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HOMAGE TO PROFESSOR CONSTANTIN GRECU ON HIS 66<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY

*Alexandru PETRESCU*  
West University of Timișoara

Professor Constantin Grecu belongs to *the* scholarly community that invests their most primary tenets in the study of epistemology, logic, and methodology of science. He makes an asset of that group of professors who are dedicated to cultivating among their students the mandatory need to acquire a personal commitment. That is, when it comes to knowledge, it is not the quantitative aspect of information that counts the most; on the contrary, it is personal assimilation, the vigorous experience of well-understood ideas that counts. Those ideas need also be centred on a personal option.

Professor Grecu was born in 1938. He studied philosophy at the University of Bucharest (Department of Philosophy), and graduated in 1962. The very same year, he started out an impressive career both as a scholar and as a teacher. First, in between 1962 and 1989, Professor Grecu worked his way up to Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy at "Traian Vuia" Polytechnic Institute, Timisoara. Starting 1990, he became a Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy at the West University of Timisoara. Professor Grecu contributed, along with Professor Viorel Coltescu, to laying the foundations of the Department. Until the day of his retirement in 2004, Professor Grecu proved himself to be a remarkable academic figure, a role model for the scholars interested in sobriety, integrity, and (self-)exigency.

Professor Grecu has been acknowledged as a genuine researcher in the fields of logic and the methodology of science based on such events as his doctoral dissertation in Philosophy (*Logical Positivism and the Theory of Scientific Explanation*, 1976) and the "Simion Barnutiu" award

(Academia Romana) for excellent scholarly merits in 1983. Throughout the years, his research interests were primarily centred on several options, among which we would like to mention: Studies on the practical and heuristic value of logical analysis beyond the limits of analytical philosophy; studies on the development of science from historical and critical perspectives; the mandatory character of alternative explanations; studies on the possible similarities between logic and rhetoric. The results of his work were much generously shared not only with the undergraduate Philosophy majors, but also with the doctoral students of the Department of Philosophy, whose doctoral committees Professor Grecu chaired since 1990.

Proof of Professor Grecu's public acknowledgement of academic excellence stands his being a member of various institutes and associations within the fields of Logic and Philosophy such as: "Interest Group on Propositional and Predicate Logic" (London, England), "Centro Superiore di Logica e Scienze Comparete" (Bologna, Italy), and "Comitetul Roman de Istoria si Filosofia Stiintei" (Academia Romana). Professor Grecu's professional activity includes his being a co-editor to the international journal *Questioning Exchange* (Taylor & Francis, London, California), as well as his being a member in the review board of several scholarly publications such as: *Revue Roumaine de Philosophie*, *Noiesis*, *Revista de Filosofie a Academiei Romane*, *Analele Universitatii de Vest, Timisoara (Seria Filosofie)*, etc.

Professor Grecu's scientific work, sober, rigorous, and original, includes two authored books (*Interrogative Logic and its Applications*, 1982, and *Introduction to Symbolic Logic*, 1996), as well as 18 books that he co-authored. In addition, Professor Grecu published a number of more than 50 studies and articles in professional journals, among which we would like to mention: "Information and Explanatory Power" (1975), "Analytical Theories of Knowledge" (1982), "Rationality and Style in Scientific Inquiry" (1983), "Philosophical Presuppositions of Science" (1983), "A New Beginning for Interrogative Logic" (1986), "The Thematic Analysis of Science" (1986), "Questioning in Romania" (in *Questioning Exchange*, California, 1985), "Logical Temporality and the Logic of Time" (1996), "Alternative Explanations in Science" (2001). These studies have been cited and reviewed in several books and studies authored by Romanian and foreign researchers. It should also be noted that Professor Grecu participated to numerous national and international conventions and conferences, where he presented various work, among which the following studies stand as notorious: "Explanation and Relevance", *Reports on the seminar on formal methodology of empirical sciences*, Wroclaw, Polish Academy of Science, 1974; "The Logic of

Perspectival Time”, at *The 9<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Logic, Methodology and Philosophy of Science*, Uppsala, Sweden, August 1991; “The Theoretical and the Observational in Scientific Knowledge” at *The 4<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Logic, Methodology and Philosophy of Science*, Bucharest, 1971, etc.

Professor Grecu’s original contributions, deeply connected to the options that we referred to above, and apparent throughout the studies and articles that he authored, include: the logic of time, the problematic that is specific to philosophical inquiry, the origins and evolution of analytical philosophy, scientific rationality, and philosophical presuppositions of science. In addition to the above, Professor Grecu conveyed an engaged interest in resuscitating the theoretical intentions of several Romanian scholars of the past, such as Eugeniu Sperantia, Stefan Lupascu, Lucian Blaga, and Petre Botezatu.

While engaged in the research on “the logic of time”, which originates in the work of Arthur Norman Prior and develops through the works of major scholars such as S. Kripke, N. Rescher, J. Hintikka, C. van Fraassen, etc., Professor Grecu pays an equal interest to the possibility of conceiving time through multiple, polymorphous perspectives. Thus, he believes data and “methodology” that are specific to such disciplines as the logic of science, rhetoric and argumentation, the classical logic of propositions, modal logic, could also become fruitful material for other research enterprises. This line of inquiry ties with a theoretical interest, that is, to argue in favour of the idea that the logic of time constitutes, in fact, a branch of philosophical logic, which could contribute to the elucidation of the concept of time and to the understanding of time itself.

As regards “the origins and evolution of analytical philosophy”, Professor Grecu argues, time and again, for its Britannic ancestry. He gives credit to Bertrand Russell and George Moore as the founding fathers of analytical philosophy, adding his voice in support of other famous scholars such as: J. O. Urmson, Berry Cross, Herman Phillipse, etc. However, unlike the others, Professor Grecu accepts Russell’s and Moore’s contribution to configuring analytical thought in its specificity (in virtue of such methods as “conceptual analysis” and common language criticism), while at the same time he takes into account Kant’s and Frege’s influence on the Britannic scholars. It should also be noted that, in light of his views on analytical philosophy’s development throughout time, Professor Grecu looks for ways of arguing that this development itself (in terms of Britannic, German, and American scholars’ manner to perform logical analyses on scientific language), makes it appropriate for one to sustain that the method of logical analysis expands beyond the

limits of analytical philosophy and becomes a successful instrument of research for some philosophers of science that, unlike the neo-positivists, fail to regard formal analysis as a mere doctrine.

While arguing for scientific rationality's co-extensiveness with philosophy upon the whole (consequently, also with the philosophy of science), Professor Grecu developed a sustained interest in the "primary presuppositions" (ontological, logical, epistemological, and methodological) responsible for the development of authentic models of rationality. Presuppositions' ways of articulation require conceptual and thematic means that are able to convey their constitutive elements. Professor Grecu speaks of "rationality and style intrinsic to scientific knowledge", and what he has in mind there is the way in which "the style that describes scientific inquiry" (its assembly of logical, historical, psychological, and sociological specifics) entails the impossible character of "complete rationality".

It is well known that one of the ongoing projects of those who, within the institutional frames set by Romanian Universities, invest their best research in the philosophy and logic of science is to resuscitate interest for the theoretical intentions of such scholars of the past as Stefan Lupascu, Eugeniu Sperantia, and Lucian Blaga. Professor Grecu himself undertakes such a project. For instance, while interested in "the specific temporality of logical thought", Professor Grecu sheds new light on the possibilities of continued research on the "theory of the dynamic logic of the contradictory", a theory created by Stefan Lupascu. Likewise, from the perspective of various themes in the philosophy of science, Professor Grecu brings to the surface of contemporary scholarship some elements of "specificity of philosophical thought" and "logical analysis of questioning", which of course Eugeniu Sperantia, one of the "founding fathers of interrogative logic" first theorized upon. In the same manner, the research on the domain of philosophy of science that Professor Grecu authors comprises a view of the problematic and the specific attributes of science that includes some of Lucian Blaga's conceptions: a) the cultural and philosophical conditioning of science ("the philosophical presuppositions of science", "the infra-structural frames of scientific inquiry", "the thematic analysis of science", "the role that the context plays" in ascertaining the connection between an idea and its presuppositions, etc.); b) the mandatory character of alternative explanations in science (which primarily derives from the historical character of scientific thought's infra-structure); c) the dynamics of science and "the nature and genres of scientific revolutions" (that is, profound changes that take place at the level of scientific worldviews, styles, ideals, and particularly, at the level of philosophical

presuppositions behind those); d) the scientific problem and its philosophical presuppositions; the philosophical problems of science, etc. Obviously, unlike Lucian Blaga, Professor Grecu regards certain aspects of knowledge and dynamics of science as being correlated with a discourse that takes into account other articulations of science as well. It is especially the case of those aspects that refer to the internal, logical structure of scientific disciplines and theories, to the “rhetorical dimension of science”, or to the specifics of a “formal problematic”.

Open and receptive to everything new in the domains of theoretical philosophy, logic and methodology of science, responsible and moderate in his scholarly engagements, Professor Grecu has always been, and will continue to stay, to his colleagues and all levels students, a powerful model of respect and commitment to philosophy, science, and a professor’s mandate to teach others. For all these reasons, now, on this unique occasion of his anniversary, we all celebrate Professor Grecu, wishing him long life for the sake of the future of philosophical inquiry, of our Department, as well as for our sake.

## THE LOCKEAN LESSON ON PROPERTY

*Cosmin GHEORGHE*  
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Our Constitution, recently modified and accepted by the people, includes an article (number 41) about the property right. This and others official documents show us the importance of this subject for mankind, because man has always felt the need for property.

Combining two classical traditions of thinking (contractualism and natural right theory), English philosopher John Locke offers us a theory on property, very actual and so liberal. But let's listen Locke's lesson!

The lockean theory of property is exposed in *Second treatise on government*<sup>1</sup> but, more than the isolated references, the thinker will dedicate to this subject a whole chapter (chapter 5), that proves his interest about the problem of property. More than that, the lockean theory doesn't express itself into a theoretical vacuum on the same subject. It is a replay to the theory of absolute monarchy (the king has absolute natural right on his subjects and their goods) and to the medieval doctrines, fully theological (it has been an initial state when everything was in common, a state spoiled by the civil laws that will accept the setting up the private property).

Concerned himself about giving different kind of legitimations, our philosopher felt the need of another legitimation: that of the private property. As Locke himself says:

*"I shall try to show how it is possible that men become owners of something that God gave in common to the mankind and this without an explicit agreement of all the people"*<sup>2</sup>.

As you can see, Locke proposes a moral legitimation of private property, trying to identify its origins and its importance for individual existence.

The lecture of the second treatise brings out to light a characteristic feature of the lockean point of view on property. The thinker uses a double definition for property, which will lead to certain dissatisfaction about his theory and will become a reason for rejecting its validity. But what does this double definition proposed by Locke suppose? It's a *short* definition and an *extended* one of property, but this will not be understood if we do not take into account the context of their use.

Locke uses the short definition of property in the chapter dedicated to the matter. Here, property means possession of goods. The English philosopher will try to offer an explanation for getting the goods and for the unequal quantitative growing up of those who are already in men's possession.

The extended definition of property is used, without excluding the short one, in the other parts of the treatise. So, Locke will understand by property, at the same time "*life, freedom and fortune*"<sup>3</sup>. The extended definition overtakes, as you can see, even the actual way of using this concept. It's talking about rights and liberties that are discussed today as isolated problems. If the extended definition includes the freedom, the short definition makes of property a condition of freedom. This double meaning makes D. Colas speak about an anthropological tackeland, not an economical one of property<sup>4</sup>. We need to specify that Locke uses the extended definition of property when he talks about political (civil) society. Property, this way understood, is the reason for which human being renounces to the state of nature for political society. In exchange, the civil or political society (in Locke's terms) will assume the responsibility and the supreme goal of preserving property.

The lockean way of seeing human nature influences his conception about private property. The human nature is dominated by a supreme power, that can't be expelled or diminished, but served: our inclination for self-preservation. The natural law demands man to do all he has to do for surviving. It is not just a moral legitimation for a natural inclination; it is the express of the divine order and the urge of the reason. The self-preservation presume the satisfaction of primarily needs, satisfaction that demands the expulsion of the other: not the elimination, but the non-participation. Because there are my needs, I'm the only one who can know when, how and how much can they be satisfied. There is a unique limit in this satisfaction, which the same natural law stipulates: the respect of the equal right to the other for self-preservation. This natural determinism becomes a right, stimulating the individual for action. As Leo Strauss says:

“... it must be recognized to the mankind the right to do something that they are incapable of not doing”<sup>5</sup>.

From this right and, also, an obligation for self-preservation, Locke deduces the natural right of property. For satisfying primarily needs, man uses different goods. These must be his and nobody else does have the right on them, because just this way these goods can accomplish their mission. Therefore, the legitimation for getting goods is made sure of the natural right for self-preservation. So, the property right is a natural right and not a social one. F. A. Harper sees the universality of the territorial instinct and this be-cause it is only the property that assures and controls what is necessary for surviving<sup>6</sup>.

The lockean theory on property focuses on two big problems, always actual, which made this theory an important and permanent point of reference about this subject. What does Locke want? He proposes a rational legitimation of private property, trying to show us the individual and collective advantages of this property form. Plus, he wants and has to legitimate the existent economical inequality.

From the beginning, the lockean approach accepts some premises, very familiar to Locke contemporaries. First, the idea that man must self-preserve. This effort becomes much easier because of two gifts that God gave to man: *the earth*-for common use and *reason*-an individual gift. The correct using of these two gifts respects the divine order and responds to the natural inclination for self-preservation. If I must survive I must become the owner with all the consequences and limits included by my new status. But what does becoming an owner mean? What does it means having the exclusive right of using a good? How can this kind of right be possible in common conditions of using? In other words, how is the private property possible?

Locke answered to these questions by making a distinction, not for separation, but for clearing the facts. When we talk about property, we must say the classes of objects on which this right is exercised. Locke will do something like this, showing that we can speak about *property on my own person and property on external objects*.

The property on my own person is the first property form and the base for the other property forms. It presumes the right of each to dispose on himself (physical and mental) as he thinks it is necessary for his preservation. This arrangement must be only positive, according to the demands of natural law, and not negative (suicide or slavery). Man has not the permission to destroy himself or to let others to destroy themselves. This natural property right is a complete, absolute and personal one or as Locke says:

“... and to this (property on his own person ) nobody else has the right besides him”<sup>7</sup>.

This natural property right is sustained by Locke regarding human relationships (political or not) and not regarding human being-God relation, because man does not belong to him, he is God’s creation<sup>8</sup>.

Intuitive, it can be discovered how the thinker succeeded in sustaining the natural property right on the external objects. So, he unified two natural rights: that of self-preservation and that of the property on my own person, getting this way the natural property right which interested him. How could Locke justify the private property when himself said that in the state of nature (the primitive state of mankind) we meet the common use of the earth, we have a “primitive communism”<sup>9</sup>? Locke found the following solution: labour. This has become the legitimation of private property (for instance, Rousseau think that robbery and not labour is the origin of property). The whole discussion will take place around the short definition of property, the lockean theory being approached from this perspective.

Private property appears as the result of an association between something common (natural good) and something human

“the labour of his body and the work of his hands”<sup>10</sup> (generally speaking, the labour).

Including his labour in something natural, man brings out a modification of the initial state of that good, gives new qualities to those objects non-existent before. This investment of human labour gives the right to the owner of that labour to proclaim himself the owner of that natural good (now a processed good), a good which nobody else has the entitled right to use, without the owner’s consent. In this matter, J. Plamenatz talks about an exclusivist Locke, because he passes from the idea that somebody has the property right only if he invests his labour to the idea that nobody can have the property right on a good, if he wants and can invest his labour, since another person has already done it. Plamenatz asks himself and asks us:

“If labour has this power of creating titles to property, why only some labour and not all? Whence the privilege of the first labourers denied to those who come after them?”<sup>11</sup>.

That natural good become part of labourer’s property, because any effort means a consumption of energy, an extension of his personality to that good. So, we can speak about “producer-owner”.

For J. Plamenatz, the lockean attempt to legitimate private property contains an error of thinking, because Locke gets from facts: *all what keeps on me is mine* a moral rule: *everything I got, because of the investment from something I had, become my property*.

The justification of property is in human being, answering to his needs. As Locke says:

“man has in himself the great basis of property”<sup>12</sup>.

And if it is so, if

“property comes into the world by labour and everybody has in himself the great source of property”<sup>13</sup>,

then it is clear that it's not necessary the other's consent for getting the owner status, despite the equal right on natural goods. You are the owner because you work and you work for satisfaction of your needs, it means for self-preservation. Without these implications, if the consent of the others to become owners has been necessary,

“man would have died of hunger, in spite of the abundance which God gave to the mankind”<sup>14</sup>.

But when is this consent really necessary? The answer of this question presumes the distinction between collective property from state of nature and collective property from political society. First it has been given by God, who encouraged man to work and to get private property. The second is the result of man agreement. If it is an agreement, we must find the consent of man for taking the common part and change it into a private one.

As you see, labour is very important for Locke, but attention! He's not a socialist! For him, labour is not a value itself; it is a way to touch different goals.

„As old as Man's Fall”<sup>15</sup>,

labour is not a free of charged activity. Demanded by God and reason, labour brings to man some advantages that satisfy the needs always bigger and diversified of this being. What are these advantages?

First, labour is the way through which man can make the legitimate distinction between what is his and what are others. Man is recognized, by labour, the indisputable owner of a good.

Secondly, the natural goods are not fit for the satisfaction of human needs. The labour transforms them into processed goods, wanted and useful. Useless because of their different lacks, the natural goods become, once processed, useful for human life and they get a certain economical value. (Locke's idea that virgin nature is without value in the absence of labour brings the ecological critics, for which nature and mankind are axiological equals). What does it mean that a good has economical value? It means that good is into the relation demand-offer and his value depends on the work necessary to bring it on the market. In this case, the price reflects production costs. Locke insists on the idea that labour gives value to the natural goods:

“labour gives them something more than Nature made it”<sup>16</sup>

or

“labour gives to every good the value difference”<sup>17</sup>.

Thirdly,

labour doesn't impoverish, but it enriches, at the same, the field worked and the labourer<sup>18</sup>.

Fourthly, labour brings the change of goods and, on this base, the material progress of the mankind, the comfort of human life, impossible to touch it even there is an abundance of natural goods.

No doubt, these are only a few advantages of the labour. Can we justify an extension of private property to these advantages? No, Locke said, because in this phase of surviving labour or “subsistence economy”<sup>19</sup> there are some limits of the property getting and the economic inequality is not a fact.

What are these limits? There are natural limits (because of human body) and rational limits (because of natural law). The natural limits are obvious: men can't labour the whole earth and, even if they could, it's not possible to consume all the goods obtained. In this case, many goods destroy themselves and the labour would be useless.

Two are the rational limits:

- 1) The limit or condition of *not-waste*: the property right is valid only on those goods which supported man's labour and can be consumed by him. Of course, nobody denies the right to a person on what he produces, but everything that is not used is a waste and an attempt to the equal property right of the other, because

every other person could have the advantages offered by those wasted goods. This limit assures an equality of the human beings regarding the distribution of goods<sup>20</sup>. For many commentators, this limit is good, but in poverty conditions, not in abundance ones (L. Strauss). The waste is not important and can't be convicted as long as it doesn't affect anyone. For Locke, this limit is important, because he thinks the property rule is „every man should have only what he can use“<sup>21</sup>.

- 2) The limit of *quantitative and qualitative equivalence*: the property right is possible if it remains for the others „enough and good“<sup>22</sup>. We can see the desire to avoid a possible harm and the assurance of the equal chances to everyone.

What affected this quasi-idyllic state? What brought the mankind from the promised equality to the existent economic inequality? (In this point, Locke tries to justify not only the private property, but also the economic inequality.) The answer is: money. The extension of property leads to the economic inequality. Because of his needs, man wanted more than he could really consume and, of course, more than the others. He wanted some-thing more, just for being owner. He looked for enrichment, nor for surviving. How could he do something like that, not breaking the natural law? Simple, Locke says: he invented money.

Money is

“the thing to which the imagination or the agreement brings them a certain value, more than their real use or their help to life“<sup>23</sup>.

As you can see, the value of money is not a natural one, its social. It talks about an agreement for exchange goods-money. Money doesn't waste as the other goods do, so the man can gather them in huge quantity, because this act doesn't affect somebody. Money saves any good from a possible waste and reward men for their effort. Here are three qualities of money: lasting, rare and with an established value-enough qualities to make men want it.

In this way, the labour not only assures the surviving, but, also, the economic superiority of somebody. Therefore, it passes from “subsistence economy” to the “intense changes economy”<sup>24</sup>. Money confirms the property right on the sold goods.

What are the most important effects of using money? The possessions rise, it appears an economic lack of balance<sup>25</sup>, but, also, an economic progress, a growth of comfort, an efficient and quick satisfaction of the needs and desires. As L. Strauss said, in this kind of society, finally, rich or poor, everyone is contented<sup>26</sup>. Also, it feels the

need for protecting the possessions and natural law can't do this thing anymore. So, it needs the civil society ( see Locke's explanation about civil society goals). Now, we don't speak anymore about "producer-owner", but "keeper-owner".

We must observe that property right is not a civil one, but it must be recognized and guaranteed by the government (see also Romanian Constitution), and money is before political society. It proves that economic relations are before political relations. We can conclude that men are together because of their material interests, and not because of their reason.

In spite of its lacks, the lockean theory of property will be a good source for different economic theories. This theory is good because it is an alternative for the actual researches for rational legitimations of private property, of return from the collective property to the private property, Locke insisting on the lacks of the first and the advantages of the second.

### Bibliographical Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Locke has a special work dedicated to the economic liberty called *Some considerations of the lowering of interest and raising the value of money* (1691), but the criticism kept the thinker's point of view, as it was expressed in the second treatise.

<sup>2</sup> J. Locke, *Al doilea tratat despre cârmuire*, trad. S. Culea, Ed. Nemira, București, 1999, §25.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, §87.

<sup>4</sup> D. Colas, *Genealogia fanatismului și a societății civile*, trad. C. Arion, M. Secure, A. Vasile, Ed. Nemira, București, 1998, p. 258.

<sup>5</sup> L. Strauss & J. Cropsey, *Histoire de la philosophie politique*, trad. O. Sedeyn, Paris, P.U.F., 1999, p. 533.

<sup>6</sup> F. A. Harper, *Proprietatea și forma ei primară*, Polis, vol. 3, nr. 1, 1996.

<sup>7</sup> J. Locke, *Al doilea tratat despre cârmuire*, trad. S. Culea, Ed. Nemira, București, 1999, §27.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, §6 "... or being all the workmanship of one omnipotent and infinitely wise maker; all the servantes of one sovereign master, sent into the world by his order and about his business; they are his property whose workmanship they are, made to last during his, not another's pleasure".

<sup>9</sup> P. Laslett, *Introduction to Two treatises on Government*, Cambridge University Press, 1988, p. 101.

<sup>10</sup> J. Locke, *Al doilea tratat despre cârmuire*, trad. S. Culea, Ed. Nemira, București, 1999, §27.

<sup>11</sup> J. Plamenatz, *Man and Society*, vol. I, Ed. Longman, London, 1963, p. 246.

<sup>12</sup> J. Locke, *Al doilea tratat despre cârmuire*, trad. S. Culea, Ed. Nemira, București, 1999, §44.

<sup>13</sup> P. Manent, *Istoria intelectuală a liberalismului*, trad. Mona și Sorin Antohi, București, Ed. Humanitas, 1992.

<sup>14</sup> J. Locke, *Al doilea tratat despre cârmuire*, trad. S. Culea, Ed. Nemira, București, 1999, §28.

<sup>15</sup> J. Dunn, *Locke*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1984, p. 39.

<sup>16</sup> J. Locke, *Al doilea tratat despre cârmuire*, trad. S. Culea, Ed. Nemira, București, 1999, §28.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, §40.

<sup>18</sup> §37 from J. Locke, *Al doilea tratat despre cârmuire*, is dedicated to justify this idea with numbers.

<sup>19</sup> S. Cucerai; J. Locke, in L. Șt. Scalat *Dicționar de scrieri politice fundamentale*, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2000, p. 194.

<sup>20</sup> L. Strauss notes that the deterioration is not a human privilege, but nature, which contains cyclic moments of ruin. So, this limit seems to be against man. L. Strauss & J. Cropsey, *Histoire de la philosophie politique*, trad. O. Sedeyn, Paris, P.U.F., 1999, p. 540.

<sup>21</sup> J. Locke, *Al doilea tratat despre cărmuire*, trad. S. Culea, Ed. Nemira, București, 1999, §36.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, §27, §33.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, §46.

<sup>24</sup> S. Cucerai, J. Locke, in L. Șt. Scalat, *Dicționar de scrieri politice fundamentale*, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2000, p. 194.

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REASON AND HISTORY IN KANT'S MINOR WRITINGS. ON  
THE PLACE OF HISTORY IN THE ARCHITECTONIC OF THE  
KANTIAN SYSTEM.

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“What can I know?”, “what ought I do?”, “what may I hope?”. These are the essential philosophical questions in which, as Immanuel Kant pointed out: “the whole interest of reason, speculative as well as practical, is centered”.<sup>1</sup> Each of Kant's major philosophical writings address these fundamental philosophical questions and, in this way, the Kantian philosophical system is probably the greatest modern philosophical attempt to map the possibilities and the limits of human Reason in its various manifestation. However, as Kant noticed later, the attempt to give an answer to these questions leads necessary towards a new, more radical question: “what is man ?”.

Unlike the case of the answers to the first and the second question (which are expressed in the first and the Kantian second critique), Kant never gave a systematic answer to this fourth essential philosophical question. Nevertheless, it can be said that, to a large extent, in *all* his minor writings from the critical period Kant tried, more or less explicitly, to offer an account this fourth, more radical question: “what is man?” The Kantian writings on the philosophy of history and on politics belong, undoubtedly, to the Kantian works which tried explicitly to give an answer, although a partial one, to this troubling philosophical question.

Through these writings Kant participated also the great revolution of Enlightenment, the discovery of history as an autonomous philosophical field. Indeed, “the conquest of historical world” was, as Ernst Cassirer

demonstrated in his *The Philosophy of Enlightenment*, one of the major intellectual achievements of Enlightenment.<sup>2</sup> Unlike the pre-modern political theories, the political theories of Enlightenment have emerged in a context of discussion in which the historical argument was very often the decisive one. Starting with the eighteenth century, “the century of Enlightenment”, the philosophy of history has become a new “language game” in which the political discourses have received their meaning. As most of his fellow Enlightenment thinkers, Kant read history from the vantage point of the “problem of emancipation”.

In the following pages I will discuss one aspect of Kant’s reasoning about history, namely the way in which Kant’s conception of the *process of human emancipation* is rooted in a specific understanding of *human nature*. Considering this problem I will attempt to highlight the fact that many others important and apparent divergent themes of critical philosophy converge in order to give an answer to this problem. Consequently, I will try to demonstrate that the problem of emancipation is not only the central topic of Kant’s philosophy of history but it that has a very important role in the general architectonic of the Kantian system. In fact, it can be regarded as the probably most systematic attempt to answer the fourth fundamental philosophical question of the critical philosophy: “what is man?”.

The Kantian investigation of the possibility to know the historical reality was carried out in the last chapters of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, specially in ‘The architectonic of pure reason’ and in ‘The history of pure reason’. Here, after mapping the boundaries of pure reason in its theoretical exercise, Kant observes that: “if I make complete abstraction of the content of cognition, objectively considered, all cognition is, from a subjective point of view, either historical or rational”<sup>3</sup>.

We can see, thus, that along with its *rational* dimension, every cognition has a *historical* dimension. In the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant questioned the possibility of cognition only from the rational perspective, according with the a priori principles of the pure reason, only as *cognitio ex principiis*.

Yet, as part of the great attempt to outline “the architectonic of the pure reason” in the final part of the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant addressed also the historical dimension of the reason. Thus, the *Critique of Pure Reason* ends with a short “History of pure reason”, where Kant sketches a short history of philosophy from a *critical* perspective. In this very interesting section of the Kantian *chef d’oeuvre* we learn that reason in its theoretical exercise has a history. It is the history of successive philosophical systems which “have aimed at erecting an edifice of philosophy”. But this enterprise was a failed one, and, as Kant

confesses further, "to my eye this edifice appears to be in a very ruinous conditions". Only the *Critique of Pure Reason* revealed the inescapable limits of speculative pure reason and demonstrated the impossibility of building that metaphysical edifice of philosophy. From all philosophical perspectives which were experimented within the history of philosophy only "the critical path alone is still open". Therefore, the history of reason in his theoretical exercise, the history of the self-knowledge of reason ends with the Kantian revolution.

In this context it has to be noticed that the pure reason has not only a theoretical but a practical use as well. Accordingly, the final chapters of the *Critique of Pure Reason* end by highlighting not only the unavoidable limits of theoretical pure reason, but also the importance and the supremacy of the practical use of reason:

In view of the complete systematic unity of reason, there can only be one ultimate end of all the operations of the mind. To this all other aims are subordinate, and nothing more than a means of attainment. This ultimate end is the destination of man, and the philosophy which relates to it is termed Moral Philosophy<sup>4</sup>.

