

SYNTACTIC LIARS

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ABSTRACT. The difficulty with *syntactic liars* is that there would seem to be very good reason to identify the thing said which is true with the thing said which is false. Natural language does allow consistent semantic closure, once we investigate indirect speech further, and so see that there can be no general 1-1 correspondence between speech and meaning.

There is a type of self-referential paradox which might be called a “semantic liar”. It clusters around example like

what this sentence says is false,

and its “semantic” nature arises because the kind of “saying” involved gives the content of the associated sentence. The kind of “saying” is indirect, in other words, a matter of saying that p rather than saying “ p ”. One motive for focussing on this type of Liar Paradox comes from the belief that sentences alone are neither true nor false – they need an interpretation, at least – and so it is “the proposition expressed”, or “the statement made”, which is instead the bearer of truth or falsity.

It seems clear from Goodstein’s early work on indirect speech (1958), and later studies (e.g., Slater 1986, 2001), that there is no intractable difficulty with this type of utterance. Characteristically, something true is said, and something false also, but there is no reason to identify the two propositions or statements in question. So there are no troubling contradictions. Indeed Goodstein proved there could not be, at the end of his definitive paper.

The difficulty with *syntactic liars*, on the other hand, is that there would seem to be very good reason to identify the thing said which is true with the thing said which is false. For direct rather than indirect speech is involved in syntactic liars, and just one sentence may be uttered. So it is in this area that more attention must be given.

Syntactic liars centre around cases like

“this is false”,

where the intended reference of “this” is the sentence itself. If sentences on their own can be true or false, and appropriate self-referential sentences can be constructed, then it seems we have met the conditions above in which the same thing has to be both true and false. But in what sense can an appropriate self-referential sentence be constructed? If the

demonstrative in the given example has the reference stated then we are directed towards whether

“this is false” is false,

but the demonstrative then in quotation marks has been given no reference – if the previous “this” just referred to *the sentence* in which it occurred. The previous sentence was a perfect example, in fact, showing that not sentences alone, but only sentences when interpreted a certain way are true or false. So we have strayed out of the pure syntactic area, and are back amongst the semantic liars, if we want reference to the sentence *interpreted the same way*. The sentence “this is false” is not true or false as such, but only when “this” is given a reference; and if its reference is simply the same sentence again then clearly we have a plain falsity – just because sentences are neither true nor false. Likewise with a strengthened liar, like

“this is either false or neither true nor false”.

If “this” in its use refers to the whole sentence, then we get an unproblematic truth, since, again, sentences are neither true nor false.

These points illustrate a more general truth about syntactically “self-referential” sentences, which holds even when no demonstrative is involved. For if there is reference just to a sentence, then it is facts about that sentence which matter, not the mode of reference to it. Thus if one has any name for a “self-referential” sentence, let us say “*s*”, such that

$s = \text{“}s \text{ is false”}$,

then, because of the quotation marks, one cannot derive

$\exists x(x = \text{“}x \text{ is false”})$,

and, going with that, there can be no quotation name for the sentence in question, since

“*p*” = “‘*p*’ is false”

would require a whole to contain itself as a proper part. So, in the crucial sense, there is no “self-reference”.

It is no use trying to reintroduce interpretations by considering syntactic forms like

$s = \text{“}s \text{ is false in (language) } L\text{”}$,

because the same point about failure of existential generalisation applies. So, if we assume

$s \text{ is true/false in } L$,

we are again led merely to

“ s is false in L ” is true/false in L ,

and we still need to apply a disquotation scheme to obtain a statement explicitly about s again, like

s is false/true in L .

But the work on semantic liars shows that it is in just these cases that we cannot rely on disquotation schemes. For there need be no (one) “ p ” such that s says that p , when s is “self-referential”. Closer inspection, therefore, shows there is no way to obtain a contradiction with syntactic liars, either. For further, and similar remarks on the above matters, see Goodstein 1965: 18–20, 166–167.

It is Tarsky’s original T-scheme which is the trouble. For

T “ p ” iff p ,

clearly does not hold in general. The hope was, of course, that in a perfect language such a scheme would hold, and natural language, under that expectation, was inevitably thought not to allow consistent semantic closure. But natural language, we come to see, does allow consistent semantic closure, once we investigate indirect speech further, and so see that there can be no general 1-1 correspondence between speech and meaning. Natural language is not so honest: what it says (indirectly) cannot always be read off its face. The difficulty in solving The Liar, it might be said, has been realizing how extensive the lying involved is.

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Reprinted by courtesy of the Editor of *Analysis*, Vol. 62, No. 2, April 2002, pp. 107–109.

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WHY ANYTHING? WHY THIS?

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ABSTRACT. We should not expect simplicity at both the factual and explanatory levels. If there is no Selector, we should not expect that there would also be no Universe.

Why does the Universe exist? There are two questions here. First, why is there a Universe at all? It might have been true that nothing ever existed: no living beings, no stars, no atoms, not even space or time. When we think about this possibility, it can seem astonishing that anything exists. Second, why does *this* Universe exist? Things might have been, in countless ways, different. So why is the Universe as it is?

These questions, some believe, may have causal answers. Suppose first that the Universe has always existed. Some believe that, if all events were caused by earlier events, everything would be explained. That, however, is not so. Even an infinite series of events cannot explain itself. We could ask why this series occurred, rather than some other series, or no series. Of the supporters of the Steady State Theory, some welcomed what they took to be this theory's atheistic implications. They assumed that, if the Universe had no beginning, there would be nothing for a Creator to explain. But there would still be an eternal Universe to explain.

Suppose next that the Universe is not eternal, since nothing preceded the Big Bang. That first event, some physicists suggest, may have obeyed the laws of quantum mechanics, by being a random fluctuation in a vacuum. This would causally explain, they say, how the Universe came into existence out of nothing. But what physicists call a vacuum isn't really nothing. We can ask why it exists, and has the potentialities it does. In Hawking's phrase, "What breathes fire into the equations?"

Similar remarks apply to all suggestions of these kinds. There could not be a causal explanation of why the Universe exists, why there are any laws of nature, or why these laws are as they are. Nor would it make a difference if there is a God, who caused the rest of the Universe to exist. There could not be a causal explanation of why God exists.

Many people have assumed that, since these questions cannot have causal answers, they cannot have any answers. Some therefore dismiss these questions, thinking them not worth considering. Others conclude that they do not make sense. They assume that, as Wittgenstein

wrote, “doubt can exist only where there is a question; and a question only where there is an answer”.

These assumptions are all, I believe, mistaken. Even if these questions could not have answers, they would still make sense, and they would still be worth considering. I am reminded here of the aesthetic category of the *sublime*, as applied to the highest mountains, raging oceans, the night sky, the interiors of some cathedrals, and other things that are superhuman, awesome, limitless. No question is more sublime than why there is a Universe: why there is anything rather than nothing. Nor should we assume that answers to this question must be causal. And, even if reality cannot be fully explained, we may still make progress, since what is inexplicable may become less baffling than it now seems.

1

One apparent fact about reality has recently been much discussed. Many physicists believe that, for life to be possible, various features of the Universe must be almost precisely as they are. As one example of such a feature, we can take the initial conditions in the Big Bang. If these conditions had been more than very slightly different, these physicists claim, the Universe would not have had the complexity that allows living beings to exist. Why were these conditions so precisely right?¹ Some say: “If they had not been right, we couldn’t even ask this question.” But that is no answer. It could be baffling how we survived some crash even though, if we hadn’t, we could not be baffled.

Others say: “There had to be some initial conditions, and the conditions that make life possible were as likely as any others. So there is nothing to be explained”. To see what is wrong with this reply, we must distinguish two kinds of case. Suppose first that, when some radio telescope is aimed at most points in space, it records a random sequence of incoming waves. There might be nothing here that needed to be explained. Suppose next that, when the telescope is aimed in one direction, it records a sequence of waves whose pulses match the number 1, in binary notation, to the first ten thousand digits. That particular number is, in one sense, just as likely as any other. But there *would* be something here that needed to be explained. Though each long number is unique, only a very few are, like 1, mathematically special. What would need to be explained is why this sequence of waves exactly matched such a special number. Though this matching might be a coincidence, which had been randomly produced, that would be most unlikely. We could be almost certain that these waves had been produced by some kind of intelligence.

On the view that we are now considering, since any sequence of waves is as likely as any other, there would be nothing to be explained. If we accepted this view, intelligent beings elsewhere in space would not be able to communicate with us, since we would ignore their messages. Nor could God reveal himself. Suppose that, with some optical telescope, we saw a distant pattern of stars which spelled out in Hebrew script the first chapter of Genesis. This pattern of stars, according to this view, would not need to be explained. That is clearly false.

Here is another analogy. Suppose first that, of a thousand people facing death, only one can be rescued. If there is a lottery to pick this one survivor, and I win, I would be very lucky. But there might be nothing here that needed to be explained. Someone had to win, and why not me? Consider next another lottery. Unless my gaoler picks the longest of a thousand straws, I shall be shot. If my gaoler picks that longest straw, there would be something to be explained. It would not be enough to say, "This result was as likely as any other". In the first lottery, nothing special happened: whatever the result, someone's life would be saved. In this second lottery, the result *was* special, since, of the thousand possible results, only one would save a life. Why was this special result *also* what happened? Though this might be a coincidence, the chance of that is only one in a thousand. I could be almost certain that, like Dostoyevsky's mock execution, this lottery was rigged.

The Big Bang, it seems, was like this second lottery. For life to be possible, the initial conditions had to be selected with great accuracy. This *appearance of fine-tuning*, as some call it, also needs to be explained.

It may be objected that, in regarding conditions as special if they allow for life, we unjustifiably assume our own importance. But life *is* special, if only because of its complexity. An earthworm's brain is more complicated than a lifeless galaxy. Nor is it only life that requires this fine-tuning. If the Big Bang's initial conditions had not been almost precisely as they were, the Universe would have either almost instantly recollapsed, or expanded so fast, and with particles so thinly spread, that not even stars or heavy elements could have formed. That is enough to make these conditions very special.

It may next be objected that these conditions cannot be claimed to be improbable, since such a claim requires a statistical basis, and there is only one Universe. If we were considering all conceivable Universes, it would indeed be implausible to make judgments of statistical probability. But our question is much narrower. We are asking what would have happened if, with the same laws of nature, the initial conditions had been different. That provides the basis for a statistical judgment. There is a range of values that these conditions might have had, and physicists can

work out in what proportion of this range the resulting Universe could have contained stars, heavy elements, and life.

This proportion, it is claimed, is extremely small. Of the range of possible initial conditions, fewer than one in a billion billion would have produced a Universe with the complexity that allows for life. If this claim is true, as I shall here assume, there is something that cries out to be explained. Why was one of this tiny set *also* the one that actually obtained?

On one view, this was a mere coincidence. That is conceivable, since coincidences happen. But this view is hard to believe since, if it were true, the chance of this coincidence occurring would be below one in a billion billion.

Others say: “The Big Bang *was* fine-tuned. In creating the Universe, God chose to make life possible”. Atheists may reject this answer, thinking it improbable that God exists. *But this is not as improbable as the view that would require so great a coincidence.* So even atheists should admit that, of these two answers to our question, the answer that invokes God is more likely to be true.

This reasoning revives one of the traditional arguments for belief in God. In its strongest form, this argument appealed to the many features of animals, such as eyes or wings, that look as if they have been designed. Paley’s appeal to such features much impressed Darwin when he was young. Darwin later undermined this form of the argument, since evolution can explain this appearance of design. But evolution cannot explain the appearance of fine-tuning in the Big Bang.

This argument’s appeal to probabilities can be challenged in a different way. In claiming it to be most improbable that this fine-tuning was a coincidence, the argument assumes that, of the possible initial conditions in the Big Bang, each was equally likely to obtain. That assumption may be mistaken. The conditions that allow for complexity and life may have been, compared with all the others, much more likely to obtain. Perhaps they were even certain to obtain.

To answer this objection, we must broaden this argument’s conclusion. If these life-allowing conditions were either very likely or certain to obtain, then – as the argument claims – it would be no coincidence that the Universe allows for complexity and life. But this fine-tuning might have been the work, not of some existing being, but of some impersonal force, or fundamental law. That is what some theists believe God to be.

A stronger challenge to this argument comes from a different way to explain the appearance of fine-tuning. Consider first a similar question. For life to be possible on the Earth, many of the Earth’s features

have to be close to being as they are. The Earth's having such features, it might be claimed, is unlikely to be a coincidence, and should therefore be regarded as God's work. But such an argument would be weak. The Universe, we can reasonably believe, contains many planets, with varying conditions. We should expect that, on a few of these planets, conditions would be just right for life. Nor is it surprising that we live on one of these few.

Things are different, we may assume, with the appearance of fine-tuning in the Big Bang. While there are likely to be many other planets, there is only one Universe. But this difference may be less than it seems. Some physicists suggest that the observable Universe is only one out of many different worlds, which are all equally parts of reality. According to one such view, the other worlds are related to ours in a way that solves some of the mysteries of quantum physics. On the different and simpler view that is relevant here, the other worlds have the same laws of nature as our world, and they are produced by Big Bangs that are broadly similar, except in having different initial conditions.

On this *Many Worlds Hypothesis*, there is no need for fine-tuning. If there were enough Big Bangs, we should expect that, in a few of these, conditions would be just right to allow for complexity and life; and it would be no surprise that our Big Bang was one of these few. To illustrate this point, we can revise my second lottery. Suppose my gaoler picks a straw, not once, but very many times. That would explain his managing, once, to pick the longest straw, without that's being an extreme coincidence, or this lottery's being rigged.

On most versions of the Many Worlds Hypothesis, these many worlds are not, except through their origins, causally related. Some object that, since our world could not be causally affected by such other worlds, we can have no evidence for their existence, and can therefore have no reason to believe in them. But we do have such a reason, since their existence would explain an otherwise puzzling feature of our world: the appearance of fine-tuning.

Of these two ways to explain this appearance, which is better? Compared with belief in God, the Many Worlds Hypothesis is more cautious, since its claim is merely that there is more of the kind of reality that we can observe around us. But God's existence has been claimed to be intrinsically more probable. According to most theists, God is a being who is omnipotent, omniscient, and wholly good. The uncaused existence of such a being has been claimed to be simpler, and less arbitrary, than the uncaused existence of many highly complicated worlds. And simpler hypotheses, many scientists assume, are more likely to be true.

If such a God exists, however, other features of our world become

hard to explain. It may not be surprising that God chose to make life possible. But the laws of nature could have been different, so there are many possible worlds that would have contained life. It is hard to understand why, out of all these possibilities, God chose to create our world. What is most baffling is the problem of evil. There appears to be suffering which any good person, knowing the truth, would have prevented if he could. If there is such suffering, there cannot be a God who is omnipotent, omniscient, and wholly good.

To this problem, theists have proposed several solutions. Some suggest that God is not omnipotent, or not wholly good. Others suggest that undeserved suffering is not, as it seems, bad, or that God could not prevent such suffering without making the Universe, as a whole, less good.

We must ignore these suggestions here, since we have larger questions to consider. I began by asking why things are as they are. Before returning to that question, we should ask *how* things are. There is much about our world that we have not discovered. And, just as there may be other worlds that are like ours, there may be worlds that are very different.

2

It will help to distinguish two kinds of possibilities. *Cosmic* possibilities cover everything that ever exists, and are the different ways that the whole of reality might be. Only one such possibility can be actual, or be the one that *obtains*. *Local* possibilities are the different ways that some part of reality, or *local world*, might be. If some local world exists, that leaves it open whether other worlds exist.

One cosmic possibility is, roughly, that *every* possible local world exists. This we can call the *All Worlds Hypothesis*. Another possibility, which might have obtained, is that nothing ever exists. This we can call the *Null Possibility*. In each of the remaining possibilities, the number of local worlds that exist is between none and all. There are countless of these possibilities, since there are countless combinations of possible local worlds.

Of these different cosmic possibilities, one must obtain, and only one can obtain. So we have two questions: Which obtains, and Why?

These questions are connected. If some possibility would be easier to explain, we may have more reason to believe that this possibility obtains. This is how, rather than believing in only one Big Bang, we have more reason to believe in many. Whether we believe in one or many, we have the question why any Big Bang has occurred. Though this question

is hard, the occurrence of many Big Bangs is not more puzzling than the occurrence of only one. Most kinds of thing, or event, have many instances. We also have the question why, in the Big Bang that produced our world, the initial conditions allowed for complexity and life. If there has been only one Big Bang, this fact is also hard to explain, since it is most unlikely that these conditions merely happened to be right. If instead there have been many Big Bangs, this fact is easy to explain, since it is like the fact that, among countless planets, there are some whose conditions allow for life. Since belief in many Big Bangs leaves less that is unexplained, it is the better view.

If some cosmic possibilities would be less puzzling than others, because their obtaining would leave less to be explained, is there some possibility whose obtaining would be in no way puzzling?

Consider first the Null Possibility, in which nothing ever exists. To imagine this possibility, it may help to suppose first that all that ever existed was a single atom. We then imagine that even this atom never existed.

Some have claimed that, if there had never been anything, there wouldn't have been anything to be explained. But that is not so. When we imagine how things would have been if nothing had ever existed, what we should imagine away are such things as living beings, stars, and atoms. There would still have been various truths, such as the truth that there were no stars or atoms, or that 9 is divisible by 3. We can ask why these things would have been true. And such questions may have answers. Thus we can explain why, even if nothing had ever existed, 9 would still have been divisible by 3. There is no conceivable alternative. And we can explain why there would have been no such things as immaterial matter, or spherical cubes. Such things are logically impossible. But why would *nothing* have existed? Why would there have been no stars or atoms, no philosophers or bluebell woods?

We should not claim that, if nothing had ever existed, there would have been nothing to be explained. But we can claim something less. Of all the cosmic possibilities, the Null Possibility would have needed the least explanation. As Leibniz pointed out, it is much the simplest, and the least arbitrary. And it is the easiest to understand. It can seem mysterious, for example, how things could exist without their existence having some cause, but there cannot be a causal explanation of why the whole Universe, or God, exists. The Null Possibility raises no such problem. If nothing had ever existed, that state of affairs would not have needed to be caused.

Reality, however, does not take its least puzzling form. In some way or other, a Universe has managed to exist. That is what can take one's

breath away. As Wittgenstein wrote, “not how the world is, is the mystical, but *that* it is”. Or, in the words of a thinker as unmystical as Jack Smart: “That anything should exist at all does seem to me a matter for the deepest awe”.

Consider next the All Worlds Hypothesis, on which every possible local world exists. Unlike the Null Possibility, this may be how things are. And it may be the next least puzzling possibility. This hypothesis is not the same as – though it includes – the Many Worlds Hypothesis. On that more cautious view, the many other worlds have the same elements as our world, and the same fundamental laws, and differ only in such features as their constants and initial conditions. The All Worlds Hypothesis covers every conceivable kind of world, and most of these other worlds would have very different elements and laws.

If all these worlds exist, we can ask why they do. But, compared with most other cosmic possibilities, the All Worlds Hypothesis may leave less that is unexplained. For example, whatever the number of possible worlds that exist, we have the question, “Why *that* number?”. That question would have been least puzzling if the number that existed were *none*, and the next least arbitrary possibility seems to be that *all* these worlds exist. With every other cosmic possibility, we have a further question. If ours is the only world, we can ask: “Out of all the possible local worlds, why is *this* the one that exists?”. On any version of the Many Worlds Hypothesis, we have a similar question: “Why do just *these* worlds exist, with *these* elements and laws?”. But, if *all* these worlds exist, there is no such further question.

It may be objected that, even if all possible local worlds exist, that does not explain why our world is as it is. But that is a mistake. If all these worlds exist, each world is as it is in the way in which each number is as it is. We cannot sensibly ask why 9 is 9. Nor should we ask why our world is the one it is: why it is *this* world. That would be like asking, “Why are *we* who we are?”, or “Why is it *now* the time that it is?”. Those, on reflection, are not good questions.

Though the All Worlds Hypothesis avoids certain questions, it is not as simple, or unarbitrary, as the Null Possibility. There may be no sharp distinction between worlds that are and are not possible. It is unclear what counts as a kind of world. And, if there are infinitely many kinds, there is a choice between different kinds of infinity.

Whichever cosmic possibility obtains, we can ask why it obtains. All that I have claimed so far is that, with some possibilities, this question would be less puzzling. Let us now ask: Could this question have an answer? Might there be a theory that leaves nothing unexplained?

It is sometimes claimed that God, or the Universe, make themselves exist. But this cannot be true, since these entities cannot do anything unless they exist. On a more intelligible view, it is logically necessary that God, or the Universe, exist, since the claim that they might not have existed leads to a contradiction.

On such a view, though it may seem conceivable that there might never have been anything, that is not really logically possible. Some people even claim that there may be only one coherent cosmic possibility. Thus Einstein suggested that, if God created our world, he might have had no choice about which world to create. If such a view were true, everything might be explained. Reality might be the way it is because there was no conceivable alternative. But, for reasons that have been often given, we can reject such views.

Consider next a quite different view. According to Plato, Plotinus and others, the Universe exists because its existence is good. Even if we are confident that we should reject this view, it is worth asking whether it makes sense. If it does, that may suggest other possibilities.

This *Axiarchic View* can take a theistic form. It can claim that God exists because his existence is good, and that the rest of the Universe exists because God caused it to exist. But in that explanation God, *qua* Creator, is redundant. If God can exist because his existence is good, so can the whole Universe. This may be why some theists reject the Axiarchic View, and insist that God's existence is a brute fact, with no explanation.

In its simplest form, this view makes three claims:

- (1) It would be best if reality were a certain way.
- (2) Reality is that way.
- (3) (1) explains (2).

(1) is an ordinary evaluative claim, like the claim that it would be better if there was less suffering. The Axiarchic View assumes, I believe rightly, that such claims can be in a strong sense true. (2) is an ordinary empirical or scientific claim, though of a sweeping kind. What is distinctive in this view is claim (3), according to which (1) explains (2).

Can we understand this third claim? To focus on this question, we should briefly ignore the world's evils, and suspend our other doubts about claims (1) and (2). We should suppose that, as Leibniz claimed, the best possible Universe exists. Would it then make sense to claim that this Universe exists *because* it is the best?

That use of "because", Axiarchists should admit, cannot be easily explained. But even ordinary causation is mysterious. At the most

fundamental level, we have no idea why some events cause others; and it is hard to explain what causation is. There are, moreover, non-causal senses of “because” and “why”, as in the claim that God exists because his existence is logically necessary. We can understand that claim, even if we think it false. The Axiarchic View is harder to understand. But that is not surprising. If there is some explanation of the whole of reality, we should not expect this explanation to fit neatly into some familiar category. This extra-ordinary question may have an extra-ordinary answer. We should reject suggested answers which make no sense; but we should also try to see what might make sense.

Axiarchy might be expressed as follows. We are now supposing that, of all the countless ways that the whole of reality might be, one is both the very best, and is the way that reality is. On the Axiarchic View, *that is no coincidence*. This claim, I believe, makes sense. And, if it were no coincidence that the best way for reality to be is *also* the way that reality is, that might support the further claim that this was *why* reality was this way.

This view has one advantage over the more familiar theistic view. An appeal to God cannot explain why the Universe exists, since God would himself be part of the Universe, or one of the things that exist. Some theists argue that, since nothing can exist without some cause, God, who is the First Cause, must exist. As Schopenhauer objected, this argument’s premise is not like some cab-driver whom theists are free to dismiss once they have reached their destination. The Axiarchic View appeals, not to an existing entity, but to an explanatory law. Since such a law would not itself be part of the Universe, it might explain why the Universe exists, and is as good as it could be. If such a law governed reality, we could still ask why it did, or why the Axiarchic View was true. But, in discovering this law, we would have made some progress.

It is hard, however, to believe the Axiarchic View. If, as it seems, there is much pointless suffering, our world cannot be part of the best possible Universe.

4

Some Axiarchists claim that, if we reject their view, we must regard our world’s existence as a brute fact, since no other explanation could make sense. But that, I believe, is not so. If we abstract from the optimism of the Axiarchic View, its claims are these:

Of the countless cosmic possibilities, one both has some very special feature, and is the possibility that obtains. That is no coincidence. This possibility obtains because it has this feature.

Other views can make such claims. This special feature need not be that of being best. Thus, on the All Worlds Hypothesis, reality is *maximal*, or as full as it could be. Similarly, if nothing had ever existed, reality would have been *minimal*, or as empty as it could be. If the possibility that obtained were either maximal, or minimal, that fact, we might claim, would be most unlikely to be a coincidence. And that might support the further claim that this possibility's having this feature would be *why* it obtained.

Let us now look more closely at that last step. When it is no coincidence that two things are both true, there is something that explains why, given the truth of one, the other is also true. The truth of either might make the other true. Or both might be explained by some third truth, as when two facts are the joint effects of a common cause.

Suppose next that, of the cosmic possibilities, one is both very special and is the one that obtains. If that is no coincidence, what might explain why these things are both true? On the reasoning that we are now considering, the first truth explains the second, since this possibility obtains because it has this special feature. Given the kind of truths these are, such an explanation could not go the other way. This possibility could not have this feature because it obtains. If some possibility has some feature, it could not fail to have this feature, so it would have this feature whether or not it obtains. The All Worlds Hypothesis, for example, could not fail to describe the fullest way for reality to be.

While it is necessary that our imagined possibility has its special feature, it is not necessary that this possibility obtains. This difference, I believe, justifies the reasoning that we are now considering. Since this possibility must have this feature, but might not have obtained, it cannot have this feature because it obtains, nor could some third truth explain why it both has this feature and obtains. So, if these facts are no coincidence, this possibility must obtain *because* it has this feature.

When some possibility obtains because it has some feature, its having this feature may be why some agent, or some process of natural selection, made it obtain. These we can call the *intentional* and *evolutionary* ways in which some feature of some possibility may explain why it obtains.

Our world, theists claim, can be explained in the first of these ways. If reality were as good as it could be, it would indeed make sense to claim that this was partly God's work. But, since God's own existence could not be God's work, there could be no intentional explanation of why the whole of reality was as good as it could be. So we could reasonably conclude that this way's being the best explained *directly* why reality was this way. Even if God exists, the intentional explanation could not

compete with the different and bolder explanation offered by the Axiarchic View. Return now to other explanations of this kind. Consider first the Null Possibility. This, we know, does not obtain; but, since we are asking what makes sense, that does not matter. If there had never been anything, would that have had to be a brute fact, which had no explanation? The answer, I suggest, is No. It might have been no coincidence that, of all the countless cosmic possibilities, what obtained was the simplest, and least arbitrary, and the only possibility in which nothing ever exists. And, if these facts had been no coincidence, this possibility would have obtained because – or partly because – it had one or more of these special features. This explanation, moreover, could not have taken an intentional or evolutionary form. If nothing had ever existed, there could not have been some agent, or process of selection, who or which made this possibility obtain. Its being the simplest or least arbitrary possibility would have been, directly, why it obtained.

Consider next the All Worlds Hypothesis, which may obtain. If reality is as full as it could be, is that a coincidence? Does it merely happen to be true that, of all the cosmic possibilities, the one that obtains is at this extreme? As before, that is conceivable, but this coincidence would be too great to be credible. We can reasonably assume that, if this possibility obtains, that is because it is maximal, or at this extreme. On this *Maximalist View*, it is a fundamental truth that being possible, and part of the fullest way that reality could be, is sufficient for being actual. That is the highest law governing reality. As before, if such a law governed reality, we could still ask *why* it did. But, in discovering this law, we would have made some progress.

Here is another special feature. Perhaps reality is the way it is because its fundamental laws are, on some criterion, as mathematically beautiful as they could be. That is what some physicists are inclined to believe.

As these remarks suggest, there is no clear boundary here between philosophy and science. If there is such a highest law governing reality, this law is of the same kind as those that physicists are trying to discover. When we appeal to natural laws to explain some features of reality, such as the relations between light, gravity, space, and time, we are not giving causal explanations, since we are not claiming that one part of reality caused another part to be some way. What such laws explain, or partly explain, are the deeper facts about reality that causal explanations take for granted.

There would be a highest law, of the kind that I have sketched, if some cosmic possibility obtained because it had some special feature. This feature we can call the *Selector*. If there is more than one such

feature, they are all partial Selectors. Just as there are various cosmic possibilities, there are various *explanatory* possibilities. For each of these special features, there is the explanatory possibility that this feature is the Selector, or is one of the Selectors. Reality would then be the way it is because, or partly because, this way had this feature.

There is one other explanatory possibility: that there is *no* Selector. If that is true, it is random that reality is as it is. Events may be in one sense random, even though they are causally inevitable. That is how it is random whether a meteorite strikes the land or the sea. Events are random in a stronger sense if they have no cause. That is what most physicists believe about some features of events involving sub-atomic particles. If it is random what reality is like, the Universe not only has no cause. It has no explanation of any kind. This claim we can call the *Brute Fact View*.

Few features can be plausibly regarded as possible Selectors. Though plausibility is a matter of degree, there is a natural threshold to which we can appeal. If we suppose that reality has some special feature, we can ask which of two beliefs would be more credible: that reality merely happens to have this feature, or that reality is the way it is because this way has this feature. If the second would be more credible, this feature can be called a *credible Selector*. Return for example to the question of how many possible local worlds exist. Of the different answers to this question, *all* and *none* give us, I have claimed, credible Selectors. If either all or no worlds existed, that would be unlikely to be a coincidence. But suppose that 58 worlds existed. This number has some special features, such as being the smallest number that is the sum of seven different primes. It may be just conceivable that this would be why 58 worlds existed; but it would be more reasonable to believe that the number that existed merely happened to be 58.

There are, I have claimed, some credible Selectors. Reality might be some way because that way is the best, or the simplest, or the least arbitrary, or because its obtaining makes reality as full and varied as it could be, or because its fundamental laws are, in some way, as elegant as they could be. Presumably there are other such features, which I have overlooked.

In claiming that there are credible Selectors, I am assuming that some cosmic and explanatory possibilities are more probable than others. That assumption may be questioned. Judgments of probability, it may again be claimed, must be grounded on facts about our world, so such judgments cannot be applied either to how the whole of reality might be, or to how reality might be explained.

This objection is, I believe, unsound. When we choose between scientific theories, our judgments of their probability cannot rest only on predictions based on established facts and laws. We need such judgments in trying to decide what these facts and laws are. And we can justifiably make such judgments when considering different ways in which the whole of reality may be, or might have been. Compare two such cosmic possibilities. In the first, there is a lifeless Universe consisting only of some spherical iron stars, whose relative motion is as it would be in our world. In the second, things are the same, except that the stars move together in the patterns of a minuet, and they are shaped like either Queen Victoria or Cary Grant. We would be right to claim that, of these two possibilities, the first is more likely to obtain.

In making that claim, we would not mean that it is more likely *that* the first possibility obtains. Since this possibility is the existence of a lifeless Universe, we know that it does not obtain. We would be claiming that this possibility is intrinsically more likely, or that, to put it roughly, it had a greater chance of being how reality is. If some possibility is more likely to obtain, that will often make it more likely that it obtains; but though one kind of likelihood supports the other, they are quite different.

Another objection may again seem relevant here. Of the countless cosmic possibilities, a few have special features, which I have called credible Selectors. If such a possibility obtains, we have, I have claimed, a choice of two conclusions. Either reality, by an extreme coincidence, merely happens to have this feature, or, more plausibly, this feature is one of the Selectors. It may be objected that, when I talk of an extreme coincidence, I must be assuming that these cosmic possibilities are all equally likely to obtain. But I have now rejected that assumption. And, if these possibilities are *not* equally likely, my reasoning may seem to be undermined.

As before, that is not so. Suppose that, of the cosmic possibilities, those that have these special features are much more likely to obtain. As this objection rightly claims, it would not then be amazing if such a possibility merely happened to obtain. But that does not undermine my reasoning, since it is another way of stating my conclusion. It is another way of saying that these features are Selectors.

These remarks do show, however, that we should distinguish two ways in which some feature may be a Selector. *Probabilistic* Selectors make some cosmic possibility more likely to obtain, but leave it open whether it does obtain. On any plausible view, there are some Selectors of this kind, since some ways for reality to be are intrinsically more likely than some others. Thus of our two imagined Universes, the one consisting of spherical stars is intrinsically more likely than the one with

stars that are shaped like Queen Victoria or Cary Grant. Besides Probabilistic Selectors, there may also be one or more *Effective* Selectors. If some possibility has a certain feature, this may make this possibility, not merely intrinsically more likely, but the one that obtains. Thus, if simplicity had been the Effective Selector, that would have made it true that nothing ever existed. And, if maximality is the Effective Selector, as it may be, that is what makes reality as full as it could be. When I talk of Selectors, these are the kind I mean.

5

There are, then, various cosmic and explanatory possibilities. In trying to decide which of these obtain, we can in part appeal to facts about our world. Thus, from the mere fact that our world exists, we can deduce that the Null Possibility does not obtain. And, since our world seems to contain pointless evils, we have reason to reject the Axiarchic View.

Consider next the Brute Fact View, on which reality merely happens to be as it is. No facts about our world could refute this view. But some facts would make it less likely that this view is true. If reality is randomly selected, what we should expect to exist are many varied worlds, none of which had features that, in the range of possibilities, were at one extreme. That is what we should expect because, in much the largest set of cosmic possibilities, that would be what exists. If our world has very special features, that would count against the Brute Fact View.

Return now to the question whether God exists. Compared with the uncaused existence of one or many complicated worlds, the hypothesis that God exists has been claimed to be simpler, and less arbitrary, and thus more likely to be true. But this hypothesis is not simpler than the Brute Fact View. And, if it is random which cosmic possibility obtains, we should not expect the one that obtains to be as simple, and unarbitrary, as God's existence is claimed to be. Rather, as I have just said, we should expect there to be many worlds, none of which had very special features. Ours may be the kind of world that, on the Brute Fact View, we should expect to observe.

Similar remarks apply to the All Worlds Hypothesis. Few facts about our world could refute this view; but, if all possible local worlds exist, the likely character of our world is much the same as on the Brute Fact View. That claim may seem surprising, given the difference between these two views. One view is about *which* cosmic possibility obtains, the other is about *why* the one that obtains obtains. And these views conflict, since, if we knew that either view was true, we would have strong reason not to believe the other. If all possible worlds exist, that is unlikely to be a

brute fact. But, in their different ways, these views are both *non-selective*. On neither view do certain worlds exist *because* they have certain special features. So, if either view is true, we should not expect our world to have such features.

To that last claim, there is one exception. This is the feature with which we began: that our world allows for life. Though this feature is, in some ways, special, it is one that we cannot help observing. That restricts what we can infer from the fact that our world has this feature. Rather than claiming that being life-allowing is one of the Selectors, we can appeal to some version of the Many Worlds Hypothesis. If there are very many worlds, we would expect a few worlds to be life-allowing, and our world is bound to be one of these few.

Consider next other kinds of special feature: ones that we are not bound to observe. Suppose we discover that our world has such a feature, and we ask whether that is no coincidence. It may again be said that, if there are many worlds, we would expect a few worlds to have this special feature. But that would not explain why that is true of *our* world. We could not claim, as with the feature of being life-allowing, that our world is bound to have this feature. So the appeal to many worlds could not explain away the coincidence. Suppose, for example, that our world were very good, or were wholly law-governed, or had very simple natural laws. Those facts would count against both of the unselective views: both the All Worlds Hypothesis and the Brute Fact View. It is true that, if all worlds exist, or there are very many randomly selected worlds, we should expect a few worlds to be very good, or wholly law-governed, or to have very simple laws. But that would not explain why our world had those features. So we would have some reason to believe that our world is the way it is because this way has those features.

Does our world have such features: ones that count against the unselective views? Our world's moral character seems not to count against these views, since it seems the mixture of good and bad that, on the unselective views, we should expect. But our world may have the other two features: being wholly law-governed, and having very simple laws. Neither feature seems to be required in order for life to be possible. And, among possible life-containing worlds, a far greater range would not have these features. Thus, for each law-governed world, there are countless variants that would fail in different ways to be wholly law-governed. And, compared with simple laws, there is a far greater range of complicated laws. So, on both the unselective views, we should not expect our world to have these features. If it has them, as physicists might discover, that would give us reasons to reject both the All Worlds Hypothesis and the Brute Fact View. We would have some reason to

believe that there are at least two partial Selectors: being law-governed and having simple laws.

There may be other features of our world from which we can try to infer what reality is like, and why. But observation can take us only part of the way. If we can get further, that will have to be by pure reasoning.

6

Of those who accept the Brute Fact View, many assume that it must be true. According to these people, though reality merely happens to be some way, *that* it merely happens to be some way does not merely happen to be true. There could not be an explanation of why reality is the way it is, since there could not be a causal explanation, and no other explanation would make sense.

This assumption, I have argued, is mistaken. Reality might be the way it is because this way is the fullest, or the most varied, or obeys the simplest or most elegant laws, or has some other special feature. Since the Brute Fact View is not the only explanatory possibility, we should not assume that it must be true.

When supporters of this view recognize these other possibilities, they may switch to the other extreme, claiming that their view's truth is another brute fact. If that were so, not only would there be no explanation of reality's being as it is, there would also be no explanation of there being no such explanation. As before, though this might be true, we should not assume that it must be true. If some explanatory possibility merely happens to obtain, the one that obtains may not be the Brute Fact View. If it is randomly selected *whether* reality is randomly selected, and there are other possibilities, random selection may not be selected.

There is, moreover, another way in which some explanatory possibility may obtain. Rather than merely happening to obtain, this possibility may have some feature, or set of features, which explains why it obtains. Such a feature would be a Selector at a higher level, since it would apply not to factual but to explanatory possibilities. It would determine, not that reality be a certain way, but that it be determined in a certain way how reality is to be.

If the Brute Fact View is true, it may have been selected in this way. Of the explanatory possibilities, this view seems to describe the simplest, since its claim is only that reality has no explanation. This possibility's being the simplest might make it the one that obtains. Simplicity may be the higher Selector, determining that there is no Selector between the ways that reality might be.

Once again however, though this may be true, we cannot assume its truth. There may be some other higher Selector. Some explanatory possibility may obtain, for example, because it is the least arbitrary, or is the one that explains most. The Brute Fact View has neither of those features. Or there may be no higher Selector, since some explanatory possibility may merely happen to obtain.

These alternatives are the different possibilities at yet another, higher explanatory level. So we have the same two questions: Which obtains, and Why?

We may now become discouraged. Every answer, it may seem, raises a further question. But that may not be so. There may be some answer that is a necessary truth. With that necessity, our search would end.

Some truth is logically necessary when its denial leads to a contradiction. It cannot be in this sense necessary either that reality is a brute fact, or that there is some Selector. Both these claims can be denied without contradiction.

There are also non-logical necessities. The most familiar, causal necessity, cannot give us the truth we need. It could not be causally necessary that reality is, or isn't, a brute fact. Causal necessities come lower down. Similar remarks apply to the necessities involved in the essential properties of particular things, or natural kinds. Consider next the metaphysical necessity that some writers claim for God's existence. That claim means, they say, that God's existence does not depend on anything else, and that nothing else could cause God to cease to exist. But these claims do not imply that God must exist, and that makes such necessity too weak to end our questions.

There are, however, some kinds of necessity that would be strong enough. Consider the truths that undeserved suffering is bad, and that, if we believe the premises of a sound argument, we ought rationally to believe this argument's conclusion. These truths are not logically necessary, since their denials would not lead to contradictions. But they could not have failed to be true. Undeserved suffering does not merely happen to be bad.

When Leslie defends the Axiarchic View, he appeals to this kind of non-logical necessity. Not only does value rule reality, Leslie suggests, it could not have failed to rule. But this suggestion is hard to believe. While it is inconceivable that undeserved suffering might have failed to be in itself bad, it is clearly conceivable that value might have failed to rule, if only because it seems so clear that value does *not* rule.

Return now to the Brute Fact View, which is more likely to be true. If this view is true, could its truth be non-logically necessary? Is it

inconceivable that there might have been some Selector, or highest law, making reality be some way? The answer, I have claimed, is No. Even if reality is a brute fact, it might not have been. Thus, if nothing had ever existed, that might have been no coincidence. Reality might have been that way because, of the cosmic possibilities, it is the simplest and least arbitrary. And, as I have also claimed, just as it is not necessary that the Brute Fact View is true, it is not necessary that this view's truth be another brute fact. This view might be true because it is the simplest of the explanatory possibilities.

