

# Analecta Husserliana

The Yearbook of  
Phenomenological Research

Volume XCV



Education in Human Creative  
Existential Learning

Edited by  
Ana Tessa Tymoczka



Springer

EDUCATION IN HUMAN CREATIVE EXISTENTIAL PLANNING

ANALECTA HUSSERLIANA  
THE YEARBOOK OF PHENOMENOLOGICAL RESEARCH  
VOLUME XCV

*Founder and Editor-in-Chief:*

ANNA-TERESA TYMIENIECKA

*The World Institute for Advanced Phenomenological Research and Learning  
Hanover, New Hampshire*

For sequel volumes see the end of this volume.

# EDUCATION IN HUMAN CREATIVE EXISTENTIAL PLANNING

*Edited by*

ANNA-TERESA TYMIENIECKA

*The World Phenomenology Institute, Hanover, NH, U.S.A.*

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## A WORD OF APPRECIATION

I take real pleasure in presenting this collection of studies to the public. It contains essays from the World Phenomenology Institute's LVth International Phenomenology Conference, held August 24–26, 2006, at Latvia's Daugavpils Pedagogical University on the theme "Rethinking Education in the Perspective of Life."

This was not the first time that I had convened our scholars and friends in Latvia. Just the year after Latvia regained independence, the Institute jointly with the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Latvian Academy of Science coorganized our XXVth International Phenomenology Conference, held in September 1990 in Riga on the theme "Reason, Life, Culture."

This significant event fanned the flames of phenomenology that had been kindled in a new generation of Latvian scholars by phenomenologically oriented scholars of Moscow, notably Prof. Nelya Motroshilova (who was among the participants of the 1990 conference).

I had the honor of participating in yet another signal event held in those days, a conference marking the centenary of the birth of Latvian phenomenologist Teodors Celms, who had studied under Edmund Husserl at Freiburg.

We returned to Latvia the very next year for a conference at Jurmala on the theme "Toward the Phenomenological Concept of Life." This was again in September, just weeks after Latvia regained her independence.

Again we were received enthusiastically. We were told that our conferences were opening "a window on the world" for Latvian philosophers, something much appreciated after the Soviet regime's imposition of Marxist philosophy. And we were bringing a fresh philosophical start—our phenomenology of life as a renewal of philosophy and the culture of our times.

In September 1993 the two institutes together held a symposium in Riga on "The Phenomenology of Life as the Starting Point of Philosophy: Bios, Ethos, Transcendence." This event was held concurrently with the visit of Pope John Paul II to Latvia, and the pontiff granted an audience to the conferees, who were able to have their pictures taken with him. John Paul addressed Latvian intellectuals at the University of Latvia, and when he and the Rector Magnificus of the university exchanged gifts, his gift to the university was the volume that gathered the proceedings of the two preceding conferences at Riga and Jurmala, *Reason, Life, Culture. Phenomenology in the Baltics*,

Analecta Husserliana XXXIX (1993). And so the planting of phenomenology of life in the soil of Latvia received striking recognition.

Our Latvian colleagues duly recognized the historical significance of this gesture. They collected and published the proceedings of the 1993 symposium in Latvian in the volume *Muuzigais un Laicigais* [The Eternal and the Time-bound] (Riga: Lielvards, 1995). On p. 4 of this work there appears a letter of November 11, 1993, from the pontiff to the editor of the volume, one in which he brings out the full meaning of his gesture:

The Latvian “love of wisdom” is in search for the best methods by which to reach it, and as your symposium proves, you see the right path in phenomenology.

What is more important still, you concentrate on the phenomenology of life. One truly cannot stress life too much in our century, which seems tragically bent on eliminating it in so many ways.

This most recent conference at Daugavpils was also a special occasion, for we were invited to the University of Daugavpils by its Rector Magnificus, Professor Zaiga Ikere, as part of the celebration of that new university’s inauguration. I want to express to her my appreciation for our being able to enter thereby the cultural life of Latvia at a significant moment of beginning.

On behalf of all the colleagues taking part in the research work of the World Phenomenology Institute, I want to express my gratitude for these twenty years of cooperation with Latvian scholars. The present occasion signifies a crowning achievement in our participation in contemporary research in Latvia, in particular in new pedagogical and general academic-cultural concerns there. We are very appreciative to Rector Zaiga Ikere and her administrative directors and to all the assistants who made this event intellectually fascinating and socially most agreeable. May the new Daugavpils University develop and flourish *ad multos annos*.

My thanks also go to those at Springer who did the copyediting of this volume.

Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka



Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka delivering her opening address

EDUCATION FOR CREATIVE PLANNING

We would venture that education is first of all the transmission of knowledge from one generation of living beings to the next. This basic definition implies that individuals carry within them a vital, innermost commitment to the future of their offspring. This simple statement is undeniable, but it is transformed when we consider living beings' temporal existence-in-progress and their evolutive expansion.

As we follow the ontopoietic route of life's constructive unfolding, we see that the transmission of knowledge and skills entails a transformation of those being educated, one reaching the individual's intrinsic virtualities as each makes choices in his or her self-individualizing sequence. As one of the fundamental developmental threads of life, this transformation extends up the entire evolutive ladder of forms, from the least complex animals endowed with the capacity for self-conscious action, through innumerable differentiations, up to the fully self-conscious human being. At the phase of complexity reached in the creative human condition, education as preparation for life acquires a specific role and significance.

We witness here a unique paradox in the strategies of the logos of life. In order to singularize itself, a living being needs a reservoir of multifarious, neutral, undifferentiated forces receptive to activation by vital sentience. From its incipient instance the self-individualizing process draws on this reservoir of forces. Contributing to this reservoir is the preexistent world of life of the given individual, its network of communal life. The self-individualizing process breaks into this preexisting environment in order to acquire existential space in which to interact and assume the role of congenial constituent. The self-individualizing being has to find this congenial place within the actual world context on its own initiative.

This amounts to saying that the new context that self-individualizing being constructs in order to fit in its world imposes new requirements, limitations, promptings, and so on. From the initial "openness" of the world from which to make selections, we advance to a field with exigencies, confines, imperatives.

This paradoxical situation holds for all types of living beings. But the paradox is made strikingly starker when we proceed up the evolutionary ladder

of animality to the novel degree of complexity found in human beingness with its fully conscious apparatus directing life, that is, when we arrive at the Human Creative Condition.

In the present collection the focus is on the particular phase of self-individualizing life that is the human creative condition with which education is particularly concerned. But it greatly illuminates the question of the education of the human individual to see it in the perspective of the entire differentiation and unfolding of life on earth. For one thing, in that perspective the human being is seen as establishing a unique platform and assuming a unique role vis-à-vis the rest of life. More critically, the creativity attained on this life platform entails what education should specifically cultivate.

1. Animals bring up their broods by transmitting to them concrete skills and discriminations. For example, cats engage in play so that kittens will learn how to catch a mouse or a bird, and birds lead their offspring to fly. Such upbringing is indispensable for the basic handling of life. It informs the interplay between the individual's intrinsic virtualities and the existential/vital and communal requirements of the life context, allowing the individual to break into its world and pursue its existential course.

This interplay is directed by the living agent,<sup>1</sup> who centers all the vital-sentient-orienting-selecting functions of the self-individualizing, life-promoting course. The agent implements the powers of its particular living type to the limits that its conscious faculties entail, gaining within them flexibility in selection and adjustment.

2. Life's unfolding reaches a culminating point at which the entire sense of its procedures is essentially transformed. From an intrinsically prompted unfolding of life on the level of survival, ontopoiesis passes into creative, specifically human life, which knows a need for "achievement."

Remaining within the primary paradoxical situation of the logos of life, the living beingness now endowed with a fully developed consciousness and informed by the creative mind has still to deal with the universal conundrum of vital forces from which it emerged and in which it retains roots. He or she has, moreover, to engage the communal world of life within which he or she interacts. Although this communal context presents relatively stable means by which to meet existential necessities, the agents who constitute it—having gone beyond the dictates of nature-life, their horizons expanded by *Imaginatio Creatrix*, the cognizing and deliberative powers of the human mind—personally select and promote options. Every human move is an answer to a challenge. This move involves planning executed by the mind. The deliberative exercise of the faculties, the will's selection of an option,

and the imagination's focus propel the individual toward the achievement of an intended aim. Every step is now a contemplated "next step," and with this essential turn, education acquires an entirely novel significance.<sup>2</sup>

Such planning requires, first of all, knowledge of the basic protocols of self-directed existence.<sup>3</sup> What is indispensable is knowledge of the circumambient world of life to which individuals have to adjust in their life courses along with self-recognition of personal talents, capacities, and predilections. When these cohere into aspirations, planning calls for the further unfolding of appropriate skills—habits mental, social, and artistic—so that life may be appropriately and profitably negotiated. The requirements for that are (1) the redevelopment of the deliberative and judgmental capacities of the mind, so that the aspects of choices positive and negative may be appreciated, (2) the unfolding of interactive capacities and of communicative skills in one's social, communal environment, (3) the discernment of principles of valuation and development of proper inclinations, (4) recognition of personal dispositions, desires, and tendencies, and (5) the mind's apprehension of a transcendent purpose in the entire evolutive course and in the pursuit of our sacral destiny.

3. The planning that our specifically human platform of life involves is an effect of the human creative condition having the mind at its center—"creative" because rising above the ontopoietic unfolding of the survival-oriented life course owing to the transformation of the living agent into a human creative mind able to imaginatively vary the individual's operations, which become full acts. Our focus is widened by the width of the mind's horizons. We may personally articulate aims. Whether we achieve them or not, these aspirations, yearnings, and sacral strivings give personal sense to our existence.

Human creative unfolding is caught between three main aspects of the human condition within the-unity-of-everything-there-is-alive: first, life's geo-cosmic ground; second, the ontopoietic thrust of self-individualizing unfolding; and third, our dynamic communal, societal milieu. This matrix begs for education that enables us to creatively plan life in ways that maintain an equilibrium—a dynamic, ever-adjustable balance among the exigencies of these three sides of life—to meet the challenges of survival, creative passion, and higher destiny.

It is the fostering of the creative planning of human existence in all its many threads that we call "education." The present collection of essays addresses numerous issues as varied as is specifically human life, in particular issues raised in our postmodern period, in which the human mind is extending its creativity.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, “The Human Condition within the Unity-of-Everything-There-Is-Alive and Its Logoic Network,” in Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka (ed.), *Logos of Phenomenology and Phenomenology of the Logos*, Book 2: *The Human Condition in the Unity-of-Everything-There-Is-Alive. Individuation, Self, Person, Self-Determination, Freedom, Necessity*, Analecta Husserliana LXXXIX (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006), pp. xiii–xxxiii.

<sup>2</sup> Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, “Creative Imagination in the Converting of Life’s Sensibilities into Full Human Experience,” in Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka (ed.), *Phenomenology of Life—From the Animal Soul to the Human Mind*, Book 1, *In Search of Experience*, Analecta Husserliana XCIII (Dordrecht: Springer, 2007), pp. 163–227; a study continued in Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, “Creative Imagination in the Converting of Life’s Sensibilities into Full Human Experience,” in Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka (ed.), *Phenomenology of Life—From the Animal Soul to the Human Mind*, Book 2: *The Human Soul in the Creative Transformation of the Mind*, Analecta Husserliana XCIV (Dordrecht: Springer, 2007), pp. xv–xx.

<sup>3</sup> Tymieniecka, “The Human Condition within the Unity-of-Everything-There-Is-Alive and Its Logoic Network,” *op. cit.*; Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, “The Metamorphosis of the Logos of Life in Creative Experience,” in Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka (ed.), *Logos of Phenomenology and Phenomenology of the Logos*, Book 5: *The Creative Logos. Aesthetic Ciphering in Fine Arts, Literature and Aesthetics*, Analecta Husserliana XCII (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006), pp. xi–xv.



left to right Maria-Chiara Teloni, Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, Clara Mandolini

## SECTION I



The first row, from left to right: Bronislaw Bombala, Carmen Cozma, Klymet Selvi, Kim Rogers; Second row from left to right: Edyta Supinska-Polit, Oliver Holmes, Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, Zaiga Ikere, Maja de Keijzer, Virpi Yliraudanjoki, Angela Ales Bello; Third row from left to right: Daniela Verducci, Piero Trupia, Clara Mandoloni, Velga Vevere, Jan Szmyd, and other participants in the background.