In his *Groundwork* and in *Critique of Practical Reason* Kant discusses the *a priori* forms of moral life. The "ultimate end" of moral life is the fulfillment of self-given moral law. Because of the double membership of the human being, to the intelligible and to the sensible world, the fulfillment of the moral law must take place in the sensible world and, therefore, it is an infinite task. The Kant's writings of morality do not explore the manner in which the moral law is fulfilled in the sensible world, since, according with their stated purpose, they are confined to expose the *a priori* grounds of morality. This fulfillment of the *a priori*, rational grounded moral law in the sensible world, the manner in which a rational order can be constructed in a sensible world is the inner theme of Kant's philosophical writings on history, religion and politics.

In his writings on the philosophy of history Kant outlines the history of the gradual realization of the moral law starting from the "conjectural beginning of human history" up to the establishment of a "civil society which can administer justice universally" (*eine allgemein das Recht verwaltenden buergerliche Gesellschaft*).

Through a free interpretation of the Bible Kant considers in *Conjectural Beginning of human history* that for man history has begun in the moment in which reason started to manifest itself as an essential endowment of the human being and to regulate human activity. As a consequence of this awakening of reason, man has lost his natural innocence and was put in a very different existential position in the

world. In this new ontological situation man found himself in a more fragile and dangerous situation, being somehow at the margin of a precipice (*Er stand gleichsam am der Rande eines Abgrundes...*). Free of the natural determinism of instinct (*diese Stimme Gottes, der alle Tiere gehorchen*), man had to recreate a moral and rational order using his reason.<sup>5</sup> Because “nature has willed that man should produce entirely by his own initiative everything which goes beyond the mechanical ordering of his animal existence”<sup>6</sup> the history of humanity is the history of the gradual progress and development of the moral order in the human society. On one hand the progress will leads finally towards the creation of the political institution which will secure the realization of a moral order in history. On the other hand the progress in history means the progressive emancipation of human being from his “self-incurred immaturity”. Therefore, from a Kantian perspective, history progresses necessarily towards the total emancipation of human being.

In *The Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose* Kant explores the inner logic of history, the mechanism by means of which progress takes place in history. In the explanation of this inner logic of history a very important role is played by the specific Kantian way of understanding human nature. The core of Kant's way of approaching the problem of historical progress and emancipation is rooted in the specific Kantian understanding of human nature. In fact, as Georges Vlachos pointed out, the interdependence between a specific way of understanding “human nature” and the reflections about moral and politics was a common intellectual attitude during the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>7</sup> In Kant's case the situation is the same, but, unlike other authors, this connection is an implicit rather than an explicit one. Nevertheless, the whole edifice of Kant's philosophy of history and of political philosophy is underpinned by the his view of human nature, and, in my opinion, a correct appraisal of Kant's enterprise in this intellectual fields has to take into account this fundamental fact. Although this connection is obvious in *The Idea for a Universal History*, the Kant's writings on philosophy of history does not contain a systematic treatment of the problem of human nature.

It has to be said that none of Kant's works deals explicitly with this topic but statements on it can be find in many of his writings on practical philosophy. The largest and the most systematic treatment of the problem of human nature is offered by Kant's writing on philosophy of religion in *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*, particularly in the first part of this work. I do not have the space here to discuss here in detail this fascinating problem and I will try to highlight only the aspects

of this problem which are unavoidably linked with the purpose of my essay.

In the intellectual history of the discussion on human nature Kant is usually known as being the philosopher who has formulated the conception of the "radical evil of man" (*das radikale Böse*). Actually, as Kant himself pointed out, the conception of the "natural evil" of human being is a classical point of view in the history of the debates about human nature. Nevertheless, the Kant's interpretation has its undeniable originality and it can be understood correctly only within the general context of the Kantian philosophical system.

Unlike other authors (Machiavelli, for instance) Kant does not conceive the radical evil of man as being a natural inclination of man to do evil for the sake itself. The radical evil of human being has to be conceived rather as "the perversion of heart" (*Verkehrtheit des Herzens*), that means the tendency (*Hang*) of man to accept not the "good maxims" but the "bad maxims", i.e. the maxims which are oriented *against* the universal moral law (*gesetzwidrig*)<sup>8</sup>. To speak of the natural evil of man means for Kant only to understand the fact that man has in himself an original ground (which is beyond the human capacity of inquiry) for the acceptance either of good (moral and rational) or of bad maxims. The evil of human beings is not a natural, innate disposition (*Anlage*) of man to follow bad maxims, but it is only a tendency which could be actualized by an arbitrary (*willkuerlich*) use of human freedom. What is essentially human is the possibility to be evil or good, to follow the moral law or to act following egoistic maxims.

Therefore, to say that man is evil means to understand that, although he is aware of the moral law, he can deviate occasionally from the duty to obey the imperative of moral law. The radical evil of man suggests his ontological fragility (*Gebrechlichkeit*), which is rooted in his specific ontological position of man as belonging at the same time to the sensible and to the intelligible, rational world. Man manages to overcome his "radical evil" only to the extent to which he manages to act according to the maxims of the categorical imperative and to construct a rational and moral order. The natural condition of man is that of a radical scission between his rational and his a-rational dimensions.

The ontological dualism of human nature resumes the dualism of human reason which can be either practical or theoretical and reminds us of the gap which exists between *Critique of Pure Reason* and *Critique of Practical Reason*. The analysis of the essential characteristics of human nature, as it has done in the first chapter of *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*, ends emphasizing the ontological gap between

the different faculties of human being, between the intelligible and sensible world.

Through his particular existence man is inclined to follow his particular and egoistic tendencies and to act according to maxims which stress his own, *particular* will. But to the extent to which man conducts his actions in accordance with the universal and *a priori* laws of pure reason and acts as a moral subject man manages to surpasses the gap between his rational and his empirical dimension and creates a new, rational grounded reality. Assuming his rationality, man becomes a moral creator and actualizes in a rational manner the freedom of his will. Overcoming his original tendency towards arbitrariness (*Willkuer*) and following the rational rules of the good will, man becomes a *rational* member of a *sensible* world. This process of assuming his own rationality constitutes the *emancipation* of man. Through emancipation man gets rid of his "self-incurred immaturity" and assumes his essential characteristic: *rationality*. The process of emancipation is a gradual one and takes various forms. In *The Idea for a Universal History* Kant presents the main points of this process of gradual emancipation of man, emphasizing the *political* dimension of emancipation.

The final stage of emancipation will be attained in the creation of a totally rational ruled society, that means a society which can administer justice universally. The essential dualism of human nature will permit to Kant to highlight on the inner mechanism of historical evolution towards the total emancipation of mankind. The ontological dualism of man is responsible for the contradictory social conduct of man. On the one hand, man is inclined to live exclusively as an individual and to develop his egoistic, *particular-orientated* inclinations. On the other hand man is a social being, who has to live together with his fellows. Therefore man actualizes in society his rational dimension and conducts himself according to the *universal* rules of reason.

The social existence of men is split between "their tendency to come together in society, coupled however, with a continual resistance which constantly threatens to break this society up".<sup>9</sup> This essential antinomic social disposition is defined by Kant as being "the unsocial sociability" (*die ungesellige Geselligkeit*) of man. In Kant's view the unsociable sociability is the principal mechanism of the historical development and, therefore, of the gradual emancipation of mankind. As we learn from the fourth proposition of *Idea for a universal history*: the development of innate capacities is that of antagonism within society, in so far as this antagonism becomes in the long run the cause of a law-governed social order"<sup>10</sup>.

In Kant's view the unsociable sociability is the principal mechanism of the historical development and, therefore, of the gradual emancipation of mankind. Through "the unsocial sociability":

all man's talents are now gradually developed, his taste cultivated, and by a continued process of enlightenment, a beginning is made towards establishing a way of thinking which can with time transform the primitive natural capacities for moral discrimination into definite practical principles; and thus a *pathologically* enforced social union is transformed into a *moral* whole. Without these asocial qualities (far from admirable in themselves) which cause the resistance inevitably encountered by each individuals as he furthers his self-seeking pretensions, man would live an arcadian life of self-concord, self-sufficiency and mutual love<sup>11</sup>.

"The unsociable sociability" gives to history a new, superior meaning". The egoistic social behavior of men reveals itself to be in a historical perspective the source of the gradual progress of humanity. Beyond their conscious intentions, men are working for emancipation of human beings for the final victory of the rationality over the "radical evil" of human nature.

Furthermore, Kant points out:

Nature should thus be thanked for fostering social incompatibility, enviously ompetitive vanity, and insatiable desires for possession or even power. Without these desires, all man's excellent natural capacities would never be roused to develop. Man wishes concord, but nature, knowing better what is good for his species, wishes discord<sup>12</sup>.

In these conditions, it appears that progress in history is more than the outcome of the conscious actions of human beings; apart from this, the progress in history turns out to be also the work of a supra-human entity: nature, too. Even if human beings tend to follow only their present and a-rational inclinations but, in long term, these actions contribute fully to the emancipation of mankind. Not the conscious will of men, which in the majority of cases, is dominated by the "radical evil" of human nature, but the hidden plane of nature is the main spring of the historical progress.

The history of human race as whole can be regarded as the realization of a hidden plan of nature to bring about an internally - and *for this purpose* also externally - perfect political constitution as

the only possible state within which all natural capacities of mankind can be developed completely<sup>13</sup>.

Only in this final stage of historical development will nature cease to play the central role in the unfolding of human affairs, because only in a society which can administer justice universally will man assume fully his rationality and will conduct his social life in a moral manner. In *What is Enlightenment?*, published in the same year with *The Idea for a Universal History* (1784), Kant urges humanity to assume its inherent rationality and to pass from an age of enlightenment to an enlightened age.

The central role played by reason led some Kantian commentators (as, for instance, E. Weil or Y. Yovel) to speak of a “cunning of nature” in Kant’s philosophy of history<sup>14</sup>. This term, which is reminiscent of Hegel’s “cunning of reason” (*List der Vernunft*) brings to light a possible inner relationship between Kant’s and Hegel’s conceptions about the logic of historical development. Here is not the place to analyze this possible fascinating connection, but the philosophy of history seems to be a place where a intellectual affinity between Kant and Hegel is more obvious than in other philosophical fields. Both of these great philosophers of the modern age seem to share the same basic intuitions about the temporal evolution of human affairs.

First of all, both German philosophers understood history as “the progress of liberty in universal history” and the development of history as being a self-contradictory, *dialectic* process (if we decide to use this genuine hegelian concept). For Hegel, as for Kant, history reveals itself to be more than simple *summum* of the all human actions in time. It is rather the result of a supreme entity transcending all human actions, spirit (*der Geist*) in Hegel’s case and nature for Kant.

The interesting question which arises now is how can this manner of understanding nature be integrated into the general framework of the critical philosophy, since the concept of nature, as it appears in Kant’s philosophy of history seems to entail a necessary metaphysical dimension of the concept of nature. How can this manner of understanding nature be reconciled with Kant’s position from *Critique of Pure Reason*?

In order to obtain an answer to this embarrassing question it is probably better to take into considerations the fact that in his writings of history Kant tried to find a possible way of reconciliation between the intelligible and the sensible dimension of human condition. From a Kantian perspective, history is a bridge over the huge ontological gap “mundus sensibilis” and “mundus intelligibilis.” It has to be noticed that

the writings on history are just a part (and not even the most important) of the Kantian attempt to overcome the ontological schism between “the sensible realm of the concept of nature” and “the suprasensible realm of concept of freedom”.

The major Kantian enterprise trying to overcome this gap is, of course, the *Critique of Judgment*. While the *Critique of pure reason* offers an analysis of the determinant judgment (as a faculty which “only subsumes under universal transcendental laws given by the understanding”)<sup>15</sup>, the *Critique of Judgment* is a critique of reflective judgment. The judgment is reflective “if only the particular be given for which the universal has to be found”<sup>16</sup>. The reflective judgment creates from itself transcendental legislating subjective principles and, therefore, make possible a knowledge of domains like arts or biological nature, domains which could never be known using only the faculty of understanding (*Verstand*).

The knowledge of organic nature is made possibly by means of the concept of “purposiveness” (*Zweckmäßigkeit*) of nature. Using this concept (which is rather only a heuristic norm, a simple subjective principle), nature can be understood as a teleological whole.

Here is not the place for an attempt to analyze the logic and the role of this concept in the framework of critical philosophy. I will confine myself to point out that this teleological manner of understanding nature entails, for Kant, a recognition of man as the ultimate purpose of nature “here, on the earth”.

Kant points out that the ultimate purpose of nature in man has to be sought only in things which man does himself in order to be a final purpose, that is things which could be expected to be realized only by nature. The realm of this kind of things is *culture* and “culture alone can be the ultimate purpose which we cause for ascribing to nature in respect to human race”<sup>17</sup>. In the *Critique of Judgment* Kant resumes the main ideas from his political and historical-philosophical writings and, in few words, emphasizes that the formal conditions of a mature culture are a *civil society* and a *cosmopolitan whole*. *Culture*, as a state where man will assume his rational dimension and will develop totally his inner skills reveals itself to be the ultimate purpose of the teleology of the organic nature.

After this brief look into the *Critique of Judgment* it appears clear in what sense one can speak of a teleology of nature in Kant's philosophy of history and of “cunning of nature of history” as underlying the historical emancipation of man. From a Kantian perspective “history” and “nature” belongs to the same ontological realm and they have the same epistemological status. The necessary presupposition of knowledge for

both organic nature and culture appears to be the concept of “purposiveness”, which can be only obtained by using reflective judgment. For Kant history is a realm of “as if” (*als ob*) and only using such a epistemological position, only by accepting the subjective principle of a *purposiveness of nature* does history become a meaningful process.

In conclusion, it can be said that, in spite of some apparent contradictions, the Kantian view of history well grounded in the inner logic of the architectonic of the Kantian system. Even though they are usually regarded as minor writings, the Kantian writings on philosophy of history prove to be, first of all, a piece of synthesis in the great architectonic of the critical philosophy. Whereas the major Kantian writings analyzed the fundamental structure of human reason (either in its theoretical or in its practical manifestation), the Kantian philosophy of history comes up with a comprehensive philosophical perspective. *History* is for Kant that specific domain where a synthesis between the different and divergent dimensions of human beings is possible. Therefore, history is a domain where a solution to the fundamental philosophical question “What is man?” appears to be possible.

The Kantian understanding of reason, as a faculty with two different manifestations and finalities, one theoretical and other practical, entailed a specific view of human nature. As bearers of rationality in an empirical world, human beings find themselves in a fragile, inner-split state. The solution of this contradiction is, for Kant, the *emancipation* of man, that is, the assuming of his own rationality: *Sapere aude!* Because of its roots in the native contradictions of human reason the process of emancipation appear to be a dialectical one. But, because of the understanding of history through the idea of purposiveness, this process has to be seen, in the Kantian perspective as conveying necessarily towards the final state of the human being of earth, the state of *culture*. In this state man surpass the natural determinism and creates his own, rationally determined order.

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- <sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 45.
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- <sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 281.

CAN A COMMON LOGICAL STRUCTURE BE IDENTIFIED FOR  
MILL'S ARGUMENTS THAT LIBERTY PRINCIPLE PROMOTES  
GENERAL UTILITY?

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*Abstract.* Mill considers political and civil liberties as a condition *sine qua non* for the well being of humanity. In this essay I will discuss the role that liberty plays in the larger utilitarian framework of Mill's thought and I will analyse the arguments advanced by Mill in his attempt to justify liberty in terms of general utility. By identifying a *common logical structure* of these arguments I will argue that Mill uses a consistent strategy throughout his works. In doing this I analyse the Liberty Principle as a two-sided principle by distinguishing a defensive and an assertive side, mainly because the strategies advanced by Mill are distinct: on the defensive side the concept of justice, as deployed in Chapter V of *Utilitarianism*, plays the mediating role of linking liberty and general utility; on the assertive side, the same role is played by the concepts of truth and progress, as elaborated in Chapter II and III of *On Liberty*.

### **Introduction**

In this essay my main aim is to analyse Mill's arguments that Liberty Principle or Harm Principle (from now on *HP*) is promoting the Utility Principle (from now on *UP*) of general utility maximisation. Mill explicitly claims in *On Liberty* that utility remains the higher principle for judging human and social affairs and therefore liberty plays only an instrumental role in promoting general utility.

The traditional interpretation of Mill's thought regarded this claim as inconsistent and qualified Mill's *On Liberty* as an attempt to elevate *HP* to the status of an absolute principle, an end in itself, and therefore highly uncomfortable within the utilitarian framework in which Mill tries to

force it. From this perspective, Mill remains an eclectic and inconsistent utilitarian thinker.

Against this critical stance, I will argue that Mill offers a consistent strategy in favour of his claim. I sustain that the arguments running through his works display a common logical structure and this fact strongly supports my claim that Mill advances these arguments in a consistent manner.

In the first section I will argue that both the Harm Principle and the Utility Principle must be analysed against the conceptual background of Mill's progressive conception of human nature.

In the second section, following G. L. Williams, I will analyse the *HP* in terms of a two-sided principle. I distinguish between a "defensive" and an "assertive" side of this principle, each one of them offering a different strategy of argumentation in favour of Mill's claim that the *HP* is one of the *axiomata media* leading to the *UP*.

In the third and in the fourth sections I will assess these different strategies arguing that on the "defensive" side of the liberty principle the concept of *justice* as analysed by Mill in *Utilitarianism* plays the intermediate role of linking liberty with general utility (section three). On the "assertive" side of liberty the same role is played by the concept of *truth*, justice and truth being seen by Mill as fundamental elements of general happiness (section four).

In the last section, I will highlight the logical structure underlying Mill's case and I will argue that the level on which Mill's strategy is to be assessed is the "purely scientific" one, of the logical "arrangement" and "subordination" between the various secondary principles, *HP* included. From this point of view, Mill's consistency and unity is secured.

### **1. The human individual "as a progressive being"**

John Stuart Mill elaborates the idea of "man as a progressive being" in order to overcome the narrow conception of human nature underlying the utilitarian theory of Jeremy Bentham and James Mill.

This fundamental improvement of his inherited utilitarian creed has a twofold origin: one is personal; the other one is to be found in the Romantic-Hellenic reaction against Enlightenment social optimism. Mill absorbed this philosophical reaction directly from the works of "the great Germans" (Mill, 1987b, p.180) Goethe, W. von Humboldt, Herder, Schelling, Fichte, and from Coleridge and Carlyle, their disciples.

In his *Autobiography* Mill remembers the moment when he asked himself, at the age of twenty, one simple but fatal question:

“Suppose that all your objects in life were realised; that all the changes in institutions and opinions which you are looking forward to, could be completely effected at this very instant: would this be a great joy and happiness to you?” (Mill, 1971, p.81).

The answer that spontaneously and irrepressibly came up from the depth of his consciousness was: No!

For the *enfant terrible* of Benthamite utilitarianism, seen by his father both as the official heir of the utilitarian doctrine as well as a manufactured, intellectual product of this doctrine, this was a devastating experience. The ultimate purpose of his life, the maximisation of general happiness, is incapable of making him happy. Which means that both his father’s project *and* his life are tragic failures.

Mill realised that the concept of human happiness as it was presupposed by Bentham’s doctrine is much too sterile. Although remaining faithful to the utilitarian principle, John Stuart Mill set out to improve the poverty of its concept of happiness.

As early as 1833, in his essay *Remarks on Bentham’s Philosophy*, published anonymously, Mill pointed out that Bentham unpardonably neglected

“the inward man” (Semmel, 1984, p.86).

In his later essay *Bentham*, published in 1838, after the death of his father, Mill further elaborates this claim, contending that the Benthamite conception of human nature was defective since it failed to take into account a deep human need for perfection:

“Man is never recognised by him as a being capable of pursuing spiritual perfection as an end” (Mill, 1987a, p. 152).

Bentham’s conception is one-sided: he excludes the aesthetic part of human life: “the love of beauty”, “the sense of honour and personal dignity”, the passionate pursuit of self-development etc. Therefore he reduced human interests to self-interest and, consequently, human happiness to material happiness.

But this is a far too simplistic account of human complexity which mainly came from its author’s limited experience of human feelings and his impermeability to larger philosophical influences. Bentham, this “systematic half-thinker” who discovered and analysed only “fractional truths” (Mill, 1987a, p. 151),

endorses an ingenuous and boyish picture of human nature (Mill, 1987a, p.149).

Mill envisaged the completion of the Benthamite half-truth in reference to German romantic philosophy. In his essay *Coleridge*, Mill makes clear that happiness could not be obtained only through the improvement of external material conditions. It is undeniably related to inward improvement. The German concept of “Bildung” in the sense of self-development is particularly suggestive in this context. Self-education as

“the training, by the human being himself, of his affections and will”

and self-culture is recognised by Mill as a

“great duty” (Mill, 1987a, p.155).

The dialectical synthesis that Mill achieves between the Benthamite utilitarian simplistic and optimistic account of human nature and the Coleridgian German school of thought, which privileged the inner progress of man, requests that any account of human happiness should take into account, as fundamental prerequisites, not only external, material conditions of human life, but also the internal aspirations for perfection and moral progress.

This complex view of human nature must stay as the necessary background for any analysis of Mill’s principle of utility and liberty and the connections between them. Before analysing in depth these connections we still need to look closely to the liberty principle

## **2. The Harm Principle as a two-sided principle**

Mill introduces the Harm Principle from the very beginning of his essay *On Liberty*:

“The object of this Essay is to assert one very simple principle, as entitled to govern *absolutely* the dealings of society with the individual in the way of compulsion and control, whether the means used by physical force in the form of legal penalties, or the moral coercion of public opinion. That principle is: ...*that the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community against his will is to prevent harm to others*” (Mill, 1991a, p.14, emphasis added).

Immediately after, Mill carefully affirms that:

“It is proper to state that I forgo any advantage which could be derived to my argument from the idea of abstract *rights*, as a thing independent of utility. *I regard utility as the ultimate appeal on all ethical questions; but it must be utility in the largest sense, grounded on the permanent interests of man as a progressive being.* Those interests, I contend, authorise the subjection of individual spontaneity to external control, only in respect to those actions of each, which concern the interest of other people” (Mill, 1991a, p.15, emphasis added).

Mill states clearly here that individual rights are not abstract ideas but “permanent interests”. These permanent interests of human beings comprise both material conditions but, also very importantly, fundamental interests in personal self-improvement. Furthermore, the general utility is “grounded” on these permanent interests. At the same time, the liberty principle is defined in terms of interests, as well: the only purpose for a legitimate interference of society with individuals conduct is to prevent him *harming others’* (fundamental) interests<sup>1</sup>, i.e. *harming others’ rights*.

It becomes clear that, indeed, Mill’s complex conception of human nature underlies and informs both principles. If this is so, how are the connections between *HP* and *UP* to be delineated more specifically? This is what I will now proceed to discuss.

In order to understand these complex connections better I propose to see the Harm Principle as having two sides (see also G. L. Williams, 1989).

Firstly, it is possible to distinguish a “defensive” side (Williams, 1989, p. 249), and *HP* from this perspective states that individuals should not harm others rights. The idea is that of freedom as absence of constraints/restraints: in so far as I do not injure others rights nobody is entitled to interfere with my conduct. Actually, the defensive side of *HP* draws a sphere of non-interference based on the distinction between actions/conduct which injure or do not injure others rights.

As can be discerned from the two passages quoted at the beginning of this section, Mill considers that drawing this sphere of non-interference will promote general utility: “those interests” [of man as a progressive being on which utility is grounded], says Mill, “authorise” the

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<sup>1</sup> I borrow here from the insights of John Rees who consistently argues that Mill refers to affecting negatively others’ *interests* and not merely to affect, concern, harm etc. others; not all interests are automatically rights, but those *fundamental* ones, legally expressed or tacit acknowledged as such. (Rees, 1997)

societal interference with individual actions/conduct “only” to prevent “harms to others”. That is to say that utility, because it is based on these fundamental interests, is promoted by their protection. The defensive side of *HP* is thought of as promoting general utility. What about the other side?

Within the sphere of non-interference drawn by the defensive side the individual must be free to pursue the way he thinks most fit for cultivating his own permanent interests. But this is an idea distinct from that of non-interference and it is this idea that underpins the “assertive side” of *HP*. The provision of non-interference does not assure or guarantee that those fundamental interests are also fulfilled or pursued.

The individual’s freedom to pursue his own self-improvement in his distinctive way is the “assertive” side of *HP*. It is expressed by Mill as such in the words:

“the only freedom which deserves the name, is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it” (Mill, 1991a, p.17).

And, again, it is affirmed that *HP*, this time under this assertive aspect, will promote general utility:

“Mankind are greater gainers by suffering each other to live as seems good to themselves, than by compelling each to live as seems good to the rest” (Mill, 1991a, p.17).

It is clear that the assertive side, if fulfilled, will lead to diversity, difference etc., but this, Mill affirms, is a “gain” for society as a whole and not a danger, as many political thinkers of the nineteenth century feared. Freedom of choosing one’s own way to happiness will promote, not impede, general utility.

Mill does not make an explicit distinction between the two sides of liberty, but he argues in favour of both as promoting general utility. Clearly he considers both as being very important for this purpose. Still, the two ideas may be conceptually distinguished from one another and they are distinct in Mill’s account of individual self-damaging actions, for example.

On the one hand, the assertive side,

“freedom as independence” (G. L. Williams, 1989, p. 257),

which will lead to varied, vigorous, original, spontaneous characters, may exist without the defensive side being involved<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand, as visible in the case of self-damaging actions, the defensive side may come into play without necessarily implying the actualisation of the assertive side: within the sphere of non-interference the individual must be free, says Mill, to pursue or not his own life-project in his own way. The sphere of non-interference exists regardless of the situation in which I do not pursue my interest in self-improvement: I may choose to undertake self-damaging actions, like drunkenness, idleness, incontinence, gambling etc., that will impede, surely, my improvement, but still, society is not entitled to compel me to become better “for my own sake”.

This points us in the direction of two things: first that there are two distinctive sides of *HP*, as I have already discussed, and, second, that there is a strict lexical order of appliance for these two sides. Only after non-interference has been assured, the free pursuit of happiness can take place.

There are many distinctive arguments in *On Liberty* in favour of non-interference and independence. Nonetheless, from the point of view of my concerns in this essay, mainly the critical assessment of Mill’s strategy of arguing that liberty promotes general utility, the concept of *justice*, in the case of non-interference, and the concepts of *truth* and *progress* (both individual and social) are of particular importance as I will attempt to demonstrate in the following two sections.

### **3. Non-interference, justice, and general utility**

The idea of non-interference is articulated around the concept of rights as some fundamental, permanent interests that individuals possess “as a progressive” being. Nevertheless, there is a question that should be answered here: if general utility remains for Mill the ultimate principle of judging human affairs, why should not society interfere with individual self-regarding actions if *UP* would require it? If *HP* is only a secondary principle and *UP* remains the higher principle, surely the *HP* may be infringed if higher utilitarian reasons would make it necessary. But Mill’s liberty principle seems to not allow this perspective. Is this principle then “an absolute” principle, independent of utility? Mill does

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<sup>2</sup> As James Fitzjames Stephen argued against Mill, it is more likely to affirm that the strong characters are formed in conditions of “restraint and coercion”. A “life made up of danger, vicissitude and exposure” like that of a soldier or a sailor is more likely to produce “originality and resource” than one lived under the “level of comfort” put at hand by Mill non-interference principle. (J.F. Stephen, 1997, p.247)

not seem to allow this perspective either. So how can we find the way out of this dilemma?

I suggest that the analysis of the concept of justice unfolded by Mill in the last chapter of *Utilitarianism* will provide the answer.

In this chapter John Stuart Mill set out to overcome

“the only real difficulty in the utilitarian theory of morals” (Mill, 1991b, p. 201),

namely the idea that the concept of justice is independent and above considerations of mere expediency (utility). This

“stumbling-block to the utilitarian ethic” (Mill, 1991b, p. 201)

may be removed by proving that justice is actually a part, “vastly more important” indeed, but not more than a part, of social utility.

The main obstacle facing this relation of inclusion is the different sentiment (both in degree and in intensity) that naturally appears in the cases of injustice and in cases of disregard for the

“idea of promoting human pleasure or convenience”.

The imperatives of justice are commonly felt as “much more imperative” than those attached to “simple expediency”. But this is only a “subjective” difference, Mill claims, which obscures the fact

“that objectively the dictates of justice coincide with a part of the field of General Expediency” (Mill, 1991b, p. 177).

The “peculiar” sentiment attached to justice is not a *sui generis* sentiment, but merely a “derivative” feeling composed by two other feelings:

“the impulse of self-defence, and the feeling of sympathy” (Mill, 1991b, p.186).

#### Surveying

“the various modes of action and arrangements of human affairs which are classed, by universal or widely spread opinion as Just or Unjust” (Mill, 1991b, p.178)

the following attributes seems to be involved by the idea of justice/injustice: the violation of someone's "legal rights" or "moral rights"; also a disregard for the ideas of "desert", of "legitimate expectation", of "impartiality" and that of "equality". Furthermore, a natural strong desire arises spontaneously that every act perceived as unjust ought to be punished. This feeling accompanies not only unjust acts, but also all moral faults, because justice is a part of morality.

"We do not call anything [morally] wrong, unless we mean to imply that a person ought to be punished in some way or other for doing it; *if not by law, by the opinion of his fellow creatures; if not by opinion, by the reproaches of his own conscience*" (Mill, 1991b, p. 184 emphasis added).

The presence of this sentiment distinguishes the moral domain from the

"remaining provinces of Expediency and Worthiness" (Mill, 1991b, p. 184),

but what then distinguishes justice from morality?

The distinction between the "duties of perfect and imperfect obligation" is helpful here.