We have not yet found the necessity we need. Reality may happen to be as it is, or there may be some Selector. Whichever of these is true, it may happen to be true, or there may be some higher Selector. These are the different possibilities at the next explanatory level, so we are back with our two questions: Which obtains, and Why?

Could these questions continue for ever? Might there be, at every level, another higher Selector? Consider another version of the Axiarchic View. Reality might be as good as it could be, and that might be true because its being true is best, and that in turn might be true because its being true is best, and so on for ever. In this way, it may seem, everything might be explained. But that is not so. Like an infinite series of events, such a series of explanatory truths could not explain itself. Even if each truth were made true by the next, we could still ask why the whole series was true, rather than some other series, or no series.

The point can be made more simply. Though there might be some highest Selector, this might not be goodness but some other feature, such as non-arbitrariness. What could select between these possibilities? Might goodness be the highest Selector because that is best, or non-arbitrariness be this Selector because that is the least arbitrary possibility? Neither suggestion, I believe, makes sense. Just as God could not make himself exist, no Selector could make itself the one that, at the highest level, rules. No Selector could settle *whether* it rules, since it cannot settle anything unless it does rule.

If there is some highest Selector, this cannot, I have claimed, be a necessary truth. Nor could this Selector make itself the highest. And, since this Selector would be the highest, nothing else could make that true. So we may have found the necessity we need. If there is some highest Selector, that, I suggest, must merely happen to be true.

Supporters of the Brute Fact View may now feel vindicated. Have we not, in the end, accepted their view?

We have not. According to the Brute Fact View, reality merely happens to be as it is. That, I have argued, may not be true, since there may be some Selector which explains, or partly explains, reality's being as

it is. There may also be some higher Selector which explains there being this Selector. My suggestion is only that, at the end of any such explanatory chain, some highest Selector must merely happen to be the one that rules. That is a different view.

This difference may seem small. No Selector could *explain* reality, we may believe, if it merely happened to rule. But this thought, though natural, is a mistake. If some explanation appeals to a brute fact, it does not explain that fact; but it may explain others.

Suppose, for example, that reality is as full as it could be. On the Brute Fact View, this fact would have no explanation. On the Maximalist View, reality would be this way because the highest law is that what is possible is actual. If reality were as full as it could be, this Maximalist View would be better than the Brute Fact View, since it would explain reality's being this way. And this view would provide that explanation even if it merely happened to be true. It makes a difference where the brute fact comes.

Part of the difference here is that, while there are countless cosmic possibilities, there are few plausible explanatory possibilities. If reality is as full as it could be, that's being a brute fact would be very puzzling. Since there are countless cosmic possibilities, it would be amazing if the one that obtained merely happened to be at the maximal extreme. On the Maximalist View, this fact would be no coincidence. And, since there are few explanatory possibilities, it would not be amazing if the Maximalist highest law merely happened to be the one that rules.

We should not claim that, if some explanation rests on a brute fact, it is not an explanation. Most scientific explanations take this form. The most that might be true is that such an explanation is, in a way, merely a better a description.

If that were true, there would be a different defence of the kind of reasoning that we have been considering. Even to discover *how* things are, we need explanations. And we may need explanations on the grandest scale. Our world may seem to have some feature that would be unlikely to be a coincidence. We may reasonably suspect that this feature is the Selector, or one of the Selectors. That hypothesis might lead us to confirm that, as it seemed, our world does have this feature. And that might give us reason to conclude either that ours is the only world, or that there are other worlds, with the same or related features. We might thus reach truths about the whole Universe.

Even if all explanations must end with a brute fact, we should go on trying to explain why the Universe exists, and is as it is. The brute fact may not enter at the lowest level. If reality is the way it is because this way has some feature, to know *what* reality is like, we must ask *why*.

We may never be able to answer these questions, either because our world is only a small part of reality, or because, though our world is the whole of reality, we could never know that to be true, or because of our own limitations. But, as I have tried to show, we may come to see more clearly what the possible answers are. Some of the fog that shrouds these questions may then disappear.

It can seem astonishing, for example, how reality could be made to be as it is. If God made the rest of reality be as it is, what could have made God exist? And, if God does not exist, what else could have made reality be as it is? When we think about these questions, even the Brute Fact View may seem unintelligible. It may be baffling how reality could be even randomly selected. What kind of *process* could select whether, for example, time had no beginning, or whether anything ever exists? When, and how, could any selection be made?

This is not a real problem. Of all the possible ways that reality might be, there must be one that is the way reality actually is. Since it is logically necessary that reality be some way or other, it is necessary that one way be picked to be the way that reality is. Logic ensures that, without any kind of process, a selection is made. There is no need for hidden machinery.

Suppose next that, as many people assume, the Brute Fact View must be true. If our world has no very special features, there would then be nothing that was deeply puzzling. If it were necessary that some cosmic possibility be randomly selected, while there would be no explanation of why the selection went as it did, there would be no mystery in reality's being as it is. Reality's features would be inexplicable, but only in the way in which it is inexplicable how some particle randomly moves. If a particle can merely happen to move as it does, reality could merely happen to be as it is. Randomness may even be *less* puzzling at the level of the whole Universe, since we know that facts at this level could not have been caused.

The Brute Fact View, I have argued, is not necessary, and may not be true. There may be one or more Selectors between the ways that reality might be, and one or more Selectors between such Selectors. But, as I have also claimed, it may be a necessary truth that it be a brute fact whether there are such Selectors, and, if so, which the highest Selector is.

If that is a necessary truth, similar remarks apply. On these assumptions, there would again be nothing that was deeply puzzling. If it is necessary that, of these explanatory possibilities, one merely happens to obtain, there would be no explanation of why the one that obtains

obtains. But, as before, that would be no more mysterious than the random movement of some particle.

The existence of the Universe can seem, in another way, astonishing. Even if it is not baffling that reality was made to be some way, since there is no conceivable alternative, it can seem baffling that the selection went as it did. Why is there a Universe at all? Why doesn't reality take its simplest and least arbitrary form: that in which nothing ever exists?

If we find this astonishing, we are assuming that these features should be the Selectors: that reality should be as simple and unarbitrary as it could be. That assumption has, I believe, great plausibility. But, just as the simplest cosmic possibility is that nothing ever exists, the simplest explanatory possibility is that there is no Selector. So we should not expect simplicity at both the factual and explanatory levels. If there is no Selector, we should not expect that there would also be no Universe. That would be an extreme coincidence.²

NOTES

1. In my remarks about this question, I am merely summarizing, and oversimplifying, what others have claimed. See, for example, John Leslie, *Universes*, Routledge, 1989.

2. Of several discussions of these questions, I owe most to John Leslie's *Value and Existence*, (Blackwell, 1979) and to Robert Nozick's *Philosophical Explanations* (Oxford, 1981); then to Richard Swinburne's *The Existence of God*, (Oxford, 1979), John Mackie's *The Miracle of Theism*, (Oxford, 1982), Peter Unger's article in *Mid-West Studies in Philosophy*, Volume 9 (1989), and some unpublished work by Stephen Grover.

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CONFIRMABILITATE ȘI ÎNȚELES FACTUAL DEPLIN

RICHARD SWINBURNE

ABSTRACT. The confirmationist principle is false because there are factually meaningful statements which are neither observation-statements nor (dis)confirmable by observation statements. Even if the principle were true, it would not be of great value in sorting out factually meaningful statements from others.

În acest articol îmi propun să examinez un principiu pe care-l voi numi „confirmaționist“. Adică, un enunț q are înțeles factual deplin dacă fie q este un enunț de observație, fie există enunțuri de observație care, dacă sunt adevărate, confirmă sau nu pe q . Prin „confirmă“ înțeleg „mărește probabilitatea“, iar prin „nu confirmă“, „reduce probabilitatea“. Prin „enunț de observație“ înțeleg o judecată ce redă o stare de lucruri logic posibilă de observat; prin „enunț“ înțeleg orice este exprimat printr-o propoziție indicativă. Un enunț ce are înțeles factual deplin descrie o stare de lucruri logic posibilă care, e îndreptățit să presupunem, ar putea, sau nu, reflecta lumea.

Principiul confirmaționist exprimă (într-o terminologie ușor diferită) forma foarte slabă la care a ajuns verificaționismul în *Language, Truth and Logic*. Nu aduc în discuție aici înțelesul judecăților ca metoda lor de verificare, nici că judecățile trebuie să fie verificabile concludiv pentru a avea înțeles factual deplin, și nici măcar că înțelesul factual este *singurul* fel de înțeles. Aceste afirmații puternice au fost rapid abandonate din motive cunoscute, dar păstrăm afirmația mai slabă a principiului confirmaționist. Ayer, și nu numai, și-a consacrat o bună parte a investigației sale încercând să clarifice când un enunț îl confirmă pe un altul (sau, în formularea lui Ayer, „verifică“ un altul „(in)direct“). Este suficient pentru ca p să confirme q că q implică p și nu implică $\sim p$? Tentativele de formulare a criteriilor de confirmare pe aceste coordonate au condus la dificultăți considerabile (vezi, de pildă, „Indirectly Verifiable: Everything or Nothing“, de James W. Cornman, în *Philosophical Studies*, 18, 1967, pp. 49–55).

Dar chiar dacă nu este posibil să oferim o explicație generală privitor la când un enunț îl confirmă pe un altul, asta nu presupune vreo umbră de îndoială asupra aplicabilității principiului confirmaționist. Câtă vreme putem în general recunoaște intuitiv când un enunț îl confirmă pe un altul (întrucât, firește, putem) reușim să aplicăm principiul.

Discuția referitoare la tentativele de a completa principiul confirmaționist prin oferirea unei explicații generale privitor la când un

enunț îl confirmă pe un altul a îndepărtat atenția de la principiul însuși. Susțin că principiul confirmaționist este fals, întrucât există enunțuri cu înțeles factual deplin care nu sunt nici enunțuri de observație, și nici nu sunt (ne)confirmabile prin enunțurile de observație; și, mai departe, chiar dacă ar fi adevărat, principiul ar fi irelevant în identificarea enunțurilor cu înțeles factual deplin.

Să începem cu cel de-al doilea aspect. Pentru a folosi principiul confirmaționist în delimitarea sensului de nonsens va trebui să ne clarificăm care sunt enunțurile de observație. Repet, prin „enunț de observație“ înțeleg enunțul ce redă o stare de lucruri logic posibilă de observat. Din pricina incertitudinii privitor la „înțelesul factual deplin“ al unui enunț, adică descria o stare de lucruri logic posibilă, principiului confirmaționist i s-a sugerat că un enunț descrie o stare de lucruri logic posibilă dacă fie descrie o stare de lucruri logic posibilă care e observabilă, fie ar fi (ne)confirmat de un enunț ce descrie o stare de lucruri logic posibilă care este observabilă. Astfel, principiul va fi folositor doar dacă oamenii cad de acord mai curând privitor la care enunțuri redau stări de lucruri observabile logic posibile decât referitor la care enunțuri redau stări de lucruri logic posibile în general. Se întâmplă asta? Nu cred. Să luăm în discuție toate lucrurile pe care unii oameni le consideră observabile: sfârșitul lumii, propria moarte, diavolul, Dumnezeu, a patra dimensiune, Poseidon, oameni transformați în pietre ș.a. Unii oameni au susținut că aceste lucruri sunt observabile „în principiu“, însă alții au respins această constatare. Există vreo cale simplă de a clarifica această chestiune? S-a sugerat că trebuie să se presupună că ceea ce poate fi observat este evident descriabil printr-un vocabular senzorial simplu; să pretindem că putem *realmente* observa obiecte pătrate sau rotunde, roșii sau albastre, care se deplasează și emit zgomote, dar că nu putem observa oameni care sunt arțăgoși, un lingou de aur sau planeta Venus. Când pretindem că le-am observat pe cele din urmă, mai curând ar trebui să susținem că am dedus aceste lucruri din unele de primul fel, pe care putem spune cu îndreptățire că le-am observat. Dar această sugestie constituie o restricție absolut arbitrară asupra folosirii obișnuite a lui „a observa“. Acum sesizăm că nu există o limită evidentă și simplă a ceea ce poate fi observat: putem observa bacteriile (la microscop), sateliții lui Jupiter (cu un telescop), pe Nixon (la televizor). Așa că dacă unii oameni susțin că au observat obiectele și situațiile prezentate mai sus cum le putem demonstra că s-au înșelat? Una sau două dintre observațiile la care ne-am referit *ar putea* fi eliminate datorită unei proprietăți logice a verbului „a observa“, și anume că nu este logic posibil să observi viitorul. De aici ar rezulta, de pildă, că un pământean n-ar putea observa sfârșitul planetei sale. Pentru mulți *p*,

totuși, demonstrația, dacă poate fi dată, că p nu este ceva logic posibil de observat, va fi alcătuită, cred, dintr-o demonstrație (prin alt mijloc decât cel oferit de principiul confirmaționist) că p nu este logic posibil *simpliciter*. Astfel că deși unii oameni e posibil să fi căzut de acord *în mare măsură* privitor la care enunțuri sunt „de observație“, nu văd vreun motiv de a presupune că proporția consensului este cu mult mai mare aici decât privitor la care enunțuri au înțeles factual deplin. Iar dacă așa stau lucrurile, principiul confirmaționist n-o să fie de prea mare folos în clarificarea ultimei situații.

Chiar dacă unii oameni ar fi de acord cu orice enunț dat privitor la ce este un enunț de observație, mai există o dificultate care apare odată cu orice încercare de a arăta că enunțul exprimat de o propoziție *nu* este o judecată cu înțeles factual deplin: în acest sens trebuie să arătăm că nu este (ne)confirmabil de către *orice* enunț de observație. Totuși, nu putem spune că avem la dispoziție un fișier cu tipuri de enunțuri de observație pe care să le parcurgem rapid spre a vedea dacă au legături de confirmare cu un enunț dat. Astfel putem greși cu ușurință concluzionând că un enunț p nu este (ne)confirmabil de către vreun enunț de observație fără să ne fi gândit la un anumit enunț de observație q , care confirmă sau nu pe p . Rar s-a întâmplat ca o teorie științifică o dată prezentată să se confrunte cu reacția: cum oare am putea arăta că este adevărată? Dar s-au găsit căi. Să analizăm teoria inițială a particulelor luminii – afirmația că lumina este alcătuită din particule minuscule. O reacție imediată este: cum oare ar putea fi confirmată această teorie? Nu putem observa lumina, fiindcă datorită acesteia se produce acțiunea de a observa. Ulterior însă învățăm despre efectele Compton și cele fotoelectrice și ajungem să vedem că ele confirmă teoria particulelor.

Din aceste motive, dar îndeosebi din primul, concluzionez că principiul confirmaționist e posibil să nu prea fie de folos în separarea „înțelesului factual deplin“ de ceea ce nu este astfel. Cu toate acestea, principiul poate fi adevărat. Oare așa stau lucrurile? Nu cunosc vreun argument sustenabil în favoarea sa. Uneori cei aflați în dispută își construiesc argumentele pornind de la exemple. Cu siguranță, multe enunțuri ce credem că au înțeles factual deplin se dovedesc a fi, după ce reflectăm, enunțuri de observație sau (ne)confirmabile de către acestea. Ceea ce nu demonstrează însă că nu există excepții. În acest sens uneori este înfățișat un argument vag încât nu am putea înțelege o afirmație factuală dacă nu am ști cum ar trebui s-o observăm spre a o susține sau care observații ar susține-o și care i-ar fi potrivnice; prin urmare, un enunț n-ar putea avea înțeles factual deplin dacă n-ar fi enunț de observație sau dacă n-ar fi dovezi observaționale care l-ar susține sau i-ar fi potrivnice. Dar cu siguranță înțelegem o afirmație factuală dacă

înțelegem termenii care apar în propoziția pe care o exprimă, și dacă aceștia sunt alăturați într-o structură a cărei semnificație o înțelegem. Este posibil ca pentru a înțelege termenii să fie necesar să fi observat situațiile în care aceștia sunt folosiți corect sau situațiile aplicării corecte a termenilor relaționați prin definiție de cei anteriori, sau cel puțin să fi observat consecințele ce justifică sau nu apariția unor astfel de situații. Și este posibil ca pentru a înțelege semnificația structurii în care termenii sunt alăturați (de pildă, o propoziție subiect-predicat) să fie necesar să fi observat situațiile folosirii corecte a unei asemenea structuri propoziționale. Dar nimic nu ne arată că pentru a înțelege un enunț anume trebuie să știm cum ar trebui să îl observăm spre a afirma sau a ști care observații l-ar susține și care i-ar fi potrivnice. Iar un astfel de exemplu precum cel cu teoria particulelor luminii menționat anterior sugerează că am putea înțelege o judecată *fără a ști* cum ar trebui s-o observăm spre a o susține sau care observații ar justifica-o și care nu.

Ca atare, argumentele în favoarea principiului confirmaționist nu sunt prea solide. Principiul este fals întrucât contraexemplele concluzive pot fi prezentate pentru judecățile care au înțeles factual deplin, deși nu sunt nici enunțuri de observație și nici (ne)confirmabile de către acestea. Judecățile pe care le voi înfățișa diferă sub multe aspecte, dar au o formă comună, afirmând existența unei discrepante între dovada maxim accesibilă pe care oamenii o vor obține vreodată privitor la sustenabilitatea unei stări de lucruri S și dacă S e sau nu sustenabilă. O asemenea judecată va avea înțeles factual deplin dacă afirmația că S este sustenabilă nu este identică cu afirmația că dovada maximă pe care oamenii o vor avea vreodată sprijină afirmația că S este sustenabilă într-o asemenea măsură. De pildă:

p_1 : Printre afirmațiile posibile privind trecutul preuman pe care dovezile cele mai bune obținute vreodată de către om le fac extrem de improbabile câteva sunt cu toate acestea adevărate.

Prin „trecut preuman“ înțeleg „ceea ce s-a petrecut înainte de apariția omului“ (termenul „om“ aici și mai jos se referă la orice ființă în stare să evalueze dovezi). În orice moment omul are un anumit set de dovezi despre ceea ce s-a petrecut înainte de apariția sa, iar dovada cea mai bună pe care o poate obține este să formuleze afirmații privind trecutul nedefinit strict. Ceea ce cunoaștem acum face foarte improbabil ca o rachetă fără pasageri să fi zburat spre Lună din Capul Kennedy acum 500 de milioane de ani; însă evident că este altceva să spui că un fapt din trecut nu a avut loc decât că dovezi ulterioare l-au infirmat cam fără rezerve. Astfel p_1 are înțeles factual deplin, în orice caz dată fiind supoziția plauzibilă că există un trecut preuman, altfel n-ar avea referință.

Unele dintre cele mai bune credințe dovedite despre trecut pot fi false. Totuși, nimic din ceea ce oamenii au putut observa vreodată n-ar putea susține sau infirma pe p_1 . Dacă avem cea mai bună dovadă posibilă privitor la o judecată q ce afirmă ceva despre trecutul preuman și această dovadă o face pe q foarte improbabilă, atunci nu-i putem adăuga vreo dovadă suplimentară că q este adevărată sau nu. Dacă *știm* că o afirmație posibilă despre trecutul preuman este clasificată corect ca „o afirmație pe care cea mai bună dovadă obținută vreodată de om o face destul de improbabilă“, atunci nu putem obține, *în timp ce știm* că descriția se aplică, vreo dovadă în plus că q este adevărată sau nu. Desigur e posibil să nu știm că o afirmație q se poate clasifica astfel; putem presupune că e posibil să obținem mai multe dovezi ce ne vor plasa într-o postură mai bună decât suntem astăzi să evaluăm valoarea de adevăr a lui q . Totuși, câtă vreme dovezile noastre actuale prezintă ca verosimil că q este „o afirmație pe care cele mai bune dovezi obținute vreodată de om o face destul de improbabilă“, acestea vor susține *ipso facto* că probabil q este falsă. Nu poate exista vreo altă dovadă relevantă cu privire la adevărul sau falsitatea lui q . Orice confirmă o judecată confirmă că cele mai bune dovezi ce pot fi obținute vreodată vor confirma acea judecată (dovezile că s-a produs un cutremur în Chile acum 500 de milioane de ani constituie dovada că cele mai bune dovezi ce pot fi obținute vreodată vor arăta că s-a produs un cutremur în Chile acum 500 de milioane de ani). Astfel, nu poate exista vreo dovadă care să pretindă că orice afirmație q este o afirmație pe care cele mai bune dovezi obținute vreodată o fac destul de improbabilă și simultan o susțin ca fiind adevărată. De unde rezultă că nici o dovadă nu poate susține pe p_1 ; întrucât dacă probabilitatea ca orice afirmație q despre trecutul preuman să aibă simultan proprietatea anterioară și să fie adevărată este aceeași indiferent de dovadă, atunci necesarmente probabilitatea că există o afirmație ce are proprietatea anterioară și adevărată este aceeași indiferent de dovadă. Nici o dovadă de observație nu poate infirma adevărul lui p_1 din același motiv pentru care nici o dovadă de observație nu poate infirma „Unii celibatari sunt căsătoriți“. Știm înainte de observație că orice dovadă ce probează faptul că un bărbat este celibatar va fi o dovadă ce infirmă că el este căsătorit. Orice observăm ulterior nu se poate adăuga la ceea ce cunoaștem deja pentru a crede că „Unii celibatari sunt căsătoriți“ este falsă. Tot așa stau lucrurile și cu p_1 . Știm înainte de a face vreo observație că orice dovadă ce confirmă că orice afirmație q despre trecutul preuman este „o afirmație pe care cele mai bune dovezi ce pot fi vreodată obținute de om o fac destul de improbabilă“ o infirmă pe q . Astfel că orice observații facem ulterior nu se adaugă la ceea ce cunoaștem deja pentru a crede că p_1 este falsă. Totuși, are sens să presupunem că p_1 , spre deosebire de „Toți celibatarii

sunt căsătoriți“, are măcar valoare de adevăr. Ca atare, nimic din ceea ce oamenii au putut observa nu ar putea susține sau infirma pe p_1 . Astfel, p_1 nu poate fi un enunț de observație (deoarece nimic observabil nu a putut-o susține concludiv) și nici nu poate fi confirmată sau infirmată de enunțuri de observație.

Alte enunțuri asemănătoare cu p_1 în această privință sunt:

p_2 : O afirmație despre starea unei planete nelocuite, care este destul de probabilă având dovada cea mai bună pe care oamenii o vor obține vreodată, este de fapt falsă.

p_3 : O afirmație despre viitorul Pământului după ce oamenii încetează să mai locuiască pe această planetă, care este foarte probabil dovada cea mai bună pe care oamenii o vor obține vreodată, este de fapt falsă.

De unde p_1 , p_2 și p_3 sunt formulate ca evidente enunțuri cu înțeles factual deplin, iar argumentul de mai sus a fost prezentat spre a arăta că ele nu sunt enunțuri de observație confirmabile sau infirmabile de unele asemenea. În concluzie, principiul confirmaționist este fals.

Admițând că principiul confirmaționist este fals, putem analiza cu alți ochi câteva chestiuni filosofice mai vechi. Iată câteva exemple de enunțuri ce ridică probleme filosofice mai vechi, dar care sunt asemănătoare cu p_1 , p_2 și p_3 fiindcă nu sunt nici enunțuri de observație și nici nu sunt confirmabile sau infirmabile de unele asemenea:

p_4 : Există o ființă precum oamenii în privința comportamentului, a fiziologiei și a trecutului care cu toate acestea nu are gânduri, sentimente sau senzații.

p_5 : Există un bărbat M_1 care este aceeași persoană M_2 la un moment anterior, deși cele mai bune dovezi pe care oamenii le vor obține vreodată susțin că această situație este destul de improbabilă.

Dovezile privind comportamentul, fiziologia și trecutul sunt singurele dovezi pe care le-am putea avea despre gânduri, sentimente și senzații ale altora (și evident p_4 este despre o anumită persoană, alta decât oricare ce o înțelege pe p_4). Astfel, nimic observabil de către oameni n-ar putea confirma sau infirma pe p_4 . „Dovezile“ vizate în p_5 vor fi considerațiile tradiționale relevante pentru stabilirea identității personale: integritatea corporală, similitudinea memoriei, firea și înfățișarea. Desigur mai nimic din ceea ce ar putea observa oamenii ar putea confirma sau infirma p_5 . Nimic nu poate fi ulterior observabil pentru a confirma sau infirma că M_1 și M_2 sunt aceeași persoană odată ce dovezile publice (și private) cele mai bune au fost evaluate. Astfel, p_5 , ca și p_4 , nu este un enunț de observație confirmabil sau infirmabil de către unele asemenea. Controversa filosofică s-a mutat asupra chestiunii dacă

p_4 și p_5 au înțeles factual deplin. Atitudinea firească a fost de a spune că ele nu pot fi astfel, întrucât nu sunt enunțuri de observație și nici confirmabile sau infirmabile de unele asemenea. Este important să admitem că această atitudine nu este validă.

traducere de **ANDREI CARPENEANU**

Reprinted by courtesy of the Editor of *Analysis*, Vol. 33, No. 3,
January 1973, pp. 71–76

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WHY PHILOSOPHY IS EASY

JACOB NEEDLEMAN

ABSTRACT. The search for wisdom *philo-sophia* requires a uniquely extensive preparation and is the proximal goal of education. Philosophy is thus not a part of education, but its first end-purpose. For the philosopher, to know is to experience *via* the activity of the *nous*.

In *The Guide for the Perplexed* (Pt. I, Chap. XXXIV) Maimonides explains why the pursuit of metaphysical knowledge is reserved for the very few and why, even for them, it must not begin until they have reached fullest maturity. The subject, he says, is difficult, profound, and dangerous. He who seeks this knowledge, which is equated with wisdom, must first submit to a long and difficult preparation mental, moral, and physical. Only then can he risk the incomparably more difficult and lengthy ascent to wisdom.

This naturally calls to mind Plato's plan of education in which the highest pursuit, philosophy, is also to be the last in line. With Plato, as with Maimonides, we read that the direct search for wisdom is to be preceded by a certain training of all the natural faculties of man: the body, the emotions, and the intellect. Note that it is not only wisdom that is so high and so difficult of attainment, and which requires such remarkable preparation. It is also the search for wisdom, the love of wisdom *philosophy*, properly so-called which requires this preparation. And so the question arises: how is it that in the modern era philosophy is no longer difficult in this rather special sense? Has something been gained or lost? Are our sights lower or is our aim better?

To this last question, many perhaps very many modern thinkers would reply that philosophy has simply freed itself from a certain grandiose illusion, and that lowering its sights it has indeed raised them toward what is possible and realistic. Detached from the goals of religion, practical ethics, and therapy, it seeks primarily to *think well* about problems that are most fundamental in human experience and cognition. The modern philosopher, in his philosophizing, no longer loves, i.e., searches for a condition of the self, a new state of being.

It is the abandonment of this objective, more than any single conceptualized point of view, that distinguishes modern philosophy from so much of ancient and medieval philosophy. When Plato speaks of the realignment of the elemental functions of the soul as the goal of the philosopher, when the ancient Sceptics speak of *ataraxia*, the Stoics of an inner collectedness and indifference, and, of course, when so many of the

medieval philosophers intertwine the aim of their thinking with the aims of the religious process, they are all speaking and thinking in a language that modern philosophy finds unacceptable. To be sure, there are still very many philosophers who approve these goals as such. It is just that we cannot understand or accept that they are to be attained or sought after in our philosophical activity.

In liberating itself from the influence of theology, modern philosophy sought, of course, to rest itself on the touchstone of experience. By and large, every modern philosophical effort ultimately bases itself on the evidence of experience be it the experience of existentially crucial situations, the experience of perception, the experience of linguistic usage, the experience of moral decisions, the experience of emotions, or the experience of thinking and judging. It would be belaboring the obvious to spell out this point in great detail. Certainly, it is no exaggeration to say that, in this sense, common human experience is the touchstone of almost all modern philosophical thought. Experience is something we all have, and we have only to apply our thought in one way or another to the test of experience to determine the rightness or wrongness of our philosophy. Naturally, there are great problems, great difficulties in definition, communication, the assessment of evidence, the selection of experience, etc. But *in principle* we all have the wherewithal with which to test our philosophy. To say of any system or philosophical position that it does not accord with experience is to condemn it beyond redemption.

How could it be otherwise? Yet, in an enormously important sense, it has been otherwise with philosophy. Indeed, it is this emphasis on and trust in our experience which makes modern philosophy easy. The Platonic philosophy is exemplary of philosophy as *difficult* precisely because the appeal to given experience is never the basis of a line of thought. At most, general human experience is used to exemplify a line of thought whose ultimate purpose is to undermine mans reliance on experience. In fact, it could be said that for Plato and for the others in the tradition that takes philosophy to be difficult man has no experience; or, to put it another way, his experience is not anything like what he imagines it to be. Therefore, the education toward philosophy must involve the acquisition by man of the ability to have genuine experience. The love of wisdom can fully emerge in a man only after he has acquired at least a small degree of this ability. It is, in any case, not something men are born with or which they acquire in the ordinary, general process of maturation and education. Now, what does this mean?

To try to explicate this it will be most helpful here to make use of the Platonic psychology though one could as well use several other

ancient or medieval philosophies. Staying with Plato will enable us to put off until later the highly charged issue of the relationship between philosophy and religion. For the moment, what will be explored is the idea that the quality of the true philosophers experience stands to common human experience much in the way that what we take to be our common human experience stands to the experience of those we call mad.

Consider for a moment what this would mean if it were true. Why, in the plainest possible sense, do we profoundly distrust the experience of the mentally ill? Though this is neither the time or place to go into the various theories of psychopathology, may we not say that, for whatever reason and in the light of whatever psychological theory we adopt, the perceptions and judgments of the mentally ill are to an extraordinary degree ruled by certain powerful fears or desires, of which they are not aware? This is surely the primary element we have in mind when we say of the psychotic that he cannot see reality, that he lives in a dream or nightmare, that he is the slave of his subjectivity, etc.

The mentally ill may, and very often do, think about philosophical problems. In fact, speaking quantitatively of course, there is more philosophical activity on many mental wards than is to be found even in our academic departments of philosophy. Thought, and even systems of thought about the nature of reality, the existence of God, the mind-body problem, the problem of other minds, the concept of goodness, the reality of evil, can be found there in great abundance. And no one who has ever had extensive first-hand acquaintance with the mentally ill will tell you their thought lacks logical consistency and systematic coherence. Of course, their philosophy is bad because their experience is bad. The experience which their philosophy explains is bad experience. And, again, the reason it is bad experience is that their desires and fears govern their power to perceive and judge. For such people philosophy is even easier than it is for us.

For Plato our common human experience is of a similar quality, and his diagnosis of the human condition is, in essential aspects, such as to relegate all men to the insane asylum. As we know, the inner human condition, life in the cave, is described as a state of affairs in which the lower element in man, the multiform desires and fears, rules the higher elements, *thumos* and *nous*. Unregenerate man spends his life as a pawn of these desires and fears (the appetitive element) which themselves do not seek knowledge, but only a sort of gratification much like the scratching of an itch.

This idea of the passive submission to the appetitive is what lies at the basis of Plato's derogation of sensory experience. That is, it is this

particular sort of passivity the very opposite of self-mastery that characterizes unregenerate mans sensory life. Man's immediate contact with the world is not just through the senses, but also and equally through the appetitive reaction to the data of the senses. Thus it is not that the senses deceive; it is that the appetitive reaction is not in the interest of truth, but only in the interest of its immediate and with respect to the whole of man partial gratification.

Even so, mans situation would not be so bad were it not that this passive submission to the appetites extends also to the realm of thought and judgment. For here, too, the thoughts that fly through the mind like birds in an aviary are accepted or rejected according to the likes and dislikes that are sourced in the appetitive element. That is to say, the very same part of man which automatically seeks pleasure and avoids pain with regard to the data of the senses also seeks pleasure and avoids pain with regard to the concepts of the mind. This general state of affairs, or condition of the psyche, is termed *doxa*, opinion. With regard to the senses only, it is called *eikasia*, imagination. But this is not all. Plato tells us that there is in man a certain power or function perhaps, in modern terms, a certain emotional force called *thumos*, the spirited element which, serving the desires and fears, locks man even more deeply in his psychic cave. For without the aid of *thumos* the multitude in the soul could never have the strength simply because it is such a rabble to cause man constantly and passionately to trust in and fight for the goals of this multitude. And this, ironically, in the name of victory, conquest, achievement, hard struggle, devotion, self-realization, or most ironically love.

So that, with *thumos* thus serving the appetites, the force that could help turn the psyche toward genuine freedom and self-mastery plunges man into the darkness of the double lie or veritable lie, a state of inner deception in which falsehood is passionately and proudly held fast. As Cushman has observed¹, here lies the source of *hubris*, false pride: the misdirected *dunamis* of the spirit element in its attachment to the multiform and inconstant appetitive element. In modern terms it might be possible to speak of this as the origin of the ego.

If experience is understood to be that which happens to us, it is clear that from the above perspective all that happens to us or, rather, in us is the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of our appetites. In a way, *nothing* happens to us, to *me*, but only to the multitude in the soul. In such a case, truth becomes that which satisfies one or another of this multitude, and the desire for truth becomes the desire to master reality, rather than to experience it: the desire to obtain pleasure and avoid pain. And thus the

ability to have experience becomes the first goal, rather than the unquestioned assumption, of the seeker of truth.

Clearly, the first step towards this ability is the knowledge of ones own condition of delusion. Presumably, this is the first real experience possible for a man whose inner life is in such chaos. That is, the first real experience is the experience that one has no veridical experience. But where in a man can this experience come from? Certainly not the appetitive element, and certainly not the spirited element. Nor from nor in the thought that serves these elements.

In the Platonic psychology real experience can be obtained only through the functioning of the highest element in the psyche, *nous*. Now, the state in which this element can function uninfluenced by the other elements is called *wisdom*. Thus, to realize ones own inability to experience already requires the active functioning of that which *can* experience. And thus, on strictly psychodynamic and structural terms, the Delphic Oracle is vindicated: Socrates *is* wise in knowing his ignorance. Wisdom is a state of being, a condition of psychic organization, and has little, if anything, to do with the lodgment in thought of correct propositions about the universe, man, or even oneself.

Until this reorganization of the psyche has begun to take place, until the experience of certainty which is sourced only in the active functioning of *nous* has been touched, philosophical speculation may be anything but a help toward the attainment of wisdom. For the very idea of what knowledge is and the purpose it may serve is, in unregenerate man, a direct or distant product of his desires and fears. And what he therefore achieves when he achieves satisfying explanations or criticism is to become that much more fixed in the condition of the psyche termed *opinion*.

The search for wisdom *philo-sophia* requires, therefore, a uniquely extensive preparation and is the proximal goal of education. Philosophy is thus, in this sense, not a part of education, but its first end-purpose. If philosophical speculation is presented or given to the appetites, which have their own utilitarian manner of thinking, it may lead to the illusion that wisdom of the ability to know is already present in a man when in fact he may have never had the real experience of certainty about anything, himself or the universe; and if by chance he has experienced it, this experience will have been used and distorted by the appetites. The whole body of Plato's pedagogical prescriptions may be understood as part of a method that would lead a sufficiently interested man toward this sense of philosophy.

For the philosopher, to know is to experience *via* the activity of the *nous*. And so the age-old philosophical questions become for him

directives for possible experiencing. But unregenerate man approaches philosophical knowledge as prepositional and deductive and based, of course, on his now questionable experience. To put it another way, the philosopher seeks in the act of thinking to embody with the whole of his psyche the structure of reality. This is, perhaps, the primal sense of the activity of reflection and speculation: a psychodynamic mirroring of the structure of reality. Such a task requires consciousness and, ultimately, control of the appetites which, for their part and in their moment, bring with them standards of satisfaction not necessarily congruent with the laws of the universe. By struggling against a passive submission to the appetitive element, the philosopher in the act of reflecting seeks to incarnate the functional and structural order of the universe.

Obviously, such a goal if accepted prematurely could easily lead to the most preposterous sort of self-inflation, and it is for this reason, among others, that the study of metaphysics is so dangerous. Only a man who has experienced the nullity of his ordinary experience such as Socrates and who can therefore be more or less persistently watchful of himself, could seriously undertake the study of metaphysics, i.e., the perfection of wisdom that leads to a mans inner life mirroring the *entire* scale of cosmic order. Logical-deductive thought in itself, *dianoia*, may be a useful aid in giving the pupil a taste, so to say, of an activity uninfluenced by the appetites. But precisely because it is removed from the lower elements, it is blind to them. As an activity of the psyche, it requires a severing of parts, not a mastery of the lower by the higher. It requires concentration, a philosophical withdrawal, and cannot, therefore, as an activity, mirror an organic cosmic order. It can serve *any* cognitive purpose and in the hands of an ordinary man it can maintain him in his ignorance at any point blithely withstanding the test of experience and allowing him to move on, unchecked, to consistency and systematic error.

I believe there is a widespread misconception about the roots of Western philosophy. It is often said that Eastern thought differs radically from the mainstream of Western thought in that it does not separate philosophy and religion. That is, there are many who believe that only in the East is the effort to think about the nature of reality inextricably bound up with the project of transforming the nature of man. Certainly this is true of the way Eastern thought differs from modern Western philosophy, by which I mean philosophy since the scientific revolution. And perhaps this is why there has recently been a growing interest in various Eastern philosophies: Buddhism in its several forms, Vedanta, Taoism, etc. But by identifying the whole of Western philosophy with the temper of modern philosophy, one may well read this temper into much

of ancient and medieval philosophy. One may fail to sense that its form and method may have been an attempt at a practical embodiment of its discursive content, and that its deepest purpose was, perhaps, to awaken in the listener or reader the beginnings of a hunger for wisdom in the sense we have described. One may fail to sense this even while spending ones life espousing its content. Just as modern philosophy is easy, so it has, perhaps, become easy to read the ancients.

The separation of the goals of philosophy from the goals of religion may therefore be a typically modern, rather than a typically Western phenomenon. If so, if there is a way of understanding philosophy and religion as tending toward a common goal, then some interesting questions also arise about the modern Western understanding of religion. Is the attainment of wisdom the goal of the religious process? Did Western religion itself change in such a way as to encourage the philosopher to be quite sure he could think more reliably, and ultimately guide his life, without its help? Did it, too, fall away from its primary goals? Finally, was Western philosophy once a religious way, or an essential part of a religious way?

This last question may be, if not answered, at least approached by attempting to place religion as it is known to us in the perspective of our discussion of Platonic wisdom. To do this it will be helpful to expand upon a certain well-known simile concerning the ultimate unity of the various religions of the world. One often comes across the idea that the various religions are to each other like the spokes of a wheel in that they emanate from a common center; therefore, as one comes to understand any one religion one comes to understand all religion. Let us assume that this center is the state of being or realignment of psychic functions which Plato and others have called wisdom. And let us assume that, with respect to individual men, it is the ultimate task of religion to bring man from his ordinary psychological condition to this state of wisdom.

It may already seem that we are begging the question by assuming this to be the ultimate goal of religion. But, among the things this simile is designed to illustrate is both the particular difficulty of deciding such an issue, and the fact that this extraordinary difficulty is no argument against there actually being a goal that is common to all genuine religion. Our simile shall be geographical; we locate the center at some point on the surface of the earth, say the top of a particular mountain. Instead of spokes, we shall speak of paths or routes proceeding from a number of locations quite distant both from each other and from the mountain, and which therefore exhibit great differences with respect to climate, terrain, social and biological conditions, and so forth. One path proceeds from the tropics, another from the polar regions, another

from the desert, another from a large city. We shall further assume that, compared to conditions on the mountain, the state of wisdom, these other places are bad places: the desert is dry and barren; the jungle dangerous; the arctic cold and isolate; the cities crowded and artificial, and so forth. It is therefore the ultimate task of religion to enable the inhabitants of these places to find their way to the mountain. To this end, certain sets of directions, handbooks, maps, practical advice, and most important guides are made available to the various inhabitants.

Thus, the farther from the mountain, the greater will be the difference in the travel advice. Those starting from the desert, for example, might be told Thou shalt carry great quantities of water, something that might be unnecessary and even a hindrance to those proceeding from the jungle. And the prescription to wear warm clothing would be disastrous to both these groups, whereas it would be a vital necessity to those starting in the polar regions.

