought.¹²

His starting-point is any items of knowledge. These are embedded in an all-embracing fact. Their embeddedness is essential for their very being. Therefore all particulars, or factors, thus embedded in an all-embracing fact must be abstractions. The fact is their all-embracingness of reality. Each factor, or particular, is significant for fact. The systematic uniformity of factors within fact he calls their *patience*.¹³ Nature is the objective field of this relationship of ingression. He now raises two objections:¹⁴

Objection 1 (*based on individual experience generalized because other persons are trusted.*)

Hume has a standard of normality, of what is usual, which creates a standard.

It arises when sense data are repeated, thus get regarded as usual; this produces a judgment based on a standard, which is the usual.¹⁵ Whitehead accepts this but investigates the presupposition involved. He regards *the usual* as insufficient, as it does not discriminate actuality and dreams. He trusts other people – but how transfer their experiences to his world?

There is here an incoherence -between space-time and your own dominant space-time; therefore you suspect the same incoherence in the case of others.¹⁶

Objection 2 (*this concerns uniform factors and fact.*)

For Hume, sense objects are mental phenomena, with no external archetypes, of a different order of being from common nature.

The prime quality: extension: the idea entirely from sight and feeling.

Similarly secondary qualities depend on *ideas* of secondary qualities.

They are perceptions of the mind only; there are no external archetypes.¹⁷

So, if all knowledge is based on experience, it is within the play of our own minds: beyond these, there is no source of information. This sweeps away the space-time of science.¹⁸

So consciousness encompasses knowledge, in so far as it is also self-knowledge. There is no knowledge which does not include self-knowledge.

Therefore, consciousness has knowledge of nature, and, within nature, of self. Thus, part of nature, or of fact, is also within our consciousness, so that consciousness apprehends fact.

Against the claim of idealists that all external significance is peculiar to consciousness, therefore it must necessarily be grasped by consciousness, he says that external significance and every factor of fact are significant; and nature *waits for*²⁰ consciousness to *participate*²¹ in sense objects amid many layers of events. When, thus, we participate in (or *ingress*) events of nature, we are also conscious of our conscious awareness.

Consciousness and *nature* are embedded in all-embracing fact. When abstracted from their embeddedness, each exhibits its patience of the other. This is one basis of uniformity in nature, within the space-time continuum (not by itself, otherwise induction would be impossible).

Here lies the weakness of Hume (and other philosophers): their instinctive trust in induction;²² but this does not disclose any rational explanation for the trust in induction.

All our evidence of matters of fact come from

- Sense experience
- Memory and
- Relation between cause and effect for which our sole idea is:

two objects, frequently conjoined which give a *feeling* of further instances.

This feeling is due to custom and 'a certain *instinct* of our nature'; this is difficult to resist, *yet, it could be fallacious*. Russell says that when B frequently *follows* A, we feel justified in practice to substitute causes for follows: but perhaps this is a superstitious notion; there is no logical justification for this substitution.²³

We cannot solve this problem; but Whitehead will point out the direction in which the solution may be found²⁴. He again quotes Hume's statement on the idea of necessary connection derived from frequency of occurrence by mental habit, which cannot be justified. Whitehead now asks, whether we can do better and find a rational ground.

It is necessary that, in each single instance of A being followed by B, we must find a rational ground for believing why there should be this frequency of A being followed by B.

Accumulation of instances is not the key to this mystery; rather must it be found in the *intrinsic character* of each instance; this gets us to the heart of Hume's argument; it must be found in the significance of *something extra to*, something other than itself; and this *something extra* is known as *relatedness*,²⁵ arising from the knowledge of the single instance by *adjective* with spatio-temporal significance (the necessary presupposition of Hume's philosophy of nature). But is there any

further significance? The relatedness between A and B has spatio-temporal significance, as well as significance regarding *participation* (or *ingression*) of sense objects and events.

How do we pass from the ingression of sense objects to the perceptual objects? The answer is that ingression *signifies* the perceptual objects; but a perceptual object is really an *event*, which is its situation.²⁶ Furthermore, there is a many-layered relation between sense object and perceptual object which arises within an event of participation.

Perceptual objects become known as participating in nature by virtue of their relatedness and within the space-time continuum – realized in a particular ('here') situation, where the sensorium recognizes the perceptual objects in question within the space-time continuum.²⁷

So the sensorium participates in perceptual objects (within space-time), and this is the percipient event 'here'.

The sense object can be a bodily feeling, where parts of the body are perceptual objects; their recognition especially vivid by the sensorium, fainter in reference of the sense object to a perceptual object in its situation.

When the sense object is not a bodily feeling, but is projected into a situation beyond the body, that is, when the sensorium reaches out to an object beyond the body, a difficulty arises: the sense object is a perceptual object; when this perceptual object is the sensorium, it is clear and definite; but when it is some outside object, it is apt to be vague, illusive, if not absent, such as hearing vague, stray sounds.²⁸

The question arises, how to refer from a sense object to a perceptual object. We perceive the perceptual object through our senses, whence we can identify the object -the chair standing here.²⁹ The standard verification is by touch; this is especially vivid within the same situation when various sense objects participate.³⁰

Summing³¹ up the evidence, we note that participation in nature by sense objects ('ingression of sense objects into nature') involves events. These events are sensoria, situations of sense objects – the loci of perceptual objects.

When sense objects thus participate in nature, they *exhibit* themselves (visually, or with the other senses).³²

A perceptual object is mental regarding all events, except the events which it qualifies.

To use modern scientific phraseology – a perceptual object is:

- (a) a present focus, that is, a perceptual object; its relation is to the present (with its duration).
- (b) a field force, stretching out into the future and controlling the future.

We observe this control in action: during the manifest present, relevant to our experience: a finite number of perceptual objects within a region of space-time; the finite number remains, as we pass from the vague perceptual objects to the more precise scientific objects (e.g. electrons).³³

Hence we control:

- present, manifest action;
- a finite number of actions of the future (as relevant to our experience), belonging within a system which is finite.

Hence we can construct an inductive argument,³⁴ if present actions and future finite actions (relevant to our experience), belong to one single finite system.

Swansea

Notes:

1. Meeting of the Aristotelian Society at 21, Gower Street, London WC1, on November 6th, 1922, at 8pm in: *Papers read before the Society. 1922-23: 1. Uniformity and Contingency. The Presidential Address* (pp. 1-18): pp. 1-3. – He quotes Hume (*Philosophical Essays concerning Human Understanding*: London, 1748: Essay III (pp.31 ff; quotation from p.35), XII (pp. 231 ff; quotation from p.239), VII (pp. 99ff; quotation from p. 122).
2. *ibid.*, p4, II. 21 -28; but this is one of Hume's central concerns: cf. *A Treatise of Human Nature* (ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge; 2nd edn.: rev. P.M. Nidditch; Clarendon, Oxford, 1978, 1992): Bk.1, Pt. III, sec. VIM (*of causes of belief*): pp. 98ff.
3. *Uniformity and contingency*, p. 4
4. *ibid.*
5. *ibid.*
6. *ibid.*, pp. 5-7.
7. *ibid.*, p.8.
8. *ibid.*
9. *ibid.*
10. *ibid.*
11. *ibid.*
12. *ibid.*, pp. 8-9: developed in the James-Scott lecture delivered before the Royal Society of Edinburgh, included by him in *The Principle of Relativity* (C.U.P.. 1922)
13. *ibid.*, p.9.
14. objection 1: *ibid.*, pp. 9-10; objection 2: pp. 10-11.
15. cf. above note 2.
16. *ibid.*, p.10.
17. cf. his quotation (p.2) from Essay XII.
18. *ibid.*, p.11.
19. *ibid.*, p.12.
20. Anthropomorphism is one of Whitehead's typical devices, showing the unity of all processes in nature; intelligent volition stands out as a special mode of acting within these; cf. also 'prehensions', and on an intelligent level, 'apprehensions', 'comprehensions'.

Continued on p. 52

IDEOLOGY: A COMMENTARY ON A DEFINITION¹

Maben W. Poirier

Abstract

In this piece, I write a commentary on a one sentence definition of ideology which is provided us by the late American political philosopher Gerhart Niemeyer. The sentence contains four clauses, and I explore, in a theoretical fashion, the meaning of each clause. I support the theoretical part with a large number of reference points from the contemporary scene and from the literature on ideology.

Keywords

art, control, ideology, modernity, philosophy, second reality, technology.

In a work whose publication almost went unnoticed at the time of its appearance in 1971, and that is almost never read today, the late American political philosopher, Gerhart Niemeyer (1907-1997), wrote the following about ideology:

The term 'ideological' refers to the subordination of contemplative theory [*theoria*] to the *libido dominandi*, which manifests itself in the building of closed systems around dogmatically willed 'positions,' in reductionism of both scope and materials of analysis, and in the determination to substitute an intellectually fabricated 'Second Reality' [See also Heimito von Doderer, *The Demons*] for the reality given to man.²

This is unquestionably one of the most compact and philosophically refined definitions of 'ideology' available in the literature on 'ideology,' and it is one of the most interesting as well.³ While it is not stated explicitly, this definition of 'ideology' is largely, although not exclusively,⁴ beholden to the theorising of the late Austrian-American political philosopher Eric Voegelin (1901-1985). Let us look closely at each one of the four clauses composing this definition, with a view to extracting as much of what is contained in each as is possible.

1. 'The term "ideological" refers to the subordination of contemplative theory [*theoria*] to the *libido dominandi* ,...'

The point of this introductory clause is to introduce and draw the reader's attention to the most important difference between philosophy and ideology, namely, the fact that 'ideological thinking' is at odds with Plato's and Aristotle's understanding of *theoria* and *epistémé*, ...at odds, it must be said, in a very specific way. It informs us that ideological thinking is driven, not by a desire to know the world

about us as *it is given to us*, but rather by a desire to *dominate, control and eventually transform it*, even before knowing it, along lines that are designed by the ideologist's fertile and creative imagination. In other words, the ideologist is someone who, from the start, is not accepting of *the given*. He is someone who does not first seek to know, and then to act. Rather, he is someone who first seeks to shape and transform, according to some inner need, some emotionally driven and deeply unsettling criteria, before knowing whether, and to what extent, shaping and transforming is appropriate and right, ...for he secretly, and, in many cases, not so secretly, doubts that there is anything for him to know or to be right about before he first transforms, shapes and creates. Prior to the ideologist's dominating, controlling and transforming, the world – if one can speak of the world at all here – is an indistinguishable and perhaps even disorderly mass, for the ideologist. It is an available plasticity needing definition. Simply put, it is the raw material on which he, the ideological thinker, will apply his art.⁵

In order to understand better what is at issue here, it may be appropriate to reflect on a passage from Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. It will be recalled that Aristotle, in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book VI, defines 'theoretical knowledge' (*epistémé theoretiké*) as being the knowledge of what is, as it really and truly is, i.e., as it is given to us, independently of and unmediated by our thought processes. The idea here is that man can be said to have theoretical knowledge when, and only when, the mind of man conforms to the given, i.e., the *reality* of the thing on which the mind is focussed often outside of the mind – but not necessarily outside of the mind⁶ – such that it can be said that there is a similitude between what is resident in the mind concerning what is outside the mind, and what really is outside of the mind, i.e., other. The situation is such that one might say that there is either a one for one relationship, or there is as close to being a one for one relationship as it is possible to achieve, between what *is* and what is known by the mind. Hence, to know the *truth* about something, Aristotle informs us, is to know in this way, i.e., to know the other or the given *as it is*. In fact, *truth* is synonymous with this kind of knowing, for Aristotle, ...and maybe even for the majority of us who, today, still think common-sensically about these matters. And, if it is not synonymous with this understanding of knowing, then truth either has no meaning at all, or it refers only to what is

conventional.⁷

Now, Aristotle concedes that arriving at this kind of knowing and knowledge is admittedly not an easy matter. It requires two things: (a) it requires that the knower be rooted in a particular way of being in the world (a *practice*) that sustains lucidity and saneness, and, (b) it requires the existence or presence of a certain type of predisposition on the part of the knower.

Speaking of the first requirement first: Being rooted in a particular way of being in the world, in a *practice*, means that the knower has to be experienced in the ways of the world, that he or she has a deep familiarity with his or her environment, in the sense that he or she cannot just have come upon the scene as a complete neophyte, and immediately expect to delve into the intricacies of a particular reality. He or she has to have accustomed himself or herself to the peculiarities of the vicinity in which that reality that interests him or her resides. The point here is that revealing the real is not a matter of putting a particular procedural knowledge into operation – i.e., a method for extracting truth – an all too common understanding of how knowledge is acquired today – and then following the programme or procedure through to its end. This sort of proceduralism does not lead to the knowledge of the *true* and the *real*. It leads only to the skilful manipulation of epiphenomena, which, in turn, is designed, in too many instances, just to impress – and unfortunately does impress in our modern environment – in lieu of the development of understanding. Most importantly and worse still – in the case of the human environment, this sort of proceduralism is designed to govern, control and discipline a man's unintended chance encounters with the *real*, and to govern the real's revelation of itself, so that man not notice that the encounter is a consequence of his way of being, or of his *manière d'être*, and not the result of his following some impersonal procedure.⁸ And so, for Aristotle, revealing the real is a matter of having no mediating or procedural knowledge in mind at all, designed to govern the encounter, prior to engaging the real, but of having an intimate, profound and practical acquaintance with the subject and its environs, and intuitively knowing when and when not to move in a specific direction.⁹

With reference to the second requirement, it calls for the knower to adopt a *contemplative* attitude for this type of knowing and knowledge to arise. The knower can not begin with what, in the broadest sense, can be defined as an explicitly held unfounded and preconceived understanding of what it means to know, nor, most importantly, can the knower begin with a fixed pre-understanding of what is outside of the mind (i.e., what colloquially is

often called 'a take on things,' and sometimes even 'a theory,' which it most definitely is not), and seek to impose or force this unfounded understanding, this 'take,' on the real that he seeks to know outside of the mind. Put simply, the one who would know theoretically cannot force the entity outside of the mind to conform to or render an account of itself based on the exigencies of a 'take' set by the mind of the would-be knower. That is, he cannot reveal the real and the given that is outside of the mind by imposing on this real, this given, the mind's imaginative expectations and coercive interpretations. This is completely self-defeating if the purpose is to know the true and the real as it is. If the knower is to know theoretically and scientifically, he has to be open and receptive to what he has not created and imagined. He has to be fully available to that which he is seeking to understand. He has to be contemplative with respect to 'the clues that are shed by the reality that is to be known,' to use a Polanyian expression.¹⁰ From the start, he has to adopt a contemplative attitude,¹¹ and not an aggressive attitude, in order for theoretical knowing to take place.¹² In a sense, he has to have entered into a state of expectancy and allow the otherness, i.e., the given – that is often in the world outside the mind, and with which he is attempting to establish contact – in its own good time, *and to the extent that he has properly prepared himself*,¹³ to reveal itself to him.^{14, 15} Failing that, there can be no theoretical knowing.

This understanding of knowing expresses a Greek classical as well as Mediaeval Scholastic view of knowledge and of reality. It affirms that the world about us is *real*, in the sense that it exists outside of the mind – or if our concern is on something that is within us, then what is within us is real – and it is not our creation, i.e., the creation of our mind or imagination. And, most importantly, it is not available to us to be re-created, *in a wholesale fashion*, according to our hubristic desires. It has an integrity all its own that we either respect, and thereby show that we are wise, or try to ignore, and show that we are fools, i.e., without minds (*anoia*). The Mediaeval Christian and the Christian Mediaevalist would add that this real has been created by God, and is therefore not available for man to alter radically. And like the ancient Greek, the Christian in all ages acknowledges that this real is written on a human scale, in the sense that it is available for contemplative man to know, and that there can be a complicity of sorts between the *real*, the given, and man the knower, ...a complicity that bears fruit and that leads the real to reveal of itself only to the person who adopts the proper contemplative attitude.

In contrast, the non-theoretical enquirer with the 'will to dominate' approaches the knowing process

in an entirely different manner and with an entirely different disposition and spirit. He very much comes upon the scene with an arbitrary preconception or plan in mind,¹⁶ and he attempts to force (i.e., govern and control) *the other* – that is in the realm outside of the mind (or that may be experienced as *distal*, if one is focussed on an aspect of one's body or interiority) – to reveal itself, but not as it is, but as he wants it to be. He has it address, or, in some cases, meet the exigencies of his preconception. He attempts to compel *the other* to reply to his plans and questions. In other words, rather than adopting a contemplative disposition, where thought precedes action, the non-theoretical enquirer is an activist first, inasmuch as action precedes thought. He does not wait for the other to reveal itself by making his a state of patient expectancy. Nor does he attend to the clues that this other issues in his direction. Rather, he approaches the knowing process with the attitude of one who is going to coerce the other (i.e., the real, namely, that which has its own integrity and existence independent of the knower) to reveal itself to him, and the instrument by which he will compel reality to revealing itself is his pre-existent plan or schema, which he may varyingly call a conceptual framework, a model, a paradigm, a pattern, an exemplar, and occasionally even a *theory*, when it is, of course, no such thing. What we see here is the dominating disposition of the non-theoretical enquirer. Reality will be placed on the rack that is the arbitrary preconception of the would-be knower, so to speak, and reality shall speak, we can hear the libidinous enquirer proclaim. It shall speak *his* language and meet *his* exigencies. And should the *other* attempt to express itself and its integrity, he shall not hear it, he shall discipline it, for its murmurings are meaningless gibberish that is beyond comprehension and any acceptable range of human interests and concerns.¹⁷

We have not arrived at the realm of modern 'ideology' yet, but we are well on the way towards entering the ideological world. What is missing from the above description of things for this world to be 'ideological' in the modern sense is the fact that the non-theoretical thinker still believes that there is a *reality* that is beyond the mind, and that this reality can be revealed by creative inventiveness and ingenuity. His approach to revealing it may not meet with the standards of the contemplative theoretician, but these are standards that ought not to exist anyway for the non-theoretical knower. Simply put, the non-theoretical thinker, described thus far, does not dispute the existence of the *real*. He only presumes that the *real* is more amenable to force than to respect. In fact, it is not amenable to respect at all, as far as the non-theoretical thinker is concerned. However, this is not what the modern ideological thinker holds. In other words, the

modern ideological thinker has yet to appear on the scene. He will appear on the scene when reality itself is doubted, that is, when it is believed that there is no *reality* to begin with, other than the *reality* (actually, it would be more appropriate here to speak of *realities*) that is produced by the 'enquirer' (who is really not an *enquirer*, but a *producer*) when he imposes *his* plan and *his* order on what is now perceived as the presumed 'chaos' that is outside of the mind.^{18 19 20} And when this happens, the full meaning of 'governing, controlling and disciplining,' i.e., of *libido dominandi* and the *will to power*, will be felt.

Note here that this new conception of a plan is different from the earlier one. The aim of the earlier plan was to force reality to reveal itself, but no one expected that there was no reality to be revealed. However, in this instance, that is to say, in the world of the ideologue, reality is presumed – I would prefer to say *imagined* – to be non-existent, and the point of the plan is not to have reality speak or reveal itself. Rather, the plan is to bring order, i.e., man-made order, to be sure, into a presumed chaotic and orderless environment. The idea here is that the man-made-plan will actually be constitutive of a *reality*.²¹ We see this most clearly, it seems, in the realm of modern technology and the society which issues therefrom; ...note, 'technology' and not 'applied science,' as many would have us believe. Technology is concerned with the creation of realities. The modern technologist is the person who approaches the world about him with a plan to impose order on what he perceives to be a wholly plastic and malleable environment, ...an environment that is deemed by him to be in dire need of a plan or design, if it is to be orderly. It is, of course, here that we encounter the 'desire to dominate.' It is here where *libido dominandi* expressed most forcefully and clearly.²² The modern technologist wants to dominate, not out of any explicitly held tyrannical propensities, but because he believes that unless he dominates, all is chaos.²³ Indeed, to dominate is the only responsible thing that a 'reasonable' person can do, according to the modern technologist – or should we speak, at this point, of *the ideologist?* – which, by the way, would indeed be true, if, from the start, there were no given, ...no *reality* that man does not author.^{24 25}

2 '...which manifests itself in the building of closed systems around dogmatically willed "positions", ...'

As we have observed above, this plan or schema which we have described as the product of the imaginative and creative genius of a thinker, is not developed under any sort of obligation to 'get it right' – i.e., create a plan that conforms to the given order of things – since it is the thinker's assumption

that there is no possibility of 'getting it right.' The world outside of the mind is entirely malleable and available for authoring. All that needs to be done by any creative genius is for him arbitrarily to posit or will an order into existence. And so, it is possible to say of this plan that it is *dogmatic*, in the sense that it need satisfy nothing other than the planner's imaginative designing and willing; it is *non-referential*, in the sense that there is nothing real for it to refer to; and it is *self-contained*, in that it is sufficient unto itself, hence *closed*. It is also *systemic* as well, because it is designed and understood to deal with or trade in only those things that are within the integrative whole that is brought into being by the creative genius.

Let us explore this matter further. The plan of which Niemeyer and we speak is non-referential because it refers to nothing beyond the confines of the technologist's or ideologist's mind and creative imaginings, because it is presumed that there is nothing for it to refer to beyond the mind; and it is self-contained because it is whole and entire within the mind. What is not part of the plan, simply is not. The plan and its contents are constitutive of what is real and sufficient unto themselves. It is closed in upon itself, in the sense that it need not take account of anything that transcends the mind and the plan, because there is, according to the understanding of the technologist/ideologist, nothing intelligible that transcends the plan, until that something is created by the planner.²⁶ The plan or schema brings into being everything there is that is intelligible and meaningful for the planner, and there is nothing beyond the plan, ...absolutely nothing that can serve as a reference point to keep the plan on course, so to speak, and inject a note of realism and sanity into the operation.

As a result, we can say that viewed from the perspective of someone who holds that transcendence of the plan is possible, i.e., viewed from the perspective of the contemplative theoretician, of whom Niemeyer speaks, the modern ideological plan or schema is both blind and hostile to all transcending reality, which it sees as an attack on its freedom and creativity. It holds that there is no reason for it to go beyond itself, because it asserts that there is no 'beyond itself' to go to. It communicates with nothing beyond the ideologist's creative self. Of course, this is also why some speak of the ideological plan as delusionally closed, 'delusionally' because, if viewed from the vantage point of the non-ideological thinker who holds that communication with otherness and transcendence of self is possible – indeed, crucial for knowledge to be knowledge – there is no real to reveal itself further, with the passage of time. The ideologist has defined the parameters of his real at the point of creating it. As a consequence, one can say that this pseudo real

is, of necessity, closed off to further development. Moreover, this pseudo ordering of the technologist, this authored order of the ideologist, this 'position,' is not only delusional. It is also sustained by an act of *willing* that can only be described as arbitrarily *dogmatic* when contrasted with the non-arbitrary character of any true knowledge of the given order of things. The pseudo order or 'position' is a capricious imposition on reality, capricious, that is, only to one who has *not* lost all contact with the real and with the given order of things. For those who have lost contact with the given, there is no, and there can be no, awareness of the capriciousness of it all. The capriciousness is concealed from view by the plan, the pseudo order, i.e., the *second reality*.