HUMAN BEING AS A CREATIVE DIFFERENTIATOR  
OF THE LOGOS OF LIFE

INTRODUCTION: THE SELF-PROMPTING LIVING INDIVIDUAL  
AS THE CORNERSTONE OF THE LIFE ORDER

Human being is one of the phases of the onto-poiesis of beingness and at the same time a creative differentiator of the Logos of Life: These are the ideas developed in Tymieniecka's metaphysics over half a century.<sup>1</sup> From the beginning of the 1970s, these reflections, which, according to Tymieniecka, underlie "all the major phenomenological attempts at grasping the great conundrum of beingness" have been discussed in the *Analecta Husserliana* series. The creative act of the human being is the human manifestation of the Logos of Life. Tymieniecka maintains

The human being as inventor/creator emerges from within the system of vital forces and currently disrupts and distantiates himself from it, destroying his essential ties with it. ... Among the forms of life, the human being appears to have attained the most advanced complexity as the free, that is, creative differentiator of the logos of life.<sup>2</sup>

This tenet about human being as a creative differentiator of the Logos of Life evokes numerous ideas concerning the societal and individual manifestations of life. Because the theme of the present congress is education, I mention here some of the areas where a phenomenological approach may open new avenues of investigation and serve as a source of inspiration for twenty-first-century educators. The most important ideas that seem to follow from such metaphysics are as follows:

- A holistic approach to life and cosmos. In this respect and along this line of thinking, according to which life is the measure of all things,

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\*The World Institute for Advanced Phenomenological Research and Learning has been engaging in philosophical inquiry on the phenomenology of life for more than a half a century. The theory of the Human Creative Condition as formulated by Prof. Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, the founder and president of the Institute, is, as I see it, one of the most important contributions to this field. Human being as a self-individualizing entity within the existential situation, human being as a differentiator of the Logos of Life, human being as a CREATIVE differentiator of the Logos of Life: These issues among others are included within the sphere of interest of the educators at the present congress at Daugavpils University, Latvia.

scholars consider problems of education for sustainability and sustainable development.

- Ethical considerations concerning the measure to use on which to found human life upon, and what is the signification and justification of life.
- The idea of self-individualization–in–existence, which involves the urge for a person’s continuous individual development. It is most significant to stress this aspect of personal development in educating the young generation to be self-consistent personalities.

The following are some thoughts about the holistic world outlook that follow from Tymieniecka’s metaphysics. Tymieniecka has been trying to reestablish the proper relationships between nature–life, the vital and psychic spheres of existence, and culture in their irreducible and interconnected nature. She characterizes her metaphysics as phenomenology\*.

In Tymieniecka’s approach to ontological issues, the accent is shifted from substantiality to processuality, generic progress, from ontology to being-in-becoming, being-in-making. In the concept of beingness, two moments are significant, namely, the generic progress within the existential spread of life and the self-individualization of life.

Tymieniecka’s philosophy of life offers a vision of totality, a vision of All. In connection with this approach, some parallels can be drawn with ancient philosophy. There is, however, a remarkable difference. Antique philosophy represents a cosmocentric model of the world in that it regards the human being as a natural part of the Universe, who does not set himself or herself apart as the ruler of the world. Tymieniecka maintains that

The vast network of vital linkages and relevancies comes together in the crucial web of the unity-of-everything-there-is-alive. Manifesting the vibrant workings of life pulsating through all its circuits, this web comprises all types and concrete individuals into an infinitely flexible, movable, changeable, transformable whole.<sup>4</sup>

Turning to that part of the processes of the world and “outer space” that function without the direct participation of human beings, Tymieniecka’s

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\*Tymieniecka’s philosophical system goes beyond the limits of traditional phenomenology. For example, Prof. Maija Küle, head of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology in Latvia, maintains, and students of Tymieniecka’s philosophy fully agree, that the concept of phenomenology is not exhaustive enough to capture the essence of Tymieniecka’s metaphysics. As Küle states,

A more exact characterization might be creativistic phenomenology of life—in the first place, accentuating man’s involvement in everything-that-is-alive, viewing man as a component part of life processes and nature (logos, nature, life as a centre of philosophical interest), and secondly, creativistic—accentuating the central theme in Tymieniecka’s teaching: creative manifestation of life. That would make it clear that Tymieniecka is establishing a new philosophical viewpoint, not just developing the viewpoints of [classical] phenomenology.<sup>3</sup>

phenomenology of life views human being in a universal dimension. She maintains that

the actual urgent situation of humankind brings out new perspectives from which this totality of life can and has to be envisaged... the emphasis now falls not upon the totality of life, which Hegel could still consider as a totality closed in upon itself, but first, upon the vital modalities that allow the differentiation of living beings from each other in their becoming, and then upon the modalities of interchange necessary for maintaining them all within a vital/existential network. This amounts to saying that the emphasis falls upon the individuation of living beings in their existential progress and on this co-existential interchange in their advance.<sup>5</sup>

Tymieniecka expounds the becoming-into-being process or self-individualization process of life as a continuous flux in which interconnect- edness, interrelations, and reciprocal exigencies take place.

Since the self-individualization of life is viewed as being in a continuous flux and interdependence, one can pose a question: What are the stable elements, the points of reference upon which to proceed with the analysis?

Scientific inquiry seeks relatively stable elements as points of reference. In this respect, philosophers used to consider "real objects," "entities," or "intentional objects" either ideal or transcendental. In the phenomenology of life, the concept of "living individual" is assumed as a point of reference. Tymieniecka explains the shift of her scientific interest from the "object" or "entity" to the living individual as a challenge to the contemporary obsession with transcendental objects she experienced in the 1960s.<sup>6</sup> She explains her decision:

In our ontopoietic model we propose a strikingly different approach to the "cornerstones of order." Instead of focusing on the phenomenal-ontological 'object-entity,' I propose a model of 'functional generativity' involving, first, the notion of synergy and, second, the unfolding of the individual living being in a *linea entitis* that... circumscribes its own domain of (internal) *actio* and (external) *passio* in an exchange that directs the functional system to construct itself as a living being. Here is the constructive activity of a functional schema that generates its own "objective" and "ontological" form of manifestation. Hence, I call this functional connection of the generating cornerstones of action and order "ontopoietic" in order to emphasize that they are factors of the ontic logos in becoming.<sup>7</sup>

It is in the conception of the living individual, where according to Tymieniecka, "come together the findings of the life sciences and the phenomenology of life's ontopoietic (ontological) concept of the self-prompting living individual as the cornerstone of the life order, maintaining all ties to cosmos and bios, carrying out their laws, while bringing all ever further into the sphere of the specifically human manifestation of the Logos of Life. Indeed from the simplest species of living beings to the complexity that is the human being there is a bridge opened".<sup>8</sup>

THE GOALS OF CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION AND THE PLACE  
OF THE SUBJECT

Because education and phenomenology are the theme of the present congress, I will focus on the consequences for education of the phenomenology of life. In modern society, education is one of the existential coordinates of the human condition. What is the existential situation of modern society and what goals are to be achieved in education?

Speaking of society today, we have to acknowledge that we live in a knowledge-based society whose key concepts relate to economics, economic output, technology, globalization processes, and human resource development.

In the world of economics, the pace of change and innovation has intensified markedly: Computer power and capacity continue to rise, information and communication technology is expanding, and services are becoming a larger proportion of economic output worldwide. It is clear that an important competitiveness factor in a knowledge-based economy is a qualified workforce. It is competitiveness that seems to be the key word for developed and developing societies.

As concerns my country, Latvia, its geopolitical situation and limited resources of raw materials and energy determine that the major competitiveness factor for its economy is an educated people and a qualified workforce. Assessments of the state of science in Latvia<sup>9</sup> underline that education, creative work, and innovations are Latvia's main resources for the attainment of its development goals. In contrast to many countries that have choices among several resources or combinations of them, Latvia has practically no other alternative than a human-centered course of development. The development of Latvia's economy and society crucially depends on the ability of its enterprises, government, and people to create, import, adapt, and disseminate knowledge. Therefore, a knowledge-based model considers education, science, development, and innovation as the prerequisites for a successful and sustainable development of the country.

Given these conditions, what kind of young generation do we want to see in Latvia?

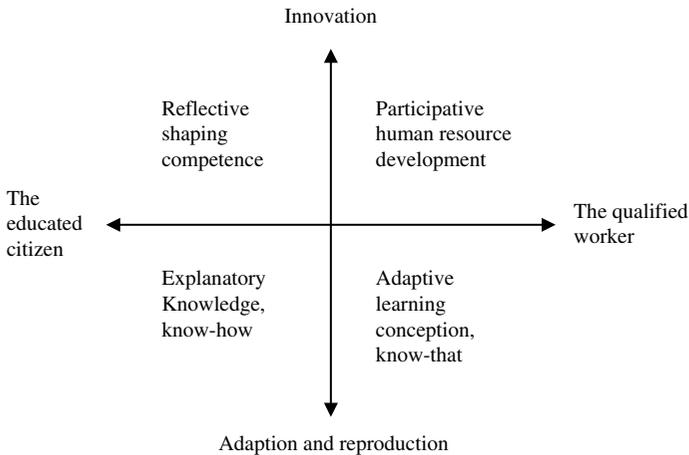
In classical pedagogy, the question was what abilities to develop in order to form a harmonious personality. In present-day Europe, the argument is about what competences should be developed. The document *Achieving the Lisbon Goal: The Contribution of VET* (2005) offers the following definition of the term *competence*:

An ability that extends beyond the possession of knowledge and skills. It includes: i) cognitive competence involving the use of theory and concepts, as well as informal tacit knowledge gained

experientially; ii) functional competence (skills or know-how), those things that a person should be able to do when they work in a given area; iii) personal competence involving knowing how to conduct oneself in a specific situation; and iv) ethical competence involving the possession of certain personal and professional value.<sup>10</sup>

Key competences needed to form the cornerstone of education and training in the knowledge-based economy are as follows: communication in one’s native tongue; communication in a foreign language; mathematical literacy and basic competences in science and technology; information and computer technology (ICT) skills; learning-to-learn; interpersonal and civic competences; entrepreneurship; and cultural awareness.<sup>11</sup> Liberal or general education develops the educated person/citizen, and targeted vocational or technical instruction develops the qualified worker. Society needs both.

The aforementioned document presents the following scheme<sup>12</sup>:



In this scheme, the horizontal axis represents what is defined as competence, which lies on a continuum between liberal education and targeted vocational instruction. The vertical axis is a continuum ranging from adaptive and reproductive ways of learning towards innovative and proactive orientations to learning processes.

In educating the young generation, whether the implementation of the profile tends more towards “participative human resource development” or “reflective shaping competence” depends mainly on the national way of organizing education.

In contemporary education, teachers are pressured to educate individuals to be professionals in certain fields. However, Plato's idea of developing a harmonious personality has also not been lost. Sjur Bergan, head of the Higher Education and Research Division of the Council of Europe, considering the present tasks in tertiary education, stressed

Preparation for the labor market is only one of the main purposes of higher education and considerable attention will also be paid to other two: personal development and preparation for citizenship. Although this part of the Bologna Process is less talked about, it does emphasize the role of higher education in developing the democratic culture without which democratic institutions cannot function.<sup>13</sup>

Based on these considerations, the need for the development of a harmonious individual and citizen is included in the education goals adopted in Lisbon.

Educators know that in order to develop a human personality fit to be a specialist in a certain profession such factors as knowledge, skills, attitude, and judgment are of most significance. One more aspect needed for the harmonious development of a human being in the present web of beingness is the approach introduced by Tymieniecka in her inquiries into the human creative condition. According to Tymieniecka, the human creative condition is an Archimedean point from which to decipher reality in general. In this respect, her metaphysics is in conformity with the general tendency of modern thought: In the philosophical thought of the twentieth century, a shift took place from the classical concept of reflection to revelation, in which highlighting, deciphering, comprehending, and narrative reading came to the foreground.

It is worth noting how the ways in which Tymieniecka's metaphysics is different from classical phenomenology and her way of thinking are of value for contemporary educators. Taking into consideration the fact that in the phenomenology of life the subject performing the description is not a part of that description, Maija Kūle holds

In this respect phenomenology of life really overcomes the limitations of classical phenomenology that is only concerned with the world of Man and his consciousness. The theme of intentionality that is central in phenomenology is replaced by creative act that is inherent not only to Man, but also to transforming *logos*. The question posed by Kant and phenomenology: how is subjective universe possible?—is transformed into a teaching on self-individualization in the stream of life.<sup>14</sup>

Kūle's analysis of Tymieniecka's conceptions includes another significant observation. This concerns humanity's role in ciphering reality within the dichotomy of world totality as opposed to subject. According to Kūle,

Besides, in the description of the manifestations of *logos* the subject describing them is of no importance. That is the essential difference in comparison with Husserl's phenomenology,

where the transcendental Ego describing the structures of his consciousness is the focal point of philosophy; just as in hermeneutics where the comprehending subject interpreting meaning is the central figure; just as in M.Heidegger's *Dasein* concept that comprehends itself in the world, is the central one in his fundamental ontology . . . . The fact that in phenomenology of life the subject performing the description is not part of the description is an essential deviation from the principles of classical phenomenology.<sup>15</sup>

Tymieniecka has revised the Protagorean maxim that "Man is the measure of all things" and declared that "Life is the measure of all things." Hence, the phenomenology of life offers a theoretical background for a contemporary education for sustainability.