A crucial element in this interpretation of religion is already apparent namely, that the primal significance of religious forms (and imperatives) is their *instrumentality*, that their root function is to serve as a means toward psychological transformation. Now, obviously, an effective set of instructions for traveling through a particular region must be based on solid knowledge about the terrain, its dangers, its problems, etc. So that, *for someone who does not wish to leave the region*, these instructions could be taken as ways to improve his life *in* the region. Obviously, much of what would help us travel *out* of the desert could also serve to make life *in* the desert easier or more efficient, *thus reinforcing our satisfaction with where we are*. There are many ways in which this state of affairs can be translated into the problems of this essay. One that immediately springs to mind is the taking of instrumental formulations as *dogma*, in the modern, pejorative sense of the term. Another possible translation would be the taking of a set of ideas designed to help us change our orientation toward the quality of our experience of the universe as themselves finalistic explanations of that experience. In short, *theology*.

What is being suggested here as a possibility is that dogmatic theology, as we generally understand it, is an instance of transforming the instrumental into the finalistic. An identical situation exists as a possibility with regard to what are termed the moral imperatives of religion. Thou shalt carry water is an imperative only as long as we are in dry places. But if we wish to stay in the desert it becomes an absolute imperative and thereby ceases to work as a help toward bringing us out of the desert. Let us say that it is this form or stage of religion that modern philosophy rejected. By identifying this level of religion with religion as

such it unwittingly lost the possibility of moving beyond that level. For, philosophy's rejection is based, in part, on the idea that it can improve upon the explanations of dogmatic theology. And, in a certain limited sense, perhaps it can. But by seeking only to do better what dogmatic theology seemed to do, it fixes itself at what is only an early way-station on the path to wisdom even, perhaps, while using the word wisdom to express its goal. Thus, there may be even more efficient ways of living well in the desert.

Consequently, philosophy, while detaching itself in this way from a relatively elementary form of religion, remains itself with regard to the actual attainment of wisdom forever bogged down on that same elementary level. No matter how intricate, subtle, or comprehensive its thought becomes, it will never move from that level. And thus, when an even more efficient way of living in the desert comes along Western natural science it is quick to recognize this as its master, or at least as that to which it must direct most of its energies. From the point of view of the actual attainment of wisdom, the development of philosophy from Descartes through Locke, Hume, Kant, and the contemporary schools thus represents little more than the rationalization of the chains that hold man in the cave. Philosophy becomes easy.

Our simile can be used to express several other things about the religions of the world. For example, to many people one of the most repugnant aspects of some religions is their claim to exclusiveness and the concomitant condemnation of other religions. But if we take this as instrumental, it can become more understandable. If we are living in the desert, then only a certain limited set of directions can help us get out of the desert. To follow an arctic handbook would kill us. Or, seen from another angle, if one considers the psychological and environmental conditions of a certain period and place, the most *useful* imperative might well involve the necessity of submission to some form of authority.

In other conditions, or at a certain point along the way say, when we are safely out of the desert it may be more *useful* to us (as judged by the guide) to try to understand that there are other paths as well. In any event, as the paths get closer to the center, the terrain naturally becomes more and more similar for everyone no matter from whence they started; therefore, the various sets of directions become more alike until, finally, they are all mountain-climbing directions, differing only with respect to the face of the mountain that is being scaled. It is only as one climbs the mountain, however, that one can actually *see* some of the other paths and the people traveling them; only then can one actually verify that the various religions lead to a common center.

Thus, the question as to whether the state of wisdom is the end-purpose of the religions cannot really be decided until one is rather far along towards wisdom. Otherwise, it would mean placing our trust in that quality of experience which it is the first lesson of wisdom to distrust. Consequently, there is no neutral ground upon which to stand in judging either the goals of the religious ways or in comparing the ways themselves. Neutral ground in this case would mean to be on no path at all, i.e., the darkest part of the cave (and, incidentally, the place where philosophy is easiest).

This now brings us to what is perhaps the most important aspect of our whole problem. For one may very well ask, does all this mean we are to surrender our critical faculties, our philosophical methods, our trust in science and in our own moral sense, abandoning all our present intellectual goods, feeble as they may well be when compared to the ideal of wisdom and self-perfection? One may well ask this, having heard of such notions as the crucifixion of reason, belief by virtue of the absurd, having read of the methods of the Zen Buddhists, and having studied the writings of the great mystics, many of whom seem to exhort us to cast away our rationality, such as it is.

We know, most of us, that we cannot do this. We cannot even wish to do this, not even if we felt able to do so. And not even though we might, somewhere in ourselves, agree that this rationality by itself may never lead us to a certain quality of thought for which we might have hoped in answer to the fundamental life-questions that first brought many of us to the study of philosophy. Even so, we are not able to give it up. But perhaps to see this fact about ourselves is already to have glimpsed at a most crucial aspect of *our* condition here and now, one feature, so to say, of our geographical situation. It would be from here, then, that our movement towards wisdom would have to begin; from *here*, and not from some other starting-place where the sacrifice of the mind is required. Just as, on another path, Kierkegaard sought to make Christianity the most difficult thing in the world, so we philosophers may wish to find a way to help us make philosophy more difficult.

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Reprinted by courtesy of the Editor of *The Review of Metaphysics*, Vol. XXII, No. 1, September 1968

METAFIZICA IN VIZIUNEA LUI VASILE CONTA

ALEXANDRU SURDU

ABSTRACT. Reality is constituted of particulars, whether substances or events, with the properties that characterize them and the relations that interrelate them. The natural order consists of material particles in various configurations, moving and reconfiguring in accordance with physical law.

Vasile Conta (1845–1882) a fost cunoscut mai ales pentru concepția lui materialist-militantă și ateistă. El a combătut, într-adevăr, sistemele filosofice idealiste și spiritualiste, ca și religia în genere, având asupra acestora o viziune evoluționistă, care începe cu fetișismul și idolatria, și se termină cu panteismul și materialismul. Se observă însă faptul că, deși apelează frecvent la argumente din domeniul științelor, el nu are o atitudine pozitivistă față de filosofie și față de metafizică în mod special. El însuși utilizează expresia de „metafizică materialistă“.

Mai mult, în lucrarea *Încercări de metafizică*, el chiar pune pe același plan încercările metafizice ale spiritualiștilor și ale materialiștilor, care converg spre aceeași problematică. „Atât materialistii, cât și spiritualiștii de toate speciile consideră concepțiunea forței materiale, care este principiul universal pentru cei dintâi, ca diametral opusă cu concepțiunea spiritului, care e principiul universal pentru ceilalți. Cu toate acestea, atât forța pentru materialiști, cât și spiritul pentru spiritualiști, reprezintă cauza primă a lucrurilor, punctul cel de pe urmă la care au ajuns cercetările noastre. Acel ceva care nu se mai poate analiza și care trebuie să fie admis în știință ca simplu articol de credință. Aceeași dificultate pe care o încearcă materialistul, când voiește a defini forța, o încearcă și spiritualistul, ce voiește a defini spiritul. Materialistul își închipuiește la urma urmei forța în mintea sa cam în același fel în care spiritualistul cel mai înaintat își închipuiește ceea ce el numește substanța spirituală. Toate acestea dovedesc că deosebirea dintre materialism și spiritualism nu este așa de radicală pe cât și-o închipuiesc partizanii respectivi ai acestor sisteme, și că lupta dintre acești adversari este abia ceva mai mult decât o simplă sfadă pentru cuvinte“. Motivul acestor afirmații, neașteptate pentru un materialist militant, rezidă în accepția lui Vasile Conta despre metafizică în genere, indiferent de aspectele ei materialiste sau spiritualiste.

În lucrarea *Bazele metafizicii*, Vasile Conta nu face o distincție clară între filosofie și metafizică, înclinând contextual s-o reducă pe prima la ultima, dar nu în accepția disciplinară, ci conceptual-categorială. Disciplinar vorbind, metafizica ar trebui să fie distinctă de ontologie,

logică, metodologie, gnoseologie și epistemologie, ca discipline fundamentale, dar și de etică, estetică, filosofia culturii etc., ca discipline secundare. De regulă, metafizica este partea ontologiei care studiază cauzele prime sau principiile, ceea ce acceptă și Vasile Conta, dar el extinde sfera metafizicii la ideile generale referitoare la întreaga existență și realitate în genere, adică și la problemele ontice obișnuite, determinabile categorial prin conceptele de spațiu, timp, vid, materie, mișcare, forță, cauzalitate, necesitate; dar și la probleme gnoseologice, psihologice, logice, estetice și sociologice.

De genul principiilor clasice sunt, la Vasile Conta, așa-numitele „legi fatale“, prin „fatalitate“ înțelegându-se aici „necesitate absolută“. Legea ondulațiunii universale este principiul suprem care guvernează apariția, dezvoltarea și dispariția oricărei forme din natură, gândire (cunoaștere) și societate. Formele evolutive sunt imaginate figurativ ca undele, coborâtoare și suitoare.

Din perspectivă gnoseologică, V. Conta imaginează un fel de „piramidă a cunoașterii“, care are la bază datele percepțiilor senzoriale, prin care sunt elaborate noțiunile sau ideile generale de gradul întâi („munte, lac, frunză“, sunt exemplele autorului). Aceste idei sunt grupate într-un număr mai mic de idei generale de gradul al doilea, care la rândul lor se grupează în idei de gradul al treilea ș.a.m.d. Unele dintre ideile generale (de fapt, categorii) constituie „cadru de câte unei științe“. Științele ar fi și ele ierarhizate în genuri și specii, ca și categoriile (botanica și zoologia sunt specii ale biologiei). Metafizica este considerată „știința care caută a cuprinde toate cunoștințele omenești într-o singură cugetare și în sfera unei singure idei universale“. Ea ocupă vârful piramidei cunoștințelor.

Metafizica este considerată știință în măsura în care operează asupra ideilor generale științifice, constată asemănarea lor și le grupează. Dar nu se mai comportă ca o știință în momentul în care încearcă să explice principiul universal, pentru faptul că acesta nu mai este, la rândul său, încadrabil în alte principii. Strădania de a face totuși inteligibil acest principiu conduce la utilizarea de metafore și ipoteze neverificabile. Situație considerată de către gânditor ca valabilă pentru orice metafizică. Metafizica spiritualistă monoteistă consideră ca principiu un singur spirit universal. Pentru explicarea acestuia este necesară referința la persoana umană, asemănătoare acestuia. Dar spiritul universal întrunește forma și calitățile omului în perfecțiunea lor, ceea ce este greu de imaginat. Metafizica materialistă reduce totul la o substanță materială universală, din care s-ar fi diferențiat apoi, nu se știe cum și de ce, o infinitate de corpuri diferite.

Reprezentarea principiului universal prin ipoteze neverificabile se bazează, după V. Conta, pe o combinare a ideii infinitului cu caracterele lucrurilor sensibile care îi servesc ca termen de comparație metaforică. În felul acesta, metafizica pătrunde în domeniul „quasi-cunoștințelor“ și devine un fel de „poezie științifică“. Ceea ce nu constituie însă un motiv pentru respingerea ei în manieră pozitivistă. Tendința către idei tot mai generale este proprie oricărei științe și reprezintă o „necesitate mentală“. „În zadar, zice el, ar refuza cineva să unifice prin generalizare toate științele, precum în zadar ar refuza de a concepe o singură idee generală pentru toate faptele particulare ce au caractere comune, căci generalizarea, tocmai ca valurile cu care luptă cineva, revine în mintea noastră cu atât mai mare impetuozitate, cu cât a fost respinsă mai violent“.

Pentru realizarea obiectivului metafizicii, acela de a obține o concepție unitară asupra universului, sunt necesare, după Vasile Conta, câteva condiții: a) examinarea valabilității cunoștințelor noastre prin confruntarea lor cu realitatea la care se referă; b) determinarea și explicarea caracterelor comune ale tuturor lucrurilor, precum: substanță, cauză, formă etc.; c) reducerea la unitate a tuturor cunoștințelor și lucrurilor, fie prin gruparea lor sub un singur principiu universal, fie prin conceperea altor raporturi care fac din toate lucrurile un întreg organic; d) stabilirea de ipoteze verificabile sau chiar neverificabile a căror probabilitate să fie bazată pe rezultatele științelor particulare.

În aceeași lucrare, *Bazele metafizicii*, autorul tratează, în maniera condițiilor enumerate, câteva probleme referitoare la: existență, realitate și adevăr. Credința în faptul că ceva există se confundă în principiu, după Vasile Conta, cu însăși conștiința noastră. Individul uman este însă conștient în mod nemijlocit de propriul său eu și de facultățile sale de cunoaștere care alcătuiesc lumea sa interioară sau subiectivă. S-ar putea considera că aceasta este determinată, că lumea exterioară n-ar fi altceva decât o închipuire a celei interioare. Conta se referă la voință și conchide că manifestarea acesteia întâmpină întotdeauna o rezistență care provine de la altceva sau de la altcineva, cu care nu poate să se confunde. Senzațiile lucrurilor exterioare, între care sunt și organele trupului meu, nu sunt închipuiri create de eul meu, ci sunt impuse contra voinței acestuia de către ceva exterior, fie că este vorba de trupul meu, fie de alte lucruri.

Lumea exterioară există, dar nu este simplă și nici omogenă. Ea produce impresii diferite, în funcție de organele de simț cu care este receptată și de modificările permanente pe care le suferă. Cunoștințele noastre despre lucruri se bazează pe constatarea asemănărilor și deosebirilor dintre acestea, cât și a gradului lor de asemănare și

deosebire. „Știința lucrurilor” nu este altceva decât clasificarea lor în funcție de aceste criterii.

Cunoștințele noi se obțin fie prin „percepția efectivă completă a simțurilor”, fie prin analogie și inducție. Percepția efectivă completă se referă, în cazul unui singur lucru, la cât mai multe din componentele sale sau, în cazul unui complex de lucruri, la perceperea fiecăruia în parte. În situații asemănătoare este suficientă perceperea câtorva componente sau câtorva lucruri pentru a conchide, prin analogie sau inducție, la existența celorlalte componente sau a celorlalte lucruri.

Cu aceleași mijloace cunoaștem nu numai lumea exterioară obiectuală, ci cunoaștem și alte ființe asemănătoare nouă, dotate cu trupuri și euri asemănătoare cu cele ale noastre. Și constatăm că și ele au aceleași imagini despre lumea înconjurătoare. Mai mult, în anumite împrejurări care nu sunt la dispoziția noastră, ne putem baza pe experiența celor care le-au avut.

Observăm la Vasile Conta modalitatea complexă de abordare a existenței pe coordonate ontologice, gnoseologice (uneori cu accente psihologice) și chiar logice. El tratează și despre deducție, pe care o consideră o modalitate mai ales demonstrativă a cunoștințelor obținute deja. Tratănd, cu aceeași ocazie, și despre cauzalitate, el constată că, tot prin analogie și inducție, regresivă sau progresivă, putem obține cunoștințe atât despre trecut, cât și despre viitor. Condiția pe care o impune concepția lui materialistă este ca demersurile noastre să pornească de la percepția efectivă a lucrurilor și a stărilor de fapt.

Experiența, consideră V. Conta, evidențiază faptul că toate corpurile din lume se influențează reciproc și că fiecare corp suferă o modificare prin influența exercitată de celelalte corpuri. Și, problemă asupra căreia insistă, corpul omenesc este supus acelorași transformări. Aici sunt introduse, rezumativ, câteva considerațiuni de tip evoluționist, dezvoltate pe larg în *Teoria undulațiunii universale* și mai ales în lucrarea despre *Originea speciilor*. „De aceea, consideră Vasile Conta, tot prin influența exercitată asupra-i de celelalte corpuri a trebuit și corpul omenesc să se modifice treptat, diferențiindu-și neconținut organele și funcțiile, pentru a se ridica de la cea mai de jos până la cea mai de sus treaptă cunoscută de perfecționare organică”. Referințele despre sistemul nervos și evoluția acestuia îl conduc pe filosof la considerațiuni despre facultățile intelectuale și morale, conturând astfel imaginea unei teorii complexe a existenței cu aspecte ontologice, logice, psihologice și sociologice. Este vorba, firește, numai de unul dintre capitolele metafizicii lui Vasile Conta, pe care n-a mai apucat, din cauza bolii necruțătoare, să-l ducă la desăvârșire.

Dintr-o schiță de plan reiese că existența era unul dintre paragrafele *principiilor fundamentale*, care mai cuprindeau referințe la: realitate; adevăr (relativ și absolut); cantitate, număr și infinit; formă, calitate și substanță; reducerea la unitate. Această secțiune sugerează, după titlurile enumerate, drumul către principiul sau ideea generală de la care ar trebui să pornească metafizica. Grupările binare și triadice ale categoriilor sugerează și anumite principii metodologice dialectico-speculative neilustrate însă explicit în lucrările elaborate.

Din restul schiței de plan – lumea (cu referințe la forțe și materie; spațiu și vid; timp și repaus; necesitatea în lume), atracția și repulsia universală, asimilația universală și undulațiunea universală – putem conchide intenția, chiar mărturisită de autor, de a îngloba toate lucrările sale filosofice într-un tratat de metafizică.

Relatarea unei discuții a lui Vasile Conta cu B.C. Liveanu, în toamna anului 1881 (se va stinge la 21 aprilie 1882), este edificatoare asupra intențiilor sale și totodată emoționantă pentru soarta acestui om de numai 37 de ani. „Mi-am pus în gând ca în iarna aceasta să sfârșesc metafizica mea. Te asigur că am să mă țin de vorbă, fiindcă văd bine că multă vreme n-am s-o mai pot duce. Apoi, tu știi bine că viața mi-a devenit de mult o povară, din cauza boalei și celorlalte mizerii de tot felul. Dacă nu voiesc totuși să mor, e că țin să-mi isprăvesc metafizica și s-o traduc în limba franceză împreună cu celelalte scrieri“. Dar n-a mai reușit să se țină de vorbă.

VALOAREA CA REFERINȚĂ

ALEXANDRU BOBOC

ABSTRACT. The central problem concerning aesthetic value is that it is not merely in the eye of the beholder, while yet it seems to require the eye of the beholder in order to exist. The traditional way of marking out aesthetic value from truth, goodness, or utility is to provide an account of beauty.

1. Așa cum se știe, Frege a supus unei ample analize noțiunea de *sens*, noțiune cu un rol fundamental nu numai în lingvistică, ci și în logica modernă și, în genere, în reconstrucția modernă a domeniilor teoretice.

După Frege, „putem asocia unui semn (nume, cuvânt compus, semn scris) nu numai denotatul (*Bezeichneten*), pe care îl vom numi semnificația (*Bedeutung*) lui, ci și ceea ce eu înțeleg prin sensul (*Sinn*) semnului, adică modul în care este redat obiectul. În felul acesta, *semnificația* expresiilor <<luceafăr de seară>> și <<luceafăr de dimineață>> este aceeași, *sensul* însă nu⁴¹.

De fapt, încă stoicii deosebeau între *semnificant* (cuvânt), *semnificat* (obiectul pe care cuvântul îl are în vedere) și lucru; *semnificantul* este sunetul însuși (de exemplu, sunetul Dion), *semnificatul* este *faptul* pe care-l clarificăm prin acest sunet, iar *lucrul* este existentul (de exemplu, Dion însuși). Distingem astfel două corpuri – sunetul și lucrul – și ceva necorporal, anume faptul semnificat ($\lambda\epsilon\kappa\tau\omicron\nu$), care nu este obiect al gândirii, ci, cum ar spune Frege, este sensul (*Sinn*) expresiei².

Sensul prezintă, astfel, un statut aparte: el nu este nici lucru, nici „obiect al gândirii“; deși este al unei expresii, el este și „transcendent“ acesteia, e conținutul ei de valabilitate. În ceea ce s-a numit „triunghiul relațiilor“, „simbolurile manipulează, organizează și comunică. Dacă vrem să stabilim ce manipulează și organizează, înregistrează și comunică, trebuie să deosebim totdeauna între gânduri și lucruri. Ceea ce se manipulează și organizează este gândirea (sau, cum spunem în mod obișnuit, referința); ea este totodată și ceea ce e înregistrat și comunicat“³.

În alți termeni, în procesul de semioză (prin care semnul capătă sens) „gândirea sau referința“ constituie sursa inepuizabilă (într-un fel, „lumile posibile“) pentru umplerea de conținut (sens) a semnelor (nume, simboluri, semne scrise, expresii etc.) De aceea, dincolo de orice împlinire a sensului, rămâne un „în sine“, un „transcendent“, „valoarea transcendentă“ (cum ar spune Rickert, raportându-se la valoarea teoretică, bineînțeles), *lektón*-ul stoicilor!

2. În măsura în care condițiile analizei sensului s-au extins și asupra analizei valorii, nu ar fi un travaliu de prisos încercarea de a privi *valoarea însăși ca referință*. Căci și determinarea valorii, ca și aceea a sensului, este contextuală, presupunând intrarea în acțiune a unor factori eterogeni, care sunt în principal trei: un subiect, ceva la care acesta se referă și modalitățile expresive în care fixează și prin care comunică această referire (raportare). Deci, tot „processe spirituale“, simbol și referent, dintre care primul termen îndeplinește rolul „lumilor posibile“, o altă expresie pentru creația umană ineputabilă, nelimitată!

Departate de a constitui o simplă curiozitate, *ideea valorii ca referință* anunță astfel posibilitatea unei înnoiri în teoria valorii, prin regândirea problematicii acesteia cu ajutorul demersului semiotic. O asemenea perspectivă (mai puțin încetățenită, e adevărat!) pune într-o nouă lumină statutul valorii ca valoare (adică, obiectualitatea ei) și, implicit, al valorii ca o modalitate de a fi a referinței.

În cele ce urmează, ne propunem să argumentăm utilitatea perspectivei semiotice pentru tipul de valoare al cărei domeniu de valabilitate s-a dovedit a fi cel mai adecvat transpunerii în „relația de semne“: valoarea estetică. Căci dintre toate tipurile de valori, aceasta este, cum s-a spus, valoarea a unui „existent pentru noi“, „valoare a ceva ce nu constă decât în apariție, așadar valoare a ceva care are ființă numai pentru noi“⁴.

Aceasta nu înseamnă însă să renunțăm la distincția între valoare și realizările valorice în forma operelor artei, literaturii etc. O asemenea renunțare ar antrena, inevitabil, relativismul axiologic și ar face imposibile: (1) criteriile obiective ale aprecierii și (2) idealul estetic. De aceea, distincția dintre valoare (valoarea estetică, în speță) și înfăptuirile valorice, una dintre cele mai de seamă cuceriri ale axiologiei moderne, trebuie să rămână oricând temeiul actului critic, și al valorizării ca atare.

Ideea valorii ca referință este în principal o cale de a justifica sus-numita distincție. Sursele unei asemenea idei nu se află, cum ne-am așteptat, în procesul larg al aplicărilor semioticii în studiul fenomenului „cultură“, ci în înseși tradițiile axiologiei. Astfel, neokantianul Rickert, unul dintre întemeietorii teoriei moderne a valorilor, a argumentat că numai pe baza analizelor de sens putem să înțelegem ce este valoarea: „sensul adevărat, care este independent sau transcendent actului judecării, trebuie considerat întotdeauna drept o configurație valorică cu valabilitate transcendentă sau, pe scurt, ca *valoare transcendentă*“⁵.

Totodată, el spunea: „este indiscutabil că valorile sunt pentru noi *unite* totdeauna cu aprecieri reale sau că noi putem *găsi* valori numai la bunuri reale“; dar „*bunurile* și *aprecierile* nu sunt *valori*, ci uniri de

valori cu realități... valorile însele nu se află nici în domeniul obiectelor reale, nici în cel al subiectelor reale, ci formează un imperiu pentru sine⁶.

Indiscutabil, distincțiile dintre *valoare* și *apreciere*, *valoare* și *bunuri*, desfășurate apoi pe larg în axiologie (Scheler, N. Hartmann, P. Andrei, T. Vianu și alții) rămân fundamentale pentru orice reconstrucție a acestei discipline. Problema principală și cea mai dificilă este însă aceea a înțelegerii obiectualității⁷ valorii (valoarea ca valoare).

Tocmai în acest context se poate vorbi însă de „transcendența” valorii și de valoare ca „transcendent” sau, în termenii unei situații semiotice, între *valoare ca referință* și *valoare ca referent*. În acest din urmă caz, valoarea *este* (este o realizare valorică, valoarea ca valoare a unor bunuri, comportamente etc.) În primul caz, valoarea *este valabilă*. Statutul valorii ca valoare valabilă ridică însă mari dificultăți de înțelegere și, de aceea, pentru a aduce un spor de claritate, propunem formula valorii ca referință.

Dar *à propos* de dificultăți: fără opere, comportamente, atitudini față de lucruri și bunuri nu putem vorbi de valori: dar valorile nu se află în acestea ca niște structuri efective, nu se pot localiza; o asemenea poziție a valorii s-ar putea reda cu formula sugestivă a lui Umberto Eco: *La struttura assente*.

3. O scurtă incursiune în teoria valorii estetice ilustrează semnificația și valențele aplicative ale ideii valorii ca referință. Căci, așa cum preciza N. Hartmann, valoarea estetică „nu este o valoare a actului, ci o valoare a obiectului... Chiar dacă, într-un obiect estetic, anumite acte fac și ele parte din suportul valorii estetice, ca de pildă în domeniul dramatic, pe toate treptele lui, totuși actul este aici numai un membru al unui întreg, și valoarea sau non-valoarea lui morală nu este valoarea sau non-valoarea lui estetică... nu ceea ce este uman interior și de ordin sufletesc, ca atare, este frumos, ci cu desăvârșire numai la apariția lui sensibilă⁸”.

În alți termeni, valoarea estetică este „*valoarea a ceva ce e numai obiectualitate ca atare* (subl. n.)”; pentru toate clasele de valori „realizarea unei valori constituie ea însăși o valoare... valorile estetice în genere nu sunt realizate. Căci obiectele cărora le aparțin ca fiind purtătoarele lor nu sunt obiecte reale, ci au un mod de ființare mixt; numai planul din față este real, totuși el reprezintă numai un minimum în ele; tot restul – toată succesiunea de straturi către interior – este și rămâne ireal. Valoarea nu atârnă însă nici măcar de acest plan din spate, ci numai de apariția însăși⁹”.

Opera de artă ilustrează în mod exemplar funcția valorii ca referință. Căci valoarea estetică fundamentală – frumosul – nu este ca atare valoare decât în raportarea unui subiect la opera de artă, adică la o

realizare valorică (nu la realizarea valorii!). Nici opera ca realizare valorică, nici suma realizărilor valorice în opere de artă nu înseamnă realizarea valorii estetice.

Dincolo de prezența ei într-o lume de bunuri despre care putem referi (realizările valorice ca „referent“), în măsura în care o desemnăm printr-un limbaj, rămâne mereu valoarea însăși, ca „referință“, ca un ideal mereu de atins, și în aceasta constă „în sine“-le valorii, „transcendența“ ei.

Deci nu dublarea lumii operelor create cu o lume în sine a valorilor ca modele, prototipuri, ci desprinderea în această unică lume a unor permanente ale gândirii, acțiunii și creației: *valorile*, care *nu* sunt (ca realități în sine), ci sunt valabile, acționează ca veritabile criterii ale creației și aprecierii.

Pe scurt, fiind și „referință“ și în realizarea valorică, valoarea estetică acționează ca tip de valoare. Într-un domeniu real structurat de ea, valoarea estetică este numai activă, nu și o prezență efectivă.

NOTE ȘI REFERINȚE BIBLIOGRAFICE

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2. I.M. Bocheński, *Formale Logik*, Karl Alber, Freiburg/München, 1956, pp. 126–127.
3. C.K. Ogden • I.A. Richard, *Die Bedeutung der Bedeutung (The Meaning of Meaning)*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1974, pp. 16, 18.
4. N. Hartmann, *Estetica*, Editura Univers, București, 1974, p. 385.
5. H. Rickert, *Der Gegenstand der Erkenntnis*, 4. und 5. Aufl., J.C.B. Mohr, Tübingen, 1921, p. 236. Rickert distinge între „sensul imanent“, legat de „realitatea psihică“ a judecării, și „sensul transcendent“, considerând că numai acesta din urmă este obiectiv (Ibid., p. 145).
6. Ibid., pp. 173, 174.
7. Acesta ar fi corespondentul în românește pentru termenul german *Gegenständlichkeit*, încetățenit de la Rickert încoace mai ales, care vrea să redea modalitatea de a fi obiect ca atare, *în fața* cunoașterii (și pentru cunoaștere, evident), nu în cunoaștere. Numai poziția obiectului *în* cunoaștere are obiectivitate, poziția lui în *fața* cunoașterii (ca un pol opus subiectului în raportul fundamental de cunoaștere) fiind pur și simplu aceea a unui existent. Modul de ființare „mixt“ nu este altceva decât opera creată și care se înscrie în regnul „bunurilor“ culturii.
8. N. Hartmann, [4], p. 381.
9. Ibid., p. 385.

UNDERSTANDING QUINE'S THESES OF INDETERMINACY

NICK BOSTROM

ABSTRACT. The author attempts to clear up some of the misunderstandings, to provide a satisfactory formulation of the thesis of indeterminacy of translation in non-naturalistic terms, to demonstrate how a naturalistic substitute can be derived from this formulation, to refute the best known arguments for and against the thesis, and to show how it relates to the thesis of indeterminacy of reference, the theses of semantic and epistemic holism and to the thesis of underdetermination of theory by data.

1. FORMULATING THE THESIS OF INDETERMINACY OF TRANSLATION

1.1 Introduction

I shall argue later that no adequate formulation of the thesis of indeterminacy of translation has yet been presented. In this introductory section I shall make a brief uncritical presentation of the thesis for readers not acquainted with Quine's philosophy.

The thesis is that divergent translation manuals can be set up between natural languages such that they all are compatible with empirical facts but nevertheless diverge radically from each other in what sentences they prescribe as translations of sentences in the foreign language. Each manual works individually, but they cannot be used in alternation: the fusion of two of these manuals does not in general constitute a manual that is compatible with all empirical facts. The sentences (or anyway many of them) which the divergent manuals correlate to a foreign expression stand in no form of equivalence to each other, however loose.

This thesis should be distinguished from the *thesis of indeterminacy of reference* which is somehow analogous but is concerned with words instead of sentences. I will say more about the thesis of indeterminacy of reference and the way it is related to the thesis of indeterminacy of translation in §3.1 and §2.1.4.

The thesis of indeterminacy of translation is not that it is *hard* to find out what foreign sentences mean, or that the evidence available to us, finite beings as we are, is always incomplete. It is rather that there isn't anything there to be found: *meanings*, interlinguistic well-defined meanings, do not exist: there is no fact of the matter as to which meaning

a foreign sentence has of the alternatives attributed to it by the rival manuals.

From Quine's writings one gathers that the thesis of indeterminacy of translation is a protest against the uncritical appeal to meanings and analyticity that characterised the logical positivists. Quine speaks of the notion of meaning as a stumbling-block cleared away. The indeterminacy thesis paves the way for Quine's philosophy of science and of mathematics, whose back-bone is semantic holism:

Where metaphysics had sought the essence of things, analytical philosophy as of G.E. Moore and after settled for the meanings of words; but still it was as if there were intrinsic meanings to be teased out rather than just fluctuant usage to be averaged out. In later years analyticity served Carnap in his philosophy of mathematics, explaining how mathematics could be meaningful despite lacking empirical content, and why it is necessarily true. However, holism settles both questions without appeal to analyticity. Holism lets mathematics share empirical content where it is applied, and it thus accounts for mathematical necessity by freedom of selection and the maxim of minimum mutilation.¹

1.2 The indeterminacy thesis says something that implies that the notion of meaning is irremediably confused

It is clear that Quine takes indeterminacy of translation to have devastating consequences for the family of classic semantic notions – “meaning”, “synonymy”, “analyticity”, “intention”, “belief”. These are all terms which must not be used as supporting blocks in any scientific theory, at least if they are understood in their traditional sense: as absolute, interlinguistic, discrete entities, the way the logical positivists and others would have it. However, there is to my knowledge no *argument* in Quine's work from indeterminacy of translation to the impermissibility of that terminology. *Therefore it is reasonable to demand of any explication of the indeterminacy thesis that it provides an explicatum that makes this implication obvious.* For to Quine it seems obvious; if some formulation of the indeterminacy thesis on analysis turned out to have no close connection whatsoever to the question of the substantiveness of the notions of meaning and analyticity, then it would be evidence that the thesis had been wrongly construed, especially if there exists an explication that provides an interesting proposition that *does* have such a bearing and in addition fits well into Quine's philosophy and agrees with most of what he has said about indeterminacy of translation. However, I am not very interested about the exegetic part of my claim

and I don't care to argue it further. Call the formulation I provide in §1.5 and §1.6 an interpretation, an explication, or an alternative to Quine's thesis, whatever you like.

So the starting point for me is that the indeterminacy thesis says something to the effect that our notion of meaning is irremediably confused. Not quite, though: there could perhaps be other things wrong with that notion beside the large-scale macroindeterminacy Quine wants to draw our attention to. Even if the indeterminacy thesis is false, there is still the possibility that meanings could be indeterminate on a microscopic level. Suppose that no translation manual could assign *radically* different meanings to foreign sentences from the standard manual and still be correct; i.e. suppose there is what I call macro *determinacy*. Could there not nevertheless be some room for divergence in the fine details, i.e. microindeterminacy? For example, what facts determine that a speaker means that he is adding when he says "I am adding", rather than that he is performing some freaky quus-function à la Kripke? Or that all occurrences of the sentence "That is a reindeer" have *exactly* the same meaning, the same inclusiveness as regards borderline instances, rather than just very similar meanings? For there to be a working notion of analyticity, these microproblems with the notion of meaning must be solvable. We want to say that the sentence "There exists a reindeer" is logically equivalent to the sentence "There exists a reindeer"; but this fails if the two tokens of the sentence have different meanings, however small the discrepancy. I think I know how these problems can be solved, under the assumption that Quine's indeterminacy thesis is false; but the manoeuvre is in no way obvious. Therefore it would not seem advisable to *define* the indeterminacy thesis as the thesis that our notions of meaning, analyticity, etc., do not make sense. If it is indeed equivalent to that proposition, then this is something that should come as a theorem, not a definition. I will not try to give any reasons that they are equivalent, not in this paper. However, what I am looking for as an explication of Quine's thesis is something that says in effect: "There can be no notion of meaning because every purported notion of meaning fails on the macrolevel."

Before we proceed, however, we have to agree upon which sort of meanings we are talking about, for "meaning" is an ambiguous word.

1.3 By "meaning" we understand: truth condition

In one of its senses, "meaning" means linguistic role or usage. Linguistic roles are floating, imprecise and naturalistic; they have no close relation to analyticity, and Quine has nothing against their notion.

Indeed, he thinks it is the right substitute for the philosophers' meanings. (See e.g. §23 in *Pursuit of Truth*)

Is "meaning" to be understood as (possible world) *truth conditions* or as some kind of *structured proposition*? It is quite possible (*prima facie* at least) that there could be indeterminacy in the one sense and determinacy in the other. In fact it seems that a thesis of indeterminacy of structured propositions would be stronger than a thesis of indeterminacy of truth conditions. For, on the one hand, physical facts presumably show fewer manuals to conserve structured propositions than to conserve truth condition, so there would be more candidates to produce the "incoherent sequences" if only conservation of truth conditions (as far as they are revealed in physicalistic facts) were required than if the structure of the expressed proposition had to remain unaltered too. On the other hand, there would perhaps be no new possible "incoherent sequences" in the case of the thesis of indeterminacy of structured propositions that were not incoherent already as regards truth value; for the structure of the proposition that a sentence expresses is presumably naturalistically determined (although there can be doubts as regards sentences containing *defined* expressions). Anyhow, there is no reason to suppose that the two theses are equivalent.

Intensional structure (or something even more elaborate) rather than truth conditions seems to be what Quine had in mind when he wrote: "The meaning of a sentence of one language is what it shares with its translations in another language."² Other statements, however, indicates that truth conditions are what is intended, in particular this interpretation seems to be vouched for by the presumption that the thesis should have direct relevance for the fate of the notion of analyticity. One possibility is that Quine does not make this distinction but aims his indeterminacy thesis against all classical semantic notions indiscriminately. This would be unfortunate, though, because, as we saw, the different versions seem to be of different strength. Alternatively, we might think that Quine has not found the notion of "intensional structure" worth bothering about; one is sympathetic to this attitude. But this does not silence the disharmony that arises from Quine's attempt to fusion the indeterminacy thesis with a proposition about practical translation. We return to this in §1.4.1.

There is yet another kind of meaning that should be distinguished from the kind of truth value meaning that the indeterminacy thesis is concerned with. I do not know that there is a special term for this kind of meanings, or indeed that the distinction has been explicitly drawn. I shall call them "*thought meanings*" and contrast them with "*logistic meanings*".

Both thought meanings and logistic meanings are truth conditions; the difference is that thought meanings are much more *fine grained* than logistic meanings. Whereas logistic meanings are known as being what is invoked to explain analyticity and mathematical deductions, it needs to be said what thought meanings are supposed to do. I do not know how to do this briefly, but I will make rough explanation in the following footnote.³

1.4 Dissatisfying formulations

Quine has on different occasions formulated his doctrine of indeterminacy differently: as a thesis about practical translation, as a thesis about manuals' usefulness, and as a thesis about conservation of stimulus meaning. I will analyse these three formulations in turn and argue that they are all unsatisfactory in that they do not have any direct consequences for the notion of analyticity, as was intended. (§1.4 is a critique over the appropriateness of certain formulations, but as I stated earlier, I make no claim as to whether Quine has formulated an interesting indeterminacy thesis incorrectly or an uninteresting thesis correctly, though I believe the former.)

1.4.1 Ordinary translation

When Quine presents his thesis he makes it seem as if it were a thesis about ordinary translation, but a little reflection suffices to realise that ordinary translation is not what he has in mind. For a translation to be correct in the ordinary sense, it has to obey a multitude of irrelevant constraints like conservation of phrase structure, frequency of use, emotional connotation, cumbersomeness of pronunciation etc., which are to be taken into account when the correctness of a translation is to be determined. When I say "irrelevant", I mean irrelevant for the issue of whether a manual conserves logistic meaning, i.e. truth conditions, or not. For example, would a manual that translated an official document issued by the French government about the costs to society of sex crimes and ways to prevent them be considered correct if it had all technical terms for money and kinds of sexual abuses replaced by corresponding colloquial English expressions in such a way as to make the text ridiculous and obscene? Would a translation of a foreign university-level textbook on mathematics be correct if all propositions were translated into "Three plus eight equals eleven"?

From these examples it is clear that a manual may conserve truth conditions yet be incorrect as a translation in the ordinary sense. So if the incompatibility of Quine's rival manuals consists only in that their fusion would be an incorrect translation manual in the ordinary sense of the word, this does not imply that they are incompatible in the relevant way, i.e. that their fusion does not conserve truth conditions. On the other hand, manuals that conserve truth conditions as far as that is determined by naturalistic criteria, and could candidate to be instances of indeterminacy of translation, will in many cases be ruled out because they are not correct as ordinary translations. They may equate sentences with different emotional connotation, for example. So there is no obvious relationship between indeterminacy of practical translation and indeterminacy of translation of logistic meanings. Thus it is unfortunate to give the thesis the appearance that it is a matter of practical translation.

As an aside, we may note that it seems plausible that there is at least a little indeterminacy of ordinary translation. For often, surely, a translator has two or more alternatives as to how to render a foreign expression that occurs repeatedly in a text; all alternatives may be acceptable, but only if the same expression is used consistently, throughout the text, to replace the nonvarying formulation in the original.

1.4.2 Useful translation

Sometimes Quine speaks as if *usefulness* were the criterion of manual correctness.⁴ A manual is said to be correct if it "promotes smoothness of conversation and success in negotiation". This is a property that comes in degrees, and an indeterminacy thesis that employed this notion of correctness would spell something like "There exist two manuals (between two languages) that are both very good at promoting conversation such that their fusion is very bad at doing that". As regards this formulation, let us first notice that when examining the usefulness of a manual, what we primarily look at is not a correlation of sentences, i.e. the abstract object of a set of ordered pairs, but rather the tokens which manifest this abstract object.

Consider a computer program that translates German into English. Suppose that it yields exactly the same output as a skilled human translator using the standard manual, except that it prefixes a "It is not the case that" to every sentence. Such a program, if you could invent it now, would make you a millionaire. It is certainly very useful, since it need only be supplemented by another simple program, or an

uneducated secretary, that removes the prefix, in order to render a cheap and elegant translation of any document whatsoever.