"Duties of perfect obligations are those duties in virtue of which a correlative right resides in some persons; duties of imperfect obligations are those moral obligations which do not give birth to any right" (Mill, 1991b, p.185).

The case of charity or generosity illustrates the difference. Charity is a moral obligation, for sure, but

"no specific person" at "any specific time" "could claim them as a *right* to be practised toward him".

It is not a matter of justice though it is a matter of morality. Justice

"implies something which it is not only right to do and wrong not to do", as any other moral act, "but in which some individual person can claim from us as his moral right" i.e. he "has a valid claim on society to protect him" in possession of that right (Mill, 1991b, p.189).

One of these rights is the individual's permanent interest in "security".  
By way of conclusion,

"the idea of justice supposes two things; a rule of conduct, and a sentiment which sanctions the rule. The first must be supposed common to all mankind, and intended for their good. The other (the sentiment) is a desire that those who infringe the rule may suffer punishment. There is involved, in addition, the conception of some definite person who suffers by the infringement; whose rights...are violated by it" (Mill, 1991b, p.188).

As Mill makes clear that the infringement of the "general rule" means the violation of individual's rights, it is discernable from this passage that the "general rule" implied by the concept of justice requires the protection of individual persons' "rights".

If we compare this analysis of the concept of justice in terms of rights to the analysis of the Harm Principle from the previous section, we notice immediately striking similarities.

Actually the distinctions drawn in *Utilitarianism* match perfectly those outlined in *On Liberty*. The "general rule" presupposed by the idea of justice is the Harm Principle in its defensive aspect: to not harm others' rights. It is a rule "common to all" in *Utilitarianism*, it is a principle designed to

"govern *absolutely*<sup>3</sup> the dealings of society with the individual..."

in *On Liberty*. The infringement of this rule/principle ought to be punished, says Mill in *Utilitarianism*

"if not by law, by the opinion of his fellow creatures; if not by opinion, by the reproaches of his own conscience".

In *On Liberty*, if an act infringes a "legally stated" right then society is entitled to punish it by the means of law. If an act infringes no legally stated right, but only those interests that

"by tacit understanding ought to be considered as rights" (Mill, 1991a, p.83),

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<sup>3</sup> "Absolutely" has to be taken in the sense of "without exception", applicable to all, "common" for all, and not as if HP were an "absolute principle" which would be at odds with the claim that UP is the absolute, ultimate principle.

society is entitled to punish it by means of public opinion. If the individual's act does not harm any "assignable" right of his fellow beings, being only a self-regarding and self-damaging act, society has no right to interfere and punish, says *On Liberty*, although these kinds of acts are punished by the reproaches of the individual's own conscience. The self-regarding acts, although informed and sanctioned by moral duties, are not part of "social" obligations involved by the concept of justice.

They belong only to

"duties of imperfect obligation"<sup>4</sup>.

From this combined analysis it appears that Mill's strategy for sustaining that *HP* promotes *UP* is entirely consistent as regarding the defensive side of *HP*. *HP* is the "general rule" implied in the concept of justice and, as justice is a part of the domain of "General Expediency", the appliance of *HP* is a matter of justice and therefore a matter of general utility as well.

Let us see if the assertive side of *HP* plays the same role of promoting utility.

#### **4. Independence, truth and general utility.**

As we saw, the defensive side of *HP* draws a sphere of non-interference. But what does this sphere comprise?

"It comprises, first, the inward domain of consciousness; demanding liberty of conscience, in the most comprehensive sense; liberty of thought and feeling; absolute freedom of opinion and sentiment on all subjects, practical or speculative, scientific, moral, or theological... Secondly, the principle requires liberty of tastes and pursuits; of framing the plan of our life to suit our own character; of doing as we like subject to such consequences as may follow..." (as long as, of course, the defensive side, to not harm others' rights, applies).

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<sup>4</sup> I disagree here with A Ryan's interpretation that Mill excludes the self-regarding acts from the domain of morality, by placing them in the domain of prudence (A. Ryan, 1991, p.164). It seems to me that he considers the self-regarding acts as belonging to "duties of imperfect obligation" that part of morality in which, although the act is obligatory "the particular occasions of performing it are left to our choice" (Mill, 1991b, p.185). Mill clearly writes in *Bentham* that self-culture is a "great duty" and he affirms that self-education "is a part of morality that is completely missing in Bentham's system" (Mill, 1987a, p.155)

“Thirdly... the liberty of combination among individuals”, (within the same limits).

Lets us follow Mill’s arguments that “diversity of opinions” and of life projects are “advantageous” (Mill, 1991a, p. 51), i.e. they promotes general utility. For liberty of thought and opinion these are developed in Chapter II.

The first argument in favour of liberty of opinion is that, no matter how uncomfortable an opinion is to the majority of individuals, it may be a *true* opinion. Human beings are not infallible and forbidding what they think an erroneous opinion, in fact, they may repress the truth. An allegedly erroneous opinion may be contradicted, disapproved, refuted by open discussions but not repressed. The man

“is capable of rectifying his mistakes by discussion and experience” (Mill, 1991a, p.25)

and

“free and daring speculation on the highest subject” “would strengthen and enlarge men’s mind.”

That is to say that man is capable of progress, and, if liberty of opinion is permitted, he and his society will progress. We have to give the truth

“the chance of reaching us: if the lists [of truths] are kept open, we may hope that if there be a better truth, it will be found...”

As Mill explicitly states

“*the truth of an opinion is part of its utility*” (Mill, 1991a, p.27, emphasis added) and “no belief which is contrary to truth can be really useful”.

The usefulness of an opinion is to be discussed in terms of its truthfulness.

The second argument goes as follows: however true an opinion is, if it is not freely discussed and refuted, if possible, it becomes a

“death dogma” and not a “living truth” (Mill, 1991a, p.40).

In order to keep a truth alive we must know the erroneous counter-arguments and the way to refute them. This means *to know* the truth you

profess. Therefore, if the opponents of truth do not exist, we should invent them. Otherwise, people will give only an empty

“homage” to the truth and their “real allegiance” to customs, habitual practices etc. (Mill, 1991a, p.47), and the truth will be held in manner of a “prejudice” (Mill, 1991a, p.59).

But this is a

“danger” to the meaning of the truth itself because, as a dogma, it is “inefficacious for good” (Mill, 1991a, p.59),

which is to say that truth is not part of utility anymore.

The third argument: the opinion may be erroneous but still, it may contain “a portion of truth”, as is seldom the case. Therefore, a

“nonconforming opinion is needed to supply the remainder of the truth” (Mill, 1991a, p. 52).

Progress, in itself, substitutes

“one partial and incomplete truth for another; improvement consisting chiefly in this, that the new fragments of truth is more wanted, more adapted to the needs of the time, than that which it displaces” (Mill, 1991a, p. 52)<sup>5</sup>

Therefore, the existence of conflicting doctrines which contains half-truths proves to be in favour of general utility:

“Each of these [conflicting] modes of thinking derives its utility from deficiencies of the other” (Mill, 1991a, p.53),

because, in the end,

“truth, in the great practical concerns of life is...a question of the reconciling and combining of opposites” (Mill, 1991a, p. 54).

Therefore

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<sup>5</sup> Mill's own doctrine can be evaluated in these terms as it explicitly aims to complete the “half-truths” of Benthamite utilitarianism with the truths existing in the Germano - Coleridgian philosophy. And Mill is not claiming, in a Hegelian manner, that his synthesis is a kind of a crowning completion of the truth.

“not the violent conflict between parts of the truths, but the quiet suppression of half of it, is the formidable evil” (Mill, 1991a, p. 58).

The second part of HP comprises the liberty of pursuing our own life-project. As in the case of the liberty of opinion, this part is thought in terms of general utility, the arguments being developed in Chapter III. It is a fact of experience that the majority of men value little

“individual spontaneity” (Mill, 1991a, p. 63),

but it would be absolutely absurd to pretend that human beings do not have

“other faculty than the ape-like one of imitation” (Mill, 1991a, p.65).

The human faculties must be exercised and the best way of doing it is by making choices. Men are not

“automatons in human form” “built after a model” but rather “a tree, which requires to grow and develop itself on all sides, according to the tendency of the inward forces which make it a living thing” (Mill, 1991a, p. 66).

“A person whose desires and impulses are ... the expression of his own nature” and not following an outward model, is said to have a character”.

Liberty as independence encourages the formation of strong and energetic characters. These energetic characters are desirable for society because

“a high general average of energy”

is desirable. The free cultivation of self-development has other bearings as well on the rest of society. The

“well-developed”

individuals may influence the others in many ways. They discover new truths, they introduce new things, they maintain alive old truths. But we

must be aware that these original characters cannot develop as such only in an

“atmosphere of freedom” (Mill, 1991a, p. 72).

They are more necessary as ever before, contends Mill, mainly because the new kind of society created by industrialisation, mechanisation, and the spread of the commercial spirit, the mass society, is more prone to uniformity, collective mediocrity, intolerance, and tyranny of prevalent opinions.

However, this is not to say that these few elite people are entitled to compel the masses to conform to specific patterns of development. All that they

“can claim is freedom to point out the way” (Mill, 1991a, p.74).

Nonetheless, these few people are

“sources of improvement”, of “progress” and “human advancement” (Mill, 1991a, p.78),

which are important elements both at the individual and societal level. A rapid historical comparison will specify the difference that they make:

“the whole East” has no history because it fell under the “despotism of Custom” (Mill, 1991a, p.78)

and Europe, warns Mill,

“will tend to become another China” (Mill, 1991a, p.80)

if the yoke of public opinion will succeed in making all individuals alike. What has preserved Europe from the same fate up to now was not

“any superior excellence” but its “remarkable diversity of character and culture. Individuals, classes, nations, have been extremely unlike one another” (Mill, 1991a, p. 80).

This

“progressive and many-sided development” (Mill, 1991a, p.80)

is kept in motion by the principle of liberty as independence, which proves indispensable to general improvement and utility.

### **5. Instead of conclusions: “logical subordination” and practical conflict**

My analysis showed so far that liberty is meant by Mill as a secondary principal which promotes the higher principle of general happiness. The consistency of Mill's approach, I argued, presupposes an ensemble of complex relations between his interrelated conception of rights, of justice, truth, progress and general utility. Beneath them all lies, as a necessary background for any analysis of this sort, his conception of human nature: the man as a progressive being.

In my opinion, the proof of Mill's claim is offered in a syllogistic manner. That is to say that Mill's argument is a *logical* type of argument, based on logical relation of inclusion and its property of transitivity. If *A* is included in *B* and *B* is included in *C* then, with logical necessity, *A* is included in *C*. The syllogism involved is of the *Barbara* kind: All *As* are *Bs* / and All *Bs* are *Cs* / then All *As* are *Cs*.

I propose to view this syllogism as the logical skeleton of Mill's argument. What changes during the argumentation is the medium term.

Thus, in the case of the defensive side of *HP* (to not harm other people's rights) the role of the medium term is played by the concept of justice: all the cases in which *HP* applies are cases of justice, and because all the cases of justice are part of general utility, then, with logical necessity, *HP* promotes *UP*.

In the case of the assertive side of *HP*, liberty as independence, the same logical structure is applied in two syllogisms, the role of medium term being played this time by the concepts of truth, respectively, individual/societal progress. All cases of freedom of thought and opinion are cases promoting the truth, and as truth is part of utility then *HP* promotes general utility. All cases of free development of individuality will promote individual and general progress and as the consequences of progress promote general utility, then *HP* promotes general utility.

A passage from Mill's essay *Bentham* provides a powerful textual support to my interpretation of the relation between *HP* and *UP* in terms of logical subordination. When Mill discusses the narrowness of Bentham's concept of general happiness he writes:

“we think utility, or happiness, much too complex and indefinite an end to be sought except through the medium of *various secondary aims...*” (my emphasis).

And, as if Mill had foreseen Isaiah Berlin's critique (Berlin, 1997), he continues: for if people strongly disagree about their first principles, they

“are more easily brought to agree in their intermediate principles, *vera illa et media axiomata*, as Bacon says, than in their first principle”.

Indeed, few people would agree that justice and truth are principles not worth seeking.

“It is when two or more of the secondary principles conflict, that a direct appeal to some first principle becomes necessary;” (without any doubt the reference here is to *UP*)

“and then commences the *practical importance* of the utilitarian controversy; which is, in other respects, a question of arrangement and *logical subordination* rather than of practice; *important principally* in a *purely scientific point of view*, for the sake of the *systematic unity and coherency* of ethical philosophy” (Mill, 1987a, pp. 170-171).

The *UP* is “important principally” for its “scientific” role as providing an important pole, a kind of fix Archimedean point, around which the *media axiomata* can be “arranged” and “logically subordinated”. I hope that my essay demonstrates clearly how these logical relations of subordination are constructed. Moreover, any kind of criticism against Mill's argument must take into account the fact that Mill's *UP* gains its main importance at the level of the logical and “purely” scientific arrangement of our conceptual map. Critical arguments against Mill's coherence and unity are abundant and there is no room to engage with them here. But it seems to me that many of them confound the “scientific”, “logical”, and “practical” role of *UP*.

Nevertheless, the *UP* has “a practical importance” as well. It intervenes when, in life situations, secondary principles conflict. In chapter IV of *On Liberty* Mill affirms that if an individual injures some “legally expressed” or merely “tacit” acknowledged right then society is entitled to punish the hurtful action. It is entitled but this does not mean that necessarily has to do so. Considerations of utility must prevail:

“the question whether the general welfare will or will not be promoted by interfering with it [with the individual conduct that harmed others rights], becomes open to discussion” (Mill, 1991a, p. 83).

What Mill has in mind may be clarified by referring to the example he uses at the end of Chapter V from *Utilitarianism*. An individual action may infringe others' rights, like when aiming to save, say, his friend's life someone steals a medicine or kidnaps a doctor and forces him to help his friend etc. These are cases of conflict between *media axiomata* and they are to be pacificated in terms of general utility.

Two considerations follow: first, that when no conflict appears

“there is no room for entertaining such question [as regards general utility]” (Mill, 1991a, p.84)

because this is automatically promoted by the secondary principle involved. Second, that if conflict appears between secondary principles it does not mean that their logical consequences (the promotion of *UP*) are cancelled by this conflict. It only means that we have to look closely at each conflictual situation and decide which of the secondary principle's applications best serves the *UP*.

It is true that this aspect raises important difficulties, such as the question of a possible hierarchy of rights, or, as Berlin incisively remarked, of a conflict that may be the result of irreconcilable ends. But the same situation shows another thing as well: that John Stuart Mill would never have pronounced Hegel's famous words: if the facts do not fit the theory, so much the worse for the facts. The temptation of theoretical absolutism is deeply against Mill's empiricism. The application of the principles must be always sensitive to the facts, but this by no means can dismiss the logical and purely scientific coherence and unity of his ethical philosophy.

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TRANSCENDENTAL ARGUMENTS AND ABDUCTIVE  
INFERENCE

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I will begin with a succinct presentation of transcendental argumentation and of abductive inference, after which I will try to discuss some problems regarding those types of argumentation. I grouped the problems in two categories: problems regarding epistemological issues and problems regarding logical structure.

**The two types of argumentation**

***The transcendental argument***

Without doubt, the transcendental argument is essentially related with Kantian philosophy. Although there are some texts before the 18<sup>th</sup> century in which can be found a similar argumentative structure, the one who develops the true essence and implications of this type of argument is Immanuel Kant. Leaving the historical details apart, I want to stress that although the term “transcendental” was used even in the middle Age, it was confused with the term “transcendent”. Kant makes the separation between them<sup>1</sup> altogether with the separation of two distinct branches of knowledge. In *The Critique of Pure Reason* Kant defines the term as follows:

“I apply the term transcendental to all knowledge which is not so much occupied with objects as with the mode of our cognition of

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<sup>1</sup> Even if there are some paragraphs in *Prolegomena* in which Kant himself confuses the two terms.

these objects, so far as this mode of cognition is possible a priori" [B25/A10].

Hence, a system of these concepts will be a transcendental philosophy. What defines the Kantian philosophy is the search for the possibility conditions of knowledge. Trying to answer the questions "How is mathematics possible?" and "How is pure physics possible?" Kant wants to discover the knowledge structures which will allow him to found metaphysics as a science. The type of argumentation used is very clearly expressed by Harrison:

"They are arguments about the preconditions of thought or judgment. They start with a supposition about our thoughts, such as that we have thoughts of some particular kind. A necessary condition for having such thoughts is then derived, followed by a necessary condition for this necessary condition, and so on. Assuming that the first assumption is correct, all its necessary conditions will then have been found also to apply."<sup>2</sup>.

Hence, the argumentation direction is from the conditional to its conditions of possibility.

### ***The Abductive Inference***

As we have seen, the transcendental argumentation is bound by Kant's name. The abductive inference is theorized by the American philosopher C.S. Peirce. The origin of the term is aristotelic. In *Organon*, First Analytic, II, 25, Aristotle presents the abduction as follows:

"Through abduction we understand an argument in which the first term obviously belongs to the middle term, but its relation with the last term is uncertain, although evenly probable or even more probable than the conclusion".

The Greek term used by Aristotle for 'abduction' is ἀπαγωγή (apagogue) and it designates a type of reduction<sup>3</sup>, other than the *reductio ad absurdum*<sup>4</sup>. On short, for Aristotle, the abduction is an argument in which:

<sup>2</sup> Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Version 1.0, London: Routledge

<sup>3</sup> Which is something less than a regular syllogism

<sup>4</sup> The English translation of Aristotle's works made by David Ross keeps the term 'reduction'

1. the minor premise is uncertain, but evenly probable or even more probable than the conclusion;
2. there are (not many) terms between the minor premise and the conclusion.

Moreover, for Aristotle, abduction is not an argument in which:

1. the conclusion is more probable than the minor premise
2. between the minor premise and the conclusion are many intermediary terms;
3. the minor premise is 'immediate', - because then we have 'science', and science is not a reduction.

Peirce begins his research of abduction with Aristotle's view. In 'The Logic of Drawing History from Ancient Documents' (1901) he rebuilds the aristotelic path:

deduction is the syllogism in which the major and the minor premise are given and we look for the conclusion, the induction is the syllogism in which the minor premise and the conclusion are given and we look for the major premise, and abduction is the syllogism in which the major premise and the conclusion are given and we look for the minor premise.

The term used by Aristotle for induction (epagogue) is related to the term used for abduction.

As Anderson<sup>5</sup> says, there are two characteristics of abduction that Peirce keeps from Aristotle:

1. the arguments is not necessary, but probable or plausible;
2. abduction is something else than pure inductive or deductive reasoning.

The distinction between the form of abduction as Peirce understood it and the Aristotelian form is given by the argument's conclusion, which, for Peirce is given as fact. The abduction's task is, in this case, to find a hypothesis.

Anderson discovers a transformation in Peirce's view of abduction, between his earlier works and his later works. Although initially he starts

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<sup>5</sup> Anderson R. Douglas, *The Evolution of Peirce's Concept of Abduction*, Transactions of the C.S. Peirce Society, Spring 1986, vol.22, issue 2, p. 146

from Aristotle's view, in a letter to Calderoni, Peirce says that his position on the aristotelic text is, in the best case, doubtful.

Both Fann and Burks<sup>6</sup> consider that Peirce thought at first abduction as 'an evidencing process' but finally he considered abduction as a step of scientific research which leads to a hypothesis. In the first case, same as induction, it was a way to decide, to choose a hypothesis. But even in this stage, says Anderson, Peirce realized the abduction's function to provide new hypotheses. Hence, the transition is made from a conflation of these two aspects: the selection and construction of hypotheses to an emphasis of the last aspect.

In 1878, the abduction in its particular form resides in the acceptance of a minor premise as hypothesis on the grounds of a strong 'fitness' with a premise and a factual conclusion. Like induction, it brings something new. In this stage both abduction and induction have the same function, but not the same form. Later Peirce will think different forms for them. As K-O Apel<sup>7</sup> says, for Peirce abduction nominates a hypothesis which later must be tested through induction.

In short, beyond the evolution of Peirce's conception of abduction, we can say that abduction is the process of adopting an explanatory hypothesis<sup>8</sup> and it has two operations: the selection and the formation of plausible hypothesis.

Wirth<sup>9</sup> resumes the scientific approach of Peirce as follows: he begins with the abduction as hypothesis proposal, then the consequences are deduced, confirming or infirming the initial hypothesis. Abduction is the 'inference to the best explication'. Its logical form is an inverted modus ponens. It is a backward reasoning, a retroduction, from the consequent to the antecedent, like the transcendental argument. Peirce shows the abduction's logical form in the next example:

"The surprising fact C, is observed.  
But, if A were true, then C will happen.  
Hence, we have reason to believe A is true"<sup>10</sup>

Sabre<sup>11</sup> illustrates this structure:

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<sup>6</sup> Cited by Anderson, op. cit., p. 147

<sup>7</sup> Apel K.-O. *Towards a Transformation of Philosophy*, Marquette University Press, 1998, cap. 3

<sup>8</sup> Peirce C.S., CP 5.145

<sup>9</sup> Wirth U., *What is Abductive Inference?* in *Encyclopedia of Semiotics*, Oxford University Press, 1998

<sup>10</sup> Peirce C.S., CP 5.189

Somebody sees on a glass door some shadows and strange lights  
(all S are P) – the major premise.  
Then he/she presumes that a fire is burning behind the door (all S  
are M) – the conclusion.  
Knowing that: fire can cause those lights (all M are P) – the minor  
premise

The abductive reasoning is Peirce's response to the Kantian problem of the possibility of synthetic judgments. Moreover, for Peirce, pragmatism is nothing more 'than the question of abduction logic'<sup>12</sup> because it is the only way to get new knowledge.

The hypothesis selection is fact of a 'guessing instinct' of truth, which is in part born, and in part learned. To make correct forecasts, the instinct is helped by a - 'principle of economy' which aims the maximal plausibility of hypothesis and the maximal efficiency of forming and testing hypothesis.

### **Problems of transcendental argumentation and abductive inference**

#### ***[A.] Epistemological problems***

##### *Transcendental argument*

The discussion of transcendental argument from an epistemological perspective implies a general discussion upon the entire critical philosophy of Kant. The discussion implies the application of the transcendental argument to the different epistemological contents – which is a task too difficult for the purpose of this article. Moreover, Kant did not develop a methodology for the application of this type of argument in the scientific research, he shows as only the outcome. But, the logical resemblance between the transcendental argument and abductive inference allows the transposition of some problems from one side to the other.

Just for exemplification, I will discuss the objective argumentation of the categories. Analyzed in an abductive manner Kant's 'deduction' begins with the fact that we have universal valid judgments, hence

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<sup>11</sup> Sabre R.M., *Peirce's Abductive Argument and the Enthymeme*, Transactions of the C.S. Peirce Society, Summer 1990, vol.26, issue 3, p. 366, 367

<sup>12</sup> Peirce C.S., CP 5. 196

objective. Having as a premise the fact that these judgments need some synthesis functions of the intellect in order to be possible, Kant discovers the categories and says that they are conditions of objective judgments possibility.

#### *Abductive inference*

Unlike Kant, Peirce's main concern was to establish the working way of this type of reasoning.

Kapitan<sup>13</sup> discusses the autonomy<sup>14</sup> of abduction as a way of reasoning. It is not the case of a delimitation of purpose or method between abduction, deduction and induction, but the case of the irreducibility of abductive validity as it is a method of discovery and explanation. Beyond some contradictions<sup>15</sup> found by Kapitan and beyond some delimitations<sup>16</sup> insufficient to prove the abduction autonomy, I want to discuss the analysis of abductive discovery.

Kapitan shows that there are three stages of abduction (in the early works of Peirce) that can be obtained through inductive or deductive reasoning:

1. the gathering of facts: it is made through conjunction and it is inductive;
2. the observation of the 'surprising' fact is a ' $p$  is the opposite of  $q$ ' type of reasoning that is a deduction ' $q$  implies *non p*';
3. the judgment (hypothesis selection): it is made through a principle of economy.

Choosing a hypothesis takes time, effort and money<sup>17</sup>:

- a) easy to see if it is false
- b) simple

<sup>13</sup> Kapitan T., *Peirce and the Autonomy fo Abductive Reasoning*, Erkenntnis 37 (1992)

<sup>14</sup> Kant does not debate the autonomy of the transcendental argument, he does not pretend to discover a new way of reasoning, independently of induction or deduction, hence, if it is shown that the transcendental argument does not have autonomy, his arguments are not less valid, or more valid.

<sup>15</sup> An inference is 'the conscious and controlled adoption of a believe as a consequence of another knowledge' (CP 2.442) and 'abduction is not a matter of believe' (CP 5.589)

<sup>16</sup> The distinction between abduction, induction and deduction as forms of reasoning is not sufficient to prove their autonomy

<sup>17</sup> Hookway C., *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, CD-Rom, London, 1998

- c) consistent with other metaphysical believes
- d) it can be explained through mechanisms already found valid.

The evaluation is comparative, the elimination of hypotheses is made disjunctively (hence, by deduction), and the reasoning towards disjunction is inductive.

Kapitan's conclusion is that abduction is not autonomous. Of course, in this critique, the author does not count the 'instinctive' nature of the abduction.

As Hoffmann says<sup>18</sup>, the abductive creativity is a subconscious process and therefore cannot be subject to logical control, it does not have to make separate inferential acts, but it develops continuously<sup>19</sup>. As Peirce says,

'the entire logical matter of the conclusion (...) must come from an uncontrollable part of the mind'<sup>20</sup>.

The continuity of thought presuppose that an idea sends to another and so on and so forth until hidden ideas are brought, unexpectedly, into conscious.

This argument which defends abduction can not be considered legitimating its autonomy, but more a psychological explanation. Moreover, the appeal to the instincts originality can not be an argument, because, as Nickels<sup>21</sup> says

'Originality is, by definition, without rules'.

The problem with Peirce begins when he introduces the instinct as a part of abduction is the observation of scientific research. When a researcher finds a surprising fact, from the infinity of possible explanations he/she manages to choose the right one in a limited number of tries. If there is no such faculty for guessing the truth, then, only by luck, progress would not be possible, because the chances for someone to find the correct hypothesis are practically zero.

This argument is contradict by the following: when a researcher 'finds' the correct hypothesis, he/she does not have to be lucky nor to

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<sup>18</sup> Hoffmann M., *Problems with Peirce's Concept of Abduction*, Transactions of the C.S. Peirce Society, 1999, vol. 4, issue 3, p. 271

<sup>19</sup> CP 5.181

<sup>20</sup> CP 5.194

<sup>21</sup> Nikles T., - *Logic of Discovery*, Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy, CD-Rom, London, 1998

have a guessing instinct. It is sufficient to categories the possible hypotheses, having as criteria the relevance for the 'surprising' fact and their common elements. When hypotheses are eliminated, they are not eliminated individually – which will be impossible, but by classes of hypotheses. If there can be infinitely possible hypotheses, the classes of those hypotheses are a limited number. Moreover, the hypothesis must be verified by induction, which means that the guessing instinct is fallible, so it, alone, can not be a criterion of validity.

In another article, which makes the pass to the logical structure problems, Hoffmann<sup>22</sup> rises the problem of abduction in a larger framework. He finds different definitions of 'logic':

1. deductive logic, analytical: searches the validity of propositional relations (Quine)
2. the object oriented logic, or epistemic: searches the possibility of objective knowledge of objects. (Kant)
3. the logic as rational evolution of thought and being (Hegel)
4. purpose oriented logic (H. Simon)

The author admits that a definition of logic which will include lows of scientific development must be very broad. Such a definition must include the next selection reconstruction based on instinct. Ten steps:

1. every knowledge, for Peirce, is mediated by signs or some elements of generality
2. being mediated by signs, it is not given in a pure way, but together with the context
3. the context is not everlasting, but it evolves along with the signs
4. the surprising element of abduction is, itself, relative to the context
5. the surprising element introduces the doubt regarding the context
6. abduction is way of perceiving the surprising facts
7. an essential condition for having new perspectives is activity. A representation in a continuum of possible representations determines the perception of new relations or new structures of data organizing.
8. for Peirce, the necessity of instinct is given by the impossibility of progress in it absence.
9. the instinct can not be replaced by a 'historical developed methodology' (Rescher) because this methodology, in order to be

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<sup>22</sup> Hoffmann M., *Is there a Logic of Abduction?* International Association for Semiotic Studies – VI<sup>th</sup> Congress 1997, Guadalajara , Mexico

valid must have another methodology to be based on, and so on and so forth. Moreover, the context will be determined by method, by those who use it.

10. Peirce identifies four characteristics of instinct (in his later works):

- a) We can not leave the context of our own instincts
- b) Sometimes, the instinct of some more intelligent mammals is modified as a result of some experiences
- c) Instincts are a way of action
- d) The instinct has a certain purpose. The instinctive action 'leads to the probable perpetuation'<sup>23</sup> of the breed<sup>24</sup>.

The instinct, as Peirce sees it is legitimated by the success and adequacy to a certain world.

Hoffmann's conclusion is that an abductive inference is logical if and only if the chosen set of plausible hypothesis is determined by a certain set of contexts which are relevant in a given historical situation. The relevance problem is, as he admits, without solution.

### ***[B.] Problems regarding the logical structure***

In the same article, mentioned above, Kapitan reaches a form of abductive inference, in concordance with Peirce's late works. This form of reasoning has a practical value. He denies any claim of valid logical form:

1. a surprising fact, C, is observed
2. if H is true, then C will happen
3. H is more economical than hers predicted competitors
4. hence, H is more plausible than her competitors
5. hence, it is recommended, for someone who wishes an explanation of C to further examine H

Peirce defines validity in terms of 'producing the truth', which means that in order to see the validity of some items like recommendations, similarities etc., it is necessary to generalize a validity criterion. Kapitan identifies two directions, both without success:

1. by 'justification'. Peirce<sup>25</sup> says that we can find the truth only after the generalization and selection of testing hypothesis. This

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<sup>23</sup> Peirce C.S, 1913a: EP 2.464f)

<sup>24</sup> An irrelevant intersection of problems.