#### CREATIVITY AND ITS MANIFESTATION IN THE ARTS AND LITERATURE

When considering the human creative condition as an Archimedean point in personal development, one starts by addressing the following questions: (1) What is creativity? (2) How is it manifested into the arts and literature? (3) What human capacities are activated and developed within the domain of the arts and literature?

Human creativity, according to Tymieniecka, is the central power in deciphering the Logos of Life. She states

The crucial difference between my phenomenology of life and the thought of both of these great thinkers [Miguel de Unamuno and José Ortega y Gasset] lies in my exfoliating in its full extent the creative/inventive essence of the human being and recognizing it consequently as the Archimedean point for the phenomenology of life.<sup>16</sup>

In speculating about the notion of creativity, I started to wonder what faculties and powers of the mind are employed and engaged in the act of creativity and what spheres of conscious and subconscious levels are exploited. As I understand it, creativity is the outcome of that system of cognitive and emotional phenomena and powers that constitutes the subjective being of a person. Philosophers dealing with the theory of knowledge have been asking about the limits and the domain of mind for centuries.

In translating the British empiricists into Latvian, I had to deal with the complexity of the semantic space of the word *mind*. The dictionary meanings of the English word *mind* are grouped under three heads: "I. Memory; II. Thought, purpose, intention; III. Mental or physical being or faculty." The last item, "mental or physical being or faculty," is presented as follows:

The seat of a person's consciousness, thought, volitions, and feelings; the system of cognitive and emotional phenomena and powers that constitutes the subjective being of a person; also the

incorporeal subject of the physical faculties, the spiritual part of a human being; the soul as distinguished from the body.<sup>17</sup>

It is interesting to compare the semantic system of the English *mind* and that of its Latvian counterpart. Over the history of the Latvian language the word corresponding to the English *mind* has been used for “reason, understanding, will, human nature, sense, liking, desire, intention, mood, conscience, and sense organ.”<sup>18</sup> Hence, both emotional and reasoning faculties are comprised in the meaning of the word. The question that follows is whether in the human emotional sphere, the mind implies the subconscious level as well. The question remains open as to what extent the subconscious level is employed, if at all, in the act of creativity. What we know for certain is that faculties such as sensing, observing, perceiving, and reflecting are employed in this process.

The British empiricist John Locke stated that the mind was like a blank sheet of paper void of characters and that all of our ideas come from sensation and reflection. He wrote

All ideas come from Sensation or Reflection. Let us then suppose the mind to be, as we say, white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas; how comes it to be furnished? ... Whence has it all the materials of reason and knowledge? To this I answer, in one word, from *experience*. In that all our knowledge is founded, and from that it ultimately derives itself. Our observation employed either about external sensible objects, or about the internal operations of our minds perceived and reflected on by ourselves, is that which supplies our understanding with all the materials of thinking.<sup>19</sup>

John Locke made a distinction between perception and thinking in that in perception, mind is not active. He affirmed that perception is the first simple idea of reflection, and in perception, mind is passive:

Perception, as it is the first faculty of the mind exercised about our ideas, so it is the first and simplest idea we have from reflection, and is by some called thinking in general. Though *thinking*, in the propriety of the English tongue, signifies that sort of operation in the mind about its ideas wherein the mind is active, where it, with some degree of voluntary attention, considers anything. For in bare naked perception the mind is, for the most part, only passive; and what it perceives, it cannot avoid perceiving. Perception is only when the mind receives the Impression. What perception is everyone will know better by reflecting on what he does himself, when he sees, hears, feels, etc., or thinks, than by any discourse of mine. Whoever reflects on what passes in his own mind cannot miss it. And if he does not reflect all the words in the world cannot make him have any notion of it.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, Locke, when using the word *mind*, meant for the most part its reasoning faculties. In creativity, one has to speak of a creative insight. Everybody will agree that it is creativity and creative insight that are entailed in the arts. In the sphere of artistic creation we speak of the intuitive insight an artist possesses.

One can analyze things rationally, that is, by *ratio*, and one can grasp the essence of things intuitively, that is, by intuition. The intuitive insight is metaphorical and inclusive. According to Maija and Rihards Kūlis, “intuitive insight in opposition to cognition does not dissect, but it merges with things, it does not disrupt, but includes in itself. Artistic metaphoric insight can grasp phenomena immediately without any mediator.”<sup>21</sup>

With regard to grasping the essence of things intuitively, I would like to mention one example illustrating the creative ciphering of reality as accomplished by an artist. Consider Matīss Kūlis’s design for the cover of Maija Kūle’s *Eurolife: Forms, Principles, Feelings*.<sup>22</sup> At first sight, one is rather puzzled by the cover design. After reading the book, one can see that the artist’s representation is in complete harmony with the author’s message. The cover design corresponds to Kūle’s concept of the present-day lifestyle as living on the surface. Kūle considers three forms of lifestyle: one tending upward, one tending forward, and one that is a mixture of directions, that is, people living on the surface with no preferred direction. From the point of view of politics and the history of ideas, these three forms can be characterized respectively as conservatively absolute, liberally democratic, and informatively fluid forms of life. It is the fragmentariness of modern life that is visualized through the artistic representation on the book’s cover. The contemporary lifestyle is depicted as consisting of different fragments, which might be in collision at times. It is our life that is a collage rather than a harmonious painting.

Another reason I mention Maija Kūle’s book here is that the inquiry is accomplished in a true phenomenological manner, as practiced in Latvia since the 1990s under the influence of the philosophical approach of the World Phenomenology Institute. A phenomenological manner means appreciating the mind’s intentionality towards a phenomenon in which the essence is not separated from the appearance.

The arts as considered from the point of view of phenomenology is characterized as a sphere in which human creative virtualities manifest themselves at their peak. From this point of view the title of the 63rd edition of the Analecta Husserliana series is significant, namely *The Orchestration of the Arts.—A Creative Symbiosis of Existential Powers. The Vibrating Interplay of Sound, Color, Image, Gesture, Movement, Rhythm, Fragrance, Word, Touch*.<sup>23</sup>

What interest me are the words included in this list of factors. What levels of consciousness, what psychic powers of the mind are included? What virtualities are at work within the process of thinking in order to create a word? Which amounts to: What is the interlinkage between language and thinking?

With respect to the connection of language and thinking, one hypothesis scholars have been considering is the language of thought hypothesis. This theory maintains that thinking and speaking, although obviously related, involve distinct levels of representation. The strong version of the language of thought hypothesis maintains that there is evidence of thinking without language. Steven Pinker in his book *The Language Instinct*<sup>24</sup> presents various kinds of evidence that thinking and language are not the same thing. He gives examples of thought processes, such as remembering and reasoning, which have been identified in psychological studies of human infants and of primates, both examples of creatures without language. He finds very convincing the various reports of artists and scientists that their creativity sometimes derives from ideas that take the form of non-linguistic images. In order to verify this hypothesis these types of argument are taken to support the view that we think in a language of thought, sometimes called Mentalese. When we want to speak, we translate from Mentalese into our spoken language, be it Mohawk or Russian.<sup>25</sup> The Russian scholar Lev Vygotsky advanced a theory of inner speech, a mental phase that lies between thinking and speaking. According to Vygotsky,

Inner speech is not the interior aspect of external speech—it is a function in itself. It still remains speech, i.e., thought connected with words. But while in external speech thought is embodied in words, in inner speech words die as they bring forth thought. Inner speech is to a large extent thinking in pure meanings. It is a dynamic, shifting, unstable thing, fluttering between word and thought, the two more or less stable, more or less firmly delineated components of verbal thought.<sup>26</sup>

To support the idea that a subconscious level of the mind is included in the creative act, I cite an example from my translator's experience. When translating George Berkeley's *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge* and *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous, in Opposition to Sceptics and Atheists*, I experienced a spiritual conflict between my Marxist theoretical background and of Berkeley's world outlook. My educational background in philosophy was in striking discordance with George Berkeley's mode of philosophy.<sup>27</sup> I experienced a discomfort in the cognitive and emotional sphere of my being as if I had physical pain. What I want to indicate here is that in the process of creating a relevant expression even subconscious levels might be involved. During the time I was concentrating on Berkeley's philosophy, I had a dream. It was a visualization of a triangle and some mathematical symbols. I did not understand why mathematics was involved. Only later did I learn that Berkeley had been interested in Newton's philosophy of nature and Leibnitz's theory of force. His essay entitled *On*

*Motion* contains criticisms of some of these ideas, and these criticisms have led to his being described as a precursor of Mach and Einstein.<sup>28</sup>

Another manifestation of creativity is literature. Philosophy and literature are separate discourses. They may share common problems in their concern for the great and small truths of human existence, but they pursue them in different ways. It is part of human nature to try to penetrate into the essence of human life. The penetration into the deepest aspects of our beingness is achieved, intensified, and transformed through the arts and literature.

Tymieniecka has also addressed the sphere of literary inquiry. The first volume in the Husserliana series relevant to literary themes was entitled *The Philosophical Reflection of Man in Literature*.<sup>29</sup> The issue of humanity and literature has been considered from different angles\*.

Literature has the capacity to expand our horizons and to make us understand motivations and world-pictures different from our own. Philosophy's self-image has often been that of the custodian of pure rationality, and as such philosophy tries to instruct and prove. Philosophy entails rationality and reasoning. The philosopher's message is attained by speculation and deduction on the reader's part. The arts and literature trigger the emotional sphere and, by offering an intuitive insight, present a more profound picture of human existence to the reader or spectator. Gary Backhouse, for instance, maintains "Artistic fabulation creates a vision through which the elemental passions of the subliminal soul cipher and decipher life's significances. Artistic creation brings the hidden recesses of the human soul to universal significance."<sup>30</sup>

To convince the reader about the truth of some maxim, philosophers and poets resort to different means. Philosophers employ argumentation. Poets present a picture. Let me exemplify. Tymieniecka's approach in apprehending the all within its universal unity and interdependence might be compared in a way to that of ancient Greek philosophers. The maxim of the unity-of-everything-there-is-alive is a message that can be retrieved both from Tymieniecka's metaphysics and the poetry of the Latvian poet Frīcis Bārda. To present his world outlook, the poet draws a vivid picture alive with images. In one poem<sup>31</sup> the poet pictures himself as being outdoors and looking towards an evening star. When observing the star he feels to be so close to it that he longs to invite the star to come still closer and have a conversation. He desires to ask the star whether it is difficult for her to be a star, and whether it is her wish to be a star forever. Maybe she would like to exchange places with

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\*The titles of the Husserliana series are illustrative in this respect, such as *The Poetry of Life in Literature* (2000), *The Play of Life on the Stage of the World in Fine Arts, Stage-Play, and Literature* (2001), *The Visible and the Invisible in the Interplay between Philosophy, Literature and Reality* (2002), and *The Enigma of Good and Evil. The Moral Sentiment in Literature* (2005).

the poet. He suggests, "When I am tired of life, I will go up there and shine, but you'll come down and struggle, and suffer here on the earth." The poet's sad conclusion, however, is that space separates them forever. However, one should not feel so sad, because this separation is but appearance, a deception of the goddess Maya, since there is only one life in its many differentiations, be these differentiations a star over there, a man here on the earth, or God above us. The reader feels that through artistic fabulation a human soul is filled with the light of truth.

In the act of creation the author experiences different passions, from exhaustion and despair to the highest peak of elevation. It is the enjoyment and despair of creation, the pain and exultation of birth.

What is gained from literature depends much on the reader because the message retrieved is in great measure also a product of the reader's ability to make sense of what he or she is reading, the reader's personality, and his or her creative imagination.

#### CONCLUSION: HUMAN SIGNIFICANCE OF LIFE AND EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY

One more issue dealt with in the phenomenology of life and important in education is that of measure. According to Tymieniecka, life is the measure of all things in the onto-poietic stream of beingness. From Tymieniecka's philosophy there follow ethical considerations about the sense of human life in terms of responsibility: Humanity is responsible for everything-there-is-alive; humanity is the custodian of life. Hence there follow conclusions about a holistic approach to education and education for sustainability.

The present congress in which philosophers of the phenomenology of life and educators are meeting at Daugavpils University is not an accident. Education for sustainable development is a theme that has been developed for more than ten years by scholars of the Faculty of Education and Management of this university. At present this theme is one of the projects supported by UNESCO. This university is one of the participants chosen from all over the world to join in this project and in particular to develop it as a case study from the Latvian perspective. Phenomenology of life is not just barren, fruitless speculation, not a reflection of marginal questions, but a means through which to understand the highest sense of human life in order to make the world better for the generations to come. Phenomenology of life bestows a meaningful sense upon human life that justifies the existence of human beings.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, ed., *Analecta Husserliana: The Yearbook of Phenomenological Research*, 85 vols. (Dordrecht: Kluwer, Springer, 1971–2005).

<sup>2</sup> Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, “Nature and Culture in the Unity-of-Everything-There-Is-Alive,” in Marcelo Sanchez Sorando, ed., *Physica, Cosmologia, Naturphilosophie* (Rome: Herder, Università Lateranense, 1993), p. 290.