This example shows that if the thesis is not to be trivialised (as Massey's manuals would do, if they were admitted as correct; see §2.1.2.1) then the utility condition must be construed so as to exclude the "It is not the case that"-manual from being useful. What sophistry could avail us here? Perhaps we might argue that in the example what was *really* being used and found useful was not the "It is not the case"-manual but the standard manual, because the standard manual was what defined the way in which the speakers' dispositions were being correlated. In passing by, before we follow this suggestion to see where it leads us, let us mention that many irrelevant contingent factors are powerful determinators of a manual's utility. Just to name one: the standard manual has the great privilege that every other manual would force us to relearn. Such factors should in any case not be allowed to play a role in deciding which truth values a sentence has. (See §2.2.2.)

Now to correlating dispositions. This idea is interesting also apart from the attempt to block the reductio of the utility criterion. The idea is that what determines the correctness of a translation manual is the way it correlates *dispositions*. What we would *like* to say is that it is the conservation of thoughts or intentions associated with sentences that make manuals correct, but we must look for a kosher substitute. The naturalistic counterpart to intention is some kind of *dispositions*. But not *any* notion of disposition will do. People may have different dispositions and mean the same thing. And there are linguistic dispositions that concern features other than meaning, e.g. spelling etc.

A large part of Quine's work has investigated into exactly which sorts of language behaviour and dispositions might determine meanings, to the extent they are determined, and how. Let us therefore move on to that part and conclude that formulating the indeterminacy thesis in terms of manuals' usefulness is not a good idea.

1.4.3 Concrete examination of evidence available to translator

I think that the preceding two interpretations are not fair to Quine. His indeterminacy thesis is quite intricate, and it does not have the character of a logical or philosophical proposition, but is more like a rationalised description of the principles involved in actual translation and language learning.

In *Word and Object* as in later works, Quine presents his thesis by first describing what sort of evidence a radical translator has to go on and then proclaiming that this evidence is not enough to fix a unique

correct manual. Hereby he sets forth a thesis which consists of two parts: (1) The claim that all relevant evidence has been described; (2) The claim that there are divergent manuals which are compatible with the described evidence.

If we interpret “divergent” as “differing in truth conditions”, then this formulation would be quite acceptable (modulo the vagueness as to *how* divergent the manuals have to be) if the description of the relevant sorts of evidence were sufficiently precise. But Quine’s description of the evidence available is not sufficiently precise. Quine does not make it clear what, exactly, counts as evidence for a manual’s correctness; to the extent to which this is undefined, to that extent is the indeterminacy thesis vague.

Without going into details, let us quickly review what Quine has done to delimit the evidence that determines correctness. Translation of observation sentences is generally determined, because we all have an “uncanny knack for empathising another’s perceptual situation”⁵:

The linguist notes the native’s utterance of “Gavagai” where he, in the native’s position, might have said “Rabbit”. So he tries bandying “Gavagai” on occasions that would have prompted “Rabbit”, and looks to natives for approval. Encouraged, he tentatively adopts “Rabbit” as translation.⁶

Translation of truth functional constructions of observation sentences are also relatively safe:

Our linguist then goes on tentatively identifying and translating observation sentences. Some of them are perhaps compounded of others of them, in ways hinting of our logical particles “and”, “or”, “but”, “not”. By collating the situations that command the native’s assent to the compounds with the situations that command assent to the components, and similarly for dissent, the linguist gets a plausible line on such connectives.⁷

And then? What can the linguist do with the other sentences?

He can keep a record of these unconstrued sentences and dissect them. Some of the segments will have occurred also in the already construed observation sentences. He will treat them as words, and try pairing them off with English expressions in ways suggested by those observation sentences. Such are what I have called analytical hypotheses.⁸

The crucial word here is “suggested”...

Let us consider, then, what constraints our radical translator can bring to bear to help guide his conjectures. Continuity is helpful: successive utterances may be expected to have some bearing on one another. He will favour translations that ascribe beliefs to the native that stand to reason or are consonant with the native’s observed way of life. But he will not cultivate these values at the cost of unduly complicating the structure to be ascribed to the native’s grammar and semantics, for this again would be bad psychology; the language must have been simple enough for acquisition by the natives.⁹

Considerations of the sort we have been surveying are all that the radical translator has to go on. This is not because the meanings of sentences are elusive or inscrutable; it is because there is nothing to them, beyond what these fumbling procedures can come up with. Nor is there hope even of codifying these procedures and then *defining* what counts as translation by citing the procedures; for the procedures involve weighing incommensurable values. How much grotesqueness may we allow to the native’s beliefs, for instance, in order to avoid how much grotesqueness in his grammar or semantics?¹⁰

The last two sentences here are curious – this talk about “weighing incommensurable values”. The idea, one could think, is that some manuals are better in some ways and other in other ways, so that what we need is not a single concept of “absolutely meaning conserving manual” but rather a family of concepts of “manual conserving those and those features of the expressions”. It is not evident how this, even if true, would make it impossible for us to define a notion of manual correctness in terms of the cited procedures. We could have, and indeed we have, several notions of correctness of translation: translations true to the letter, translations true to the author’s intention, translations that yields texts that have an effect on the intended audience that is similar to the effect the original text had on its target group, etc. So this sort of pragmatic diversification can’t be what the passage is controverting.

What, on the other hand, could be thought to really make impossible the use of Quine’s description of the field linguist’s procedures to define a reasonably clear notion of manual correctness is that it might seem too vague. It does not specify, for instance, how much grotesqueness we may allow to the native’s beliefs in order to avoid how much grotesqueness in his grammar or semantics; or does it? Well in fact it does, though not as explicitly as one could wish. The cue is the word

“psychology”: we should ascribe to the natives exactly those beliefs which it is psychologically plausible that they have¹¹; we should ascribe to them a semantics which assigns those meanings to their expressions which it is plausible that the expressions have. -And what evidence should count? -All. -And how should it be weighted? -In accordance with the rules of rationality and our concept of meaning. In the next subsection I will explain what I mean by this. In any case, unless one takes on a mentalistic approach of this sort, it is not well defined by the cited procedures what evidence should determine a manual’s correctness and in what ways. Therefore the indeterminacy thesis is not well defined either, in Quine’s presentation.

Let’s dwell a little on this point. Consider the questions: “Why on earth should a manual be respected for making successive utterances have some bearing on each other? Where do all of these criteria come from? Why may we use some criteria but not others in determining the correctness of a manual?”. I do not know that Quine has an answer to these interesting questions.

What we want is thus *a criterion for which criteria to apply*. My explication of the thesis in the next section will give such a criterion and allow us answer those embarrassing questions in a satisfactory way. My approach is natural and straight-forward, as we shall see; it was hinted at above when I spoke of psychological plausibility.

1.5 A better formulation of the indeterminacy thesis

The morale of §1.4 is that Quine’s naturalistic formulations of the indeterminacy thesis do not express what was intended. In this section a non-naturalistic formulation will be suggested which is claimed to be more adequate. In the next section it will be shown how to derive a naturalistic formulation which is roughly equivalent to the mentalistic one, sufficiently close to equivalent to serve Quine’s purposes.

When Quine formulates his philosophy and in particular his doctrine of indeterminacy of translation he takes heed lest he should use any of those notions he dismisses, e.g. “meaning”, “analyticity”, “possible world” etc. Not that he never uses any of these words; but he avoids using them except where it is obvious how to replace them with Quine-acceptable terms or where merely a colloquial hint is intended and nothing is strictly claimed. This is as it should be, for it would be dubious moral to demand the exclusion of certain words from the philosophical vocabulary and go on using these very words as building blocks in formulating ones doctrines. However, for those not persuaded of the impermissibility of the terminology, no reason exists for not employing it

in their own philosophy, even when that philosophy deals with the possibility of indeterminacy of translation. In fact, the issue of indeterminacy can be made clearer if access to the classical semantic vocabulary is granted. So long as the words “meaning”, “synonymy” etc. are used with care, they can be utilised also in communicating with convinced Quineans. For Quine does not claim them to be *totally* incomprehensible: some things said by sentences involving these words are quite substantial; only those myriads of sharp distinctions required for upholding a working notion of analyticity are not to be had. But in order to state something like Quine’s thesis, no such fine-grained distinctions need be made. That the following non-naturalistic formulation could be Quine-acceptable is supported by the fact that it can be transformed into a naturalistic formulation, as we shall see in the next section.

The claim that lies at the bottom of Quine’s pronouncements is, I think, the following: between two natural languages manuals can be set up such that (1) they differ as to which logistic meanings have the expressions in the second language that the manuals yield as translations of given expressions in the first language; and (2) they are correct in the sense that if only the totality of naturalistic data is taken into account then they qualify as falling under our notion of a logistic meaning conserving manual.

This explication appeals to an unexplained “notion of logistic meaning conserving manual”, so it is not very informative, it does not take us far. But it does have the merit of getting things right from the start; if everyone had taken this formulation as their starting point when specifying the indeterminacy thesis, many an absurd argument for or against the thesis would not have been expressed. We will see examples in §2.

In the present context it is useful to think of a notion in the following way. A notion is the mental equivalent to a definition. The notion of a bear, for example, is a cluster of fairly consistent beliefs of the form “x is a bear iff x has the property A to the degree a and the property B to the degree b; x is a bear iff x has the property B to the degree b’ and C to degree c; x is a bear iff...” The notion is thus a set of connected beliefs about the membership criteria to “bear”, and “bear” may either be taken as the word “bear” or as nameless mental “button” (which, when pressed, activates all the beliefs in the notion of bear, and other beliefs in addition). Just as a purported definition can be inconsistent, so can also a purported notion be inconsistent: we may then call it a confusion if the inconsistency is serious enough (i.e. if sufficiently great adjustments in the cluster of beliefs are necessary to make it consistent).

Now, one belief which is certainly an important part of our notion of logistic meaning conserving manual is that sameness of logistic meaning is a transitive relation. So if it could be shown that the indeterminacy thesis, as stated above, is true, then, under the assumption that naturalism in linguistics can be shown to be mandatory, as Quine thinks, it would follow that our notion of logistic meaning is inconsistent; if there is much indeterminacy, then it is seriously inconsistent and our purported notion of logistic meaning amounts to a confusion. Thus, in our formulation, the indeterminacy thesis has the devastating consequences for the purported notion of analyticity which Quine assumes it has.

1.6 A naturalistic indeterminacy thesis

What are we to say about the mentalistic formulation of the indeterminacy thesis if it is true? Is it then nonsensical or confused?! Well, it would be a matter of degree. Anyway, we may avoid such problems by opting for a naturalistic formulation instead. This alternative should be especially attractive to people who, like Quine, believes in indeterminacy of translation.

The naturalistic version I am about to propose is coarser than the mentalistic one, but if Quine is right in thinking he has discovered a phenomenon which is so abundant, he does not have to tinker with subtleties and borderline cases: it suffices for him to draw a broad distinction in naturalistic terms: the rival manuals he has in mind should fall far within the boundary of empirical admissibility but far outside the border of equivalence of logistic meanings. The following formulation illustrates what I have in mind: between two natural languages manuals can be set up such that competent, well-informed speakers of English will confidently assent to (1) the sentence “The purported notion of logistic meaning conserving manual contains a belief according to which these manuals qualify as falling under it, if only naturalistic data are taken into account.” and also to (2) the sentence “But the purported notion of meaning conserving manual also contains a belief according to which the fusion of these two manuals does not qualify as falling under it.”

Here the word “confidently” is to be understood in such way as to rule out small fluctuations and confusions on part of the “competent, well-informed” speakers. It looks as if we tried to smuggle in the forbidden notion of meaning, in the form of an appeal to competent speaker’s linguistic intuitions, but the point is that we could let “confidently” be a very restrictive property, since all borderline cases, which would have to be correctly decided upon for a notion of synonymy

to be definable in terms of “confidently”, all these borderline cases can be disregarded by our notion of “confidently”, because the manuals in question are such that the relevant sentences are very confidently assented to by competent language users. In other words: the divergent manuals Quine imagines should be so obviously correct and incompatible that one would need only a small fraction of the discerning abilities of the notions of “logistic meaning conserving manual, as concerns naturalistic facts” and “manuals differing in their assignments of logistic meaning” to determine that they were correct; this fraction can easily be provided by a naturalistic formulation ,p>. This naturalistic formulation serves the purpose of explaining how the indeterminacy thesis could be expressed if it is impermissible in general to use the notions “meaning” and “part of our concept” etc. My formulation is an alternative to those of Quine, which we found to be inadequate. Quine has criticised Naess’s semantic method of seeking answers to questions about synonymy through distributing a questionnaire to ordinary language users:

And now the test suggested is that we ask the natives the very question which we do not understand ourselves: the question for which we ourselves are seeking a test. We are moving in an oddly warped circle.¹²

Does the same critique apply to my suggestion? To some extent it does. However, one must bear in mind that what I am seeking here is not a definition of synonymy or a general criterion of what is part of the meaning of an expression: I am looking at a particular case and I’m only interested in certain broad features of the term that the natives are supposed to have an opinion on. I do not care whether their opinion is prejudiced or well-grounded. What is necessary, however, is that the right sort of explanation precede the query; else the subjects will not count as well-informed. One could for example choose a number of intelligent individuals and quote some passages from classical logical positivist writings; then present to them an alternative translation manual between two languages they know. Finally one put the specified sentences to them, asking for their assent or dissent, allowing them time to reflect before delivering their answer. A procedure along this line could surely be stated in naturalistic term, and if the non-naturalistic formulation of §1.5 is adequate, then we have good reason to believe that such a naturalistic explication would also be extensionally equivalent. (We have good reason to believe this even if we do not yet have good reason to believe that the thesis is false or to believe that it is true.) I call the technique (cheat-

technique) involved in my naturalistic formulation *the method of pragmatic assent*.¹³

I said that to some extent Quine's critique over Naess' method also applies to my suggestion. This is to the extent to which: speakers would have difficulty to understand the question, different speakers would answer differently, and their answers would tend to vary with details in the presentation preceding the query. I suggest that this extent is not so wide as to prevent my naturalistic formulation from being an acceptable surrogate for the non-naturalistic formulation of the indeterminacy thesis. I do not think that there is a practically pervious way of providing a better naturalistic formulation other than along the line indicated. I also think, however, that except where it is necessary to do otherwise, it is better to use the non-naturalistic formulation.

In the remainder of this paper I take the "indeterminacy thesis" to be understood in the way I have just explained.

2. REFUTATION OF SOME ARGUMENTS FOR OR AGAINST THE INDETERMINACY THESIS

Many arguments have been advanced for or against the indeterminacy thesis. In this chapter I shall review some of them, the most important ones, and I shall try to show that all of them are flawed. Moreover, several of these arguments betray serious misunderstandings of the thesis, and I shall point out as we go along how such confusions would have been avoided had the formulation I suggested been adopted.

2.1 Refutation of some arguments in favour of the thesis **2.1.1 An insufficient argument for the indeterminacy**

One argument for the indeterminacy thesis takes the following form. (1) The only naturalistic criteria for what truth conditions a sentence has, are through those of its empirical consequences which a subject can test by a short series of observations (a sort of verificationism). (2) But these are not sufficient. (Something like this argument can be read into *Word And Object*)

The reason for (1) is that: (1.1) Only the observation consequences will effect the speakers' dispositions to assent to or dissent from a sentence when faced with a stimulation within the "modulus"¹⁴; and (1.2) Such effects are the only relevant ones because our only source of information is the speakers' dispositions to react to stimuli, and (1.2.1) Only stimulus of a *short* interval can be used since there is no guarantee

that the meaning of a sentence for a speaker will not change during a long period of stimulation.

Reasons for (2) could be (2.1) full-scale examples, but such may be tedious to construct; or (2.2) indications or proofs that there must be such examples.

We could call (1.2.1) an argument that the *noise level* is too high. It is obviously a matter of degree how effective a physicalistic explication can be made for abstracting changes of logistic meaning for a speaker from changes of his other beliefs.

Briefly, the reply to this is that we are still waiting for (2.1) or (2.2). In particular one should be keenly aware of the possibility that the truth conditions of a theoretical sentence could be derived from the meanings of its words, while the words derive their meanings from their relations to words that occur in observation sentences. The inner parts of language may thus be uniquely determined, as to their meaning, by their interconnections to other inner parts and ultimately to those parts that lay on the surface of language and are immediately determined by their connections to external stimulation.

2.1.2 Putative examples of divergent manuals

One way of arguing for the indeterminacy thesis is to present examples of correct divergent translation manuals (2.1). Let us briefly review some of the most important suggestions for such examples.

2.1.2.1 Massey's manuals¹⁵

Massey has devised three manuals, the “dualizing”, the “contradictory” and the “Cretan”, that conflict radically with the standard manual but which he nevertheless claims to be correct. When we would say that a speaker asserts S, the dual manual holds him to deny the dual to S¹⁶; the *contradictory manual* holds that he denies the negation of S; the *Cretan manual* that he asserts the dual to S but that he lies whenever we would say he speaks the truth.

The correctness of these manuals is of the same sort as the correctness of a physical theory that says that bodies dropped near the surface of the earth fall upwards, and prescribes that we by “upwards” should understand: downwards. Massey's manuals would prove indeterminacy only if it could be shown that “assent” and “dissent” are not reasonably clear terms anchored in some physicalistic facts. Quine's case would be weak indeed, if it depended upon such a lemma.¹⁷

From the point of view of my §1.5-interpretation of the thesis, this reply is straightforward. In order to instantiate indeterminacy of translation, Massey's manuals would have to satisfy the second clause of the definition, i.e. they would have to qualify as falling under our notion of a logistic meaning conserving manual if only the totality of naturalistic data is taken into account. But our notion of meaning is surely such that it would be psychologically extremely unlikely that everybody in a language community went around constantly telling lies to one another. (We have to involve psychological theory since from a meaning assignment alone, no observational consequences about the behaviour of the speakers can be derived.) So the only way for the proposed manuals nevertheless to satisfy the second clause is through the notion of lying, or the notions of assent versus dissent, to have no anchoring at all in naturalistic facts. This assumption is then easily seen as gratuitous.

2.1.2.2 Duality in projective geometry (Frege)

In one axiomatization of geometry one can interchange the words "plane" and "point" throughout the axioms without changing their truth values. As Kirk has correctly pointed out¹⁸, this is only because the terms "plane" and "point" are uninterpreted in that axiomatization. It has not been shown, for example, that it is correct to suppose that someone says he sees a "plane" when he is looking at the figure of a point.

2.1.2.3 Poincare's example of underdetermination of theories of physical space¹⁹

The example is that a theory asserting that physical space is spherical and finite and that bodies shrink uniformly as they approach the borders could be specified so as to be empirically equivalent to a theory that says that space is infinite and bodies do not thus change their size. Yet, the finite space would have a centre, a singular point, which the infinite space would lack. So the two theories would be logically incompatible, *assuming that all notions they involve are thoroughly meaningful*. The suggestion is that divergent but empirically correct manuals could be established between the terms of these two theories. But if this is to suffice to establish indeterminacy of translation of ordinary language, those of the theories' notions that are also used in other contexts would have to be translated compatibly with these other usages; it is not obvious that one could do so. And if, instead, the theories' notions are disconnected from ordinary language, then great care have to be taken that they do not get confused with associations belonging to the

terms' usage in ordinary language (as was the case with "plane" and "point" in §2.1.2.2).

It is pertinent to issue a general warning against mathematical examples intended to prove counterintuitive propositions of nonformal concepts: they tend to benefit from the ambiguity between an intuitive notion and its formal explication.

2.1.3 An argument based on a false principle of belief attribution

It has been stressed by Davidson, and Quine also, that assignment of meanings to sentences is closely intermingled with assignment of beliefs to speakers.

What beliefs should we ascribe to a person? Some philosophers say we should apply the principle of charity, others suggest that *those* beliefs should be ascribed to a subject which it would be most rational for him to have. The truth, however, is that we should ascribe exactly those beliefs to a subject which it is *psychologically plausible* that that subject has under the circumstances in question. It is a task of the psychologist to find out which beliefs a person holds. Another question is what we should mean by "believe"; to answer that question the philosopher and the psychologist may work together in an investigation of what concept of believing we most need in our understanding of the world. The principles of charity and of rationality are only rules of thumb that perhaps in many cases approximate what is psychologically most plausible; whenever those principles yield verdicts that conflict with what we think reasonable, we should simply disregard them, because they derive their authority solely from being approximations to psychological plausibility.

To adopt the principle of rationality as one's codex of belief attribution can influence one's evaluation of the evidence in favour of the indeterminacy thesis. One might be misled to reason like this: "Our theories are underdetermined by all possible data, i.e. there are several equally simple but mutually incompatible theories that equally well explain our observations; therefore we have no rational reason to prefer one of these theories to another; therefore we may correctly be assumed to hold any of these theories (according to the principle of rationality); thus there is no fact of the matter as to which one of several mutually inconsistent beliefs we hold, and so it is likely that there will be indeterminacy as to which opinions we express and what propositions we assert."

2.1.4 Pressing from above and from below

We come now to Quine's own arguments. He says that there are two ways of pressing the doctrine of indeterminacy of translation:

The "pressing from above" is the argument that: the same old empirical slack, the old indeterminacy between physical theories, recurs in second intention. Insofar as the truth of a physical theory is underdetermined by observables, the translation of the foreigner's physical theory is underdetermined by translation of his observation sentences. If our physical theory can vary though all possible observations be fixed, then our translation of his physical theory can vary though our translations of all possible observation reports on his part be fixed. Our translation of his observation sentences no more fixes our translation of his physical theory than our own possible observations fix our own physical theory.²⁰

There are three reasons why the pressing from above need not necessitate acceptance of the indeterminacy thesis. First, it needs the support of the underdetermination thesis, which is controversial. From the assumption that a physical theory is underdetermined by all possible observation, a solid verificationist would draw the conclusion that not all terms in the physical theory are thoroughly meaningful; he would rather welcome Quine's argument as a justification for his verificationism in this case.

Second, even if the truth values of some theoretical sentences are not determined by an assignment of truth values to all observation sentences, indeterminacy for those theoretical sentences still doesn't follow. For instance, the two theories which are equally justified by all observations might have different structures: they might employ unisomorphic machineries of abstract entities to produce their observation consequences. It is not implausible that the structure of the theories are reflected in their formulations in such a way that this may be used to determine which theory the speakers entertain.

Moreover (third reason), there might be psychological considerations as to which one of several beliefs, equivalent as to which expectations of observations they generate, that a given speaker has in mind and intends to express.

By "pressing from below", Quine means pressing whatever arguments for indeterminacy of translation can be based on the inscrutability of terms. The well-known "Gavagai"-example was intended as an example of such inscrutability. Quine tells us that his readers "have

responded with suggestions of how, with the help of screens or other devices, we might hope to give the native informant an inkling of the desired distinctions and so settle the reference.”²¹

But the most we can hope from the screens and kindred aids, then, is an indirect hint as to which of various analytical hypotheses regarding pronouns, identity, plurals, etc. might in the end work out most naturally. When this kind of hint is available, should we say that the supposed multiplicity of choices was not in fact open after all? Or should we say that the choice is open but that we have found a practical consideration that will help us in choosing? The issue is palpably unreal, and the doctrine of the indeterminacy of translation depends in no way upon it.²²

“Palpably unreal”? I would say that it is a question of whether an explication of “meaning” involving such considerations would be adequate. The indeterminacy thesis “depends in no way upon it”? If the meaning of terms were fixed, then the only way for the meaning of sentences *not* to be fixed would be through indeterminacy of the contribution to logistic meaning by modes of composition. But it scarcely seems plausible that the indeterminacy of translation could derive solely from the absence of any fact of the matter as to which meaning a mode of composition generates out of given meanings of the constituents. There are relatively few basic modes of composition, and these can often be easily studied when they operate upon terms whose meanings generate sentences whose meanings can be determined by a field linguist theory. In fact, Quine does not mean that the indeterminacy thesis in no way depends upon the inscrutability thesis, for later on the same page he continues:

The *gavagai* example had only this indirect bearing on indeterminacy of translation of sentences: one could imagine with some plausibility that some lengthy nonobservational sentences containing *gavagai* could be found which would go into English in materially different ways according as *gavagai* was equated with one or another of the terms “rabbit”, “rabbit stage”, etc.

The pressure is not compelling. Even if we grant the indeterminacy of reference, this is still no reason to accept indeterminacy of logistic meanings. The only argument in this passage from the former to the latter is the statement that “one could imagine with some plausibility that ...”.

I am aware that these refutations seem very hasty and maybe trivial. But then again: so are the arguments they refute. Adopting my interpretation of the thesis would seem to lessen the temptation of a simple proof or disproof. The thesis in my formulation looks like something substantial, controversial and important. Maybe it seems counterintuitive, but as we shall now see it is not so easy to prove that it is false.

2.2 Refutation of some arguments against the thesis

2.2.1 How the indeterminacy could go unnoticed

Prima facie, we have little reason to suspect any considerable flexibility in our translations; and we need an explanation of how there could be such without our noticing it (before Quine pointed it out).

Consider two languages with only a few sentences each, of the kind that very small children may have. Here all sentences are high on observability, and means of variation and construction are very sparse: there is no indeterminacy of translation. If we add a single term, there will probably still be no indeterminacy. We can go on adding term after term, and for some time there will be only one acceptable translation manual, since it will take a while before the domain gets big enough to allow those “compensatory moves” that will be necessary to adjust a rival manual. But according to Quine, there comes a time when the structure of the theoretical sentences will possess not only one but two or more “stable states” (i.e. be such that several radically divergent but empirically adequate translation manuals could be set up between them). In practice, the translation will remain in its original state -that state is, after all, stable; but there will be other stable states as well, and it is a matter only of historical contingency that the translation ended up in that stable state. We could start up a completely new interpretation, and if we started it off from a certain other domain, it would end up in a stable state different from the first one. (This is the crucial fact overlooked by Robert Kirk in his refutation of the indeterminacy thesis.)

Thus translation of sentences would be relative to stable states, i.e. translation manuals. To paraphrase Quine, it is not the translation of a single sentence but only translation of a language as a whole that faces the tribunal of experience. One reason why indeterminacy was not easy to discover, then, is that a developing translation tends to remain in its stable state, and that all translations in practical use between a given pair of languages are, in fact, developments from a single *Urübersetzung* between those languages, which may perhaps have evolved as the languages themselves developed out of a common ancestor. “Radical

translation is a rare achievement, and it is not going to be undertaken successfully twice for the same language.”²³

A second factor that may account for the absence of divergent manuals, and which I think more potent than prejudice, is that there are other pragmatic considerations, not essential to synonymy, that decide which translation we adopt, beside the consideration that the traditional manual is the best since it does not force us to relearn. For example, words that are used frequently should be translated into words that are frequently used.

Since my formulation speaks of *logistic meanings*, not usage or linguistic roles, and since it does not appeal to the usefulness of manuals, it would seem that it minimises the risk for improper considerations of this sort to infect our judgement about whether there is indeterminacy or not.

2.2.2 Not considerations about language learning

Another way, which does not look promising, of explicating correctness of translation is through considerations about *language learning*. “If an expression *e* in language A is rendered as an expression *e'* in B, then *e* and *e'* should be learned at approximately the same stage in the typical language user’s language acquisition process.”

First, it is not clear that this move would expel the indeterminacy. Second, I think the language acquisition process is one of those lower level features of language behaviour that is idealised away in the higher levels of description, where the notions of “correct translation” and “equivalent sentences” belong. A sentence has the same logistic meaning independently of whether it is generally learned in the ordinary way or through a \$10 quick-learning cassette course or through the consummation of a fancy “language pill” ,p>. This would be yet another example of how we could go astray through a lack of understanding of exactly which criteria are relevant.

2.2.3 Not straightforward pragmatic considerations

Given only Quine’s formulation of the indeterminacy thesis, one could be tempted to interpret “empirically correct manual” as referring only to those manuals that would really be a good choice for a translator. Or at least, one could define a notion of correctness to denote only the pragmatically best translation manual, and then one could regard this as an explication of “correctness” that would escape the indeterminacy and which we could be happy with.

However, as we saw in §1.2, the term “correct” as used here is tied to the notion of logistic meaning, and so any explication of “correctness” must really be an explication of “logistic meaning conservation” if it is to serve in a formulation of the indeterminacy.

But simply looking to the manual's usefulness is not justified from the meaning conservation point of view. For a typical pragmatic reason for the preferability of one manual over another is that by some historical contingency we have become accustomed to the former but not the latter; which is irrelevant to the issue of which expressions in the languages that really are synonymous with which.

There is, of course, the possibility to formulate an indeterminacy thesis in term of usefulness, as we saw in §1.4.2. In that case one should probably settle for something more sophisticated than common usefulness; e.g.: “tends to be a useful manual in those and those respects”.

2.2.4 Bennett's argument

A naturally occurring argument against the indeterminacy thesis is set forth in the following quotation from J. Bennett:

The “reverberations across the fabric” [of that system of interconnected sentences which constitutes our language and theory] have their own detectable pattern; and the two translations of [the tribal sentence] S cannot both be secure unless E1 and E2 [two nonequivalent English translations of S] both reverberate in precisely the similar ways. For example, if any experiences would render problematic the acceptance of E1 but not that of E2, then there could be behavioral evidence favoring the translation of S by one of them rather than by the other. Or if E1 were relevant to some theoretical issue, while E2 did not have an exactly analogous relevance to an exactly analogous theoretical issue, then again there could be a basis for preferring one translation. In short, every single fact about E1 must be mirrored by a fact about E2. By any reasonable standard, therefore, the two sentences are synonymous, and so the indeterminacy of translation thesis is false.²⁴

“Reverberations across the fabric” sounds physicalistic; “relevant to some theoretical issue” sounds as if it presupposes a classical notion of interlinguistic meaning. This is the crux. The argument is that for E1 and E2 to be correct translations of S, they have to “reverberate in precisely the similar ways” as S. If by “reverberate in precisely the similar ways” you mean: play exactly the same linguistic role (i.e. being used in exactly the same way) then what your requirement is naturalistic, but so strong

that no sentence can be correctly translated by any sentence, except itself. That would clearly be unreasonable. If, on the other hand, you mean that the two sentences must have the same theoretical implications, then you are assuming what you set out to prove, namely that sentences have a well defined set of truth conditions associated with them in a naturalistically scrutable manner. In either case the argument fails. There is no other obvious interpretation of “reverberate in precisely the similar ways” than these two. One hope that no one working with my explication of the thesis would produce an argument like this one. I submit, though, that it might sound rather convincing if one is not clear over what the indeterminacy thesis really says.

2.2.5 Robert Kirk’s attempt to prove determinacy

Robert Kirk claims to have refuted Quine’s thesis of indeterminacy of translation.²⁵ I will here discuss the core of Kirk’s argument which is set forth in his book *Translation Determined*, chapter 11, where he intends to demonstrate domestic determinacy, i. e. that no two translation manuals from one natural language to the same language can satisfy all Quine-acceptable constraints and yet be incompatible with each other. This, together with the claim (which Kirk argues for earlier in the book) that indeterminacy of translation implies domestic determinacy, has as a consequence the negation of Quine’s indeterminacy thesis.

Kirk asks us to imagine a “twin-language” to English, “Martian”, which is so defined that “all relevant facts about it about behavioural dispositions, brain states, and whatever else Quine will accept as facts are exactly like relevant facts about English, except that each Martian morpheme is the reverse of its m-correlate [where “m” is the “morpheme-to-morpheme correlation under which Martian and English are translatable.”²⁶].”²⁷ The word corresponding to “bird” is “drib”, and so forth. The argument then proceeds by an attempt to justify the claim that there is a possible procedure of learning a natural language which can be regarded as progressing in small minimal steps, “minimal in the sense that the increment constituted by a given step cannot be regarded as consisting in its turn of the successive acquisition of semantically relevant increments.”²⁸ Kirk goes on to describe one such route for learning English and one for learning Martian. Emma and Marcia are two children learning to speak their native languages, English and Martian, respectively; and they are exactly similar in all their dispositions etc., except that Emma is disposed to utter “bird” whenever Marcia is disposed to utter “drib” and so on. As a starting point Kirk takes the stage at which

Emma and Marcia each have an active vocabulary of about 200 basic expressions, such as two year children can have, and some simple construction means whereby they can form sentences such as “Adopti book” (=I’ve dropped it: the book) or “Ere-e-is, bird” (=There it is: a bird). Kirk believes that Quineans would concede that Emma’s and Marcia’s utterances are “too simple, and too closely keyed to publicly checkable circumstances, to leave room for the sorts of compensating adjustments that would be required for the construction, within these rather limited language fragments, of permissible rivals to the ultra-simple morph-for-morph manuals that gives such perfect results here.”²⁹ In order to expand the determinacy of these fragments, Kirk first considers what would happen if Emma and Marcia had such phrases at their command as “We say that ‘___’ when” and “The new predicate applies to ___”. In that case Emma and Marcia would be able to extend their languages by definitions and explanations of new expressions, e.g. colour words or ‘atom’, and this would involve no indeterminacy that was not already in the language, since “she could always replace any sentence in which they occurred by a sentence in which they were merely mentioned”³⁰. Kirk goes on to argue:

obviously there is no reason why colour words or “atom” should not have been introduced *before* the languages included that simple semantic vocabulary. Nor could the determinacy or indeterminacy of translation of sentences including colour words or “atom” depend on whether or not those words happened to have been introduced with the aid of semantic words. For the question whether translation between a given pair of languages is subject to the indeterminacy is to be settled by the actual character of those languages at whatever stage they may have arrived, regardless of the route by which that stage was reached.³¹

So the simple fragments of Emma’s and Marcia’s can be extended in such a way that no new indeterminacy is incurred; and since there was no indeterminacy in the translation between the original fragments, by induction there can be no indeterminacy in the translation between the whole languages either, thus no domestic indeterminacy at all.

The part of Kirk’s argument just explained covers 21 pages in his book; clearly, he is in great pain to make his argument watertight. There seems, however, to be a silent consensus that he has failed (I’ve never heard anyone mention his proof). The first objection that comes to one’s mind is that there might be some unnoticed build-up of looseness of fit

that eventually allows room for the horse to turn in its box. Kirk has anticipated this and prepared a reply:

given that assumption [that English can be acquired by a succession of small “steps”] the objection would only work if we could do exactly the same sort of thing for a non-standard rival to T [the standard translation] as my argument does for T. For clearly, if a rival to T is permissible at all, there must be exactly the same possibility of building up this rival manual by successive increments as there is for the case of T itself. I believe my argument rules out this possibility because at each stage T_n supplies *exact* versions ____, while no exact rival versions are permissible.³²

I think that Quine would agree that if we could supply a definition of every theoretical sentence in terms of logical constructions of observation sentences (if an complete Aufbau could be successfully erected) then nothing would stand in the way for indeterminacy of translation to be explicated away straight forward. It is an integral part of Quine’s doctrine that a complete Aufbau is impossible. Theoretical expressions are not generally reducible to logical constructions of observation sentences. If one wants to squeeze out the empirical content of theoretical sentences, one has to make them relative to the theory formulations in which they occur. One could then define the meaning of a theoretical sentence as the set of all ordered pairs whose first component is a set of sentences and whose second component is the set of all observation sentences the sentences in the first component implies if taken in conjunction with the sentence whose meaning is being defined; or something like that. This would dispose of indeterminacy of translation but only at the price of making theoretical sentences untranslatable.

It is therefore a flop in Kirk’s argument that it presupposes that more advanced language games can be defined in the observational vocabulary of a two-year-old. Ideally, she may be able to explain her new linguistic tools, but that is not enough: for the argument to hold, she would have to be able to define them. An explanation leaves it to the other girl to form some conception of the new word or sentence. There is no reason why there should not be different conceptions, intuitively speaking, which would enable her to communicate successfully with her extraterrestrial sister.

This difference in conceptions would not show up until their languages had developed to the stage at which alternative ways of talking about the same things begin to be feasible. It is therefore possible that the

requirement that manuals have to be a closure of some manual between these simple language fragments would indeed prevent indeterminacy. But this is, in effect, just to impose constraints of language learning; I argued in §2.2.2 that this would be impermissible.

3. INDETERMINACY OF REFERENCE AND SOME RELATED TOPICS

3.1 Indeterminacy of reference and indeterminacy of logistic word meaning

A logistic meaning is to a sentence what x is to a word. What is x ? Not the denotation of a word, for what corresponds to that is the *truth value* of a sentence. We can know the logistic meaning of a sentence without knowing its truth value, and we can know x , the logistic meaning of a word, without knowing what it denotes. We do not know which things are blue although we understand the predicate. Just as the logistic meaning of a sentence is its truth conditions, i.e. a function from possible worlds to truth values, so the logistic meaning of a word (or formula) should be taken as its denotation conditions, i.e. a function from possible worlds to denotations. The logistic meaning of “blue” is a function that takes out the set of objects that are blue, given a complete totality of facts.

A analogue to the thesis of indeterminacy of logistic meanings (by which we have hitherto meant: logistic *sentence* meanings) now comes spontaneously to one’s mind: the thesis of indeterminacy of logistic word meanings. It is to be formulated in exactly the same way as we defined the thesis of sentence meaning indeterminacy in §1, just disambiguate that formulation in the obvious way.

Ontological relativity, or Quine’s thesis of indeterminacy of reference, is something else. It differs on two accounts. First, it concerns *the actual denotation*, not the denotation *conditions*, of words. Second, and more importantly, it seems to be disconnected from our intuitive notion of reference. The thesis is that there are divergent acceptable ways of assigning denotations to predicates. But here “acceptable” means simply: conserving truth value of all sentences.³³

I will return to Quine’s ontological relativity in a moment, but first I wish to speak of my own thesis of indeterminacy of word meaning. In this case, as opposed to the one with the thesis of indeterminacy of translation, I am not suggesting that my formulation is an explication of Quine’s thesis; it is simply another thesis.

First we make some distinctions. We note that, just as was the case with the indeterminacy of logistic meaning, indeterminacy of

reference may come in degree. We may say that there are theses of *amounts* of indeterminacy of reference: how many and how wild can the correct “proxy functions”, i.e. permutations, be? There is also the possibility of microindeterminacy of reference, and this problem is as pressing as the corresponding problem for logistic meanings. How does it come about that two ostensions of the same bear pick out *exactly* the same object rather than just almost completely overlapping spacetime regions? I think this problem can be solved in the same way as the problem of microindeterminacy of logistic meaning, but it should be distinguished from theses of various amount of macroindeterminacy of reference.

Further, we must determine whether or not it is permissible to invoke intuitions as criteria for whether an assignment of denotations is correct. This is obviously a very essential issue.

To begin with, it must be understood that to appeal to intuitive notions of this and that is not necessarily to beg the question from Quine. There are three regulations to observe however, if such an appeal is going to be successful. (i) If you argue that something falls under a concept, then you must give *naturalistic* data according to which it does so. This is because of Quine’s naturalism. (ii) You must recognise that the fact that x falls under the purported concept Y does not imply that x does not fall under the purported concept not-Y. This is because a purported concept need not be a concept: it may be inconsistent. If e.g. the term “meaning” leads to confusion, this is the state of affairs one should expect. This regulation holds generally, not only in a debate with Quineans. (iii) You should be prepared to meet a demand to translate your jargon of notions and concepts into naturalistic terms. Regulation (i) said that, given a concept, only naturalistic facts should determine whether something falls under it; regulation (iii) says that only naturalistic facts should determine what the “concept” is in the first place. This regulation is lifted if it is supposed that semantic eliminativism is mistaken. Even if that is not supposed, (iii) could still be suspended. One would then have to reckon that what is said may be partially meaningless, but this need not prevent that some useful points could be made.

As long as (i)-(iii) are respected, nothing prohibits a thesis or an argument that appeals to intuitions from being fully acceptable from a Quinean point of view. The thesis of indeterminacy of translation is an example, at least under my §1-explication.

So there is no obstacle to formulating a thesis of indeterminacy of word meaning in analogy to the thesis of indeterminacy of logistic sentence meaning we presented in §1. What we require of an assignment

of word meanings to predicates is that it conserves word meaning in the intuitive sense as far as this is naturalistically determinable.

Back to Quine's ontological relativity.

We may now ask what may be the philosophical significance of the thesis of indeterminacy of reference, interpreted so as to be proved by the presentation of any proxyfunction. Does it show (a) that there are incompatible theories of reference, all of which are equally adequate, albeit we have happened to choose one particular theory by opting for our actual notion of reference? Or does it show (b) that there is no fact of the matter as to which sense of "reference" we are using?