Notice that what we are saying here is that ideological thinking is a particularly sophisticated form of delusional thinking, which is, in a very deep sense, related to some of the psycho-pathologies which prevent, in varying degrees, depending on the severity of the illness, the ill subject from dealing with reality, and which cause him or her to fabricate an imaginary world, an imaginary reality or realities. These pathologies are perhaps best explored from within the realm of philosophical psychology.²⁷

3 '...in reductionism of both scope and materials of analysis,...'

One of the more damaging consequences of having to live in the pseudo order that is this engineered reality (i.e., second reality) fabricated by the ideologist's imagination is that it is never as rich and subtle an order as the given order of things. The reason why it is not as rich or as subtle is because it can be no more subtle than the imaginative capacities of the one who constructs it. Now, admittedly, some imaginations are more subtle than others, but none is as subtle nor as capable of producing the variety and luxuriousness we see as the order that is given. For one thing, men construct on the basis of what is already known, whereas, when the given develops, it is not restricted in its development by what is already known to man. It is restricted only by the inherent potentialities of the given, which is beyond the capacity of the modern ideologist, at any point in time, to know completely or totally. And even if someone's imaginative capacities were almost as subtle and creative as the given's, the fact is that they would not, in either the short or long term, reveal themselves to have unknowingly constructed more than they initially intended to construct.²⁸ And so, to live in a pseudo order is to live in a collapsed and restricted order, ...indeed, a much more restricted order (world) than the one that is given us. It is to live in the equivalent of a prison of our own making. As a consequence, we can say, while it is initially perhaps interesting, and maybe even entertaining, the imposed world of

the ideologist is ultimately a world that is impoverished by comparison with the order that we experience as given to us. Hence, we ask: Why would anyone want to live in such an environment? Why would anyone want to settle for a hovel, i.e., a caricature of the real, when the luxuriously real is available to us?

What is particularly intriguing here are the consequences of this sort of 'prison life.' Because man cannot eliminate or even indefinitely ignore the given order, eventually a dissonance arises between the imaginatively imposed pseudo order and the order given to man, and this dissonance creates in man something in the nature of a bifurcated experience of the world around him. Man, at one and the same time, is obliged, by his contemporaries – who also may have experienced the dissonance, but who have in some sense committed to the imaginative man-made order, i.e., to prison life – to live in this pseudo order, and yet, he is subsidiarily aware²⁹ of the presence and the importance of the given order in his life. However, he cannot acknowledge the importance of this given order in the environment in which he finds himself, for, to acknowledge it, would be to challenge and contest this order, which, of course, has its supports and its supporters. And so, the average person represses, as best he can, his awareness that something is awry in the world about him, despite the fact that he does know tacitly, and maybe even explicitly, that something is not quite right. In fact, he may even begin to wonder whether he is maybe not suffering from some sort of cognitive or emotional imbalance, that he may equate with a pathological condition, since, all about him, he sees others who seemingly experience the pseudo order as if it were normal, while he is in a state of doubt, maybe even severe scepticism, as regards this matter. Little does he know that many of neighbours are in the same dissonant state as he, and like him, they dare not speak for fear that they will be set upon by the defenders of what they dimly experience as pseudo. Sadly, he does not realise that almost no one is entirely comfortable with himself or herself, not even those who make a show of believing in the imaginative creations of the ideologists.³⁰

Lest someone think that prison life is something that affects man only at the political and societal level, consider the fact that ideological thinking extends even into our intellectual concerns and musings, into the field of epistemology, for example. The pseudo order created by ideological thinking in the field of epistemology expresses itself in a most recognisable way. It restricts our relations with the world about us to a set of formally prescribed relations. It sets before us as worthy and true only those things that are approved of by the fabricators of the pseudo order. We might illustrate

this by reflecting upon the way in which modern empiricism and empiricists insist(s) on the pre-eminent importance of fact in scientific knowledge and in knowing scientifically, as well as upon the absolutely crucial character of experimentation in natural science, when our own experience as well as many of the foremost practising natural scientists tell us that while facts are important, it is, in the end, experienced judgement and 'connoisseurship,' and not fact or proceduralism, that counts in the advancement of natural science knowledge. Experienced judgement, we are informed, tells us when to ignore certain facts because they are unimportant, would lead us astray were we to credit them, and do not mean what they seem to mean to the inexperienced person. And so, it is not true that practising natural scientists either treat all facts in a given field of study as equally important and significant, which is what early empiricists in the philosophy of science contended at the beginning of the last century, nor is it the case that natural scientists rank facts according to the exigencies of some conceptual framework or *theory* (understood in the modern sense, i.e., as plan, schema, conceptual framework, paradigm, etc.), for that would be to prejudice the argument from the outset. Rather, practising natural scientists discriminate amongst the facts that are available, and this discrimination is not based on or grounded in a criterion that is intersubjectively transmittable in any explicit fashion, as would be a conceptual framework, model, schema, paradigm, etc. It is based on experienced and schooled judgement and connoisseurship, which cannot be made wholly explicit, as the Anglo-Hungarian physical chemist and philosopher of science, Michael Polanyi (1891-1976), informs us in his famous work *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (1958). But an empiricist, be he or she early or more recent, is not allowed to say these things or think these thoughts, for while it accords with his (and our) experience of what is the case, it is, though true, ironically, not a rendering of the facts that is prescribed by the ideology that is scientism expressed as empiricism. Again, we see the need to control, dominate and discipline the real and the true. In short, in the name of empiricism, the modern empiricist cannot state the facts. He or she has to distort the truth about the facts in order to meet the ideological exigencies of scientism and modern empiricism.

In terms of the study of politics and sociology, we can illustrate the proclivity that ideological thinking has to force us to live in a restricted and restrictive environment by drawing attention to the tendency of ideological thinkers both to misread and reconstruct the political and social environment in which we live. Ideologists misread the political and social

environment by their impoverished descriptions of it, which, all too often, reduce all of its rich fabric to nothing more than the expression of social laws and forces at play, when it is all-too-frequently plain for all reasonable persons to see that the events being described are both more complex and more interesting than the simple unfolding of social forces would allow us to observe.³¹ They reconstruct the political and social environment when, in their intended descriptions of it, they distort it to meet the exigencies of their particular ideological orientation,³² or alternatively, when they attempt to give the well established norms of a great social institution new meanings.³³

4. '...and in the determination to substitute an intellectually fabricated 'Second Reality' for the reality given to man.'

Now, this pseudo order that ideologists fabricate, in the belief that if they do not fabricate it, there will be no order at all, is an order that is in the nature of a 'Second Reality,'³⁴ in the sense that it is a illusory substitute for the First Reality, that is to say, for the reality that is given man, but which the ideologist refuses to acknowledge as a given.

Notice that the modern ideologist is an especially interesting character type ...provided we can prevent him from working his magic on us. If we cannot prevent him from working his magic on us, then he becomes a great deal less interesting, and a whole lot more frightening. Why interesting, and why would we want to speak of magic in connection with this character type? The ideologist is interesting because he has given himself the task of denying the existence of what he, in some sense, often knows exists all too well, namely, the reality that is given to man, i.e., the First Reality, and of substituting for this reality, a reality that he gives himself, and then either imposes or seeks to impose on the rest of the population. In other words, he knowingly sets about to suppress a dimension of his awareness, and of the awareness of others, so that the given can have no claim on him or on the others, and, in the process, he often unreservedly exaggerates a dimension of human existence that is undoubtedly present, but not to the degree that the ideologue would have us believe it is present. Simply put, the ideologist chooses to live, and have us live too, in a different world from the world that is given us as human beings, and the way that he hopes to succeed in this venture is by denying outright the reality of the given world both for himself and for us. Now, in order to achieve this objective, the ideologist has to engage in intellectual gymnastics and slight-of-hand that matches that and then some of the great magicians. Indeed, the more capable thinker knows

that it is not enough simply to deny the reality of the given. He has to represent the given as a chimera, an illusion, and, in turn, he has to represent his illusion as reality. As a result, the ideologist is involved in nothing less than a great shell-game involving the restructuring of human consciousness so as to make the familiar unfamiliar, and the unfamiliar familiar, which, to say the least, entails bizarre mental callisthenics.³⁵

The point here is that the ideologist has a plan, a plan which, under normal circumstances, would be viewed by most people as deranged, but it is not so viewed because the ideologist operates in an atmosphere where the commonplace and the abnormal are either difficult to distinguish from one another or are no longer distinguishable.³⁶ The plan is to achieve nothing less than the restructuring of human consciousness according to the ideologist's wilful demands, which are, in no way, seen as capricious or disdainful of others, because he sees and represents himself to himself and to others as archetypal man, ...as universal man. Consider, for example, how Marx understood 'consciousness',³⁷ and how the expression 'false consciousness' developed amongst Marxists. 'False consciousness' is an expression that is used by Marxists to speak of the presumed mistaken and alienating idea that people have which is to the effect that consciousness determines life, whereas, in fact, life determines consciousness for Marxists. It is also the expression that is used by Marxists to designate the views of one who associates with his class-enemy's societal objectives rather than with his own class's societal objectives. An instance of this would be a proletarian person's assimilation of, and association with, bourgeois capitalist goals, when they are clearly not to his or her advantage, or when this same person pursues religious goals and values, in the mistaken belief, according to Marxists, that these are class neutral goals and values, when, again according to Marxists, they are anything but class neutral. Indeed, as part of the Marxist's effort to restructure consciousness, it is his general contention that there are no class-neutral goals and values. All goals and values are class based, the Marxist affirms, and so, associating with goals and values that are not one's class 'objective' goals and values is tantamount to having a colonised mind, colonised by a class that is not one's own class, by the dominant class. Concomitant with this is the Marxist argument that there are only class truths, and there is no such thing as truth *per se*, truth that is common to all mankind, irrespective of class. Affirming all of this, of course, is linked closely to the restructuring of consciousness, for the Marxist. If one can get people to believe that what they know all too well, namely, that truth is truth, is actually not the case, and have them doubt their

common-sense knowledge, then the familiar becomes the unfamiliar, and the unfamiliar the essence of reasonableness.³⁸

Of course, it is not only ideologies on the left that seek to restructure human consciousness. Ideologies of the centre left and centre right, and the far right, also attempt to do the same thing, as do ideological movements in the philosophy of science, in art, and even in religion, religion which, by its very nature, should reject everything having to do with ideology and ideological thinking. By way of an example, consider Nazism. This was, in many respects, a crude ideology which sought to explain the world in which we live as a product, not of class, but of race. Every aspect of human existence, the Nazis believed, was a function of race, and could be explained on the basis of the race of the individual(s) involved.³⁹ Now, it may be the case that some things may be explicable on the basis of race, although, I cannot imagine what these things might be. But no man who is not an ideologist is going to argue that *all* things, or even very many things, are susceptible of explanation on the grounds of race. Here again, we see the ideological component displaying itself in the single-minded abandonment of common sense, in favour of an outrageous claim that anyone with an elementary experience of living and of the world would readily know to be wrong. Of course, the fascinating thing is that the ideologist is totally immune to life, to living and to the world that is about him, and even to any semblance of common sense. In fact, he has vaccinated himself against life and the world of common sense, by blinding himself to the given order with a notion like 'false consciousness'. He, that is to say, the Nazi, the Marxist, the capitalist, the positivist, the religious fanatic or fundamentalist, etc., has protected himself from life and living by convincing himself that the key to understanding the world about him is to be found apart of him, ...apart from his hopes and desires, i.e., in race, in class, in an especially arcane skewing of religion belief that we see today amongst certain Christian sects in the U.S.A., as well as amongst Muslims, and other religious denominations. The story is virtually always the same. One group or another has access to the truth, something needs to be done about man's predicament immediately, and common-sense is of no assistance to us in bringing about a remedy.

A very similar ideological mind-set is displayed by the so-called mainstream school of thought in the field of epistemology. In this instance, the key to the acquisition of 'so-called' scientific certainty – that ever present objective where ideological thinking is concerned – in the field of knowledge is method or procedural know how. Procedural know-how becomes the key to understanding how scientific

knowledge comes to be the reliable thing that it is, and any knowledge that would be reliable in the scientific sense is a function of this know-how. As an instance of this, consider a school of thought that is, in one variation or another, still a mainstay in the Anglo-American world – particularly so in the social sciences, and to some extent even in the humanities as well – namely, that school that is sometimes referred to as the mainstream school, but which is perhaps better described by the appellation positivist empiricism. Positivist empiricists hold that scientifically trustworthy knowledge, as opposed to biased or emotionally based reasoning, is founded solely on reliance on *sense data* and the *scientific method*, in the sense that sense data forces the decision for or against a particular position, and man, who is guided by procedural know-how, has neither the freedom to acquiesce to nor to refuse to acquiesce to the data and the procedure, for that would be to indicate a personal preference and bias. Man is there only to record the decision taken by the data, i.e., the facts, and not to show preference or bias.⁴⁰ The education of social scientists is heavily focussed on driving home this point. 'Bias' is the every-present watchword, the thing to be avoided, the thing that will plunge us into uncertainty. Of course, even here, the restructuring of human consciousness in order to meet these ideological exigencies is necessary, for what is being recommended is certainly not intuitive. Programmes of study are specifically configured in ways so as to teach the student to be critical of personal biases in decision making in science, for, it is argued, biases play no positive role in the advancement of truly scientific thinking. Rather, students should focus their attention on the collection and proper methodological analysis of sense data.⁴¹ Reliance solely on sense data, and not on any kind of personal knowledge and judgement, it is held, is the reason why the knowledge provided by the natural sciences is the powerful and predictive knowledge that it is. And so, any disciplined study – be it one of the social sciences or the humanities – that would be scientific ought to follow suit and mimic the natural sciences in this regard. But, this is precisely where things derail completely because this has nothing to do with the way natural scientists reason when engaged in scientific research, as we have been reminded umpteen times by natural scientists who are regularly involved at the forefront of scientific research. This is ideological thinking passing itself off as scientific. And the reason why it is able to do so rather successfully is because it has monopolised the discussion of these matters for so long that many have come to believe that it must be correct. And yet, this does not gainsay the fact that the personal preferences of the connoisseur in science are central to the development of science and scientific

knowledge? When a natural scientist identifies some sense datum as a fact, but not all sense data as fact, and then decides to privilege certain facts and not others, there is always an expression of preference or bias involved, since it is obviously not the facts that privilege themselves, as would have to be the case if positivist empiricists mean what they say. On what *fact-based basis* would a natural scientist credit certain facts and not others? For this is what has to take the place of the expression ‘founded solely on sense data (and not on bias)’ to be meaningful for a positivist empiricist, ...unless, of course, the positivist empiricist means something that is completely different from what he is saying, and is not expressing himself clearly on this matter. That is, does the positivist empiricist really mean to speak about the elimination of *inappropriate* biases and *unjustifiable* preferences,⁴² and not about the elimination of all preferences altogether? If that is what the positivist empiricist means, then let him or her say it. Let the positivist empiricist say that he is not, strictly speaking, a positivist empiricist at all.⁴³ Let him say that he has been misunderstood. Let him or her say that for science to take place, there are certain biases that are absolutely necessary for science. But if he really favours the elimination of all personal preferences from the knowing process altogether, in the expectation that facts will decide, then that is completely unattainable. No practising natural scientist reasons this way because, were he to do so, his efforts as a scientist would be totally unproductive and lead nowhere. Were these sorts of ideological recommendations to be followed, science and scientific thinking would rapidly come to an end. The advancement of scientific knowledge is not based primarily on sense data, but on the educated judgements of natural scientists about which data to accept and which data to ignore. My point, and that of others as well, is that *science is a culture and not a procedure to be implemented, and the survival of science depends upon a particular (moral) way of being in the world, and not upon dogmatic adherence to a modus operandi. Science does not stand apart from our various cultural activities, and legislate unto them from afar. It is part and parcel of and on par with these cultural activities, which cultural activities, if corrupted, results in the corruption and death of science itself.* And so, to be a great scientist is to have developed a deeply refined moral and culturally-based judgement. It is really not true that the advance of natural science knowledge is based *solely* on devotion to method and sense data. It is rather the case that the culturally schooled and experienced judgements of the natural scientist advance natural science knowledge.⁴⁴

Needless to say, all of these attempts to deny the given order, or to affirm something that is all too

obviously inconsistent with a practice that we know very well, cannot be successful in the long run. Eventually, the truth wills out. However, there are consequences of a psychological nature that are discernible while we live under the spell of ideological thinking, and this is true whether it be political ideologies that we speak of or other types of ideologies. For instance, it is impossible for us not to experience some sort of cognitive dissonance while under the influence of ideological thinking. This cognitive dissonance may be more or less troublesome depending upon a number of factors, i.e., our degree of commitment to the ideology in question, the extent to which the ideology is supported by an authoritarian structure, the presence of avenues of escape from the clutches of the ideology in question, etc. For instance, it appears that if our commitment is great, despite the cognitive dissonances we may experience, avenues of escape are likely not to be use. In fact, in an effort to find favour with the authority structure, we are likely even to critique the escape routes, and the consequence is that we set up for ourselves a ‘blind spot,’ where the ideological order will dominate over the given order, and over our lives, indeed, more than dominate, it will actually lead us to deny the given order. But this can only last for a time, for the given order does not disappear just because the ideologist denies it. It remains present in the background of our lives, in what we might call *the subsidiary ranges of our existence*, and it creates for us cognitive dissonances or dislocations. That is, conflict develops between our explicit awareness of and belief in the dominant ideological *take* on things, and our implicit or subsidiary awareness that is alert to the fact that there is something serious wrong with this *take* on things. This ultimately sets up a tension within us, a tension between our ideologically rooted existence and our momentarily eclipsed or suppressed truer experience.⁴⁵ Of course, the momentariness of this conflict may last much longer than one would like it to last, and be more destructive than we might imagine or than we would like it to be, but, ultimately, it must end.⁴⁶

In conclusion, the thing that strikes us most forcefully in all of these matters is the fact that ideology and ideological thinking is not a rare or unusual mode of thinking in our times. It is, rather, in one form or another, an important and almost unavoidable ingredient in, if not at the heart of, much modern thinking.

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Notes:

1. BRIEF BIBLIOGRAPHY: Aiken, Henry David. *The age of ideology: the 19th century philosophers, selected, with introduction and interpretive commentary by Henry D. Aiken*. New York, N.Y.: New American Library, c1956; Benda, Julien. *The Treason of the Intellectuals*. New York, N.Y.: W.W. Norton and Company, Ltd., The Norton Library, 1969; Crick, Bernard. *In Defence of Politics*. Second edition. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1972. (Originally published by Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London: 1962.) See Chapter II entitled 'In Defence of Politics against Ideology.'; Germino, Dante. *Beyond Ideology: The Revival of Political Theory*. New York: Harper and Row, 1967; Hawkes, David. *Ideology*. London: Routledge, 1996; Johnson, Paul. *Intellectuals*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1988; MacIntyre, Alasdair. *Against the Self-Images of the Age: Essays on Ideology and Philosophy*. New York: Schocken Books, 1971; McCullough, H.B. ed. *Political Ideologies and Political Philosophies*. Toronto: Thompson Educational Publications, Inc., 1989; Minogue, Kenneth. *Alien Powers: The Pure Theory of Ideology*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1985; Plamenatz, John. *Ideology*. London: Macmillan, 1971 (1970); Eric Voegelin, 'A Letter to Robert B. Heilman' dated November 13th, 1947, *The Southern Review*, Vol. VII (New Series), No. 1 (January 1971), pp. 9-24.
2. Gerhart Niemeyer, *Between Nothingness and Paradise*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), p. 141f. Karl Jaspers provides us with a somewhat related definition of ideology. However, it is not as subtle or as elegant as Niemeyer's definition. Yet, like Niemeyer's definition, it captures the deceitfulness masking the need to control, a need which is characteristic of all ideological thinking. Jaspers writes: 'An ideology is a complex of ideas or notions which represents itself to the thinker as an absolute truth for the interpretation of the world and his situation within it; it leads the thinker to accomplish an act of self-deception for the purpose of justification, obfuscation and evasion in some sense or other to his advantage.' See Karl Jaspers, *The Origin and Goal of History*.
3. The word 'ideology' has a modern origin. However, aspects of the reality that is ideology predate the appearance of the word. The word was coined in 1796 by the late Eighteenth Century French thinker Destutt de Tracy (1754-1836). It appears that the term, as de Tracy understood it, referred to a general science of ideas, and had few of the contemporary connotations we assign to it. Concerning ideology, de Tracy wrote in 1801:
"Cette science peut s'appeler idéologie, si l'on ne fais attention qu'au sujet; grammaire générale, si l'on n'a égard qu'au moyen, et logique, si l'on ne considère que le but. Quelque nom qu'on lui donne, elle renferme nécessairement ces trois parties; car on ne peut en traiter une raisonnablement sans traiter les deux autres. Idéologie me parait le terme générique, parce que la science des idées renferme celle de leur expression et celle de leur déduction. C'est en même temps le nom spécifique de la première partie".
One or two additional things that can be said are that de Tracy, in the fashion of the late Eighteenth Century, apparently sought to understand ideas as would a contemporary materialist like Condillac, let us say, rather than as an earlier philosopher. To this extent, therefore, there is a connection between de Tracy's understanding of the term ideology and some modern views which see ideas as the products of the material conditions under which men live. It is further said that the term 'ideology' received its negative connotations from Napoleon, who opposed de Tracy's followers who were known as 'les idéologues.' See also Roger Scruton, *A Dictionary of Political Thought*. London: The Macmillan Press, 1982, p. 213.
4. Voegelin did not explicitly use the expression 'contemplative theory,' and it is not clear to some scholars that the expression is entirely consistent with the architecture of his thinking. In fact, there is rather good evidence to show that it is a term that is not consistent with Voegelin's thought.
5. In this connection, consider Marxism, a movement that has become almost synonymous with ideology and ideological thinking, both from the perspective of providing us with an understanding of what ideology is that is proper to it, and from the perspective of it itself being an ideology. At no point in his writings does Marx attempt to make sense of the givenness of the world, not even when he is ostensibly describing an event or a thought from the past or from his present. That is, he rarely does justice to the event or thought he intends to describe in his would-be description of something. He rarely states it the way it is or was. Rather, he 'describes' the event or thought according to the exigencies of his preconceived interpretive framework, and in the process, deforms his, as well as his reader's, very ability to understand the phenomenon under investigation, because there is really no investigation of the phenomenon as such taking place. What there is, is a fitting of the phenomenon into the mould of Marx's interpretive schema. Of course, this is fundamentally dishonest inasmuch as it knowingly seeks to represent what is really a pseudo description as a true description, and to pass off a pallid simulation of something as the real thing. There is, in a sense, a swindle taking place here, a swindle that is entirely consistent with and to be expected given Marx's Eleventh Thesis on Feuerbach, where Marx makes it clear that he is not interested in knowing what *is*, or presumably what *was*, but in bringing about what can be. The famous Eleventh Thesis reads: 'The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it.' (See Karl Marx, *The German Ideology*, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964), p. 653.) Of course, it is not only Marx and Marxism that does this. All ideological thinking swindles us in this way.
6. This clause is necessitated by the fact that the intellect

may want to focus on and draw attention to an intellectual reality, i.e., a concept or idea that is within the intellect, and make contact with its givenness as the intellect would, on other occasions, make contact with the givenness of a reality that exists outside of the intellect. In fact, this is precisely what I am attempting in these notes on ideology. I am attempting to focus attention on an intellectual reality that we conventionally call 'ideology,' i.e., I am attempting to acquire a theoretical knowledge of what it means to think ideologically, as others, at times, seek to acquire a theoretical knowledge of a physical reality. However, in my case, the reality does not exist primarily in the world outside of the mind. It exists within the mind and has bearing on the world outside of the mind, inasmuch as it affects the way we approach this world.