<sup>3</sup> Maija Küle, “The Role of Ciphery in Phenomenology of Life,” in Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, ed., *Does the World Exist? Plurisignificant Ciphery of Reality. Analecta Husserliana LXXIX* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2004), p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, “Nature and Culture in the Unity-of-Everything-There-Is-Alive,” in Marcelo Sanchez Sorando, ed., *Physica, Cosmologia, Naturphilosophie* (Rome: Herder, Università Lateranense, 1993), p. 298.

<sup>5</sup> Tymieniecka, op. cit., pp. 290–291.

<sup>6</sup> See Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, “The Ontopoiesis of Life as a New Philosophical Paradigm,” in *Phenomenological Inquiry* 22 (Belmont, Massachusetts: World Institute for Advanced Phenomenological Research and Learning, 1998), pp. 39–40.

<sup>7</sup> Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, “Ontopoiesis of Life as the Measure for the Renewal of Education,” in Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, ed., *Paideia. Philosophy/Phenomenology of Life Inspiring Education of our Times. Analecta Husserliana LXVIII* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2000), p. 14.

<sup>8</sup> Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>9</sup> See Žaneta Ozoliņa, ed., *Yearbook of Politics: Latvia 2004* (Rīga: Zinātne, 2005).

<sup>10</sup> *Achieving the Lisbon Goal: The Contribution of VET: Final Report to the European Commission 1-11-04* (European Commission, 2005), p. 94. (VET is abbreviation for vocational education and training).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 95.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>13</sup> S. Bergan, The New European Higher Education Area and Its Implications, in A. Rauhvargers, J. Frey, G. Vaht, and A. Nastor-Eriksson, eds., *News of the Recognition Field: Background Information for the ACE Track. 13th Annual Conference of the European Association for International Education (EAIE) 5 to 8 December, 2001. Tampere, Finland* (Riga: Latvian Academic Information Centre, 2001), p. 12.

<sup>14</sup> Maija Küle, *Phenomenology and Culture* (Rīga: Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, University of Latvia, 2002), p. 45.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., pp. 44–45.

<sup>16</sup> Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, “The Human Condition within the Unity-of-Everything-There-Is-Alive: A Challenge to Philosophical Anthropologies”, in Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, ed., *The Moral Sense and Its Foundational Significance. Self, Person, Historicity, Community. Phenomenological Praxeology and Psychiatry. Analecta Husserliana XXXI* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1990), p. 6.

<sup>17</sup> *The Compact Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

<sup>18</sup> G. F. Stender, *Neue vollstaendigere Lettische Grammatik* (Braunschweig, 1761).

<sup>19</sup> John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Abridged and Edited with an Introduction* by A. D. Woozley (Glasgow: Collins, 1980), pp. 89–90.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>21</sup> Maija Küle and Rihards Kūlis, *Filosofija* (Rīga: Burtņieks, 1996, 1997), p. 447.

<sup>22</sup> Maija Küle, *Eirodzīve: Formas, principi, izjūtas* (Rīga: LU Filozofijas un socioloģijas institūts, 2006).

- <sup>23</sup> Marlies E. Kroneger, ed., *Analecta Husserliana. The Yearbook of Phenomenological Research*, Vol. LXIII (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2000).
- <sup>24</sup> Steven Pinker, *The Language Instinct* (London: Penguin Books, 1994), p. 59.
- <sup>25</sup> John J. Saeed, *Semantics*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), p. 44.
- <sup>26</sup> Lev Vygotsky, *Thought and Language* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1986). Lev Semenovich Vygotsky (1896–1934), a Russian psychologist, advanced a historical and cultural approach to psychology. He investigated the structure of consciousness. A profound theoretician, he was also a man of practice who founded and directed a number of research laboratories.
- <sup>27</sup> Džords Bērklis, *Traktāts par cilvēka izziņas principiem. Trīs sarunas starp Hylasu un Filonusu/Tulkokjums angļu valodā un sastādījums Z. Ikere* (Rīga: Zvaigzne, 1989). In translating Berkeley's *A Treatise Concerning Human Knowledge* and *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous, in Opposition to Sceptics and Atheists* I had to coin new words as equivalent translation variants for some of Berkeley's terms. For instance, in order to translate *mind* adequately into Latvian, I introduced the word *garasfēra*, which was not in the Latvian explanatory or English-Latvian dictionaries at that time. At present the word *garasfēra* is included in the Latvian-English dictionary (Rīga, 1997) as a relevant translation of *mind* in the philosophical sense.
- <sup>28</sup> See G. Vesley and P. Foulkes, *Collins Dictionary of Philosophy* (Glasgow: Collins, 1990), p. 44.
- <sup>29</sup> Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, ed., *The Philosophical Reflection of Man in Literature. Selected Papers from Several Conferences Held by the International Society for Phenomenology and Literature in Cambridge, Massachusetts* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1982). Includes the essay by A.-T. Tymieniecka, *Poetica Nova*.
- <sup>30</sup> Gary Backhaus, "Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka: The Trajectory of Her Thought from Eidetic Phenomenology to the Phenomenology of Life," in *Phenomenological Inquiry 25* (Belmont, Massachusetts: World Institute for Advanced Phenomenological Research and Learning, 2001), p. 38.
- <sup>31</sup> Fricis Bārda (1880–1919), Latvian poet, one of the most outstanding Latvian romanticists. The reference is to his poem "Tūvi-tālie," in *Dzīvīte, dzīvīte...* (Rīga: Avots, 2003), p. 65.

EDUCATION AND THE ONTOPOIETIC CONCEPTION  
OF LIFE

*A Neoanthropological Perspective*

1. MAN IS NO LONGER ENOUGH

Since Nietzsche put into circulation the idea that it is no longer to man's advantage to be "all too human,"<sup>1</sup> the traditional form of education has also become unsatisfactory.

It is no longer enough to commit oneself passionately to "bring to light" (*e-ducere*) humanity, and the Pindaric motto to "become what you are,"<sup>2</sup> which had seemed to contain the entire trajectory of human formation, now does not seem adequate.

In fact, there are numerous current variations on the theme of beyond-humanism, for example, neo-humanism,<sup>3</sup> post-humanism,<sup>4</sup> trans-humanism,<sup>5</sup> and hyper-humanism.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, it would seem that the task of education is no longer simply to articulate and develop a paradigm of humanity, known and shared in its essentiality, as in the case of the Greek *paideia*<sup>7</sup> or of the *animal rationale* of the Latin tradition,<sup>8</sup> but to promote man's capacity for transcending and surpassing himself, which Nietzsche showed to belong to his nature<sup>9</sup> and recent philosophical anthropology has confirmed.<sup>10</sup> This capacity for transcendence, however, does not anchor him to any stable idea of himself, but, rather, continually pushes him beyond himself, positioning him before the ever new challenges that history sets before him.

Peter Sloterdijk, perhaps best known for his response to Heidegger's *Letter on Humanism*,<sup>11</sup> also holds that "humanistic anthropotechnique", from which man as we know him derives in his historic *humanitas*, has become entirely inadequate. Founded on the complex biopolitics of house, man, and domestic animal, one of its preferred techniques of domestication was school training, which could be summarized in the imperative to read, sit still, and calm down. For this reason, humanistically educated man finds it almost impossible, through the empowerment of the human by acquiring a new and vaster horizon of meaning, to transcend toward the beyond-humanity prefigured by Nietzsche and resolve the conflict in our culture between inhibiting media

directed at mass literacy and uninhibiting media such as television and violent films.<sup>12</sup>

## 2. TRANSEVALUATING MAN

In any case, by now it is quite evident that the self-consciousness of the Western individual has been transformed. He no longer conceives of himself as anchored to a substantial and static nature; at the same time, however, he acutely feels the lack of a unitary idea of himself, in which he can comprehend and put to work the principal legacies to which he is heir: the Judeo-Christian tradition, the Greek tradition, and recent scientific thought on naturalistic evolutionism.<sup>13</sup> In no era of history has man been so enigmatic to himself,<sup>14</sup> so much so that we find ourselves agreeing with Scheler and Nietzsche when they claim that whatever might restore to man the unity that has been lost can only be set in the future—in the unity of a common goal, in a task to be set for the multiform and variegated natural human essence.<sup>15</sup>

The essential quality of human nature has in effect moved from the substantial level to the moral one, and today we can glimpse the manifestation of this in the open decision about what humanity wants to be and to become.<sup>16</sup> As the Polish sociologist Zygmunt Baumann observed, the only nucleus of identity surely destined to emerge unharmed and perhaps even strengthened by the continual change is that of the *homo elicens*—“the man who chooses,” but not “the one who chose”!—a stably unstable “I,” completely incomplete, definitively indefinite, and authentically unauthentic.<sup>17</sup>

To generate and transmit humanity through education from this new stage of anthropological self-consciousness, however, something else, a radical change of mind, is required.

### *Genetic Anthropotechnique*

In this sense, there is an increasing consensus that humanistic anthropotechnique, as a prisoner of the inhibition-uninhibition dynamic of the *medias*, be replaced with a genetic-type project of raising and domesticating man. In fact, modern scientific laboratories are gestating a new anthropotechnique that will make any other kind of education superfluous. Bringing to completion the philosophy of nature of German idealism present in the first Schelling,<sup>18</sup> the ambition of this genetic anthropotechnique is to allow the human species to subvert the fatalism of inheritance through explicit social planning of those genetic characteristics believed to be the most functional, and thus select prenatally only suitable human individuals, that is, those that are psychologically and physically in conformation with the development

planned by the human collectivity. According to Sloterdijk, one of the proponents of such a disquieting scenario, critical thought cannot avoid dealing with the current success of a growing technical capacity of production of nature as such in its inorganic and organic aspects and, within the latter, in its vegetative and animal aspects.<sup>19</sup> In effect, one is led to ask: whether humanistic anthropotechnique, which had its origins in an intact patrimony of humanity, has led, because of the unilateral use of the bio-political complex of house/domestic animal/man, to the present impoverishment of the human, producing only a sedentary little man,<sup>20</sup> incapable of any self-transcendence whatever, falling back upon domesticated animality, what reduction of man will we meet if we apply genetic anthropotechniques, based as they are on preventative selection that curtails man's genetic patrimony? Sloterdijk notes that, all things considered, in this case as in the previous one, man would end up being calibrated on his animality, but he quickly adds that the use of eugenics will place us in the presence of a *monstrous* animality, in which the monster will be a mirror of our form.<sup>21</sup>

For that matter, Nietzsche had already affirmed, in an entirely original way compared to geneticists of his time, such as Francis Galton,<sup>22</sup> that in order to promote the empowerment of the human, selective technical interventions should not be utilized, even though they derived from a science of heredity that, in order to artificially reproduce them, observed the lines of development of the factors of cultural superiority. Nietzsche had perceived the need, after centuries of indirect and ineffective ethical education, "to work, directly influencing the organism" of the contemporary European in order to form "another corporality, that by itself would create for itself another soul and other customs."<sup>23</sup> In fact, he was convinced that only by reaching the physiological level of man could his discourses intercept the energy and vital drive indispensable for establishing, in the current morality of altruism and sacrifice of the individual for the benefit of the species, that illuministic countermovement, the generator of "dominating natures"<sup>24</sup>: the only ones that, unlike the "last men," totally dependent on the herd instinct,<sup>25</sup> are super-human-natures,<sup>26</sup> capable of breaking the instinctual atavism and facing existence with untried tools. According to Nietzsche, in order to give rise to supermen,<sup>27</sup> there was no need to turn to extrinsic techniques of genetic selection. Instead, what was required was the endogenous modality represented by the sociocultural contribution of the "deviating natures": the only ones he judged capable of advancing the biocultural human type, which strong natures had instead fixed as stationary. The indispensable assistance for human development brought by the deviating natures consists precisely in putting back into motion that which was set or fixed in the past but is no

longer adequate for facing the new challenges of reality. In fact, when the “deviating natures” manage not to ruin themselves because of their weakness, they “flare up and from time to time inflict a wound on the stable element of the community” through which “the community is inoculated with something new.”<sup>28</sup>

So it was quite clear to Nietzsche that the human is promoted with the human because technical stratagems, even the most advanced, always operate exclusively on the level of the causal dynamics proper to biological evolution and are unable to reproduce that “spontaneity of conception,” underlined also by William James, that is endogenous and from which man draws the capacity to organize his experience in an unusual and peculiar way, transcending himself and qualifying as superman.<sup>29</sup> Nietzsche’s “superior type” does not derive at all from simple genetics, but from “cultural genetics,” which delivers him from the deterministic dynamics proper to psychological and physical evolution and instead consigns him to the exercise of the will. “My concern,” says Nietzsche, “is not to establish what can take the place of man, but what kind of man must be chosen, wanted, raised as species of superior value.”<sup>30</sup>

For this reason, the “conditions of birth and conservation” of the type of superman, even though different from that of the average man,<sup>31</sup> presuppose the existence of the latter. In fact, it is precisely the adaptive movement of the species that, channelling all energies into a *continuum* streamlined for typological determination, guarantees the *minimum* expenditure and *maximum* capitalization of these energies: The superman draws benefit from such an original accumulation of forces, using it to break evolutive continuity and “to invent his superior form of being.”<sup>32</sup>

In the light of this, therefore, not even H. R. Maturana and F. J. Varela’s discovery of autopoiesis<sup>33</sup> as the dynamic structure identifying the individuality of living beings can be considered sufficient to establish a modality of education of man that is suitable for promoting humanity, which, thus, must be radically innovative, inasmuch as it no longer is exclusively directed at developing the human being in the limits of his being-given, but is devoted above all to cultivating the specific attitude of man to set his own goals for himself, as J. G. Herder<sup>34</sup> and L. Bolk<sup>35</sup> observed. In fact, even though Maturana and Varela gained for all living beings spaces of relative autonomy within the biological determinism of the species, they still remain prisoners of a reductionistic anthropological hermeneutics that claims to comprehend man’s humanity itself in a one and only comprehensive poietics, which hosts on the autopoietic level the living beings capable of producing themselves and gathers on the allopoietic level all the other devices/mechanisms whose functioning produces something different from themselves.<sup>36</sup> It is not by chance that the autopoietic

structure of the living being discovered by Maturana and Varela constitutes the foundation of the systemic paradigm in the social sciences theorized by N. Luhmann.<sup>37</sup> In it, society is represented as an organism that lives and reproduces itself according to the autopoietic schema, by which each system spontaneously and automatically generates subsystems, which in turn proliferate, giving rise to the social entirety, which thus qualifies as an accumulation of reproductive systems and is not the carrier of substantial new developments.