I think it does not show (b) because in order to prove that the purported notion of "reference" is merely purported, it is not enough to show that there can be divergent denotation assignments conserving the truth values of all sentences; one would also have to show that conserving truth value of all sentences is sufficient for an assignment to be correct in the intuitive sense, as far as this is naturalistically scrutable. That has not been shown. There is no obvious reason why there may not be determining criteria hooked directly onto words.

I think it does not show (a) either. (a) would in effect be a case of underdetermination of theory by data, underdetermination of the countless possible theories of reference. I will say more about the relation between indeterminacy and underdetermination in §3.4, but it should be clear in any case that two theories which have exactly the same structure and are straightforwardly intertranslatable should not count as examples of nonequivalent theories. That would make the underdetermination thesis trivial and uninteresting: it would amount to nothing more than the truism that the same word (sign) can be used in different senses. Now, this is precisely what we have here: two theories with exactly the same structure, straightforwardly intertranslatable via the proxy function. In other words: proxyfunctions do not prove that there are empirically equivalent nonequivalent theories, because the theories to which they give rise are equivalent.

Nor does the thesis of indeterminacy of reference have any obvious bearing on the thesis of indeterminacy of translation. As regards my thesis of indeterminacy of logistic word meanings, on the other hand, there exists such a connection. If we assume, as seems reasonable, that the meaning³⁴ of a sentence is uniquely determined by the sequence of its words and the meanings of these words, then indeterminacy of translation implies indeterminacy of word meanings. (Since the order of words in a sentence is surely scrutable and since that order plus the meaning of the words would determine the sentence's meaning, it is evident that that if the sentence's meaning is not determined, this can

only be so because the meaning of the words is not determined.) This assumption is reasonable because the way in which word order contributes to sentence meaning seems to be naturalistically scrutable. There is a limited number of construction rules, and they can often be tested in cases where they are applied to sentences whose meanings are naturalistically scrutable to yield sentences whose meanings are directly naturalistically scrutable. In those cases the effect of the operation stands out clearly, and one can readily generalise to more complicated cases.

The converse is not obviously true; indeterminacy of word meaning could cancel out so that sentence meanings were still determined.

3.2 Is it a matter of degree?

What the indeterminacy thesis is intended to bring out is not so much that there is a considerable zone of fuzziness and arbitrariness in the determination of the meaning of many a sentence, but rather that the issue whether a certain sentence can be assigned a certain meaning is dependent upon which meanings are assigned to other sentences. This is the point of semantic holism. A corresponding proposition holds for the thesis of indeterminacy of reference.

At the same time one feels that any nontrivial indeterminacy must be a matter degree – just how confused is the notion of meaning. Especially my explication brings this conclusion near at hand: it must be a question of more or less, not of yes or no. But the holistic scenario seems to indicate that indeterminacy tends to come in blocks, so that it is a discrete phenomenon after all. How are we to resolve this conflict? There are at least two natural ways of specifying a degree of indeterminacy.

First, there is the question of *which* expressions can be divergently translated. Is it only highly theoretical sentences or does the indeterminacy reach down to common standing sentences or even some observation sentences? Or is it even limited to particularly obscure statements in philosophy or psychology and other soft sciences? This is clearly one relevant variable; any exact thesis of indeterminacy of translation would have to specify its value, i.e. make clear exactly which set of sentences is submitted to indeterminacy.

Second, we may ask: how drastically do we have to change our notion of meaning in order to cure it from inconsistency. This is a second variable that determines exactly what the indeterminacy thesis says. Quine suggests that we have to make meanings relative to translation manuals. That would surely be a very drastic modification: so drastic that

it is better to say we have another concept, not a new version of the original one. But it could also happen that we would need only to make some small adjustment in order to expel the indeterminacy, perhaps regard some expressions as ambiguous in unexpected ways.

If we regard our purported notion of meaning as fixed, then these two variables are not independent. An indeterminacy thesis would be specified as soon as we fixed the value of one of them, since they are related via the purported notion of “meaning”. Given that we know this purported notion and the set of expressions which can be divergently translated, we should in principle have at least a rough idea of what modifications would be necessary to eliminate the indeterminacy. And given that we know what changes are required, we could figure out which translations they would render incorrect and so which expressions were struck by indeterminacy before the changes.

So our intuition that indeterminacy must come in degrees and the appearance of its being a discrete phenomenon can be reconciled. If the indeterminacy is such that it can be removed by making some minor changes to our notion of meaning, then we might say that there really isn’t any indeterminacy, we have just been somewhat confused about what “meaning means”. If, on the other hand, a complete transformation of our purported notion is required, we would instead admit that there were no such notion at all. The outcome is thus discrete, though the underlying phenomenon comes on a continuous scale. There will, of course, be vagueness as to exactly how much confusion a concept can be said to accommodate: when it ceases to be real and becomes merely “purported”.

3.3 Vagueness, epistemic holism and indeterminacy

Suppose you open a philosophical journal at random and read one sentence in the middle of a section. The sentence is grammatically well-formed, but is it true or false? For many sentences, you would not know this *not only because your philosophical insight is imperfect, but also because it would be very difficult to know what the author meant by that sentence without having read the rest of the text.*

The typical situation for a philosophical argument is that you cannot determine whether it is valid or at which step it goes wrong, until you know what it is aiming at, what it is supposed to prove. Only that determines the exact content of every intermediate stage of the proof.³⁵

Is this a symptom of holism? Yes, but not necessarily *semantic* holism, of the strong sort that is claimed by the indeterminacy thesis. Let us suppose that the indeterminacy thesis is false. The way I would then

prefer to think about the phenomenon I illustrated, epistemological holism, is as follows. At least in philosophy and other soft sciences, many sentences seems to be highly vague, or *ambiguous*, and there are two equivalent ways of describing this situation.

One way is to make the meaning of such sentences relative to contexts. Theoretical sentences do not have a private fond of observational consequences they can call their own but obtain empirical significance only when taken in conjunction with other sentences. This means semantic holism, but not in the strong sense, for there is another, equivalent, description which does not relativise meanings.

This other way is to insist that each sentence has a meaning on its own. We must then take the meanings of theoretical sentences to be quite diffuse and “spread out”, so to speak; but that need not deter us. Given the holistic description, it is trivial to transform it into an particularistic one. Simply define the meaning of a theoretical sentence, as, e.g., a function from contexts or theories (taken to be equivalence classes of sets of sentences under the synonymy relation) to more definite meanings. This obviously presupposes that there is no indeterminacy of translation, since otherwise the synonymy predicate will not be well defined. But if the indeterminacy thesis is false, the road seems paved to an intuitively plausible meaning assignment which does not make reference to particular theories or contexts.

Thus the thesis of epistemic holism, while plausible in the moderate form advocated above, does not imply that there is indeterminacy of translation or semantic holism in the strong sense. The implication *does* seem to obtain in the opposite direction. If there is indeterminacy of translation, then we would certainly not expect that soft science sentences could generally be verified or falsified one at a time, without considering them as part of a theory; for if that were possible, they would succumb to a determinate translation by the same clause that except observation sentences from the indeterminacy. What the thesis of epistemic holism amounts to is something like the claim that stimulus meaning falls short of being a reconstruction of logistic meaning. That is a necessary but not sufficient condition for indeterminacy of translation.

3.4 Underdetermination and indeterminacy

The thesis of underdetermination of theory by data, maintained by Quine, is that there are logically incompatible but empirically equivalent theories. *If* one may use the term “logistic meaning” then this boils down to saying that there are contingent nonempirical facts. (By empirical we mean: in principle possible to verify or falsify by

experiment.)³⁶ The underdetermination theory is thus equivalent to the negation of some form of verificationism, under the assumption that it makes sense to talk about such things as logistic meanings.

But suppose now that Quine is right about indeterminacy of translation. The problem is that the underdetermination thesis seems to be *nonsensical* if neither “empirical content” nor “logical incompatibility” make sense! Whether we say: “there are logically incompatible but empirically equivalent theories” or we say: “there are contingent nonempirical facts”, we are talking nonsense if the indeterminacy thesis is true. (I here refer to the thesis I formulated in §1.5 or §1.6; but the same holds for Quine's indeterminacy thesis if I am right in claiming that it should be construed in such a way as to imply that it does not make sense in general to talk about interlinguistic, absolute synonymy, analyticity etc.) So how are we to understand the underdetermination from a Quinean perspective?

As far as I can see, what remains of the underdetermination thesis after the elimination of the terminology that presupposes the coherence of the notion of meanings is the claim that there can be two theories exploiting very dissimilar abstract machineries but fulfilling the same explanatory and predictive purpose. “Very dissimilar” and “the same” are to be taken in some vague intuitive sense. If worst comes to worst, we can always fall back on the method of pragmatic assent to define some rough material equivalent.

In order for such a thesis to be really interesting, it would be necessary to make more precise what we mean by “very dissimilar”: whether it is true or false certainly hinges on what we are prepared to count as very dissimilar.³⁷

Underdetermination does not by itself imply indeterminacy of translation; that we saw in §2.1.4. Now we have just seen that indeterminacy of translation would make it necessary to reformulate the underdetermination thesis. Whether indeterminacy of translation would bring with it underdetermination depends upon how different are the various rival translations, whether they would count as “very dissimilar”. It also depends upon whether they would fulfil the same explanatory and predictive purposes: typically, perhaps, the rival manuals would each have a distinct set of virtues, making them suitable for different objectives, so that they would not constitute an instance of underdetermination.

3.5 My opinion

I do not think that the notion of meaning is so confused that we should cease using it; indeterminacy of translation is at worst of a modest degree. Meanings will do more good than harm, especially if we are aware that in particular among the more abstract parts of discourse there might be some arbitrariness in the assignment of logistic meanings to sentences. Quine's reasonings may serve to alert us of this condition.

I am not in sympathy with those philosophers who use arguments based on the theory of classical semantics, its mentalistic side, to downplay the philosophical significance recent developments in neuroscience. I think that just as Carnap's philosophy was in some sense succeeded by Quine's, so may Quine's find its transfigured continuation in neurophilosophy and AI. Quine's verdict on Paul Churchland's latest book "an outstanding philosophical achievement"³⁸ indicates that *il Maestro* shares this view, that the naturalisation of epistemology and semantics, and even ethics and aesthetics, are to be pursued in terms of neural networks and other concepts from the converging lines of research in the cognitive and brain sciences and AI.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Quine, W.V., *Word and Object*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1967, pp. 55–56.
2. Quine, W.V., *Pursuit of Truth*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1990, p. 37.
3. First we make meanings relative to interpretations. Everything means anything, but according to different interpretations. This pencil here has the meaning "It will rain tomorrow" according to an interpretation that assigns that meaning to it; according to other interpretations it means other things. An interpretation is just a function from objects to truth conditions. Then we can have theories about these interpretations. These theories may contain a predicate "Correct interpretation(x)", but these predicates are relative to theories. (I speak of theories here in the sense of "systems of doctrine or belief" rather than in the logician's sense, "set of sentences".) So in general we have the predicates "Correct interpretation in the sense of theory #1 (x)", "Correct interpretation in the sense of theory #2 (x)", etc. One of the most important fields for which such a theory containing a correct-interpretation predicate is suitable is the field of human behavior, or many aspects thereof. It is obvious that we need several theories of human behavior, or rather several levels of explanation which may be integrated and reduced in an overall theory. (The reason, of course, is that the amount and kind of information available, and the detailedness of the predictions needed, and the amount and type of computational or intellectual power at hand, varies strongly from occasion to occasion. A theory

that is good when we want to understand the details of the co-ordination between eye and hand would be bad when we try to find out in daily life whether someone is likely to respond aggressively to an obstruction, and vice versa.)

One straightforward theory of humans is that they are perfectly rational beings, infinitely intelligent, acting so as to maximize expected utility. To give full content to this theory one has to specify (1) what a person's preferences are, (2) what basic beliefs about data he has, and (3) a canon of rationality. The latter canon could be taken as a law of induction plus logic. Then to predict what his behavior will be, one simply calculates, for each possible action, the probability according to his canon of rationality and the basic beliefs that it should have a certain outcome and multiply this probability with the value he attaches to it. The prediction is then that he will perform that action for which this product is greatest. Is this theory true or false? That cannot be determined until we have made clear what we mean by all the terms in our formulation of it. It is trivial that there is some assignment of preferences, basic beliefs, and canon of rationality that would make the theory yield the right predictions. But if the theory should be of any use, we must know something about which of these assignments we should make. Here is a thing to notice. The theory, or the part of it which can be explicitly formulated, need not say exactly what assignment should be made: that may be left to the judgment and intuition of its users. As long as the theory says something that may be helpful to its users in making this assignment, it may be of value.

So before we can say whether the theory is true or false we have to make some specifications. Let us decide that "preferences" and "canon of rationality" and "basic beliefs" should be understood in the pretheoretic, intuitive sense. The more diffuse this sense, the weaker the theory; but it will not be wholly devoid of might as long as "preferences" and "canon of rationality" are not wholly nonsensical: which they aren't. Now, the theory, as we have formulated it is certainly a poor theory for human beings, (but perhaps not so bad for a chess computer). Many would say that the theory is decidedly false for humans; but I hold that there is one merely moderately stretched sense of "basic beliefs" which makes the theory true, albeit weak.

Let us disregard for the moment that part of the canon of rationality which consists of a law of induction and concentrate on what is derivable from pure logic. Suppose a person's preferences are specified as ordered pairs of a sentence and a number, the number being a measure of the value the person attaches to the state of affairs expressed by the sentence. If we then took the basic beliefs to be exactly mirrored in the atomic sentences the person would assent to, the above theory would be empirically false, if those atomic sentences are understood in the usual way, i.e. when we regard them as carriers of logistic meaning. For people do not possess unlimited intellectual powers, and they often act irrationally, even if we only consider their conscious, deliberate actions. On the other hand, we could stipulate that the atomic sentences the person believes in should be assigned meanings such that the theory holds true about his conscious, deliberate actions. Here we come to the thought meanings. The interpretation of the sentences in which a person believes and disbelieves that makes him perfectly rational is the interpretation which assigns (his) thought meanings to the

sentences. The thought meaning of a sentence varies strongly from individual to individual and from one minute to the next. The thought meaning of a sentence for a speaker at a point of time is the meaning of that sentence in that person's idiolect at that time.

4. e.g. *Ibid.*, pp. 46–47.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

6. *Ibidem.*

7. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

8. *Ibidem.*

9. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

11. I was pleased to find that Quine would use this very term on a videotaped interview, produced by Rudolf Fara. Quine said: "I do not believe in the charity principle; I think that beliefs should be assigned on the basis of psychological plausibility" (I quote from memory, so it might not be verbatim.)

12. Quine, W.V., "Methodological Reflections on Current Linguistic Theories", in *Synthese*, 21, 1970, pp. 386–398, 1970.

13. In analogy to what Quine has called "semantic assent". In semantic assent you simply switch from using a sentence to mentioning it. In pragmatic assent you switch from claiming a proposition to claiming something about peoples' reaction to the sentence supposed to express that proposition. I think that the method of pragmatic assent deserves an investigation of its own, but I will not undertake it in this paper. Pragmatic assent has been used before, in Turing's well-know test for conscious intelligence, for instance; though I do not know that it has been recognised as a general philosophical method.

14. The "stimulus meaning" of a sentence for a speaker is the ordered pair whose first component is the class of all stimulations of an endurance not longer than the time interval called the modulus that would prompt his assent, and whose second component is the set of those stimulations within the modulus that would prompt his dissent.

15. G. J. Massey, "Indeterminacy, Inscrutability, and Ontological Relativity", in *Studies in Ontology*, 12, 1978, pp. 43–55.

16. The dual to a sentence is obtained by replacing all predicates with their inverses (i.e. new predicates true of all and only those objects of which the original predicates were false), all conjunctors by their duals (i.e. "and" by "or"; "or" by "and" etc.; negation remains unaltered), and existential quantifiers by universal quantifiers and vice versa.

17. Of course, Quine does not think it does. (See *The Roots of Reference*, §12, for some naturalistic criteria for assent and dissent.)

18. R. Kirk, *Translation Determined*, pp. 178–182.

19. See, e.g., Quine's "Three Indeterminacies", in *Perspectives on Quine*, p. 13.

20. "On the Reasons for Indeterminacy of Translation", p. 183.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 181.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 182.

23. Quine, W.V., [2], pp. 50–51.

24. J. Bennett, *Linguistic Behaviour*, p. 262.
25. He maintains his claim in an article published in 1993: "Interpretation, Idealisation, and Norms", *Phil. Stud.*, 70(2), pp. 213–223.
26. R. Kirk, [18], p. 214.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 214–215.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 219.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 221.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 225.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 227.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 235.
33. See e.g. Quine, W.V., *From Stimulus to Science*, Harvard University Press, 1995, p. 72.
34. For simplicity I here regard sentences with scope ambiguity or with an otherwise ambiguous surface syntax (e.g. "Every boy in the class is in love with a girl who is older.") as nonambiguous, having as their meanings the disjunctions of the meanings of all their possible disambiguations. Since indeterminacy due to scope ambiguity is not what Quine has in mind and has never been taken as a serious threat against the notion of analyticity, it may be expedient to work with meanings that are defined so as to spare us qualms about that sort of ambiguity.
35. I am therefore slightly pessimistic about attempts to provide strict proofs in philosophy; that a philosophical reasoning is very explicit and progresses in minuscule small steps like Kirk's "proof" of determinacy of translation tends, in my view, often to make it take longer time to see it through. But who can tell? quite possibly philosophy will profit in the long run from what looks like unfruitful formalism and a tedious roundabout way of dealing with things.
36. Why? Well, because of the following argument, which we may also take as a contextual definition of what we mean by the critical terms. Assume that T1 and T2 are logically incompatible. Then there is a sentence S, such that T1 implies S and T2 implies \neg S. Since T1 and T2 are empirically equivalent, S must be nonempirical. S must also be contingent. This is because otherwise S would be either contradictory or necessary. Then one of the theories, T1 say, would be contradictory. But a contradictory theory implies every sentence, in particular $B \& \neg B$, for some observation sentence B. $B \& \neg B$ is empirical, since it can be empirically falsified by verifying B or verifying $\neg B$. However, T2 implies $\neg(B \& \neg B)$, so T1 and T2 would disagree about an empirical sentence, contradicting the premise that T1 and T2 are empirically equivalent. Hence S is contingent and nonempirical. This means that $\neg S$ is contingent and nonempirical. Either S or $\neg S$ is true. Therefore there is a contingent nonempirical fact. Conversely, assume that there is a contingent, nonempirical fact, claimed to obtain by the sentence S. Let $T1 = \{S\}$ and $T2 = \{\neg S\}$. Then T1 and T2 are logically incompatible. Remains to show that T1 and T2 are empirically equivalent. Assume, for a contradiction, the opposite, i.e. that there is an empirical sentence S^* such that T1 implies S^* and T2 implies $\neg S^*$. But then S^* is equivalent to S, so S would be empirical too, contrary to the premise. It follows that T1 and T2 are empirically equivalent and logically

incompatible. Thus the indeterminacy thesis, under this interpretation, is equivalent to the proposition that there is a nonempirical (contingent) fact.

37. More generally, I think holism in any form will always be a matter of degree, and we should not expect that any fruitful discussion of holism is possible without making some effort to give a quantitative specification of what degrees we are talking about. Even more generally, I think that philosophers should try harder to quantify their claims. We are no doubt a long way from treating philosophical problems fruitfully with mathematical formulae and numerical measures: it might not even be possible; but there are other, more modest ways of giving some rough indication of how much there is of something. At the very least, we could state that something is a matter of degree when it is so, and then try to explain the relevant dimensions along which this degree is in principle to be specified. This means starting from a typical philosophical problem and deliberately working our way down towards the empirical science. The opposite movement in philosophy is to staple abstraction upon abstraction, in a scholastic manner, and it too may have some justification; but at the present I think it would be good to have more of the downward inclination.

38. Paul Churchland, *The Engine of Reason. The Seat of the Soul*, MIT Press, 1995, back cover.

Paper presented in 1995 as an MA thesis at the Department of Philosophy in Stockholm University

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GRAMATICĂ ȘI MULȚIMI (I)

HARTLEY SLATER

ABSTRACT. We obtain a better definition of the natural numbers after considering a more elementary case where the language of Set Theory is insufficient to complete an important definition. That set-theoretic language is far removed from the ordinary language of number of things, and even sets of them. The very possibility of there being a number of Ss is contingent, specifically on the term "S" being count.

„Filosofia apare din concepțiile greșite asupra gramaticii“, a spus Wittgenstein. Puțini l-au crezut și probabil nici un filosof al matematicii. Totuși aserțiunea sa este reflectată de filosofia teoriei mulțimilor, și voi încerca să demonstrez acest lucru¹. Justificarea pentru teoria mulțimilor în secolul 20 s-a bazat pe credința că în matematică totul poate fi definit în funcție de mulțimi². Nu doar că sunt elemente notabile ce nu pot fi definite astfel, inclusiv numere și sume mereologice, dar însăși noțiunea de mulțime, precum este formalizată în cadrul acestei tradiții, se bazează pe o serie de confuzii gramaticale.

Obținem o definiție mai bună a numerelor naturale în secțiunea 3, după ce analizăm, în secțiunea 1, un caz mai elementar unde limbajul teoriei mulțimilor este insuficient pentru a completa o definiție importantă, iar în secțiunea 2 cât de mult s-a îndepărtat limbajul din teoria mulțimilor de limbajul obișnuit al numărului de obiecte, și chiar de mulțimi ale lor. Ceea ce este necesar pentru formularea „numărului lui Ss“ este, mai întâi, un termen descriptiv alcătuit din forma generală a cuantificatorilor numerici finiți, stricți „ $(nx)Sx$ “. Dar acest lucru ne conduce să vedem, în secțiunea 4, că însăși posibilitatea existenței unui număr al lui Ss este contingent, specific asupra faptului că termenul „S“ este socotit, și astfel o analiză completă trebuie și să considere când un asemenea termen nu determină o unitate. Secțiunea 5 definește detaliile acestei distincții dintre termenii numărabili și alții, iar asta duce, în secțiunea 6, la o re-evaluare a necesității numerelor infinite. Urmează, în secțiunea 7, un argument substanțial privitor la gramatica specifică a tăieturilor Dedekind, și clasele de echivalență ale succesiunilor numerelor raționale Cauchy ca opuse numerelor raționale și iraționale.

1. Mulțimi ordonate

Un caz binecunoscut ce include concepții gramaticale eronate acoperă variate opțiuni sugerate, în teoria mulțimilor, pentru mulțimi de

identificat cu numerele naturale. Benacerraf a scris un articol formidabil în 1965, arătând că nici o asemenea identificare n-ar putea fi corectă, dar poate fiindcă nu a oferit nici o identificare corectă el a lăsat impresia că rămâne pur și simplu o alegere privitor la care mulțimi sunt numerele naturale. Totuși, s-a sugerat prin urmare că fundamentele aritmeticii se află în teoria mulțimilor, iar acum ne dăm seama că sunt posibile diverse fundamente. O abordare recentă, totuși, precizează cu prudență că doar „mandatarii“ sau „substituitele“ numerelor naturale sunt implicate în variate fundamente ale teoriei mulțimilor, spune Potter³, care subliniază și că aspecte similare apar și în cazul simplu al mulțimilor ordonate. Astfel, ne putem începe investigațiile gramaticale la acest nivel elementar.

O pereche ordonată de obiecte este, de pildă, un număr de obiecte, unul desemnat primul, iar altul, al doilea. Dar dacă încercăm să încorporăm această aranjare într-o mulțime adițională spunând, de pildă, $\langle a, b \rangle = \{\{a\}, \{a, b\}\}$, sau, printr-o convenție diferită, $\langle a, b \rangle = \{\{b\}, \{a, b\}\}$, atunci evident introducem relații neintenționate, pe care susținătorii ai diverselor identificări le-ar respinge ca neesențiale sau irelevante.⁴ Astfel, în primul caz de mai sus putem spune $\{a\} \in \langle a, b \rangle$, iar în al doilea, $\{b\} \in \langle a, b \rangle$, dar nu invers. Asta înseamnă că membrii unei mulțimi ordonate sunt o chestiune de opțiune? Firește că nu. Vrem însă să spunem că ordinea în care aceștia sunt analizați este o chestiune de preferință, și nu că membrii înșiși sunt astfel.

Ceea ce n-a funcționat este încercarea de a reprezenta un aspect al unei mulțimi ca o mulțime adițională. O mulțime ordonată nu diferă prin membrii săi de mulțimea neordonată corespunzător; aranjarea doar dă un anumit aspect mulțimii de membri. Tendința de a ignora acest fel de rafinament face parte din filosofia teoriei mulțimilor de acum un veac, care a încercat să vadă mulțimile ca alcătuind domeniul în care poate fi definit absolut orice din matematică. Dar în cazul de față avem nevoie de un limbaj mai bogat, fiindcă spre a ordona mulțimea $\{a, b\}$ trebuie să desemnăm unul dintre a și b ca „primul“, altul ca „al doilea“, și astfel avem nevoie și de expresii pentru asemenea adjective ordinale.

Asemenea adjective ordinale, desigur, nu se referă la mulțimi, deoarece nu se referă practic la nimic, adjectivele fiind descriptive și nu referențiale. Expresiile formale pentru ele se pot obține făcând abstracție de termenii epsilon, totuși, deoarece aceștia au o semantică a funcției opționale, permițând interpretările standard ale „ exSx “, „ $\text{ex}(\text{Sx.x} \neq \text{eySy})$ “ să fie „primul S“, „al doilea S“ ș.a. Asta înseamnă: „primul“ este „ λPexPx “, „al doilea“ este „ $\lambda \text{Pex}(\text{Px.x} \neq \text{eyPy})$ “, conducând în cazul de mai sus la expresii ca $\lambda \text{PexPx}(\mathbb{C} \{a, b\}) = a$ și $\lambda \text{Pex}(\text{Px.x} \neq \text{eyPy})(\mathbb{C} \{a, b\}) = b$, necesare pentru a delimita aranjarea aleasă cu privire la mulțime. Atunci, mulțimea ordonată nu este o mulțime adițională, nu e un obiect, ci doar

un aspect al lui {a, b}, văzut sub aranjarea aleasă despre care discutăm. Ca atare, să observăm necesitatea unui verb în argumentul acestor funcții lambda, deoarece „P“ este o variabilă față de predicate, și astfel legătura este substituțională.

2. Substantive colective și descriții la plural

Dar mulțimea pereche? Este ea un obiect? Autori ca Lewis, Maddy, și acum Potter, au sesizat dificultatea prin identificarea mulțimilor ca un singur element sau, cel puțin, a mulțimilor cu un singur element ai căror membri sunt urelemente. Fiindcă unde sau ce este mulțimea cu un singur element a unui măr? Maddy a ajuns să presupună că ea este același lucru cu mărul însuși. Dar soluția este mai ușor de găsit prin analizarea mai întâi a mulțimilor ce au mai mult de un element, precum perechile.

Cu două mere avem un singur obiect în apropiere, adică suma mereologică a celor două mere. Dar aceasta evident nu poate fi perechea de mere, deoarece întregul ar putea fi dezmembrat în mai multe feluri, iar în câteva în mai mult de două componente. Prin urmare, speranța a fost că trebuie să căutăm altundeva *un alt obiect* care să fie perechea de mere. Dar acest presupus alt obiect este un miraj gramatical.

Avem aici cel puțin trei tipuri de expresii, cu reguli gramaticale destul de diferite, și fără o analiză atentă este dificil să le urmărim pe toate, sau chiar câteva laolaltă. Avem astfel substantive colective ca „banc (de pești)“, „cireadă“, „pereche (de cărți)“, „trib“, substantive colective ca „pereche“, „trio“, „cvartet“, „duzină“, și expresii la plural ca „peștii“, „vitele“, „cărțile de joc“, „sălbaticii“. Din substantive colective de primul tip teoria mulțimilor desprinde ideea colecțiilor de obiecte, dar aspectul distinct privitor la acești termeni ai limbajului natural este că aceștia sunt specii mai mult sau mai puțin determinate ce descriu, fiecare în parte, anumite sume mereologice sub un anumit aspect. Adică principiul diviziunii întregii sume mereologice este prevăzut prin substantivul numărabil adițional cu care ele se asociază curent („banc“ cu „pești“, „cireadă“ cu „vite“, „pereche“ cu „cărți“, „trib“ cu „sălbatici“ ș.a.). Faptul că asemenea colecții sunt sume mereologice este indicat și de faptul că bancuri (de pești), cirezi, perechi (de cărți), triburi ș.a. sunt localizate și se pot deplasa în spațiul fizic precum membrii lor.

Nu se poate spune același lucru cu privire la substantivele colective de cel de-al doilea tip, și nu doar fiindcă o descriție completă a mulțimii intenționate trebuie furnizată — perechea este poate de pești, trioul — de vite ș.a. Întrucât aceste substantive colective pot fi folosite

fără prezența obiectelor fizice, și astfel când nu avem sume mereologice ale acestora. Ca atare, ele doar indică numărul câtorva obiecte, și trebuie să ne amintim gramatica generală a lui „y este unul dintr-un număr de Ss“. Acesta nu este de forma „y ∈ S“, cu un termen singular în locul lui „s“; o formulare precisă ar fi, de pildă, „y este unul dintre 2 Ss“, care-l relaționează pe „y“ la un termen plural, iar originalul este chiar „(∃ n)(y este unul din n Ss)“.

Burgess⁵ opinează că sunt două sensuri ale expresiei „este unul dintre“, astfel că am putea spune, de pildă, „y este un membru al mulțimii de mere“, dar „y este printre mere“, chiar dacă expresiile sunt echivalente. Asta ar permite unui singular „s“ să intre în „y ∈ s“, în timp ce un plural „xx“ intră în „y α xx“. Evident, „y este un membru al unei perechi/al perechii/al acelei perechi de mere“ este echivalent cu „y este printre două mere/cele două mere/acele două mere“, dar „este unul dintre“ ar putea fi folosită în ambele cazuri și cu același sens. Întrucât corespondențele arată că „o pereche/perechea/acea pereche de mere“ se referă totuși la aceleași lucruri ca „două/cele două/acele două mere“ – prima expresie doar se referă la ele (sic) într-un mod diferit, colectiv adică (considerându-le ca pe o unitate). Trebuie să avem grijă ce adăugăm la forma simplă „y este unul dintre câteva mere“: evident „y este unul dintre două mere“ poate vorbi despre aceleași mere, dar este mai determinat cu privire la numărul lor, iar „y este unul dintr-o pereche de mere“ la fel. Dar ultima expresie nu apelează la un obiect adițional „o pereche“ alături de cele două mere, ci doar introduce o anumită evaluare numerică a merelor, considerându-le pe cele două ca o unitate. „O pereche de mere“, cu alte cuvinte, diferă de „două mere“ pur și simplu prin transformarea expresiei „doi ori un măr“ în „unu ori două mere“. Putem calcula cu asemenea unități, socotind pe perechi, dar atunci nu calculăm decât mere; nu calculăm pur și simplu merele individual, pe rând. „Avem două perechi de mere“ spunem, ceea ce este echivalent strict cu „Avem patru mere (individuale)“ sau „Avem un grup de patru mere“. Cuvinte precum „pereche“, „grup de patru“ sunt astfel similare cu „uncie (28,35 gr.)“ și „livră (453,6 gr.) în „Avem opt uncii/o livră de carne de vită“: ele nu se referă la entități adiționale, ci sunt temeiul evaluărilor cantitative. Iată două perechi de litere: ab cd. Observați că fiecare pereche este indicată fără acolade ca în „{a, b}“, întrucât ultima expresie, adică simbolismul curent al teoriei mulțimilor, nu reprezintă mulțimile ca simple numere sau cantități de obiecte, ci ca obiecte independente, distincte de membrii acestora. Totuși, cele patru litere de mai sus, luate ca două perechi, pot fi considerate și ca grup de patru, pe când cele două „mulțimi“ {a, b} și {c, d} nu reprezintă același lucru ca „mulțimea“ {a, b, c, d}. De fapt, nu două

„mulțimi“ pot fi același lucru ca o „mulțime“, ci două grupuri de două reprezintă același lucru ca unul de patru.

Reificarea unei unități de evaluare ca un obiect adițional separat poate apărea prin îndepărtarea diferenței dintre cele două tipuri ale termenului colectiv. Întrucât expresia mereologică „trib“ nu are o referință obiectivă față de un obiect independent, dar expresia „pereche“ are nevoie de ceva în plus, iar atunci, în „o pereche de mere“, ea doar califică substantivul următor. Poate accentuarea termenilor numărabili și eliminarea termenilor colectivi joacă un rol în perspectiva eronată. Fiindcă aceeași chestiune a schimbării unităților apare mai relevant în cazul fracțiilor decât în cel al multiplilor de individuali. În „Am o jumătate de franzelă“ nu există evident o altă referință decât față de pâine; în plus, nu există referință față de vreuna din entitățile obiective adiționale misterioase dintr-un șir: „jumătăți“, „sferturi“, „părți“ ș.a. Există doar o precizare privitor la câtă pâine avem, poate ca o introducere la numărarea jumătăților de franzelă sau la reunirea variatelor părți din franzele pentru a găsi o sumă de franzele complete ș.a.

Putem aborda acum chestiunea a ceea ce este o mulțime cu un singur element în teoria mulțimilor, adică ceea ce ar putea reprezenta „ $\{y\}$ “ sau „ $\{x: x=y\}$ “. În locuțiunea limbajului natural „o mulțime S cu un singur element“, firește, „o mulțime cu un singur element“ pur și simplu o descrie pe S ca fiind singura de tipul său, și nu se referă la un alt obiect. Dar un alt mod de a reprezenta fiind singura S ca „fiind una dintre“ ceva ar putea fi sursa esențială a noțiunii de „mulțime cu un singur element“ din teoria mulțimilor. Întrucât chiar dacă numărul de obiecte care sunt S este chiar unu, atunci putem totuși spune „y este unul dintre acele obiecte care sunt S“, făcându-le *pe acele obiecte care sunt S* ceea ce singură S este unul dintre ele. Dar „este unul dintre“ e atunci urmată iar de un termen la plural și nu de unul la singular. Dacă am citi expresiile abstracțiunilor din mulțime ca asemenea termeni la plural, atunci „ $\{x: x=y\}$ “ ar fi „acele obiecte care sunt y“, permițând „ $y \in \{x: x=y\}$ “ să fie „y este unul dintre obiectele care sunt y“. Însă atunci identificarea unor asemenea „mulțimi cu un singur element“ cu membrii lor individuali, în maniera lui Maddy, ar fi evident negramaticală, întrucât „y este acele obiecte care sunt y“ nu are sens. Într-adevăr, identificarea generală a abstracțiunilor din mulțime cu termeni la plural n-ar putea fi completă, deoarece nu doar „ $y = \{x: x=y\}$ “ ar fi negramatical, ci și „ $y = \{x: Px\}$ “ pentru orice „P“, și deci „ $\{\{x: Px\}\}$ și „ $\{\{x: Px\}, \{x: Qx\}\}$ “, fiindcă acestea din urmă ar trebui să fie „ $\{z: z=\{x: Px\}\}$ “ și „ $\{z: z=\{x: Px\} \vee z=\{x: Qx\}\}$ “. Pe de altă parte, interpretând expresiile mulțimii ca termeni la plural ar rămâne doar individuali și mulțimi ale acestora, ca în perspectiva tradițională. Iar un alt avantaj, după cum sublinia Boolos, ar fi că atunci n-ar apărea problema

russelliană în privința axiomei abstracțiunilor $(x)(x \in \{y: Sy\} \equiv Sx)$, întrucât n-ar exista vreo posibilitate de înlocuire a „ $\{y: Sy\}$ ” cu „ x ”, indiferent de „ Sy ”. Totuși, precum vom vedea, asta nu înseamnă că avem vreo problemă cu această axiomă, chiar ținând cont de forma de plural.

S-ar putea crede că asemenea perspective asupra substantivelor colective și a termenilor la plural presupun că dacă matematica nu poate fi reconstruită în limbaj nematematic atunci ea este neinteligibilă. Dar afirmația este doar că „mulțimile” sau „teoria mulțimilor” nu pot fi interpretate fie în funcție de grupuri de obiecte fizice, fie în funcție de numere de obiecte sau prin transpunerea în expresii la plural. Cu siguranță putem vorbi de simbolism în teoria mulțimilor și de reguli pentru întrebuintarea sa, și poate că e posibilă o anumită interpretare, dar nu una dintre cele tradiționale pe temeiul cărora s-a dezvoltat, iar dificultatea cu care s-au confruntau Lewis, Maddy, Potter ș.a. în privința noțiunii fundamentale de mulțime cu un singur element arată că aceasta nu a fost clarificată.

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traducere de GEORGE LĂZĂROIU

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DEZVOLTAREA FILOSOFIEI LINGVISTICE

MARIN ȚURLEA

ABSTRACT. The central principle of linguistic philosophy is that the traditional problems of philosophy are not genuine problems at all but confusions generated by misunderstandings about language or by the misuse of it. The findings of psycholinguistics strongly support the claim that grammatical information is not merely an artefact of theory but is psychologically real.

Dacă numim <<*filosofie analitică*>> întregul fenomen filosofic ce îl examinăm, iar <<*atomismul logic*>>, <<*pozitivismul logic*>> sunt stadii ale acestei mișcări filosofice, atunci și <<*filosofia lingvistică*>>, numită uneori *analiza lingvistică*, sau *filosofia limbajului obișnuit*, reprezintă un stadiu al evoluției filosofiei analizei. Unii autori îi califică pe filosofii lingviști oxfordieni ca pozitiviști logici, alături de discipolii de la Cambridge ai lui Russell, Moore și Wittgenstein. Oricum, noi am împărțășit clasificarea: *ramura formală* a filosofiei analitice în care vedem inclus pozitivismul logic vienez și continuarea acestei direcții, în formă modificată, în SUA; și *ramura neformală* (filosofia limbajului obișnuit – *analysis of ordinary language*).

Sunt diferențe radicale între *filosofia lingvistică* și *pozitivismul logic vienez*, și, evident, chiar față de *Tractatus*-ul wittgensteinian, și amintim respingerea principiului pozitivist logic al verificabilității, o ruptură marcată prin sintagma „semnificația este uzul“ și nu verificarea. Tematic și metodologic, limbajul obișnuit (și nu cel formal, simbolic) și analiza conferă identitate filosofiei lingvistice. Filosofia lingvistică pretinde să <<*descâlcească*>> confuziile conceptuale ale filosofiei și refuză „*explicațiile*“ și „*reconstrucțiile*“ raționale pozitivist (empirist) logice de tip carnapian, considerând că, pe lângă unele calități, limbajul formal ideal ar avea suficiente defecte, unele proprii.

Filosofii lingviști resping analizele <<*reductive*>> și <<*constructive*>> folosite în exces de empiriștii logici. Analiza lor pare-se pleacă de la teoria tipurilor logice a lui Russell și ținta este identificarea expresiilor folosite sistematic greșit. Această analiză, numit „*conectivă*“, are ca țintă nu atât semnificația, cât *lipsa de semnificație* a expresiilor și combinațiilor acestora. La Ryle, pivotală este „*greșeala categorială*“, munca filosofului relevând aceste „*greșite* attribute categoriale“, corectându-le și „*salvându-ne*“ de lipsa de sens, în final de <<*absurdități*>>, prin înlocuirea unei enunțări eșuate cu una nouă, într-o altă formă a cuvintelor. Insistăm asupra originalității abordării formulate de Ryle prin trasarea unor delimitări față de Russell și

Wittgenstein, accentuând pozitiv și negativ asupra <<greșelii categoriale>>, pivotul metodologic al concepției filosofului oxfordian.

Discutând aspecte ale filosofiei minții (a lui Ryle), dar și ale epistemologiei configurate în *The Concept of Mind* și în alte lucrări, explorăm ceea ce s-a numit <<mitul cartezian>>. Mai puțin influențat de Wittgenstein decât Ryle, Austin, „cel mai rafinat filosof lingvistic“, „doctor subtil al filosofiei analitice postbelice, [...] fără rival în detectarea obscurităților conceptuale ale uzului lingvistic“ a elaborat o interesantă *filosofie analitică conectivă*, respingând, ca și Wittgenstein, metodele de analiză reductivă și constructivă.