<sup>25</sup> CP 2.777, 5.603, 5.17, 7.219

means that the scheme from above is valid not because the conclusion is based on premises, but because the acceptance of the conclusion is the only way to discover the truth in case of the selected hypothesis.

Two problems:

- a) we cannot tell the semantic value of the conclusion
- b) it sacrifices the uniform treatment of abduction validity

2. by 'action recommendation'. Abduction goes beyond a theory of a plausible explanation, it represents a hypothesis about what is best to do in certain conditions, which means that the recommendation from the conclusion is necessarily derived from premises. The inference from (4) to (5) is a valid deductive form.

Although Kapitan does not accept the abduction's autonomy in any form, nor logical or epistemological, he doesn't deny the importance of abductive reasoning.

Another objection, this time against the transcendental argument is brought by Körner<sup>26</sup>. On short, the transcendental argument is not valid because when the antecedent is true, it is not proved its uniqueness; hence the inference is not necessary.

Uniqueness cannot be proved, because all the other cases (that can imply the consequent) must be eliminated – but we cannot know if we eliminated them all. The second part of the transcendental deduction of categories, B Edition, can be interpreted just like this, as a try to prove the uniqueness of categories in founding the knowledge. In principle, Körner's argument is valid, but it can be subject to further interpretation. If the discourse universe in which the argumentation takes place divides the antecedent's domain in a finite number of finite classes, identifiable, then the opponents of the chosen antecedent can be eliminated, and the argumentation can be valid. In the case of Kantian argumentation, if the categories were not elements of founding knowledge, then the only alternative (in the given discourse universe) is for the knowing subject to have an intuition, called by Kant, 'divine', which will contradict the experience, because thinking an object will lead to its creation<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup> Körner S., *The Impossibility of Transcendental deductions*, in vol. *Kant Studies Today*, Editor, Beck W.L., Open Court – La Salle, Illinois, 1969, p. 231

<sup>27</sup> The divine intellect has knowledge without the categories; hence the only possibility to know things is to create them. This would be an immediate intellectual knowledge, which obviously humans don't possess.

In the abduction case, if the hypotheses that must be checked are infinite, one cannot argue that once chosen a hypothesis and successfully tested, it is the only valid explanatory hypothesis. But, if we keep the abduction in its original form, derived from the categorical syllogism, I think it is possible to argue a necessary valid form, which can guarantee the valid hypothesis's uniqueness. Abduction is formed by a categorical syllogism which misses the minor premise, which must be found.

For an abduction derived from a aaa-1 syllogism to be valid and the conclusion true it is necessary and sufficient that the major premise, by conversion to be universal (and true). Although the rule of conversion of a universal affirmative proposition leads to a change of quantity, there are cases in which is possible to maintain the universal character of the proposition. This is the case when between the subject and the predicate of the major premise we have an identity relation, not just a inclusion relation.

Ex. All men have reason  
 Socrates is a man  
 Hence, Socrates has reason.  
 The abduction that follows:  
 All men have reason  
 Socrates has reason  
 Hence, Socrates is a man.  
 Which is valid if S=M, which leads to:  
 All that have reason are men  
 Hence, Socrates is a man.

For an abductive argument to be valid it is sufficient to have an identity relation between the subject and the predicate of the rule (major premise).

This shows that in spite of all the criticisms brought to abductive inference and transcendental argument, they are not necessarily non-valid. Moreover, the above example shows that the necessary abductive inference can be reduced to a categorical syllogistically form.

The transcendental argument can be expressed through inferences of compose propositions:

$$q \cdot (p \rightarrow q) \cdot (r \rightarrow q) \cdot \neg r \cdot (s \rightarrow q) \cdot \neg s \cdot (t \rightarrow q) \cdot \neg t \cdot \dots \cdot (\alpha \rightarrow q) \cdot \neg \alpha \rightarrow p$$

Which is equivalent to:

$$q \cdot \neg r \cdot \neg s \cdot \neg t \cdot \dots \cdot \neg \alpha \rightarrow p$$

Where:

$q$  is the transcendental consequent  
 $p$  is the transcendental condition  
 $r, s, t, \dots \alpha$  are the other conditions

This formula is realizable.

If it is proved that for any  $\alpha$ ,  $\neg\alpha$  is true, then the formula is a logical law.

Even if these types of argumentation, from the consequent to the antecedent can be valid, I don't think they represent a new, autonomous way of reasoning. If Peirce begins his research of abductive inference with the thought that it is autonomous, as deduction or induction, then I think he was wrong. If, in the case of deduction we have the major premise and the minor premise and we look for the conclusion, and, in the case of induction, we have the conclusion and the minor premise and we look for the major premise, then abductive inference, as a logical form has the conclusion and the major premise and looks for the minor premise. If this logical form can be considered autonomous, then we must also consider as autonomous the following logical forms: negation, implication, equivalence etc. Maybe that the deduction's and induction's autonomy comes from the particular – general rapport, and not from the propositions order in argumentation.

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HUMANITY-IN-ME: ESSENTIAL NATURE, RATIONAL  
AFFECTABLE CONSTRUCT OR THREATENED HAPPYNESS?

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This paper is a tentative comparative discussion of three different anthropological views as supposed by similar moral systems: mediaeval, Kantian and Freudian anthropology. First issue I tried to endeavour is the idea that „*Human-To-Be*” Or *Humanity As Universal Cannot Be Compromised By The Actual Individual*. In mediaeval moral systems like Abelard or Thomas Aquinas’, human nature is understood as an ideal that should be actualised or as standard of life that supposes virtue as an ontological *deficiency* that must be recovered. Essence is opposed to nature, which is permissive and erratically developing. Humanity means virtue; any individual who attempts achieving virtue is seen as *creature with divine essence*: even a sinner, he cannot corrupt this essence because it is specific (trans-individual). The sin can be voluntary, involuntary or accidental but in none of the cases it can corrupt substantial essence. In the second part, I used as a case study the Kantian moral beliefs and discussed that “*Human-To-Be-Conceived*” Or *Humanity As Universal Can Be Compromised By Actual Individual*. This is the case of Kantian ethics where humanity means also universal but in a sense that it is a corruptible and deformable concept. Humanity as a goal remains a rational axiom which individual should protect with his life. In the third part I deal with the idea that „*Human-As-It-Is*” Or *Humanity As An Abstract Universal Is Actually Identical With Particular Individual*. Contemporary thinking starting from Freudian humanism develops a third scenario. Here individual is postulated as desiring to *remain* happy despite the three ferocious enemies: external nature, other people and corporality. Nature in all three meanings is seen as enemy that can be defeated by, respectively, turning *external nature* in *terrestrial paradise* (by tourism industry, eventually), *other people* into *erotic paradise* (by multimedia and film industry) and *corporality* in

*sensorial paradise* (by corporal technology and cyborg-like ideal). Human nature is now completely stated, fully and actually immanent. Humanity is a happiness that must only be maintained at all “costs”.

I am not going to discuss a homogeneous concept of ethics and morals but rather attempt a comparative analysis of different ethic ideals, each of them connected to its own different anthropological bedrock, like in a slideshow. I am going to use three different philosophical contexts valuable here at least as “case studies”: medieval, modern and contemporary.

**„Human-to-be” or humanity as universal that cannot be compromised by the actual individual.**

The first element of my analysis concerns scholastic view that ethical virtue is an essence to be realised. Human being is both corporeal and intelligible and, following Aristotle’s “footsteps”, intelligible part has to be actualised. That is, we are corporeal as a matter of fact but we are nonetheless intelligible as a matter of ontological reason. We must, as a goal, let our intelligible essence *manifest itself*, in particular ways and in universal form. What we essentially are is *virtual* but necessary; whereas what we particularly are is manifest but contingent.

Let us begin actually with Petrus Abaelardus, because he mentions an example that comes from Augustine and will be used later by Immanuel Kant. It is the example of being violated and it raises the question: should someone give his/her own life in exchange for virginal integrity or not?

In his treatise on ethics<sup>1</sup>, Petrus Abaelardus draws a difference between *vice* (*animi vitium*), *sin* (*peccatum*) and *evil action* (*actio mala*). The *vice* is an inclination or tendency towards consent to something opposed to our nature, *sin* is *consent* itself to this vicious tendency and equivalent to *not doing what we believe we must so for our Creator*. Thus, *sin* is rather a *non-action*, an abstinence from what is natural to do, because *sin* has not a *substantial cause* (*nulla esse substantiam peccati*). In consequence, *evil action* (as exterior act of consent, which is *sin*) is understood as an abstinence from what *should* be done. In other words, *evil action* is not a *sin* itself, it is only the *matter* of *sin*; the *sin* properly is done *before* action, as an interior act of consent.

The consequence is that our actions are entirely morally indifferent. *Intention* and *consent* makes them morally valuable. God does not evaluate our action itself but intention behind it, and consequently does not punish the act but the intention. Any action committed by ignorance or by force is not evil if it is not accompanied by consent.

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Virtue of the soul means *eliminating desire* fighting against vice. Sin is therefore strictly speaking exclusively interior: it cannot be added, nor decreased by the quantity of actions. One of the propositions by Pierre Abélard that have been condemned at the Sens Concilium said that those who crucified Jesus Christ did not commit sin because they acted by ignorance.

The problem we wish to express at this moment is whether we can assert that, for Abélard, letting someone dispose of our own person in exchange for our life means sinning or not. It should not be a sin if this kind of surrender is not accompanied by inclination and consent. Let us take a Kantian example, which we are going to discuss further in its proper context. Is a woman allowed let herself raped in exchange for her life? Kant will say no. But for Aristotelian and Scholastic thought, the answer is not as simple as it seems in Kantian terms. For scholastic terms include this ontological difference between *corporeal act* and *spiritual adhesion* (inclination and consent). In Abélard's terms, this problem contains a hierarchy that is exclusive and sufficient to decide the case. In other words, what is a sin: to give your life in order to save your virginal integrity or give your virginal integrity in exchange for your life?

Abélard offers a key: losing your virginity may happen by external violence, with no consent whatsoever. No evil act is a sin itself if not consented to, therefore it is possible that the woman may save her life by an act of sacrifice. The lack of consent and desire to sexual act does not contain guilt. The same position has been asserted by Saint Augustine some seven hundred years before, in his *On the City of God* (I, 16, 17), by saying that one cannot commit suicide for any reason, and he is guilty for committing suicide as there was no guilt in acting any other way.

We have discussed the case of Abélard because it is culturally convenient. It has been said that his ethics is an immature synthesis of Aristotelian and Christian sources, and this is exactly what we need: to enlighten a manner of thinking instead of a purely religious commitment. And if Abélard was not a case of mature Catholic commitment, he was surely a case of scholastic intellectual who assumed the view that virtue must be seen as giving up desire, fighting the vice, that is, human essence must be understood as a system of teleology. Humanity is composed of altered nature and inner pure essence, where human *nature* means conscious ascending effort towards essence. Whereas nature is weak, the essence is strong because divine and cannot be corrupted by pure corporeal actions outside desire and will. In this

sense, *will* is the only open door an individual has towards humanity; an individual door, which man must enter to reach his ideal of virtue.

Passions, inclination, vice or productive interest (taken as vice), do not alter humanity, which is universal and must be realised in individual by participation of all faculties. Vices as accidents may throw the individual away from the ideal of humanity but the ideal itself, that is, universal essence, is never altered. It is a divine essence and therefore incorruptible.

This is the classical way of seeing the problem of vice and virtue: *humanity* is a standard or essence, which must be actualised; virtue supposes an existing gap (*steresis*) to be filled. Virtue means *virtual humanity* and this is the reason why a sinner cannot corrupt his essence, as essence is trans-individual. An accident may never modify substantial essence.

Thomistic ethics starts from the view that reason and will are connected by the fact that ethics includes free exercise of the will, which is the appetitive faculty of the rational soul. Any nature has an *inclination* called appetite, but some things – like material ones – act without judgement, having *necessary inclinations* oriented towards self-preservation. Biological entities, for instance, manifest such an inclination. Animals, on the other side, exercise a natural appetite but do not judge: they have a sensitive recognition entirely dedicated to obtaining contextual goals, dependent by accidental circumstances. Natural inclination and sensorial perception allow animals to look for what is proper to them, avoid what is harmful and oppose to obstacles.

Above all, human has intellect or faculty of judgement. This allows us act independently of natural inclination or instinct. According to our reason, particular situations are contingent; whereas inferior species (animals) act *within* these contingent contexts, following only their immediate goal of conservation, human is able to understand the contingent character of these contexts and can distinguish them from his final goal, *happiness* (“beatitudo”, that is, vision of God).

Compared to this final goal which is natural and necessary, any particular situation is contingent and instrumental, so that human is the only being to use particular events in order to turn them into *instruments at his free choice*. All human agents have the same necessary goal; they live their own particular life, practice different skills, more or less elevated, and they often make errors in their choice. They may even miss their goal by insisting in moral errors but there is no possibility to change the natural goal.

*Good* in itself is materially an act of free will and formally a rational act because reason makes Good intelligible and eligible. Thus, reason is

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the cause of free choice, though, the actor of choice is will. Freedom of will stands therefore in human nature and God, as First Cause, does not cancel our freedom but lets it manifest according to the principle that First Cause acts upon every thing according to its own nature. It is in human nature to choose the *proper* rational instruments for happiness. What reason does in this context is govern feelings so that they will follow what is good; feelings thus governed are called *virtues*.

We may ask the same question concerning our corporeal surrender in Thomistic context. First, let us mention that, according to Thomas, there are three things contrary to virtue: *sin* (an inordinate act), *malice* (contrary to virtue in respect of that virtue implies goodness) and *vice* (consisting in a thing not being disposed in a way befitting its nature)<sup>2</sup>. Further on (art. 2), Thomas adds that *vice* is contrary to human nature in so far as it is contrary to the order of reason and this means that it is contrary to the rational soul, that is, to man's species. Now, we read below ("Reply to objection 3"), the "presence of vices and sin is owing to the fact that [man] follows the inclination of his sensitive nature against the order of his reason".

In article 5 of Quaestio 71, where Thomas speaks of relation between sin and action, he agrees with St. Augustine's opinion (*De vera religione*, XIV) that every sin is voluntary act, therefore, unless it be voluntary, there is no sin at all. On the other hand, the objection 3 goes on, he who never does something that he ought to do, ceases continually doing what he ought. Therefore he sins continually *with no act at all*. This is meant to be a sort of sophism as a contradictory theory is built: sin means voluntary act and no act at all at the same time.

Aquinas answers that there is a distinction that must be drawn between sin by act and sin by omission. And this is the very problem we are trying to isolate. In the sin of omission, says Thomas, we must consider the *causes* or occasions of the omission: for *there is no sin unless we omit what we can do or not*.

"There must be some cause or occasion, either united with the omission or preceding it; now if the cause be not in man's power, the omission will not be sinful"<sup>3</sup>...

This solution is grounded on a similar presupposition as in Augustine: as long as there is no will and power to oppose the sin, there is no sin at all. This means that human nature cannot be affected accidentally; therefore we must not commit suicide in order to avoid a non-voluntary and violent act being committed upon our person. We

must read nevertheless question 85 to find out that human nature is threefold:

„First, there are the principles of which nature is constituted, (...) such as the powers of the soul, and so forth. Secondly, man has from nature an inclination to virtue (...). Thirdly, the gift of original justice, conferred on the whole of human nature in the person of the first man, may be called a good of nature”.

Accordingly, says Thomas,

“The first good of nature is neither destroyed nor diminished by sin. The second good of nature, viz. the natural inclination to virtue, is diminished by sin, because human acts produce an inclination to like acts. The third good of nature was entirely destroyed through the sin of our first parent”.

In other words, sin corrupts individual nature, not essential one. That is, man cannot contradict his own nature; otherwise he would not be a man. He can, though, corrupt himself as an individual, but this, in no case, by accident. Even angels, says Thomas elsewhere (Q. 64, art. 1), after sinning and falling, were partially taken their intellectual power but not their *natural* intellectual power because this would make them different from what they naturally are, namely, *spiritual natures*.

**„Human-to-be-conceived” or Humanity as a universal that can be compromised by actual individual.**

In this second paradigm, humanity is understood as a universal concept and therefore alterable by modifying our perception on it. By an eventual erroneous positioning towards this concept, the individual may succeed in altering the integrity or purity of his humanity. Humanity as an aim remains a postulate which individual must prudently guard at all costs.

Kant's thinking is not essentialist and this is the reason why his opening concern of all ethical treatises is to draw attention upon the great danger of misidentifying maxim and practical law. His ideal of virtue, shaped as categorical imperative, postulates humans' obligation not to ground actions on a maxim of will that could not possibly become principle of a universal legislation<sup>4</sup>. Saint Augustin, Abélard and Thomas had thought differently:

“love and (then) do whatever you wish”

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was a way of saying that we *should* identify our inclination with virtue, as virtue is humanity in us.

Kant avoids this way and begins with his eternal concern that inclination could associate with moral action. His abstract essentialism grounds human virtue on a concept not an ontological principle and thus human essence is not preserved, nor safe. It cannot be *known*, cannot be *believed in*, it can only be accepted as a regulative idea, a new kind of “universal” which is ontologically non-problematic because it is a concept. What we must do is protect it from any inclination and corporeal act.

What was accident in mediaeval terms turns now into action grounded on maxims (principles of individual will). When they occur, *humanity in us is vitiated*. What we encounter in this context is a *weak* humanity: being subject of a violent action means dishonouring humanity. In his *Lectures on Ethics* (1775-1781) we may read as follows:

„The moment I can no longer live in honour but become unworthy of life by such an action, I can no longer live at all. (...) If for instance, a woman cannot preserve her life any longer except by surrendering her person to the will of another, she is bound to give up her life rather than dishonour humanity in her own person, which is what she would be doing in giving herself up as a thing to the will of another”<sup>5</sup>.

The American researcher Alan Soble considers this fragment as an evidence of misogynist Kant<sup>6</sup>. Far from only that, we think we are confronting a direct consequence of anti-essentialism and transcendentalist criticism, which is Kant’s scepticism concerning transcendent grounding of metaphysics. By refusing essentialism, even immanent or transcendent, inevitably leads to a specific subjective grounding. Kant’s transcendentalism proves itself incapable of conceiving an invulnerability of values. Humanity understood this way is a *concept* alterable by individual actions, not an ideal incompatible with accidental defects. It becomes more evident by another comparison: we remember St. Augustine saying that whatever someone would do to our body and into our body, in an inevitable manner and without any sin from the victim, the guilt must not be attributed to he who suffers the forced action, because it was not done with any acceptance of the spirit and no pleasure of flesh<sup>7</sup>.

In post-critical period of Kant we meet an identical “fear” for the integrity of moral values. Unlike classical values, Kant’s moral virtues must be protected by a guardian-reason by using the law. The first part

of *Metaphysics of morals* (1797), a late work, begins – just like *Critique of practical Reason* (1788), and like *Grounding of metaphysics of morals* (1785) – with a clear expression of Kant's concern towards the possibility that moral values may be altered by inclination and interest. It is therefore symptomatic in Kant the fear for vulnerability of human values in case they would remain unprotected from the danger of accidental infestation. All Kant's moral works begin with pointing the danger, which stands behind "humanity". A humanity that is not understood as project (actualisable but unalterable by error) but as *rational construct*, absolutely vulnerable when inclinations and passions occur.

Another fragment in the same *Lectures on Ethics* expresses undoubtedly this concern:

"neither can we without destroying our person [humanity] abandon ourselves to other in order to satisfy their desires, even though it be done to save parents and friends from death" (*Ibidem*).

It is obvious that these Kantian expressions stand for the second formula of Categorical imperative, which says that we should act so that humanity both in our own person and in another person to be used as a goal not as a mean. It is true nevertheless that humanity as a goal expresses a serious concern: is humanity a value that can suffer violence from any individual? Is the individual capable to compromise [his] humanity by arbitrary acts? And, once compromised, can humanity still be restored by a consequent restoration of conscience?

It is this last question that brings up the delicate problem of Kantian humanism. If the individual can restore his own conscience then humanity in himself was never compromised so there is no need to give one's life for conservation of humanity. *Self-sacrifice* (which is not a metaphor in Kant) is necessary if and only if compromising of humanity is irreversible! That is, *contingent!* On the other hand, integrity of humanity is totally dependent of individual vigilance only if it is *independent* of other individuals, so, impossible to be thought of as a common goal. This is why Kant puts himself in the situation of conceiving humanity in terms of generic rational being, which is a pure concept. Possibility of humanism stands on individually assuming our own resemblance to a perfectly abstract concept having a pure regulative and non-referential status.

In Scholastic ethics, *Humanity* is far from such a danger. Being human, in Scholastic terms, meant a project of fulfilling human person, a project which could be either achieved or missed by the individual but

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never “modify” by accident. The same project is, in Kant’s terms, possible to achieve, possible to miss, at the same time possible to alter. Law is designed to protect by any cost the rational artefact called humanity. The price of such a protection may be *infanticide*, if it is necessary to solve a case of attack to humanity:

„Legislation cannot remove the disgrace of an illegitimate birth... A child that comes into the world apart from marriage is born outside the law... and therefore outside the protection of the law. It has, as it were, stolen into the commonwealth (like contraband merchandise), so that the commonwealth can ignore its existence (since it was not right that it should have come to exist this way), and can therefore also ignore its annihilation”<sup>8</sup>.

**„Human-as-it-is” or humanity as an abstract universal that is actually identical with particular individual.**

A third way of scenario is possible in the context of dualist thinking, more or less Cartesian, contemporary nevertheless. It was made possible by the Freudian humanism. Sigmund Freud formulated the theory that humans longs for happiness, they want to be and stay happy in spite of the fact that there are three factors that limit this desire: a) their own corporality (matter); b) external world (nature) and c) relations to the *others*. Given this context, human tends to regard the world (summing all the three factors) as the *enemy of his happiness*, enemy by excellence. He consequently tries to re-create the world according to his own wish. Freud warned nevertheless that he who tries to do this would get nothing but madness<sup>9</sup>. Whether Freud’s theory had or not an impact on European mentality, this impact missed anyway Freud’s warning.

Freud proved to be right in his theory on individual tendency. We tend to modify reality in order to meet our personal objective because an enemy-world, seen as a limit of personal happiness, is unbearable. The enemy must be turned into ally; but we do not need an ally in a common fight (eventually a fight for realising the initially potential happiness), we need an ally in *conservation* a natural happiness. We turn the foe that threatens our naturally inherited comfort into a friend that maintains it. What we do is therefore redefine our relation to nature, other and corporality, in order to preserve our feeling of happiness *here and now*.

First, happiness is not a goal but an inheritance threatened by the others. We have two ways of solving the problem: *destroy* the others or *transform* the others. The first way has been consumed in fascism and racism times. The second is what we do right now.

*The others' person* may be brought into harmony with our own happiness by turning it into source and target of our *libido*, "otherness" is no more different, therefore not a danger, as it became co-inhabitant, *Eros* in person. Multiculturalism is successfully accomplishing this goal of transforming the *Stranger* into a possible partner of miraculous adventure.

*External nature* or the world is, in its turn, possible to become a *terrestrial paradise* and this transformation can be made by enriching it at least in our imagination. Film and tourism industry, virtual reality and popular science have again accomplished our happiness.

*Corporality*, "the final frontier", is consequently able to become a non-limit: it could be understood as the very direction of extending our happiness by improving its resistance and sensorial acuity.

This context being given, humanism seems to be conceivable as a complete *affirmation* of human as naturally happy being. Human as a goal means this time human affirming himself, a self-created God. The goal of Freudian human is identifiable to physical environment turned into paradise: nature is terrestrial paradise; *otherness* is erotic paradise and corporality – identity paradise (or *cyborg*).

Affirmation of human nature is complete: it is no more distant and transcendent (that is, ontologically different), it is no more forced to self-sacrifice for the sake of conservation of a rational postulate, it is purely and simply sensible: humanity means happiness. And this happiness we did not lose (as mediaevals thought), we cannot alter (as Kant reckoned), but it is rather the nature, the other or corporality the factor that tightens it. By a financial investment eventually we can nevertheless turn these foes into friends to conserve what we are, in a corporeal sense: *eudaimonion zoon*.

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<sup>1</sup> Petrus Abaelardus, *Etiica seu Liber dictus Scito te ipsum*, especially „Prologus”, „Caput primum” and „Caput II”.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, First part of the second part, Q. 71, art. 1. (*The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Second and Revised Edition, 1920, Literally translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, Online Edition Copyright © 2000 by Kevin Knight).

<sup>3</sup> This is completed by the „Reply to Objection 2”: „The term "voluntary" is applied not only to that on which the act of the will is brought to bear, but also to that which we have the power to do or not to do, as stated in Ethic. iii, 5. Hence even not to will may be called voluntary, in so far as man has it in his power to will, and not to will”.

<sup>4</sup> See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of practical reason*, Part I, I, 1, #7.

<sup>5</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Vorlesung (Lectures on ethics*, trans. Louis Infield, Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1963, p. 156), apud. Alan Soble, „Kant and Sexual Perversion”, *The Monist*, 86, no.1, 55-89.

<sup>6</sup> Alan Soble, *Loc. cit.*, p. 55.

<sup>7</sup> Aurelius Augustinus, *De Civitate Dei.*, book I, ch. 16.

<sup>8</sup> Immanuel Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 109.

<sup>9</sup> Jonny Baxter, discusses self-representation of human cyborg starting from Freud’s psychoanalysis in the study: „What is a Cyborg? A study of the cyborg and its relationship to Freud”, url = [http:// cezanne.caad.ed.ac.uk/msc/newdir\\_essays/baxter.html](http://cezanne.caad.ed.ac.uk/msc/newdir_essays/baxter.html)

## HEIDEGGER AND THE PROBLEM OF ANGST

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The term “anxiety” (*Angst*), as it appears in Heidegger’s writings, can very easily lead to misunderstandings and confusions. Because of this some abusive and wrong interpretations is possible to appear. In order to understand its real meaning in Heidegger writings we must begin our analysis with the mechanism of anxiety as it appear in *Sein und Zeit*. This is an excellent point of departure in order to perform a pertinent and clear analysis of relation that exists between *essential anxiety* and the pathological anxiety which we can meet in the mental disorders hospitals.

### **Metaphysics and Psychiatry – Fear and Anxiety**

A first observation: from a formal point of view, between the *essential angst* or the *essential anxiety* and the pathological one there are no differences. None of them has any clear source. Here is an example of how the psychiatric discourse deals with this problem:

*“The acute anxiety can be compared to the feeling of falling into the abyss (...), with sliding in death and dissolution of own body”<sup>1</sup>.*

With few and minor observations we can accept this perspective as the main conceptual frame that is used by the psychiatry to describe this very unpleasant human feeling. From here we can extend our analysis to Heidegger thought.

Even if we cannot identify a certain source for anxiety we must accept that this kind of feeling – in its pathological form – is born only in contact with the “elements” from the world. Of course, these “elements” are always present in a very ambiguous way in the mind of a patient but, and this is the fundamental issue, the feeling of anxiety – in its

pathological form – is possible only through this form of “contact” with what we can call “world”.

The feeling of anxiety always signals an acute discomfort and the failure of individual to obtain a reasonable integration in its world. But we must notice that this form of anxiety has nothing to do with what we can call the “metaphysical level of perception”. The pathological anxiety does not appear as a result of a “metaphysical fear” in front of the pure fact that something exists but, on the contrary, it appears in a form of “dead-end” for those who have this kind of experience. The pathological form of anxiety means defeat for the individual who is trying to fit into the world. It throws him in a long and painful fall into abyss. If we want to make a brief analysis between this form of anxiety and the “essential anxiety” which appears in Heidegger writings we can observe very soon that Heidegger anxiety has exactly the opposite mean than the pathological one. And this we can see only by regarding the implications of “essential anxiety”. In order to be more specific we must go back and get a very close perception about the mechanism of “essential anxiety”.

### **The Experience of “Essential Angst”**

For those who have already a minimum contact with Heidegger thought it is clear that for the German thinker nothing which is inside the world can be a source for *Angst*. The pressure on the individual is constant but the thing which is doing it remains always undetermined. At a first sight the individual is forced to endure the same torture that is endured by ordinary patients of psychiatric hospitals. But the *implications* of “essential anxiety” are very different from those of ordinary one. Heidegger has made very clear that the “essential anxiety” represents something which is very different by the pathological one. Let us say it simple: the anxiety in front of the pure fact that *something exists* has for Heidegger a strong *positive* role because *only* this kind of anxiety can provide authentic freedom for the individual. The “essential anxiety”, as Gabriel Liiceanu says, is bringing authentic freedom for *Dasein* by opening that mysterious circuit which Heidegger calls *project*<sup>2</sup>. This is the main reason and only because of it the “essential anxiety” is such a different thing from the pathological one. The “essential anxiety” – like Heidegger calls it – is not a kind of a worry about something which is located inside the world. The “essential anxiety” appears as a fundamental experience and it is possible only as a kind of “metaphysical fear” in front of the world, in front of its existence. This type of fear brings upon the shoulders of individual an enormous responsibility. The “essential anxiety” has the capacity to enlighten the *Dasein*, to show him how the things really are. This type of experience

has been described in western philosophy not only by Heidegger. Leibniz also talked about it but he never developed an articulate discourse on this subject.