7. Speaking of the truth in this way is something that is almost unheard of in institutions of higher learning today. In fact, holding the view that it is possible to know some part of the truth about something is almost forbidden. If one even dares to assert that there is such a thing as truth that is not radically contingent upon context and time, one opens oneself up to the charge of being a fool or a dogmatic ideologue, or both. Not far beneath the surface is the insinuation that this sort of thinking about truth was and is what is behind the murderous actions of ages past and present, and that one is indirectly sanctioning these murderous activities by holding this view of truth. People who oppose injustice, violence and murder are supposed to hold the view that there is no truth that is not culture- and time-bound. This is being broad-minded, enlightened and liberal. This is the way one affirms one's decency, goodness and opposition to the inhumanities of the past, because it shows that one is prepared to revise oneself totally and affirm the complete opposite of what one affirmed in the past. Revising oneself is the hallmark of a liberal-minded person, we are led to believe.

The curious thing in all of this is that it seems never to cross the mind of these contextualists and relativists that when one says that it is possible to know the truth about something, one is not claiming that one can know the whole truth. Nor does it seem to have occurred to them that when someone says that he or she knows aspects of the truth about something that he or she can be just as tolerant of any challenge to his or her views as can any relativist. After all, is that not the manner in which natural scientists reason when they defend their views before their colleagues, since they certainly do not assume that their knowledge of the truth is contingent on space and time? That would not be science. In fact, it would be the end of science. Contextualists and relativists simply assume that they have a monopoly of tolerance – they are the good people, and you, who claim that it is possible to know truth, are not, didn't you know – and that this monopoly which they have is directly related to their belief in the truth of nothing except their beneficent and fine sentiments.

Of course, the major problem with all of these fine sentiments about contextualist thinking is that it flies in the face of reasoning in science, historical reality

and clear thinking generally, something that one would expect academics to know about, but apparently many of them these days do not. Was it not precisely the contextualists and relativists, who, in conformity with their beliefs in the relativity of truth in the 1920s and '30s, and in defence of their right to be open-minded and non-doctrinaire, revised themselves totally and worshiped at the altar of the 'new age'? Believing in nothing, was it not they who showed, when the Nazis and the Bolsheviks came to power, that they were capable of believing in and coming to the defence of anything, including tyranny, and this for no better reason than the fact that they were tired of the *ennui* of liberal democracy? In fact, did they not argue that democratic government and justice of the sort that prevails in liberal societies was *passé*, bourgeois and old-fashioned? Was it not they who said that they were in pursuit of a better, more robust, more Aryan way of living in this 'new age'? Was it not they who also said that humans were about to realise a more masculine way of governing and a higher justice, something more in keeping with the times and the 'new truth' of the Nazi and communist eras? Of course, it was they, as we learn from the historians of the period. However, many of our contemporaries, it seems, have forgotten this – if they ever knew it at all – and they vindictively misplace the blame for the monstrous actions that were committed in the name of this 'new truth' during the 1930s and 40s, and even later, on the opponents of contextualism and relativism.

8. For a compelling understanding of this need to 'govern, control and discipline' man's chance encounters with the given and the real, see Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish, The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books (Random House) 1979, pp. 135-169.
9. This experienced knowing or connoisseurship of which I speak in this piece can be equated with Michael Polanyi's understanding of 'tacit knowing.' See Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*, pp. 54ff.
10. *idem*.
11. The word 'contemplative' here is not meant to signify that the knower needs to enter into something akin to a trance-like state in order to know theoretically. To suggest something like this would be completely nonsensical. The word 'contemplative' rather refers to the state of mind of the experienced connoisseur who, in his attentiveness, is receptive of the clues that issue from the real, which he is attempting to know. The *contemplative mind* is at variance with what I will call the *active* or *aggressive mind* inasmuch as the aggressive mind is really not founding itself on experienced connoisseurship, nor is it at all interested in 'attending to' (if I may be permitted a Polanyian phrase) the clues that emanate from the real. The aggressive mind is founded on the assumption that experienced connoisseurship is not, and cannot be, a basis on which to found theoretical knowing. Theoretical knowing, according to the aggressive mind in the early modern period, arises when the would-be knower preconceives (in the sense of claims neither to rely on any sort of connoisseurship nor be attentive to any kind of clues in the elaboration of an insight into

the real, but rather begins by constructing a plan according to which it forces the real to account for itself) an order. In the late modern period, the aggressive mind carries its logic forward and calls an unfounded orderliness (unfounded in the sense that it has no basis in the given, but is a fabrication of the mind of the one who calls it forth) into existence by the fiat of its creative imagination.

12. The word 'aggressive' may seem inappropriate. However, it is not. The reason why it is not inappropriate is because the so-called knower who would approach the world of the other and the given with a preconceived notion of what is other and given, i.e., with a plan or schema, is, in a manner of speaking, forcing what is other to reply to the exigencies and questions generated by his plan or schema. He is saying that he will take notice of the other only to the extent to which it conforms to his preconceived understanding of it, a preconceived understanding that is not rooted in the other, but in the creative imaginings of the would-be knower. In other words, the so-called knower is refusing to be informed by the other, if his being informed by the other involved him in going beyond *himself*, ...in his transcending himself in the act of making contact with the other and given. He will make contact with the other only inasmuch as the other is, curiously, not the other, but a dimension of himself, and, of course, for this to be possible, he has, provisionally, at least, to eliminate the otherness of the other, ...hence, the violence and aggression done to the other. The point here is that there is something violent and deeply solipsistic about this approach to knowing, in short, about the approach of the artist-technician.

Later, when this aggressiveness is brought into the study of the social sciences and the humanities, we will want to say that its exponents are often patronisingly aggressive, in the sense that the wilful egotism exhibited above is frequently masked by a pseudo humanist discourse that is designed to achieve nothing less than our compliance with what is an entirely egotistical plan. Human compassion and concern become weapons in the arsenal of the egotist, and virtue is increasingly just a means of gaining the listener's compliance with the technician's will.

13. This is what we mean when we speak of the *experienced connoisseur* and *connoisseurship*.
14. See Nicholas Lobkowitz, *Theory and Practice: History of a Concept from Aristotle to Marx*. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1967.
15. I am assuming here that this 'otherness' exists in the world outside of the mind. However, it may very well be that the 'otherness' in question is within the knower, and maybe even within the mind of the knower, in the sense that an idea that a knower wishes to explore, must first be experience as something that is, using Michael Polanyi's expression, *distally* related to the knower. That is, the knower must relate to it as he or she would to a physical object existing in the world outside of the mind, even though it is an idea or an aspect of the knower's mind that the knower seeks to know theoretically. In such an instance, the knower is obliged to treat that idea or aspect that he wishes to know scientifically as if it were an 'otherness,' that is

to say, deal with it as if it were an object of his attention and knowledge that exists apart from him, despite the fact that it is within him, and perhaps even within his mind. For want of a better word, the knower has to set *distance* between his experiencing self and that aspect of himself that he seeks to know theoretically or scientifically. Rather than experience the object of his investigation in the usual way, i.e., as he typically experiences it as he goes about his life doing other things, he has to experience the object of his investigation as if it were detached from him, despite the fact that it may be within him, if he is to know it theoretically and scientifically. And so, in a very profound sense, what this tells us is that theoretical knowing and knowledge is different from experiential knowledge, but very much dependent upon it also. For a very insight-filled account of what is happening in this to-ing and fro-ing between experiential knowledge and theoretical knowledge, see Michael Polanyi's distinction between tacit and explicit knowledge in *Personal Knowledge* as well as in many of his published papers from the 1960s and '70s. such as those in *Knowing and Being*. We have already briefly spoken about this in n. 6 above.

16. We speak of *arbitrary* preconception here because we want to draw attention to the fact that this preconception is not rooted in a *practice* or *way of being*, but rather in inventiveness. The non-theoretical enquirer does not approach the object of his investigation with respect for its integrity. Rather, he comes upon it with the will to dominate it, and he will dominate it by applying to it *his* expectations of what it should be, and, as far as he is concerned, is. Rather than *respectfully* try to explore its integrity through contemplation, he will ignore its integrity, and have it respond to his activist's questions. (Parenthetically, the entire history of the shift from theoretical thinking to ideological thinking is the history of the loss of respect for the integrity of the known. The activist we are describing here is not an ideologist, yet, but he is clearly someone who has no respect for the given order about him, for if he had respect he would not act the way he acts *in regard to matters that are*.)
17. See the writings on the Canadian scholar George Grant on technology, particularly his work entitled *Technology and Empire*, Toronto: House of Anansi, 1969. While Grant's prime concern was to describe the technological mind-set in his writings on technology, he also captures the mind-set of the person I am calling 'the non-theoretical enquirer' as well, ...at least to the degree that he sees him as 'summoning forth' reality and demanding of it that it account for its being.
18. Observe that we do not speak of *respect* anymore. We cannot speak of respect in the presence of the ideologist and in the age of ideology, for the ideologist does not know respect. What is there to respect?, the ideologist tacitly asks. And the answer is 'nothing,' according to the ideologist, '...absolutely nothing.' Man is here to create realities, not to respect reality.

Parenthetically, it is in relation to this issue of *respect* that I find myself in disagreement with my teacher Charles Taylor over his focus on *recognition*. It is true that Taylor speaks to us, not of *respect*, but of

dignity and *recognition*, and he informs us that these concerns have a specifically modern origin. Well, to the extent that there is a relationship between what I am characterising as the *respect* of a Classical, Scholastic and early modern thinker for the integrity of the other, and what Taylor refers to as *recognition* of the *dignity* of the other, then it seems to me that *recognition* and *dignity* are concerns for modern man more by virtue of their felt absence than their presence in our world, i.e., because they are so little present in the lives of modern men. After the atrocities of the last century, man can do no less than issue a plea to be respected, ...a plea in favour of human dignity and recognition. Modern man's call for recognition arises not from the fact that he is free to ask to be recognised in the modern context, in a way that he was not able to ask in earlier times. Instead, his call for recognition comes from the fact that he has suffered a major loss of dignity over the past three centuries or more, and, hence, he is too little acknowledged and recognised. Modern man speaks of dignity, not because of the overwhelming acknowledgement of human dignity in the modern world. Rather, haunted by the atrocities of the modern era, he persistently asks to be recognised as dignified because of the overwhelming absence of human dignity from modern practice. Speaking a language that Taylor will not allow himself to speak because it is a language that is inconsistent with his deeply held modern beliefs in the emergence of a new way of being in the world at the dawn of the modern era; in modern times, the First Reality – the reality that Classical thinkers and Scholastics knew as given to man, and that teaches respect – breaks the surface of the fabricated Second Reality created by the modern – the reality that man gives himself – and, in the process, it disturbingly inserts itself into a context in which, on its own terms, it hardly makes sense any more, except as a protest against man's loss of dignity, recognition and respect in our era. And so, we can say that our focussing in these difficult times on *dignity* and *recognition* highlights not the achievements of modernity, but its all too obvious failures over the past few centuries.

19. While it is true that there is a rapport between the Classical, Scholastic and early modern artists and technicians, on the one hand, and the modern ideologists, on the other, we must not confuse the two, for one is not the other. The modern ideologists are, *in a manner of speaking*, infinitely freer than any Classical, Scholastic or early modern artist, but this freedom is purchased at a high price. The price is *freedom* itself.
20. Parenthetically, this gives rise to an interesting observation. Although the non-theoretical thinker is not someone who is necessarily moving in the direction of ideological thinking, there is a connection between the two thinkers. The connection is that the ideological thinker draws on the thought of the non-theoretical thinker in the sense that, following the eclipsing of reality, which the ideological thinker insists on seeing as the abolition of the real, he produces and then dwells with and within the substitute realities that the non-theoretical thinker saw only as abstract modellings of the real.

21. Hence, the overwhelming concern with governance in the modern context, the governance of everything, from the seemingly most innocuous aspects of human lives to the most serious of matters – and this is true not only of the ideologies of the left, but of the centre and right as well.
22. The expression *libido dominandi* is perhaps best translated into English by the expression 'desire to control or dominate.' From whence does this desire to control or dominate come – this desire which is so central to the ideologist and modern technologist? This is one of the most searching questions that can be asked.
23. Note that there is a frightful urgency to all of this, in the sense that unless the plan is imposed on the chaos, the future of mankind may be in jeopardy, ...or, at least, so it is felt by the ideologist. This urgency issues out of two different but related concerns. *One*, it is, in part, the fear of the lurking chaos that drives technological society to act, which means, to transform, by an act of the will, the feared plasticity of things outside of the mind into something that is 'recognisably rational and stable.' But what if what is outside the mind is not plastic, or as plastic as it is imagined to be by the technologist-ideologist? What then? What sort of imaginative madness is the technologist-ideologist engaged in then? Is it not then that one speaks of the imaginative madness of 'Second Realities'? *Two*, it is also the case that this urgency, in part, issues out of the need to do good – or, at least, good as it is perceived by the modern person – and to stave-off the perceived incoherences of the natural order. Consider the issue of genetic engineering. We have arrived at a point where it is now *seemingly* possible for us to disavow the influence that untidy evolution may still have upon us, and to take charge of our destiny by transforming ourselves into the kinds of beings that we estimate we ought to be. Indeed, we speak of eliminating, through genetic engineering, both biological and psychological diseases in the hope of compensating for all sorts of *felt* inadequacies present in our species. Simply put, we propose for ourselves nothing less than a *metastatic* transformation, namely, a transformation of our species as we have known it till now *through an act of the human will* into something that will transcend and thus escape what we mistakenly presume to be the errors and the capriciousnesses of time. One speaks of 'mistakenly presume' here because one must never forget that human life is the consequence of some of these presumed errors and capriciousnesses, and that the sought for replacement is the certitude of the morbidity of stagnation and death. In this matter, it is important to recall the observation of the two great French biologists and Nobel Prize winners in medicine (1965) Jacques Monod and François Jacob who held that the stupendous edifice that is evolution is predicated on so-called 'errors' – which we today in our limited wisdom would correct – in transplanting DNA into amino acid sequences. See François Jacob's two works, *The Possible and the Actual* and *The Logic of Life*.

In addition, if this is the sort of transformation that is to be pursued, then the question will inevitably

arise: why should we not pursue another type of transformation? Why should we not bring into being and maintain a completely separate species from our transformed self, a species that will be at our beck-and-call, a species that will not protest our dominance, but see it as entirely acceptable and appropriate? What is wrong with this? Why should a new morality not come into being – a morality that is consistent with our metastatically transformed *new self* – a morality that will find acceptable things that are not, at present? At this point, one cannot help but wonder whether Hitler has not returned to live amongst us as a ‘compassionate’ geneticist who is prepared to fulfil not his will, as was the case in the past, but *our* will that was once *his* will. It is amazing. We discover that we fought against Hitler not because we were at odd with his objectives, although many would have argued that we were at the time, but because he failed to consult us and obtain our permission before embarking on his project. Had he consulted us, it would have been a wholly other matter. In this mad ideological era, Hitler is the archetypal modern man. He is the great artist of the modern age, and the full force of the Nazi conception of art resurfaces in our day.

As terrible as all of this may seem, we need to remind ourselves that there are still islands of pre-modern or post-modern – I cannot tell the difference – sanity in our time. Their shorelines may be contracting at the moment, it is true, but, it is our responsibility and our duty to maintain them, and where possible expand them.

24. This out-of-control penchant to dominate goes well beyond what is reasonable, and a long way towards explaining the ever-expanding role of government in our lives in the modern era, not to mention, the actual policing and surveillance of the lives of people. At the seemingly most innocuous end of things, consider, for example, the constant attention that is given by the authorities to controlling, sometimes in the minutest detail, the way modern man conducts himself. Increasingly, every aspect of one’s life comes under the scrutiny of government, for, should any part of it escape scrutiny, there is, it is felt, the potential for a loss of control, and this may mean chaos and disorder. (Michel Foucault does a marvellous job of describing this phenomenal growth in governance and policing in modern times in *Surveiller et Punir: Naissance de la prison*. Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1975. For an English translation of this work, see Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Trans. by Alan Sheridan. New York: Random House (Vintage Books), 1979.) Of course, this attentiveness on the part of governments is ostensibly always defended on the basis of the need to achieve some moral good, which would, indeed, be appropriate, if there were no real, and things were completely malleable. However, this defence of some good is increasingly seen to be little more than a strained justification for exercising complete control over the lives of ordinary people. We have in mind here little things – things that are seemingly always done in the interests of being more moral or of making things more secure for modern man. Consider the following

example. In the early summer of 2002, it was reported on the national news in Canada that parents in a ‘Church of God’ (Mennonite) community in Aylmer in southern Ontario were in ‘hot-water’ with the local child welfare society because of their alleged use of ‘the rod’ to discipline their children. When interviewed by reporters, the parents indicated that they were guided in this matter by the Bible, that, as parents, they were responsible for the moral and spiritual education of their children. Now, it was clear from all that was said, and all that was observed, that they loved their children, and were certainly not given to brutalising them. As for the children, when they were questioned by reporters, they unanimously acknowledged that they did not experience the disciplining to be excessive, and to the unbiased observer it was transparent that the children were very well-adjusted and happy, and showed no signs of being cowed by brutality and physical abuse. In fact, it transpired that the one great fear that some of the children had was that of being taken from their parents by the authorities, a fear that was not baseless, since it had been the fate of some of their play-mates. The local authorities were not interviewed by reporters, but one expects that had their representative been interviewed, one would have discovered that their actions *vis-à-vis* this small Mennonite community were well intentioned, and that they would have genuinely had the welfare of these and other children at heart. Doubtless, these child welfare people have seen a great deal of child abuse, and, by what they define as ‘objective standards,’ this was a case of child abuse, ...or so they believe. And so, there is no disputing the sincerity of child welfare, it seems to me. However, exactly what is child welfare engaged in here? In addition to protecting children from abusive parents and guardians, which is certainly desirable, but which, by any appropriate and prudential standard of measurement, seems not to be the issue in this case, is child welfare not simply one of the many agencies through which the government exercises control over and disciplines the conduct of decent – and, admittedly, sometimes not-so-decent – people? In fact, in this particular instance, are not traditionally moral actions – moral actions that have served us well over the centuries – actions that no sane person would find untoward – being criminalised in order to enable government to gain control over the conduct of a morally upright and even recognisably responsible sector of the population?

In the course of viewing this particular reportage, one was inevitably drawn to reflect on the consequences of the actions of child welfare. Here we have a law-abiding community of Mennonites, noted for its virtually non-existent crime rate and high sense of morality and social responsibility, being forced by a quasi-governmental agency to abide by supposedly loftier rules and regulation than those of the community in question, yet, nonetheless, rules and regulations that are in the process of bankrupting the rest of society, with its rampant egotism, its relative high crime rates compared to the Mennonites, and expanding criminality (and if not criminality, then certainly anti-social behaviour) at all levels of society.

While no one contests the fact that children have to be protected against brutalisation, one could not help but think that judgement needs to be exercised in ways that it appears not to have been exercised in this and too many similar instances, and child protection, etc., should not become a means to mask the expansion of government control over peaceful and responsible parents and citizens. But, of course, in order for judgement to be exercised, one has to be cognisant of the ubiquitous and surreptitious character of modern ideological thinking, and the influence it has on virtually every aspect of our lives, even when the goals may be laudable, as in this instance. Unfortunately, our awareness of the ubiquitousness of ideological thinking in our life is what is missing.

Consider now an example of a move to expand governance at the other end of the spectrum, and that is with reference to matters more serious than the Mennonite case just mentioned. When U.S. President George W. Bush met His Holiness Pope John Paul II in Rome in the late spring or early summer of 2002, in the course of his meeting with His Holiness, he offered (according to President Bush's own statement made following his meeting with His Holiness) His Holiness the help of the U.S. government to 'clean-up' paedophilia in the American Catholic Church. Just how the U.S. government was going to help the American Catholic Church in this regard, other than by enforcing U.S. law, was not made clear. But, it seemed, that that was not important. Now, no doubt, President Bush meant well when he made this offer. However, we are not certain that His Holiness appreciated the offer, for it was an offer that completely ignored, if not made light of, the millennial-old governing laws, rules, regulations, practices and traditions of the Church, which are, to say the least, every bit as thoughtful and moral as those of civil governments. Indeed, they both predate and are the origin of many of the laws, rules and regulations instituted by civil governments in the West. As such, President Bush's offer was mildly offensive, if not worse. One cannot help seeing in this offer of help a desire on the part of the civil authorities to arrogate unto itself the right to set moral standards for the institution that has been at the centre of moral debate in the Occidental World for the past two millennia, and without whose influence and inspiration the civil state itself would be much poorer. More to the point, one cannot help wondering if this offer of help was not an attempt on the part of civil government (and here we do not find fault solely with the actions of the U.S. government, although in this instance it was the U.S. government that was involved) to get a 'foot in the door' of the Church, and to begin to convert it into an institution that in the end would be subservient to the state. The point that needs to be recognised here is that amongst all of the religious institutions in the contemporary world, the Catholic Church is perhaps the only one that has the moral authority and traditions of government that match those, and then some, of civil governments. Civil governments inevitably, in these ideological times, feel threatened by this. And so, what better way to remove the threat than by gaining control over the Church, by

setting adrift doubts in the minds of the faithful, by highlighting an unquestionably real problem within a part of the Church, and then feigning concern for the Church's well-being, in the expectation, of course, that this will eventually lead to the Church's conversion into an instrument of the state, as so many other religious institutions and even churches have been, at least in part, taken over by the state. Fortunately, this Pope had experience with these sorts of issues, albeit the case that his early experience was with much cruder actors acting on behalf of the state. Rarely, one imagines, had His Holiness seen previous challenges to the authority of the Church come in the form of offers of help. Providentially, he seems not to have been taken in by any of this. As for the state, the issue was moved to the back-burner, when it too was faced with having to address its own serious moral shortcomings and weaknesses, first, when faced with the moral corruption of part of the U.S. business community, a community which the U.S. state regularly defends, and a year and a half later when confronted with the revelations about the part played by the American military in the torture and sexual degradation of Iraqi detainees while on its mission to bring democracy to Iraq.