Știm că Austin a evitat să formuleze enunțuri generale sistematice despre natura filosofiei. Și totuși, se poate identifica un set de „*contribuții locale*“, „*punctuale*“, „risipite“ în opera lui cu privire la diferitele domenii ale filosofiei. Austin s-a preocupat de tema relației dintre *cunoaștere* și *experiență*; el pleacă de la achizițiile empirismului britanic, care edifica cunoașterea plecând de la datele senzoriale, de la care pornind, prin inferență, se construiesc <<etajele superioare>> ale cunoașterii. Așadar, avem <<*fundatie*>> și <<*inferență*>>; dar când o cunoștință nu este validă, responsabilitatea revine inferenței și nu fundației, este ceea ce se cunoaște sub numele <<*asimetriei*>> privind *certitudinea* cunoștințelor. Austin critică enunțurile cu statut privilegiat, cele referitoare la date senzoriale, declarate ca incorigibile, și deci infailibile. Critica lui Austin vizează acest concept-cheie de *dat senzorial* (*sense-datum*), dar ținta acestei critici merge mai departe – *verificaționismul*, mai ales cum era configurat la Ayer. O ultimă problemă care conferă un loc distinct lui Austin în peisajul filosofiei lingvistice este teoria actelor locuționare și ilocuționare ca „Prolegomene“ la *Principia Gramatica*.

P.F. Strawson, filosof al logicii și metafizician, profesor la Universitatea din Oxford, are ca specific, contra-distinct de Wittgenstein și Austin, „o afinitate specială cu filosofia lui Kant“. Menirea filosofiei – <<*maxima generalitate*>> kantiană – este cercetarea „caracteristicilor structurale generale ale gândirii noastre“, detectate prin reflecție aplicată asupra funcțiilor fundamentale ale discursului. Pentru Strawson, <<*metafizica descriptivă*>> are sarcina cercetării funcțiilor fundamentale ale discursului sub supoziția condițiilor generale în prezența cărora sunt efectuate.

P.F. Strawson s-a ocupat în mod special de teoria russelliană a descripțiilor în directă legătură cu referirea. Strawson susține că referința unei expresii care referă unic variază contextual, vezi exemplul „actualul rege al Franței“; Frege insistă asupra unei relații normale dintre semn, sens și referința acestuia: semnului îi corespunde un sens definit, iar

acestui, o referință dată. Dacă Frege privilegiază *sensul* sau judecata, Strawson accentuează importanța enunțului.

Dar P.F. Strawson este cunoscut mai recent prin introducerea de către el a termenului <<*metafizică descriptivă*>>, care descrie „structura actuală a gândirii noastre despre lume“, în acest sens lucrarea lui *Individuals* fiind, poate, cea mai reprezentativă. Această metafizică descriptivă este abordată astăzi în contrast cu <<*metafizica revizionară*>>, să spunem de tip *whiteheadian*. Strawson se alătură lui Ryle și Austin în atitudinea de a respinge *analiza reductivă* și *constructivă*, excelența concepției carnapiene, el practicând ceea ce a numit <<*analiza conectivă*>>, metafizica lui descriptivă nedeosebindu-se în mod esențial de *analiza conceptuală* sau *filosofică*.

Ceea ce le este comun filosofilor oxfordieni este *stilul de filosofare anti-metafizic*; desigur, în interiorul acestui mod de gândire urmează să distingem particularitățile filosofiei oxfordiene care o separă de pozitivismul logic. Deși, ca și empiriștii logici, Strawson respinge vechiul stil metafizic de gândire, care concepea filosofia ca o „*supraștiință*“ posesoare a unor intuiții despre *realitatea ultimă* (sau, mai precis, despre natura ultimă a acestei realități), și, în mod radical, dezavuează metafizica atomismului și chiar a *Tractatus*-ului wittgensteinian, el este un <<*oxfordian*>>, care reabilitează termenul <<*metafizică*>>, fapt cu adânci rezonanțe în actualitate, în principal și datorită <<racordării>> la tradiția clasică a filosofiei.

Dar Strawson a fost preocupat și de o explicație a *naturii generale* a filosofiei, prilej cu care el cel puțin sugera că este necesar studiul problemelor fundamentale ce aparțin *metafizicii, ontologiei, epistemologiei și filosofiei limbajului*, ca să ne oprim aici, constatând că demersul este „*trasat*“ ca „o înaintare de la *global* la *local*, de la general la specific, de la schiță la detaliu“.

În încheiere, amintim substanțiala sa sugestie referitoare la imaginile filosofiei, a *gramaticii* și cea a *terapii*. Remarcăm faptul că optica de înțelegere a relației dintre metafizică și știință, după care „filosofia ca metafizică este un accident istoric, ce îi știrbește din <<*generalitatea eternă*>>, <<*atitudine-concepție*>> susținută de <<*metafizica revizionară*>> (a lui Whitehead), a fost respinsă de P.F. Strawson: *filosofia analitică* <<*igienizează*>> intelectul, îl face conștient pe specialist de întrebuițarea unor concepte (considerate comune, cotidiene), ca *explicație, demonstrație, concluzie, cauză, eveniment, proprietate, ipoteză, evidență* și altele, și îl avertizează în privința uzului onest în cadrul comunității științifice căreia îi aparține. Și acest lucru ar trebui mai puternic prețuit.

LA SPÉCIFICITÉ DE LA CONCEPTION DELEUZIENNE DU CORPS

GEORGE LĂZĂROIU

ABSTRACT. The body in the world is the example that illustrates that between the visible and the invisible the relation is one of “embrace”. There is no thetic thought, but only a particular thickness that defines flesh. In the body-world relation, good dialectic, as permanent annulment of its own position, is present.

Le corps deleuzien conserve ses organes, mais ceux-ci sont désorganisés par les forces qui le traversent, interrompant ainsi le processus d'agencement en organisme des organes. Le corps humain sais comme un ensemble ne se définit ni par ses facultés biologiques puisqu'il est désorganisé, ni par des attributs intellectuels ou cognitifs comme ceux de la perception et de la sensation. Le corps propre des phénoménologues est pleinement vivant en ceci qu'il est parfaitement organisé pour la constitution ou la fusion pathique. Le corps sans organes libère le corps de ses contraintes organiques en le faisant participer aux mouvements des forces chaotiques, elles-mêmes affranchies de toute loi déterminable. <<Le corps sans organes ne manque pas d'organes, il manque seulement d'organismes, c'est-à-dire de cette organisation des organes>>¹.

Le corps n'est pas idéalement connecté avec l'extérieur puisque le désir avec lequel il se confond fonctionne toujours comme une machine susceptible de se détraquer à tout moment. Deleuze oppose le cinéma d'action au cinéma du corps. Les cinéastes du corps font de la monstration des actes corporels un enjeu second par rapport à la captation en images des passages entre deux postures. L'action est organisée jusqu'à former une unité, tandis que le corps se découvre à chaque fois de nouvelles capacités qui l'empêchent de trouver un état stable. La manque d'horizon de l'écran constitue pour Deleuze un gain pour la pensée; Deleuze voit dans le cinéma, présent en acte, l'évanouissement du monde. <<Le cinéma ne se confond pas avec les autres arts qui visent plutôt un irréel à travers le monde, mais il fait du monde lui-même un irréel ou un récit: avec le cinéma, c'est le monde qui devient sa propre image, et non pas un image qui devient monde>>². Le concept de la perception exige d'être polarisé et il est encore trop rattaché à l'idée d'un travail de l'intellection. Deleuze a décidé de doubler son étude de la perception d'une analyse de la sensation, davantage liée au champ affectif.

Les forces vitales activent les diverses parties du corps sans organes en se distribuant de manière aléatoire en lui. «Le corps sans organes est un corps affectif, intensif, anarchiste, qui ne comporte que des pôles, des zones, des seuils et des gradients. C'est une puissante vitalité non-organique qui le traverse»³. Deleuze admire les personnages de Beckett qui s'acharnent à épuiser les possibilités liées aux attitudes corporelles, de la claudication à la reptation, qui sont autant de potentialités contenues dans l'espace. Le corps sans organes deleuzien conserve ses organes; ce sont seulement les connexions entre les organes qui ne sont plus adéquates à l'idéalité fonctionnelle du corps. Les facultés constituante et fusionnelle sont réparties de façon homogène dans le corps phénoménologique, tandis que les forces externes qui pénètrent le corps deleuzien le désorganisent constamment⁴.

Deleuze maintient l'opposition rationnelle et traditionnelle entre l'immanence et la transcendance. Les lois de fonctionnement des singularités qui peuplent le plan deleuzien d'immanence ne réfèrent toujours qu'à elles-mêmes en étant soumises à un principe d'individuation⁵. L'événementialité deleuzienne de l'expérience s'oppose à la recherche phénoménologique des conditions générales de l'expérience qui fondent une théorie de la connaissance⁶. La conscience est assimilée à une image parmi d'autres, lumineuse certes, mais qui n'éclaire rien, qui n'a aucun privilège sur les autres images⁷. L'activité n'est pas de l'ordre d'un volontarisme émanant d'une forme d'intériorité. «Nous ne croyons plus à un tout comme intériorité de la pensée, même ouvert. Nous croyons à une force du dehors qui se creuse, nous happe et attire le dedans»⁸.

Les singularités se produisent à travers un processus d'individuation non plus dominé par un principe d'auto-organisation évolutive, mais plutôt par des lignes de forces chaotiques et désorganisantes qui traversent la matière organique en obligeant les corps à produire de nouveaux systèmes singuliers de lois⁹. Il y a une capacité créative chez le sujet qui est en mesure de transformer la réception du donné pour en faire une croyance ou une invention. L'activité véritable correspond au travail des forces du dehors qui conditionnent les rencontres involontaires entre les corps en les amenant à contracter de nouvelles habitudes au gré d'une expérimentation des puissances du désir machinique. Nous vivons dans un monde où le visible et ce qui peut en être dit atteignent une pureté d'indépendance qui échappe à toute forme de convergence, y compris à la convergence intentionnelle¹⁰.

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CHOMSKY ON LANGUAGE, MIND AND KNOWLEDGE

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ABSTRACT. Chomsky develops a theory of linguistics as a discipline of natural sciences or physical sciences, which are empirically based. In syntax the basic data admitted by Chomsky include pretheoretical facts about what is and what is not a sentence in the given language.

Chomsky generalizes his idea of UG, especially the process of parameter determination in acquiring a particular natural language for a subject. "This result of this process of parameter determination and periphery formation is a full and richly articulated system of knowledge. [...] The same may well be true of large areas of what might be called 'commonsense knowledge and understanding'."¹ The nature of knowledge, closely tied to human knowledge in general, makes it a logical step for Chomsky to generalize his theory to the study of the relation between language and the world, in particular, the study of truth and reference. Chomsky has a machine in his mind, which is analogous to the language acquisition device: "An engineer faced with the problem of designing a device meeting given input-output conditions would naturally conclude that the basic properties of the output are a consequence of the design of the device."²

Substantive universals concern the vocabulary for the description of language and a formal linguistic universal involves the character of the rules that appear in grammars and the ways in which they can be interconnected. Chomsky does not accept the suggestion that knowledge of language should be taken to be an abstract "Platonic" entity. "Knowing everything about the mind/brain, a Platonist would argue, we still have no basis for determining the truths of arithmetic or set theory, but there is not the slightest reason to suppose that there are truths of language that would still escape our grasp."³ The input during the period of a natural language acquisition is circumscribed and degenerate; the output cannot be accounted for by the learning mechanism only, such as induction and analogy on the input.

One task of the brain sciences is to discover the mechanisms of brain that are the *physical realization* of the state *SL*. "Linguistics, conceived as the study of I-language and So, becomes part of psychology, ultimately sciences insofar as mechanisms are discovered that have the properties revealed in these more abstract studies; indeed, one would expect that these studies will be a necessary step toward serious investigation of mechanisms."⁴ Harman rejects Chomsky's theory of

innate structures. “I view linguistics, it is closer to both anthropology and the behavioral sciences that he would apparently allow. Nevertheless, I think that what is significant in his paper is the fact that he believes that a genetic account is relevant to certain fundamental epistemological questions lying at the foundation of language.”⁵ Chomsky treats the innate idea as a fixed form, which resembles rationalist doctrine of ideas. Chomsky criticizes the lack of physical, empirical aspects of Cartesian rationalism. “The far-reaching studies of language that were carried out under the influence of Cartesian rationalism suffered from a failure to appreciate either the abstractness of those structures that are ‘present to the mind’ when an utterance is produced or understood, or the length and complexity of the chain of operations that relate the mental structures expressing the semantic content of the utterance to the physical realization.”⁶

Philosophical grammar is “typically concerned with data not for itself but as evidence for deeper, hidden organizing principles,”⁷ and is “very much like current generative grammar, developed in self-conscious opposition to a descriptive tradition that interpreted the task of the grammarian to be merely that of recording and organizing the data of usage — a kind of natural history.”⁸ Chomsky develops a theory of linguistics as a discipline of natural sciences or physical sciences, which are empirically based. “In the sciences, at least, disciplines are regarded as conveniences, not as ways of cutting nature at its joints or as the elaboration of certain fixed concepts; and their boundaries shift or disappear as knowledge and understanding advance.”⁹

There is a level of “deep structure” which separates a semantic component of a language from a syntactic component: the insertion of lexical items into a sentence would all take place at a single point in the “derivational history” of each sentence, all that precedes that point being semantics and all that follows it being syntax. The deep syntactic representation of a sentence is an object of the same formal nature as its surface syntactic representation, i.e. it can be represented by a tree diagram whose non-terminal nodes are labeled with syntactic category names and whose terminal nodes are labeled with some kind of “lexical material”. The “deep syntactic representation” of an utterance must contain sufficient information to determine both what its surface syntactic representation and its semantic representation will be. “Syntactic transformations and the insertion of lexical items, rather than being accomplished by separate components of a grammar, as Chomsky proposed in *Aspects*, are in fact intermingled within a single system of rules and successive stages between the semantic representation of a sentence and its superficial form involve gradually more and more lexical

material.”¹⁰ In syntax the basic data admitted by Chomsky include pretheoretical facts about what is and what is not a *sentence* in the given language. Further relevant data may include *grammatical relations* which obtain between sentences and between parts of sentences. A grammar of a particular language is a finite means of representing the infinite number of sentences of that language that a fluent speaker is prepared to recognize and/or produce and the grammatical relations he is prepared to perceive in them. Theories of language are theories of human competences. Grammar is a theory of what a speaker’s mastery of the rules of grammar equips him to do. A theory of performance is a theory that may predict, but more likely would only explain, the fact that speakers (or perhaps only a speaker) behave as they do. Particularly for those languages of which the linguist himself is a fluent speaker, there are a great deal of data already on hand; thus, the problem of assembling, justifying, and confirming data becomes minimal. A grammar may be regarded as descriptively adequate for a given language if it provides one and only one description for each sentence in that language; it thus represents the fluent speaker’s competence in recognizing sentences. The fluent speaker has additional competences to recognize grammatical relations of certain sorts or to recognize grammatical descriptions of certain sorts as preferable to others. If a grammar adequately represents these additional syntactic competences, it has achieved “explanatory adequacy”. UG (Universal Grammar) is a system of conditions on grammars, constraints on the form and interpretation of grammar at all levels, from the deep structures of syntax, through the transformational component, to the rules that interpret syntactic structures semantically and phonetically.¹¹

Normal physical development is triggered by external phenomena, and also responds in some modified way to external phenomena, but its major properties are built in, and so is language. A child cannot help acquiring it, though we can improve the way it is acquired as we can improve the way a child walks: maybe it will walk two weeks earlier, but it is going to walk, because it is a human. Language is not taught, not even learned; it is something that your mind grows in a particular environment, just the way your body grows in a particular environment: your shape, how heavy you are, or the onset of puberty may vary depending on environment, nutritional level, etc. One distinctive feature about humans is the language capacity: it is central for our present existence and it does not have anything analogous or homologous to other organisms; it seems unique to the human species, it is essential and it is also uniform across the species. There are open questions about how these systems grow in the individual, how they are used when we

express our thoughts, how they are realized in what we assume to be brain mechanisms.¹²

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PREMISE BLAGIENE – DE LA METAFIZICA LOGOS-ULUI SPRE O ALTA MOTIVARE A LIMBAJULUI

DAIANA CUIBUS

ABSTRACT. Even if we had access to objects in a Platonic third world, and had a mapping of terms and sentences onto these objects, that would do nothing for us unless those objects were already signs which had intrinsic meaning; the same would go for a picture in the world of physical or mental representations.

Între arbitrar și motivat

Problema deopotrivă lingvistică și filosofică a originii limbajului și disputele privind motivarea cuvântului sunt constante ale gândirii, de la antici la moderni, și au cunoscut abordări și dezvoltări variate, nu o dată contradictorii. Fără a parcurge o istorie a disputei asupra valorii semantic-naturale sau convenționale a limbajului, ci reținând selectiv premise și teoretizări ale unor direcții diferite în abordarea și studiul limbajului, se poate arăta că discursul teoretic, dar și cel dramatic blagian, ca discurs al unei filosofii a limbajului, este capabil să reformuleze controversa *realia–signa* (în perspectiva unei dialectici a logos-ului, între *Logos-gândire* și *Logos-discurs*).

Astfel, raportul dintre limbaj și lucruri este descris dihotomic, încă din textele platoniciene. Între *physis* și *nomos*, între Cratylos și Hermogenes, Socrate opta pentru o cunoaștere ce nu ține de raportul nostru cu numele, ci de cel cu lucrurile, sau mai bine zis cu Ideile, recunoscând, însă, caracterul *filosofic* al numelor, de vreme ce ele intră în alcătuirea oricărei rostiri-logos.

Pe de altă parte, Heraclit insista asupra caracterului schimbător și ambiguu atât al fenomenelor, cât și al modurilor de denumire a lor. Aristotel postula caracterul mimetic al cuvântului, dar considera că sunetele devin nume doar dacă dobândesc o semnificație stabilită prin convenție, adică devin simbolice, iar Epicur credea că numele trebuie să fie o clară și nemijlocită dovadă a noțiunii.

Nu mai puțin, textele sanscrite văd în cuvânt șansa la lumea concretă, dar și obstacolul în accesarea la ea; cuvântul, etern sau convențional, este determinat absolut, aidoma ființelor existente (idee foarte apropiată de concepția blagiană), iar conținutul său semantic este latent în el; abia manifest, în frază, el cuprinde semnificatul, ca expresie generală a cunoașterii.

Asemenea puncte de vedere, reluate de filosofia și lingvistica moderne, primesc accente dintre cele mai diverse, unele radicale, altele folosind dihotomia în încercarea de a clasifica elemente diferite ale aceluiași limbaj (cum face, de exemplu, Vico, vorbind despre o origine/valoare duală a cuvintelor – convenție, dar și legătură naturală între ele și semnificația lor).

Tot mai adesea, însă, disputa între cuvântul înțeles ca fapt natural și cuvântul înțeles ca fapt convențional, social, este privită ca raport ce trebuie depășit și/sau reformulat, într-o conciliere, așa cum o vedea Russell, între omul de știință și cel mistic. Alți gânditori merg până la a declara că valoarea cuvintelor, fie ea semantic naturală sau convențională, constituie o problemă irezolvabilă, încât, o cere și Wittgenstein, „ar trebui să lăsăm lucrurile așa cum sunt“.

Abordarea metafizicii blagiene, așa cum o intenționăm, ar putea trimite și chiar o face, până la un anumit punct, la o apropiere de viziunea nominalistă, care vedea în crearea unui sistem de semne cerința prealabilă a oricărui sistem de gândire, în care adevărul și falsitatea nu sunt atribute ale lucrurilor, ci ale limbii, iar cunoașterea adevărată ar consta în crearea de nume și îmbinarea lor în propoziții și enunțuri-judecăți. Doar că, blagian, o astfel de definiție a cunoașterii poate fi valabilă doar pentru cunoașterea ființei, dar ea nu este acceptată/acceptabilă drept cunoaștere *adevărată*, absolută.

Firește, din perspectiva *originii* limbii, concepția blagiană este explicită, de vreme ce este definită ca dat ontologic, organism supraindividual, care integrează ființa. Ca manifestare umană, însă, ca vorbire a ființei vorbite de limbă, ea inaugurează individului o lume, singura sa lume – *de* și *prin* logos, iar ideea trăirii într-o atare lume generează o (aparentă) contradicție: pentru ființa care o locuiește, adecvarea limbă–lume (a limbii sale) este completă și perfectă; pentru o gândire critică, lingvistic-filosofică, relația poate fi cel mult arbitrară, convenție a unui limbaj care ratează definitiv orice adecvare la real. *Cu riscul de a părea că afirmăm un paradox, în cel mai bun caz, dacă nu un non-sens, ambele soluții ni se par, în perspectivă blagiană, deopotrivă justificate și funcționale, în nici un caz ireconciliabile sau contrapunctice.*

Astfel, într-o configurare a raporturilor ființei cu lumea și cu transcendentul, raporturi nu doar mediate de limbaj, ci chiar *substituite* de/cu acesta, când chiar realul și absolutul sunt pentru eu doar ceea ce propriul limbaj le face să fie, respectiv ființa pe care le-o dă acest limbaj e mai reală decât re(al)itatea/existența lor transcendentă și singura reală pentru eu, *perspectiva blagiană asupra motivării limbajului rupe canoanele oricăror concepții anterioare.*

LIMBAJ – LUME CONCRETĂ

Pe de o parte, între lume-ca dat și lumea-limbaj nu există legături necesare sau, cel puțin, nu determinante; ele sunt de rang secund, cum le-am numit, semnificative doar în sensul ideii unui alt-ceva decât sinele; de aici, relația dintre limbaj și lumea „concretă” va fi prin excelență *arbitrară*.

Esența și obiectualitatea acestei lumi, intuite, dar ratate și chiar evitate, rămân străine eului, iar limbajul care, aparent, propulsează spre ea, o relativizează și o discreditează, substituind-o, ipostaziindu-se el însuși ca lume. Chiar păstrându-și reitatea, structura, organizarea și esența ei nu pot avea, decât întâmplător și misterios, legături și analogii cu cele ale limbajului care i-a devenit ființei lume.

Până și ideea unei relații între limbaj și lumea concretă este discutabilă, de vreme ce entitățile comparate sunt incompatibile; ele nu sunt, probabil, nici contrapunctive, dar, oricum, ființa nu are cum să emită judecăți de valoare asupra a ceea ce nu *îi* este, nu *îi* ființează.

Pe de altă parte, însă, ca produse ale logos-ului transcendent, Mare Anonim, ființa și lumea concretă nu sunt doar analoge, ci și consubstanțiale; încât nu putem să nu trimitem la o etimologie a „concretului” ca derivat al latinescului *con-crescere*, în sensul de „ceea ce s-a format împreună”. Iar aceeași relație, înțeleasă drept consubstanțialitate a unor manifestări echivalente ale logos-ului, e una a *motivării totale*.

LIMBAJ – LUMEA FIINȚEI

Dintr-o altă perspectivă, între limbă și lumea pe care aceasta o generează nu poate exista decât o relație de *motivare* totală; nu se poate vorbi despre arbitraritatea limbajului în raport cu o lume care își datorează în întregime existența tocmai acestui limbaj, care *este* limbaj, și față de care condiționările extralingvistice sunt de ordin secund, premise inerente, dar abandonate, dizolvate în re-producerea operată prin limbă. „Dacă conceptele limbajului nu sunt doar simple semne pentru lucruri și procese obiective, ci semne pentru ideea pe care ne-o formăm despre ele, ele trebuie să reflecte nu atât natura lucrurilor, cât tipul și direcția aprehensiunii noastre despre lucruri” (Cassirer). Limbajul ca determinare și structurare a singurei realități pentru ființă, accesibilă ei.

Pe de altă parte, *convențiile*, cum spune și Merleau-Ponty, sunt un mod tardiv de relație între oameni; însă nu între om și lume(a sa), căci vedem în valoarea de convenție a limbajului tocmai o relație tardivă cu Celălalt, comunicare proclamată, dar fără „garanții”, remediu necesar și relativ față de multiplicitatea lumilor lingvistice ale ființelor, fiecare dintre ele opacă în raport cu celelalte.

Limba e, astfel, arbitrară în raport cu misterul transcendent, în măsura în care nu îl revelează, iar în raport cu lumea concretă nu poate fi „naturală”, din moment ce se constituie ca realitate suprapusă, paralelă, concurrentă. Dar limba îi este și consubstanțială lumii, ca Logos cu valoare ontologică.

Ca lume, limba este nu doar adecvată și absolut motivată în raport cu misterul pe care i-l prezintă ființei, ci *este* chiar acest mister; pe de altă parte, sub premisa comunicării, în virtutea valorii sale de lume proprie ființei ca individualitate, ea poate fi cel mult convenție.

Încât, o analiză a logos-ului, configurat dinspre metafizica blagiană, în termenii „natural, motivat” vs. „convențional, arbitrar”, nu poate să ducă decât la paradoxuri. Din perspectiva disputei *naturalia* vs. *realia*, ambivalența valorilor la care putem raporta un astfel de limbaj poate constitui ea însăși premisa unei *noi*, unei *alt fel* de motivări a limbajului. Ideea unui limbaj-lume, cu tot ce am văzut că înseamnă, implică, drept consecință, și această *motivare duală, dihotomică*, dar *non-conflictuală*, motivare absolută, iar nu una în sensul vreunei determinări clasificatoare a elementelor interne ale limbii (cum era la Vico).

Sau, cel puțin la fel de firesc, putem vedea în aceeași idee a limbajului-lume premisele suspendării „disputei”: față de un limbaj care „nu spune altceva decât pe sine” (Merleau-Ponty), autoreferențial și autogen, autonom și generator de lume și transcendent, *problema motivării devine irelevantă* și poate fi depășită; ea poate fi o dilemă a metalogos-ului, în sensul pe care i l-am specificat deja, dar în nici un caz a logos-ului asumat și revendicat ca atare de ființa blagiană.

THE WTO AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

CONSTANTIN LĂPĂDAT

ABSTRACT. The WTO agreements are enforced through a *compulsory* dispute settlement mechanism backed by an effective system of sanctions. Within national polities, the WTO does not restrict debate on trade questions such as whether a new round should be launched. The WTO needs to rely on cosmopolitical constituencies for guidance and support.

Democratic public law within a political community requires democratic law in the international sphere. The institutional solution to the problems of democracy in the global order requires the “opening of international governmental organizations to public scrutiny and the democratization of international *functional* bodies.”¹ International law has rested on sovereignty and states surrounded by national boundaries. International trade law differs from traditional international law because trade law is individual and welfare-based, while international law is state and security-based; world trade law views national boundaries as an impediment and is not based on a model of State sovereignty.²

The WTO is the key institution to which sovereign economic space is being seceded. WTO Member States cannot impose local content or balancing requirements on foreign capital irrespective of their individual needs and concerns. The WTO agreements are enforced through a *compulsory* dispute settlement mechanism backed by an effective system of sanctions. The WTO hopes to bring within its regulatory ambit aspects of the relationship between trade and investment, government procurement policy, competition policy, and so on.³

While WTO agreements take into account developing country concerns in a number of areas, “the tendency has not been to grant developing countries broad exceptions to compliance with GATT rules.”⁴ The WTO needs to develop “a higher degree of connectedness to the peoples of the world. This kind of relationship can be achieved (in the absence of global politicians) through the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that represent civil society.”⁵

The WTO does not seek to prevent public debate on trade policy at the national level. “Even assuming that WTO rules are intended to help governments ward off lobbies and muffle special interests, the performance of that function is separable from the process of *setting* world trade rules. Within national polities, the WTO does not restrict debate on trade questions such as whether a new round should be

launched. Thus, normal domestic politics reigns with interest groups, including protectionist groups, having a voice in such decisions.”⁶ The trading system is characterized by dealmaking and bargaining rather than deliberation and argument. “Besides its intransparency, the WTO decision-making process does not meet the conditions of deliberation on a more fundamental level. [...] Deliberation is defined as a process of exchanging arguments in order to convince each other. The WTO decision-making process, however, is dominated by bargaining instead of arguing. [...] Different interests are combined, but are not integrated into a common framework.”⁷ The mission of the WTO is to put controls on the way governments use discriminatory and protectionist trade measures; in contrast to many other international organizations that address market failure, the WTO addresses mainly government failure. WTO should not insist that NGOs filter their ideas through national governments. The official WTO position that NGOs participate only through the channels of their national governments (the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other lobbying groups do not participate in WTO activities except in special events such as seminars and symposiums, they can only exert their influence on WTO decisions through their governments) dilutes the quality of debate within the WTO by excluding divergent views that WTO Member governments may not be willing to express.⁸ There is public and political disenchantment with international institutions tied in part “to the view that powerful international bodies are less accountable to the ordinary citizen than should be the case. It is a view we cannot share. It is governments which negotiate in institutions like the WTO, and governments are accountable to their citizens.”⁹

Keohane and Nye point to the problem of insufficient politicization of the WTO. “The lack of intermediating politicians is the most serious democratic deficit of international organizations in general and the WTO in particular.”¹⁰ Wolf says, “The WTO is merely a secretariat servicing a structure of intergovernmental agreements. It is not a government. It follows that the place for democratic accountability is the legislatures of each of its members.”¹¹ Even if NGO participation is suitable for the United Nations or other international organizations, it ill fits the WTO. “Members have pointed to the *special character* of the WTO, which is both a legally binding intergovernmental treaty of rights and obligations among its members and a forum for negotiations. As a result of extensive discussions, there is currently a broadly held view that it would not be possible for NGOs to be *directly* involved in the work of the WTO or its meetings.”¹² The WTO needs to rely on cosmopolitical constituencies for guidance and support. “Clearly, the way to develop a free trade constituency is to engage the opposition and address their

legitimate concerns. Intergovernmental institutions such as the WTO [...] must make an effort to satisfy and address the principal concerns of NGO groups by inviting them in from outside the closed doors.”¹³ The principal task of the WTO “should be to restrain protectionist interest groups and thereby promote both free trade and representative democracy.”¹⁴

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PROIECTUL DEMOCRATIC RADICAL AL LUI ROUSSEAU

CARMEN PĂLĂCEAN

ABSTRACT. In Rousseau's view, the sources of corruption lie in the individual's own make-up, but tend to be deepened and consolidated by social processes or envious competition and desire for precedence. However, it is possible to envisage a different basis for human society and hence a different destiny for men.

Rousseau compromite distincția dintre stat și comunitate, guvern și popor, dar în direcție opusă față de Hobbes. Statul a fost redus la un „mandat”, iar „publicul” a încorporat toate aspectele politicului. Rousseau explorează posibilitatea conectării comunităților politice ale Europei la un loc, într-o uniune a statelor europene, deși este sceptic privitor la efectul practic al unei asemenea idei¹. Toți cetățenii ar trebui să se reunească spre a decide ce este mai bun pentru comunitate și să formuleze legile adecvate; cei conduși ar trebui să fie conducătorii, iar afacerile statului ar trebui integrate în cele ale cetățenilor obișnuiți. Rousseau subminează concepția ateniană a democrației directe care nu a reușit să realizeze o separare între funcțiile legislative și cele executive, fiind, prin urmare, predispusă la instabilitate, lupte distrugătoare și indecizie în vreme de criză. Rousseau subliniază că o imagine coerentă a puterii politice necesită o recunoaștere explicită și oficială a faptului că suveranitatea își are originea în popor și ar trebui să rămână acolo; suveranitatea nu poate fi reprezentată sau înstrăinată, fiindcă esența acesteia este crearea, autorizarea și promulgarea legii, potrivit standardelor și cerințelor binelui comun, a cărui natură poate fi cunoscută numai prin discursuri, deliberare și acorduri publice. Doar cetățenii pot formula clar „direcția supremă a voinței generale”, suma judecăților lor generate public despre binele comun.

Rousseau plasează comunitatea, sau o majoritate din aceasta, în postura de a domina cetățenii individuali: comunitatea este atotputernică și, ca atare, suveranitatea poporului poate ușor anula libertatea indivizilor². Precum Hobbes n-a izbutit să articuleze principiile și instituțiile necesare pentru a delimita acțiunea statului, la fel Rousseau a crezut că minoritățile ar trebui să consimtă la hotărârile majorității, susținând că nu există restrângeri ale deciziilor unei majorități democratice și deci ale intervenției politice. Rousseau apără importanța împărțirii și restrângerii puterii guvernamentale, iar executivul sau guvernul este legitim doar dacă îndeplinește „instrucțiunile voinței generale”; „persoana artificială” este voința generală, determinată de

popor și „personificată” de executiv. Puterea executivă derivă din conferirea dreptului de „personificare”, iar lui Rousseau i s-a reproșat că a proiectat un model al puterii politice cu implicații potențial tiranice. Cetățenii pot fi constrânși să respecte doar un sistem de legi și reguli pe care și l-au prescrișii ei înșiși, urmărind binele general; trebuie să deosebim „voința generală” de „voința tuturor”: este diferența dintre suma judecăților despre binele comun și simpla cumulare a fanteziilor personale și dorințelor individuale. În mod ideal, indivizii ar trebui implicați direct în crearea legilor prin care le sunt reglate viețile, deoarece autoritatea suverană este alcătuită de voința generală – judecățile deliberative despre binele comun formulate de oameni în postura de cetățeni³.

Dacă idealul de autoguvernare al lui Rousseau era funcțional undeva, „aceasta s-ar fi putut petrece în state nici mai mari, nici mai puțin omogene decât Atena antică sau Florența renescentistă, însă implicația concepției lui Rousseau este opusul a ceea ce urmărise el. În condițiile prezente, democrația nu poate însemna autoguvernare exercitată de națiuni sau popoare. Idealul de democrație al lui Rousseau este autodeterminarea colectivă a unei singure comunități; când societatea încorporează mai multe moduri de viață, înfăptuirea acestui ideal este inconceptibilă, iar urmărirea lui, pernicioasă. Democrația republicană este o rețetă a diviziunii, dacă națiunile și popoarele se întrepătrund în societăți plurale, sprijinând dezmembrarea marilor state și societăți plurale, și impunând constituirea micilor state naționale etnice. Rezultatul final este secesiunea și riscul continuu de război”⁴. Condiția originară a omului nu era o stare a sărăciei și a războiului fiecăruia împotriva tuturor, ci o stare de abundență, de independență și inocență, în care oamenii erau însuflețiți de două sentimente naturale: dorința naturală de conservare a sinelui („dragostea de sine”) și mila, care ne face să simțim compasiune față de suferința semenului. Dimpotrivă, Hobbes crede că, în starea naturală, omul era marcat de ticăloșie, de dorința de dominare și posedare ș.a. Rousseau respinge motivele care ar determina dezvoltarea primelor forme de viață în comun și, o dată cu ele, crearea unei stări de război, deloc naturală, cum spune Hobbes, ci apărând din instaurarea proprietății private și din inegala repartizare a bogățiilor între oameni. Societății trebuie să-i atribuim cauza caracterului meschin al omului, și nu naturii sale primare, de unde reiese că oamenii s-au unit în societate datorită bogățiilor, care urmăreau să-și protejeze bunurile. Rousseau nu stabilește o distincție între om și animal, bazată pe folosirea rațiunii și înțelegerii, preluată de întreaga tradiție filosofică de la Aristotel. Dezvoltarea gândirii e influențată, esențialmente, de pasiunile noastre, și se datorează dorințelor deșarte pe care societatea le creează în

noi; judecata, în starea naturală, nu era atât de elaborată, iar pasiunile se reduceau la dorințe elementare: omul nu se deosebea de animal prin întrebunțarea rațiunii, la început în stare latentă, ci *datorită* unei asemenea dezvoltări, numită de Rousseau „perfectibilitate”⁵.

Legea este anterioară justiției, și nu poate fi nedreaptă nu din cauză că justiția constituie fundamentul ei, ceea ce ar putea să nu fie întotdeauna adevărat, ci fiindcă este împotriva naturii să vrei să-ți faci rău ție însuși. Ceea ce este natural e grija față de sine, apărarea propriilor interese, care reprezintă mobilul „contractului social”, element fondator al ordinii politice; dacă legea exprimă acest pact este dreaptă, întrucât altfel pactul s-ar opune intereselor noastre. Domnia justiției și a dreptului nu este ceva natural: omul trebuie să renunțe la libertatea sa naturală în favoarea „libertății civile”, pentru ca ordinea dreptului să poată domni în acțiunile umane. Această trecere de la starea de natură la starea socială produce în om o schimbare considerabilă, substituind, în conduita sa, justiția cu instinctul, și asigurând acțiunilor sale raporturi morale nemaîntâlnite. Starea socială fondată pe un principiu de reciprocitate presupune că proprietatea fiecăruia este protejată și că nimeni nu e lezat, garantând fiecăruia urmărirea intereselor proprii, dar supunându-le interesului general. Contractul social se fondează pe alienarea integrală a fiecărui asociat cu toate drepturile sale cedate comunității, alienare ce instituie ordinea legii; ordinea în cauză conduce spre depășirea vechii reguli de aur, după care „facem celuilalt ceea ce dorim să ni se facă nouă”, pentru a trece la principiul moral care spune că trebuie să acționez „conform voinței pe care aș avea-o, dacă aș fi un altul” (astfel, trebuie să mă fi alienat, iar conceptul de alienare își dobândește realmente sensul). Legea nu se poate fonda pe moralitate, întrucât ultima este cea fondată pe dreptul pozitiv ce decurge din legea fundamentală reprezentată de actul social; dreptul pozitiv este alcătuit din specificațiile acțiunilor care determină înfăptuirea binelui. Legea este, la același nivel, izvorul „actelor politicoase” și al altruismului. Rousseau nu se iluzionează în privința naturii umane: este eronat că în starea de independență (când oamenii nu sunt relaționați printr-o stare civilă) rațiunea ne orientează spre binele comun prin vizarea interesului nostru; interesul particular nu se aliază cu binele general, ci se exclud reciproc în ordinea naturală a lucrurilor, iar legile sociale sunt un jug pe care fiecare urmărește să-l impună celorlalți, dar niciodată sieși. Această realitate nu poate fi afectată de vocea rațiunii naturale sau de principiile sublimale ale religiei și ale moralei.

Sensul justiției și al supunerii față de ordinea dreptului nu poate apărea decât din organizarea socială, și presupune abandonarea „dreptului natural” sau a „libertății naturale”, în vederea unei mai bune asigurări a propriei vieți și a promovării propriilor interese. Prin urmare

trebuie să se dezvolte un drept pozitiv care să stabilească ceea ce justiția urmează să reprezinte, pe care cetățenii n-ar putea-o descoperi prin sentimentul lor spontan. Rousseau subminează vechea teorie a dreptului natural: actul convențional al contractului fondează dreptul pozitiv din care rezultă moralitatea și „dreptul natural”. Rousseau nu este însă un pozitivist, dreptul nu își este suficient sieși, nu este drept decât fondat pe „legea fundamentală și universală a binelui maxim pentru toți”, singura ce face posibilă crearea unei ordini sociale stabile; însă poziționând legea la baza statului și a moralității, gândirea devine principiul și conținutul statului. Raționalismul modern subliniază necesitatea construirii dreptului pozitiv, ce nu este o simplă aplicație a dreptului natural, de unde dihotomia ceea ce decurge din dreptul natural–ceea ce reiese din instituția socială. Rousseau observă că nu există societate a genului uman: dacă societatea generală ar exista în altă parte decât în sistemele filosofilor ar fi o ființă morală înzestrată cu calități specifice; ar exista o limbă universală, iar fericirea publică ar fi sursa celei a indivizilor. Încorporarea omului într-o ordine socială supusă legii determină habitudini care finalmente vor părea naturale; astfel, dispoziția de a practica acțiuni chiar în dezavantajul nostru, ceea ce numim forță sau virtute, este un rezultat social apărut din acceptarea legii, admisă doar întrucât furnizează avantaje tuturor contractanților. Se articulează, prin urmare, un drept natural rațional – natural dacă se reia maxima după care obișnuința este o a doua natură. Există, spune Rousseau, un fel de drept natural anterior contractului social, însă vag conturat și curent înăbușit de dragostea pentru noi înșine⁶.