*Making the Human Grow with Philosophy*

The attempt to trans-evaluate the human by disengaging from traditional anthropotechniques has fallen short of success. The recourse to techniques of genetic selection to improve the human seems actually to lead to a reductionistic paradigm that yields no superman, but only a humanity further impoverished in its capacity for transcendence.

Sloterdijk, as much as Maturana and Varela, notwithstanding their undeniable merit in having brought to light the points of effective crisis of traditional humanistic education, remain far short of the ambitious goal they had perhaps set for themselves, that of opening new paths to the formation of man that could respond to the need to surpass the “all too human”<sup>38</sup> that Nietzsche had voiced when he prophesied the overcoming of nihilism. Neither reference to technique nor accommodation to the biologicistic-vital level seems to sufficient valorise the component of creativity that represents the *proprium* of man, who, unique in the universe, is able to bring himself beyond himself and successfully face the challenges that continually arise in history, the latest of which is the development of biomedical technologies and their application to human life. For that matter, it is only through his innate creativity that the human living being, the being most defective from the biological and evolutionary point of view because of his not completely determinated organic specialization, has been able to bring about, in his life and that of the entire cosmos, the development that enables us today to enjoy considerable well-being, but that also makes us much more nihilistic than in the past. Thus, the issue is to recover human creativity and put it to work, not as arbitrary and evasive imagination,<sup>39</sup> but in its graftedness into life, in such a way as to exploit life’s quality of spontaneous autoproduction to bring human creativity anew to the light. This is the point at which it is absolutely necessary to engage in a work of radical metaphysical re-elaboration: It is necessary once again to employ the philosophical method of the search for the first principle of all things, covering the field of being no longer just in its ideal interality, which embraces all-that-is, but also and above all, in its concrete articulation historically unfolding itself, accepting a positive comparison with the challenge

of comprehension that each-new-being that appears on the horizon flings at philosophical speculation: We must succeed in philosophically thinking in such a way as to validate the results of the inquiry only in the presence of principles that are likewise living forces. Without tarrying to destroy the history of ontology,<sup>40</sup> the task at hand is to transform traditional ontology, which is static and lacks a future, into a thought of being that succeeds in grasping the intrinsic interpenetration with becoming. It will be in such a way that metaphysics, from its current dogmatic immobility of meaning, now in disintegration, may become the area in which the integration of being and becoming is realized, expanding continually to permeate every ontological level. In fact, if now man conceives of himself as “a rope over an abyss,” “a bridge and not a goal,”<sup>41</sup> a being whose nature consists in “becoming” what he is, then the primary urgency before the new anthropology is to attempt a reflective journey whose destination is to open a new horizon of being that makes those metaphors positively meaningful, enabling the rope not to plunge into the abyss, and the bridge to reach its goal, becoming to acquire the consistency of being, without losing its dynamism. In the face of the loss of the European humanistic inheritance that Heidegger interpreted as the destruction of the idea of *humanitas*,<sup>42</sup> one can in fact try to establish that “countermovement” (*Gegenbewegung*) that Nietzsche had discovered as the modality for crossing through nihilism produced by the unilateral triumph in Europe of the Judeo-Platonic-Christian paradigm and applied to contain the fear of life, and thus to start that “transevaluation of all values”<sup>43</sup> that Nietzsche heralded so many times but never made operative.

Only by gaining such a further, mobile horizon of meaning can one hope to conserve and promote humanity. In fact, human life has become “liquid,” to use a Baumann’s apt expression, indicating the characteristic of modern society in which the situations in which men act are modified before their way of acting can consolidate into habits and procedures.<sup>44</sup> Thus, the nuclei of meaningful experience are rapidly thwarted and the action of fixing traditional cognitive and ethical categories is ineffective. Baumann suggests updating education, developing it in the same sense in which ballistic weapons evolved: In trench war, missiles could have a fixed trajectory established at the beginning, but now that they are employed against a mobile adversary, they have become intelligent, capable of changing direction during flight according to the changes of circumstances, perceiving instantaneously the movements of their targets, obtaining the information necessary to ascertain their targets’ final direction and velocity, and extrapolating, from the information the exact point where their respective trajectories will meet. These missiles still follow an instrumental type of rationality, but now it is “liquefied,” in the sense that it

has been necessary to abandon the assumption that the goal is given, constant, and unchangeable for the entire time and, consequently, that the forecasts and interventions will concern only the means. On the contrary, continues Baumann, even more intelligent missiles will be able to choose their targets after they are launched, guided by evaluation of the greatest possible result, based on their own technical capacities and on the potential targets that they have the best chance of hitting: Thus, there will be a sort of overturning of instrumental rationality because now the means available will decide which objective is chosen.<sup>45</sup>

But in order for all this to come to realization in education, wishes, advice, or orders are not enough. A new metaphysical vision is needed, one that opens out to a broader horizon of being, in which all the new developments of postmodernity, including the neoanthropology of beyond-man, can position and develop themselves in synergy.

### 3. FROM METAPHYSICS TO METAONTOPOIESIS

Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka has gained a prominent position with regard to the issue of transevaluation. She was not content with the philosophical gains of the first- and second-generation classic phenomenologists of the realist tendency, who limited their speculation to the level of essential givenness, assured by the constitutive genesis of objectivity. She proceeded beyond this to seek the contact point between consciousness and the vital and creative “inner workings,” or “the locus whence *eidōs* and fact simultaneously spring” at the juncture of human experience from which *logos* and life branch out, in the conviction that “not constitutive intentionality, but the constructive advance of life, which carries it, may alone reveal to us the first principles of all things.”<sup>46</sup>

From this position Tymieniecka was able to show that the creative function that presides over the evolution of life, determining its growing specialization and complexity, finds its culminating expression in the stage of development in which man appears, the living being endowed with *Imaginatio Creatrix*:

The creative function, guided by its own *telos*, generates the *Imaginatio Creatrix* in man, as the means *par excellence* of specific human freedom: that is, freedom to go beyond the framework of the life-world, the freedom of man to surpass himself.<sup>47</sup>

Therefore, when life attains the level of the human creative condition, it no longer stops at reproducing itself, but in the acts of the life of man it always interprets itself in existence, giving rise to forms of life that are not only new

and previously unimaginable, but also congruent and adequate to the becoming being of life, of which he alone possesses the cipher.<sup>48</sup> For this reason, man is radically the carrier of metaphysical exigency: To orient the virtualities in his possession in the sense of positive realization, he needs both to find the reasons of “beingness” and to avail himself of the principle of being, through which he can confer on creations that indispensable character of humanly adequate “objective” form that makes them graspable and usable. Of crucial importance at this point is the fact that being, so spontaneously put into play, does not limit itself to maintain the significance of the “indispensable essential factor of all beingness,” in the sense of classical metaphysics, inasmuch as it “concerns beingness in its finished, formed, established or stabilized state.” Rather, in the measure in which it appears in the acts of the human living being, being manifests itself as “the intrinsic factor of the constructive process of individual becoming.” This means that, since “becoming is a process in its own advance, in qualification,” and since “the individual remains always in the process of becoming,” that is, is continually proceeding toward what is not yet, being, engaged in the creative acts from which becoming proceeds, acts as the intrinsic stabilizing forerunner of the acquisition and transformation of form that characterizes the natural evolution of individual life. In this sense, compared to all the other givennesses, that of man within his world is not simply comparable to a process-like nature, but expresses a specific type of “constructivism,” which furthermore does not reduce itself to what it develops during life. The human being does not operate just as “meaning-bestowing-agent” and producer of his world-of-life, as Husserl proposed. Man begins first to “create according to being” (= *ontopoiesis*) because man’s “very life in itself is the effect of his self-individualization in existence through inventive self-interpretation of his most intimate moves of life.”<sup>49</sup>

For this reason, cognition and the intentional network of its highest manifestations could not discover the origin of the order that man prescribes for the world-of-life and his social world: They must be integrated with the essential modalities with which the human being delineates the enactment of the course of life and enacts it. The guiding factor of the progress of life, in fact, lies in its enactment: For such enaction, even cognition is planned and the principles of the same cognitive emersion and of its nature are functionalized in relation to the performance of this enaction.

In the reality of experience, besides, there is no solution of continuity between the two operative series, and while the human individual determines the course of his life, formulating and enacting reactions, deliberations, selections, choices, imaginative inventions, plans, and so on, he realizes his

self-interpretation-in-existence, mixing the use of the apparatus of enactment of life and that of cognition, for the one purpose of accomplishing “the essential work of life-meaning establishment.”<sup>50</sup> Thus it is revealed that the creative act of man is the prototype of the action capable of sparking the progress of life: As in a crucial device, here the enactment of life and the cognitive function of the human being are rooted, and “the entire span of man’s questioning emerges in its full extent with a pristine appearance in which all the lines of life’s assumed progress gather in order to receive their significance.”<sup>51</sup>

The new ontopoietic outlook on life that gathers being and becoming in the human creative condition is being delineated, and Tymieniecka concludes, “I call it [the becoming of life], going back to Aristotle’s *Poetics*, a ‘poietic’ process: onto-poietic. In brief, the self-individualization of life is an ontopoietic process.”<sup>52</sup>

She adds,

Thus, man’s elementary condition—the same one which Husserl and Ingarden have attempted in vain to break through to, by stretching the expanse of his intentional bonds as well as by having recourse to pre-reduced scientific data—appears to be one of blind nature’s elements, and yet at the same time, this element shows itself to have virtualities for individualization at the vital level and, what is more, for a specifically human individualization. These latter virtualities we could label the “subliminal spontaneity.”<sup>53</sup>

In her fourth, most recent and monumental publication of the *Logos and Life* series, entitled *Impetus and Equipoise in the Life-Strategies of Reason*, Tymieniecka identifies philosophy as the eminent discipline for the procedure of ontological-metaphysical going-beyond. In fact, history has taught us that

we have seen that the semantic system of language cannot determine what a given philosophical inquiry aims at, since any new insight or fresh flight of creative imagination would disrupt the semantic logic of the system in the effort to reach further areas.

Philosophical procedure demands that the system assumed at the beginning of the inquiry must inevitably be transformed or replaced by another, emerging one. On the other hand, not even “the givenness of life,” the manifestation of which extends to multiple spheres of meaning, can adequately be led by any procedure of philosophical inquiry to disclose itself and be more clearly comprehended. Finally, we are by now aware of the fact that neither rigorously rational rules or logical interconnections, nor schematizations employed in the language of every rational discourse, can ever adequately evaluate and grasp

the vast sweep of the significant modalities entering into and interplaying in the vertiginous outburst of unfolding forces in the ongoing gigantic play of the manifestation of beingness or reveal all the fragments, sequences, segments of complete constructive processes subject to disruption by unforeseeable conditions and influences.

None of the so-called philosophical methods are appropriate to the numerous modalities of the real,<sup>54</sup> and thus one must concede postmodernism's statement that in philosophy no approach can claim absolute validity compared to the others.