25. Notice the extent to which modern ideological/technological society is not neutral or indifferent to what is given by the Transcendent. It is actually hostile to both the given and the Transcendent inasmuch as its aim is not to reveal but conceal the revealing of being and truth, to use Heideggerian language. In fact, it is engaged in a long-lasting low-grade war with both the given and the Transcendent. Note further that this gives rise to a culture that is not morally neutral in the struggle between good and evil, as many of us are wont to believe. It produces a culture that is very clearly and actively on the side of evil, inasmuch as it, at the very least, makes light of the given, and, at the worse, denies it and seeks to replace it with an entirely man-made order, an order that is willed. As a result of this, all who live under such conditions are, in different degrees, participants in this evil, in this wilful subversion of the given, even as we go about our lives doing good, as our culture understands it. The good that is done by us is, in one fashion or another, a good that is used to advance the cause of the egoistic order that neither understands nor shows any care for 'the given' that is the measure of the good that is done. But there is worse. Ideology and ideological thinking is prepared to discipline the expression of the good, and submit it, along with its measure, to its control. The genuinely good act, the act that is done with no regard to whether or not it advantages the community, is quickly seized upon and converted into something that does benefit the community. Of course, in the conversion, the act is amputated of its transcending quality so as to make certain that it is neither appreciated nor respected for what it is.

Of course, the point that surfaces in all of this is that ultimately morals are not strictly private matters, as many liberal democrats are wont to believe. How can they be private when it becomes the belief of a large part of the community that its fulfilment depends upon its setting the standards of right and wrong? One

may disagree, but one always has to go along for the ride, and accept that the quality of one's actions be tarnished. Russell, with whom I am more often in disagreement than in agreement, nicely captures an aspect of the point that I am making. He writes: 'I often long to be simple and good, never say a clever thing again, never bother about subtle points, but give up my life to love of my neighbour. This is really a temptation – but it is Satan in an angelic form.' Bertrand Russell, *Letters*.

26. When I refer to 'nothing intelligible that transcends the plan,' I mean nothing that is not understood by ideologists to be chaotic, meaningless, orderless, purposeless, etc. It is the ideologist's plan that gives order and meaning to existence, as far as the technologist/ideologist is concerned. In the absence of a plan, all is deemed by him or her to be chaotic and unintelligible. Note here that order, meaning and intelligibility are not things that are available to be discovered, according to ideological thinking. They are to be created by the ideologist when he or she conceives of and brings the plan into being, ...a plan which is often manipulatively represented as a description of the real world. I speak of manipulateness here because the ideologist is not someone who believes in the *real* world, other than as something available for authoring and structuring. (Notice the complicated deception at work here. The ideologist argues that his plan better reflects what is, while, at the same time, he holds that there is no such thing as 'what is.')
- Consider the thought of Thomas S. Kuhn in this regard. His is a thought that is, at once, profoundly ideological and technological.

We have here an insight into the essence of modern technological thinking. Modern technological thinking approaches the world, not as something to be discovered, for this would presuppose that there *is* a something to be discovered – an order, a meaning – whereas, it is felt by the technologist that there is no order or meaningfulness in existence. There is no given to be discovered. Rather, what there is, is an opportunity for the creative individual, i.e., the technologist, to bring into existence order and meaningfulness.

The ideologist is a technological thinker, the technological thinker is an ideologist, and technological society is ideological society. (Note that this observation flies in the face of Daniel Bell's thesis in *The End of Ideology: On the Evolution of Political Ideas in the Fifties*, New York: The Free Press, 1960. It is my claim that not only have we not seen the end of ideological thinking with the rise of modern pragmatic approaches to the world about us, but we have plunged more deeply into the world of ideological thinking than we might ever have imagined possible.)

27. This leads me to suggest that a good analysis of the delusional thinking associated with ideology would perhaps be best carried out by a philosophical psychologist, who is familiar with those pathologies of the *psyché* that cause a person to shun the real, and to enter into a subjective realm of his own making. While there are a number of psycho-pathologies that come to mind in this connection, it may be tentatively

suggested that one could begin by searching for the connection between autism, and perhaps even schizophrenia, and ideology, to the extent that neither is strictly biologically based.

28. This gives rise to an interesting conundrum. First, man, the creature, casts himself in the role of man 'the dominator creator,' and then presumes that he can take charge of creation, of which he is a creation and a creature. Stating this differently, man, who is a product of the unfolding of reality, in the midst of its unfolding – for who can say that the unfolding is over – seeks to take charge of the real that has authored him, in the belief that he can transcend his position of creature in the scheme of things, and, in so doing, do a better job of authoring himself and the order that surrounds him, and he believes this despite the fact that his very presence on the scene is entirely due to the real, i.e., to creation, which he has come to believe is directionless, random and uncontrolled. Of course, what this is is hubris on a grand scale. But it is more than just hubris. It is hubris that has been elevated to the level of a cultural, intellectual and pathological madness.
29. I am borrowing the expression 'subsidiarily aware' from Michael Polanyi, who speaks of 'subsidiary awareness' in his famous work *Personal Knowledge* as well as in many of his other writings.
30. In this connection, reflect on Plato's parable of the cave from *The Republic*. It deals with the very dissonance that we are speaking of in this paragraph. See also Eric Voegelin's, 'The Eclipse of Reality,' in Maurice Natanson, ed., *Phenomenology and Social Reality: Essays in Memory of Alfred Schütz*, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), pp. 185-194. This bifurcation is the source, according to Voegelin and many others, of many modern emotional, social and political pathologies.
31. By way of an example, consider the way in which David Easton, the father of behaviourism in political science, was forced, by the nature of his systems model of political life, to describe the transition from Weimar to Nazism in the early 1930s. His model (which was based on Ludwig von Bertalanffy's reasoning about systems in the biological world) obliged him to view this transition as a *stress-alleviating change*, since change (by Bertalanffy and Easton's definition) always takes place in order to alleviate stress. Now, apart from the problems associated with the transference of a model originally designed to explain the biological world to the political and moral world, can anyone truly believe that Easton's description of this change is a true description of the momentous character of this event, perhaps the most momentous event of the Twentieth Century? And I am not speaking solely or primarily of whether it is appropriate to describe the transition from Weimar to Nazism as stress-alleviating. Of course, I understand that this was the only sort of description of the event that Easton's systems 'theory' permitted him to give. However, I am concerned with the question of whether it was a description of the event that captures the complexity of the moral and political issues at the centre of this event. The point here is that, viewed from within the realm of Easton's ideology or pseudo 'theory,' it may be correct for him

to say what he says. But is it true? Would Easton not have described, *in exactly the way, and using the very same language, any change that would have taken place?* Replacing the authorities, or modifying the conversion process, for example, would also have been described by Easton as *stress-alleviating*, would it not? And so, why did Weimar not adopt one of the less traumatising forms of stress-alleviating change, rather than the one it did adopt? This is the question that Easton should be answering and that his so-called theory should be able to answer, for it is the essence of the political question. But he cannot answer nor even address this issue, and not being able to address this matter casts serious doubt on the usefulness of Easton's systems model for the study of politics. More than that. It raises the question of whether Easton's systems model of political life is at all capable of dealing with political issues. For a more sustained exploration of these and related matters, see Charles Taylor's very interesting piece entitled 'Interpretation and the Sciences of Man,' in *The Review of Metaphysics*, Vol. XXV No. 1, (September 1971), p. 3-51.

32. We have all witnessed political ideologues representing themselves as 'experts' on the politics of this or that region of the world. And, frequently, we ask ourselves how it was possible for these people apparently to know so much about a place which they either have not visited at any length, or, if they have visited it at some length, which speaks a language which they do not understand. We may even wonder how it is possible for these same people to make sense of things by basing themselves on models designed to make sense of a completely different cultural, economic, developmental, etc., environment. Very quickly, we realise that these people are not familiar, or have only a passing familiarity, with the political practices of that part of the world for which they claim expertise, for they certainly are not describing anything that is recognisable about the place they claim to know about. What they know very well, however, is a modular explanation with its set of phrases and canned expressions fed them by the ideology which they espouse (and we are not only speaking of Marxists here), and they apply these phrases in virtually exactly the same way, and with the same fervour, to every political context they speak of, whether it be in Europe, Africa, South or North America, or Asia. But to say that they know something about the particularities of any specific context anywhere – apart from the locale where their modular explanation originated – would be a gross exaggeration bordering of a lie. I am reminded here of a statement made by David Kay, President Bush's envoy to Iraq, who, upon returning to the U.S. in the summer of 2003 after his team's exhaustive search for weapons-of-mass-destruction (WMD), reports on the Charlie Rose show on PBS that he cannot understand what is going wrong with the American effort to pacify that country, and then by way of an explanation for his befuddlement, he says 'We sent our best social scientists over there, and it's turning out to be a complete failure. None of their recommendations apply. Absolutely nothing works. I think that we are

going to have to just use common sense.' What an amazingly perceptive observation for Kay to make in these ideological times when common sense (*phronesis*) is a rarity. It seems that Kay concluded – correctly, it has to be said – that common sense is just not part of the baggage of some of America's 'best social scientists.' But what do social scientists, and specifically political scientists, study if not politics, and is politics not about the exercise of common sense? Of course, my point is that sadly political science is not about the exercise of common sense, and it has not been for years. For far too many, it is about ideological thinking.

33. Consider the following logic, which was often heard in academic settings in the 1960s. It went something like this: the speaker would say, that, in these modern times, it goes without saying that it would be naive for us to think that there is such a thing as disinterested truth, and so, *all* approaches to a discipline (whatever that discipline may be) are essentially interested and, hence, ideological. And since one cannot, without overt prejudice, decide which interests should have priority over other interests, all interests should be treated equally for all are equally worthy and deserving of our attention as academics. Hence, *in the interests of democracy and fair-mindedness vis-à-vis all ideological positions*, it is desirable to achieve greater ideological balance in our transactions with one another. As a result such-and-such an action should be taken. In a university this often means that students should be made aware of a broad spectrum of ideological options, so that, without being swayed by anyone, and particularly not by anyone in authority, they may be allowed to chose their preferred bias.

Now, note the convoluted thinking and sometimes outright dishonesty that is involved here. Or is it a combination of both convolutedness and dishonesty? Either, the ideological thinker has no difficulty elevating 'the good of democracy' and 'fair-mindedness' above ideological interestedness – otherwise why would he or she view these arguments in favour of greater ideological latitude as persuasive, and not simply the expression of another form of ideological interestedness – or, these too are expressions of ideological interestedness, and if they are mentioned at all here, it is because the ideologist knows that his audience is vulnerable to this sort of argument. In other words, the argument in favour of the good of democracy and fair-mindedness serves his or her purpose of the moment. And when it ceases to server the purpose, then the speaker can forget both of these arguments quite quickly and easily, since, after all, they are ideological, and therefore no better or no worse than any other ideological argument. Or there is a third possibility, and it is that the speaker is both unclear in his thinking and dishonest in terms of his stated objectives, which is what I expect is the case with a good many ideologists.

What are we to make of this? It behoves us, I would argue, to reject outright the claim that there is no truth. We should deny that *all* approaches to a discipline such as, for example, politics or philosophy, or any other discipline, are necessarily ideological. It is also incumbent upon us to argue that it is not true

that scientific thinking is on a par with ideological thinking. In fact, it is our responsibility to show that the scientific study of politics and philosophy is incompatible with every ideological approach to the study of politics and philosophy. In addition, and in the long run, it is also our duty to demonstrate that there is little or no *true* interest in the creation of a more open society amongst ideologists, despite their claims to the contrary and calls for fairness and open-mindedness. And the reason why there cannot be any true interest in the creation of a more open society is because anyone who claims that there is no truth, other than the truths we, as human beings, construct, is making it patently clear that there is no open societal order *per se*. That is, there is no open societal order existing independently of the will of its creator. And if there is no open societal order existing independently of the will of its creator, then the ideologue's initial pleading in favour of openness and breadth is, under the best of conditions, nothing more than special pleading and misguided thinking, and under the worst of conditions, subterfuge designed to place him or her, or one of their acolytes, in charge of whatever order there is.

Most importantly, of course, teachers are enjoined by their commitment to the truth to demonstrate to the ideologist that it is *not* the function of an academic to provide students with a smorgasbord of ideological offerings from which to choose. In fact, on what basis would the student's choices be made if, as the ideologist claims, there is no truth and all is ideological? No doubt, the choice(s) would be based on the prejudices of the moment. Of course, ever willing to demonstrate his or her open-mindedness when not at the helm, the ideologist will ally himself or herself with the prejudices of the moment. But when at the helm, the smorgasbord of choices will receive short shrift from the ideologist, and those who appeal to the need to be open-minded under these altered conditions are apt to discover just how dangerous such an appeal can be. The fact is that the sole function of a teacher is to go beyond ideological thinking, and to speak the truth as best he or she can, and if, at times, the truth happens to be on what some see as the ideological left, the ideological right or the ideological centre, then so be it. It is not correct because it is on the ideological left, right or centre. It is correct because it is about what is the case, about what is real and true.

34. The expression 'Second Reality' is borrowed from the Austrian novelist Heimito von Doderer (1896-1966), who, in his work *The Demons* (1956), was the first to speak of life in the modern world as having the character of a 'Second Reality,' thus conveying that it is alienated from the givenness of things. Life in the modern world has a puzzling character, he informs us. It is seen as real, but it ought not to be seen as real, for it isn't real.
35. We have here the reason why Eric Voegelin brands Karl Marx a 'swindler,' in his work *Science, Politics and Gnosticism*, (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company [Gateway Edition]), 1968, pp. 27f. Marx was a 'swindler,' according to Voegelin, because he very clearly understood what he was up to, and he went

ahead and did it anyway, unlike many contemporary thinkers who do not fully understand either the import or the implications of this sort of move.

36. A great deal more should be said here about the transformation of the commonplace into the abnormal, and the abnormal into the essence of reasonableness, if we are to explain how the ideological thinker and ideological thinking gains the upper hand. One of the first things that has to be noted is that this transformation is not something that is made possible overnight. That is, it is not because an ideological thinker decides that he would like to experiment with the possibilities offered by his skill at designing alternative realities that it immediately becomes possible for him to foist on a community a Second Reality. Simply put, the shift is not something that is entirely the product of the ideological thinker's initiative. A great deal of preparation is required to transform the commonplace into the unfamiliar, and the unfamiliar into the commonplace. Before the ideologist can begin to realise his objective, a virus, so to speak, has to install itself in the community that is to be transformed by ideology, and, curiously, the ideologist has not much say about whether or not the virus installs itself. Furthermore, this virus is not necessarily something that is irresistible for a community. The community that wants to save itself from a terrible fate can extirpate the virus from its midst. However, as with all viruses, this virus usually makes itself invisible, or almost so, to the defences of the unwary community, and, as a result, the community weakens and eventually succumbs.

But what are the initial signs that a community is under attack by the virus of ideological thinking? This is a question that has intrigued scholars over the years, and while there are no absolutely incontestable signs that something is amiss in a given community, there are some features that seem to be present, if not in all, then in many communities under attack. The community that is under attack, or, at least, important segments of the community that is under attack, begin by showing signs of wanting what is beyond the capacity of any community to provide, namely, *certitude* about its future and perhaps even about life itself. The lack of *absolutely certain knowledge* about the future and life's meaning, which never disturbs the members of a healthy community, begins to trouble important segments of the community under attack. Truly reliable and incontestable knowledge about our destiny as human beings should be available to man, it is argued. For it not to be available is either a sign of our complicity in our ignorance, or clear evidence that the truth is being kept from us. And so, this is a situation that has to be remedied. We can wait no longer. Nay, we have waited too long. The point here is that the experience of a profound and ungovernable uncertainty – usually in times of crisis – calls forth a desire for certainty, and a desire for certainty calls forth a presumed incontrovertible answer, which has to be a pseudo answer, to be sure, for it can be nothing else.

But why do people who have lived with uncertainly become devotees of certainty? How is it that a people that has always lived with uncertainty

becomes unable to do so any longer? Is it that they become devotees of certainty solely because of the times and because they have lost sight of who they are, ...of what it means to be human?

37. In *The German Ideology*, Marx writes:

‘In direct contrast to German philosophy which descends from heaven to earth, here we ascend from earth to heaven. That is to say, we do not set out from what men say, imagine, conceive, nor from men [h]as narrated, thought of, imagined, conceived, in order to arrive at men in the flesh. We set out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life-process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life-process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life-process. The phantoms formed in the human brain are also, necessarily, sublimates of their material life-process, which is empirically verifiable and bound to material premises. Morality, religion, metaphysics, all the rest of ideology and their corresponding forms of consciousness, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence. They have no history, no development; but men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter, along with this their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking. Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life. In the first method of approach the starting-point is consciousness taken as the living individual; in the second method, which conforms to real life, it is the real living individuals themselves, and consciousness is considered solely as their consciousness.’ See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964), pp. 37f.

38. Unfortunately, this shift away from the common-sense understanding of life and of the world about us to an ideological understanding of the world finds support, ideological thinkers will argue, in, of all places, the world of the natural sciences. But does it really find support there? It is well recognised by all students of the natural sciences that progress in the study of physical reality, where ‘progress’ is understood in the sense of the development of a deeper insight into the structure of physical reality, became possible when, in the 16th and 17th Centuries, early natural scientists abandoned their common-sense understandings of the world about them and opted in favour of abstract conceptualisations of physical reality, conceptualisations which had a great deal to do with the abstract mathematical harmonies of the ancients. That was, for example, when the Aristotelian understanding of motion, and then the notion of ‘impetus’ of Beneditti, and similar notions rooted in the world of common sense, were replaced by the Newton’s first law of mechanics, which was very definitely not rooted in man’s everyday life experiences, and yet, this new abstract conceptualisation provided our ancestors with a deeper understanding of the physics of motion. (See Herbert Butterfield, *The Origins of Modern Science, 1300-1800*, (Toronto: Clarke Irwin and Co., Ltd., 1957) originally published in 1947, Chapter I; and E.A. Burtt, *The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Physical Science*, (London: Routledge and Kegan

Paul, 1924)).

Now, ideologists believe that they are engaged in the same type of shift that natural scientists engaged in when they suspended their common-sensical beliefs and opted for an abstract conceptualisation of the world about them. However, are they? It seems that ideologists seriously misread the problem at hand when they seek to associate their way of reasoning to that of the natural scientists. The first error they make relates to the fact that when natural scientists abandoned their common-sense understanding of physical reality in favour of an abstract conceptualisation of this same reality, they applied this abstract conceptualisation to a reality that *is*, i.e., to a reality that is not authored by them. Their abstract conceptualisations had to do justice to what is. These abstract conceptualisations were not presumed to be creatively imposed upon a plasticity that would accept any definition proffered by a natural scientist. The natural scientist was not willing something into being, and then pretending to investigate what he had just willed into being. He was, through reliance on his intellect, attempting to reveal what really was the case. The ideologist, on the other hand, unlike the natural scientist, proceeds with a belief in the primacy of the will over the intellect, and he denies the existence of givenness to reality, and this includes physical reality. The point here is that the capriciousness of willing, that the natural scientist shuns at all cost, becomes the driving force of the ideologist and ideological thinking.

In this connection, consider the world of T.D. Lysenko. T.D. Lysenko, it will be recalled, was the Marxist ‘biologist’ who, in the 1930s, argued that the Mendelian laws of heredity were bourgeois, and that they no longer applied in advanced Marxist environments such as the Soviet Union. With the Soviet leadership’s support, he promptly set about to demonstrate how right he was by showing how in Soviet agriculture the Mendelian laws had been superseded in the progressive Marxist state that was the U.S.S.R. The result was that he became famous for contributing to the massive failure of Soviet agriculture. Clearly reality *is*, and one cannot creatively fiddle with it in the interests of realising one’s dream world. It will not be opposed by any ideologist or ideological thinking. In this particular instance, a terrible price was paid to discover something that is so obvious.

As we have seen, for the ideologist, reality is a function of man’s thought process. What this means is that the ideologist’s abstract conceptualisations are not called upon to reflect and articulate exigencies that are independent of the mind of the ideologist. The ideologist conceives of himself as one who is free to construct any sort of reality he elects to construct, whereas the natural scientists are not constructing realities when they abandon a common-sense understanding of the world about them in favour of an abstract and often mathematical conceptualisation. Their conceptualisations, in and through their abstractness and mathematical character, have to do justice to reality. The difference is that the ideologist can literally fabricate any conceptualisation that he

chooses to fabricate, and even make claims about its explanatory power, when it, in fact, has absolutely no explanatory power at all. Indeed, how could it have any explanatory power, since in order for something to have explanatory power, it has to be about a something that has an integrity all its own. Explanatory power is about a something that exists independent of the explanation.

In addition, assuming that the problem described above did not exist, still there is a difficulty which the ideologist does not take into account. It is this. Can the approach of the natural scientist that is described above, and this is appropriate for the study of physical realities, enable us to understand social reality? The answer, I believe, is 'no, it cannot,' and the reason is because social reality does not have its existence as a reality in quite the same way as physical reality has its existence. Paraphrasing the words of Charles Taylor, social reality has real existence. It is not a subjectivity. However, we must also understand that it is, *in part*, constituted by the language that we use to speak about it, whereas physical reality is not. Physical reality exists, as it exists, on its own, and it is not constituted by our language. Stating this in a slightly different way, the language that we use to speak about physical reality is heavily symbolic, whereas the language that we use to speak about social reality is both symbolic and constitutive. As a consequence, if we are to render social reality correctly and do it justice, we cannot, in our efforts to conceptualise this reality, abandon outright (in the manner that David Easton's systems theory of political life, for example, speaks about inputs, outputs, feedback loops, etc., all terms that play no role in common sense everyday parlance about political life), or sever our thought in a serious way from, the common-sense discourse that we have used and continue to use to constitute and even reconstitute this reality. The point here is that because political reality is, as Taylor elegantly demonstrates, in part constituted by the language that we use to speak about it, as actors, we cannot hope to render that same reality in a completely different language, ...a pseudo-scientific language that can reflect and constitute none of the subtlety and richness of the social reality at hand. See Charles Taylor, 'Interpretation and the Sciences of Man.' *The Review of Metaphysics*, XXV 1 (Sept. 1971): 3-51.