Dacă pentru Hobbes subordonarea moralei față de politic devine o regulă, pentru Rousseau morala și politica trebuie relaționate, fiind postulată și unitatea dintre om și cetățean; totuși, apare o lacună în această „totalitate rațională”: ca om, cetățeanul nu știe când și cum forul său interior coincide cu voința generală, fiind necesară o neconținută corecție a realității indivizilor neintegrați încă în colectiv. Rousseau vizează calea statului total și a revoluției permanente, care urmează să integreze forul interior al particularului pe care Hobbes l-a scos de sub influența statului; spre a remedia deficiențele absolutismului, Rousseau sugerează o identitate iluzorie, o unicitate fictivă, între convingere și acțiune: pentru a menține iluzia ca realitate, sunt perpetuate mijloacele de identificare – teroarea și ideologia⁷. Fiindu-le amenințată securitatea, oamenii au fost obligați să accepte o anumită „organizare” politică (un „contract social”), fondându-se astfel societatea politică, ce are la bază un contract înțelept și rațional, dar abuziv, impunând noi constrângeri celui slab și noi puteri celor bogați, și instaurează, clamând protecția, inegalitatea dintre oameni. Contractul social legitim nu are legătură cu un

contract de guvernare, fiindcă, înainte de a inspecta actul prin care un popor alege un rege, ar trebui să examinăm documentul prin care *un popor este un popor*: nu este un contract încheiat între indivizi, ci contractul fiecăruia cu el însuși, care transformă fiecare individ în „cetățean”. Toate clauzele acestui contract se reduc la una singură: transferul integral al fiecărui asociat, cu toate drepturile sale asupra comunității, moment în care se înfăptuiește contractul. Legea este expresia voinței generale, dă corpului politic acea mișcare care îl conservă, și, caracterizată prin generalitatea obiectului său, este opera poporului. Scepticismul lui Rousseau se supradimensionează când este vorba de popor și de guvernarea sa, multiplicându-se astfel sfaturile de conveniență, prin recomandarea, de pildă, a unei proporții corecte între întinderea teritoriului și numărul populației, în vederea unei juste aplicări a legislației.

Rousseau conturează două feluri de inegalități: i) naturală sau fizică, datorată diferenței de vârstă, sănătății, forței fizice sau calităților spirituale, e irelevantă, întrucât nu poate pune bazele vreunei organizări sociale; ii) morală sau politică, stabilită cu acordul oamenilor în urma unei convenții, este singura ale cărei origini și procese merită descrise: nefiind „naturală”, secretul existenței sale se află probabil în diferența dintre starea naturală și civilizație, dar prima reprezintă numai o ipoteză teoretică, o operație a spiritului, un postulat al rațiunii. Dezbaterile poporului nu au întotdeauna rectitudinea voinței generale, ceea ce generalizează voința e mai puțin numărul de voturi, cât interesul comun ce le unește, iar absolutismul puterii suverane este limitat: din clipa în care puterea suverană încearcă să anuleze această egalitate și împovărează mai mult un supus decât pe un altul, problema devine particulară, nu mai înseamnă exercitarea unei voințe generale și nu mai este, ca atare, nici suverană și nici absolută. Analizând cauzele inegalității dintre oameni, și contestând, prin urmare, natura umană, Rousseau își revine contemporanii asupra eterogenității tezelor ce au precedat-o pe a sa, și urmărește să denunțe „eroarea comună” a teoreticienilor dreptului natural care au transferat asupra stării naturale idei dobândite în societate, vorbind despre omul sălbatic în timp ce descriu omul civil (Rousseau încearcă și să-i avertizeze asupra aversiunii sale față de orice primitivism naturalist). Rousseau este asociat uneori cu iacobinismul, considerat o inflexiune radicală a revoluției, și inspirat de grija față de democrația directă; însă teoria guvernării revoluționare nu dorește model, iar Rousseau respinge violența.

Rousseau crede că trebuie să începem prin a înlătura toate faptele, spre deosebire de cei care, pretinzând că stabilesc dreptatea cu ajutorul faptelor, întrebuintează o metodă avantajoasă îndeosebi

tiranilor, fiindcă duce la eternizarea a *ceea ce este* (a inegalității). Natura umană, vizată de Rousseau, nu e atribuită integral și nici chiar virtual în starea naturală căreia Rousseau îi neagă instinctul social: totul pare să desprindă de omul sălbatic propensiunea de a înceta să mai fie astfel. Corpul politic, obiect al contractului social, nu mai este rezultatul adunării voințelor particulare, ci se confundă cu voința generală, așa cum reiese aceasta din înstrăinarea totală a fiecărui individ, și deci din libertatea sa, calitatea de a face ca voința sa generală să-i domine voința particulară. Voința generală presupune integrarea, în sens matematic, a voințelor particulare, ale căror mici diferențe se anulează astfel; manifestarea voinței generale exclude partidele sau fragmentarea corpului social. Voința generală activează corpul politic: suvernitățile înseamnă exercitarea ei, pe când legislația o pune în mișcare⁸. Societatea civilă sau politică nu datorează ceva *necesității*, fiind consecința unei serii de accidente, a căror cantitate influențează numărul de familii a căror dezvoltare maximă va culmina cu epoca de aur a comunităților patriarhale, însă tot ele determină și apariția diviziunii muncii și a proprietății care nu datorează nimic naturii. Istoria nu este liniară, ci înseamnă o îmbinare de progres și decădere; dintr-un accident într-altul societatea își modifică natura⁹.

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KANT AND THE POSSIBILITY OF MORAL MOTIVATION

GIORGIANA-GRAȚIELA BĂLĂCEANU

ABSTRACT. Kant stresses both self-legislation and self-government as essential to autonomy, in addition to its foundational role in endowing persons with dignity. Knowledge of moral generalizations is prior to knowledge of specific moral judgments, for example the judgment that a given sentence is unjust.

Kant conceives action from virtue as emerging from pieces of practical reasoning (such action is deliberate in the strong sense). Hill comments thus: “[S]ubstantive values, such as desire and pleasure, do not *necessarily* provide even *prima facie* reasons for action. Their status as reasons depends on their endorsement by the individual agent.”¹ Kant’s intrinsic end formulation of the imperative is: always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never merely as a means but always as an end. In Kant’s view, the categorical imperative is knowable a *priori*. I can know what particular sorts of acts are right by reasoning in the light of the categorical imperative.

Kant says, “Suppose... something which as *an end in itself* could be a ground of determinate laws; then in it and in it alone would there be the ground of a possible categorical imperative.”² Kant regards autonomy as more basic than dignity.³ Kant stresses both self-legislation and self-government as essential to autonomy, in addition to its foundational role in endowing persons with dignity. For Kant, autonomy may be better described not as *having* moral value but as the *foundation* of it. Audi writes, “I do not see that Kant must take autonomy to imply our always *creating*, as opposed to at least sometimes discovering, normative reasons. Indeed, Kant sometimes speaks as if there are things actually having intrinsic value; it would be strange indeed if they could not provide (normative) reasons for action without prior endorsement.”⁴

Unless there is a utilitarian criterion for the worth of agents, this grants that moral value is not wholly a matter of utility; and if there is such a criterion it treats people as means, even though one is taken to be means only to human happiness, including one’s own. Lying to people is wrong because it treats them merely as a means. Morality consists in respecting, in oneself and in others, the absolute and transcendent dignity which inheres in the empirical existence and nature of men. The fact that man is conscious of the “ought” makes him transcendent to the empirical of the phenomenal, makes him also noumenal.⁵ Deigh notes: “[I]f one holds, as Kant did, that an aversion to inconsistency is inherent

in reason, then the motive would be internal to the cognitive operation and the account would therefore support taking the internalism of the categorical imperative to be true of our deeper knowledge of right and wrong.”⁶

We have internal access to moral principles, though to be sure we do not actually believe, but are only potentially justified in believing, many of them. Ross comments thus: “Kant is far from insisting, as he has often been charged with insisting, that there is a natural opposition between duty and inclination; what he does insist on is that there is a complete difference between the two.”⁷ Knowledge of moral generalizations is prior to knowledge of specific moral judgments, for example the judgment that a given sentence is unjust.⁸ Rawls tries to derive his principles of justice from an instrumentalist conception of rationality, saying that “[f]ollowing the Kantian interpretation of justice as fairness, we can say that by acting from these principles persons are acting autonomously: they are acting from principles that they would acknowledge under conditions that best express their nature as free and equal rational beings.”⁹

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HOW THE LAW RULES

ION ZĂULEȚ

ABSTRACT. Rights-based theories are more concerned with the recognition and formulation of the rule of law as a form of political morality. A state could be responsible for the acts of individuals it employs as its agents without there being the need of fault on behalf of the ruler himself.

The rule of law excludes the exemption of government officials from obedience to the law and it denies the validity of the creation of a separate body of law to deal with such breaches; the rule of law and the rights it protects are the products of the traditions and customs of the ordinary law, not a written constitutional document.¹ The idea of the rule of law “has given place to i) the idea of a *government of laws* (where officials are subject to law, even if their legal position remains one of legal privilege as with a constitutional monarch); ii) an idea of *universal positive legality* (where everybody, including officials, is equally subject to law).”²

The expression “rule of law” may be used “as a formula for expressing the fact that with us the law of the constitution, the rules which in foreign countries naturally form part of a constitutional code, are not the source but the consequence of the rights of individuals, as defined and enforced by the courts, that, in short, the principles of private law have with us been by the action of the courts and Parliament so extended as to determine the position of the Crown and of its servants; thus the constitution is the result of the ordinary law of the land.”³ The very essence of the rule of law is that “in acting upon the citizen (by putting him in jail, for example, or declaring invalid a deed under which he claims title to property) a government will faithfully apply rules previously declared as those to be followed by the citizen and as being determinative of his rights and duties. If the rule of law does not mean this, it means nothing. Applying rules faithfully implies, in turn, that rules will take the form of general declarations.”⁴ Stewart gauges some basic principles that are central to the “rule of law” concept: i) the value of *certainty* – all law should be prospective, open, clear and stable so as to maximise the autonomy of the individual; ii) *generality* – in addressing the control of the conduct of people from different classes, law must be impersonal and non-particularised; and iii) *equality* – all people should be equally subject to the law (everyone will be treated the same regardless of the differences between them; all have the same negative liberties –

freedoms from interference – that should be protected in the same manner).⁵

The rule of law is brought to bear by a strict judicial interpretation which reads down the effects of legislation (but which cannot find it void). “The qualification upon the doctrine of the parliamentary supremacy of the law concerns the identification of the source of a purported enactment with the body established by law as the supreme legislature and the fulfilment of the conditions prescribed by the law for the time being in force for the authentic expression of the supreme will. If the qualification be law these are matters upon which the validity of a purported enactment may depend and they may accordingly be examinable in the courts.”⁶ A state could be responsible for the acts of individuals it employs as its agents without there being the need of fault on behalf of the ruler himself. “The acts of a private citizen are not the acts of the nation to which he is subject, since they are not done as by a subject or so far as he is a subject. [...] The situation is different if he acts by order of the ruler of the state, whom he obeys as a superior.”⁷ According to Pufendorf, a state could not be held responsible for the acts of its citizens, “for no matter how much a state may threaten, there is always left to the will of citizens the natural liberty to [injure foreign states or nationals].”⁸ Jennings classifies the idea of separation of powers as a policy rather than a constitutional principle: “The existence of an elected legislature necessarily implies a separation of powers, not because it is possible to distinguish functions of government into three classes, but simply because an assembly is not a suitable body to control detailed administration or to decide whether the laws have been broken or not.”⁹

Montesquieu did not intend a rigid separation of institutions: his theory required a “diffusion” of power, and was not intended to rule out any functional overlap at all between the levels of government.¹⁰ Austin distinguishes “the larger political powers” into “*supreme* and *subordinate*”: “The former are the political powers, infinite in number and kind, which, partly brought into exercise, and partly dormant, belong to a sovereign or state: that is to say, to the monarch properly so called, if the government be a government of one: and, if the government be a government of a number, to the sovereign body considered collectively, or to its various members considered as component parts of it. The latter are those portions of the supreme powers which are delegated to political subordinates: such political subordinates being subordinate or subject merely, or also immediate partakers in those very supreme powers of portions or shares wherein they are possessed as ministers and trustees.”¹¹ The history of the separation of powers “suggests that as long as power is restrained and liberty protected there is a degree of flexibility

in its application. To this end it is possible that advisory opinions could, with the requisite safeguards, promote liberty and the principle of the rule of law without compromising the objective of restraining power.”¹² The bureaucratic-administrative trend expands the scope of the resource allocation function of the state with a subsequent increase in the number of interactions between the state and the economic base. The legal systems of the Western world are undergoing a profound crisis leading to a dismantling of the rule of law concept.¹³

Dicey’s preference for private law effects a constitutional privileging of private-law values over those of public law. “Interference with public rights is at bottom a less striking exhibition of absolute power that is the interference with the far more important rights of individuals; a ruler who might think nothing of overthrowing the constitution of his country would in all probability hesitate a long time before he touched the property or interfered with the contracts of private persons.”¹⁴ The liberal basis of the rule of law is said to be subject to fundamental and irreconcilable contradictions. “Liberalism is seen as viewing the world in terms of a series of contradictory dualities and values such as reason and desire; freedom and necessity; individualism and altruism; autonomy and community; and subjectivity and objectivity. These contradictory values are reflected in virtually all our common law and statutory concepts and rights.”¹⁵ Modern government should not aim to achieve any direct social goals, nor actively manage economies, but should instead concentrate on providing the basic structure within which society could generate itself.¹⁶ Rights-based theories are more concerned with the recognition and formulation of the rule of law as a form of political morality: judges not only follow and apply rules in their judgments but expand upon them so that they are adjusted in accordance with their purposes to show the practice of interpretation in its “best light”.¹⁷

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CHOMSKY'S SEMANTIC INTERPRETATION IN GENERATIVE GRAMMAR

ADRIAN CONSTANTINESCU

ABSTRACT. By a generative grammar Chomsky means a system of rules that in some explicit and well-defined way assigns structural descriptions to sentences. Deep structures are generated by the base rule of the syntactic component.

The grammatical categories and the rules framed in terms of them matter because together they provide the terms in which the grammatical relations can be defined for the given language. These relations matter because of their decisive bearing on the semantic interpretation of sentences. A philosopher's ability to recognize a philosophical problem is similar to an English speaker's ability to recognize an English sentence. For any expression, if those who appear to use it competently generally agree on an indefinitely large class of cases to which it applies, and an indefinitely large class of cases to which it does not, the expression does pick out things with certain discoverable distinguishing characteristics, and that the people who are in such general agreement have a competence to recognize things with such characteristics. The syntactic component of the theory yields us both deep and surface structures of sentences. The rules of the phonological component of the theory are applied to surface structures to yield the actual sound-rendering of a sentence. The information contained in the semantic component about the meanings of individual lexical items is supposed to combine with the structural information contained in the deep structure diagram to determine the full semantic interpretation of the sentence.

Chomsky acknowledges that a "*descriptively* adequate" generative grammar of a language would not by itself satisfy the condition of *explanatory* adequacy. We should need a theory of linguistic universals characteristic of human language in general, and we should need to show that this theory was related in a certain way to our descriptively adequate grammar, picking it out from other possible grammars consistent with the "primary linguistic data". A grammar employs two types of syntactic rules to achieve its aim of assigning the correct constituent structure characterization to each sentence of the language.¹ The first type are rules which rewrite single symbols on the basis of information which comes from the linear context of the symbol. A grammar can assign constituent structure characterizations correctly only if some of its rules use information about the derivational history of sentences. Grammars

contain “transformational rules” that operate on entire constituent structure characterizations, or any of their parts, and map labeled trees onto labeled trees: simpler sentences are transformed into more complex ones, and the transformed sentences are assigned a constituent structure characterization. Type two projection rules are intended to explicate the manner in which transformational rules preserve or change meaning: in general, the sentence resulting from the application of a transformational rule to a set of source sentences is related in meaning to these source sentences in a definite, systematic way.² Deep structures are generated by the base rules of the syntactic component; if we set aside that part of the base which allows the completion of deep structures with terminal sequences, we are left essentially with the branching rules which introduce grammatical categories in various permitted concatenations. The importance of these rules and of the grammatical categories which they introduce consists primarily in the fact that they supply the basis for the definition of those grammatical *relations* which are of decisive, though not exclusive, importance for the semantic interpretation of sentences.³

The Minimalist Program (MP) is a “program” which provides a framework of inquiry into the study of language. “At the methodological level, the program has certain heuristic and therapeutic value. It brings to light what might be fundamental problems, where empirical evidence and minimalist expectations conflict. And it encourages us to distinguish genuine explanations from ‘engineering solutions’.”⁴ The MP focuses more than the P&P (Principles and Parameters Theory) model on the idea that all categories are to be defined as sets or bundles of features. “In the earliest work in generative grammar it was assumed that the elements of the underlying base grammar are formatives and categories; each category corresponds to a class of strings of formatives. [...] It was soon found necessary to depart from this assumption in the case of lexical categories.”⁵

The Standard Theory (ST) of transformational generative grammar represents the first systematic attempt to formulate an argument in favour of a rationalistic approach to the study of language which assumes that there are “innate ideas and principles of various kinds that determine the form of the acquired knowledge in what may be a rather restricted and highly organized way.”⁶ By a generative grammar Chomsky means a system of rules that in some explicit and well-defined way assigns structural descriptions to sentences. A generative grammar attempts to specify what the speaker actually knows, not what he may report about his knowledge. A generative grammar is not a model for a speaker or a hearer; it attempts to characterize in the most neutral

possible terms the knowledge of the language that provides the basis for actual use of language by a speaker-hearer. The rise of generative linguistics represented a radical shift from “behavior or the products of behavior to states of the mind/brain that enter into behavior.”⁷

Chomsky idealizes and points out the developmental dimension which is involved in the process; only the moment of acquisition of the correct grammar is considered. “It might very well be true that a series of successively more detailed and highly structured schemata (corresponding to maturational stages but perhaps in part themselves determined in form by earlier steps of language acquisition) are applied to the data at successive stages of language acquisition.”⁸ The stimulus-response model is untenable for language behavior: such a system cannot account for the production and comprehension of entirely new sequences of words. We can understand/utter sentences which we have never heard before. Investigating language acquisition, “one may hope to give some real substance to the traditional belief that the principles of grammar form an important, and very curious, part of the philosophy of the human mind.”⁹

Mentalism understands talk about the mind “to be talk about the brain at an abstract level at which [...] principles can be formulated that enter into successful and insightful explanation of linguistic (and other) phenomena that are provided by observation and experiment.”¹⁰ Acquisition of language, though associated with a distinct specific faculty of the human mind, is not seen as entirely separate from other components of the abstract mind. “It is an important problem for psychology to determine to what extent other aspects of cognition share properties of language acquisition and language use, and to attempt, in this way, to develop a richer and more comprehensive theory of mind.”¹¹ The inventory of functional categories available in the lexicon is reduced: “It is clear that the lexicon contains substantive elements (nouns, verbs) with their idiosyncratic properties. And it is at least reasonably clear that it contains some functional categories: complementizer (C), for example. But the situation is more obscure in the case of other possible functional categories, in particular T, Agr, specific phi-features, a Case category K, and so on.”¹² The LAD (language acquisition device) can be hypothesized on the basis of the analysis of the input and of the output, and is defined as consisting of these substantives and formal universals which “provide a schema that is applied to data and that determines in a highly restricted way the general form [...] of the grammar that may emerge from presentation of appropriate data.”¹³

Children learn both grammar and vocabulary rapidly, sometimes after one single exposure to a particular word or a particular structure.

“To imagine that an adequate grammar could be selected from the infinitude of conceivable alternatives by some process of pure induction or an infinite corpus of utterances is to misjudge completely the magnitude of the problem.”¹⁴ The child is endowed with the ability to acquire language, with the faculty of language, which undergoes changes under the influence of the linguistic input and possibly of maturation. Any sequence of words which has not been heard before can be recognized as a grammatical sentence. A stimulus-response model cannot explain the fact that every sentence which a person might understand or utter can be a novel combination of words or that children can acquire language rapidly, without any formal instruction, growing to correctly interpret constructions they have never heard before.¹⁵

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DOSSO DOSSI'S "JUPITER, MERCURY, AND VIRTUE" – A SAMPLE OF GENRE ANALYSIS (OF A TEXT BY ANDRÉE HAYUM) (I)

ANDA-ELENA CREȚIU

ABSTRACT. Compositional canons tend to place the most important thing/character in the focal point and, probably, the center of a painting would be such a position. A basic device the discourse about art deals with is the formal analysis, viewed both as a genre with its own purposes and structure, and as a discursive strategy serving to achieving other genre's goals.

The text intended for analysis in what follows is in fact a fragment of a larger article in an art magazine, by Andrée Hayum, entitled "The Courtly Art of Dosso Dossi".¹ The fragment itself does not have a title of its own, but if it had one, that would probably be *Dosso Dossi's "Jupiter, Mercury, and Virtue"*. The importance the author of the article places on this specific fragment can easily be inferred from the fact that it is placed at the end of the whole, it is rather lengthy as compared to the previous parts, it is graphically separated from the rest by a space and the initial letter is graphically marked (in bold). After going through it all, we realize that it can be considered a text in its own right, a text belonging to the genre of formal analysis, as may come out from the demonstration below.

A basic device the discourse about art deals with is the formal analysis, viewed both as a genre with its own purposes and structure, and as a discursive strategy serving to achieving other genre's goals. The formal analysis is one type of critical essay; from this point of view, we may consider it a sub-genre; but if we consider the basic requests a genre proper must meet², then we can easily notice that the formal analysis has its own purposes, its own standard move-pattern, its own discursive strategies. Its name is obviously derived from the verb "to analyse" = to take a whole apart in order to discover how the pieces work together to create it. It is exactly what a formal analysis is supposed to do: to deconstruct an artwork into its formal elements in order to see how these formal elements work together to contribute to the general impression the whole makes on the viewer (here including its meaning). Under formal elements art literature usually lists such things as: subject-matter (that which can easily be discerned when looking at an artwork: e.g. a spot in nature, characters, just lines; the title of the artwork can also be considered as belonging to the subject-matter), specific formal elements (e.g. lines, shapes, colour, volume, space – perspective either

atmospheric/aerial or linear/geometric, light, time, texture, etc), principles of design (e.g. balance, focal point, dominance, rhythm, scale, proportion, unity, variety).

Formal analysis presupposes the skilful description of the most important elements appearing in the work, but it cannot be reduced only to it (a mistake art students seem to make). Formal analysis is a step forward towards discerning what meanings lie beneath the beautiful surface created by the masterly handling of such elements subordinated to the artist's vision of the world. Formal analysis is both form and meaning. It follows that the communicative purposes of a formal analysis are contained in the activities of describing the artwork + inferring and discussing the possible meanings + evaluating the artwork.³

A prerequisite to good writing about art is access to the analysed artwork, whether direct, at an exhibition, gallery or museum, or mediated, through reproductions of some quality. The writer of the text we shall analyse here visited the exhibition opened at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, Jan. 14—Mar. 28, 1999 and at Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (Apr. 27—July 11), called "Dosso Dossi, Court Painter in Renaissance Ferrara".⁴ The magazine also offers a reproduction of the analysed work.

The text follows, more or less, the standard move-structure of a formal analysis:

Move I: Introducing the work and the artist

If landscape was still far from becoming a self-sufficient genre, the emergence of this modern attitude toward the painterly medium is demonstrated by Dosso himself in a more programmatic way in a remarkable painting called "Jupiter, Mercury, and Virtue".

While usually this move is dedicating to identifying the work – title, author, theme, subject-matter, medium, dimensions, period of creation, location, influences, etc, here we are only given the title and the type of the work (a landscape). Of course, some information on the artist, some biographical aspects, his sources of inspiration (legends, myths, philosophy), his favourite themes (allegories and landscapes) had been offered in the previous fragments of the article. In addition, some more information is placed inside the following move:

Move II: Transition

All of Dosso's strengths come together in this middle-sized, horizontal composition: his glowing colors and agile shifts from light to dark, the

atmospheric landscape, and an artistic imagination nurtured by the font of poetry and myth.

While usually this move offers a personal (or some other people's) first response to the work, here the introductory information on the size of the work, dominant principle of design, spatial developments, colours, light, atmosphere, sources of inspiration accompanies the writer's first response to and appreciation/evaluation of the work as representing one of Dosso's most valuable paintings.

Move III: Analysing de-constructed elements of the work

Step I – Element I: Mercury (Description + Interpretation based on iconography)

At first sight, only Mercury, seated in the center, is clearly identifiable, with his nude, muscular body, winged helmet and ankles, and magic wand – the golden caduceus – remnants of this messenger god's flying missions and open-sesames. He turns to look back at...

The analysis of the work begins with the analysis of the first element, in this case of the character appearing in the center of the work. Compositional canons tend to place the most important thing/character in the focal point, and, probably, the center of a painting would be such a position. This always results in the viewer's first perceiving of that element. From that point the eye roams in other directions. Usually that focal point thing/character bears the most important meaning of the work. We shall see though that this is not the case here. Mercury is not the most important character in this painting, at least in the interpretation given by our author. However, his role is to guide the viewer's eye firstly behind him, as we allow ourselves to be steered around by his posture, gestures, and move. The first step of the analysis of the first element is to describe what can actually be perceived. Adjectives serving as epithets are typical devices for descriptions in the discourse about art. There usually are plenty of such determinatives ("nude, muscular body", "winged helmet and ankles", "golden caduceus"); metaphors are also welcome ("flying missions and open sesames" as part of an interpretive description – of the wings and caduceus – also suggested by the words "remnants of"). Description is always followed by interpretation of those perceived aspects. In this case the writer appeals to iconography: the caduceus and the wings are clearly identifiable symbols of the messenger-god, Mercury; we can therefore

notice that the proof the author brings to her interpretation is an internal one, that is, present inside the artwork itself.

Step II – Element II: Virtue (Description + Interpretation based on comparison)

As we follow Mercury’s move backward we meet another character:

... a fleshy, supplicating female (Virtue, according to the modern title), who kneels in from the composition’s lower right. With windswept, yellowish-tan drapery, she is adorned by bracelets, necklaces and crowning wreaths all wrought of delicate flowers (like Flora, goddess of spring, in Botticelli’s “Primavera”). To her, Mercury lifts the right hand, index finger to closed lips as, in age-old fashion, he seems to signal the lady to silence, apparently out of respect for the activities of...

The same typical discursual strategy is employed here: describing the character and interpreting it. The description also makes use of rich, even multiple determinatives⁵ (“fleshy, supplicating female”, “windswept, yellowish-tan drapery”, “crowning wreaths... wrought of delicate flowers”). The interpretation given to this character (“Virtue, according to the modern title”) is inspiredly suggested by a comparison to the goddess Flora in another great painter’s work.

Step III – Element III: Jupiter (Description + Interpretation 1 based on iconography)

Again we follow the moves and gestures of the central character, Mercury, and we move our eyes to the left in order to see the reason why he is trying to silence the supplicating woman/goddess. Then we meet another character, who, as the writer will demonstrate, is in fact the most important one, in spite of his non-central position in the composition:

... the grey-bearded, rustic sage who sits, legs crossed, on his other side. Taking up nearly half of the composition with his salmon and pink draperies, this figure turns away from the others and toward a tablet/easel and the job at hand: painting butterflies on an otherwise empty picture field. Who would this be?

The description reveals to us a third character who appears to be a “rustic sage”. Also described are his clothes, his appearance (“grey bearded”), posture (“legs crossed”), movement (he turns away from the others towards an easel), activity (painting butterflies on an empty picture field). Although not in the center of the painting, this character takes up

nearly half of the composition, a very important aspect which seems to bring about some meaning. The fact that an interpretation will follow is signalled here by a rhetorical question: “Who would this be?”.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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2. Swales, J., *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*, Cambridge University Press, 2001, p. 58, and Bhatia, V., *Analysing Genre: Language Use in Professional Settings*, Longman, Harlow, 1993, pp. 12–16.

3. Crețiu, A.E., *Genre-Structured Discourse in Art Texts*, Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 2003, pp. 90–92.

4. As is specified at the end of the article mentioned above.

5. Bhatia noticed that nowhere else there is such an excess of determinatives – mainly adjectives – as is in the language of advertising; we may rightfully add as well the case of the discourse about art to his insightful observation.

KANT — A PARADIGM OF A RATIONALIST IN MORAL EPISTEMOLOGY

ROBERTH SÜTÖ

ABSTRACT. The will is practical reason, and therefore a genuine moral judgment, which represents a deliverance of practical reason, must be motivating. Virtue signifies a moral strength of will. The experienced sense of doing duty is clearest when one is acting against inclination, though we need not take it to occur only then.

Kant took good will to be the only unqualified good (only deeds done from duty have moral worth). There is no inconsistency in universalizing the maxims corresponding to failure to do good deeds and to develop one's talents. According to Kant, "[A] rational and impartial spectator can never feel approval in contemplating the uninterrupted prosperity of a being graced by no touch of a pure and good will. ... [G]ood will seems to constitute the indispensable condition of our very worthiness to be happy."¹ The will is practical reason, and therefore a genuine moral judgment, which represents a deliverance of practical reason must be motivating. Kant's *good will* is defined as the will which does what is morally right because it is morally right.

Kant took reason to have both the normative power to determine what we ought to do and the motivational power to produce that conduct. Ross suggests, "We can, while agreeing with Kant that the sense of duty is the best motive, justify the generally entertained preference for actions in which some more instinctive generous impulse is present as well. And it is possible... to value highly the presence and operation of warm personal feeling, without disparaging, as it is often being thought necessary to do, the supreme moral value of the sense of duty."² Acting from duty seems necessary for acting from *moral* virtue. A strong requirement for Kantian action from duty is suggested by Kant's second principle of morality. Kant conceives action from duty as motivated solely by a commitment to a suitable principle of duty. Actions from duty, which have moral worth, are performed from virtue.

All one needs access to is one's awareness of the duty itself, provided this awareness is suitably anchored in one's overall moral outlook. Discussing Kant's antithesis of duty and inclination, Ross notes that a dutiful action which, through the formation of a moral habit, has become less difficult to perform, does not thereby become less morally good.³

Kant points out that virtue “signifies a moral strength of will... the moral strength of a *man’s* will in fulfilling his *duty*, a moral *necessitation* by his own legislative reason in so far as reason itself constitutes a power of *executing* the law.”⁴ An unselfconscious agent keeping a promise from duty is at least *tacitly* following a maxim which the agent could formulate on reflection, including reflection on the content of the intention with which the action is performed. For Kant, what is obligatory upon me is what I have a duty to do; the paradigms of acting morally are deeds done purely from duty. The consequences of my action do not matter to its moral justification (if keeping the promise is my duty, then the moral justification of my doing this does not depend on its consequences).

The experienced sense of doing duty is clearest when one is acting against inclination, though we need not take it to occur only then. A perfect duty, such as the duty to keep a promise, always outweighs an imperfect duty, such as the duty to help someone in distress. Promoting one’s happiness from duty must be grounded in a commitment to the duty of so doing, not in the happiness to be achieved. Action on a maxim requires a decision favoring that action over one or more alternatives.⁵ What I ought to do is simply what it is my duty to do, and I may do what I have no duty not to do; the moral status of my character is determined precisely by my doing what I ought and doubtless also by my being disposed so to act in relevant hypothetical situations.

REFERENCES

1. Kant, I., *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. H. J. Paton, Hutchinson, London, 1948, sec. 393.
2. Ross, W.D., *The Right and the Good*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1930, pp. 170—172.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 158—165.
4. Kant, I., “Introduction to the Doctrine of Virtue”, trans. Mary McGregor, Harper and Row, New York, 1964, p. 66.
5. Audi, R., *Moral Knowledge and Ethical Character*, Oxford University Press, Oxford-New York, 1997, pp. 176—289.

DEVENIREA ÎNTRU FIINȚĂ ȘI PROBLEMATICA SPIRITUALĂ

OANA GHERMAN

ABSTRACT. The contrast between being (in the sense of existence) and essence is itself an ancient one, rooted in the distinction between accidental and essential properties. There is an ontic duality that cannot be confused with the ontological one and which allows for transcendence and immanence to come together.

Înainte de toate trebuie spus că ontologia criptologică (discursul despre ceea ce este ascuns) dă naștere, în ceea ce privește doctrina lui Noica, la o *reconstrucție simbolică*, care le înglobează și în același timp le depășește pe cele trei contemporane: „Reconstrucțiile raționale sunt necesare pentru a ne ajuta pe noi, filosofii de azi, să reflectăm la problemele noastre. Reconstrucțiile istorice sunt necesare pentru a ne reaminti că aceste probleme sunt produse istorice, prin demonstrarea faptului că ele au fost invizibile pentru strămoșii noștri. *Geistesgeschichte* este necesară pentru a justifica credința noastră că ne aflăm într-o poziție mai bună decât acei strămoși, în virtutea faptului că am devenit conștienți de acele probleme”¹; depășirea reconstrucției simbolice constă în aceea că doctrinele filosofice, fără deosebire, relevă, în mod parțial, prin evidență sau interpretare, o anume perspectivă legată de însemințarea unui dat primordial în lume creat de Ființa autentică.

Astfel, dacă devenirea într-o ființă, cel puțin la om, se desfășoară în spirală, atunci „filosofia spiritului poate fi înțeleasă prin problematica ființei”, iar „problematica ființei este de înțeles prin unitatea de conștiință a spiritului”², ceea ce înseamnă că reconstrucția simbolică pornește de la cea mai joasă ființă (de exemplu, ființa mineralului), și ajunge până la ființa Ființei autentice, în așa fel încât spiritualitatea, ținând cont că Ființa autentică este Adevărul, să presupună câteva lucruri de bun simț: 1. Niciodată adevărul nu este de drept accesibil subiectului. 2. Nu poate să existe adevăr fără o transformare sau conversiune a subiectului. 3. Accesul la adevăr produce, asupra subiectului, o adevărată transfigurare³. Aici însă credem că trebuia precizată atât identitatea spiritului, în speță spiritul uman, cât și cea a ființei, și anume a Ființei autentice, căci numai omul față de Ființa autentică, prin unirea lor și sinergia care le este proprie, pot accede la o relație dacă nu de explicație a unuia prin Cealaltă (în cazul spiritului uman prin acțiunea Ființei autentice este evident), cel puțin printr-o forțare la înțelegerea Acesteia prin comportamentul spiritului uman față de Ea, și anume prin manifestarea unității sale de

conștiință reprezentată de tripticul unitar minte-suflet-trup direcționat pozitiv, prin care și de la care persoana umană își capătă și valoarea autentică.

Dar dacă lucrurile stau așa, atunci filosofia spiritului și problematica Ființei autentice duc la dialectică, cum susține Noica, sau la contradicție simbiotică, cum afirmăm noi, căci: „Ființa (Ființa autentică, n.n.) este pentru rațiune (spiritul uman, n.n.) o temă, care își ridică împotriva o antitemă, devenirea, pentru a ieși abia din înfruntarea aceasta ca o adevărată teză, devenirea întru ființă”⁴, devenire întru firea, ființa umană spre atingerea desăvârșirii personale.

Putem însă adăuga că forma triadei de influență hegeliană poate fi întâlnită și sub întruchiparea de problemă-instrument-soluție, acolo unde Ființa autentică este o problemă a omului ce trebuie rezolvată printr-un instrument care nu este altul decât devenirea persoanei umane ce dă și cheia soluției (devenirea întru ființă) prin unirea celor doi poli, omul și Ființa autentică, iar acest fapt nu exprimă decât spirala, contradicția simbiotică.

De observat că în acest context „Rațiunea (spiritul uman, n.n.) trebuie să nu fie neutră”⁵, adică trebuie să fie orientată, căci „dialecticul (contradicția simbiotică, n.n.) nu are sens și nu e cu adevărat posibil fără orientare”⁶, fapt care duce la „regândirea conceptului de rațiune (spirit uman, n.n.)”⁷. De aceea, în această ultimă accepție, de regândire a rațiunii, spiritului uman, Noica înțelege să afirme că aceasta/acesta este „conștiința devenirii întru ființă”⁸, care nu este altceva decât „devenirea conștientă întru ființă”⁹. Într-adevăr, prin unirea rațiunii cu afectivitatea, sau altfel spus prin unitatea spirituală minte-suflet-trup orientată și unită cu Ființa autentică, omul devine întru ființa/firea proprie, precum și conștientizează devenirea sa reală, autentică desăvârșindu-se personal și dobândind valoare.

Dar alături de lumea spiritului, a valorilor autentice, a devenirii întru ființă există, la un nivel inferior, dar destul de eficient din nefericire, lumea materiei, a falselor valori sau mai degrabă a non-valorilor, care presupune o devenire oarbă, fără scop, o devenire întru devenire acolo unde unitatea minte-suflet-trup se sparge și apar conflicte, distorsionări, disensiuni la nivelul conștiinței umane, fapt care duce la dezintegrarea, deteriorarea omului, la reasezarea lui într-un con de umbră, dacă nu de întuneric, când Ființa autentică nu își mai dă girul pentru a îmbunătăți natura umană, căci aceasta din urmă îi întoarce spatele, prin acest lucru pierzându-se și rătăcindu-se ea însăși.

Devenirea întru devenire este devenirea întru existență care nu se mai desfășoară în spirală, ci mai degrabă în cerc, într-unul vicios, al dorințelor pervertite care trebuie împlinite cu orice preț. De aceea,

scopurile și obiectivele sale vor fi fără valoare, neautentice, ca și cum n-ar fi ca atare. Și totuși în perimetrul ei Noica a găsit cu cale să ne arate că ea presupune pentru a fi înțeleasă mai multe trepte de parcurs.

1. Devenirea întru devenire

a. Devenirea întru devenire lipsită de conștiință este și cuprinde în sens larg, susține Noica, natura anorganică¹⁰. Această realitate anorganică, deși lipsită de conștiință, poate avea, în travaliul ei de creatură, un parcurs pozitiv și unul negativ, în funcție de comportamentul persoanei umane față de Ființa autentică. Astfel, dacă cel puțin un om este orientat spre unirea cu Ființa autentică, implicit spre dezvoltarea calităților sale în mod integral și valoric, atunci natura anorganică va deveni întru ființa proprie, își va reintra în fire, adică omul va putea să descopere sensul și rațiunea ei de a fi. Altfel, natura anorganică va deveni întru devenire, adică va trăi într-un ciclu non-valoric moarte-viață fără consistență autentică.

b. Devenirea întru devenire cu conștiința subiectivă este „treapta pe care o atinge viața animală și de la care pleacă ființa umană”¹¹; în contextul acesteia „conștiința este confundată cu cunoștința”¹², iar „conștiința de ceva este una de sine”¹³. Așa să fie? Desigur că în condițiile anterioare animalul trăiește în zona precarului, dar el, ca și natura anorganică, poate face saltul calitativ înspre autentic în funcție de relația om-animal, om-Ființă autentică: dacă persoana umană se unește cu Ființa autentică, atunci animalul va avea față de om un comportament adecvat, adică nu numai omul va accede la ființa proprie, ci și animalul se va împlini intrându-și în fire, în fâgaș și rost. Astfel, conștiința subiectivă, atât la animal cât și la om, lasă loc unei conștiințe autentice care se află dincolo de distincția subiectiv–obiectiv, în preaplina unei contradicții simbiotice când subiectivul este obiectiv și ne-obiectiv, iar obiectivul este subiectiv și ne-subiectiv, fiecare în parte și luate împreună, iar animalul își dobândește valoarea reală.

c. Devenirea întru devenire însoțită de conștiința obiectivă face posibilă, susține Noica, intrarea în „împărăția omului” când „cunoștința, deși încă dublată de conștiință, este cunoștința a lucrurilor ele însele. Caracteristic este deci că acum cunoștința se deosebește de conștiință și deosebește lucrurile”¹⁴. Acum întâlnim cu claritate funcționarea disjunctivă a opoziției subiectiv–obiectiv când „Eu sunt eu și lumea e lume”¹⁵, valoarea umană în acest caz fiind una a precarității, căci omul nu se mai unește cu Ființa autentică, care este măsură a tuturor lucrurilor. Dar omul nu rămâne aici. El poate deveni întru ființă, iar pentru aceasta are de parcurs iarăși câteva trepte.