However, we are duty bound in our condition, which aspires to get to "the bottom of things," "the source of truth," or "the spring of reason that carries on the great streaming edifice of life," to do such a "twist" of thought on experience as to consider any insight that falls within our purview. Thus, this is how conscious reflection reacquires life as its own context, "the vertiginous wealth of emerging, unfolding, transformation, degeneration—the vast spectrum of the dynamic fluctuations," and philosophical discourse abandons "the stereotypical language of so-called 'scholarly' discourse that would ape science but be merely pseudo-scientific," in order to substitute the "sequential 'therefore' order of writing" with an approach that is suitable for living life, which "streams in all directions and will at any point refract its modalities and their apparatus into innumerable rays that flow concurrently onward" and therefore requests the enactment of "all modes of human functioning, all human involvement in the orbit of life."<sup>55</sup> Phenomenological givenness is experiencing an impressive growth: It no longer corresponds just to "cognitive processes of the human mind," but also to the "inward givenness of the life progress common to all living beings as such," specifying itself as "the modality of a role fulfilled within the constructive process."<sup>56</sup> It is in this way that philosophical thought can embrace the opportunity "to disentangle and grasp life's patterns," for "it is only in a direct, immediate insight into the constructivism of life and its coincidence with our own constructivism that we may expect to disentangle and grasp life's patterns."

From here we can see the beginning of a different philosophical modality, meta-onto-poietic, that measures itself against the becoming of life without renouncing the principle of being and that valorises the anthropological capacity of transcendence even while maintaining a rigorous horizon of immanence. Taking on and developing this viewpoint, we may be able to think anew about education so that it will be capable of empowering our humanity to the point that it can compete with the most intelligent of Baumann's intelligent missiles.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> F. Nietzsche, *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches I*, in *Nietzsche Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, ed. G. Colli and M. Montinari, Berlin: de Gruyter (from now on cited as NWKG), IV<sub>1</sub>, 1967, §224. See also *Human, All Too Human*, transl. ed. W. Kaufmann, in *The Portable*

*Nietzsche*, New York: Viking Press, 1968; *Human, All Too Human*, transl. R. J. Hollingdale, 2 vols. in 1, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986. In this chapter, I use *Human, All Too Human*, transl. H. Zimmern, R. J. Hollingdale, and M. Faber, available: <http://www.geocities.com/thenietzschechannel>.

<sup>2</sup> F. Nietzsche, *Ecce homo. Wie man wird, was man ist*, in NWKG, VI<sub>3</sub>, 1969, pp. 253–372. See also *Ecce homo. How One Becomes What One Is*, transl. W. Kaufmann, New York: Vintage Books, 1967; transl. R. J. Hollingdale, New York: Penguin Books, 1982. In this chapter, I use *Ecce homo. How One Becomes What One Is*, available at: <http://www.geocities.com/thenietzschechannel>.

<sup>3</sup> I am referring here to the intention of reinventing the values of humanism in existentialist terms, after the barbarism of National Socialism and the eclipse of metaphysics, expressed by Jean-Paul Sartre at the legendary conference: *L'existentialisme est un humanisme*, held October 28, 1948, in the packed Salle de Centraux and culminating in the motto “existence precedes essence.” On the theme of the possibility of a neo-humanism, a fruitful long-distance dialogue was opened with Martin Heidegger through the mediation of Frédéric de Towarnicki, a young interpreter posted with the French troops occupying Germany, and above all, of J. Beaufret. See J. Beaufret, *Dialogue avec Heidegger*, Vols. I–IV, Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1973–1985; and *Entretiens avec Frédéric de Towarnicki*, Paris: P.U.F., 1984. On the question of the humanism proposed by Sartre, Karl Jaspers also intervened, at a conference held in 1949 on the occasion of the *Rencontres internationales* in Geneva, later published in K. Jaspers, *Über Bedingungen und Möglichkeiten eines neuen Humanismus*, Stuttgart: Reclam, 1962.

<sup>4</sup> The term *post-human* was popularized by an exhibit of contemporary art curated by the critic Jeffrey Deitck (in Italy, it was hosted at the Rivoli Museum), and since then, the term has been proposed as the most radical concept of the family of ‘posts’ that are all the rage in world culture. But since in art and in a certain type of art criticism, an excess of metaphor can at times obscure clarity of thought, from that time on there has been ongoing inquiry into the scientific and anthropological validity of our “exit from biology” according to a hypothesis of transcendence of man compared to nature that can traced back at least as far as Plato. See in this regard K. Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999. For Hayles, the cybernetic and techno-optimistic conceptions do not escape the body–mind duality of rationalistic, Western dualism; rather, they re-propose it as technological transcendence. Hayles observes how the post-human does not indicate the end of the human, but the end of the liberal humanistic subject. He reconstructs the history of the separation between matter and information, moving from classic cybernetics (centered on the concept of homeostasis) and proceeding toward the second wave of cybernetics centered on autopoietic systems (according to the theories of Humberto R. Maturana and Francisco J. Varela), and then toward contemporary virtuality, in which consciousness is seen as property emerging from complex systems, and computer programs are developed in order to evolve (*artificial life*). Hayles defends the corporeality of man and holds that it is precisely the complexity of *embodiment* that makes human consciousness different from the transferable intelligence in machines, and he proposes a re-thinking of the articulation of the human with intelligent machines that takes into consideration corporeality. The fundamental intuition of the human as a historical construct whose era is about to end is already found in M. Foucault, *Les mots et les choses: une archeologie des sciences humaines*, Paris: Gallimard, 1966. Later, I. H. Hassan (*Prometheus as Performer. Towards a Posthumanist Culture?*, in *Performance in Postmodern Culture*, ed. M. Benamou and C. Caramella, Madison WI: Coda Press, 1977) described the post-human, catching both its character as an ambiguous neologism and its great cultural potential. In addition, the humanistic conception of the subject has been subjected to the criticism of feminist theory and post-colonial thought and examined by theoreticians such

as G. Deleuze and F. Guattari (*Mille plateaux. Capitalisme et schizophrénie*, Paris: Minuit, 1980), who, with their concept of the body without organs, sought to illustrate the liberating potential of a subjectivity dispersed among different desiring machines. Also foundational for the discourse on the post-human is the work of D. Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*, London: Free Association Books, 1991. In her recent work, Rosi Braidotti (*Metamorphoses: Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002) proposed a connection between the post-human horizon and nomadic subjectivities, underlining from this prospective the need for a post-humanist ethics of sustainability. In Italy, reconsideration of the relationship to the crisis of anthropocentrism and new links with technologies has been carried forward by important scholars such as M. Costa (*Il sublime tecnologico. Piccolo trattato di estetica tecnologica*, Rome: Castelvecchi, 1998), R. Terrosi (*La filosofia del postumano*, Genoa: Costa & Nolan, 1997), G. O. Longo (*Homo technologicus*, Rome: Meltemi, 2001), R. Marchesini (*Post-human. Verso nuovi modelli di esistenza*, Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2002), and M. Perniola (*Il sex appeal dell'inorganico*, Turin: Einaudi, 2004). In addition, with particular reference respectively to the theories of the cyborg and the post-organic body in art, see the work of A. Caronia (*Il cyborg. Saggio sull'uomo artificiale*, Rome: Theoria, 1985) and T. Macri (*Il corpo postorganico*, Milan: Costa & Nolan, 1996). In the field of law, see B. Romano, *Diritto postumanesimo nichilismo: una introduzione*, Turin: Giappichelli, 2004.

<sup>5</sup> The term “trans-humanism” was coined by the biologist Julian Huxley (*The Humanist Frame*, London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1961) with a different meaning from that later used in the 1980s. The current definition is due to the philosopher Max More, the pseudonym of Max T. O'Connor, who, in his essay *Transhumanism. Toward a Futurist Philosophy* (*Extropy*, 6, Summer 1990, pp. 6–12), introduced the term with its contemporary meaning, connecting it to its humanistic roots. According to More, trans-humanism comprises the philosophies that propose to guide us toward a “post-human” condition, working to recognize ahead of time the radical changes and alterations in both nature and the possibilities for our lives resulting from progress in the various sciences and technologies. The Swedish neurophysiologist, L. A. Sandberg (*Sustainability, the Challenge: People, Power and the Environment*, Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1998) also presented a trans-humanistic outlook in the sense of claiming that we can and must develop and attain physically, mentally, and socially superior levels, utilizing rational methods. For R. Hanson, professor of economics at George Mason University and expert in “idea futures markets,” in addition to supporting the practices of cryonics and extropianism, trans-humanism involves the idea that new technologies will probably change the world in the next century or two so much that our descendants will in many aspects not be human. To summarize, trans-humanism supports the improvement of the human condition through the application of technology aimed at the reduction of aging to the point of eliminating it and the expansion of man’s intellectual and physical capabilities. It thus gives particular attention to the study of the benefits, dangers, and ethics of the implementation of these technologies.

<sup>6</sup> M. Bucchi (*Scegliere il mondo che vogliamo. Cittadini, politica, tecnoscienza*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2006) expresses the hope there will be an elaboration of a sort of hyper-humanism of political reach as well as technocracy and ethics. In fact, the more science and technology advance, the more society seems to resist them, as if institutions and citizens do not feel sufficiently equipped to discuss and face them. The challenges posed by research and innovation can no longer be dealt with by delegating them to the experts, the “technocratic response,” or by referring them to the moral values of the individual, the “ethical response.” Rather, what is necessary is a “political response,” since each technology incorporates a vision of man, nature, and society; thus, transparent and reliable entities, institutions, or procedures are indispensable means of enabling public choice based on the possible alternatives. In this way, democracy is rediscovered as the open dialogue among different ideas of our future.

<sup>7</sup> W. Jaeger, *Paideia: die Formung der griechischen Menschen*, 3 vols., Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1959; transl. G. Highe, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*, 3 vols., New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

<sup>8</sup> M. Heidegger, *Brief über den "Humanismus"*, in *Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 9, Wegmarken, Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1976, pp. 313–364; transl. F. A. Capuzzi, *Letter on "Humanism"*, in *Pathmarks*, ed. W. McNeill, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

<sup>9</sup> F. Nietzsche, *Also sprach Zarathustra*, NWKG, VI<sub>1</sub>, 1968; transl. Th. Common, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra. A Book for All and None*, available at: <http://www.geocities.com/thenietzschechannel>. "I teach you the Superman. Man is something that is to be surpassed" (*Prologue*, §3); in addition, "what is lovable in man is that he is an over-going and a down-going" (*Prologue*, §4).

<sup>10</sup> I refer first of all to M. Scheler, A. Gehlen, and H. Plessner, the protagonists of the so-called "anthropological shift" that occurred in the 1920s. They promoted ideas of man that highlighted his capacity for transcendence in comparison to other living beings, above all the other animals, which lack in it. In fact, man is presented as essentially *weltoffen*, cf.: M. Scheler, *Die Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos*, in *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. M. Scheler and M. Frings, Bern: Francke (from now on cited as GW), Vol. IX, *Späte Schriften*, 1975 or characterized by an *exzentrische Position* (H. Plessner, *Die Stufen des Organischen und der Mensch*, Berlin: Göschen, 1926) or, finally, understood as *Mängelwesen* (A. Gehlen, *Der Mensch. Seine Natur und seine Stellung in der Welt*, Wiesbaden: Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft Athenaion, 1978).

<sup>11</sup> P. Sloterdijk, *Regeln für den Menschenpark. Ein Antwortschreiben zum Brief über den Humanismus—die Elmauer Rede, Die Zeit*, 38 (1999); reprinted P. Sloterdijk, *Nicht gerettet. Versuche nach Heidegger*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2001, Chapter 6.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Scheler, *Die Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos*, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> M. Scheler, *Philosophische Anthropologie*, in *Schriften aus dem Nachlass IV*, GW XII, 1987, pp. 49–50.

<sup>16</sup> M. Scheler, *Der Mensch im Weltalter des Ausgleichs*, GW IX, p. 150. See also D. Verducci, *Il segmento mancante. Percorsi di filosofia del lavoro*, Rome: Carocci, 2003, pp. 87–96; D. Verducci, *Scheler-Nietzsche. Per una misura dell' "Übermensch"*, in *Nietzsche tra eccesso e misura. La volontà di potenza a confronto*, ed. F. Totaro, Rome: Carocci, 2002, pp. 219–236.

<sup>17</sup> Z. Baumann, *Liquid life*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005, Chapter 2.

<sup>18</sup> See the interview with Sloterdijk conducted by Heik Afheld and Bernd Ulrich that appeared in *Der Tagespiel on line* on March 8, 2001.

<sup>19</sup> Sloterdijk, *Regeln für den Menschenpark*, op. cit..

<sup>20</sup> Nietzsche, *The Bedwaring Virtue*, in *Thus spoke Zarathustra*, op. cit., Part II, Chapter 49.

<sup>21</sup> See the interview with Sloterdijk by Afheld and Ulrich, op. cit.