39. Many of us fail to realise just how serious were the Nazi claims regarding race. We tend to think of the Nazi interest in race as being little more than a witless expression of Hitlerian madness. Yet, the truth is that Nazi 'scholars' conducted elaborate studies, in which they travelled far and wide to measure bone and cranial structures of peoples from various parts of the world and backgrounds in an effort to establish race as the pre-eminent explanatory factor of history.
40. Notice that the objective of this sort of ideological thinking is to discipline, control and ultimately suppress the 'corrupting' influences of the personal on knowing and the growth of knowledge, in short, to read man out of the knowing equation, and to replace him with an impersonal proceduralism that is supposed to guarantee a compliance that is absent where human preferences are present.

42. Observe what this ideological reasoning does. At the explicit level, it places emphasis on the primacy of sense data and the facts, but it actually does not get the facts about how we know right, and it does not care that it does not get the facts about the knowing process right, because ultimately it is more committed to its ideological understanding about how knowing takes place than it is to getting things right. The point here is that any close analysis of what actually occurs when scientific knowing takes place will demonstrate that it is not sense data and facts that are primary. It is the basis on which the selection of sense data and facts is made that is primary, and this is not something that is empirical or knowable empirically. This basis is located in something that is deeply personal, and draws on a discretionariness (a fiduciariness, Polanyi will say) that cannot be empirically motivated. So attempting to eliminate the human person and his or her discretion from the knowing process in an effort to overcome bias in knowing is not a step forward. It is a blinding of oneself to what actually takes place when someone knows in the scientific way, ...an eclipsing of reality in the interests of meeting the requirements of an ideology.

Stating this in a slightly different way, the ideology of positivist empiricism cripples the knower's consciousness of how he actually experiences knowing, in the sense that it draws the knower's attention away from the important role he or she plays in the development of scientific knowledge and places the focus on a matter of secondary importance, namely, the facts. The point here is not that facts in science are not important. Of course, they are. But the facts do not take decisions. Facts cannot take a decision. Man takes the decision, even when it is a decision about which sense datum is a fact and which is not, and which fact is to be credit and which fact can be safely ignore. Of course, this is an expression of preference, and so the positivist empiricist does not want us to say this, because it introduces a factor into the knowing equation that the positivist empiricists wishes to eliminate, namely, human bias and personal preference. And yet, at some level, the positivist empiricist, like the rest of us, is aware of the fact that natural scientists advance knowledge by relying on personal preference. How could it be otherwise? But this cannot be acknowledged because the ideology of positivist empiricism forbids it. So the positivist empiricist sets up a series of procedural requirements, under the rubric of methodology, designed to eclipse our awareness of man's reliance on personal preference in science. As with all forms of ideological thinking, the purpose of adding these procedural requirements is that they serve to discipline and control the personal, which is something that all ideological thinking sees as problematical. But they do nothing for our understanding of how the advancement of knowledge takes place, which is, of course, what is of concern to us. In fact, focussing on procedural requirements actually cripples our understanding of our ability to advance knowledge.

43. A *justifiable preference* is a preference that searches out and correctly identifies the clue to the real that is contained within the fact. The point is that a fact in

science does not point to itself. Indeed, it would not exist as a fact if that is all it did. A fact is not self-sufficient. It is not a fact if it does not direct us away from itself. A fact points away from itself and towards something else, namely, the real, and the ability to recognise the direction of this pointing (to read the clue, i.e., the meaning of what the scientist identifies as a fact) is very much a function of a particular scientist's deep connoisseurship and personal knowledge. It is the scientist's ability to read meaning that elevates what was till then a 'something' to the status of a fact.

43. It is not uncommon at this point in the argument for some to say that this characterisation of empiricism is incorrect, and that empiricism has gone beyond these views, that were characteristic of the 1920s and '30s. But the issue is not with whether the empirical plays a role in the advancement of knowledge. Of course it does, and British empiricism as opposed to continental empiricism does a good job of showing that facts play a role in the growth of knowledge. But what British empiricism does not do is ideologize this issue. The problem is positivist empiricism and whether it (a) correctly understands how knowledge is advanced, and (b) most importantly, with whether the social sciences have, in part, fallen victim to the ideology that is positivist empiricism or scientism. The argument here is that positivist empiricism does not allow us to understand how scientific knowledge develops, and that some social sciences have indeed fallen victim to scientism.
 44. In this connection, see the writings of the Anglo-Hungarian physical chemist and philosopher of science, Michael Polanyi (1891-1976), particularly his work *Person Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*, to which I referred above.
 45. This phenomenon has been very well studied by psychologists, psychiatrists and artists. An especially readable examination of this problem is to be found in Arthur Koestler's work *Darkness at Noon* (1940).
 46. There is a cost to all of this. One cannot engage in this game of self-deception and not expect to pay the price. And the price is paid by everyone, including the ideologists in our midst. In some of the less developed parts of the world, the price that is paid is usually easy to calculate. It is calculated in terms of the death and violence associated with the various efforts to impose an order and a reality that is at odds with the given order and the real. Here, we have only to list the many atrocities that have been committed in developing societies, in the name of different ideologies and 'beneficent dreaming,' in modern times. However, the price seems, for most people, more difficult to calculate when societies are developed and are described as open. Still, there is a price. It may not always take the form of the murderous activities that we have seen and continue to see in developing societies, but here too there is violence involved. It manifests itself in various ways and is often inner directed. One way in which it expresses itself is in the use of a great variety of drugs that many of our contemporaries take 'just to get through the day,' i.e., to treat what I have called 'cognitive dissonances,' but which are also often referred to as 'pathologies of the modern psyche' by physicians. Parenthetically, it should perhaps be noted here that one of the first rate students of the economics of ideological thinking is Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, who in almost all of his works weighs and measures the cost of ideological self-deception.
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GOD, QUANTUM FIELDS, AND DISTANT RESPONSIBILITIES: NEW RELATIONS FOR A NEW PARADIGM OF REALITY

Wendy Hamblet

Abstract

Quantum Field Theory is generally accepted by the modern scientific community as the most accurate paradigm for understanding the mystery of reality. This theory revolutionizes what we know as ‘matter’ and how material things are connected. But it also confirms an ancient philosophical and ethical truth: the unfathomable mystery of being. Quantum Field Theory demonstrates that beings be in such a manner that their composite reality evades human cognition. Quantum Field Theory forces a rethinking of what we mean by ‘world’, ‘beings’, ‘existence’, and ‘God’, and our assumptions about order, God, responsibility and systems of ethics.

Key Words

Quantum field theory, Descartes, reductionist epistemology, epistemological frameworks, disease, ecological system, John Bell, Albert Einstein, Benedict de Spinoza, Aristotle.

1 The inadequacy of Reductionism

Since Descartes, the Western world has remained convinced that knowledge of things is to be sought through reducing them to their smallest parts and inquiring into the nature of the parts. This reductionist theory has determined the ‘appropriate’ methodologies for rational and scientific inquiry in all the physical sciences, and in the human sciences as well. It also undergirds present modes of medical practice in the West.

Despite the dogged persistence of the Cartesian scientific approach, a paradigm shift in the sciences has rendered this approach meaningless. The paradigm of reality under which Western scientists now conduct their labours posits, at what they name ‘the quantum level,’ no simple parts that sum up to wholes, but integrated ‘fields’ of energy. These fields comprise areas of *stable* existence (‘ecologies’) where no-things exist, but, rather, interlocking and overlapping zones of excitations, fluctuations, or vibrations. On the perceptible level, the fields of vibrations become manifest to the perceiving subject as wholes – the discrete ‘things’ of the material world. But that appearing is utterly deceptive as a clue to the true nature of reality.

The new paradigm of reality revolutionises what we know as ‘matter’, since the objects that we perceive as discrete entities are not discrete at all, but their parameters actually extend beyond their

supposed identity boundaries given in the data served up to empirical observation. The boundaries of identity read through the senses, and giving the observer a phenomenon of *this but not that* discrete thing, fail to represent accurately the real limits of the thing. Rather, the boundaries that we attribute to discrete identities determine only the limits of subjective inquiry.

Thus does the new quantum science confirm an ancient philosophical truth symbolized in the single raised finger of the Cynic Diogenes and the Japanese Zen master Gutei, and in the silence of the Buddha Gautama: the unfathomable mystery of being. Being is unfathomable because, whether thought as the field of constituent parts that compose the living thing or thought as the field of relationships that bind into unity an ecological field of beings, the being of beings stretches beyond the comfortable and discrete borders established by perception and relied upon to confirm our prejudices concerning identity and difference. In short, the beings-that-be be in such a manner that their composite reality substantially evades the grasp of human cognitive appropriations. Being escapes beyond the limits of the human senses and the judgments that would make sense of it and appropriate its truth.

The new paradigm of existence, Quantum Field Theory, therefore forces a rethinking of what we mean by world, beings, and god. It challenges our assumptions regarding how (and indeed whether) something we might name ‘order’ occurs, and how the god-notion and the order-notion are interrelated. Most importantly for this inquiry, the new paradigm forces a new look at traditional notions of responsibility and the systems of ethics upon which people have historically relied for guidance in their worldly relations. This paper seeks to think through the new paradigm of reality against the background of the modern worldview, still very much the reigning framework for understanding reality, and it will propose new definitions of existence, god and order and a notion of responsibility that better fits the new paradigm.

2 The modern framework

The ancient Greeks held a holistic, harmonious view of the universe. Their very name for the whole of things – *kosmos* – means, literally, ‘order’ (to be distinguished from *chaos*, that undetermined primal nothingness presided over by the menacing dark gods). In the ancient Greek view, the universe is

coherent, co-operative, and purposeful. All things function according to a divine underlying reason that steers them and guides them in harmonious relations in the direction of systematic development. God or Nature (*Physis*) is good, healing, and orderly, from the 'breath of life' (*pneuma*) that enlivens the individual body to the All-Soul (*psyche pantos*) that 'has care of all things unsouled' (*apsychou*).¹ Bodies naturally move toward their proper destinies, organically unfolding according to their most appropriate ends (*teloi*). Acorns grow into oak trees and not swans, and they always become the best oak trees that they can possibly be, given the limits of the environing system. In the ancient worldview, justice composed the inner balance that simultaneously guarantees the integrity of the thing and maintains each thing in harmonious relations with the whole field of the thing's being.²

It was the work of the ancient philosophers to make sense of the Being of beings. Long and hard and from many differing angles, they struggled with what they called the 'problem of the one and the many.' How do the pieces, each so infinitely diverse, add up to form the meaningful 'world' – one *cosmos* or *uni-verse*? What is the nature of the relationship between the parts such that they are rendered so wholly one? The *logos* is the binding truth of all things, said Heraclitus. Being is one by logical necessity, said Parmenides. That it is and cannot not-be, he stated; 'whole, one and spherical'

Logos was originally the name given to the binding reality of the cosmos. However, Aristotle took the ancient term and employed it to cut the world into discrete pieces when he established the first laws of logic. The governing rules that were to make sense of world were named: the law of identity and the law of non-contradiction. In practical essence – *this is this* and can never be *that*. Once the parts were successfully severed and individual identities could be confirmed beyond any discomfiting doubt, Aristotle had the sense to maintain some degree of mystery in the relationship adjoining the parts. The whole is always greater than the sum of the parts, he maintained. Aristotle's metaphysical assumptions, including the logic that bound beings into Being, held philosophical sway for centuries to follow. His view of reality remained unchallenged to the point that Aristotle came to be named 'the philosopher' during the long and reasonably dark Middle Ages.

It was not until the seventeenth century that Aristotelian metaphysics lost its grip to new 'modern' ideas. René Descartes is generally deemed the Father of Modernity. Descartes offered a new account of the nature of reality, a new prejudice against matter and in favour of human reason, overcoming the Greek notion that human wisdom was impossible and human reasoning always clouded. That new account established not only the notion of

the primacy of mind over the material world, but also determined the methodological approach for inquiry into the nature of Being. Descartes laid the framework for modern understandings of self and world and the methodology for investigating into the nature of things. That framework still rules the Western world. It reigns over rational explorations in the sciences, both human and physical, and it determines medical practices to this day.

In his *Discourse on Method*, Descartes describes relations between the individual and the world outside in a way that reflects the passionate interest in the individual that was typical of his era. The post-medieval view held that the principle focus of the scientist ought to be the individual and her relations to the environment. To understand the world, proposed Descartes, a single method was effective. If this method was applied correctly then knowledge would follow clearly and distinctly. In the typically Eurocentric view of the era, Descartes believed that it was the more and less appropriate application of the correct method of inquiry into things that explained why some cultures excelled and advanced in knowledge while others lagged behind.

The Cartesian method of rational inquiry thus attenuates the universalism typical of all aspects of Cartesianism. The *Discourse on Method* is written in a personal tone, mapping out Descartes' own rational journey of enlightenment into the 'appropriate method' he will describe. In the buccaneering spirit of the day, Descartes describes that journey in a tone of adventurous discovery, of triumph and manly *agon*, rallying military metaphors as though he were an audacious warrior setting his daring spirit to the intellectual quest.

The first chapter composes a rigorous attack on the humanities. Aristotle only speaks about potentialities, probabilities, verisimilitudes. These offer no firm basis for truth in ethics, history, medicine, or philosophy. Only the revealed truths of theology and the pure logic of mathematical truth can admit of certainty, asserts Descartes. Thus he proposes the construction of an edifice of knowledge more exact than any previous inquiries and more unified than the multiple and diverse efforts of the many. The most noble engineer of that enterprise, Descartes himself, would trace, from the certainty of mathematical truth, the very unity of the sciences. Applying himself to the investigation of things, armed with the method of mathematical inquiry, applying the order of mathematical progression over both spatial and numerical relations, Descartes proceeds to extrapolate four mathematical rules that he deems valid for investigation into every question in every domain in every one of the sciences.

The first rule is that of intuition. The pure light of the mind is favoured over the faulty data of the senses or imagination. Intuition tells directly that

one is, one thinks, that a triangle has three sides. The intuitive embraces fundamental truths that are their own evidence. The second rule is that which describes the proper method of analysis. Decompose complex problems into their simplest parts to arrive at their simplest truths. The third rule directs the synthesis of these simple truths by putting them into order, from simplest to most complex. The fourth step is to apply deductive reasoning to link first principles of things to their natural consequences.

Descartes' method composes the mathematization of nature, what F. E. Sutcliffe names 'a physics of ideas.'³ It became, and remains, the trusted method of all scientific inquiry. All objects of the world, it promises, can be successfully probed and fully understood using this simple four-step method of investigation, and inquiries thus performed render truths as certain as mathematical principles – clear and distinct ideas that can be fully relied upon. After all, Descartes reasoned, the world is mathematical in its very structure. Ideas are more 'real' than things, their truths more reliable than the evidence of the senses. Thus the clarity of the idea itself serves as certitude to the thinker that the content of his ideas conform to the truth about real existents in the world.

With this certain investigative technique, the world is effectively reduced to matter under a microscope. Gone are the gods from the liveliness of things; gone is the inner balance of nature, its Justice, its seductive *telos*, its inherent healing properties. Gone is the mystery of Being and beings. The world is simply a clock, a machine functioning according to mathematical principles, bodies simply complex machines. Break them into their smallest parts and their deepest secrets come to light. Rejecting all else of which there is cause for doubt, the lively being of beings is reduced to the indubitability of two modes of existence – physical qualities of extension and movement. Ironically, instead of struggling with the objects of doubt as the intrepid adventurer Descartes depicts himself to be, he detaches the act of doubting from the objects of doubt and finds metaphysical solace in the certainty of ideas. The cogito assures him of clear and distinct ideas, assures the distinction of soul from body, and guarantees the superiority of mind over material world.

Descartes is deemed the Father of the Modern Era because, in many respects, the tone of arrogant certainty (exemplified in the full title of this work – *Discourse on the Method of Properly Conducting One's Reason and of Seeking the Truth in the Sciences*) and the unqualified trust in the capability of human reason to fathom the mysteries of Being will come to fulfil themselves in the buccaneering adventurisms of the following centuries, the imperialisms and colonialisms, whose arrogant

ethnocentrism is only surpassed by the neo-colonialisms of the present day. The certainty vested in the *cogito* and granted to human rational inquiries 'properly' undertaken will be rallied by Europeans to separate the 'civilised' from the 'savage,' the advanced cultures from the evolutionarily backward. The will to dominate, the will to eliminate chance and mystery, the will to control nature, the will to abolish the 'irrational' and to establish the certainty of human (read: white European) reason can be traced to Descartes' reductionist method of inquiry into the nature of Being. If his system was a 'philosophical' failure, abandoning the very scepticism that gave it rise and that founds philosophical inquiry *as such*, its attitude was powerful and enduring.

The scientific collection of micro-level data allowed modern science to probe the depths of the cosmos, inside and out, scientifically and culturally. Hegel recorded the latter implications of the modern arrogance in philosophical terms. The human world is the great drama of the unfolding of a divine Reason. This implied an explanation for the diversity of cultural formations. Some cultures (European) had taken great leaps of reason's unfolding reality, while others had been left behind, less unfolded, less evolved, less reasonable than their (European) counterparts.

Louis Pasteur applied the reductionist method in its medical application, to render the Western view of health (and its absence) in terms of the etiological specificity of disease. Trace the disease to its 'root' cause in a micro-organism that had infected the healthy organism, then target that cause for elimination of the infecting organism to eliminate the disease. By isolating active ingredients that could eliminate the symptoms (we call these medicines) – often in chemical combinations so purified and isolated from their origins in nature that they are utterly unnatural – it was (and is) believed that the diseases themselves could be eliminated.

And, thus, to co-opt a phrase from my old teacher of Eastern Philosophy (Prof. John Mayer of Brock University), 'We began to know more and more about less and less until we finally knew everything about nothing' and certainly nothing found in nature.

3 Quantum field theory

Science's evolving edifices of knowledge are ruled in turn by evolving truth determinants, subtle frameworks of understanding, varying 'paradigms' of reality. The ruling paradigm governs our perception of things; it configures our sense of reality. It determines what kind of phenomena come to appearance, how they come to appear, what appears as a problem, what methods of inquiry are appropriate to the problems, and the standards for acceptable

solutions to the problems. Only when the paradigm shifts – as in the 16th Century when it was established that the earth was not the centre of the universe poised directly beneath the discerning eye of the daddy-god, but just another rock revolving about just another sun in an infinite expanse of space – so do the underlying assumptions of the paradigm come into view and reveal themselves as faulty.

Often the new information that will eventually shatter the old ruling paradigm is too scandalous to be readily accepted. It must wait for the slow exposure of inconsistency after inconsistency under the old paradigm before the new information is finally accepted and the next scientific revolution can shake the world, transforming our perceptions of reality and reconfiguring our epistemological frameworks. I propose that we are now in this sceptical moment, torn between the safe certainty of the old paradigm yet troubled by the new information that will with time shake us free from ‘modern’ perceptions of ourselves and our world.

The inconsistencies of the ‘modern’ scientific paradigm born of the Cartesian epistemological method are coming into view only slowly. Scientists grow steadily suspicious that matter is just dead, mundane stuff. Life seems to display a will of its own to crop up everywhere from almost nothing. No matter how much concrete we pour over the earth, that single blade of grass will find its way through to the sun. Scientists grow awe-struck with the magnificence of life, from the smallest cell to the wonders of the galaxy. They may be able to penetrate the *what* and the *when* of material causation, but remain ever baffled by the *why* and the *how*. Many scientists, originally proponents of the godless worldview that sees the universe as a random collection of particles operating and interacting according to purely mechanical laws, are now reintroducing God into their cosmological explanations to explain their meta-questions. They are beginning to recognise the flaws in Descartes’ methodology: Mother Nature does not readily reveal her secrets when stripped naked and paraded in the marketplaces and laboratories of the human world. Much still remains a mystery. Many questions remain unanswered.

Perhaps the greatest inconsistencies of the old paradigm are coming to exposure in the medical field, throwing into question the investigative and therapeutic methods it dictated in the West. The holistic approach of communal ritual and the healing herb of pre-modern times were replaced by the appropriately modern method of carving the disease into particles, isolating the infecting organism and applying foreign particles – chemical components, the ‘isolated active ingredients’ of modern medicine – to combat the invader disease.

The medical community of the Western world is only just beginning to see the folly of treating

isolated roots of disease and isolated parts of human anatomy. They only just begin to see the folly of the application to human bodies of chemical antidotes not found in nature whose long-term effects remain unknown. As is evident in the multiple meanings of the ancient Greek name for medicine, *pharmakos*, chemical remedies applied to human bodies can as readily be poisonous as they are medicinal; they can kill as quickly as they can cure. The hemlock that killed Socrates was named *pharmakon*, as was any medicinal herb used in the ancient world.

The difficulty of administering active ingredients safely and effectively can be traced to the difficulty of understanding the infinite mystery of mental and material causes, the mystery of the truth of Being. The invasive treatments and wildly speculative medical procedures that are typical of Western medical practice may be effective, when they do not kill, at treating the micro-organic symptoms of disease. But they fail utterly at locating the effects of their invasions upon bodies to the whole of the person. They fail utterly at understanding how these invasions violate physiological laws, the deeper laws of nature. Bodies are not the degraded ‘others’ of mind. They are lively networks of intelligent, self-organizing, dynamic, carefully-intertwined, mutually-attuned elements carefully balanced in a harmonic equilibrium that *in itself* knows what is best *for itself* when not interfered with.

Disease is precisely what ensues when this equilibrium is lost. Disease is perhaps best understood etymologically – as the *dis*-ease that results when unnatural combinations find themselves not-at-home with each other and defeat the crucial and fragile balance that maintains the intelligent equilibrium within infinitely complex ecologies of life. Disease is what results, as often as not, as a direct result of modernity’s invasive procedures and its chemical interventions, the imposition of methods and compounds not found in nature (pollutants, free radicals, split atoms) into the ecology of living beings.

The gradual sickening of the planet by the invasive procedures of modern science and greedy business interests have eroded the earth mother’s natural intelligence and gradually broken down the co-ordination, order and interconnectedness of her micro-level processes. Invasive micro-level interventions of modern medicine may be able to suppress the symptoms but they do not grasp the disease in its wholeness, as a problem of the wholeness of integrated ecologies of life. They treat the broken and disparate bodies of earth’s animal, mineral and vegetable components, but they fail to recognise the macro-level dysfunctions of ecological systems.