2. Devenirea întru ființă

a. „Există o treaptă subiectivă a devenirii întru ființă și deci, întrucât conștiința acesteia este rațiunea, există o formă subiectivă de a duce prin rațiune la ființă”¹⁶. Aici întâlnim o problemă: dacă avem în vedere rațiunea singură, autonomă, și funcționarea ei în plan uman, atunci este evident că omul nu poate deveni întru ființă cu ajutorul ei; dar dacă punem în joc regândirea rațiunii, și înțelegerea ei ca unitate spirituală minte-suflet-trup sau în unire cu afectivitatea, atunci, prin unirea cu Ființa autentică, el poate deveni întru ființă, dar atunci conștiința nu mai este subiectivă, ci de altă natură, dincolo și dincoace de opoziția subiectiv–obiectiv. Aici fiecare devine întru ființă în funcție de intensitatea trăirii și realizării procesului de unire cu Ființa autentică, dar și în funcție de capacitatea primirii darurilor acesteia prin care persoana umană se împlinește. Valoarea câștigată de om în acest caz va fi una autentică, dar va fi diferită de la om la om, îmbrăcată în culoarea fiecărei personalități umane în parte.

b. „Există însă o treaptă obiectivă a devenirii întru ființă” când „rațiunea depășește acum planul sinelui subiectiv și încearcă să obțină mai mult decât persoana individuală”¹⁷, iar expresia acestei trepte este comunitatea istorică. În acest caz, pentru ca respectiva comunitate să devină întru ființă, trebuie ca fiecare membru în parte, sau cel puțin majoritatea membrilor ei, să devină întru ființă, deci trebuie să îndeplinească condițiile pe care le-am arătat deja; dar important este faptul că respectiva comunitate în rolul anterior trebuie să se comporte ca o singură persoană: așa cum omul are un trup alcătuit din mai multe părți, și pentru funcționarea fiecăreia ca și a întregului este nevoie de o împreună-lucrare, căci fiecare parte este necesară celeilalte ca și întregului trup, tot așa societatea, corpul social, comunitatea istorică are nevoie ca fiecare membru-parte să fie sănătos, să devină întru ființă, astfel dobândindu-și valoare și atingându-și scopul eshatologic¹⁸. Dar atunci nu mai avem de-a face cu o treaptă obiectivă, ci cu una care, așa cum am mai arătat, depășește distincția subiectiv–obiectiv, prin ea comunitatea istorică în devenire câștigându-și valoare autentică.

c. „Există însă o treaptă absolută a devenirii întru ființă, unde nu mai încap constrângere a subiectivului de către obiectiv, căci de astă dată ele vor fi una”¹⁹, aceasta fiind modalitatea religiei în trecut sau astăzi, „conștiința solidarității planetare”. Noi însă considerăm că această unire ca depășire a subiectivului cu obiectivul este proprie religiei, respectiv creștinismului, în sânul căruia are loc și veritabila devenire întru ființă, iar conștiința solidarității planetare nu este altceva decât o

abstracțiune, o pură ficțiune, căci adevărata solidaritate între oameni nu poate proveni decât dintr-o conștiință religioasă, din iubirea aproapelui. Valorile cultivate în acest perimetru vor fi cele religioase adecvate unui proces de devenire autentic.

d. „Devenirea întru ființă a rațiunii absolute”, proprie filosofiei și dialecticii²⁰, cum susține Noica, este una fără impact cu realitatea, căci Rațiunea Absolută, adică Ființa autentică, nu presupune nici înlăuntrul, nici în afara ei devenirea întru ființă ca un proces complet și integrator, iar filosofia lucrează cu rațiunea autonomă, precară în teritoriul căreia are loc devenirea întru devenire. Astfel, această așa-zisă treaptă nu există și ca atare nu aduce cu ea nici o valoare.

3. Ființă-devenire-element

Și totuși, prin demersul de până acum n-am aflat ce este ființa la Noica: „Generalul, individualul și determinațiile reprezintă cu adevărat eterogenitatea ființei, iar ele în triplicitatea lor ar exprima ființa din lucruri”²¹; în acest context, autorul vorbește de un model al ființei, dar și de niște maladii constituționale ale acesteia, de precarități ființiale²². Dar ființa la Noica este structurată ca model pe trei nivele: ființa lucrurilor, ființa elementelor, ființa ca ființă.

3.1. Prima instanță a ființei – devenirea

Ființa din lucruri este „opusul ei aparent, devenirea”²³; devenirea, în acest registru, este „o bună închidere ce se deschide”²⁴, fiindu-i proprie infinitudinea „limitației ce nu limitează”²⁵. Or, noi putem afirma că există o ființă a fiecărui lucru, care se cere descoperită de omul autentic, care lucrează la creșterea sa interioară în relație cu semenii și cu Ființa autentică, și care constă într-o rațiune și un sens propriu pus de la creație *in nuce* în el; și atunci putem vorbi de devenire doar ca instrument, mijloc de a accede la ființa lucrului, ceea ce nu ne împiedică totuși să susținem că ființa acestuia este o limitație, căci îi pune hotar față de celelalte regiuni ale făpturii, dar una care nu limitează, căci ea, prin faptul că este imuabilă, neschimbătoare o trece în orizontul veșniciei, al infinității; în plus, am mai putea adăuga că este o veritabilă deschidere ce se deschide și crește neîncetat, nicidecum o închidere ce se deschide, decât dacă închiderea este văzută ca limitație și discuția ar reveni la planul anterior.

Devenirea însă, noi credem, poate fi legată de ideea de număr; astfel, dacă „orice număr e unu, deoarece e reprezentat printr-o intuiție simplă a spiritului, iar această unitate e unitatea unei sume, ea

îmbrățișând o mulțime de părți, ce pot fi privite izolat²⁶, atunci putem susține că, în mod asemănător, devenirea este una, din perspectiva eshatologică a Ființei autentice, care are la rândul ei părți multiple, căci doar însumarea devenirilor are un scop precis, eshatonul.

Valorile, în spațiul articulat de Noica, vor fi unele, asemenea devenirii pe care o slujesc, relative, precare, trecătoare, pe când dacă intrăm în teritoriul nostru, acestea vor fi unele ale eternității, autentice.

3.2. A doua instanță a ființei – elementul

„Toate sunt de fapt (au fost și supraviețuiesc) în elementul lor²⁷, afirmă Noica; dar ce este elementul? El este „această ordine de realitate, în care sunt împlântate lucrurile și care le face să fie²⁸, nici funcțional, nici substanțial, ci și una, și alta în același timp²⁹, el este „orice mediu exterior ce poate deveni mediu interior³⁰, „ce este mai adânc în lucru decât lucrul însuși³¹, se distribuie fără să se împartă³² și este un Unu Multiplu³³ asemenea valorilor culturii europene³⁴. Or, dacă lucrurile stau așa, atunci am putea spune că elementul are o conotație spirituală, el nefiind altceva decât energia, manifestarea necreată care lucrează în lume și care este proprie Ființei autentice, căci: 1. face lucrurile să fie, întrucât ca manifestare a Ființei autentice este și poartă viață, Ființa autentică fiind Viața; 2. este mediu exterior ce poate deveni mediu interior, întrucât atât dinăuntru cât și din afară sporește, crește, înzestreață, conservă și construiește făptura lumii; 3. se distribuie la toată făptura neîmpuținându-se și neepuizându-se, rămânând la fel și cantitativ, și calitativ, adică neîmpărțindu-se; etc. Astfel, categoriile elementului³⁵ vor fi categorii ale Ființei autentice. Dar la nivelul elementului nu există devenire, ceea ce înseamnă că valorile proprii elementului nu vor fi cele ale devenirii, căci „devenirea nu este element, pentru că nu poate primi nici una din categoriile elementului³⁶.

Concluzia care se poate trage de aici, din discursul de până acum, este că „devenirea reprezintă marea promisiune ontologică a lumii”, căci prin ea, zicem noi, lumea își atinge scopul eshatologic, în timp ce „elementul este realitatea ontologică așezată într-o ordine³⁷, căci el susține ca Viața acest efort al devenirii de a-și atinge scopul pentru care a fost creată, de a realiza și împlini lumea.

3.3. Devenința

Există, susține Noica, și o devenire în sânul elementului, o devenire întru sine a acestuia, care se numește devenință³⁸, un fel de conștiință de sine a elementului prin care el ajunge să fie eficient. Or, noi

considerăm că elementul ca manifestare a Ființei autentice este de la început, fără a deveni întru sine, deci fără devenință, conștiință de sine însuși în stare de desăvârșire și nu de perfectibilitate continuă, cum îl prezintă autorul. Ca atare devenința nu numai că nu există, dar nici nu este necesară.

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FORME ALE EGALITARISMULUI ECONOMIC

CONSTANTIN LĂPĂDAT

ABSTRACT. The advanced capitalist world has pushed through a series of changes in international economic laws, which lay the legal foundation for capital accumulation in the era of globalization by prescribing uniform global standards. Underpinning the emerging global state is a web of sub-national authorities and spaces that represent its decentralized face.

Trăim într-o lume de inegalitate economică și socială care afectează spiritul, „o lume a cărei evoluție către admiterea unor standarde comune de toleranță, de libertate individuală și dezvoltare umană a fost deprimant de lentă și instabilă”¹. Democrația este inamicul egalității depline, „de când cei săraci nu mai constituie o majoritate”². Este necesară articularea unei noi autorități transnaționale, capabilă să analizeze echilibrul dintre prioritățile investițiilor publice, structurile de cheltuieli și situațiile economice de urgență. „Sarcina unui asemenea organism ar fi să umple un gol, să devină coordonatorul unei politici economice la nivel global și regional, dovedindu-se util la fixarea obiectivelor pentru repartizarea fondurilor în variate domenii, ca și la crearea unor politici economice care să iasă de sub jurisdicția sferelor actuale de reglementare, de pildă piețele de capital internaționale pe termen scurt. Ca atare, sarcina acestui organism ar fi să pregătească niște cadre de conduită mai extinse, care ar putea acționa ca puncte de orientare pentru cei care lucrează la alte niveluri de autoritate”³. Goodhart reiterează irelevanța clivajului dintre bogați și săraci. „O teorie a egalității în sprijinul celei de-a *treia căi* ar trebui să declare că această falie este neimportantă sau, cel puțin, că ea contează mai puțin decât speranța de viață a lumpenului. Dacă aceasta crește constant nu contează că cei bogați prosperă în continuare. Credința în această dihotomie săraci—bogați se originează și dintr-o idee defunctă asupra înavuțirii, privită ca un joc cu sumă nulă. Într-un sat minier din secolul 19 era evident că averea proprietarului de mină era cumva cauza sărăciei minerilor; astăzi, în general, lucrurile stau altfel: situația săracilor nu determină bunăstarea bogaților și viceversa. Bill Gates n-a acumulat o avere de 150 miliarde de dolari exploatănd săracii din Seattle”⁴.

Un consens ideologic referitor la oportunitatea capitalismului și la concentrarea puterii militare de hegemoni puternici de la centru nu este îndeajuns pentru a împiedica un conflict major în cadrul sistemului ca întreg. Nici una, nici alta nu ar fi suficientă, „dacă majoritatea nu s-ar divide într-un strat de jos mai extins și un strat de mijloc mai restrâns.

[...] Semiperiferiei îi este repartizat un rol economic specific, dar motivul este mai puțin economic decât politic; [...] se poate susține cu succes că economia mondială ar funcționa la fel de bine și fără semiperiferie. Dar ea ar fi din perspectivă politică mult mai puțin stabilă, întrucât ar fi vorba de un sistem mondial polarizat. Existența unei a treia categorii presupune evident că stratul de sus nu se confruntă cu opoziția unită a tuturor celorlalte straturi, deoarece stratul de mijloc este și exploatat, și exploatator⁴⁵. Brown solicită instaurarea unui nou egalitarism economic, care să pornească de la admiterea faptului că potențialul oamenilor (și prin aceasta valoarea muncii lor) este forța motrice a economiei moderne, ce izbuteste sau eșuează în funcție de felul în care ameliorează calificarea fiecăruia. „În loc ca munca să se efectueze în avantajul unui grup restrâns, provocarea este de a reconstrui economia pentru a ne asigura că munca poate folosi capitalul în beneficiul tuturor⁴⁶. Ipotezele formulate de Gilpin cu privire la state rezultă din teoria microeconomică a alegerii raționale — utilizată pentru a postula o teorie ciclică a schimbării în sistemul internațional, care este stabil dacă nici un stat nu consideră că schimbarea sistemului este avantajoasă; un stat va încerca să schimbe sistemul internațional dacă beneficiile așteptate depășesc costurile presupuse; un stat va încerca să schimbe sistemul internațional prin expansiunea teritorială, politică și economică, până când costurile marginale ale unei viitoare schimbări sunt egale sau mai mari decât beneficiile așteptate; o dată ce se ajunge la un echilibru între costurile și beneficiile unei viitoare schimbări (și expansiunea este atinsă), costurile economice de menținere a *statu quo*-ului tind să crească mai repede decât capacitatea economică de a susține *statu quo*-ul; dacă dezechilibrul din sistemul internațional nu este soluționat, sistemul se va schimba și se va stabili un nou echilibru, care va reflecta redistribuirea puterii⁴⁷.

Luttwak observă că dacă economia Statelor Unite ar fi alcătuită doar din vechi titani cu un număr foarte mare, dar în scădere, de angajați, și din noi titani care angajează foarte puțini, șomajul ar crește la niveluri fenomenale, însă „lucrurile nu se petrec astfel datorită rețelei extinse și variate de servicii, de la administrațiile statale și cea federală până la curățătoriile de haine, trecând prin imensa industrie a îngrijirilor medicale, care e în creștere. În această rețea intră giganții din sfera comerțului cu amănuntul și lanțurile de fast-food, care au sporit considerabil numărul de angajați; totuși, ei nu oferă nici slujbele excelente ce abundă în sectorul tehnologiei informației, nici locurile de muncă modeste, dar bine remunerate, ale vechilor titani. În lanțurile mari de comerț cu amănuntul și de fast-food, mulți angajați sunt plătiți cu salariul minim, mulți alții câștigă doar ceva în plus, și numai câțiva, la vârf, sunt plătiți foarte bine⁴⁸. Sen arată că există posibilitatea ca oamenii

să opteze contra intereselor proprii și nu trebuie ignorat „angajamentul” din comportamentul uman: agentul individual poate acționa într-un asemenea mod încât să se afle într-o situație mai dezavantajoasă decât dacă opta pentru o altă alternativă dintre cele prezentate. „Caracteristica angajamentului de care mă ocup aici cel mai mult este faptul că el realizează o fractură între opțiunea personală și bunăstarea personală, iar o bună parte din teoria economică tradițională se bazează pe identitatea celor două”⁹.

Sub influența judecăților politice, economiștii pot urma o cale periculoasă, dar nu fiindcă economia poate fi separată cumva de valori și pusă pe o bază strict „factuală”, ci întrucât multe considerații politice, îndeosebi cele relaționate de interesul de partid pe termen scurt, sunt neînsemnate pentru practica economică. „Ceea ce unui anumit partid politic i-ar plăcea să fie adevărat, în sensul că ar facilita implementarea politicii, poate să nu fie, în același timp, adevărul propriu-zis. Economistul nu trebuie să cadă în cursa de a spune politicienilor doar ceea ce ei vor să audă; dacă economia este realmente o știință, ea trebuie adaptată la ceea ce se petrece în mod real în societate, mai curând decât la interesele politice particulare. Firește, există limite ale nemulțumirii față de ceea ce se petrece în realitate și vor exista probabil conexiuni între dezacordurile dintre economiști și argumente politice mai extinse, fapt datorat, cel puțin parțial, subdeterminării teoriei economice de către fapte”¹⁰. Intervenția politică în economie este rezonabilă atunci când i) obiectivul ei este să depășească urmările (ne)intenționate ale interacțiunii economice ce determină efecte pernicioase, precum poluarea mediului, care amenință sănătatea, și când ii) e justificată de asigurarea cerințelor primare de autonomie, atât în interiorul cât și în exteriorul organizației; bazele unei astfel de intervenții stau în nesiguranța sistemului de piață”¹¹.

Wolf opinează că puterile financiare ale lumii nu vor putea nici să împiedice crizele, nici să le soluționeze cu ușurință, fiindcă le lipsesc interesul, voința și mijloacele. „Acest dureros episod prezintă trei consecințe: noua lume a deschiderii pieței capitalului este vulnerabilă în fața crizei; pentru a ameliora suferința celor afectați, lumea poate face extrem de puțin; conștientizarea riscurilor pe care și le asumă și hotărârea asupra celui mai bun mod de a le trata depind de economiile aflate în curs de dezvoltare. Lumea nu poate reduce apariția crizelor, însă poate contribui la ușurarea suferințelor aferente. Dar cei care suferă sunt locuitorii țărilor în curs de dezvoltare și guvernele care au responsabilitatea capitală de a minimiza această suferință”¹². Este relevantă o cultură adecvată a încrederii sau a „sociabilității spontane”, ușurința în a te înțelege cu concetățenii în moduri economic productive. „Aproape toate activitățile economice contemporane sunt înfăptuite nu

de indivizi, ci de organizații, care solicită un grad ridicat de cooperare socială. Drepturile de proprietate, contractele și dreptul comercial sunt instituții indispensabile pentru articularea unui sistem economic modern, orientat spre viață, dar este posibil să se economisească substanțial din costurile de tranzacție, dacă astfel de instituții sunt completate de capital social și încredere, ultima fiind produsul comunităților preexistente de valori și coduri morale. Aceste comunități [...] nu sunt produsul alegerii raționale¹³.

Integrarea globală are nevoie de integrarea financiară, circulația mondială a capitalului, „însă precum ne-au indicat evenimentele din anii '20 ai secolului trecut, crizele financiare internaționale pot determina dezintegrarea globală¹⁴. Rata ridicată a șomajului în Europa, în comparație cu cea americană, reflectă faptul că strategiile publice americane sunt întrucâtva mai egalitariste și mai activ implicate în crearea de posturi decât cele ale Uniunii Europene, aflată din 1999 sub administrare social-democrată¹⁵. În timp ce consistența este considerată în teoria economică a fi o condiție necesară a raționalității, se adaugă curent o cerință auxiliară, o concepție autonomă față de ceea ce individul ar putea maximiza. „Regula urmăririi consecvente a interesului propriu este o ipoteză curent utilizată de comportamentul rațional, fiind prezentă implicit în multe din teoriile economice tradiționale¹⁶.

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COMPOSITIONAL BREAKTHROUGHS *VERSUS* REVOLUTIONARY PIANISTIC TECHNIQUES

LUMINIȚA POGĂCEANU

ABSTRACT. The mature development of a piano student's ability to realize aesthetic value in the music they study is a vital aspect of piano instruction. A good performance involves more than pushing down the right keys at the right moment. The performer has become less knowledgeable in some respects.

There is a common ground among critics and researchers as to what constitutes the standard repertoire. "Most of them identify the works of nearly fourteen composers as the most frequently programmed by professional and degree-seeking piano performers. Although the order of preference may slightly vary, the most regularly programmed are Chopin, Beethoven, J.S. Bach, Liszt, Schubert, Brahms, Debussy, Mozart, Haydn, Scarlatti, Schumann, Prokofiev, Bartók, and Ravel."¹ Last emphasizes the final product of musical interpretation: "The further the aspiring pianist progresses the more it should become apparent to him that a good performance involves infinitely more than pushing down the right keys at the right moment. [...] Interpretation is more concerned with *sounds* than it is with *notes*; thus our first aim in 'giving a performance' is to produce the *kinds of sounds* that the musical context demands."² The mature development of a piano student's ability to realize aesthetic value in the music they study is a vital aspect of piano instruction; students are able to separate art from assignment when they receive from their teacher a clearer understanding of what constitutes aesthetic experience.³

A half-century after Bach's death, "the functions of the composer were essentially separated from those of the performer, and only since this time has it become a necessity for the creator to give more precise instructions to the re-creator in order to avoid possible distortion. The performer, ever since Bach's time, has become less knowledgeable in some respects."⁴ Faurot discusses Bach's compositional output: "Bach's preeminent place in keyboard music is acknowledged by all. [...] Bach's keyboard music falls into three general types: 1) fugal or contrapuntal writing (the two-part inventions, sinfonias, and fugues), 2) glorified dance tunes in a variety of rhythms (the French suites, etc.), and 3) free, rhapsodic passages (the preludes, toccatas, and fantasies)."⁵ The characterization of themes is one of the most important functions of articulations in the performance of Bach's fugues. The fugal entry should be played louder than the continuing counterpoint. "As the subject

appears in the second voice, the countersubject appears in the first voice as accompaniment.”⁶ A study of the late Beethoven sonatas demonstrate that Beethoven’s markings make a firm statement of interpretation, are an integral part of the composition, and are as essential to the music as are the notes themselves.⁷

Haydn’s music contains not only restrained, conservative Classic elements but also passionate, expressive elements. “Haydn came onto the scene at a time when he could stand at the crossroads of the Rococo and the *empfindsamer* styles. [...] Haydn commanded a full complement of moods and emotions in his music, from the joyous and gay to the tender and passionate.”⁸ An original Viennese grand fortepiano is the ideal instrument on which to perform Mozart’s music: only it can match the beauty and richness of sound, the surprising amount of tone color variation, and the lofty quality of the instrument.⁹ Van Oort outlined the influence the English Classical piano style had on Haydn and Beethoven. “The inefficient damping of the English piano led not only to a different basic touch, but also to a greater emphasis on sustained melody, and resulted in a more extensive use of the pedal; the relatively heavy feel of its action and fullness of its tone led to a thicker, more orchestral texture; its lack of brilliance was counteracted by increased activity in the treble; the way the bass and treble are balanced led to different activity in both hands.”¹⁰ Brahms may be regarded “as the Romantic successor of Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven. Equally significant, however, is Brahms’s influence upon later composers. As the first prominent neo-Classicist, he rejected many practices of the Romantic style and began a trend in composition which was to gain increasing momentum after the turn of the century.”¹¹

Debussy is generally credited with revolutionizing the existing pedal technique. “He was the first to recognize the potential musical chaos which might result from an undisciplined, indiscriminate use of the pedal. It is a particularly strange paradox, therefore, that in the composer’s extensive piano repertory only nine compositions contain recognizable pedaling indications of any sort. Consequently, one is compelled to rely heavily upon secondary and, at times, circumstantial evidence in reconstructing an authentic Debussy pedal aesthetic today.”¹² Chopin developed a lyrical style “paralleling the operatic writing of Bellini, with similarly rather square phrasing made flexible by its ornamentation and rhythmic *rubato*.”¹³ Chopin’s originality is the artistic manner in which he created an atmosphere. The pianist “must refrain from over-accentuating; he must avoid too dazzling *sforzandi*, out of fear that the auditor miss the charm created by the tender melody. [...] Finally, too rapid tempi are a mistake in this music which is an

uninterrupted melody. Rapid tempi exclude expression and interrupt communion with the soul of the composer.”¹⁴

Bartók’s didactic notation is full of markings, especially those related to articulation, which are potentially confusing. “Bartók had an unorthodox approach to piano technique and tried to communicate very specific and subtle instructions through these markings. Tempo marks are also problematic, partly because of discrepancies between the various primary sources and editions, partly because of the faulty metronome Bartók is known to have used in his early creative years.”¹⁵ Studying Ravel’s two piano concerti written during the end of his career, Jozaki stresses two opposing techniques: a) Ravel’s use of a neo-Classical transparent texture and sound; and b) Ravel’s more Romantic, dense texture.¹⁶ Prokofiev’s works are highly energetic pieces in which rhythm plays an important role.¹⁷ Prokofiev had a penchant for writing driving, motoric rhythms as well as a special gift for writing energized dance music.¹⁸

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LA RÉFLEXION DE RICOEUR SUR LE JUSTE

CARMEN PĂLĂCEAN

ABSTRACT. Although discourse about justice is often influenced by models of law, the ethics of justice is a subject in itself. To treat persons unequally with respect to distribution of important benefits and burdens, in the absence of a justification, is a paradigm of injustice.

Ricoeur plaide pour la création d'une instance qui permettrait à la société civile de demander des comptes au politique. Une telle «cour civique» aurait ainsi por tâche de remettre de l'avant les valeurs héritées des Lumières: «La publicité contre l'opacité, la célérité contre l'atermoïement, mais peut-être plus encore la prospective contre l'enlisement dans un passé qui ne veut pas passer» [296]. Ricoeur décrit ensuite le déroulement du procès; celui-ci se déroule en deux phases: i) la phase délibérative, qui repose sur des arguments (il s'agirait donc d'une discussion ou l'on verrait apparaître diverses opinions); ii) la sentence – celle-ci montre la différence entre l'approche historiographique et l'approche juridique. La sentence est définitive, la chose jugée ne peut pas être rejugée. La section «Exercices» permet à Ricoeur de mettre à l'oeuvre ce qu'il considère être le point culminant de la justice, à savoir le jugement en situation, plus particulièrement dans le cas où le tragique de l'action rend impraticable la stricte application des normes et impose par suite de puiser dans les ressources de sens qui gisent dans la visée téléologique initiale de «vivre bien avec et pour les autres dans des institutions justes». L'imposition d'une sentence pénale consiste «en une sorte de violence légale qui réplique, au terme d'un processus entier, à la violence primaire de laquelle tout État de droit procède dans des temps plus ou moins éloignés» [264]. La réinsertion du criminel doit en permanence constituer l'horizon de l'exercice de la justice.

Le juge doit juger, il doit conclure, trancher; il doit remettre à une juste distance le coupable et la victime. Le jugement historique peut être qualifié de provisoire contrairement au jugement judiciaire qui lui serait définitif. L'incrimination juridique repose sur le principe de la culpabilité individuelle; le procès criminel ne met en scène que des protagonistes individuels. Ricoeur étudie la résurgence de la vengeance dans l'exercice de la justice; la justice institutionnalisée, en tant qu'elle établit un tiers entre l'offenseur et sa victime, est précisément ce qui tente de séparer la justice de la vengeance, opérant en cela un déplacement de la violence du privé vers le public, laquelle violence doit, par le procès,

être transformée en discours argumenté soumis à l'interprétation. «Justice et vérité» vient situer le juste comme le point culminant du ternaire de l'axe horizontal (soi-proches-autres) à chacun des niveaux de l'axe vertical des prédicats à assigner à l'action («bon» = moment téléologique, «obligatoire» = moment déontologique et «convenable» = moment prudentiel). Ricoeur utilise à rebours les trois niveaux hiérarchiques des prédicats moraux: à savoir le bon, l'obligatoire et le convenable afin de structurer une réflexion sur la bioéthique au sens thérapeutique (clinique). C'est au niveau prudentiel, dans le pacte de confiance qui s'établit dans chaque cas singulier entre le patient et le médecin, que surgissent les premiers préceptes de la bioéthique. Ricoeur développe le lien entre imputabilité et expérience morale; il ressort d'emblée la référence à Kant qui, avec le jugement synthétique *a priori* fondant l'idée d'autonomie, fait le lien entre la règle et le soi. Il n'empêche que le lien entre le soi et la règle est de toute évidence plus obscur chez Kant, qui se borne à le définir comme un «fait de la raison» devant inspirer le respect. Ricoeur ajoute au couple de juge et de l'historien un troisième partenaire qui est le citoyen; celui-ci émerge comme un tiers dans le temps: son regard se structure à partir de son expérience propre, instruite par le jugement pénal et par l'enquête historique. La conviction du citoyen justifie l'équité de la procédure pénale dans l'enceinte du tribunal et l'honnêteté intellectuelle de l'historien aux archives.

Malgré cela persiste la violence à l'origine et à la fin du processus; à l'origine parce que l'État détient le monopole de la violence légitime et à la fin parce que la sentence exerce un pouvoir sur la liberté de l'offenseur, ajoutant en cela un souffrance à la souffrance initiale. Ricoeur explore le filon éthique que ses recherches phénoménologiques et herméneutiques avaient jusque-là laissé de côté. Ricoeur s'attarde à reformuler l'articulation des différents moments composant les deux axes, téléologique et déontologique, de son éthique. Il fait alors de la déontologie, c'est-à-dire du lieu où se croisent à la fois la normativité et la relation subjective qui lie le sujet aux normes. Si la déontologie relève par définition de l'universel, la visée téléologique ainsi que la sagesse pratique sont toutes deux ancrées dans une réalité historique. Le tragique de l'action est «le lieu même où l'universel et l'historique se recoupent et se recroisent, et ce, dans une dialectique, qui cofère au *Juste* son dynamisme fondamental» [51]. Ricoeur développe les potentialités d'un lien théorique entre la phénoménologie de l'expérience morale et son fondement anthropologique essentiel, l'imputabilité, qui consiste en «l'aptitude à nous reconnaître comme comptable (racine *putare*) de nos propres actes à titre de leur auteur véritable». Ricoeur scrute la problématique de l'autorité du point de vue politique, c'est-à-dire non pas

la reconnaissance de la validité d'une obligation morale, mais plutôt la reconnaissance de la validité d'un commandement, d'un pouvoir au sens politique («l'autorité d'un ordre symbolique n'est opérante que si elle est reconnue»). L'historien et le juge occupent une position de tiers dans l'action sociale; les deux ont des intentions de vérité et de justice. Les historiens se rapprochent également des juges car ils se comportent très souvent comme les avocats d'une cause. Les métiers d'historien et de juge se fondent également sur la possibilité de prouver, les notions de preuves et de vérité feraient donc partie de ces deux métiers.

Ricoeur présente une réflexion sur le politique où il tente de définir la responsabilité des politiques en mettant en lumière la sphère politique dans son ensemble comme une dimension où la responsabilité individuelle ne peut être établie sur la même base que dans le droit pénal en général. Ricoeur milite en faveur d'une appréhension du pathologique comme une dimension autre mais non inférieure par rapport à la normalité, à la santé: «La maladie est autre chose qu'un défaut, un manque, bref une quantité négative. C'est une autre manière d'être-au-monde. C'est en ce sens que le patient a une dignité, objet de respect» [226]. Ricoeur examine, dans l'ensemble du processus éthique, ce qui relève de l'universel et ce qui relève de l'historique, c'est-à-dire de ce qui est lié à un contexte donné. Ricoeur refuse l'opposition scolaire entre les deux termes, alléguant qu'ils appartiennent à deux niveaux différents, à deux moments distincts de l'éthique. Au niveau social ensuite, Ricoeur fait observer comment l'on considère normale la «conduite capable de satisfaire aux critères sociaux du vivre ensemble», la société repoussant et excluant ce qui lui rappelle sa propre fragilité. Juger les politiques selon une dynamique du «tout-pénal» nie la spécificité du politique et conduit par suite à une appréhension erronée de la «malgouvernance», ce qui n'est pas sans risques: «Le risque, avec le «tout-pénal», est que le politique, soumis à une sorte d'intimidation, soit livré à un processus rampant de victimisation» [291].

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CICERO, NATURAL JUSTICE AND THE *JUS GENTIUM*

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ABSTRACT. Cicero's views of the specific rights or *iura* deriving from natural justice can be dealt with under three headings: personal, social, and political. Cicero's views on private property and the role of the state in the distribution of wealth are uncompromising and characteristic of conservative republican sentiment.

The *jus gentium* (the Roman legal order dealing with international affairs), "the law observed by all mankind", was used to describe two distinct systems of law: i) the *jus gentium* that Roman jurists developed since the early days of the Republic characterizes a branch of private law separate from the Roman *jus civile* (and applied to determine the legal affairs involving both Romans and non-Romans); ii) Roman historians used the term *jus gentium* when they described the legal relations between the Roman state and other states (legal order rooted in "natural reason"). The smallest unit of ancient society was the family and not the individual; inside the family unit, connected by common subjection to the highest male ascendant, the individual was assigned a fixed status. The Roman conception of state responsibility was quite similar to the current principle of due diligence. The *jus gentium* reflects the relationship between state and subject in ancient society (they are not separate units but a single collective).

The entire society of the state was conceived of as a single unit when it interacted with another entity (it was not a collection of individuals living in a state). War could be waged only against a legitimate opponent against whom a reason to go to war existed; hostile acts against Romans or Roman vassals were also considered reasons for war. Ambassadors were considered immune and their bodies, *sacrosanctus* (killing or injuring an ambassador was considered an offence to the gods and the ambassador's people, which justified a war against the perpetrator's people). The Romans considered war a tool that determined legal disputes between peoples; the *jus gentium* was the municipal instrument that determined whether the war was "just".¹

The laws and practices of societies are a form of social contract by which people accept limitations on their freedom and the uncontrolled pursuit of their self-interest in return for protection against the encroachments of others. Cicero's views of the specific rights or *iura* deriving from natural justice can be dealt with under three headings:

personal, social, and political. The most basic personal right recognized in the Republic was equality before the law, and the system took special precautions to emphasize it and provide against its abuse.² Laws exist to secure the safety of citizens, the preservation of the state, and a peaceful and happy life. Cicero's theory of natural law and of the common capacity of all human beings through their reason to discern and follow it implies an equality of moral worth. Law has a single unchanging source. Differences in the statutes enacted by societies and differences in their opinions on law and justice arise because people pervert their nature by bad habits and false beliefs (and suppress their true natural impulses): if they did not twist weaker minds in this way, the singleness of human nature would be self-evident (no one would be so like himself as all would be like each other, and all would be in perfect agreement on all issues of right and wrong, just and unjust). Justice required that society take account of *gradus dignitatis* in its structure of government, and that the greatest power should not be given to the greatest number but to those whose *virtus* and resultant *dignitas* indicated their greater capacity to exercise it.

Life in society accords with the nature of human beings and is a requirement for human happiness. Cicero saw this social instinct as the primary reason for the origin of the state, and admits one further reason, security and protection.³ Cicero's views on private property and the role of the state in the distribution of wealth are uncompromising and characteristic of conservative republican sentiment. Cicero focuses on Roman experience, and proceeds from the belief that the republican constitution during its long evolution had identified and developed the true foundations of justice, and that Rome's laws and customs embodied them. The state is a partnership in justice, that is the bond of society and no state deserves the name, nor will it survive, unless its people recognize and uphold the rights and obligations that stem from their shared sense of justice. Law is not something conceived by man or enacted by societies, but something eternal that rules the universe; it is the law of nature, which can otherwise be described as the mind of God or the divine reason.⁴

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THE ACQUISITION OF SYNTACTIC KNOWLEDGE IN ASPECTS

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ABSTRACT. Chomsky's tacit competence is supposed to be knowledge of the particular rules of the grammar. Chomsky identifies a theory of language learning with the construction of a language "acquisition model". A linguistic-acquisition model must duplicate language-learning behavior.

Chomsky wants a theory of performance to describe how a model functions, but he does not require that the theory specify a physical realization of the model. Chomsky calls theories incorporating performance models "mentalistic". "The mentalist need make no assumptions about the possible physiological basis for the mental reality that he studies. In particular, he need not deny that there is such a basis. One would guess, rather, that it is the mentalistic studies that will ultimately be of greatest value for the investigations of neuro-psychological mechanisms, since they alone are concerned with determining abstractly the properties that such mechanisms must exhibit and the functions they must perform."¹ Facts about language support a "rationalist" theory of language learning as against an "empiricist" theory, transformational linguistics is incompatible with "empiricism". A theory of language learning concerns the linguistic-acquisition device that enables a potential performance model to become the performance model of a given language when exposed to people speaking that language.

Chomsky claims that when we see the enormous complexity of what is to be acquired in learning language, and when we recognize certain gross facts about the ways it is learned, the following theses become plausible: (i) human language acquisition devices are highly complex and innately determine a number of substantive principles about what the acquired language will be like; (ii) these devices are species-specific, that is, they reflect special properties of human beings; (iii) these devices are specific to the acquisition of language. They are not part of very general all-purpose problem-solving techniques or learning strategies. Chomsky distinguishes a person's linguistic *competence* (the speaker-hearer's knowledge of his language) from his *performance* (the actual use of language in concrete situations). A grammar of a language "purports to be a description of the ideal speaker's intrinsic competence"² and is "*descriptively adequate* to the extent that it correctly describes the intrinsic competence of the native speaker."³ The phonological component of a grammar determines the phonetic form of a sentence

generated by the syntactic rules: it relates a structure generated by the syntactic component to a phonetically represented signal. The semantic component determines the semantic interpretation of a sentence: it relates a structure generated by the syntactic component to a certain semantic representation.

The linguistic-acquisition device must have information about the theory of performance if it is to infer the grammar from the primary linguistic data; the empiricist's device does not have this information built into it, so it must infer a theory of performance from the data it has. The empiricist's device must be allowed to infer the truth of theories as well as generalizations, where this is appropriate, appropriateness being determined by certain principles of induction. There is a connection between theories of linguistic performance and "performance models": "The only concrete results that have been achieved and the only clear suggestions that have been put forth concerning the theory of performance, outside of phonetics, have come from firm studies of performance models that incorporate generative grammars of specific kinds."⁴

The central goal of linguistic theory is to determine what it is people know if they *know* a particular language. Knowing a language is not simply a matter of being able to manipulate a long list of sentences that have been memorized: knowing a language involves having the ability to produce and understand a vast (unlimited) number of utterances of that language that one may never have heard or produced before. Creativity (productivity, open-endedness) is an aspect of linguistic knowledge that is of paramount importance.⁵ Chomsky's tacit competence is supposed to be knowledge of the particular rules of the grammar, the rules that are explicitly represented in a performance model; linguistic competence cannot be identified with that type of unconscious knowledge speakers actually have. If an empiricist is taken to deny the role of theory, the empiricist's linguistic-acquisition device cannot even get started, since its first task must be to formulate a theory of performance: the empiricist can be refuted without the need of any appeal to the facts of transformational linguistics.

Competence is knowledge in the sense of knowing how to do something, it is ability and not the sort of knowledge that can properly be described as "tacit". Speakers of a language have something that might be thought of as tacit knowledge about the language: speakers can be brought to judge that certain sentences are ambiguous, that certain sentences are paraphrases of each other, or that certain strings of words are not grammatically acceptable. Chomsky introduces a theory of *unconscious* knowledge about the language: "Obviously every speaker of

a language has mastered and internalized a generative grammar that expresses his knowledge of the language. This is not to say that he is aware of the rules of the grammar or even that he can become aware of them, or that his statements about his intuitive knowledge are necessarily accurate. Any interesting generative grammar will be dealing, for the most part, with mental processes that are far beyond the level of actual or even potential consciousness.”⁶ To construct an actual theory of language learning, “it would be necessary to face several other very serious questions involving, for example, the gradual development of an appropriate hypothesis, simplification of the technique for finding a compatible hypothesis, and the continual accretion of linguistic skill and knowledge and the deepening of the analysis of language structure that may continue long after the basic form of the language has been mastered. What I am describing is an idealization in which only the moment of acquisition of the correct grammar is considered.”⁷ Chomsky identifies a theory of language learning with the construction of a language “acquisition model”: “To facilitate the clear formulation of deeper questions, it is useful to consider the abstract problem of constructing an “acquisition model” for language, that is, a theory of language learning or grammar construction.”⁸

The “empiricist” believes that the linguistic-acquisition device can arrive at correct grammatical rules by inductive inference from the primary linguistic data; the “rationalist” holds that the linguistic-acquisition device requires further “information” in addition to the primary linguistic data. The failure of a taxonomic theory to handle the full range of facts about linguistic structure is due to the failure of such theories to concern themselves with mental capacities, events, and processes. The best kind of theory is one which systematizes the widest range of facts: a mentalistic theory is better than a taxonomic one because the former can handle any fact that the latter can handle, whereas the latter is unable to handle many kinds of facts that the former handles easily and naturally. There are two kinds of linguistic universals, substantive (theoretical terms which enter into the formulation of the rules of particular linguistics descriptions) and formal (specifications of the form of the rules that appear in each of the components of any empirically successful linguistic description of a natural language). The child is innately equipped with a language-learning device that contains such linguistic universals and a simplicity principle; the latter enables him to acquire the simplest linguistic description of the form determined by the linguistic universals which accords with the sample of utterances he is exposed to.⁹

A linguistic universal is not just a feature common to all languages linguists have happened to study. It is rather a feature common to all humanly possible languages, that is all languages which humans could learn and speak in roughly the way they normally do; whether something is a linguistic universal, then, is determined by what sorts of languages humans are prepared to acquire. A linguistic-acquisition model must duplicate language-learning behavior; such a model would be a device that, when exposed to a particular language, comes to be a performance model of a speaker of that language. For all practical purposes “there is no way to avoid the traditional assumption that a speaker-hearer’s linguistic intuition is the ultimate standard that determines the accuracy of any proposed grammar, linguistic theory, or operational test.”¹⁰ Taxonomic methods cannot yield correct grammars because they yield only “taxonomic” (phrase-structure, grammars), and because the theory of phrase-structure grammar has supposedly been refuted by transformational linguistics.¹¹

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