<sup>22</sup> J. Paneth was the one who gave Nietzsche the work of F. Galton, *Inquiries into Human Faculty and Its Development*, London: Macmillan, 1883. He had other contacts through reading the magazine *Das Ausland*, which published Oskar Peschel's review of F. Galton's, *Hereditary Genius: An Inquiry into Its Laws and Consequencies*, London: Macmillan, 1869 (*Das Ausland*, XLIII, 1870, pp. 928–931). See R. F. Krummel, *Joseph Paneth über seine Begegnung mit Nietzsche in der Zarathustra-Zeit*, N-S, XVII, 1988, pp. 478–495; M.-L. Haase, *Friedrich Nietzsche liest Francis Galton*, N-S, XVIII, 1989, pp. 633–658. Already, C. Richter (*Nietzsche et les théories biologiques contemporaines*, Paris: Mercurie de France, 1911) spoke of possible points of contact between Nietzsche and Galton. See M. C. Fornari, *Superuomo ed evoluzione*, in *Nietzsche e la provocazione del superuomo. Per un'etica della misura*, ed. F. Totaro, Rome: Carocci, 2004, pp. 49–53.

- <sup>23</sup> F. Nietzsche, *Nachgelassene Fragmente*, 7 [97], Spring–Summer 1883, in NWKG, VII<sub>1</sub>, p. 283.
- <sup>24</sup> Nietzsche, *Nachgelassene Fragmente*, 27 [80], Summer–Autumn 1884, in NWKG, VII<sub>2</sub>, 1974, p. 295.
- <sup>25</sup> Nietzsche, *Thus spoke Zarathustra*, op. cit., Prologue, §5.
- <sup>26</sup> Nietzsche, *Nachgelassene Fragmente*, 7 [21], Summer–Autumn 1883, in NWKG, VII<sub>1</sub>, 1977, p. 252.
- <sup>27</sup> There are two principal English translations of *Übermensch*: “superman” (Hollingsdale, Common) and “overman” (Kaufmann). In my opinion, the two meanings meld and thus should always be understood together, even when one opts for just one term.
- <sup>28</sup> Nietzsche, *Ennoblement through degeneration*, in *Human, All Too Human*, op. cit., §224.
- <sup>29</sup> See S. Franzese, *L'uomo indeterminato. Saggio su William James*, Rome: D'Anselmi, 2000, pp. 19–63. Perhaps Nietzsche had read the essay by W. James, *Great Men and Their Environment* (*Atlantic Monthly*, XLVI, pp. 441–459), in its French translation in *Critique philosophique* (Jan.–Feb. 1881). See G. Campioni, *Les lectures françaises de Nietzsche*, Paris: P.U.F., 2001, p. 32, note 2.
- <sup>30</sup> Nietzsche, *Nachgelassene Fragmente*, 9 [7], 9 [84], Autumn 1887, in NWKG, VII<sub>2</sub>, pp. 6, 42.
- <sup>31</sup> Nietzsche, *Nachgelassene Fragmente*, 10 [17], Autumn 1887, in NWKG, VIII<sub>2</sub>, 1970, pp. 128–129.
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 [17] and 10 [17]. In this regard, see G. Campioni, *Scienza e filosofia della forza in Nietzsche*, in *Sulla strada di Nietzsche*, Pisa: ETS, 1993, pp. 161–196; C. Richter, *Nietzsche et la biologie*, Paris: P.U.F., 2001; G. Moore, *Nietzsche, Spencer and the Ethics of Evolution*, *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, XXIII, 2002, pp. 1–20.
- <sup>33</sup> H. R. Maturana and F. J. Varela, *Autopoiesis and Cognition. The Realization of the Living*, Dordrecht: Reidel, 1980. In addition: H. R. Maturana and F. J. Varela, *The Tree of Knowledge*, Boston: New Science Library/Shambhala, 1992.
- <sup>34</sup> J. G. Herder, *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache*, ed. H. D. Irmscher, Stuttgart: Reclam, 1966.
- <sup>35</sup> L. Bolk, *Das Problem der Menschenwerdung*, Jena: Fischer, 1926.
- <sup>36</sup> H. Maturana and F. Varela, *De máquinas y seres vivos. Una teoría sobre la organización biológica*, Santiago de Chile: Editorial Universitaria, 1972.
- <sup>37</sup> N. Luhmann, *Soziale Systeme. Grundriss einer allgemeine Theorie*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1984; N. Luhmann, *Ökologische Kommunikation. Kann die moderne Gesellschaft sich auf ökologische Gefährdungen einstellen?*, Opladen: Westdeutscher, 1986.
- <sup>38</sup> Notwithstanding the differences, both J. Derrida and G. Agamben have already undertaken this path. See J. Derrida, *E se l'animale rispondesse (finte e tracce), aut aut*, 310–311 (2002), pp. 4–26; G. Agamben, *L'aperto. L'uomo e l'animale*, Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2001.
- <sup>39</sup> Regarding the value of creativity in the realizative and economic sphere, a lively debate is underway in the online magazine *Cato Unbound* between R. Florida, author of the best-seller *The Rise of the Creative Class and How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life* (New York, Basic Books, 2002) and R. Hanson, an expert in “idea futures.” See R. Hanson, *Idea futures. How making wagers on the future can make it happen faster*, *WIRED*, 3.09, Sept. 1995. A section was quoted in the 30 August 1995 *Wall Street Journal*.
- <sup>40</sup> M. Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, in *Gesamtausgabe*, op. cit., Vol. II, 1977, §6; transl. J. Stambauch, *Being and Time*, New York: State University of New York Press, 1996, §6: The Task of a Destructuring of the History of Ontology.
- <sup>41</sup> Nietzsche, *Thus spoke Zarathustra*, op. cit., *Prologue*, §4.
- <sup>42</sup> Heidegger, *Letter on “Humanism”*, op. cit.

- <sup>43</sup> F. Nietzsche, *Der Wille zur Macht. Versuch einer Umwertung aller Werthe*, ed. O. Weiss, Vols. XV–XVI, Stuttgart: Kröner, 1911, *Vorwort*, §4; transl. ed. W. Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale, *The Will to Power*, New York: Vintage, 1967, *Preface*, §4.
- <sup>44</sup> Baumann, *Liquid Life*, op. cit., Introduction.
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, Chapter VI.
- <sup>46</sup> A-T. Tymieniecka, *Tractatus Brevis. First Principles of the Metaphysics of Life Charting the Human Condition: Man's Creative Act and the Origin of Rationalities*, *Analecta Husserliana*, XXI (1986), p. 3.
- <sup>47</sup> A-T. Tymieniecka, *Logos and Life: Creative Experience and the Critique of Reason*, Book I, *Analecta Husserliana*, XXIV (1988), pp. 25–26.
- <sup>48</sup> A-T. Tymieniecka, ed., *Phenomenology of Life and the Human Creative Condition*, *Analecta Husserliana*, LII (1998).
- <sup>49</sup> Tymieniecka, *Creative Experience and the Critique of Reason*, op. cit., pp. 4–5.
- <sup>50</sup> R. Eucken also exhorted his contemporaries to battle for the goal of conferring a meaning on life (*Der Kampf um einen geistigen Lebensinhalt*, Lipsia, 1899), but his appeal was almost entirely ignored. Max Scheler, his student in Jena, declared that he drew from that work the starting idea for his 1899 essay *Arbeit und Ethik* (GW I, *Frühe Schriften*, 1971, pp. 161–197), whence his reflection on work began.
- <sup>51</sup> Tymieniecka, *Creative Experience and the Critique of Reason*, op. cit., p. 7.
- <sup>52</sup> M. Kronegger and A-T. Tymieniecka, eds., *Life. The Human Quest for an Ideal*, *Analecta Husserliana*, XLIX (1996), p. 15: "'Onto-' refers here to the 'firstness' of this process with respect to the scale of existential formation. Before this schema's articulations there is no beingness that we may ascertain with the criteria of our minds—which are attuned precisely to this and no other reality. 'Onto-' here also means the indispensable and universal character of whatever there could be in the 'objective' form proper to human reality in the sense of the classical metaphysics of 'onto-' logos, that is, ontology. However, and this is of crucial significance for the understanding of our vision, this indispensable essential factor of all beingness does not concern beingness in its finished, formed, established or stabilized state; it is the intrinsic factor of the constructive process of individual becoming. The individual remains always in the process of becoming. It acquires form and transforms it. 'Becoming' is 'becoming something that is not yet.' Becoming is a process in its own advance, in qualification."
- <sup>53</sup> Tymieniecka, *Creative Experience and the Critique of Reason*, op. cit., p. 28.
- <sup>54</sup> A-T. Tymieniecka, *Impetus and Equipose in the Life-Strategies of Reason* (Logos and Life, Vol. 4), Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2000, p. 3.
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- <sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4–5.

## PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH IN EDUCATION

In this study I discuss how to apply the phenomenological approach to education. Formal learning systems try to create a community in which people have similar feelings, behaviors, and understandings, and so they mostly ignore students' individual differences. Because these differences are necessary for person to become an individual, the differences among students being subjected to formal learning should be supported by using a phenomenological approach.

Phenomenology focuses on an individual's first-hand experiences rather than the abstract experience of others. It emphasizes explaining the meaning of things through an individual's perspectives and self-experiences. Phenomenology inspires self-searching, self-experiences, and new learning. It also requires a motivated inquiry into knowledge and a desire to learn about self and others.

Phenomenological learning is related to the search for the meaning of self-experiences and perceptions. Students must be encouraged to describe, investigate, and explain their feelings, experiences, and thoughts. They describe their experiences, consider possible meanings, and understand the essences of their experiences in relation to the topics of learning. The student's self-experiences include feelings, thoughts, responses, and the relationship between self and others, which include other students, teachers, learning topics, and so on. If we ask students about their self-experiences, the answers will include images, intuitions, ideas, innovations, inquiries, creativities, perceptions, understanding, and perspectives.

Education should focus on these by means of its curriculum implementations. The phenomenological approach should be applied in the education system as a tool for learning.

## INTRODUCTION

Phenomena are objects defined by science, and scientists try to explain phenomena by using scientific research methods. The concept of phenomena includes perceptions of sensuous things-appearances and includes all

experiences. Phenomenon means “that which displays itself” (Farber, 1928, pp. 41–44). The phenomena themselves are the theme of phenomenology.

There is no definite answer to the question of what phenomenology is. It is concerned with the a priori nature of perceptions, judgments, and feelings of an individual (Kockelmans, 1967) and with the meaning of phenomena based on an individual’s perception. Phenomenology deals with things themselves, on an individual basis.

Phenomenology as the general doctrine of essences is related to epistemology, which is interested in “pure phenomena” as truly absolute data. Phenomenology explains how an object of knowledge is constituted in our knowing acts (Kockelmans, 1967, pp. 29–34). “Phenomenology is the first method of knowledge because it begins with ‘things themselves’” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 41). The phenomenological method is radically subjective in that it refers all meaning back to a transcendental subject that is the source of meaning (Bidney, 1989); it searches for the meaning and essence of experience rather than explanations.

Phenomenology as a method of scientific research is especially significant for the development of the social sciences (Luckmann, 1989). Phenomenological investigation includes the real objective world and mental life-processes (Kersten, 1989). Phenomenological investigation targets the experience of pure consciousness of an individual. Phenomenology is concerned with phenomena and their significance. It supports scientific study in all areas because scientific development depends on the ordinary experience of an individual. An individual’s knowledge and experience feed back on each other. Experience means the acquisition of knowledge in any situation in which an individual participates.

The aim of phenomenology is to seek the meaning of the world and the basic meanings of objects. In learning, human action is focused on finding new meanings and explanations for things. Phenomenology does not put forward anything before and during the research process. It does not give explanations and logical inferences for situations. Phenomenology is only interested in an existent situation that is imaginative or a real-life experience. It does not deal with causality and the results of thing. Phenomenology is concerned with an individual perception. It focuses on only the descriptions of an individual’s perceptions. “Phenomenology describes the way in which humans make sense of their everyday life-world from their own perspective” (Cho, 2000, p. 46). Phenomenological study involves self-enquiry and a prior description of self-experience. For this reason, phenomenological analysis does not relate to community acceptance and approval (Louchakova, 2005).

Phenomenological description does not deal with community values such as good, bad, right, wrong, and so on.

Although the phenomenological method is not new, phenomenological research procedures can change. According to Moustakas (1994), phenomenological research methods have four main stages: preparation, collecting data, organizing data, and analyzing data. Spiegelberg (cited in Natanson, 1989) stated that the phenomenological method is composed of seven steps: investigating particular phenomena, investigating general essences, apprehending essential relationship among essences, watching modes of appearance, watching the constitution of phenomena in consciousness, suspending belief in the existence of the phenomena, and interpreting the meaning of phenomena.

Phenomenological research is based on interest in a particular problem. Formulating the question seeks to reveal the meaning of human experience. It seeks to uncover the qualitative factor in behavior and experience. Personal history is the core of the problem. Phenomenological research is derived from first-person reports of life experiences. The phenomenological research method is a way of bringing out unique feature of an individual.