Only very few enlightened minds in the Western medical community are ready to recognise that the health of human communities cannot be guaranteed by simply isolating sick people from their families

and neighbours, and then isolating the symptomatic causes of their disease for treatment by isolated chemicals after the fact of disease. Few have recognised that healing and prevention must be approached at the macro-level of Being, by restoring order, intelligent operation and natural functioning to the earth and its component ecological networks.

Variant and recurrent inconsistencies and paradoxes have been threatening our scientific certainty for years. Spontaneous remission from terminal diseases where people seem to *think* themselves well, and the dark counter-phenomenon to this remission, where people seem to *think* themselves ill and then expire of no accountable causes, 'placebo effects' measured against chemical treatments, the mystery of psychosomatic disorders and the that remarkable fact, in multiple personality disorders, that police-personalities enter the community of personalities and monitor the environmental circumstances for safety – these phenomena suggest the faultiness of the current paradigm of reality that seeks knowledge in the secrets of the body-parts of wholes.

In other fields of knowledge, the inconsistencies have grown glaring as well. The largest, most complex systems of life, previously thought to be utterly random creations of evolutionary forces, are now seen to be profoundly ordered. The music of deepest dissonance has been shown to be, at the heart, more ordered than the sweetest harmonies. Subjects and objects are now known to be so deeply entwined in each other's being that atoms disappear when they are not being observed, and the molecules in a thing's 'field' of being can be effected by other 'fields' over vast expanses of space.

In the terms of cosmological knowledge, quantum theory brings with it shocking new truths that defy explanation within the framework of Cartesian-Newtonian-Darwinian notions of existence. Scottish physicist, John Bell, in 1965, offered a theorem that sounds absurd but explains the new data more successfully than modern theories of Being: reality is non-local. On the quantum level, there exists no such thing as purely local causes (the stuff upon which Cartesian method is grounded). The world is governed by *non-local* forces that often exist galaxies away, and yet are deeply, intimately and immediately and instantaneously connected to the things here about us. No signals pass between them, yet they are thoroughly and systematically linked to each other in their very being. As the ancients claimed long ago, the fundamental reality is the cosmos as a vast network of particles, far more subtly and holistically interwoven and interconnected than the naked eye can ever appreciate.

Quantum Theory articulates that, between the atomic/molecular world under our microscopes and the world we experience through our senses, the discrepancy of reality postulates we experience is not

simply a difference of quantity but of quality as well. At the quantum level, no discrete 'things' exist, but nor is there simply chaos. What do exist are discrete states of energy, fields of excitations. $E=mc^2$ (Energy equals matter multiplied by a squared constant number) tells us that the forces and matter that we consider the building blocks of reality are mere epiphenomenal entities. Einstein states: 'The field is the only reality.'⁴ Spinoza, employing a different metaphor, would express a similar sentiment: the essences of things can be expressed as unique ratios of motion to rest.

At the quantum level, matter dissolves, solid bodies crumble, only fields composed of fundamental forces of nature – gravity, electromagnetic forces, strong and weak nuclear forces – remain. What are the implications of this new *physis* for an understanding of *meta-physis*? The fundamental lawfulness of Being – logos, as the ancients once named it – is more real than the bodies they govern and the world of bodies that we know as reality. The fundamental and intricate interrelatedness of Being means that there is no separated being, no freedom, no autonomous subjectivity (a favourite assumption in the West). There exists no independent reality; only the whole is real, as Spinoza suspected centuries ago. For epistemology, the new schema of reality dictates that knower and object are intimately entwined in each other's being. No discrete subjectivity exists, no discrete knower of objects. So, what does the subject know 'objectively' and uncontaminated by the observer's presence? Nothing whatsoever can be objectively known, because no object exists as an isolated presence awaiting observation. The new physics has implications for the logic whereby the world is rendered comprehensible. Aristotle's logic of identity (that $A=A$ and $A \neq \text{not-A}$) is simply faulty. Things are not simply identical with themselves, but entwined within each other's being. A is not simply the discrete entity A, but it is also its other – not-A.

Few of even the best minds in the West are ready to make the paradigm shift that would upset the Cartesian model and its concomitant view of reality. Few will acknowledge the world as the integrated whole that it is, a whole ever more sickened through modern dissections and interventions. This refusal flies in the face of the latest revelations of science which ratify the notion of an infinitely integrated world and that caution humility in place of modern arrogance in regard of certain knowledge.

Reality, as exposed at the quantum level, suggests that Being's pieces are fundamentally and intricately interconnected in multifarious ways. Each body is a body within a body within a body. Life is the product of the work of a quadrillion cells, each with its own specialised function, each affected by its evolving parts and by its own place within larger systems

ad infinitum.

It is impossible to identify the infinite plethora of factors in the causal relations of bodily phenomena. We can isolate and treat the parts. We can break down the pieces and chart their properties. But we can never fathom what holds the whole together or how. We can never know the physiological laws that govern nature as a whole – not at the level of the individual body and certainly not at the macro-level of cosmic reality.

Even a cell, the smallest unit of life, is a micro-cosmos – a miniature world of constant bio-electric, biochemical operations with its ruling mechanism (DNA), its power generators (mitochondria), its manufacturing centres, its own system-maintenance, and its full infrastructure for communications and defence. The smallest units of life compose a miracle of organising complexity that baffles the most advanced scientific minds. How much greater must be the interconnectedness at the level of the whole of Being?

At every level of existence, the whole, as Aristotle had suspected, turns out to be greater than the sum of its parts.⁵ The cosmos is an effervescent functional unity, a fluctuating, dynamic network of intelligences that cannot be understood by reductionist procedure. Descartes' mechanistic explanation of nature's purposeful functioning insufficiently accounts for the mystery of life and the infinite complexity of Being. Biologist Stuart Kauffman of the Santa Fe Institute confesses:

Science has left us as unaccountably improbable accidents against the cold, immense backdrop of space and time. Thirty years of research have convinced me that this dominant view of biology is incomplete....[N]atural selection is important, but it has not labored alone to craft the fine architectures of the biosphere, from cell to organism to ecosystem. Another source – self-organization – is the root source of order.⁶

A number of practitioners of the new quantum sciences are challenging the modern worldview, emphasizing the need to move beyond the Cartesian model of the earth as machine – a clock whose parts may freely be tinkered with, a machine whose parts may be fixed and adjusted to suit human desires. Now scientists are recognising the need to explore the role of the *self*-organising dynamics of organisms to approach explanation of the emergence of the vast variety of bio-structures that form the cosmos.

'Knowing the molecular composition of something is not, in general, sufficient to determine its form,' objects biologist Brian Goodwin.⁷ We may be able to make sense of a part of a thing or a field of Being, but, when we have reassembled the parts, we find ourselves faced with higher order wholes. This is because every entity is not only a wholeness but a

part of other wholenesses, each is embedded in other entities, overlapping and networked and nested in one another, layer upon layer upon layer of wholenesses that form innumerable layers of yet greater emergent entities.

4 Implications of the quantum 'field' theory of reality

Quantum Theory has forced scientists to reformulate their understandings of the nature of reality. Hari Sharma explains:

The seemingly magical aggregation of parts into self-organising holistically-functioning living systems, the increase in order and complexity during the course of evolution, and the organization of living systems in hierarchical layers of emergent wholes, pose serious challenges to a purely mechanistic understanding of living systems....The basic postulates of the materialistic, mechanistic paradigm are assumptions about the nature of reality, not assertions firmly based on experiential data.⁸

At the quantum level, a new reality is exposed. Beings are not separate, discrete entities with autonomy, intention and free will all their own. Each and every being is a field of energy, patterns of vibrations or pulsations, interwoven and embedded in ever greater fields of Being.

The new understanding of reality forces a rethinking of the epistemological methodology appropriate to scientific investigation. It implies the adoption of a new broader, holistic worldview that, ironically, is strikingly resonant with that of the ancient world. It suggests a view of the world as interlocking realities, not as isolated entities. Everything is part of a greater whole, each ruled from within by its own intelligent forces, what the ancients would name *logos* or divine reason.

Does this tell us then that 'All things are full of gods,' as declared by the ancient sage and first Western philosopher, Thales? Gods represent the pinnacle of reason, the most wise and knowing of cosmic entities. The notion of inner 'gods' implies intelligent steering toward a good purposefulness all its own. But it also implies a purposefulness that coordinates and resonates with the intelligent operations of the wholeness of things. The many gods work together under the wise direction of the chief Olympian, each god(dess) with his or her own function to perform, yet all under the greater governance by fundamental moral norms – Justice, Destiny, Honour and Fate.

The new science and new, more humble worldview that attends it also call for a new model for understanding human responsibility toward that world and its constituent parts. Our behaviour is intimately linked to our understanding of the world. The Western autonomous subject with its arrogant ethnocentrism relies logically on the existence of

separate beings, unbroken wholenesses, liberated from the influence of others, to achieve the notions of radical freedom upon which their ethical vision rests. But if reality is not a collection of separate things, if matter is a secondary expression of a deeper, truer reality – a ‘field’ of life, then the new reality calls for a replacement of the individualistic ethic of modernity with an *ethos* of broader concern. *Ethos* is a more holistic notion. It implies the cultivation of a way of life, a nurturing, all-embracing being-togetherness that includes the interests of all beings in the field of Being, rather than the isolating, fragmenting individualisms that have been the focus of modern notions of responsibility. The new ethos more befitting the new science would look beyond the short-sighted competitiveness of the modern capitalist world. It would look to the good of the individual as best served by the mutual good of the many other individuals that surround and interweave with its identity, and best served when the good of the infinite layers of beings are served in a way that keeps the whole in harmonious consonance.

Most importantly, the new science suggests a new humility about the possibility of human knowledge in regard of the infinite mystery of being and the magical workings of the planet mother. It suggests the return to ancient pre-Aryan notions of deity as the fertile, intelligent, nurturing forces associated with the earlier earth mother goddesses, rather than the later transcendent warrior sky-gods of Indo-European origin that slaughtered, enslaved and assimilated the earlier earthy peoples, still rules the West today. If the very existence of an observer affects, not only the behaviour but the very existence of the particles of an object being observed, then this deep integration with our environment suggests we take great care with our ‘beholdings.’ And

if the material world is simply an illusion, as the ancient Eastern sages suspected (calling it Maya), then too much focus upon the material can only mean a coarsening of the deeper, more subtle self. This suggests a regimen of behaviour to be cultivated by all beings: keep company with those who uplift and inspire, cause no pain to proximate beings, speak well of others, create harmonious environments, peaceful neighbourhoods, that nurture our children and our fellow creatures.

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Notes:

1. Plato, *Phaedrus* 246a.
2. Plato’s justice, as depicted in the *Republic* blueprint and the myth of the *Phaedrus*, is a careful balance in the soul between rational, passionate and appetitive needs (*Phaedrus* 247d ff.; *Rep.* 368e).
3. Introduction to René Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, (Harmondsworth.: Penguin Classics, 1982), 17.
4. Quoted in F. Capra, *The Tao of Physics*, (New York: Bantam Books, 1983), 196-197.
5. Aristotle, *Politics* 1281a1-2; 1253a3, c.f. 1253a27-28, 36-37, 1260b25-30.
6. S. Kauffman, *At Home in the Universe: the Search for Laws of Self-Organization and Complexity* (New York: Oxford University Press. 1995)
7. B. Goodwin, *How the Leopard Changed its Spots: The Evolution of Complexity* (New York: Charles Scribner & Sons. 1994), p. 34.
8. H. Sharma, *Awakening Nature’s Healing Intelligence*, (Delhi, India: Motilal Banarsidass Press, 1999) p. 88.

HEIDEGGER, DERRIDA, BLAGA: POSTMODERNIST PERSPECTIVES ON METAPHYSICS

Angela Botez

Abstract

In contrast to the traditional conception of metaphysics as aiming at a absolute system, to the positivist dismissal of metaphysics, and scientific reductionism, Heidegger, Derrida and Blaga, regard metaphysics more as an sphere or artistic creation and construction

Key Words

Being, Blaga, Derrida, Heidegger, metaphysics, ontology, post-modernism, subconscious, technism

Heidegger, Derrida and Lucian Blaga (1895-1960, Romania's most important philosopher) are among the philosophers who impelled the birth of a new type of metaphysics after the deconstruction of the modernist one. They proclaim the end of Western metaphysics, that is the 'death' of the science of the absolute, prime principles and unique truth. Unlike the neo-positivists, they try to suggest plural metaphysical constructions, closely connected to literary artistic creation while the Marxist and analytic orientations attempted to melt metaphysics into science by looking for a truth correspondent to material reality, or by reducing truth to empirical data. Post-positivist postmodern conceptions try to deconstruct the unique metaphysical idea and multiply the philosophic approach which is considered fictional, generator of possible worlds and having the same ludic, gratuitous feature with artistic creation, mostly literary creation.

Inspired by Spengler, Bergson, Pierce, James, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Whitehead, Wittgenstein II, the post-moderns opened a new horizon in the history of philosophy due to a new type of criticism; this criticism differs from the Kantian and positivist one and the type of metaphysical creation is different from the classical one as well.

As a continuer of the 19th century Romanticism, Blaga considers creation the most authentic fact of human activity. Since he identifies creation to revelation, it implicitly contains a fragment of knowledge. The parallel Kant-Blaga can go further. Blaga operates a transfer of criticism from the superior level of consciousness – the place of knowledge activity that interested Kant – to the level of the unconsciousness which, according to Blaga, is home of creative acts. Creation brings about something ontologically new to the content of reality and consequently it breaks the rigid boundaries of old mechanistic determinism.

Blaga's explanation mainly resorts to the idea of creative spontaneity of the subconscious which is free from any linear determinism. Thus, Blaga's Kantianism is influenced by Freud's theory of the subconsciousness. In fact, Blaga applies Kant's ideas to the new Freudian problem of the subconscious. Analyzing consciousness, Kant had discovered in its structure the *a priori* forms of knowledge and the intuitions and categories while investigating the depths of subconsciousness. In its most hidden places Blaga identifies the *a priori* elements of creation that make up style. Knowledge with Kant and creation with Blaga are essentially similar activities that structure and unify a diversity involving the active part of *a priori* forms: Kant's intuitions and categories, Blaga's style. In the act of creation style represents for Blaga an equivalent to the *analogon* of Kant's theories of the consciousness in knowledge. Kant's apriorism of consciousness in knowledge corresponds to Blaga's apriorism of subconsciousness in creation. Blaga also offers a metaphysical justification deriving in the general philosophic perspective opened by the system of the Trilogies. The metaphysical principle of reality, the Great Anonymous, through his inherent activism, constitutes the permanent mysteries generator substratum of existence. Reality is perceived as a process, it is not static, but dynamic, it is not completely, nor forever, shaped. Since reality is not completed in its metaphysical substance, human creation in general is also justified. In Blaga's philosophy, the fact of belonging to a stylistic field represents the metaphysical condition of creation and the ultimate origin of the stylistic factors lies in subconsciousness.

We are going to mention here some of the views pointing to the loss of credibility of absolutist metaphysics in the contemporary cognitive context, implying that such a philosophy is 'dead', 'has reached its end'. We shall also mention the 'resurrection of metaphysics' nowadays, as a result of the same reform of knowledge that imposed the redefining of reality and of the nature of objective and subjective. A diversity of ontologies of the human being (existentialist, pragmatist, post-modernist) appear, together with scientific, probabilist, holist-complementarist, quantum, neo-realist, neo-Thomist metaphysics. Concepts such as 'ego', mind, human being, language, duration, becoming, existence in the world,

existence in itself, existence for the other, existence for death, care, anguish, anxiety, freedom of choice, unconsciousness, cultural archetype, culture, soul, conscience, intentionality are ontologised.

According to Heidegger, who expressed this opinion in his conference 'What is metaphysics?' in 1928, the most difficult question of metaphysics refers to Being.

Metaphysics questions what is beyond being. Generally metaphysics spoke about being while referring to the Being. The difference between Heidegger's 'essential thinking' and 'metaphysical thinking' (from Plato to Nietzsche) resides in the fact that Heidegger sends thinking beyond its roots, towards the ground the latter lie in. The being represents the ground where metaphysics finds its roots. 'Metaphysics remains the prime element of Philosophy', says Heidegger, but it doesn't reach the prime element of thinking. 'The surpassing of Metaphysics does not put Metaphysics aside. As long as man conceives himself as a being endowed with reason, Metaphysics, according to Kant, belongs to the very nature of man. If Metaphysics represents the root of Philosophy, Heidegger wants to go further and find the ground where these roots lie. The truth of knowledge must be replaced by the truth of the being (*veritas* through *aletheia*). Thinking, strictly linked to representation, according to metaphysics up to now, cannot reach the essence of truth – the truth of the being. Metaphysics expresses being in the most various ways, but forgets about the being. *Dasein* was meant to name that particular 'something' which is to be known as a privileged place for the truth of the being and subsequently should be properly studied; we didn't wish to replace the words 'conscience' or 'thing' by *Dasein* – says Heidegger. The ecstatic essence of *Dasein* resides in 'accepting the placement in the decline of the being'. Being as a way of existence is man. Only man exists, the rock is, but it doesn't exist. The sentence 'only man exists' doesn't mean that only he has real existence, but it means that he is situated in the state of non-hiding of the being, because he has the conscience of what he represents'. In *Being and Time* Heidegger states that only time leads to the state of non-hiding. As representation is inadequate to this relation, the truth of the being will be conceived as understanding. Time keeps open the truth of the being as understanding. Metaphysics represents its nature of being as its whole and its general features on the one hand, and on the other hand as the divine supreme being. So, it is both ontology and theology. Metaphysics, in its double hypostasis, is founded on something hidden, that something whose ground is searched by Heidegger's basic ontology. Remains of the representation of transcendence are to be found in the word ontology, although Heidegger demands

the replacement of representative thinking by remembering thinking. The answer to 'What is metaphysics?' leads to the question: 'Why is being more likely to exist than the nothing?'

In *Identity and Difference* (1929) Heidegger shapes his view on technique, conceived as an open existence of man (*Dasein*) towards what perverts human essence. Technique doesn't allow things to be, it aims at irreversible changes, by replacing natural with the artificial. Heidegger pleads for the return to archaic which he considers authentic. Technique, viewed as the expression of man's will for power, alienates him because it opposes his meditative ability. The modernist way of thinking separates thinking from the being. Technical thinking is a 'delivery on request and an 'availability' of man in relation to a system of commands that dominates him. Man allows his being manipulated by what he himself manipulates. Heidegger speaks about an alienation of the essence of truth, a deviation from the work of the mysterious shepherd of the being which leads to the neglect of man's fundamental aims. Heidegger doesn't claim the abolition of technique, but a return to original thinking which ensures the persistence of the hidden and of the source of truth. Man should keep his silent and abeyant attitude towards time. Direct material and calculated cognitive analysis as well as the demiurgic character of technique abandon the being in favour of action and reason. The attempt at mastering nature, entities of reason and language quantifying including moral utilities and mechanic organization leads to the technicist characteristic of the world, changing it into a world of rational calculus.

Letter on Humanism (1946) focuses on Heidegger's ideas regarding the relation between the being and the essence of man. Man is no longer master of the being, as he used to be in traditional humanism, but a thinker and expression of the being. Heidegger is against the bi-millennial configuration of humanism and metaphysics and he approaches the term *Lichtung* (opening, showing). Through thinking the being gets closer to language which is a shelter for the being and in which man lives as well. The technical interpretation of thinking has to be removed. It started with Plato and Aristotle who perceived thinking as *techné*, that is a procedure serving acting. Reflection is considered to be both theory and praxis. So, theory appears from the beginning comprised in thinking as *techné*, hence the perpetual need for philosophy to justify itself in relation to 'science'. Continually menaced of losing its prestige if proven not to be a science. In accordance with such interpretation, the being is sacrificed and thinking is improperly evaluated – 'the ability of the fish to live on dry land'. Thinking must keep its own multidimensional quality, it

mustn't seek for artificial technical-theoretic accuracy. Utterance has to stick to variable dimensions. When thinking transcends its element and moves towards *techné*, philosophy becomes a technique of explaining through prime causes creating the 'isms' that compete with each other. Language becomes subdued by public space which distinguishes between intelligible and unintelligible. According to Heidegger, language is placed outside his domain due to the domination of the modern metaphysics of subjectivity. Any metaphysics is humanist because it humanly represents the truth of the being. The denial of humanism means for Heidegger that thinking should be placed in front of its unique authentic object. The essence of man lies in his placement in the opening of the being, through language and thinking free of technique.

Derrida will follow the same line of thought nowadays with his two major themes – 'the end of philosophy' and the criticism of humanism. Thinking should avoid metaphysics, in his opinion, and even Saussure and Levi Strauss' structuralism still keeps elements of metaphysics that need to be removed. Speaking about the end of humanism, Derrida points out that by stating the universal essence of man one embraces a meaningless anthropologic metaphysics. According to him, there is no 'transcendental ego' and no philosophy as rigorous science. Philosophy is dead in its ontologic (metaphysics) and epistemologic aspects. Still, its end represents a philosophy limited to Hermeneutics.

Heidegger and Derrida try to elaborate a conception based on Nietzsche's idea of changing the extremely rationalised Western metaphysics into poetry and a deconstructive approach to the scientific and technical modernity and into a criticism of the philosophy of abstract consciousness.

We shall further speak about Blaga's view on the plurality of metaphysical conceptions as fictional creations, an idea he has in common with Heidegger, Derrida, Rorty, Vattimo. In this respect we find significant his opinions regarding neo-positivists' criticism of Heidegger, as well as the similarities we may trace between his ontology of culture and Heidegger's ontology. Here is a quotation from Blaga's remarks on neo-positivist criticism:

In all cases a neo-positivist concludes that Heidegger's sentences are simply meaningless. We may ask: What would be left of all human culture if we tried to submit all the sentences uttered by the human spirit to the neo-positivist exam? It is a fact that a steady use of the neo-positivist criteria would result in a complete sterilization of the spirit.

Similarities between Heidegger and Blaga can

further be detected: Heidegger considers man to be 'a thinker and utterer of being' who enables the perpetuation of the hidden through silence' and preserves the source of truth guarded by a mysterious shepherd of the being; while Blaga sees in the Great Anonymous the defendant of the cosmic mysteries through transcendent censorship and poetic creation.