Let us now turn back to our theme. This type of experience – the supreme fear, if we can call it so, in front of the pure fact that *something exists* – is described, with great accuracy, by one of the most prestigious intellectuals in western culture today: Leszek Kolakowski. The manner in which this author describes this type of experience is in itself a strong support for our analysis. In brief, Kolakowski has made very clear that not only philosophers had this kind of experience.

This fundamental human experience is also present in life of ordinary people and it can be recognized by that strong feeling of fear in front of the fact that *something exists*. This experience may also be interpreted as a strange meeting with what Kolakowski calls “nothingness” or, to be more precise, “nichts” in German words<sup>3</sup>. This means that the experience in itself is so strong and so decisive for the individual, so devastating and confusing that in the final his perspective about “world” will be dramatically changed. Nothing will survive after it. This is the main issue: the “essential anxiety” has that mysterious power to wake up the *Dasein*, to take him from his familiar place in the world and to throw him in a completely new type of perception, a very unpleasant one. The *Dasein* is now completely alone. Nothing from the “world” can now help him. The only “thing” which is still intact after this experience is world itself but a very different one from that which before was a real home for the individual. Now, if we can say so, only “thing” that is still “functioning properly” is the mysterious presence of the world. But this presence is also a strange one: world is still here but the *Dasein* can no longer recognize it. What before was so easy to see and understand is now completely transformed. The world is in front of him but he can no longer be a part of it. Why?

In order to understand this we must obtain a close perspective about the concept of “Unheimlich” as it appears in *Sein und Zeit*. Only after the storm of *Angst* was gone the *Dasein* is fully capable to see and to understand its real status. Only after this devastating experience, only after all the “things” which before were so familiar to him had been washed away by the action of *Angst* the *Dasein* will be ready to understand its real and truly condition. In other words, only now the *Dasein* can understand the fact that he was thrown in this world, without having the possibility to know who done this to him, and, since he is already “here”, is forced to make something with himself and with his life. Many authors have noticed that for Heidegger the “essential anxiety”, or the *Angst*, has the mysterious capacity to wake up the *Dasein* and to

make him prepared for its authenticity. The experience of *Angst* is in itself fully capable to move out the *Dasein* from its ordinary life and to throw him, with a devastating force, in what Heidegger calls “authenticity”. This type of change could be itself a subject of analysis.

Let us try now to draw some conclusions. Firstly, it is very clear from our analysis that the experience of *Angst* has nothing to do with the pathological anxiety. Of course, this type of experience will be always very difficult to put in words in such a manner that to resist at any sort of criticism. With all the cautions, confusions will be always possible. However, it is important for us to understand that the “essential anxiety”, as a fundamental human experience, is located beyond the scientific discourse of psychiatry. This experience is strictly metaphysical and it is maybe the most strangely experience that humans can have.

Secondly, in Heidegger conception the experience of *Angst* has a fundamental role because only through it the *Dasein* can become what Heidegger calls “authentic”. Authenticity of the *Dasein* can only be achieved through devastating experience of *Angst* but this type of experience has nothing to do with any sort of theological or psychiatric discourse. This is an issue who deserve here few words. Heidegger was, at least in his first years, very reluctant with any attempt to put his philosophy in relation with the theological type of discourse. He made clear that philosophy represents a kind of “madness” that it cannot be compared with the structure of any other type of human discourse. But let us turn to our analysis. The relation that exists between “essential anxiety” and the problem of authenticity is in itself a field of research. Heidegger has insisted on it in numerous writings and even this subject was a very solid source of confusions.

There were authors who claimed that Heidegger idea is at least ambiguous but we do not want here to insist upon it. As an intermediary conclusion we can observe that what Heidegger says is clear enough to avoid any misunderstanding: the *Dasein* can be truly himself only after he was transformed by the enormous power of the *Angst*<sup>d</sup>. Only after the *Dasein* had become fully aware about his status as a “thrown human being in the world”, only after this fundamental event he will be able to assume his responsibility as a mortal being in the world. If we put this way the problem about authenticity we may establish links with a possible ethic discourse.

### **The *Angst* and the Problem of Ethics**

Is the ethical discourse present in Heidegger thought? The answer to this question is not easy to obtain. An author as is Michel Haar has

made an interesting analysis about this subject and his conclusions can be resumed as it follows below<sup>5</sup>.

If there is an ethical discourse in Heidegger writings than it will be never possible to understand it in the traditional ethical discourse. The moral categories, as is the "guilt" or the "goodness" have in Heidegger thought completely different sense.

Heidegger's does not intend to establish an articulate ethical discourse but to reconstruct a conceptual frame through which he wants to give new senses for the traditional ethical categories. Because of that ethics has in his thought the status of nothing more than an *ontological perspective about the implications of being thrown in the world*. The concept of "guilt", for example, has in its work a very sensitive sense. The "guilt" must to be understood in a totally new perspective. The *Dasein* is "guilty" of being the fundament for his "nothingness". This also must to be understood in the sense that *Dasein* is forced to overcome a supreme absence: the absence of the real fundament.

So, the *Dasein* itself is forced, by the nature of its status as a thrown being in the world, to play the role of being the fundament even it is not. Let us put it simple: we are "thrown" in this world, we do not know from where we are coming and also we do not know where we are going but, as long we are "here", we must to take upon us an enormous and terrible responsibility: we must to "play" the role of the fundament. In other words, *we must to replace an absence*. In this perspective the whole problem of ethics is rearticulated in a new and strange conceptual frame. I believe that this type of approach makes almost impossible to integrate the traditional categories of the ethical discourse. Anyway, we must notice that the problem of *Angst* is strongly linked in Heidegger's thought not only with the problem of authenticity but also with the problem of ethics.

### **The *Angst* and its main Theoretical Problems**

Considering all this now we can go further with our analysis and try to see the main problems which appear about the experience of *Angst*. In doing this we will follow the line of Jean Greisch analysis<sup>6</sup>. This author has wrote maybe the most profound analysis on *Sein und Zeit*.

The French author starts his debate on the problem of *Angst* with a brief analysis on the relation that may exist between the anxiety as a psychological phenomenon and its implications on the human body. This analysis is very interesting because through it we can see once again the profound difference which exists between Heidegger's *Angst* and ordinary anxiety. From the very beginning the French author is made very clear that the "essential anxiety", or the *Angst*, has absolutely no

implications on the human body. The *Angst* is not causing any trouble at the human body. The individual is not having any problem with his breathing or with his heart. This observation is having a great importance. The fact the *Angst* has nothing to do with human physiology is the best proof that *this type of experience is located beyond the theoretical resources of psychiatry or other human science*. Heidegger himself has made very clear this thing along his entire work<sup>7</sup>. In conclusion, says the French author, the *Angst* is behaving in a totally different way than anxiety. The *Angst* is a privilege but the anxiety is just a disease.

Another fundamental issue, says Greisch, is the difficulty to obtain a real ontological interpretation of the *Angst*. Heidegger was observing that in the history of philosophy is not present a real and authentic ontological interpretation of *Angst*. Greisch is saying that between Existential Analytic and the theological discourse can be established some consistent similarities which concern the issue of *Angst* but we may wonder if this interpretation is correct. We consider that Heidegger was very clear on this subject and any attempt to link his way of thinking with any type of theological discourse represents a big and serious mistake. The phenomenon of *Angst* has in Heidegger's thought a clearly *ontological sense* and its religious connotations can be established only as a comparative analysis with other philosophical points of view.

The last problem about which Greisch is doing his analysis is the status of *Angst* in Heidegger's conception. The issue is why Heidegger is considering that the *Angst* has the status of fundamental human experience. We talked already about this and that is why we do not want here to repeat our observations. We just want to say that *Angst* is for Heidegger not a punishment but a privilege for the human being. The *Angst* is the only way in order to understand our truly and authentic condition as beings which were thrown in this world. The status of supreme human experience is given by its power to enlighten the individual and to pick him out from his ignorance, to get him out from *Das Man*. The only issue that remains is that this kind of freedom has nothing to offer in a palpable way. That is why Heidegger can be so easily criticize and misunderstood.

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ALL OTHER THINGS ARE EQUAL: ANALYZING *CETERIS  
PARIBUS* LAWS

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*Ceteris paribus* laws have determined an entire controversy in the philosophy of science questioning fundamental concepts like the concept of the law of nature or that of scientific explanation. From the beginning the stake was considered very high because what needed to be considered was not only the status of the laws in the special sciences (psychology, biology, economics, etc.) but also the status and even the existence of strict laws in the fundamental sciences. Symptomatic in this respect is the position of N. Cartwright who claims that the laws of physics, as they are expressed in physics textbooks, lie<sup>1</sup>. If we interpret them as strict generalizations we will find that they never apply to real cases because physical systems are never isolated from the external influences. If, in change, we want to save them from falsity and attach to them suitable *ceteris paribus* clauses then we will find that they would not apply to real cases but only to highly idealized, counterfactual situations.

A *ceteris paribus* (*cp*) law is a scientific law supplied with the clause

“other things are equal”.

The *cp* clause is attached to the law to hedge it against possible exceptions caused by interfering (or disturbing) factors. Thus, instead of saying

“Ingestion of arsenic causes death”

and discover that our generalization is infirmed by cases in which persons ingested arsenic and survived, we will say:

“Other things being equal (if an antidot is not given or stomach pumping is not performed) ingestion of arsenic causes death”.

Without this qualification the generalization is falsified by those (many) cases in which other things are not equal.

Any attempt of analyzing *cp* laws must first distinguish between several meanings of the concept. According to G. Schurz, there are two kinds of *cp* laws: comparative *cp* laws and exclusive *cp* laws.

“A comparative *cp* law claims that if all other (unknown) parameters describing an underlying system are held constant, then an increase (or decrease) of one (quantitative) parameter leads to an increase (or decrease) of another parameter. Thus, a comparative *cp* law does not exclude the presence of other <<disturbing>> factors, but merely requires *to keep them constant*. Therefore, comparative *cp* laws are testable by the methods of statistical experiment”<sup>2</sup>.

The *cp* comparative law does not require the absence of interfering factors but only their identical distribution between groups.

The exclusive *cp* laws instead assert that the law is true as long as nothing interferes. The *cp* clause indicates the absence of interfering factors that would falsify the law. An exclusive *cp* law does not merely require keeping all other interfering factors constant, but it rather excludes the presence of interfering factors. This is the reason that made some philosophers to replace the clause *ceteris paribus* by that of *ceteris absentibus* or to renounce to use the expression “other things are equal” in favor of the expression “other things are right”.

Another important distinction is that between exclusive definite *cp* laws, exclusive indefinite *cp* laws and exclusive normic *cp* laws. In the case of the exclusive definite *cp* laws it is possible for us to specify the *cp* conditions, that is, to replace them by a finite list of all the disturbing factors excluded by the law. Such a strict completion of the antecedent of a law make the law innocuous, entirely non-problematic.

Serious philosophical problems occur in the case of exclusive indefinite *cp* laws and that’s why they became the core of the debates about *cp* laws. Here we cannot completely specify the conditions in which the law is true because the interferences are either too many or unknown. The problem with this type of laws is one of content,

“the problem of seeing how *cp* law sentences succeed in saying anything at all. The trouble is that the *cp* clause in a *cp* law seems

tantamount to a blank in the antecedent. To say «All *F*s are *G*, *cp*» seems tantamount to saying either «Everything that is *F* and is *G*» which is not a proper statement at all, or to saying «All *F*s are *G*, except those that are not», which is a tautology<sup>3</sup>.

Furthermore, as M. Morreau had shown, as a consequence of the lack of content, *cp* laws in the exclusive indefinite sense seem incompatible with their contraries. Given two contrar generalizations:

*Cp*, an increase in the supply of an article will cause its price to fall,  
*Cp*, an increase in the supply of an article will cause its price to rise,

it seems that both sentences are true. On the one hand, any given increase in the supply of an article, together with a fall in demand, will cause its price to fall. We can consider this sentence true. On the other hand, the combination of any given increase in supply with a sufficiently large increase in demand will cause the price to rise. Therefore the second sentence can also be considered true.

“But surely neither generalization expresses anything worth calling a law, if it is compatible with the other”<sup>4</sup>.

This kind of difficulties have determined many authors to manifest scepticism about the sense and the utility of exclusive indefinite *cp* laws. This way, if G. Schurz considers that they are almost empty, D. Steel claims that analyzing truth conditions of that sort of laws is not a very promising research program and he proposes to focus our attention on comparative *cp* laws, exclusive definite *cp* laws and exclusive normic *cp* laws which would not raise such insurmountable problems. I consider that ignoring exclusive indefinite *cp* laws is not a good option because they are the prototype-law enounced by the sciences. When, for example, a physician asserts the law of gravity he seems to imply that the force of attraction between two masses is as it is with the provision that all the possible interferences, known or unknown, discovered or not, are absent. That’s why these reconstructions of exclusive indefinite *cp* laws, which try to provide truth conditions for them, are valuable.

Finally, exclusive normic *cp* laws are generalizations used mainly in life sciences, technology and everyday life. One example of such law is: “Normally, birds can fly” where the phrase “normally” occupying the place of *cp* clause indicates a statistical majority, a “most” claim. The law is held normally, for the most cases although some birds may not have wings due to a mutation or an amputation. The most well-known interpretation of these laws is offered by G. Schurz who pretends that

acceptance of normic laws implies maintaining a default inference. Thus, when you learn that something is a bird you are justified to make the default inference that it also has wings, an inference that can be falsified when you gather more information. The default inference is true only if it is the case that most birds have wings. So the normic interpretation of *cp* laws implies the following statistical condition: exclusive normic *cp* laws are held for the most cases. This statistical normality is explained by the fact that these laws refers to self-regulatory systems developed by evolution:

“For open self-regulatory systems ... it suffices to assume that the disturbing influences, whatever may be, are in the «manageable range» of the system’s self-regulatory compensation power”<sup>5</sup>.

Many authors have tried to provide non-vacuous reconstructions of *cp* laws and thus to endorse the insight that these laws constitute usual currency in the scientific practice. What they have in common is the fact that they attempted to provide truth conditions for *cp* laws so that they can be considered genuine scientific laws. In what follows we will refer only to some of the most important proposals.

An entire direction is represented by the dispositionalist conceptions pretending that *cp* laws are about dispositional properties and not occurrent ones. The principal advantage of using dispositions is the fact that while occurrent properties can be either manifested or not, a dispositional property is tripartite: manifested, present but not manifested or absent. In addition, dispositions themselves can be conceived as mutable, some of them being more stable than others. P. Lipton claims that we can understand *cp* laws as sentences referring to stable dispositions. For example, to say that *ceteris paribus*, iron filings will arrange themselves around a bar magnet in a specified pattern is to say that magnets exert a certain sort of force on iron filings, a disposition magnets do not lose while remaining magnets.

“Instead of seeing a *cp* law as a description of what happens when there are no interfering forces, the suggestion is that we see some *cp* laws as descriptions of one force that is present even in situations where many other forces are in play, and even if there is no situation where the first force acts alone. Thus, *cp* laws are not descriptions only of what never happens or only of what occurs under highly artificial laboratory environments: rather they refer to stable dispositions that may be widely present even if only rarely directly manifested”<sup>6</sup>.

The *cp* laws refer to a disposition which is always present although not always manifested. Magnet has always the disposition to attract iron filings in a specified pattern even when there are disturbing factors (an electrical field, for example) that impede its manifestation. This is because dispositions can be at the same time present and not manifested. The disposition will become manifested in the pure cases when there are no interfering factors.

Another dispositionalist solution offered to *cp* laws is proposed by A. Hüttemann who distinguishes between discontinuously manifestable dispositions (like the fragility of a glass) and continuously manifestable dispositions (like the solubility of the salt in water). The first are all or nothing situations while the last are gradual situations: the more water we pour in recipient, the more manifest the disposition will become. Only continuously manifested dispositions constitute an evidence for the existence of a *cp* law because only they can be measured:

“Looking at the way physics is practiced, the most reasonable suggestion is that laws can be applied whenever the physical system possess the *CMD* (continuously manifestable dispositions) to behave the way the law says “<sup>7</sup>.

Hüttemann claims that his approach explains why laws support inferring counterfactuals. Laws describe the behavior of isolated physical systems, rare counterfactual situations. We have the evidence of counterfactual behavior of physical systems because we can measure the continuous dispositions even when they are not completely manifested.

The dispositionalist view cannot solve the problem without presupposing some deep metaphysical tenets: the existence of dispositions and dispositional properties underlying objects and phenomena. But the fact that we are not always able to ascribe these properties have determined many to believe that the problem of *cp* laws is just an epistemological issue. Thus, from a Humean perspective, *cp* laws are incomplete pattern descriptions, universal generalizations with incomplete antecedents. The antecedents can be completed at least in principle if not in practice and when they are completed they are just pattern descriptions as any other law. The fact that the antecedent is not completed can raise interesting semantical and epistemological issues but not metaphysical ones. From the Humean point of view it is a mistake to speak about *cp* laws:

“there are *cp* sentences, but the only laws there could be are strict”<sup>8</sup>.

In this category we can include Silverberg's proposal concerning psychological *cp* laws, solution that can be extended to all *cp* laws. According to this author, *cp* conditions are merely instances of a very common phenomenon in our assertions and in our inferences, that of non-monotonicity or defeasibility. When we make conditional claims we implicitly admit the existence of possible defeaters, that is, of disturbing influences or infringements. The *cp* clauses are only explicit acknowledgements of what we implicitly assume. For instance, when we say

"Tomorrow I will go to the theatre"

we understand

"*Ceteris paribus*, tomorrow I will go to the theatre",

in other words, I will go to the theatre unless there is an earthquake, or I'll suddenly die, or the universe disappears. When we assert a *cp* conditional we presume that the question of its truth is to be considered relative to only some possible models, the most appropriate, the most preferred of its antecedent, disregarding its truth relative to all other possible circumstances in which the antecedent may be true.

"Without the presumption of such sorts of conditions as *ceteris paribus* clauses express, we would be fatally hampered in our thought and our discourse ... This phenomenon of focussing on only some conditions that satisfy the antecedents of defeasible conditionals is involved commonly in the development and affirmation of idealizations in science. Scientific generalizations are affirmed commonly only for some possible circumstances which make their antecedents true"<sup>9</sup>.

Silverberg thinks that as a result of introducing the concepts of preferential satisfaction and preferential entailment we will be able to determine the truth-value of a *cp* law taking in account only the most preferred models of the *cp* clause and ignoring other models. With the help of preferential entailment we concentrate exclusively on the most appropriate antecedent conditions of the law, thus limiting the circumstances in which the antecedent can be true. This operation can be found not only in scientific reasoning but also in everyday life in our inferences about human behavior and functioning of mechanisms. If we did not make such presuppositions we could not act because we cannot anticipate all disturbing situations but only the frequent ones.

I think that Silverberg's proposal can be applied in situations in which there are not many defeaters and they are mostly known from past experiences. But it leaves those new cases uncovered, where we cannot control or predict the interferences or the defeaters.

A final category includes those approaches which consider that *cp* sentences cannot be reconstructed to represent authentic laws of nature. These sceptic conceptions either deny the utility and even the existence of *cp* laws or asserts that they play a secondary role in science.

Thus, referring to psychology, S. Schiffer claims that such things as *cp* laws do not exist. There are at most *cp* sentences but they don't express propositions, or, if they do, they are not nomologically necessary because the psychological states are multiple realizable. In explaining human behavior via "because" statements we employ propositional attitude concepts which explain behavioral mechanisms:

"Cognitive psychology, too, insofar as it is legitimate is largely concerned with explaining how things work: how we remember, solve problems, process sentences, and so on. In explaining the mechanisms by which we do these things, it can take its cue from commonsense psychological explanations. But since it's explaining how mechanisms work, there's no obvious reason such explanations should *need* laws, strict or *ceteris paribus*"<sup>10</sup>.

An alternative account is that of P. Mott's who pretends that *cp* laws are just descriptions of experiments. The law will have the form of a conditional whose antecedent describes the experiment and the consequent the result. On this account there certainly are *cp* laws because there are well established experiments in cognitive science. The law is expressed *ceteris paribus* because the underlying experiment sometimes does not work. This is not to say that the law is sometimes false:

"The law is always true (*ceteris paribus*). Its *experiment* sometimes does not work"<sup>11</sup>.

This failure can have two main reasons: insufficient skill on the part of experimenter or random external interferences.

Then there is the possibility that *cp* laws are merely signals that somewhere in the neighborhood we will find a strict law. *Cp* laws are parts in the construction process of science. This is the position of J. Earman and J. Roberts who pretend that

“a *ceteris paribus* law is an element of a «work in progress», an embryonic theory on its way to being developed to the point where it makes definite claims about the world”<sup>12</sup>.

*Cp* laws belong to the context of discovery rather than the context of justification. It doesn't make sense (and it is in vain) to search truth conditions for *cp* laws. They are inherently vague and without definite truth conditions and therefore we should better let the scientists get on with their work rather than attempt to analyze *cp* laws in a manner that

“hides their shortcomings and obscures the road that lies ahead for science”<sup>13</sup>.

Being elements of embryonic theories they are not ready to be confirmed or disconfirmed and they have no real explanatory import.

What is special about this approach is the fact that *cp* laws are not entirely excluded from science, in fact they are admitted in those domains (special sciences) in which searching for strict laws is hopeless because of the complexity of the situations and the multiplicity of interfering factors. Special sciences are not by that illegitimate (or less scientific) because the mark of a good science is not its similarity to fundamental physics. It may be that special sciences are not about finding strict laws of nature.

For a long time *cp* laws have been ignored because philosophers have treated strict laws as an idealization for laws in general. They thought: *ceteris paribus*, all laws are strict. Only when they realized that the world is a messy and complex place they began to pay attention to the conditions in which the laws formulated by scientists apply. At an ontological level *cp* laws are a consequence of nature's complexity, of the deterministic chaos represented by the interactions between multiple causes, forces and conditions. At an epistemological level they reveal the necessity for completely stipulating the conditions that make them true when applying to real situations. The more complex and variable the phenomena the wider the gap between the *cp* conditions and the facts. And the gap should not affect the truth of the laws in question. The fact that an object in the real world is never absolutely free of external influences should not affect the truth of the law. The importance of fully completing the *cp* clause explains why scientists are not concerned only with observing facts but also with their reconstruction in laboratories. The difference between manifestation of phenomena in isolation and their manifestation in the complex situations of nature can help scientists to express the law more precisely.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Cartwright, Nancy, *How the Laws of Physics Lie*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Schurz, Gerhard, "Theories and their Applications – a case of Nonmonotonic Reasoning", in W. Herfel et al (eds), *Theories and Models in Scientific Processes*, Rodopi: Amsterdam, 1995, p. 283.

<sup>3</sup> Lipton, Peter, "All Else Being Equal", <http://www.cogs.susx.ac.uk>, aug 2003, p. 157.

<sup>4</sup> Morreau, Michael, "Other Things Being Equal", in *Philosophical Studies* 96, No 2 (Nov. 1999), p. 164.

<sup>5</sup> Schurz, Gerhard, "Laws of Nature versus System Laws", <http://www.uni-erfurt.de/wissenschaftsphilosophie/NatureSystem.pdf>, july 2002, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> Lipton, Peter, op. cit., p. 164.

<sup>7</sup> Hüttemann, Andreas, "Laws and Dispositions", <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/philosophie/personen/huttemann/dateien/laws.doc>, aug 2002, p. 20.

<sup>8</sup> Lipton, Peter, *Op. cit.*, p. 158.

<sup>9</sup> Silverberg, Arnold, "Psychological Laws and Non – Monotonic Logic", in *Erkenntnis*, 44, No.2 (March 1996), p. 218.

<sup>10</sup> Schiffer, Stephen, "Ceteris Paribus Laws", in *Mind*, New Series, Vol. 100, Issue 1 (Jan. 1991), p. 16.

<sup>11</sup> Mott, Peter, "Fodor and Ceteris Paribus Laws", in *Mind*, New Series, Vol.101, Issue 402 (Apr. 1992), p. 341-342.

<sup>12</sup> Earman, John and Roberts, John, "Ceteris Paribus, There is No Problem of Provisos", in *Synthese*, Vol. 118, No. 3, 1999, p. 465-466.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 471.

THE PARADIGM OF THE INVISIBLE HAND IN LINGUISTICS.  
IN DEFENCE OF KELLER'S ARGUMENTS

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The present paper sets out to analyse and defend Keller's claims (1994) regarding language change and explanation of language change:

"A natural language is spontaneous order".

"The adequate mode of explanation for language change is the so/called invisible hand explanation".

"The invisible hand explanation is a functional one".

The first claim asserts that spontaneous order is a macrostructural system which comes about under certain framing conditions due to microstructural influences. Indeed, the influences are not aimed at the formation of the system at hand. Spontaneous order in the social field is other than the one in animate and inanimate field, in that the structure-forming actions are intentional. The present-day English language is a consequence of intentional communicative acts whose goal was not to bring about the present day English language. Since these phenomena are neither natural nor intentionally created artefacts, Keller (1994) calls them phenomena of the third kind.

Whoever accepts this claim must accept the second claim as well; the valid mode of explanation for such phenomena is the invisible-hand explanation, as it logically flows from the first claim. The third claim is riddled with difficulties as the question whether an invisible-hand explanation is a functional explanation is still a moot point. Its detractors endeavour to show that it is self-contradictory. Keller (1994) defends his point by showing that there arises a confusion in connection with the use of the word function which contains a triple ambiguity. We fully agree with Keller's arguments.

What is an invisible-hand explanation? An invisible-hand explanation accounts for its explanandum, a spontaneous socio-cultural phenomenon, as the causal consequence of individual intentional acts which at least partially fulfil similar intentions.

Simon Dik's illustration of a markedness shift can act as an example for an invisible-hand explanation (cf. Dik, 1977). When the frequency of a polite expression increases, because of the intention to avoid impoliteness, it loses its markedness and thus its ability to express particular politeness. It borders on default usage. This is a well known phenomenon of semantic inflation which occurs from time to time in many languages.

The individual speaker shows his choice from the linguistic potentialities available to him under certain "framing conditions". The goal to avoid impoliteness prompts one to choose the somewhat more polite variant. When many people do this frequently, the result is that the expression under discussion forfeits its relative exceptionality and therefore its politeness, because politeness is a game in which exception is 'trump' (see Keller, 1994). This is an example of the structure of an invisible-hand explanation. It explains the shift of meaning of the English 'you' or Dutch 'jij' or German 'Ihr' as non-intended causal consequences of intentional communicative acts. Keller uses this example to tackle the issue in whose sense such an explanation is functional.

Let us assume that the goal of explanation, the explanandum, is the change of meaning (that is, the markedness shift). The change in meaning is not intended. It is one of the goals of the communicating language users. It has no function. Since the change in meaning is a causal phenomena, a functional explanation is inappropriate. This is the argument of the detractors of this theory.

In fact, an invisible-hand explanation consists of two layers: the micro-level explanation, which is actually an analysis of the speakers' rational choice in communicative behaviour, and a macro-level explanation, which shows the unintended macro-structural consequences of the choices of the speakers. An invisible-hand explanation is a combination of

"micro-finality and macro-causality" (Wyman, apud Keller, 1994).

The speaker's choice is functional in the teleological sense. That his or her choice is functional means that the speaker picks a choice from the linguistic means available to him, from which he or she (subjectively) expects that they will serve his communicative purpose under the given

circumstances. A functional choice involves a goal and the intention to reach it. If the speaker is lucky, he or she has proved a choice which serves its purpose. We agree with Keller when he defines a means that serves its purpose as an instrument. An instrument that is made to serve a certain purpose is a tool. Purposefully it is built into the concept of the tool. We inquire now into the question whether linguistic means are tools or not.

Let us see the kinship between rules and tools. If we quote Vanberg (apud Keller, 1994) rules and tools provide standard solutions to recurrent problems. This is what language does as well, as Simon Dik admits it (1977). Rules and tools are objects of evolutionary processes and bearers of cultural knowledge.

“Tools come to incorporate the experience of generations of experiments. Without any of the persons using them being aware of or being able to articulate, the knowledge that is embodied is the tool” (Vanberg, apud Keller, 1994).

This form of so-called collective learning is called “learning without insight” by Vanberg.

One can read this statement as follows: He who has learnt a language participates, in the way the user of a hammer, for example, does, in knowledge that stems from experience that has been gathered by the preceding generations. One needs only to take into reckoning the empirical and communicative experience encapsulated and stored in the systems of concepts in natural languages. Society benefits not only from the division of labour, but also, owing to language, from the division of experience (cf. Vanberg apud Keller 1994). There is however an important distinction to be drawn between linguistic rules and tools.

We go along with Keller’s suggestion that a tool cannot (genotypically seen) lose its usability through use. The evolutionary development of a tool can, with regard to its purpose, only be progressively steered whereas the evolutionary development of linguistic means can envisage any possibility. E.g., what is informal today can soon become formal and vice versa. This implies that the functional use of a linguistic means by many can and often does lead up to the fact that this means loses or alters its use for a certain purpose. On account of the fact that the consequences arising from invisible hand processes are not the results of human design,

“invisible-hand phenomena are only contingently functional”  
(Nyman, apud Keller, 1994).