Blaga views metaphysics as the supreme spiritual value: 'Metaphysical creation is the very coronation of philosophic thinking. We shall never tire pleading in favour of this. A metaphysician is creator of a world. A philosopher who does not aim to become a creator of a world shuts down his vocation; he can be anything, even a brilliant thinker at times, but remains unaccomplished. Certainly, a metaphysical view is never final, such that a victory would render superfluous any other attempt. A metaphysical view represents a historic moment, which means that obsolescence is implied by metaphysical conditions from this perspective too, not only in view of the regret that they are perishable. We should acquire the sensitivity which is able to weigh a metaphysical view according to its depth and interior harmony. Again: When evaluating a metaphysical conception we must practise an immanent criticism; in this perspective, the transience that stigmatizes any metaphysical conception acquires the appearance of fatality which is inherent even to the greatest achievements of the human spirit. Blaga also believes that with metaphysics

we enter the border and even the foggy regions beyond, towards the dense mystery zones where thought can move only when dressed up in ritual silence. We stop easily, not because of condescension to the warnings given by science, but because of the timidity communicated by the transcendent scenery. The greatest satisfaction following a philosophic attempt is offered by the dim moments from a realm beyond. A poet who describes hell is said to be blamed and he doesn't deny having wandered there, because metaphysically he has been there.

A metaphysical conception aims at offering transparency to the serious figure and articulation of existence, to submit it to the fundamental parameters of the cosmic mystery, to reveal the secret architecture we only guess within the Great whole to which we belong. Thus, any metaphysical thought aspires to bring along its light into the dark night that surrounds us. Metaphysics casts light to ultimate abysses and touches us like an 'awakening'. But the darkness outside is not the only one. There is also the darkness inside ourselves. When the philosophic eye had turned inwards facing the human spirit it led to 'awakening' there too.

We have a real 'soft spot' for metaphysics, said Blaga. We tend to wrap our thoughts into a view on the metaphysical significance of culture. I see this

view offering itself, yet not compelling, not even for those willing to accept my theory on style and culture. A metaphysical view is the answer to its author's spiritual needs and usually it represents an uncontrollable leap. Metaphysics is the assertion of a spirit, of a personality. Its author seems to say: 'I'm staying here, I can't do otherwise.' The arguments against metaphysics do not help, since they cannot fight love. No one lives without metaphysics and our metaphysical endeavours are in the worst case punished by death, so these arguments shouldn't scare us. At metaphysical levels thinking is no longer philosophy, it ends up as mythosophy – a waste of meanings, linear thoughts, presentiments which prevent a cold purely conceptual style. Blaga follows his path and he is aware of it. A philosophy of history lacking a thorough perspective and which doesn't culminate in metaphysics can say a lot of things, but not everything. Philosophy without the coronation of metaphysics seems amputated, or beheaded or limp. A philosophy of history that doesn't contain or discover any metaphysical aim remains a philosophy without a message.

I have openly conceived metaphysics in the spirit of a comprehensive view on existence. Metaphysics always aims at this final move. But, unlike other thinkers, I have never concealed the fact that I see my metaphysics more like a creation combining philosophy with myth than accurate knowledge about existence as a whole.

In spite of being rejected by both science and philosophy, myth persists in metaphysics, protecting man from the delusion of casting the anchor of his thought into the absolute (God's eye). This lucidity

distinguishes me from the other metaphysicians, because they all consider themselves inheritant of 'the divine revelation' – even those who explicitly declared that they didn't believe in it. All metaphysicians after Kant tried to restore the dogmatism before him and to re-build the shattered trust of conscience into its 'servant', the idea. They behave as if any metaphysical approach is entitled on condition that it implies its access to the absolute. Surrogates of divine revelation have been created, each of them pretending to be unique and universal.

The aim of philosophy lies in its ability to create metaphysics, that is why all the ages of vigorous thriving in philosophy produced unmatched metaphysical ideas: Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Schelling, Schopenhauer or Bergson. But in Blaga's opinion philosophic autonomy is possible because of the fact that metaphysical ideas are views in themselves, with their own logic, revealing acts that trigger only presentiments in connection to transcendence. His view is obviously similar to the postmodern conception regarding the plurality of metaphysics as forms of literary creation, of fiction and myth. His main metaphysical idea resides in his metaphysical courage to see culture as an ontological mutation.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Phillip Cole,
The Myth of Evil

Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2006;

Phillip Cole asks, in his *The Myth of Evil*, whether a secular conception of “evil” is possible and, if so, could such a conception add to an understanding of human agency, and could it help to clarify the nature of the human condition.

Cole’s *The Myth of Evil* composes a philosophical experiment that questions the popular assumption of the existence of something people call ‘evil’. Cole analyzes in this work several popular conceptualisations of evil, sorting these into four categories of meaning:

- (1) a monstrous conception (evil as an inhuman force inhabiting the universe and infecting human agency);
- (2) a pure conception of evil (where a human agent exercises absolute malevolence and gratuitously pursues the goal of human suffering or destruction);
- (3) an impure conception of evil (where suffering is the by-product of human agency aimed not at that suffering but at some other goal such as power, wealth, comradeship, the collective good, or some ‘higher’ purpose);
- (4) a psychological conception of evil (where brutality is seen as resulting from empirical causes in the agent’s lifeworld such that madness or necessity cause the breakdown of normal reasoning faculties dictating appropriate human behaviour).

Cole first surveys Biblical texts to locate origins of the notion of evil in a personified image of a devil or Satan figure, demonstrating that, historically, Jews and Christians became particularly prone to belief in personages representing evil (devils, witches, vampires) at historical moments when they felt their religion required defence or their self-identity had fallen into question. From the Biblical references, Cole then sketches the development of figures of evil in narrative fictions, showing the latter as the true source of the most robust figures of diabolical agency.

Philosophical accounts of evil are then treated. Immanuel Kant never employs the concept of evil in the pure or devilish aspect found in narrative, but only in an impure sense, to describe the state of will where the will pursues non-moral incentives instead of incentives of moral duty or categorical imperative. Cole’s philosophical treatment of conceptions of evil culminates with that of Friedrich Nietzsche for whom moralities of good and evil, praise and blame, are fundamentally reactive phenomena indicative of a sickened culture. This treatment turns out to suit Cole’s ultimate aims in this book because Nietzsche’s genealogy of morals

demonstrates that moralities of good and evil provide a means for the powerful priestly class to manipulate the *ressentiment* of the masses, exploiting their fears for the sake of maintaining power over them.

Nietzsche’s insights lead Cole to consider the political use of ideologies of evil in modern times. Cole’s careful analysis of the murder of James Bulger by two ten-year-old Liverpool boys exposes that sociological factors, such as poverty, gender socialisation around ideals of extreme masculinity, and scant community support for youth and parents, can impact greatly children’s risk level for committing brutal acts. On the other hand, discourses that posit evil threats at the borders of identity serve the political purpose of occluding the chaos, the social ‘evils’, evident within a political system. This fact has import for Cole’s conclusions about modern day demonising mythologies, such as (1) the U.S. domestic campaign directed against more than 1200 suspected ‘terrorists’ in the aftermath of the attack on the World Trade Center in 2001, and (2) the campaign against Iraq for alleged complicity in the 9-11-01 tragedy and alleged harbouring of UN-banned WMDs that culminated in the 2003 U.S. invasion of that sovereign nation. Cole further links new myths of evil to U.S. torture practices in prison camps across the globe and to the erosion of civil liberties in the U.S. through such measures as the U.S. PATRIOT Act (the Uniting and Strengthening of America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act).

The Myth of Evil is a fine work of theoretical analysis of a difficult mythical concept, but Cole gives his theory immense practical value by applying it to modern radical violence. In the end, the reader would be hard-pressed to find fault with Cole’s conclusions: the concept of evil has no value in modern philosophical discourse; it adds nothing to our understanding of human agency and, instead, obstructs our understanding of world affairs. Worse, there are strong moral and political reasons to abandon myths of evil. Such myths account for the horror of Holocaust and other genocides, and continue to fuel modern campaigns of terror, torture, and war. *The Myth of Evil* is a valuable study that culminates in the ominous conclusion: ‘Oppressive governments maintain their power by making their people terrified of them, but democratic governments increasingly maintain their power by making their people terrified of something else’ (p. 241). Myths of evil serve in both those contexts, in feeding campaigns in both forms of terror.

Cole’s book is worth the read for its theoretical treatment of the concept of evil and for its practical

insights into modern campaigns of terror in and by democratic nations. If the book has one flaw, it is the extensive use of secondary sources where primary would be more suitable.

Wendy Hamblet

The Library of Scottish Philosophy

Exeter, Imprint Academic

Art and Enlightenment: Scottish Aesthetics in the 18th Century,

ed. Jonathan Friday, ISBN 0907845-762

Scottish Philosophy: Selected Writings 1690-1960,

ed. Gordon Graham ISBN 0907845-746

Adam Smith: Selected Philosophical Writings,

ed. James R. Otteson ISBN 184540-001-1

The Scottish Idealists: Selected Philosophical Writings, ed. David Boucher ISBN 0907845-72X

John Macmurray: Selected Philosophical Writings, ed. Esther McIntosh ISBN 0907845-738

All of the above are priced at £14.99 each.

In this series of readers for use by students, the selection of eighteenth century writings in aesthetics might surprise, simply by having been possible. Yet numerous philosophers associated with Scotland, Francis Hutcheson to John Macmurray, have paid serious attention to feeling. Hutcheson and his contemporaries came out from under an exclusivist theology fabricated within the seventeenth century Scottish church, and while Shaftesbury awakened them to questions of feeling as they recognised the moral and intellectual bankruptcy of federal Calvinism, they had been intellectualised within its culture. Their 'passion for ideas' is a byword for a period of immense intellectual productivity, founded on a systematic appreciation of the work of among others Shaftesbury, Newton, Berkeley, Malebranche.

Jonathan Friday includes serious discussions on relations between art and morality very relevant now, and James Beattie's pioneering discussion of the sublime (duplicated in another volume of the series devoted to Beattie) is one of several indicators that the latterly so-called 'Scottish Enlightenment' doesn't fit any stereotype of eighteenth century *terrible simplificateurs*, secularist and anticlerical.

Gordon Graham's volume, alas, perpetuates his idea that the arrival of a neo-Kantian and neo-Hegelian presence in Scottish philosophic debate from the 1860s onward excluded Scottish philosophy hitherto, just as analytic philosophy, the linguistic turn, and the *Revolution in Philosophy* cut

off what had come before. Collingwood's account of a continuity of British philosophy from Adam Smith, carried on using different terms, Graham does never mention. Yet he doesn't seem well informed, never mentioning Robert Flint, lavishly praised by Alasdair MacIntyre, or even Sir William Hamilton. The selections from Reid, Hume, Thomas Brown and A.E. Taylor seem designed mostly to serve a Humophobia. If Hume was 'the grit in the oyster of Scottish philosophy' rather than belonging to Scottish philosophy, was Scottish philosophy philosophy?

Graham's gloss on the crucial eighteenth century Rankenians cites only an interest in Shaftesbury – no Newton, no Berkeley – and is thus inept. It's a lazy book, C.A. Campbell on Free Will (a chestnut) and Campbell's *Who Was Who* entry garbled. The Gifford Lectures were really just an extension of dialogue between Scottish professors, and Hutcheson the sole major philosopher to devote a substantial work to the topic of laughter? *Pauvre* Bergson, Whitehead, MacIntyre *et al.* It's unbelievable!

By contrast, James Otteson's Adam Smith reader (dubiously claimed the first ever!) is recommended for the abiding interest of Smith's metaphysics expounded within the *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, *Wealth of Nations* and other works represented here. *Applied philosophy* was for Smith the very foundation of philosophy. Where Thomas Reid took the principles of what he called Common Sense to be ordained by God, their inscrutability demonstrated by Hume's eliciting of paradoxes, their soundness vindicated in a unity of theory and practice, Smith found the origins of conscience in the discovery of contradictions between inherited assumptions and the deliverances of experience: on a model of Berkeley's account of the interaction of sight with touch/ kinaesthesia, and the other senses. The infant, faced with what respective adults respectively do and say, experiences the coming into being of conscience as 'impartial spectator within the human breast'. Otteson's *Wealth of Nations* selections access Smith's further account of the functions of the 'I' in resistance to mob pressures.

Long before John Macmurray, Smith was well aware of the social origins of conscience, an insight embodied in critique of Rousseau. The social sciences Smith and his less optimistic contemporary Adam Ferguson pioneered had to be founded on historical and empirical evidence.

Systematising Shaftesbury on a basis of the foundation course in philosophy as taught continuously in Scotland through the Reformation, Smith's teacher Hutcheson had insisted not only on the irreducible character of moral judgments, and the reality of altruism, contra Hobbes and Mandeville. While Smith's eulogy of 'the never to

be forgotten Hutcheson' is duly celebrated, he differed from Hutcheson in respect of the value of sheer altruism. He differed also from Mandeville in recognising the latter's formula *private vices, public benefits* as not the whole truth but a valuable insight. Self-regard is integral to the satisfactory operations within the polity, but functions alongside altruism within a moral economy including the ethically neutral judgments alike with self-regard and altruism.

The baker bakes bread for his own economic benefit, says Smith, but within an actual plurality of motivation. Denial of the legitimacy of self-regarding propensities does also raise problems about the meaning of personal concern for others (Cf. Macmurray).

Otteson also represents Smith's strong concern with negative practical implications of the division of labour. Charge respective workers exclusively with one task, for all of every working day through all four seasons of every year, and you buy economic efficiency at huge cost. The lack of variety of stimulation is liable to render the specialised worker more and more 'stupid'. Understanding can become impoverished to an extent which removes prospects of individuals lacking the motivation to for instance work, or fight for his own welfare as implicated in his country's welfare. Historically, 'twas not ever thus: the agricultural worker's seasonal and other ranges of variety of work and experience afforded stimulations whose loss has serious implications.

The issue of stimulation, a secular interpretation or manifestation of what the religious attribute to Providence – and the reality of providential operations, whether *qua* Divine Providence or in terms of natural operations – is alive also in Smith's opposition to slavery and master-slave considerations influential upon Hegel. Master and slave can alike suffer from the inanition and inadvertences of the master who insists on his will and denies the slave initiatives. The master's blind hegemony deprives himself and everyone of the potential benefit of the slave's initiatives.

David Boucher's selection from 'Scottish Idealists' doesn't duplicate his other selection of Idealist texts, published by Thoemmes and including the Scottish Idealist J.H. Muirhead's protest, during the 1914-18 war, against a too common tendency to identify Hegelian and even Kantian philosophy with German policies leading into that war. Muirhead's protest was and unavailing. Prof. Boucher some ninety years on has the task of revealing the persisting worth and relevance in 2006 of writings long dismissed *a priori* as necessarily representative of a bankrupt intellectual system and implying acceptance of untenably odd ideas. You don't need to be an avowed Idealist to get the point of this

volume.

Was the prominence of Scots among important Idealists previously unremarked? I do recall a Victorian jibe about the improving philosophy cultivated in the west of Scotland, and somebody must have noticed that by 1914 there was hardly a British philosophy chair which hadn't been held by some Scot. Manchester, Cardiff, Oxford, London: Scots had a head's start simply because they had attended Scottish universities where philosophy had always been in the curriculum, and taken very seriously. There were so many more good candidates, and they filled chairs from Aberdeen to Adelaide, Bloomsbury to Brown.

The author of Boucher's first item never held a philosophy post. Impressively resistant to dogmas of Whig History, the Glaswegian W.P. Ker was professionally a (very great) philologist. In print he paid explicit tribute to Edward Caird's classroom teaching, and demonstrated real acquaintance with the earlier Scottish philosophy, Dugald Stewart et al., and contributed to the volume regarded as the manifesto of British Neo-Kantianism and Neo-Hegelianism, the paper on Plato's attack on the poets published here. In Ker's analysis Plato was arguing for philosophy as against a Greek aestheticism, and a religion dependent for its pantheon on the work of artists and poets, but not poets in the sense of Tennyson or Burns. Plato was attacking an irrational mystagoguery which might even be with us yet. Christianity, founded on historical claims, rendered possible a conception of art different from and superior to the Greek.

A huge influence on Brand Blanshard, William Mitchell (1861-1962) was an Edinburgh pupil of the neo-Berkeleyan Alexander Campbell Fraser, and of Henry Calderwood, whose views were sustained in critical dialogue with Reid's work. The paper here by Mitchell was an undergraduate essay, submitted to *Mind* by Calderwood, and indeed published. While Boucher includes it as a supposedly rare case of Idealist concern with psychology, how Idealist was Mitchell (longtime professor at Adelaide, subject of a book-length study by Boucher's fellow-Australian Martyn Davies) in comparison with G.F. Stout? And how far did Stout's work render superfluous any very explicit attention to psychology on the part of Idealists during a pre-publish or perish era? Longtime professor at St. Andrews and member of Scottish debates, Stout, though born in England, has as good a claim to inclusion in this series as A.E. Taylor, whom he probably influenced.

Mitchell's prose is, as later, idiosyncratic. His reference to Schelling might suggest that, with Andrew Seth Pringle-Pattison and others, he attended the philosophy lectures the amazing Simon Somerville Laurie delivered as Edinburgh's

Professor of Education.

A.S. Pringle-Pattison (born Seth, and bequeathed a huge legacy on condition he took a surname which otherwise would have died out) has perhaps been overrated *qua* thinker. His *Hegelianism and Personality*, sponsored by the Scottish theist and opponent of scientism, later Prime Minister, A.J. Balfour, possibly represented what others thought too, who lacked Seth Pringle-Pattison's powers of expression. Boucher prints the key chapter from that book, much celebrated as the first published attack on Hegelian discourse as at odds with the recognition of individuality, and personal ethical responsibility, Christian or otherwise, from a Briton who'd previously shown interest in Kant and Hegel. Boucher places this chapter brilliantly as springboard for a very considerable philosophical contribution from Henry Jones, to whose work he himself devoted a book-length study some years back.

Born a Welshman but in Boucher's account thoroughly Scotticised by university education, Jones sidelined such work as his rejoinder to Pringle-Pattison in favour of efforts as public moralist, and social campaigner, which he believed more important both at the time and in long-term effect. While the rhetoric successful in his day hardly seems impressive now, the priority does in Macmurray's terms represent the Hebraic and Christian.

Jones replies to Pringle-Pattison with a critique of *epistemology* paralleled by Bradley, but in Jones's exposition directed toward dangers of this or that supposed theory of knowledge being intruded into the range of human considerations with consequent disruption of the unity of knowledge: imposing distorting or strictly inapplicable criteria. That Jones wasn't simply recalling readers to an Absolute Idealism can be demonstrated by the succession of his pupils unsympathetic to Jones's Idealism who stressed the same dangers: John Anderson in Sydney demanding 'a single logic', A.A. Bowman at Princeton and Glasgow identifying some references of a supposed principle of parsimony to an irrational stinginess; Norman Kemp Smith at Edinburgh teaching at Edinburgh with some reference to H.H. Joachim, and represented by the discussion of epistemology I had there from his pupil the late A.M. Fairweather (unlike John Passmore, Graham never mentions the Scottish resistance to the *Revolution in Philosophy* maintained by the generations these men belonged to).

Boucher's selection from D.G. Ritchie also warrants plaudits. Close to his teacher T.H. Green (who did represent Idealist reaction against psychology) through the years until Green's untimely death, the also short-lived Ritchie offers useful discussion of Green's unfulfilled project to

substitute for what he called the *Wirrwarr* of Hegel a critical reappropriation of Kant in relation to Aristotle.

Even better is Boucher's contextualisation of Ritchie's other paper in direct confrontation of Peter Singer's work on 'Animal Rights'. Ritchie denies that animals have rights: human beings have responsibilities. For all the rubbish sometimes mouthed about 'Idealists' Ritchie here as in his book *Natural Rights* is hardly less modern than Singer. The headings of the final paper, Viscount Haldane's 'The Higher Nationality' mark the weakness of copy editing in this series: rampant spell-checker turned his middle name Burdon to *Burden* (and elsewhere Robert Latta is misprinted *Latter*). Haldane's discussions of Law as historical development, and considerations of international relations in the address printed again commend Boucher's editorial acumen. Never in an academic post, Haldane was senior lawyer and politician (Lord Chancellor!) as well as Gifford lecturer, author of an attempted rapprochement of his own neo-Hegelianism with the Physics of his friend Einstein. Delightful to read, not merely for his strictures on attempts to reduce considerations to timeless abstract system, but also for the observation that Adam's descendants didn't have to wait for Aristotle before they could start to think.

Esther Mackintosh's introduction to her comparably good John Macmurray selection betrays lack of knowledge of the older Scottish MA curriculum. Macmurray's Glasgow degree was *not* in 'Classics and Geology'. It was a general Arts degree under the standard historical dispensation, but with further study in Classics to the then Honours level. The historical development of that degree was an issue in pre-1914 denunciations of German universities, and again post-1945. Its almost complete abandonment since then in Scotland is no reason why it ought not to have been discussed in planning the general Arts degree now being developed across the EU.

Even into the 1970s it was not exceptional for Scottish undergraduates in the Faculty of Arts to study Geology, which was included in one of the compulsory subject groups. It *was* exceptional that Macmurray required special dispensation to take the course; which he did only because he'd studied so little science at school.

I also query the statement that Macmurray strove to 'construct an adequate concept of the person' and – worse – 'concept of action'. That idiom is too much of the linguistic turn which Macmurray rejected explicitly in a 1948 paper. Macmurray's questions are partly ontological, seeking not definition but description within dialogue. The 'adequate concept' belongs rather to such a desire for the organised as Macmurray continually

impugns in texts within Ms. McIntosh's highly recommended selection. A background within analytic philosophy is no advantage in the study of Macmurray; nor is the notion tendered by Gordon Graham that Macmurray was mysteriously a one-off with strange resemblances to earlier representatives of a philosophical continuity somehow cut off completely by about 1880. Macmurray's discussion of the Person, Persons being recognisable actualities within an empirical natural history of humanity, and Person also being a norm, might profitably be considered with reference to a paper by C.A. Campbell on the topic of entities belonging to both categories.

Macmurray had his own 'turn' in matters linguistic, marked by the decision in 1938 to apply the term 'Action' in a specific sense marginal to the everyday usage of the word which can be found in earlier writings of his. In the preface on terminology in *Persons in Relation* he makes clear that in his Gifford Lectures he applies this or that term in a special sense which might become common usage were they in future to be applied more consideredly and consistently.

Where Macmurray believed that his 1938 paper 'What is Action?', justly included in Ms. McIntosh's selection, had been grotesquely misunderstood by the other two participants in the symposium which was its initial context. These by no means wholly uncongenial academics were not wholly engaged in trying to construe Macmurray's paper. In fact they were trying to misunderstand it with a view toward its rewriting in a more organised idiom: an idiom organised more with a view toward avoiding ambiguities and posing problems of interpretation. Macmurray was subsequently clear that the maximum clarity worth working for is that of expressions comprehended in context of a dialogue.