What Nyman envisages here is the third reading of functional and namely: 'beneficial', 'useful'. The conclusion Nyman jumps to is a bit too strict:

"invisible-hand phenomena become institutions and other cultural objects by an act of functionalisation [...]. Functional superimposition is a rational, finalistic act, by which a given phenomenon of the third kind becomes a social artifact. There is nothing uncanny here: such a process is known as SEMIOSIS [...]. If the end result is found to be beneficial, it will get functionalised by a collective rational act consisting in an epidemic mimesis" (Nyman, apud Keller, 1994).

This theory maintains the instrumental and the functional character of language. With the concept of a rational, teleological act of semiosis, a kind of rationalistic mysticism is brought into picture, which throws up more problems than it sorts out. Who is the agent / actor / performer of this rational act of semiosis, and how does this act come about?

If the consequences of these invisible-hand processes are only contingently functional this implies that some of the processes may not be functional, according to Nyman. In this light, English 'thou' and Dutch 'du' have completely lost their usability and 'you' and 'jij' continue to be usable only for modified functions. Since language change is not theoretically foreseeable, the functionality of its outcome is also not theoretically foreseeable. One must always expect that the result processes of language change are partially non-functional; that is, they can no longer, or hardly ever be used as tools (cf. Dik, 1977). But the explanation of non-functional (in the sense of non-beneficial) change must be functional (in the logico-mathematical sense) in the same way as explanations of functional i.e beneficial outcomes.

It is exactly what Lightfoot (1991) said of widespread therapy:

"Grammars practice therapy rather than prophylaxis" (1991).

Therapy is an intentional action with the goal of remedy. Regarding language or its speakers, the concept of therapy is also tantamount to rationalistic metaphysics. A language can neither think nor act by itself. It does not recognise its own weakness and therefore it cannot carry out therapy on itself. Can speakers of a language become therapists? We wonder whether this is possible because the individual speaker generally neither knows the past of his language, nor is he/she interested in its future. He/she is not capable of carrying out a therapy for the language either.

To put it in a nutshell, we shall now sum up the main readings of the word 'functional': teleological, logico-mathematical and beneficial set out in the manner of mathematical assertions (see Keller, 1994).

In a communicative situation, the speaker pursues certain communicative goals, envisages communicative possibilities and interprets the framing conditions. The relations to these factors, the speaker generally has more than one linguistic means for the realisation of his communicative goal he chooses the means from which he expects the highest clear benefits. Thus he rationally picks out a possible means from the linguistic means available to him. This option is functional in the teleological sense of the word.

A set of unsteered options brings about the validation or alteration of rules. This generative process, the so-called invisible-hand process, is causal. It is usually neither intended nor noticed by the speakers. The outcome of such a process, the validation or alteration is a function of the speakers' option, a function in the logico-mathematical sense of the word.

The degree of functionality of the unintended outcome of the invisible-hand process is contingent. This boils down to the fact that they can be functional, less functional, or even dysfunctional. Functionality here means 'usefulness' or 'beneficiency'.

Some of the unintentionally generated rules or structures become a part of the individual competences of some, many or all speakers, and thus become items for the speakers' rational and functional options (cf. number 1). The forms which have lost their functionality in the sense of usability are likely not to undergo a therapeutic treatment, but are simply ignored, because the speakers' options pursue individual benefit, not linguistic health.

Every explanation of language change that strives for explanatory force must attempt to go down this cyclical path. If the notion 'functional explanation' is understood in this complex sense, we think that the quirky and paradoxical invisible-hand explanation put forth by Keller can certainly fall under this heading of functional explanation.

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MANIFESTATIONS SCIENTIFIQUES

**The national symposium “*Modernism. Recognition. Critical philosophy*” organized by West University of Timisoara, The Faculty of Political Sciences and Communication, The Department of Philosophy and by Kant Society from Romania, Timisoara Branch, on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of June, 2004**

Between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of June, 2004 the Faculty of Political Sciences and Communication, The Department of Philosophy within West University of Timisoara held the national symposium “*Modernism. Recognition. Critical philosophy*”, dedicated to the commemoration of 300 years since the death of the philosopher John Locke (1632-1704) and of 200 years since the death of the philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804).

Moderators for this scientific activity were Univ.Lecturer Ilona Birzescu and Univ. Lecturer Alexandru Petrescu, members of The Department of Philosophy. The symposium was attended and supported with papers by members of The Department of Philosophy (Octavian Balintfi, Ilona Bîrzescu, Ioan Buș, Gheorghe Clitan, Paul Kun, Aura Mariș, Claudiu Mesaroș, Ionel Narița, Alexandru Petrescu, Iasmina Petrovici), members of The Department of Political Sciences (Cornel Berari, Gabriela Colțescu, Ionuț Crudu, Florentina Muțiu, Silviu Rogobete, Lucian Vesalon), members of Romanian Academy (Acad. Alexandru Boboc), other professors interested in the discussed theme (Ion Cepraz, Emilia Guliciuc, Viorel Guliciuc, Silvia Lucica, Mircea Lăzărescu) and students of The Faculty of Political Sciences and Communication ( Petru Moisă, Marian Tătaru).

The papers discussed at the symposium will be gathered within *Annales Universitatis Occidentalis Timisiensis*, series *Philosophia*, vol. XVII, 2005.

**The symposium “*Knowledge and Culture*”, a homage paid to Professor Constantin Grecu, organized by The Faculty of Political Sciences and Communication within West University of Timisoara , on the 4<sup>th</sup> of June 2004**

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of June 2004, The Faculty of Political Sciences and Communication within West University of Timisoara organized a symposium on the theme “Knowledge and Culture” , dedicated to professor Constantin Grecu, doctor in philosophy and outstanding member of The Department of Philosophy .

The opening word belonged to Prof.Univ.Dr. Ioan Mihai, president of West University of Timisoara and moderator for the symposium was Prof. Univ.Dr.Ioan Biris, dean of The Faculty of Political Sciences and Communication.

The symposium was attended and supported with papers and debates by members of The Department of Philosophy (Ioan Biriş, Gheorghe Clitan, Constantin Grecu, Paul Kun, Ionel Nariţa, Alexandru Petrescu, Iasmina Petrovici), members of The Department of Political Sciences (Florentina Muţiu), members of Romanian Academy (Acad. Alexandru Boboc, Acad. Mircea Flonta), other professors interested in the developed Theme (Ion Ceapraz, Emilia Guliciuc, Viorel Guliciuc, Florea Lucaci).

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COMPTEs RENDUS

**Alexandru Petrescu, *Lucian Blaga: o nouă paradigmă  
în filosofia științei*, Editura Eurobit, Timișoara, 2003.**

Die Arbeit des Herres A. Petrescu, *Lucian Blaga: ein neues Paradigma in der Wissenschaftsphilosophie*, die bei dem Eurobit Verlag von Temeswar in 2003 erscheint war, verfolgt sich aus zuzeichnen, dass Lucian Blaga gleich Gelehrt und spitzfindig Analyst der zahlreichen Aspekten war, aus denen die Wissenschaft philosophisch Behandlung kann.

Überschuss Lucian Blaga hat als Titel der bahnbrechende Arbeit Behandlung der Wiessenschaft aus der Kulturphilosophie Perspektive vorgenommen.

Der Versuch dieser Arbeit beabsichtigt Lucian Blagas Beitrag zu der Untersuchung der kognitiven Dimension der Wissenschaft in den ontologischen, kulturellen und historischen Kontext einzuordnen. Diese Untersuchung wird durchdie interdisziplinäre Einbeziehung der Wissenschaftsphilosophie und der Gnoseologie in der Kulturphilosophie gemacht. Die Rückkehr zu Lucian Blagas theoretischen Vorsätzen ist anerkannt als eines der wichtigsten Projekte der rumänischen philosophischen Forschungen. Das Niveau eines solchen Forschungsprojektes, eine wichtige Richtung, die bis jetzt nur in einigen elbstständigen Studien im Vordergrund standen, zeichnet sich eben im Wieder-Aufnehmen der entscheidenden Aussagen der so genannten „kulturellen Analysen der Wissenschaft“ – als metodologische Perspektive, die Blaga in mehreren seiner Arbeiten behauptet, aus. Herr A. Petrescu hat sich diese Perspektive einer komparativen, kritischen Analyse zu unterziehen sowohl bezüglich des Klarstellens von manchen seiner Artikulationen zur Wissenschaftsanalyse von Blaga als auch der Art und Weise vorgenommen, wie sich Blaga in die philosophischen Auseinandersetzungen seiner Zeit gedanklich eingefügt hat, als auch bezüglich seines gegenwärtigen gedanklichen Stellenwerts.

Blagas wesentliche Absicht war es eine unausschließliche und ungetrennte Alternative in bezug auf die wissenschaftliche Erkenntnis zu entwickeln. Er verwirklicht diese Absicht aus der Perspektive seiner Verfügbarkeit für die Situierung des Denkens alternativ, aber auch aus der Überzeugung, dass I. Kant eine Theorie der Wissenschaft formuliert hat, welche als „Modulationspunkt“ der geschichtlichen Entwicklung der wesentlichen Modelle von Struktur und Natur der Wissenschaft angesehen werden kann.

In dem ersten Kapitel der Arbeit der Verfasser hat sich dieser Idee angeschlossen und berücksichtigt, dass auch aus der Perspektive des Vergleiches mit Kant bemerkt werden könnte – als Alternative – und den Darstellungen, was die wissenschaftliche Erkenntnis betrifft, die bedeutsam für den Kontext der Erscheinung der philosophischen Werke der Wissenschaft sind: a) der Neopositivismus – als Variante der analytischen Philosophie; b) die Phänomenologie c) Bergsons Intuitionismus und der so genannte „rumänische Neorationalismus“. In diesem Sinn habe ich auf einige Probleme bestanden wie: a) die Quellen und die deutsche Richtung der analytischen Philosophie (diese aus der Perspektive der Streitgespräche, die um ein Buch von M. Dummet erschienen sind); b) die Eigenart des „kantschen Testaments“ gegenüber der analytischen Philosophie und Phänomenologie; c) der gemeinsame Ursprung der analytischen Philosophie und Phänomenologie (worüber M. Dummet und J. Benoit); d) der Einfluss des kantschen Denkens in der post-Maiorescu rumänischen Philosophie.

In dem zweiten Kapitel Herr A. Petrescu wollte beweisen, dass in der Nähe von Kant, Blaga die Absicht hatte einen neuen Begriffsumfang zu dessen Gnoseologie zu gestalten; Blaga richtet das Gespräch durch systematische Beziehungen zum Neopositivismus und zur Phänomenologie auf die konstruktive Zone wissenschaftlichen Vorgehens, welche Rechenschaft über die Dynamik der Wissenschaft gibt. Für das wird sich Blaga von der Idee der Unterscheidung zwischen der phänomenalen Welt, die Kant beabsichtigt, und die Welt, wie sie uns in der Erkenntnis erscheint, einerseits und andererseits von den „kulturell gestalteten Welten“ auf Grund einer offenbarenden Absicht und laut einiger stylistisch-unbewußten Matrix angeleitet lassen haben.

Diese Idee wird konstant von seiner grundlegenden Anschauung hinsichtlich der Einheit der Kulturformen begleitet. Auf Grund dessen kann die Wissenschaft in der Gesamtheit der geistlichen und schöpferischen Manifestationen des Menschen angesiedelt werden. Wie die Philosophie, die Kunst, der Mythos, die Religion, setzt die Wissenschaft ein stilistisches Vorläufige voraus. Hinsichtlich der

Wissenschaft, modellieren die stilistischen Faktoren in beabsichtiger Art „die Bemerkung geleitet von einer Idee“, der Versuch, die Formulierung der Hypothesen und die Gründung der Theorien, die die Erklärung in Beziehung mit einigen Bereichen der Existenz setzten. Die Wissenschaft kann als Bereich der Schöpfung aus der Perspektive der stilistischen Theorie angesehen werden, bedingt von einem stilistischen Feld, eine Art von Kontext, von kulturellem Paradigma, das durch stilistische Kategorien die Art der wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnis bestimmt, von Beobachtung zur Methode und Theorie. Gleichzeitig wird durch die stilistische Theorie die interdisziplinäre Einfügung der Wissenschaftsphilosophie und Gnoseologie in der Philosophie der Kultur möglich.

Um das Spezifische der stilistischen Theorie von Blaga hervorzuheben, durch Beziehung zu einigen anerkannten Theorien in seiner Zeit (zum Beispiel die Theorie der Kulturmorphologie ) hat er die blagasche Thematisierung der Einheit zwischen Stil und Metapher inklusiv der wissenschaftlichen Schöpfung, als auch die Gründungen und der metaphysischen Sinn der Bedingungen von Möglichkeiten der Kultur beabsichtigt. Die Kultur ist für Blaga das Ergebnis einer ontologischen Veränderung, die Kultur drückt sich im Rahmen eines Stils und durch die Anwesenheit des Metaphorischen, dem schöpferischen Schicksal des Menschen aus. Es ist die Rede von dem luziferischen Menschen, dessen Verlauf in Zeit und Raum die Geschichte selbst nennt. Unter solchen Bedingungen ist leicht zu verstehen, warum der Philosoph auf die Beziehung zwischen der Idee der kulturellen Bedingungen der Wissenschaft und der Notwendigkeit einer geschichtlichen Analyse und deren Dynamik bestanden hat. Diese Beziehung wird an dem Niveau der geschichtlich-komparativen Analyse hinsichtlich der Wissenschaft von antiken Modellen und der gallileo-newtonschen Wissenschaft offenbar.

In der Arbeit der Verfasser zeigt ebenfalls, dass für Blaga diese geschichtlich-kulturelle Perspektive auch die Entdeckung der philosophischen Infrastruktur der Hypothesen und der wissenschaftlichen Theorien ermöglicht. Denn jede schöpferische Handlung, also auch die wissenschaftliche, kann auch als Ausdruck einer übernommenen philosophischen Einstellung angesehen werden. Die Philosophie ist das Ferment jedwelcher Kultur oder Geschichte, sagt Blaga. Ich habe die Lektüre der blagaschen Texte von der aktuellen epistemologischen Rede her vollzogen und die Idee der Voraussetzungen vorgestellt. Am Niveau der so genannten „philosophischen und metaphysischen Koordinaten“ kann die Anwesenheit mancher Voraussetzungen der Wissenschaft von ontologischer,

metaphysischer, epistemologischer und methodologischer Natur identifiziert werden. Dieses philosophische Vorläufige der wissenschaftlichen Theorien identifiziert sich selbstverständlich mit dem, was ich in der Arbeit „Voraussetzungen des unbewussten Geistes“ (die sich in einer gewissen Kultur oder Epoche zeigen) genannt habe.

Das dritte Kapitel, Die kulturell-methodologische Perspektive über die Wissenschaft, beabsichtigt die Art und Weise, wie Blaga „kulturelle Methode“ und „geschichtliche Analyse“ aufgreift, indem er den Grund und das Spezifische der modernen Naturwissenschaft zu gestalten versucht. In seiner Untersuchung wird besonders auf das so genannte methodologische Ideal hingewiesen, durchgesetzt durch die moderne wissenschaftliche Revolution, die die Einheit zwischen Mathematik, Versuch und Formulierung von Voraussetzungen vermutet. Auf der theoretischen Ebene, dieses methodologischen Ideal ist die Perspektive der Über-Methode angedeutet, und als stilistisch bestimmende Einstellung verstanden, welche die gallileo - newtonsche Wissenschaft gegenüber seiner eigenen Methode und gegenüber der Möglichkeit der Zusammenfassung deren mit der Mathematik übernommen hat.

Hinsichtlich der Mathematik, der Verfasser hat Blagas Einstellung aus der Perspektive von zwei Problemen versucht zu deuten: a) die Natur des mathematischen Vorgehens (das Spezifische der mathematischen Urteile); b) die Rolle der Mathematik in der modernen Naturwissenschaft. Herr A. Petrescu hat dieses Vorgehen einerseits aus der Perspektive seiner deutlichen Beziehungen zu Kant und zu den neopositivistischen Denkern und andererseits durch das Vergleichen der blagianischen methodologischen Perspektive mit Heideggers phänomenologisch–metaphysischer Perspektive bezüglich zu „Mathematisch“ und „Mathematik“ durchgeführt.

Weiterhin der Verfasser hat sich mit dem Versuch des Philosophen auseinandergesetzt die Kontradiktion, die Antinomie durch die Neubewertungen der Vernunftquellen neu zu deuten und, implizit, durch den Vorschlag der verklärten Antinomiemethode – als eine Art so genannter ex-statischen Existenzrationalisierung. Er versuchte Blagas methodologische Einstellungsperspektive zu identifizieren als eine, die den Weg auch zu einem Verständnis was wir als „Forschung“ aus der Perspektive der so genannten „Logik des wissenschaftlichen Problem“ bezeichnen, eröffnet. Hinsichtlich „des Problems“ und „der Erklärung“ in den Wissenschaften hat er selbstverständlich die Beziehungen zur Phänomenologie und zum Neopositivismus nicht ausgelassen, vielmehr versuchte er einige Ähnlichkeiten und Unterschiede zwischen Blagas Perspektive und der von Eugeniu Sperantia unterschrieben, dem

Veranlasser einer philosophischen Problematologie in der rumänischen Zwischenkriegszeitphilosophie zu identifizieren.

Im vierten Kapitel Rationalität und Stil in der wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnis, der Verfasser versuchte zum Vorteil der blagianischen Reflexionsumschreibungen bezüglich des Themas in der Methodologiesphäre zu argumentieren, ausgehend von der Tatsache, dass sich die Rationalität für Blaga in der wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnismethode ausdrückt, die „auf die Reduzierbarkeit des Irrationalen im allgemeinen“ hinweist. Deswegen, spricht er auch von der Rationalisierung und deren Arten in der Wissenschaft. Als funktionale Artikulation, die der Wissenschaft zugehörig ist, stellt sich die Rationalität in Form von manchen theoretischen Erklärungen, Beschreibungen, Klassifikationen, Ordnungsstellungen der Mannigfaltigkeit der Welten vor; diese alle werden der Umwandlung mancher stilistischer Einfassungen untergeordnet. Dem Philosophen gelingt die identifizierten Rationalisierungsarten in der historischen Evolution der Wissenschaft mit der Idee des kulturellen Stils zu korrelieren, er verteidigt seine Berücksichtigungen auch durch eine historische und kulturelle Analyse.

In diesem Kapitel brachte Herr A. Petrescu Blagas Berücksichtigungen in die Nähe von anderen Reflexionen zu diesem Thema, die im ersten Teil des XX-sten Jahrhunderts verteidigt waren: Carnaps Rationalisierungsprogramm (als Logizisierung) der induktiven Prozedur der Wissenschaft, Meyersons Theorie hinsichtlich der Rationalität – als Tendenz die Identität in dem irrational Verschiedenartigen zu bestimmen, die husserlsche Gründung der Rationalisierung in einem Vorherige Ante-Rationalen, oder die Behandlung der Rationalität von D. D. Roscas tragischer Rationalismuslage.

In den letzten Kapitel, das auch unter dem Zeichen der Beziehung zu Kant steht, der Verfasser versuchte den gegenwärtigen Wert einer von der blagischen Betrachtungen bezüglich der Wissenschaft, mögliche Ähnlichkeiten zwischen diesen Betrachtungen und eine der bedeutungsvollen philosophischen Darstellungen für den letzten Teil der XX-sten Jahrhundert zu prüfen. Herr A. Petrescu ist thematisch verfahren und hat die folgende Punkte berücksichtigt: a) die philosophische Infrastruktur der Wissenschaftstheorien – als wesentliche Dimension der historischen Perspektive über das wissenschaftliche Denken (u.a. von A. Koyre, Thomas Kuhn, Stl. Tolmin, P. Feyerabend usw.); b) die kulturelle Behandlung der Wissenschaft; c) das Problem und die Rationalität in der Wissenschaft; d) Realismus und Antirealismus.

In Bezug auf die philosophische Infrastruktur der Wissenschaftstheorien der Verfasser der Arbeit suchte gleichzeitig danach was

Blaga an Koyres Behauptungen annähert beziehungsweise was ihm von dessen Behauptungen und denen der von der Neuen Wissenschaftsphilosophie trennt. Und das aus der Perspektive einiger Probleme, wie zum Beispiel: die wissenschaftliche und philosophische Denkeinheit, die Bedeutsamkeit einer historischen Wissenschaftsanalyse, die Idee des Fortschrittes in den Wissenschaften, die systematische Analyse der Evolution der Wissenschaftszweige, das Relativismus und der Relativität in der wissenschaftliche Erkenntnisphilosophie usw.

Im folgenden Schritt wollte er die Art zeigen in der Blagas Anschauung über das stilistische Feld – einiger Massen – den gegenwärtigen, non-empiristischen Orientierungen entspricht; der Existenz einer unbewussten Matrix mit bestimmender Rolle im theoretischen Bereich wird zugestimmt. Hier wurde auf N. Chomskys Doktrin über die „generative Grammatik“, Gilberts Durand Theorie bezüglich der tiefen Strukturen des Imaginären, Michael Polanyis Perspektive über „die stillschweigende Erkenntnis“, Gerald Holtons Analyse der hinsichtlich der „Themen“ hingewiesen. Auch in diesem Fall hat er die bedeutungsvollen Unterschiede zwischen diesen Behandlungen nicht umgangen.

Hinsichtlich der Struktur, Voraussetzungen und Rolle des wissenschaftlichen Problems in der Wissenschaftsdynamik, Herr A. Petrescu beschäftigte sich mehr mit der problematologische Anschauung von Michel Meyer. Gleichzeitig, bemerkte er auch in diesen Fall die systematische Ausarbeitung einiger Themen und Ideen, die auch von Blaga aufgestellt wurden: die Struktur der Wissenschaftsprobleme, die Logik solcher Problem, die Schichten des interrogativen Verfahrens, die Beziehung Problematologik – Problematologische, die Rolle der Metapher in der wissenschaftlichen Untersuchungsdynamik usw.

In Bezug auf die Rationalität in der Mannigfaltigkeit der Theorien zu diesem Thema, der Verfasser hielt sich mit ein paar Betrachtungen von Gilles Gaston Granger und Calvin Schrag auf. Er bestand auf der Theorie von der „transversale Rationalität“ des amerikanischen Verfassers, auch wegen der besonderen Bewertungen, die der Verfasser im Hinblick auf „verklärte Antinomie“ und auf die blagianische Idee bettreffs der Ressourcen einer erweiterten Vernunft vornimmt.

Weiterhin hinterfragte der Verfasser zwei Angelegenheiten: a) die Gegenwartsbezogenheit „des metaphysischen Realismus“, den Blagas Betrachtungen in Bezug auf die Wissenschaften gründet; b) eine Identifizierungsmöglichkeit eines wissenschaftlichen Realismusfall in seinen späten Werke. Damit er antworten kann berücksichtigte

einerseits Putnams Kritik zum metaphysischen Realismus und andererseits die Argumente des Antirealismus, dessen Quelle in der Wissenschaft liegt (vor allem die Quantenmechanik), in der „Neuen Historiographie der Wissenschaft“ und in der empiristische Philosophie. Aus der durchgeführten Analyse lässt sich folgern, dass bei Blaga von einem wissenschaftlichen Realismusfall sprechen kann; viele von seinen Betrachtungen sind nahe zu dem wichtigen Vertreter des gegenwärtigen wissenschaftlichen Realismus, Ernan Mc Mallin.

Am Ende dieses letzten Kapitels, traute er sich einer Durchsicht in dem Bereich der Bilder über die Wissenschaft herzuleiten, die sich abzeichnen in den aktuellen epistemologischen rumänischen Abhandlungen; diese Durchsicht steht für die Identifizierung einiger Behauptungen, die in einer guten Gemeinsamkeit mit einigen blagaschen Betrachtungen stehen können. Der Verfasser ist bei einigen Verteidigungen stehengeblieben, die von den namhaften Professoren, Mircea Flonta, Ilie Parvu und Constantin Grecu verfasst sind. Es ist ihm bewusst, dass seine Lektüre und sein Wahrnehmungsvermögen, das er plötzlich hatte, sehr bescheiden für eine großangelegte Untersuchung in dieser Richtung sind.

Schlussfolgerungen:

a) In seiner Analyse über die blagasche Abhandlung hinsichtlich der Wissenschaft stellte er erstens seine Unität und die unlineare Weiterführung im Übergang von einer philosophischen Etappe zur anderen fest;

b) L. Blaga hat sich in einem konstruktiven Art und Weise in die philosophischen Auseinandersetzungen seiner Zeit eingefügt, er setzte die echte Anschauung der Einheit der Kulturformen durch, die er historischen Daten der Wissenschaft gegenübergestellt und weiter zu einer Formulierung und Ausübung eines wahren historischen und kulturellen Forschungsprogramms der Wissenschaft geführt hat.

c) Durch „die historische Analyse“ und „die kulturelle Methode“ gelingt es Blaga (vor einigen Autoren wie Koyre, d'Espagnat oder M. Clavelin) die Unterschiede zwischen „der antiken Wissenschaft“ und „der gallileo-newtonsche Wissenschaft“ zu identifizieren, Unterschiede, die er in der Beziehung mit „den Verwandlungen im stilistischen Bereich“ stellt. Außerdem setzte, diese blagasche Behandlung einen sogenannten „revolutionären Bruch“ im Verhältnis zu seiner Zeit aber auch in einem anderen Sinn voraus. Wie man weiß, orientieren sich die klassischen epistemologischen Systeme an einem einzigen Wissenschaftszweig, der Physik: man versuchte in dieser Richtung den Voraussetzungen Klarheit zu bringen und durch die Verallgemeinerung versuchte man auf dieser Basis einen Begriff von „Wissenschaft“ zu definieren. Das ist

gültig, zugleich, für Kant, für den logischen Empirismus und popperschen kritischen Rationalismus und, auch viel später, für die von Th. Kuhn vorgeschlagene „Wissenschaftstheorie“. Blaga kommt mit „einer problematischen Überstürzung“ schon aus dem Zwischen – Kriegszeitraum; neben Physik und Mathematik hält Blaga auch „die theoretische Phase“ für wertvoll, in die Mikrobiologie und Makrobiologie, Psychologie und die Geschichte eingefügt waren. Heute ist die Diskussion über „die regionalen Epistemologien“ konstant, ebenso über das gleichzeitige Reifenwerden einer grossen Anzahl von Wissenschaftszweigen.

d) Die kulturelle-methodologische Behandlung der Fundamente und des Spezifischen der modernen Naturwissenschaft hat Blaga zu einer originellen Idee der „Übermethode“ geleitet, die für die moderne Wissenschaft eine neue methodologische Bewusstheit, ein neues methodologisches Idealbild, eine neue epistemische Strategie und eine neue Organisationsmodalität der Methoden auf dem Prinzip des Mathematismus bedeutet. Der Philosoph lehnt aber den Panmathematismus ab und entwickelt eine besondere Perspektive der Rolle der Mathematik in den Wissenschaften.

e) Die Neubewertung der theoretischen Vernunftquellen hat für Blaga die Rehabilitierung des Dogmatischen und eine neue Thematisierung der Rationalität und der Rationalisierung in den Wissenschaften möglich gemacht. Auf diese Art und Weise gelangte Lucian Blaga einerseits zur Erkennung und zur Identifizierung des Irrationalen in der wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnis und andererseits zu der gegenseitigen Beziehung der wissenschaftlichen Rationalität mit dem kulturellen Stil.

f) Der Vorschlag einer sogenannten „Logik der wissenschaftlichen Frage“ (im methodologischen Sinn und nicht technisch-formal) hat den rumänischen Philosophen zur Hervorhebung des besonderen Orts der wissenschaftlichen Frage in der Erkenntnisdynamik und durch eine bahnbrechende Arbeit zu seiner historisch-kulturellen Behandlung geleitet.

g) Der Verfasser versuchte im Besonderen den aktuellen Wert von einigen der blagaschen Betrachtungen zu begutachten und er kam zu der Schlussfolgerung, dass Blagas Abhandlung tatsächlich einigen Richtungen und wesentlichen Ideen der jetzigen Wissenschaftsphilosophie vorgriff „die historische Wissenschaftsphilosophie“: einige bezeichnende Eigenschaften der problematologischen Perspektive in der Wissenschaftsphilosophie, gegenwärtige Orientierungen bezüglich der kulturellen Behandlung der Wissenschaft, die aktuelle Richtung der Theorien hinsichtlich der vorhergehenden Rolle in der Wissen-

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schaftsdynamik usw. Mit Sicherheit machte auch, die komparative Analyse aus dem letzten Kapitel die Bemerkung einiger Begrenzungen von Blagas Doktrin notwendig, die selbstverständlich offenbar sind aus der Perspektive einer Gegenüberstellung, die ähnlich dem Versuch dieser Arbeit ist: die spekulative Kosmologie, die die anfänglichen Angaben des blagaschen methaphysischen Realismus festhielt, ist heute schwer zu akzeptieren; die historische Analyse der Wissenschaft hat nicht immer die spezialisierten Mittel des Berufshistorikers ausgenützt; seine Abhandlung bezüglich „der Logik der Frage“ gelangt nicht zu einer technischen Systematik, vorausgesetzt in der Analyse einiger Zeitgenossen, wie Joseph Agassi oder M. Meyer. Aber diese Begrenzungen benachteiligen wesentlich nicht was wir jetzt „die europäische Dimension“ dieser rumänischen Perspektive über die Erkenntnis und die schöpferische Gestaltung in den Wissenschaften nennen können.

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THE TIME OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER

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*“Any authentic life is a meeting”  
(Begegnung) – Martin Buber<sup>1</sup>*

Isolated in his everyday being, anyone would like an advice, an answer, some help. The oracle answers cynical: *look for yourself!* And Socrates emphasizes:

“One can neither look for what he knows, nor for what he doesn't. He can't search for what he already knows because he knows and none needs to search for what he knows. He can't search either for what he doesn't know, because he doesn't know what to look for”<sup>2</sup>.

It is clear he does not know the road as soon as he asks. He must search but how to start it? Saint Augustine says that we can't perceive the significance of any foreign sound.<sup>3</sup> Our labyrinth is hiding another one: how is knowledge possible as soon as we can't communicate with others and we don't have the answer in ourselves although everybody tells us to look for it, there? What kind of eyes might help you to search as soon as you don't know what to look after? What is happening when you get tired? And how to do it with no help? The first, primordial Fall was one in human incapacity?

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Buber, *I and You*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 1992, page 38;

<sup>2</sup> Plato, *Menon*, 80 e, in *Works*, ,Editura Stiintifica si Enciclopedica, Bucharest, 1976, page 387;

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Augustin, *De magistro*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 1994, page 121,

The individual gets the questioning part and in the same time he becomes the shelter of the answer. But as soon as he is the only one to get the solution, what parts do the rest have? Why should one ask if the same existential instance is suspected to have the answer? How can we answer if we don't know?

“The young man comes to school to show us a paper's draft. Is it good? I don't know if it's good: write first your paper. – How shall I write the paper with no plan? – How can you do the plan without the paper? The plan comes out from the paper like the skeleton came out the living plasma”<sup>4</sup>.

So that, we have the plasma and we are looking for the skeleton. So like a composer who has the Sound and looks for all the rest. Namely, for the discourse. For his fall from the plasma into concrete, Heraclit said

“that there is the whole (το πᾶν) divided – undivided, born – non born, dying – eternal, logos – eternity, father – son, divinity – justice. «Listening not me, but the logos – its wise for you to understand that all are one»”<sup>5</sup>.

He was thinking of our plasma, suggesting that the transition from the whole to concrete is just the problem of a man who questions the whole. This man has to prove his understanding degree by giving things a meaning and a name, separating them this way from the whole of the world. The 'paper' is already done but the 'young' man does not know how to read it. This is why he is young. He has to learn the alphabet from the same plasma in which he also exists and then, to write in his own language, the labyrinth' discourse, the stairs' one, the map of getting out the labyrinth. The strange operation of learning the 'language' is the line that can save him. But it presumes an *ontological care*, the *fear* not to forget it, *the permanence of an effort* expected to keep him in the openness of his being. This language is “the being' shelter. In that shelter does man live”<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Constantin Noica, *Philosophical Journal*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 1990, page 100;

<sup>5</sup> Heraclit, cf. Hippolytos, *Refutationes* IX, 9, in *Greek Philosophy before Plato*, vol.1, part 2, Editura Stiintifica si Enciclopedica, Bucharest, 1979, page 357;

<sup>6</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Letter on Humanism*, in *Marks on Thought's Road*, Political Editors, Bucharest, 1988, page 297;

This is why *time's* passage means the road from non-understanding to meanings, from questions to answers. As both of them are in being's shelter, it is natural to require the same reading code. A given code will be for each person, according to his own being, his own shelter. For a certain human subject, there is a single language that can stay for his inner map and for the lengthen of his efforts. We are very close to the theory of closed monads. It might seem that no spiritual master is possible as soon as he has his own language while the disciple has a different one. How could a person who searches for his own alphabet to teach somebody else another alphabet that he does not know and will never know? Is there any common code possible in order to allow ideas to pass from one to another? And if not, what is remaining from the relation with the others? Is any *meeting* still possible or we have only parallel worlds meeting formally without touching each other's content?

On the other side,

“among the creatures of the vast world, man is the only one having a different part. He is the only one to offer the strange show of a being possessing inside itself some kind of scene where every single moment there are taking place strong debates between being and appearance”<sup>7</sup>.

Some of us did already met their *master* although only virtually and are still waiting for the real event. They will search in a mirror inverting the priorities. Instead of something that *does not exist but can come into being by constructing an image*, they are looking for *the one who is beyond the image*. We do not know what there is. Somebody must be there, but we don't know his face. We never saw him. What would we have to discuss with him? And in what language would we do it? Are we able to understand him? This might be the dialogue with ourselves, with our real Self, the one which we can't lye for a long time... It would be a dialogue with an instance that punishes the skids, as soon as it does not admit any palliating circumstances, no defense. What are you to say to a judge who already knows everything and is watchful all the time? He provokes you all the time, pretending he does not understand, just to instigate and test you. ... He allows you to hoax him in order to prove whom are you really hoaxing. All the languages you will propose him are withering in front of the decision pronounced in the simplest possible way: using the sound of you interior Self. He knows what is beyond masks and artificial idioms, as he *is the natural entity that you are* and that you are cheating every day. He is the only one to know the

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<sup>7</sup> Mihai Sora, *On the Inner Dialogue*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 1995, page 75;

language of your being because *it is exactly this being*. This is how he knows the answers, because he is these answers, because your being is the residence of all the answers. From the inadequation between you and your being do start all the questions. If the spring of these questions would be exterior to you, there would be an infinity of solutions while choosing would be a problem of taste. Or of trend.

But as soon as these answers influence your existence, the intimate resorts of your being should be in harmony, in communication with your being. But co-communication supposes that inside you there is something that asked for the answer, of something that needed the dialogue or a completion. Being complete, being like a whole is the monopoly of being, so that the answer is addressed to it. The one who did not provoked the world needs no answer. He thinks he is already a complete entity. As a consequence, even if the question is loudly expressed, the need of it is perceived inside your being. There is to be found the exigencies code, which validates from an infinity of possible answers, the only searched one. Now it is clear why the answer is inside of us and how could Saint Augustine say that we can't improve our knowledge using the exterior sounds. There is a single one, starting from yourself, the answer that will welcome you, will complete your being or, at least, one aspect from your life. It is the only answer that bears ontological reality. While the question is intimate link to your interior question, it "possesses in its code" the answer it is waiting for and in the absence of which nothing will be accredited.<sup>8</sup>

We can thus notice that we are not those to ask, but our inner being is shaking the certitudes any time it remarks inconvenience in the situations we are or in the situations towards which it is sending us. The question is the proof of an in-completeness. It sends outside a provocation, asking for that single mark that might validate its existence. Each mark is a letter from the alphabet we were speaking about, an alphabet in which the Self has to tell his story. In other words, each answer is a valid episode of the story as soon as it gets a better situation in our Self, in our inner order. This is how each question is a *limit* we

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<sup>8</sup> We were thinking here to one of Sora's affirmations, although we have climbed the mountain on different parts. In the book we have already quoted, *Interior Dialogue* he says: "Not only the question is monovalent (namely it can't accept but a single answer). But this unique answer can't be any answer, the question been formulated so as to be a single answer expected to satisfy it, the answer that – without knowing – it heard like a child. It is an answer coming from its interior, impossible to be substituted with any answer came from outside." (page 36)

*have to pass over.*<sup>9</sup> Without it, being blocks in its project while due to it, being opens to the answer, welcoming the search for the own road (*Sich Einhausen*, would Hegel say)

If we accept that any moment means such a question, then we may add that each answer is an acceptance of time's provocation, a line from the long conversation with the time you have been given. An answer that authorizes new questions addressed to an instance that is ready to answer all the time. We must emphasize here that this kind of answer (in inner code) represents an intimate time (as Husserl called it), a private<sup>10</sup>, personal, own time. This time is characterized by some other kind of historicity than the public sphere. It is some kind of *now* as it has ontological reality. It can't be infinite that is continuous so that it has these attributes only in a relative manner, related to the instance that I am. Once I fall back in the public time, this *now* becomes a simple moment of my being's discourse. As compared to the others, this interior route is unwinding *out of time*. It comes that as soon as my being is implied as a subject of temporality, we may speak about an atemporal context - regarding the public level - having its own discursivity at its private level. The historicity, the becoming process of your interior being can't be 'threw out' of time. None can deny its temporal attribute! Only after we enter in Time for good, one may speak about a complete lack of temporality. All the rest is a flow, a temporality even in this *now* of mine due to the need to rescue and redefine it. Any stop endangers the becoming process. If it comes before the life's end, it offers something that is not the whole being, while after this moment the becoming process ceases to be a process. This is why the inner time of an

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<sup>9</sup> We have taken this term with its whole semantic charge from the well-known Gabriel Liiceanu's book, *On the Limit*. He says: "*The limit to pass over* is the inner limit we feel like a shortcoming. We introduce it in a projective, willing, formative (*paideic*) project. If there won't be any project, the inner limit couldn't have appeared as an obstacle and can't turn into a limit to be passed over." (Page 64, Humanitas, Bucharest, 1994). We are not discussing here the relation between an inner limit and a limit to be passed over. From the point of view of present paper, the inner limit is not a shortcoming. It blocks the relation master-disciple and sends them both in the position of two individuals that do not meet each other as they do not need nor the other or themselves. These are personages that can't get the statute of subjects in a discourse about being and inner search.

<sup>10</sup> We have used the attribute *private* for this kind of time in order to oppose it to the *public time*, the one of everyday life, of the exterior, of something out of our self. It is a time in which the only possible validation belongs to the interior life of the individual.

individual has a proper flow that is independent from the public time. Looking from the beach between the interior man and the public one, the inner time appears like a set into parenthesis the public time, as a block of co-operation. From the public space perspective, all that happens inside us is characterized by atemporality. We would thus consider that the correct meaning of atemporality is the inner time, despite of its flow. It is another kind of flow, taking place in some other ontological register, because it is the provoking and protecting context of our inner becoming. There is a flowing time because only this way it can help us search the Idea.

“But why does the Idea always escape us? Because only this way we can be in a wisdom position, in that of searching, of tao. If Plato would have found somewhere the Idea, all has been frozen. The liquidity, this meaning of tao, of the road, is everything. This searching is culture itself. No other answer is good if it closes the problem. The Idea must be always in front of you, that’s all. If staying behind, we get only a technique in the name of an Idea.”<sup>11</sup>

We have thus to distinguish a public time – having no connection to the interior dialogue – and the interior time, responsible for being’s openness. This is the one who meets the limits to be passed and initiates their proper-called transcend. This is how being questions the interior world of the individual and asks him for more details in order to preserve the proper language’s function as becoming process’ context. It is the one who dares a new question and knows how and when to ask it. Afterwards, it confirms the fulfillment of a given moment of our interior being, generating another one and thus, generating permanent communication. In the absence of this process, everything might stop, annulling the already done effort and the chances to cross the interior labyrinth.

What is it happening during *the public time*? This is a time of the street, of administration, of getting out of you towards the others. In the same time, it is the time of (changing) paradigms, of all kinds of “schools”, of everyday show. In the best case, it occasions the social affirmation of the individual, using the languages and the categories that come towards him. Even the proper language must be adapted, shaded, explained, so as to fit the others or, at least, to transmit some information. This way, communication becomes a desire, a hope, and

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<sup>11</sup> Constantin Noica, quoted by Gabriel Liiceanu in *Paltinis Diary*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 1991, page 142;

many times a *limit to be touched*. But the public, social time may follow its road without consenting with an individual or even with the majority of living individuals. It is exterior to them, it's the clocks' time, the time of calendars, of public agendas, so it's flow is independent from the interior road of those who will co-exist with him. Here are the parallel existences of some individuals. Public time is a provocation waiting for the images and the hypostasis that we want to embody. Offering to everybody, it does not belong to anyone. Therefore, it is no need of communication between its language and the individual ones. On the contrary, while living in this public time, individuals neglect their own language, using another poorer, artificial one because it lacks the being's pulsation. It is some kind of reversed spiritual master<sup>12</sup>. Perhaps it is the stars, politicians or journalists paradigm. Of "circus horses" as Noica used to call them. As they do not address to our spirit but attracting it out of its own route, they are out of the spiritual dialogue, out of a raising together on a spiritual stair. It freezes the questions coming from the other time, the interior one, turning his prisoners into faceless persons that lack qualities or dimensions. They have no *limits to be transcended*. Any kind of success does not belong to the individual, but to the external time that initiated the competition. We shall thus discover the individual excluded both from him and from the time that had charmed him, and left him alone, with no further wishes.

This is when a far off voice comes to warn:

"Do not trust the one who is not or who can't become a 'case'; suspect his every step, his every gesture. Do not discover in his mobility any tragedy or in his doubts any tortures. Do love his lack of fatality in order to get satisfaction for your own equilibrium and confortability."<sup>13</sup>

What does this individual do every day? He does nothing more than conversation with the public time, resigning his authority and liberty. He listens the voices around, forgetting about himself, trying the best adaptation to the proposed game. As the judge is out of his conscience,

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<sup>12</sup> Even is the term *anti-master* seems to be more literary, it sends to a pejorative meaning that is not the object of our analysis. So much the more, the social reality proves that this kind of master, called *opinion creator* or *opinion leader* is more efficient and more important today. Therefore we have preferred the 'poetic' variant of a 'reversed master' just to avoid an undesired elitism.

<sup>13</sup> Emil Cioran, *The Man without Destiny*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 1991, page 240;

the sentence will be too, in the public space, as a line from the quotidian show.

On the other pole, the individual would have had to pronounce his own means of punish and to endure the whole pain of self/judging. This would have been a return to the interior dialogue and to *the moral law in us*. A return to our destiny. What would matter here will be again the interior time, measuring the performance, the projects and their deadlines. Any transcended limit becomes an argument to go on, grounding the search for the self. Armed with his own language that is in course of constituting, the individual with destiny identifies some other limits to be passed while listening to his interior questions.

“The mobile identity that human life gets from the ensemble of passed and touched limits is called destiny. The destiny means life’s fulfillment in the context of human finitude, the maximum coherence that the in definite can get as a human definition. In the relative meaning of life’s finitude, the destiny is its fulfillment.”<sup>14</sup>

In the context of this discussion, we shall complete this definition. We would say that the destiny supposes the *simultaneous* fulfillment of the following two conditions:

- a) the existence of a continuum between the touched and passed limits, in order to obtain a coherent and consistent message;
- b) The existence of a limit to touch that will be never passed, because it is untouchable. It will confer the road, a sense, a definition, and an identity. The spiritual life needs a horizon line to give sense, to ground all the rest. And all this has to happen because “any real destiny is a cultural syllogism.”<sup>15</sup>

We shall use thus the term Being with capital letter to design the untouchable limit of the road to destiny. We shall also say that the man with a destiny is the one crossing a stair that starts from himself and aims to the Being. Each step is a passed limit and so, the man with destiny will define his own language and the portrait of his interior being.

Heidegger said that

“the language is being’ shelter”.

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<sup>14</sup> Gabriel Liiceanu, (1994), page 66-67;

<sup>15</sup> Constantin Noica quoted by Gabriel Liiceanu, (1991), page 134;

Following him, we can say that getting one's own language represents the answer to the oracle in Delphi, that is the exit from the labyrinth. As soon as the individual decided to get from his own being to the Being, he placed himself in the openness that lights the being.

"In order to include in a single word both the relation of being with human essence and the essential relation of man with being's openness (*Da*) it was selected the term *Dasein* for the essential domain where the man places himself as a man."<sup>16</sup>

This might be the generic term for each one of human' stages, for the human searching his being. The term *man* remains to design the whole, for the passed limits while the real, active subject will be the *Dasein*. He is the one who crosses the road; he's the one to support the psychical costs of the doubt, of the efforts, of the uncertainties. He is the part that a given man plays in this moment. The interior level is a *Dasein* trying to cross the axis between the interior being and the Being. Here there are all the limits. The destiny will be the actualization of this axis, the acceptance of the obligation to pass the limits.

"The sensibility for a destiny identifies the individual in the place where the being, through individuation, separates itself from the original and anonymous existence zone. The destiny means nothing else but the specific, fatale and immanent elements that describe this individual evolution and mark it as an Excellency among the plurality of individual evolutions."<sup>17</sup>

The man with no destiny is the one who blocks himself in a given *Dasein* variant, either by remaining there or getting out in the public space to encounter specific obstacles. It is clear enough that the majority of people have only a public existence or, at least, a dual one: passing alternatively (interior) limits and (exterior) obstacles. When the public space swallows him, the *Dasein* becomes passive and the individual becomes a prisoner, a simple object of this space. But here there are no persons, no individuals, but personages. While the exercise of *Dasein* is missing, everybody wears a street suit, trying to touch some goal publicly validable, trough a visible road. The account in which it influences the interior human life is a problem that was largely debated in the socio -political literature of the last two decades. Anyway it is a

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<sup>16</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to "What is Metaphysics?"*, in (1988), page 335;

<sup>17</sup> Emil Cioran, (1991), page 242;

manner of getting out of our selves and to surrender to the public space. The questions do no longer belong to the individual, but to any instance that intends to swallow him. Only by returning to him by formulating again his own definition, by finding the proper sound of his being, man might get back the quality of a subject. There will be his *Dasein* patiently waiting for him to discover new hypostasis, to pass new limits, getting back the route of his destiny.

We must notice that crossing this route as well as its deadlines or the attributes of his effort can't have any consistency but coming from his interior being, the only that can evaluate the crossed "distance". The interior time is the context in which this entire route is to be crossed. Human's life is a series of moments, of *Dasein*-s. As soon as the series is fructified for the Being' sake, it is called destiny. Otherwise, the individual is out of the series and contradicts his destiny, failing it in the name of public space.

The exclusively public man, the one who surrendered and has been over token in the quotidian sandcastle, represents a denial of the *Dasein*, a simple *Da* with no active interiority. Therefore, we shall call him a non/Being, the complete opposite of Being, because it leaves in a Being shut off. Its time will be static one, while the time of interior questioning will be stopped once with getting out in the public space. Any evolution process will be impossible meanwhile the subject is wandering in the public space.

"The *Dasein* ... who lives with a clock in his hand, this *Dasein* who subdues the time to a calculus, always says «I have no time». Isn't he betraying himself trough all he is doing with the time, as soon as he himself is the time? How to loose the time and with the view of this to search for a clock? Isn't it here the whole *Dasein*' strangeness?"<sup>18</sup>

To conclude, the interior dialogue between the proper being and the *Dasein* is occasioned by the interior time. Its moments are the questions he asks to the reality and the answers are nothing more than passed limits on his road to Being. From the public sphere's perspective, here is an *atemporal context*, as this interior time has nothing to do with the public time. It is protecting each one's intimacy. Any spiritual life is taking place in such a context, if we understand it from the *Dasein*'s point of view. On the other side, there will be the historical context, that is the public time, the discourse, the flow of events that is crossing in

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<sup>18</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Der Begriff der Zeit*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 2000, page 53-55;

everyone's eyes. Where is then, possible for someone to meet his spiritual master? In the public time there is no spiritual communication. In the private, interior time, there is none to access... But the spiritual master does not teach you anything.

"States of spirit, this is what to give the others; no contents, no advice, no lessons"<sup>19</sup>.

In the public space, your master indicates something to you, leads you close of something that is not knowledge yet, but it becomes trough an unknown chemistry, your very proper knowledge. The meeting takes place both in the public and private time. In the public space you see the man / otherwise it would be just a *Dasein* hypostasis. But the effects are felt in the inner space, where the spiritual master redefines, moves things from their frames, suggesting new semantic arrangements. As also Saint Augustin has suggested, what can be transmitted from a person to another are not the words as significance bearers, but a certain way of relating to that significance. The words represent only signs who act over the disciple only as far as they generate affective states, namely states in which the sign brings back latent information, unexpressed, that was waiting for some moment to come to light. So, the spiritual master rescues you from the public space and by sending you back on your road, determines you to recover your atemporality, your being. Linking back your *Dasein* with your being, you'll get your destiny back. The spiritual master helps his disciple to find himself back, to redefine himself, and that is the only valuable lesson. All the rest is public space.

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<sup>19</sup> Constantin Noica, (1990), page 9;

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## QUELQUES RÉFLEXIONS SUR LA NOTION DE L'ALTÉRITÉ

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La description de l'*altérité* se trouve au cœur des préoccupations de l'anthropologie culturelle et même de l'anthropologie tout court.

Il n'y a rien de plus difficile que de définir cet *Autre* – un indéfini par excellence – qui «hante» les discours anthropologiques. On a l'habitude de l'associer avec des mots tels «différent», «distinct», «étranger», «étrange» etc. Mais quelque terme qu'on utilise, il surgit la question «par rapport à quoi?». On parle toujours d'*autre* chose par rapport à quelque chose qu'on connaît déjà. Ou bien on dit que quelque chose est «différent» par rapport à un terme (de comparaison) qui nous est déjà familier.

Il s'ensuit donc que même en anthropologie, si l'on ne veut pas rester dans l'abstrait, il faut établir un *point de référence* avant d'essayer de définir l'Autre. Ce point de repère est constitué par celui qui parle lui-même, c'est-à-dire par le sujet qui entreprend la tentative d'élucider le statut de l'Autre. Et qui pourrait mieux comprendre cela sinon l'anthropologue lui-même?

Une fois posé ce principe qui postule une relation entre l'altérité et le *moi* qui parle, on peut se lancer dans l'aventure de la découverte de l'Autre, compte tenant, bien entendu, de la subjectivité qui menace à chaque pas un tel essai. Subjectivité inhérente, c'est vrai, mais qui doit être maîtrisée, de telle manière qu'elle puisse assurer un certain degré d'*objectivité* qui est de rigueur dans une telle démarche.

La question de l'altérité se pose depuis longtemps dans la culture européenne. Dans le survol qu'on tente de faire afin de voir l'évolution de cette réalité à travers les siècles, on utilisera plutôt le terme d'*étranger*, figure emblématique de l'*Autre*. Mais avant d'entreprendre ce survol, il faut préciser qu'on fera référence non seulement au *statut* de l'étranger dans les sociétés respectives, mais aussi à la *représentation*

de celui-ci. Et pour faire cela, il se doit tout d'abord d'éclairer la notion de *représentation sociale*. Nous avons essayé de le faire en s'appuyant sur l'étude de Serge Moscovici, *La Psychanalyse, son image et son public* (1961).

Il y a deux processus qui caractérisent la représentation sociale: celui d'*objectivation* et celui d'*ancrage*. L'*objectivation* signifie la transformation d'un concept en une image ou en un noyau figuratif. Ce schéma figuratif, basé sur quelques notions simples et concrètes, permet à des concepts émanant d'un univers spécialisé et restreint de se mettre à la portée d'un groupe plus large d'utilisateurs, selon des modalités qui sont proches de celles de la vulgarisation scientifique. Le processus d'*ancrage* permet d'intégrer un nouvel objet à un cadre de référence plus familier. L'ancrage implique donc que l'objet soit d'abord identifié, puis classé, sur la base des catégories (et des appréciations positives ou négatives) du groupe impliqué dans ce processus. Ainsi, la représentation accomplit des fonctions sociales importantes: elle permet tout d'abord de *domestiquer l'étrange*, c'est-à-dire d'appivoiser les effets de la rencontre avec des faits inattendus. Elle a également une *fonction justificative*, notamment lorsque

«dans les rapports de discrimination la représentation faite de l'autre sert à justifier l'action qu'on entreprend à son égard».

La représentation sociale constitue donc un lien entre notre vie concrète, d'individus vivant en société, et la dimension, plus abstraite, de nos savoirs et croyances: schéma mental socialement partagé, elle permet à chaque individu d'analyser les événements extérieurs, et de mobiliser des jugements antérieurs en vue d'une action. Caractérisée par des structures rigides ou simplifiées et récurrentes, la représentation se transmet de manière aisée, et contribue à renforcer le sentiment d'interdépendance entre un individu et son milieu.

Les premiers étrangers qu'on connaît, depuis la mythologie grecque, sont en fait des étrangères. Il s'agit des Danaïdes, les filles illégitimes de Zeus, punies par la jalouse Hera. Elles sont doublement étrangères: elles viennent d'Égypte et, en plus, elles sont rétives au mariage. Extérieures donc, du point de vue de leur origine, à la communauté d'Argos, les Danaïdes contreviennent par leur comportement à la loi morale la plus importante de toute communauté, celle de la famille. Et la mentalité grecque, qui ne condamne pas l'étrangeté en elle-même, va la sanctionner quand même dans le cas de ces filles de Zeus et de Io notamment parce qu'elle aspire à braver la commune mesure.

A l'époque classique (on reste toujours en Grèce), pour nommer les étrangers on utilise les mots *Barbares* ou *Métèques*, selon le statut des ceux qui ne sont pas Grecs. Les Barbares sont les étrangers qui habitent en dehors des murs de la Cité. Le mot se retrouve chez Homère, Eschyle, Sophocle et Euripide, ayant comme synonymes possibles «incompréhensible», «non grec», «excentrique» et même «inférieur». La connotation péjorative en est donc évidente. Les Métèques, par contre, sont ceux qui habitent *dans* la Cité, qui ont un rapport contractuel avec celle-ci, mais qui restent en fin de compte des étrangers.

On quitte l'espace grec pour regarder un peu la situation de l'étranger dans le monde juif à l'époque de l'Ancien Testament. Quoique l'élection des Juifs faite par Dieu puisse sembler être une exclusion des autres, la Bible établit nettement une attitude positive envers les étrangers:

«Tu n'offenseras pas l'étranger [l'hôte], ni ne l'opprimeras, car vous avez été étrangers dans le pays d'Égypte». (Exode, XXII, 21)

Par ailleurs, on garde même aujourd'hui le syntagme «Juif errant», qui renvoie toujours au statut d'étranger.

A l'époque du Bas-Empire (III-IV s. apr. J. Chr.) l'étrangeté peut être repérée sous les traits du *Barbare* et de *l'hérétique*, opposés à *Romani*. On distingue même plusieurs types de *Barbari*: *deditices* (des vaincus transportés de force en Gaule), *laeti* (des prisonniers barbares libérés) et *foederati* (des fédérés qui ont pour obligation essentielle d'accomplir leur service militaire).

Saint Paul, voyageur infatigable de la Méditerranée orientale des années 45-60 après Jésus Christ, fonde son église sur l'idée du cosmopolitisme hérité de l'hellenisme tardif qui offrait déjà des conditions matérielles et juridiques plus propices qu'auparavant aux étrangers et à leurs croyances. Mais Paul dépasse le côté matériel pour s'adresser aussi à la détresse psychique des étrangers auxquels il propose un voyage entre «corps» et «âme». Le but de ce voyage est «l'homme nouveau» – un être spirituel habité par l'Autre (i.e. Jésus Christ).

Saint Augustin parle lui aussi de l'errance du chrétien entre les deux Cités: celle des hommes et celle de Dieu. Le pèlerin donne et reçoit, son errance est un enthousiasme ou, en d'autres mots, *caritas*. De cette

façon, l'aliénation de l'étranger cesse dans l'universalité de l'amour pour l'autre – *le prochain* dont parle le Nouveau Testament.

Les premiers siècles du christianisme verront donc naître un grand nombre de *hospitia* ou *xenodochia* (sorte de hôtels de l'époque) destinés aux étrangers. Le concile de Nicée (325) exige par exemple que chaque ville ait un tel bâtiment. Toutefois, cette générosité envers les étrangers a des limites: elle est destinée aux chrétiens seuls! Selon notre manière actuelle d'envisager les choses, on serait tentés de dire qu'il s'agissait plutôt d'un moyen de prosélytisme que d'une vraie hospitalité.

Au Moyen Age existent en parallèle deux régimes d'attitudes concernant les étrangers: l'un, chrétien, à l'intérieur duquel l'Autre est le *païen*, associé toujours au mal, et l'autre, politique, qui se modifiera avec l'évolution de la féodalité en Etat féodal centralisé. Pour ce second régime l'Autre ou l'étranger sera nommé *aubain* (< lat. *alibi natus*, c'est-à-dire «qui n'est pas né sur les terres du seigneur», «qui est né ailleurs»). Le statut d'aubain suppose, bien-sûr, la privation de certains droits et, par conséquent, une situation inférieure sur l'échelle sociale.

Un critère plutôt «écologique» sera utilisé à l'époque de la Renaissance pour identifier les Autres. On parlera donc des *sauvages*, les êtres de la forêt, pour désigner ceux qui ont un mode de vie différent de celui de la Cour, qui sont plus proches de la nature, alors que les nobles préfèrent se réfugier dans des châteaux somptueux et se délecter avec des oeuvres d'art exquises. L'opposition fondamentale qui sépare les deux catégories sociales est celle entre *nature* et *culture*.

Les voyages se font de plus en plus nombreux, suivant l'exhortation rabelaisienne de «hausser le temps», c'est-à-dire rêver, imaginer, forcer la réalité jusqu'au fantasme, voyager afin de rencontrer d'insolites étrangers. L'attitude envers ceux-ci est plutôt celle de curiosité et d'étonnement dans un premier temps, après quoi se pose le problème de l'acceptation ou du refus, étant donné que le modèle de référence est celui de soi-même. Il y en a donc qui refusent même d'admettre l'humanité des sauvages parce que trop différents, tandis que ceux qui prétendent accepter les Autres ne font que nier leur altérité, en essayant d'installer leur propre logique dans le monde des sauvages. A une logique de l'altérité on oppose une logique du déjà-vu et ces deux types se maintiendront dans les discours anthropologiques des siècles suivants. On a dit d'ailleurs, à juste titre, que les premiers «pressentiments anthropologiques» sont apparus pendant la Renaissance.