Sentences in which 'Society' figures as the grammatical subject are mostly, Macmurray notes in discussion of 'Self-Realisation', nonsense., They essay organisedness oblivious of crucial purposes. As well as Campbell, Alexander Macbeath (both Glasgow contemporaries of Macmurray, the latter short-term successor to his Edinburgh chair) discuss 'Self-Realisation' within 'Society' properly conceived, rather than by way of any individualist contrast, as in Rousseau and Hobbes, involving a falsely separated concept of the individual (a misprint seems to have crept into the selection's printed text here).

Ms. McIntosh is to be congratulated for printing 'What is Religion About' from *The Listener* and 'Prolegomena to a Christian Ethic' from the *Scottish Journal of Theology*, both 1956. Macmurray's reference to the Hungarian uprising of that year and its suppression renews awareness of the context of

totalitarianism environing some of his earlier writings. Macmurray makes plain enough that he is not merely arguing the soundness of certain Christian and theistic notions, but clarifying the assumptions implicit in the narrow secularism against which he is making his case. Whatever one makes of his case *for*, the critique of that secularism, and of its character as monolithic systematised dogmatism, is plain. Beside which, his two invaluable political essays are very welcome at last in book form. He extols the secular and the functional as the necessities they are, distinct but not separable from the religious and the personal. The state is not a person or an organism, or a religion. Where the Mother and Child chapter sits well with Smith, the rhythm of withdrawal and return hardly needed preached to a man who embodied his metaphysics in works of direct practical import. Smith was of course exceptional, though his works are not unique in being illuminated by a reading of Macmurray. Nor is Macmurray immune to being understood the better with benefit of Smith.

Robert Calder

Raymond Tallis

The Knowing Animal: A Philosophical Inquiry Into Knowledge and Truth

Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press 2005, ISBN 0 7486 1953 4

What is religion? William James in his Gifford Lectures argued that religion has two essential components: (1) a sense of the higher, and (2) a sense of our inferiority. The first experience is common enough. When we encounter outstanding beauty, whether it be a person, a landscape, or a work of art, the experience has an 'unearthly' quality. Our Indo-European ancestors called god's 'daevas' i.e. the shining ones. People are prepared to pay hard earned cash to see beautiful people, visit beautiful landscapes, or own beautiful works of art. To talk about beauty in such mercenary terms however seems inappropriate. Why? Because our instinctive response to beauty is admiration. This feeling is no less evident when we consider values such as goodness. If we look at – for example – the life of the prison reformer Elizabeth Fry, we experience a sense of awe. This prompts some biographers to write stories that show their subjects in a bad light. Not to ridicule goodness, but to remind us that they fall short of the ideal. To be wholly good you would have to be a higher sort of being. In a religion reverence for the higher generally occurs in ceremonies. These rituals are often directed by those who see themselves as being in a special relationship with the higher. Some

worship however is solitary e.g. anchorites. Some theology is undogmatic e.g. Hinduism. In the last few generations many intellectuals have argued that science tells all there is to know about reality, and so we ought to abandon talk about higher realities. Such talk can only make sense if it is converted into a language that science can comprehend.

Love for example is understood as something that is generated in order to further the species. In what Polanyi calls 'moral inversion' the lower is deemed superior to the higher. The quest to destroy beauty and replace it with ugliness [such as pull down Georgian Bath and replace it with offices and car parks] for example is motivated by an inverted moral fervour. Raymond Tallis allies himself with science. As an enlightened man he disdains religion. But he is repulsed by scientism. In "Darwin's Dangerous Idea" for example Daniel Dennett claims that anybody who cannot accept a materialistic account of what it is to be a mind is too stupid to see the consequences of Darwinism. Tallis responds that "Dennett's Daft Idea" denies obvious realities such as consciousness, intentionality, and the deliberateness of actions. Instead of scientism Tallis seeks to rescue higher realities, and in particular the reality [the miracle it is tempting to say!] of being human, without appealing to the supernatural. In a trilogy of books - written in order that 'we may arrive at a better understanding of what is good for us' - he investigates what it is to be human. Tallis seeks to remind us of obvious facts about ourselves in order to correct the 'despairing sense of nullity' that has accompanied the denial of our higher nature. Sociobiology for example - whose essential claim is that our behaviour is shaped by instincts designed to ensure the replication of our genes - fails to acknowledge the huge gap between instinct and reason. In the first book of the trilogy he traces the origins of human agency back to the fact that we have hands. It is what our hands pioneer - notably tools and language and the positive feedback mechanisms they set in train - that accounts for the ontological distinctness of human beings.

In the second book Tallis highlights inadequacies in various attempts to comprehend - or deconstruct - the self. He derives selfhood from the 'existential intuition' that accompanies the causality of our agency. In the final volume of the trilogy, he explores how instincts are replaced with reflection. Tallis argues that knowledge is essentially explicit. Any suggestion that non-human animals have beliefs, judgments, and the ability to classify contents, is merely anthropomorphism. Contrary to Neo-Fregean philosophers however he asserts that knowledge is a form of consciousness i.e. it cannot simply be reduced to formal properties. Defining knowledge as 'justified true belief' or truth as 'a relationship between sentences' can only seem

satisfactory [rather than point missing] to those working within a tradition that ignored the knowing subject. When mind replaced meaning as the focus of philosophical inquiry, brains were conceived as rule following machines that processed representations. Tallis notes however that clouds in a puddle are not representations of clouds. A representation can only re-present a presentation. Without awareness there cannot be representations. This awareness is intentional i.e. it has aboutness. Tallis asserts that while nerves of some sort are a necessary condition of having a conscious state, they are not a sufficient condition. This is sufficiently demonstrated by the fact that at some point between 'feeling cold' and 'that is cold' it no longer makes any sense to expect a nervous system to cast any light on our conscious states. Trying to understand persons in terms of neurones is like trying to find the forest by looking at foliage.

Tallis asserts that knowledge in its most typical form is the articulation of deindexicalised, collectivised, abstract possibility, which though it may be checked against experience is not reducible to sentience. All knowledge claims are underdetermined - they go beyond our experience. This led some philosophers, from ancient Greek Pre-Socratic philosophers onwards, to uphold reason as the royal road to truth. But in addition to the problem that reason supplies us with more possible worlds than there are realities [even if you believe that there are an infinite number of universes we are still faced with the challenge of knowing our universe] no object in the world is identical with the abstract form of itself. There is always some impoverishment. The exact sciences for example transcend our immediate experience at the price of emptying the phenomenal world of everything except that which can be measured. By rendering our identification of general features explicit, we can re-classify objects. Our use of the explicit not only carries with it a sense of its incompleteness; it also carries with it the sense that we can progress to a more adequate understanding. Tallis concludes by noting that although much of what he has asserted is descriptive rather than explanatory - it does little more than move the bump in the carpet as he puts it - philosophical reflection, although grandly frivolous, is nevertheless deeply important. It realises that which is highest in our nature. Whether or nor he can rescue the higher without appealing to yet supernatural realities I leave you to decide.

C.P. Goodman

Aurel Kolnai***Sexual Ethics: The Meaning and Foundations of Sexual Morality.***

translated by Francis Dunlop, with a Preface by Roger Scruton, Ashgate 2005. ISBN 0-7546-5312-9. Hardback.

Aurel Kolnai, born Aurel Stein, on 5th December 1900, died 1973.

A book that has a preface by Roger Scruton is bound to lean somewhat toward the conservative, and this is certainly the case here. It is however, as in the works by Scruton himself, full of interesting argument worthy of consideration, although the style, with sentences of many and sometimes unnecessary clauses, is not likely to find legions of modern readers. It was in fact first published in German in 1930, when Kolnai was under thirty, but who had already written an article on Sexual Ethics in 1924 and had presented his doctoral thesis on the same subject in 1927.

Scruton's preface provides the context from which this book came: the turn-of-the-century explosion of books and articles on sex, including, of course, and the most influential, Freud's enormous *opus*, (which despite Scruton's put-down, is still deeply influential), and the distinctly suspect *Sex and Character* (English edition 1906) by Otto Weininger, that was just as influential in its day, especially on Kolnai himself. Like Freud and Weininger, Kolnai was born a Jew, but who, unlike both, would later convert to Roman Catholicism; whilst Weininger committed suicide at the age of twenty-three. It must be remembered, and can hardly be forgotten, that the first half of the twentieth century was a time of great convulsions for the notion of human identity, especially if one were Jewish. For a few years Kolnai was involved in the psychoanalytic movement, presenting a paper to Freud and his colleagues in Vienna in the early '20's, but would soon become highly critical of them. As to Marxism, although not always directly hostile, Kolnai invariably maintained a distance.

Strange to say, it was G.K. Chesterton who, Kolnai said, had the greatest influence on him: 'this Fleet-Street Aquinas, this public-house phenomenologist,' this anti-utopian, anti-secularist with his robust English common-sense, who, it seems, set him fair for conversion to Roman Catholicism. Yet the person who advanced him in the direction of phenomenology, and someone who, like Kolnai himself, liked to remain independent of its Husserlian centre, was Max Scheler who encouraged the use of this discipline in coming to terms with moral and religious questions, with the nature of the individual person and persons in society, with feelings and emotions, all of which are the life-blood of ethics. Yet he thought Scheler,

along with most moral philosophers, evaded the issue of how their principles should be applied to life and moral action. The aim of his *Sexual Ethics* was, in part, to attend to this burning issue.

One thing, associated with this, and remarked upon by Scruton too, is that to Kolnai's great credit, unlike most of the newly fashionable 'sexologists', he tackled the problem of sexual *morality* in a secular age, when most evaded moral questions, as we still do, by reducing them to materialist notions which many thought, mistakenly, to be fully graspable in the coarse net of scientism alone.

Kolnai begins with the question: 'what is the inner logic of this or that kind of erotic conduct, and what does it lead to?' p3. As we can see from the start, it's about consequences as much as descriptions. He admits from the beginning 'As there are no universal ethical axioms which can be applied mechanically, specific ethical questions will need to be answered in the light of more general ethical principles or ideas of the Good'. We are left in no doubt as to the source of this light: '... I stand on the ground of Christian ethics', (p. 3.) Yet he does not want to rely here on its 'supernatural and religious anchorage...' (p.3), but 'on the idea of 'spiritual personality' as the prime bearer of moral values...' (p. 3), in its concrete existence and limitations, embedded in the Christian love-ethic with its obligations in the setting of the possibility of reason and freedom. He makes no argument that this is the only possible ethic, but wants to explore just how far such a stance will take him, whilst at the same time being a totally committed Christian, '... but the centrality of the person, in contrast to some abstract feature of morality, helps us to keep in contact with the typical situations and problems of the real world, and sharpens our gaze – thanks to the many aspects and varieties of personal relations – for the discernment of the different shades of ethical value.' (p. 3). His Christian ground stands firmly in the richness and complexity of the everyday.

The 'enemy' for Kolnai are those who '... reject the absolute importance and completely obligatory force of the Moral', (p. 4), who have since then, it seems, been constantly growing in number owing to our seeming incapacity to see the importance of the 'sovereignty of good', embedded as it is essentially in the relation of the self, all too prone to selfishness and egotism, in that which one is not - the object or the other. This particular point is one made much of by personalists like John Macmurray, who gives much space, in books like e.g. his *Persons in Relation*,¹ arguing, in perhaps greater detail and clarity, for this very priority. He even makes an argument, if one follows it through, that meaning and logic itself depends, *logically* on the priority of the ethical. Kolnai is clearly from this philosophical

'stable'.

Charles Taylor, who, like Macmurray, can be seen as a personalist of the 'left', can also be seen assisting with the ploughing of this difficult ethical furrow made stony by uncomprehending 'nihilists', in his *The Ethics of Authenticity*² where the 'enemies' of Kolnai are criticised under the concepts of 'individualism', in its solipsistic and selfish guise, and 'instrumental reason', in the guise of scientism/materialism. It is through the philosophical simple-mindedness of these two notions that the necessity for the ethical slips from our grasp. Another 'Scylla and Charybdis' of the ethical is avoided by Kolnai when he steers a course between the prude and the libertine in his pursuit of the meaning of sexual ethics: the traps of '[I]ustful lingering on the one hand, puritan prudery on the other ...', which he is all too aware will be directed at him by those too 'pure' for a coming to terms with sexuality, and those 'phallus worshipers' who are overwhelmed by it.

Kolnai himself argues for the priority of sexual ethics for ethics generally. This is a bold claim, argued for in great detail, making many complex and subtle distinctions, as he does with other issues throughout the book, which might, on first reading, seem a little unsystematic, and which one might still wish had been structured somewhat further, even at the second reading. Yet he argues that the ethical is born in the coming to terms with sexuality and in finding its proper and creative place and use in an ethical existence. Nonetheless, there is a proper and important place for sexual chastity, but only for those who are capable of being *truly* chaste, and not like the person who would set 'up the ideal of a somehow 'absolute' chastity and declares ... indifference to everything else, if this ideal remains unfulfilled.' (p. 30). This is of a piece with Kolnai's rejection, as a good Catholic, of Manicheism, the belief that the universe is evil in its material nature, especially in its manifestation of the body and sex, as in its most famous and extreme instance of the mediaeval Cathars in the South of France who attempted to refrain from sex with the intention of 'closing down' the material world for one of 'pure spirit'. Like its 'opposite', libertinism, it is fundamentally life and world-hating, as can be seen in the works of that arch-libertine, the Marquis de Sade. Kolnai presents us with a telling *Critique of Immoralism* on (pp. 28-31).

Yet sexuality as such is intrinsically dangerous, though certainly not, in itself, evil. Its 'ethical precariousness' is based on the 'drowning of personality in the homogeneous ... feeling of voluptuousness.' that may easily cause us '... to cast aside all value-systems ...' (p. 45). 'It is concern for the *person* that leads moral conscience to set itself against moral laxity, lack of restraint and impurity'

(p. 49). Yet sex, for Kolnai, can have a wholly benign affect, when set in moral relations and loving self-expression. Striving for union, that for Kolnai must be monogamous and heterosexual, can sharpen identity, overcome arrogance and self-sufficient pride. It is, of course, love itself that is essential for sexual ethics in particular and for ethics and religion in general, and Kolnai explores this in some phenomenological detail. It could be this phenomenological approach, with its seeking out of direct experience of particular moral states, that prevents the incisiveness and analytical clarity of Macmurray, and perhaps we should not ask for this in such an endeavour.

One could cite many examples of this phenomenological treatment, but Kolnai's Chapter Five, on the *Special Features of Sex*, is a good one. Sex's special features are:

- (1) Its 'Apartness', a kind of 'alienation' from normal existence.
- (2) Its 'All-Pervasiveness': it lurks in all spheres of personal life and is not a cultural product, like art.
- (3) The Enormous Extent of its Claims: its tendency to take over life, repressing honour and duty.
- (4) Its Polymorphousness: not in the Freudian sense, where libido is transfigured according to notions such as displacement, sublimation, transference etc., where the 'higher' is always derived on principle from the 'lower', but in the propensity for sex to associate 'outside and alongside' the sex act itself, with all sorts possible relationships with e.g. the spiritual and the social realm. But we can't and shouldn't want to desexualise life: for it is, despite its 'suspect' nature, a source of spirituality. Nonetheless, in certain circumstances, suppression will be appropriate because sex has the ability to sexualise the non-sexual inappropriately, as in sado-masochism and fetishism: about which Kolnai has much to say.
- (5) The Intertwinement of Body and Soul: where both are in balance and the body needs a 'safeguarded and responsible relation between the couple, compatible with spiritual and personal love' (p. 65), *as in marriage*.
- (6) The Creation of Personal Intimacy, based not on a functional, using, relationship but a self-giving of body and soul to the personal other *exclusive of the outside world*, unlike any other relationship such as religion, friendship and family relations. There is a danger here in depersonalisation – and 'grovelling before vital powers'.
- (7) The Fundamental Relation between Sex and Society: where sexual relations *are* also the business of society, because '... nothing important can be a completely and utterly private matter', (p. 68), although it is essentially turned away from society too. This paradox is essential, but it enables the immoralist attack. 'Social supervision' is necessary,

but should not be defined: 'the elimination of social supervision would be no less unnatural than the abolition of sex itself', (p. 68).

(8) Its 'Irrationality'. Sex is essentially alien to reason, e.g. in the choice of partner, where there are fewer objective criteria 'than in the choice of an employee'! It is, and should always be 'a leap in the dark' – but always within marriage.

Kolnai opens Chapter Seven by saying that there '... is a primal tension, a germ of radical incompatibility between sex and the personal, spiritual, ethically ordered values of human existence.' (p. 90). Yet the 'mutual exclusion between morality and sex does not have to be realised', p90. Sex, in fact, is a precondition 'of certain apparently irreplaceable ethical goals: rescuing the person from atomistic torpor, and meeting the personal need for significant relations with the external world, which, ... also brings about a particular kind of self-consciousness, self-awareness and hence fulfilment *as a person*.' (p. 90). Sex in a sense is both bad, and, in a different sense, good. It is bad 'when thought of as *detached* from those forms of its unfolding which do justice to both nature and the person.' (p. 92).

Sex, in short, is ethical dynamite: dangerous in itself, yet an essential blessing when allied to the good. Thus there are certain basic demands of Sexual Ethics, and Kolnai spells them out on pages 93-96. These provide an orientation for much of what follows. These Most General Demands are Limitation, Completeness and Compatibility.

1 Limitation.

This is essentially negative. No other value '... ascribes a similarly decisive importance to the 'absence of something'...' (p.93). Here there is limitation on certain sexual possibilities in the form of certain persons or objects, or of certain kinds of sexual activity; otherwise the 'dynamite' blows up in one's face.

2 Completeness.

This does not oppose Limitation, it is not about 'maximal intensity, variety and promiscuity in sexual abandon, but only as indicating the presence of *essential* elements which must be present *whenever* sexual activity has really been embarked upon' (p. 94). Like Limitation one essential element is legitimacy of goal and 'normality'; others are the presence of love in a relationship in which 'the personal element plays a determining role' ((p. 94). '...it presupposes a degree of personal engagement continuously maintained even in the midst of sexual surrender and activity' ((p. 95). Otherwise the personal and the sexual split asunder.

3 Compatibility.

This is related to the other two and requires that

'sexuality be subservient to and in keeping with the purposes of the values of personal life...' especially 'love, affection, spiritual and vital life outside the sexual sphere' (p.95).

In a short review it is possible to give only a taste of this rich dish, but the recipe in the form of its four part structure might help: the book itself needs time and attention. Part One: 'The Justification of Sexual Ethics' dealing with, *inter alia*, 'The Ethical Experience of Sex', 'Relativism and Immoralism', 'What Can We Expect From Sexual Ethics?' Part Two: 'Sexual Ethics in General' dealing with, *inter alia*, 'Sexual Pleasure', 'Special Features of Sex', 'The Desire of Each Sex For The Other', 'Sex: Its Dangers and Values', 'The Basic Principles of Sexual Ethics'. Part Three: 'Detailed Problems of Sexual Ethics' dealing with *inter alia*, 'Ordered and Disordered Sex', 'Questions Related to Monogamy', (absolutely essential for Kolnai's view of sexual ethics), 'Questions Relating to Normality': a robust and carefully argued defence of marriage and heterosexuality, which tackles homosexuality and perversions head on, giving both short shrift in a most un-PC way, whilst remaining sympathetic, especially to the former. Part Five: 'Sexual Morality and Society' dealing with, *inter alia*, 'The Sexual Ethical Claims of Society', 'Women's Honour', the 'Family, Sexual Ethics and Culture'.

One could say that a central core of this book is concerned with relating instinctive sexuality, the 'other' within (with a seeming life of its own) to the deeply personal through redeemed sexuality, and then relating this with the socio-cultural - or the other without. It is the quality of these relations that seems to absorb him, not their conventional, external forms, and he captures this quality in the term 'chastity', (or 'abstention', 'purity'); although this cannot be confined to sexuality – even though it is often its greatest challenge. Macmurray defines 'chastity' as 'emotional sincerity', a state of grace - the ability to love. In the case of sex it relates the 'infernal' to the eternal, transforming the 'base' into the good. But neither, and this is important, deny the fleshliness of sex – nor of life generally.

Both agree that mere sexual attraction is not love. 'Real personal love is the basis in the absence of which specifically sexual relations are unchaste and immoral.'³ In the ethical realm such moral sincerity serves the same purpose as honesty in the factual realm: as a guide to the real, as a guide as to how to apply the rules in a given ethical circumstance – and how to become real oneself. For this reason it might be seen as the root of wisdom. Both also agree that the integration of all aspects of life must be founded

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21. Similarly, 'participate' and 'ingress' refer to the same sort of operation, but highlighting the factual unifying and the dynamic acceptance and mutual bonding of participants in a process of 'conrescence'; cf. esp. Pt.

III (*The Theory of Prehensions*) in *Processional Reality* (corrected edn. by David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne; The Free Press, New York, 1978), pp. 219ff.

22. *Uniformity and Contingency*. pp. 12-13.
 23. *ibid.*, pp. 12-14.
 24. *ibid.*
 25. *ibid.*
 26. *ibid.*, p. 15. We must note again the dynamic character of Whitehead's line of argument; here, 'event' and 'situation' are synonymous; he refers to his work, *The Principle of Relativity*, where even the syntactic unit, 'adjective' is in action, as he calls it 'pervasive'.
 27. *ibid.*, p.15; of course, the 'situation' is an *event!*
 28. *ibid.*, p.16.
 29. *ibid.*, pp. 15-16.
 30. *ibid.*, p. 16; Whitehead refers to doubting Thomas (John 20, 25-28).
 31. *ibid.* We note that 'ingression' and 'participation' refer to the same kind of event; this is viewed in two different ways; 'ingression' (as its Latin root-term shows) refers to the dynamic action of one sense object actually *invading* the other, whereas 'participation' reflects the mutual embrace of two sense objects attaining union – i.e. this is not a static situation, but rather like that of two participants who receive the Eucharist.
 32. *ibid.*, pp. 16-17; Whitehead calls them 'Aristotelian pervasive adjectives which are the controls of ingression'.
 33. *ibid.*, p.17.
 34. cf. his concluding quotation from Keynes' *Treatise on Probability* (p. 18): cf. *The Collected Writings of John Maynard Keynes*. vol. VIII: Macmillan for the Royal Economic Society, London, 1973 (1921), p.280.
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in chastity of this kind in order to be a person, capable of love. In this sense love does indeed reveal all, especially oneself, as one is, to oneself and to the other, so that one can indeed love and be loved.

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- 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)
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- 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).