Le XVIIe siècle français nous offre un modèle d'ethnocentrisme (on reprendra cette notion plus loin). Cette époque a l'ambition de

représenter l'homme en général, par delà ses variantes; la langue même se veut universelle, car langue de la raison. Tout ce qui échappe à ses modèles est considéré inférieur. Ce ne sera qu'au XVIIIe siècle que la fiction philosophique se peuplera d'étrangers qui invitent le lecteur à un double voyage: spirituel et géographique. Car l'étranger devient la figure en laquelle se délègue l'esprit perspicace et ironique du philosophe, son double (v. par ex. *Le Neveu de Rameau* par Diderot). La démarche revendiquée par Rousseau sera, d'ailleurs, la découverte du propre par le différent. C'est toujours à cette époque qu'on accorde une grande importance au mythe du *bon sauvage*. L'attitude envers l'altérité sera donc tout à fait différente par rapport au siècle précédent.

Au XIXe siècle, pour désigner l'Autre on utilisera plutôt la notion de *primitif* - terme assez péjoratif -, la civilisation étant à nouveau un critère de classification. Cela aboutira au siècle suivant à la dénomination de *sous-développé* (qui appartient au Tiers Monde). On veut à tout prix se délimiter de ceux qui ont un degré de civilisation moindre que le sien et on procède donc à un découpage du monde en différentes parties selon ce critère. Le XXe siècle verra aussi les effets désastreux en ce qui concerne la relation avec l'Autre causés par des régimes politiques tels le nazisme ou le communisme.

De nos jours, on essaie de remédier au mal infligé par cette attitude méprisante envers l'Autre pratiquée par les siècles précédents en adoptant plus ou moins ce qu'on appelle *political correctness*, qui veut qu'on n'insiste plus sur les différences, surtout quand celles-ci sont des déficiences, mais qu'on accentue l'appartenance de chacun à l'humanité.

Ainsi, la représentation de l'étranger a-t-elle toujours une histoire: loin d'être statique et fixée une fois pour toutes, elle évolue avec le temps et rend compte des relations d'une communauté avec les autres. Elle est également socialement marquée, relevant de l'ensemble social qui la produit et variant aussi en fonction de la place que les individus et les groupes occupent au sein de cette société.

La représentation est intimement liée à la définition du statut de l'étranger: le droit, notamment, se charge de reconnaître et d'institutionnaliser la présence des étrangers dans une communauté nationale, selon les degrés d'acceptation compris entre les deux pôles d'intégration et de l'exclusion. Elle est en relation avec la représentation qu'une communauté se fait de l'*ailleurs* le long de l'axe reliant le *proche* et le *lointain*. Ainsi, elle rentre dans la conception du monde qu'une société élabore, et rend manifeste la manière dont s'intègrent, dans cette conception les relations avec les autres.

La représentation de l'étranger peut se concrétiser, se transmettre et se manifester dans la langue aussi, à travers les «qualificatifs d'altérité» (Baslez, *L'étranger dans la Grèce antique*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1984). Chaque langue comporte des appellations d'étrangers, à partir des termes qui se sont internationalisés, tels *barbares*, *métèques* et jusqu'à des qualificatifs plus fortement marqués par l'histoire des relations entre les communautés en question (par exemple, en français, le mot *boches* pour désigner les Allemands) ou des termes péjoratifs, pouvant exprimer jusqu'à la déshumanisation de l'Autre, par sa réduction à un objet (*macaroni* pour les Italiens). Mais on ne peut pas quitter ce passage en revue de la question de l'altérité sans évoquer la relation métaphysique entre ce que Emmanuel Lévinas<sup>1</sup> nommait, par exemple, «le Même et l'Autre», c'est-à-dire entre le Moi terrestre et la divinité. Celle-ci représente une forme unique, distincte de l'altérité :

«L'Autre métaphysique est autre d'une altérité qui n'est pas formelle, d'une altérité qui n'est pas un simple envers de l'identité, ni d'une altérité faite de résistance au Même, mais d'une altérité antérieure à toute initiative, à tout impérialisme du Même».<sup>2</sup>

Comme dans les relations avec l'altérité présentées précédemment, le rapport entre le Même et l'Autre se joue au niveau du langage. On ne peut s'approcher du Tout-Haut qu'au niveau de la pensée ou du sentiment, les deux s'extériorisant par le discours.

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<sup>1</sup> *Totalité et infini (Essai sur l'extériorité)*, Le Livre de Poche, Paris, 1987

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 28

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THE DARKNESS OF ONES' HEARTS: RHETORICAL  
STRATEGIES OF WHITENESS IN *APOCALYPSE NOW*

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*. . . You are neither cold nor hot. How I  
wish you were either hot or cold! But  
because you are lukewarm, neither hot  
nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.  
(The Book of Revelation)*

Regardless of the degree to which people's lives are culturally, socially, and/or politically constructed and determined, ultimately they still constitute *lives*. They are destined to come to an end. The myth of the apocalypse – ironically unifying humans even in death – represents a cultural creation as well. However, should the end of the world ever take place, it would probably bring about an exclusive “white” tragedy -- not less, but *not more* than that.

This study aims at contributing to a program of research in intercultural rhetoric on the concept of “whiteness”. According to Shome (1996), the concept of *whiteness* is defined by

“the everyday, invisible, subtle, cultural, and social practices, ideas, and codes that discursively secure the power and privilege of white people, but that strategically remains unmasked, unnamed, and unmapped in contemporary society” (p. 503).

An attempt to respond to the needs of what McKerrow (1989) calls the “critical rhetoric” demands, argues Shome, an examination of whiteness from the standpoint of its capacity to “conceal” its discourse of power and its dimensions of domination. The author claims that a way in which the secluded “constructed-ness” of whiteness can be demystified is by focusing on how media production consciously (but not necessarily on

purpose) creates and reinforces cultural identities. The mainstream media, therefore, provides a site of access to the rhetorical discourses through which whiteness secures its hegemony within the cultural world.

Many media-artifacts reflect whiteness as a generative principle. Moreover, there are some that reveal their unselfreflexiveness by restating white dominance in the very process of critiquing some of its promotional institutions. I claim that one of these artifacts is Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*. The film, though itself

“an ideological and ethical critique of U.S. politics in Vietnam”  
(Norris, 1998),

performed by using a risky “mythical method” of dialogue with Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, ultimately displays a rhetorical argument aimed at securing, once again, the hegemony of whiteness in the cultural world.

Revealing the discourse of whiteness' self-promoting powers is definitely worth examining, especially by concentrating on those instances in which they transgress any sort of self-conscious site of authorship. The Foucauldian “discursive formations” would probably meet the strategies of whiteness somewhere in a theoretical framework aimed at assessing these strategies' functionality. However, this is not the purpose of the present study. Instead, I am interested in identifying the double-edged rhetorical devices that make Coppola address a series of sound criticisms to the American institutions that he targets but, at the same time, reveal his own propensity to re-endorse white domination.

In pursuing my goal, I start out by reviewing selective literature on the topic, that is, how *Apocalypse Now* has been analyzed by literary and/or film critics and journalists. Then I will provide my study with the conceptual framework of Fisher's (1984, 1987) “narrative paradigm” and I will argue for the appropriateness of assessing Coppola's film through the lens of narrative criticism. Indeed, Fisher's narrative paradigm, a synthesis of argumentative and aesthetic strands in the history of rhetoric, seems to be the fitting theoretical frame for revealing the underlying rhetorical pattern of the movie. Because Coppola's story has a mythical structure, one is practically “invited” to perform narrative criticism – would argue scholars like Campbell (1973), Cassirer (1944), and Eliade (1963) (as cited by Fisher, 1984), who contend that

“the most compelling, persuasive stories are mythical in form” (p. 287).

The following step is to set forth the claim that narrative rhetorical criticism is also valid and meaningful due to its capacity to enhance the understanding of the movie's discourse beyond the mere identification of "themes", as in the reviewed literature. Finally, I use this method to illuminate the divergence of the two stories narrated by the film. Indeed, as Norris (1998) argues,

"the self-reflection inscribed in the twice-told narrative of *Apocalypse Now* generates a spiral of extratextual self-reflection, as well, both for the viewer obliged by the film to confront the U.S. citizenry's complicity with the making of the debacle of Vietnam, and for the auteur, the filmmaker whose own troubled journey in making the film has often been metaphorized as his own *Heart of Darkness*, and his own Vietnam" (p. 756-757).

Hopefully, the examination of these layered stories' dialogue will eventually provide sound evidence for my claim's validity.

Intercultural rhetoric might want to focus more on these cases where the tribute paid to one's culture goes beyond one's own criticisms targeting that culture's creations. If cultural legacy is that compelling, maybe there is a point in this event. I agree that intercultural interactions should be approached with extreme awareness of the divergence of codes, norms, and assumptions. But beyond this "cultural burden" of specific kinds, all people are similar inasmuch as they are different due to their shared humanity. In intercultural interactions one's culture should neither be a constant target of one's self-skepticism, nor a steady agency of frustration, but the will of one's own power to deal successfully with people from other cultures (see Fadiman, 1997, p. 261). The rhetorical critic might want to inquire how these power structures reflect not only domination, but also the very possibility of making oneself aware of the presence of the cultural "other".

#### **On war and other facets of darkness**

When Americans decided to pose the problem of the Vietnam War by use of

"less confrontational means"

– as an anonymous columnist remarks in a recent edition of the *Atlanta Journal the Atlanta Constitution* – they introduced it as a theme of debate in fictional works. Feeney (2000) estimates that publications in English about the war exceed 700-750 novels, 100 short-story collections, and 1400 personal narratives included in the Library of

Congress catalogs. Media-film production celebrated the event by releasing, in the last quarter of the prior century, a series of movies

“crackling with the energy of involvement” (*Los Angeles Times*, 2000).

*The Green Berets*, *Coming Home*, *The Deer Hunter*, *Apocalypse Now*, *Platoon*, *Born on the Fourth of July* seem to reveal stories accepted as historically significant, dramatically successful, or both. But there exist many more releases, some of which make even the deliberate decision to watch them a problematic issue. The same columnist suggests that,

“if sanity weren’t an issue”,

movies such as *Casualties of War*, *Full Metal Jack*, *The Killing Fields*, *Good Morning, Vietnam*, *84 Charlie Mopie* would be worth being re-examined.

The plethora of depictions on this “surrealist nightmare” gives credibility to one of Norris’s (1998) contentions:

“Culturally, the Vietnam War was a video war and, aesthetically, a psychedelic war” (p. 729).

The same author explains that Coppola’s choice of a modernist mythical method in constructing his film – that is, upon Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* and Eliot’s *The Waste Land* – derives from his awareness of the fact that the surreal manifests a stark incapacity to convey anything but the war’s incomprehensibility. Indeed, in and of themselves the surrealist images seem unable to reveal either the “bigger picture” of the war’s impact on the American public, or the damages that it exerted on people’s moral lives. Norris (1998) senses a problem, though, in Coppola’s choice:

“The ‘mythical method’ incurs the risk and cost of dehistoricizing – and thereby depoliticizing – its historical subject. An even greater danger lies in its use (or abuse) to idealize, apotheosize, occlude, or occult problematic ideologies embedded in the art” (p. 730).

However, Norris ends up claiming that, while secluded in the deep texture of the film, Coppola’s meaning-making choices can be ultimately labeled as political. Several arguments provide evidence for this claim. Coppola’s criticisms toward the American institutions and practices are various and incisive. Colonialism and/or imperialism, the frustrated

military institution, the U.S. mercenary mentality, the American assumption of moral superiority, Vietnam's fascination with the news media, the American racism toward the Vietnamese, finely submerged into

“a broader coding of cultural difference in terms of social and ethical superiority” (p. 744)

– all these become the targets of Coppola's critique. *Apocalypse Now* is a situated, political act, concludes Norris, in that it aims at giving the U.S. public the redemptive opportunity of seeing

“the heart of its own darkness in Vietnam” (p. 748).

The ambiguity of this message – which may cause unawareness of the profoundly political nature of Coppola's film – resides in the U. S. public's decoding competence, that is, in its ability to understand that *Apocalypse Now* is

“neither war, nor simulation, but a representation obliged to problematize itself” (p. 759).

Norris's (1998) sound analysis of Coppola's film counts as a starting point of my own assessment of Coppola's rhetorical choices at a later moment in this essay. However, there are several other interpretations of *Apocalypse Now* that are worth reviewing, for the same purpose stated above. Some studies attempted to assess the film in terms of its narrative parallelism with Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (Bachmann, 1998; Cahir, 1992; Deltcheva, 1996); others aimed at revealing Coppola's ethical critique of human nature through the lens of the war (Greiff, 1992; Kuwahara, 1992; Roberts & Easingwood, 1997); others focus on the context and the side-scenes of this movie's production (Biskind, 1996; Kauffmann, 1997; Marschall, 1999). However, for this essay's purpose, two perspectives on the movie seem extremely relevant: Cahir's (1992) and Grieff's (1992).

Cahir (1992) draws attention on Coppola's awareness that Conrad's narrative is essentially *cinematic*. By invisibly interposing the camera's equivalent, i.e., the narrator, between the teller and the listener, the entangled stories contained in *Heart of Darkness* seem to urge those movie watchers who know Conrad's story not to fall prey to the belief that Coppola's depiction is entirely unmediated. The similarity of the texts' narratives, in spite of the stories' divergent topics, allows Cahir (1992) to give an account of Coppola's existential comment on the

Vietnam War. The transfer of symbolical patterns, the effects and lightning usage reflect Coppola's meditation on the absurdity of violence, war, and imperialism. However, this meditation is somehow "thematic", in that – as Cahir argues – the shots of *Apocalypse Now* constitute mere pre-texts for Coppola's problematization of some rather general issues regarding human nature: What moral implications entails imperialism? Is the "fascination for abomination" a prevalent feature among humans? What is acceptable of human conduct?

Though, as Cahir argues, Coppola

"realizes that the initiation into darkness cannot be accompanied by reason" (p. 186),

Cahir does not seem to be aware of Coppola's capacity to provide the apparently incoherent sequence of shots with a strongly rational underlying structure. This fact is surprising, especially in the light of her conclusion:

"Coppola understood that technique and theme, structure and meaning are inseparable entities. To tell a story differently is to tell a different story. Ultimately, it seems, Conrad and Coppola tell the same tale" (p. 187).

It is worthwhile to keep in mind the correlation between story telling as both process and product and the divergence that results from the alternative usage of this correlation.

Greiff's (1992) analysis of *Apocalypse Now* signals Coppola's fidelity to Conrad's ethical frame and cultural concerns – homage paid to the novelist by use of unexpected strategies, which exist buried deep in the texture of the film. This allegiance seems to be grounded – though Greiff does not explicitly say it – in Coppola's consideration of his audience. Loyalty "in letter", notices Greiff, would have transformed Conrad's story into a disgraceful parody. Instead, Coppola finds the means to remain faithful to Conrad's design by exploiting the alterations in meanings produced by the context of his depiction (i.e., the Vietnam War), and by converting spaces and structures so as to preserve the consistency with Conrad's meanings. In this process, Coppola also makes manifest his understanding of the situational component of a rhetorical event such as the film he produced. His appeal to the U.S. public through the reversal of the value system's structure allows him to critique the morbid, ideologically petrified institutions and people responsible for the atrocities of the war and at the same time to keep on reinforcing the traditional American values that were supposedly

victimized throughout this war. Greiff explains this double-edged rhetorical strategy of Coppola's movie by identifying the director's "converted" frame. First, he argues, Coppola's choice of having Doors' song *The End* mark the beginning and the end of the movie displays his ingenious conversion of the "center" and the "margins". The same idea, continues Greiff, is reinforced by Coppola's portraying the "American identity" not in the main characters (Willard and Kurtz), who were

"too abnormal to be representative" (p. 195),

but in the peripheral figures of Chief, Chef, Clean, Lance

("rock 'n' rollers, with one foot in their graves"),

and even Kilgore who, like Jim Morrison and *The Doors*,

"give us back ourselves as Americans" (p.195).

Therefore, Coppola's way of centering the ethical dimension of the movie by seemingly marginalizing it allows him to preserve, beyond the situational needs, Conrad's design and preoccupations.

Greiff's interpretation appears to be extremely resourceful for this study's purpose, in that it penetrates to the mechanisms through which Coppola – blatantly lacking full control upon them – renders manifest his commitment (still!) to the culture of "whiteness". However, it is not without purpose that I chose to give such a comprehensive review of the above authors' analyses and also to briefly assess them at the same time. This critical revision allows me to make use of these studies' results and to consider them as part of the "foundational frame" of my analysis, since, though it may not be apparent, at some point they converge. Therefore, the identification of Coppola's treatment of ethical themes and cultural values and the enumeration of his criticisms toward American institutions and social practices will not be performed once again in the present study.

#### **The narrative paradigm – an additional tool**

The conceptual framework fit for a critical assessment of Coppola's rhetorical strategies in *Apocalypse Now* seems to be the "narrative paradigm", as defined and elaborated by Fisher (1984, 1987). Fisher's perspective draws upon the Burkeian "drama" perspective on human communication, and is related with Bormann's (1972) conception of "rhetorical visions" embedded in the chaining out of the "fantasy

themes". His "narrative paradigm" is an alternate to the traditional rational paradigm, which it complements, even while lacking

"a particular method of investigation."

The underlying foundations of the narrative paradigm state that humans are essentially story-tellers and that decision-making and communication are based on the concept of "good reasoning", which depends on communication situations, genres, and media. Moreover, the production of "good reasons" is historically and culturally determined. The narratives' intrinsic rationality is measured by two principles: probability and fidelity. Accordingly, although the narrator's characters, the conflicts, the resolutions, and the styles may differ, a story aims at relating a "truth" about the human condition. In this process, the narrative seeks to establish communities for people and to induce them into sharing common experiences. Fisher (1984) points out that, ultimately,

"language action is meaningful only in terms of narrative form" (p. 278),

although language does not constitute the exclusive form a narrative may take. Moreover, Fisher (1984) argues that narratives' intrinsic moral value doubles the criteria of discrimination between various stories (fidelity and probability). The narrative paradigm provides the grounds for people's possibility to be "equal" in their fundamental ability of "being rationale" in this paradigm. Therefore, Fisher sustains the narrative paradigm's moral superiority over the rational paradigm.

Lewis (1987) applies and critiques Fisher's conceptual frame, while noticing that

"narrative form shapes morality by placing characters and events within a context where moral judgment is a necessary part of making sense of the action" (p. 302).

"Narrative truth", unlike "rational truth", is accessible to common sense:

"a story should be a good story judged by internal aesthetic criteria and by external criteria of 'fit' with the audience's experience and morality" (p. 308).

This fact, continues Lewis, compels the rhetorical critic to make a choice with regard to the conceptual frame thought of being in charge of a

discourse's production. The competing, although not mutually exclusive paradigms should be first considered when critically assessing the rhetorical events' emission and/or reception. Eventually, Lewis (1987) problematizes Fisher's claim on the moral superiority of the narrative paradigm, by arguing that people are not always prone to accept "the truth" and "the just".

Narrative rhetorical criticism, therefore, is aimed at assessing discursive narrative events in terms of their power to make sound choices in order to appeal to an audience in the process of shaping reality, creating "common places" and conferring them probability, fidelity, and moral value. As mentioned at a previous moment in this study, scholars believe that the most compelling stories have a mythical structure. Coppola's narrative meets this condition, in that it subtly redefines the mythical design of Conrad's novel, while leaving, at the same time, room for political, situated interpretations. Therefore, *Apocalypse Now*, as one of Coppola's most challenging stories, seems to invite Fisher's narrative paradigm as *the* method of inquiry.

Moreover, narrative criticism allows further assessment of Coppola's film beyond – somehow accounting for "literary" products of criticism, in Wichelns's (1925) terminology – the results reviewed in the previous section. Before moving forward, there is an observation to be made. As this study implicitly considers *Apocalypse Now* a rhetorical event shaped within the "narrative paradigm", the way to approach it critically resides in assessing its choice of "good reasons" in providing the audience with a probable and/or faithful and/or moral view of the war's reality, as perceived and made meaningful by Francis Ford Coppola. The evaluation of these choices of "good reasons" themselves will eventually provide evidence for the claims that this study has made.

A final, but essential, word. If one sensed that the narrative criticism is a particular case for what Burgchardt (1995) labeled "neo-Aristotelian" criticism – exemplified by Hill's (1972) assessment of one of Nixon's speeches on the same Vietnam War – one is certainly right. Narratives are more restrictively determined instances of rhetorical action aimed at making the right choices of argumentation, considering the available resources, including the audience and the particular situation. The rhetorical critic's task is to assess this choice-making process of the narrator, rather than the actual effects of the event on the audience. Ultimately, these choices reflect the narrator's *Weltanschauung's* dialogue with those whom she/he addresses. Culturally, this observation points to a narrative's propensity toward creating, maintaining, critiquing, and eventually reinforcing particular identity definitions. How this happens in *Apocalypse Now* is the concern of the following section.

### Francis Ford Coppola's confession

*How can I quit from myself?* (Francis Ford Coppola, *Hearts of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse*)

No other line or shot better comprises a sense of Coppola's own presence at the interface between *Apocalypse Now's* narrative and its viewers than Willard's utterance:

"If his (i.e., Kurtz's) story is really a confession, than so is mine".

Even the scene that depicts the director himself in the process of filming the war – a scene unanimously recognized as one of Coppola's ingenious techniques of critiquing the war's strongly mediated character – does not reflect this movie's significance for its own producer better than Willard's assertion. Indeed, it goes without saying that, if the access gate toward Kurtz's heart of darkness is Willard, Willard's story itself, being Coppola's own creation, leads us into his own "heart of darkness". However, at a second glimpse, the intrinsic complexity of the above observation becomes more articulate. Because the stratified narratives are not simply stories; they are – as Coppola generously hints the viewers toward this interpretation – they are *confessions*. The strongly subjective, highly personalized connotation of the term is not occasional. A confession is solidly impregnated with one's most inner beliefs. It reflects one's view of the world, one's value system and cultural background more than anything else does. In a more particular sense, a confession even reports one's way of appropriating morality. In a confession, one's ethical rapport with the outside world becomes explicit. Therefore, the confession comprises the paradigmatic, the exemplary narrative. Analyzing one's confession practically *requires* the context of the "narrative paradigm".

Norris (1998) confirms the observation above. The critic emphasizes the movie's spiraled, self-reflective character, which ultimately invites the viewers themselves to acknowledge their own confessional, self-reflective appropriation of the Vietnam War. But – and this is a point that Norris overlooks – it is *Coppola's invitation* that the viewers are faced with. Coppola structurally and intentionally embeds Willard's line in the movie's texture as a rhetorical device aimed at signaling the deepest message of *Apocalypse Now*. That is – the "world" (in the most general sense of the word) is what one makes of it. The counterpoint of this message, whether acknowledged by Coppola or not, is obviously – everyone is what the "world" (in the same most general sense) makes of

them. This counterpoint impinges on the very choices made by Coppola in putting this film together. His choice of words (*confession*, in particular) and images gives the critic full access to the director's own cultural heritage, to his own *Weltanschauung*.

In this analysis, the point of getting access to a rhetorician's worldview in order to assess his/her work constitutes more than a reinforcement of a traditional hermeneutic assumption. In fact, it stands for *something else*. Beginning with aesthetic modernity, textual hints are generally accepted as "limits of interpretation" (Eco, 1990), spaces where meaning-negotiations take place. Therefore, no textual element should be overlooked or considered unintended. On the contrary, in a modern/postmodern text such elements should be regarded as effective attention grabbers. They constitute the interface of the text's and the author's ongoing dialogue, a dialogue whose "limits" get negotiated within the contextual setting. Having insisted enough on this rather linguistic issue – which, however, makes a decisive and, at the same time, a legitimate point in the present analysis (considering the fact that it is situated in a "narrative", and therefore, language-determined framework) – I move on to directly enumerating the instances where Coppola's tribute paid to the culture of whiteness becomes accessible. As it should be apparent at this point, the legitimacy of my making the following statements emerges from what has been stated so far in this essay.

First, Coppola's narrative (confession) manifests his biased selection of "whites" as the locus for both the light of "mythical America" and the darkness of the same Americans' worst inventions. Marginalizing or not the ethical dimension of humans, Coppola's story privileges "white" culture as the locus of moral analyses. Abnormal or representative for the American society, it is the "whites" that live and die, have nightmares and revelations, use and are being used by their own culture's institutions and practices. One may argue, in alignment with Grieff (1992), that characters like Chief and Clean are used by Coppola to point out to his condemnation of Willard's subtle racism. But Coppola has all these characters *share* the same boat, which symbolizes the Western culture of the "equilibrium". In their journey to the heart of darkness, their common slogan (Willard included) is "Never leave the boat".

Second, Coppola's criticisms toward the American institutions and practices stress on their decisive, distorting power to alter the "human condition". However, what does Coppola refer to with this label? As a direct consequence of the first point that I have made, the answer is – the culture of "whiteness".

The mythical structure of the movie itself, even in its reversed order identified by Grieff (1992), reveals what the Western culture regards and responds to as a myth. How could, indeed, Coppola ever hope to successfully appeal to the American public by use of an alternative mythical framework? His strategy was rhetorically sound, of course; but this still does not spare his selection from being classifiable as tributary to the ongoing discourse of “whiteness”.

Even the probability and fidelity of Coppola’s narrative give the story “narrative rationality” in accordance with the whites’ concepts of “truth” and “coherence”. Therefore, ultimately, Coppola’s film signifies in a discursive, intelligible manner, the ubiquity of ambiguousness, confusion, and “horror” within the culturalized world, and in this process reveals its own privileged position.

One of the rhetorical devices that contribute to this last mentioned of Coppola’s strategies is his use of Doors’ *The End* to provide entrance and exit for the movie.

“The perfect setting for these cult American post-rockers’ eerie guitar sound-scapes would be the closing sequence of *Apocalypse Now*. Sadly, the Doors got there 20 years ago”

– ironically comments Simpson (2000) in *Guardian*. “Sadly” for a nostalgic – with regard to rock’s authenticity – listener. But, however “eerie” they might be,

“these cult American post-rockers’ guitar sound-scapes”

are still. . . discursively intelligible enough to be comprehended by the American public, were they included in a film like *Apocalypse Now*.

Why Doors? Why Coppola did not introduce other bands or singers who celebrated the psychedelic visions of the apocalypse? In a recent interview with the remaining components of Doors, Paul (2000) states that:

“Together the group provides the closest picture of *the truth* currently available” (p. 72, italics mine).

If, after so many years, rock is nostalgic for bands like Doors and their flirt with the extreme darkness of the human beings, surely their place was rightly conferred in Coppola’s movie, a movie about “a rock ‘n’ roll war”, a movie about being

“on the verge of life and death every second” (p. 76),

just as Jim Morrison was. Moreover, the apocalypse's taking place *here and now* prevented Coppola from using another song and/or band – apocalypse was elsewhere treated as a future expectation, which compels people to frantic liveliness. It was not the case for *Apocalypse Now*. And Coppola knew that better than anyone did.

Eventually, one figures out who/what mediates in between Coppola and his film's audience, who/what controls the camera with authentic authorship. It is the discourse of "whiteness" that guides every step of Coppola's narrative. One cannot get out of one's cultural legacy, one cannot step out of all the possible ideologies, and the ideologies of whiteness are by far the most complexly layered and labyrinthine. Therefore, though being in an advanced position in the "stratification" of ideological discourses of whiteness, Francis Ford Coppola is ultimately a medium of the dominant culture's proliferation as well. Indeed, as a bitter critic asserts, on an Internet page:

"It's easy to see how Francis got high on his own genius as he hacked down volumes of historical analysis into a few words: It was a war between the Americans and their evil side. I'm sure the Vietnamese will be glad to hear that they were able to help us work through our little case of national schizophrenia".

Hopefully, in an essay in intercultural rhetoric, it is not too late for the "other" (culture) to finally come upstage.

#### **Power and culture-binding – a dialectic**

This study attempted to assess the degree to which Francis Ford Coppola inherits the culture of whiteness' legacy and how this heritage is rendered manifest in his rhetorical strategies in *Apocalypse Now*. Building on the results of previous studies, this essay incurred an exercise in narrative criticism, in order to reveal the efficacy of the choice making process of "good reasoning" as exerted by Coppola in his film. Ultimately, as shown, Coppola is highly indebted to the discourses of whiteness, even in his most incisive criticisms addressed to his own culture.

For the intercultural critic, these results point to the inevitability of culture binding of discourses. Although, as Shuter (2000) argues,

"culture and rhetoric are inseparable – a critique of discourse is a critique of the culture that produced it" (p. 12),

the need for critical competence and sensibility toward intercultural symbolic interactions can hardly be properly addressed, especially in those contexts where the “subject” of criticism is at the same time part of its “object”. Awareness of cultural difference, manifest in the rhetorical critic’s quest for underlying presuppositions embedded in discourse, may in fact *impede* his access to understanding the rhetorical strategies employed in the culture under study. My suggestion is that, instead of focusing on frustrating techniques of avoiding any stereotyping assumptions regarding the “other”, the intercultural critic should instead rely on his/her own culture’s *power* to bridge with whatever artifact the alternate culture produces. As Fadiman (1997) has one of her characters state:

“If you can’t see that your own culture has its own set of interests, emotions, and biases, how can you expect to deal successfully with someone else’s culture?” (p. 261).

These “interests, emotions, and biases” express possibilities, rather than obstacles.

Francis Ford Coppola would have probably made a powerful critic if he decided to take into account the Vietnamese side of the Vietnam War. He did not, though. Maybe that happened because, regardless of his preaching out our culture’s darkness, he was too “white” to accept the *possibility* of darkness in others.

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