Phenomenological studies are interdisciplinary, and various disciplines have been addressed (Verhaor, 1989), such as psychology, sociology, and mathematics. According to Cho (2000, p. 56), "phenomenology applied to education or to the field of curriculum involves a different discovery of what is generally referred to as educational experience." The aim of this study is not to carry out phenomenological research, but to show how to apply the phenomenological approach in education as a teaching and learning method.

#### PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH IN EDUCATION

Education aims at the full development of the individual by means of teaching and learning. According to Kurenkova et al. (2000, p. 197), education has two functions: reproductive (social reproduction) and creative (formation of personality). The reproductive function of education is to adapt an individual to the current social system through the acquisition of its social rules and values. The reproductive function of education is realized by formal learning and informal learning systems to ensure the continuity of the social system. However, education also has a creative function, which is not taken into account in formal systems, which are based on reproduction. The creative function of education focuses on the individual and supports the formation of personality. It allows the full development of the individual through the development of original thoughts, senses, feeling, values, perceptions, and experiences. The phenomenological approach in education is very important for

self-individualization and self-development. Improving the creative function of education should also have a positive effect on its reproductive function.

The application of the phenomenological method in education has led to a phenomenological pedagogy. According to Kurenkova et al.,

Pedagogy has been based for a long time on classical philosophical theories, stressing the priority of intellect in understanding the essence of human being. So, the main stress was given to knowledge, and then abilities and skills. According to new phenomenological pedagogy, the basic factor for a rational explanation of a human universe may be seen in creative coordinates of a human being's life-world, in his self-individualization and universe of life itself (2000, pp. 203–204).

Phenomenological pedagogy in this sense supports teachers and students in learning and teaching by emphasizing their unique individualities. The current educational system does not support the unique futures and creative acts of students, who need a phenomenological approach to their feelings, thoughts, will, and other experiences.

In the educational context, phenomenological inquiry is “the direct investigation and description of phenomena as consciously experienced, without theories about their casual explanation and as free as possible from unexamined preconceptions and presuppositions” (Aoki, 2004, p. 90). In educational studies, direct experience is more important than the abstract experiences of others. Experience is organized continuously in the learning situation, which is an interaction between the learner and the environment. Authentic experiences and interpretive meanings arise depending on the individual's intuitions, intentionality, perception, and present reality.

What is phenomenological knowledge? According to phenomenology, all knowledge is derived from an individual's experiences. Phenomenological knowledge is composed of intuition, intentionality, and perceptions. Intuition is a preparation for intentionality and perceptions. Intentionality is the directed attention to an object. Intentionality can arise when an individual has a tendency to learn about an object. It is a tendency that focuses on the preparation stage and the ongoing process of learning. Intentionality in a phenomenological investigation is similar to the preparatory and ongoing processes of teaching and learning.

Each perception is a source of phenomenological knowledge. Perception begins with intuition. Perception occurs at an individual level and therefore cannot be explained just by observation by others. It can be described precisely by the person engaged in the process. For example, if a person is angry, this feeling can be reflected as mimes, as a reflective behavior, or as a result of this behavior. However, it cannot be stated that observations by others reflect the individual's mere explanation, because observations of by others

are second-hand perceptions. That is, this kind of information is made by the interpretations of others.

According to Groenou (2005, p. 521), “phenomenology has used the term of intentionality to indicate the human search for meaning.” A curriculum is an overall educational plan and indicates institutional intentions. Institutional intentions involve the publicly expressed philosophy, perspective, and aims of education. Every student is expected to fulfill social aims and standards. There is little chance for students to express their own perspective in the education system. Self-experiences are not important to institutional intentions. “The subject-matter of such as a discipline consists of experiences whose essential universality is to be analyzed in intuition and not to experience as events occurring in the natural world” (Kockelmans, 1967, p. 78).

Education deals with the occurrence of experiences according to institutional intentionality. The goal of the learning process is to reproduce the institutional intentionality in the student. For instance, students are given general aims and behavioral objectives ranging from the abstract to the concrete. However, these intentionalities are forced upon students by persons who are responsible for creating institutional intentionality such as curriculum developers, teachers, and textbook writers. Since these intentionalities are not designed with the students’ aims in mind, they are difficult for students to perceived and understood them. This situation creates difficulties for students who are looking for their own intuitions, intentionalities, wishes, and perceptions. To actualize institutional intentionality, students, teachers, parents, school administrations, authors, materials, and technologies work together. Students become successful in school actualizing institutional intentionalities.

Whereas formal education is concerned with institutional intentions, phenomenology is concerned with the intentionality of the self. The phenomenological approach is based on determining the intentional experiences of the self. During phenomenological investigations, an individual learn from his or her intuitions, observations, and direct perceptions. “The most crucial learning has come from lonely separation from the natural world, from immersions and self-dialogues and from transcendental places of imagination and reflection” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 41). If we think about our own learning situations, we see that we learn many things by our imaginations, self-dialogues, and reflections on things.

An individual is always busy with imagination and self-dialogue. Imagination supports creativity and the discovery of possible solutions. Self-dialogue supports choices and the development of values, beliefs, judgments, and conscience. Whereas in the current educational system, students

perceive, feel, understand, and learn by relying on structures given to them, the phenomenological approach does not rely on ready-made structures. An individual is expected first to do a clear reduction and then engage in description, during which evaluation and judging are avoided.

Aoki (2004) stressed that a situational interpretative research program has two significant features. The first is that an individual gives personal meanings to each situation experienced, and the second is that an individual interprets the same event in many different ways. These are the phenomenological descriptions that are the first-order interpretations of individual experiences. An individual continuously interprets events such that experiences and interpretations differ from person to person. This situation is connected with the concept of learning styles and strategies.

We need to ask why education does not rely on phenomenological learning. The answer is that education is concerned with empirical knowledge and facts. School is intended to teach to student other people's abstract experiences, thoughts, beliefs, values, feelings, opinions, observations, and so on. Students have to memorize and gain knowledge of other people's opinions, judgments, values, and experiences. However, they lose their own bases of opinion, thought, judgment, and values.

In contrast, when a phenomenological approach is applied to education, students' learning relies on their own perspectives. They focus on their own knowledge, freedom, thought, creativity, choices, and behaviors from their perspective. This improves their self-awareness and self-esteem. They can describe their own learning experience more clearly because they have their own thoughts and inner dialogues. Students learn from their experiences by applying phenomenological inquiry to their school studies.

#### IMPLEMENTATION OF PHENOMENOLOGICAL TEACHING AND LEARNING IN EDUCATION

Although there is some debate about how to apply the phenomenological learning approach in schools, there have also been some implementations in education. In this section I discuss the work of Moustakas (1994), Alerby (2000), Louchakova (2005), and Selvi and Öztürk's (2000) as examples of applying phenomenological teaching and learning in education.

Moustakas (1994) emphasizes and focuses on individual knowledge, freedom to explore and make choices, personal vision, discovery, and self-assessment. Learners are encouraged to enter into a process of authentic self-presence, thinking, and choosing a way of discovering the meaning of experience. Moustakas' methods include six main stages: growing quite and listening; coming to an inward clearing; connecting with the dominant

question, issue, person, event, or situation; describing the experience; considering possible meanings; and determining the qualities of the experience. At the end of this process, students arrive at an understanding of their experiences.

As an example of the phenomenological method, consider some questions that Moustakas asks students related to “power” (1994, p. 63): “What is the nature of power? Who holds the power? How is power communicated? What tactics are used to maintain power? Who makes the critical decisions? How are conflicts resolved?” These questions help the learner to explore his or her interpersonal life in a relationship or in the family based on his or her self-experience. Learners discover what power is and means, how it shows itself in consciousness, and how it affects relationships to self and others. They think about their experiences of power and they realize the personal meaning of the concept of power and its effects on their lives.

Alerby carried out research intended to uncover the thinking of children and interpret their thoughts about the environment (Alerby, 2000, p. 206). The theoretical roots of Alerby’s study are based on the phenomenology of the life world. The study had two main stages. The first included thoughts and drawings about the environment. In this stage, the teacher asked “What do you think about when you hear the word environment?” Students had to answer the question by making a drawing of what came to their minds. They visualized their thoughts by drawing a picture using paper, pencil, crayons, or watercolors. In the second stage of the study the students made oral comments on their thoughts related to their drawings. The analysis of this study included both the drawings and the subsequent oral comments.

Alerby showed that the dimensions of human awareness contain thoughts and these thoughts are shaped by experience. The students’ thoughts were based on their own reality and awareness. Learning and teaching in school should take their life world into account in developing and improving new thoughts and ideas.

In this study, Alerby pointed out that many interpretations may be related to the same concept, and conversely that interpretation of the same concept can lead to knowledge depending on an individual’s perspective.

Louchakova (2005) applied a training method that helps to build an aptitude for the phenomenological research method. It consists of three main stages: (1) learning the four modalities of awareness, (2) identifying the research paradigm, and (3) accessing knowledge by presence.

The first stage can be explained as a technique of teaching-learning. It is called the “four modalities of awareness” and includes the inner experiences of sensing, feeling, imagining, and thinking. In this stage, the students describe their inner experiences by using the four modalities “I sense,” “I feel,” “I think,” and “I imagine.” The teacher gives the following instructions:

“You are in the see what you are sensing, what you are feeling, what you are thinking and what you are imaging.” The students describe their own experience to the teacher.

At the end of first stage, the teacher expects students to ask themselves “What did I learn related to this experience?” This question refers to the intentions of learning according to the students’ view. Louchakova’s study shows that phenomenological research is a “transformative educational practice, contributing to both personal development and professional training of future psychologists” (2005, p. 108).

Another method is the creative drama method. Selvi and Öztürk (2000) applied this method in a fifth-grade science classroom. It has five stages: warming, playing, improvisation, formation, and evaluation. In the first stage, warming, the drama leader gives instructions similar to those in Louchakova’s (2005) training stage one. This stage consists of activities that help the students to grasp the theme of the lesson. The aim of the warming stage is to get the student acquainted with others and to accommodate them, to use all senses, and to trust in himself or herself and the others in the group. The playing stage is aimed at activating creative thinking, playing in harmony, and understanding the relationship between rules and freedom. The improvisation stage focuses on “things” and tries to reach predicted or unpredicted results. This stage is intended to develop an individual’s creativeness and make him or her share the resulting creative products or results with the group members. In the formation stage students are given the chance to be freer and more creative than in the improvisation stage. In this stage the results cannot be perceived in advance. Therefore, it helps to reach favorable results if the former stages are taken into consideration efficiently. In the evaluation stage all the activities are reviewed with the group and shared and discussed. The creative drama method and the phenomenological research method are similar in that they have the same stages and processes.

In the “warming” stage of the creative drama approach, leaders give an instruction to students like “Imagine! You are walking along the street in the evening. The street is very dark and empty. You believe you are the only person on it. You are carrying some money. Then you hear a voice and you think somebody is following you. The person is getting close to you. What do you sense? How do you feel? What do you think? What do you image? What do you do?” At the end of this stage, students create new knowledge by means of body-based focusing. Students report their sensing, thinking, imaging, and feeling related to their self-experience.

In phenomenological research also, instructions are given to students about their sensations, imaginations, emotions, and thoughts. Students focus on inner

experiences and perceptions related to the topic. As a result, they create new knowledge related to the given instructions. According to Moustakas (1994), phenomenological studies focus on topics, questions, or problems to guide the study. Phenomenological research is interested in phenomenological descriptions as a way to discover meaning (Aoki, 2004). Students give personal meanings to the same instructions and interpret the same events in different ways. In other words, interpretations of experiences differ from student to student.

According to Louchakova (2005), students reported that the process of phenomenological learning led to a decrease in performance anxiety and an enhancement of their learning.

Alerby's (2000) study is an example of how a phenomenological approach in education created conditions for genuine thoughts and ideas, which can aid in the development of the natural intelligence and creative capacity of the individual. This application improves democracy, freedom, and tolerance in the school and society. The phenomenological approach can support diversification and alternative thinking.

In Selvi and Öztürk's (2000) study, the creative drama method allowed students to describe their self-experience related to given topics and create new knowledge by means of imaginations, experiences, and body-based focusing.

Project studies in school can be combined with phenomenological learning. This requires applying phenomenological observations and research method. These studies should begin with original and creative ideas. Finding an unusual idea depends on individual experiences, phenomenological descriptions, individualistic perceptions, and imagination. However, most project studies in school are related to ready-made and abstract descriptions of the experiences of persons older than the students. Teachers prefer the usual ideas because they may have problems with the different thoughts and ideas of their students, whose unusual ideas may take some time to be understood and managed. Brainstorming in the classroom among students and teachers can allow students to find different ideas and solutions related to discussion topics. They should be free to adopt descriptions of their own perceptions, experiences, feelings, imaginations, and ideas

Learning activities should focus on students' knowledge, opinions, values, understanding, freedom, and perceptions. They should describe their experiences in the first person. How do their everyday experiences, perceptions, and imaginations fit into the education system? Phenomenological learning and teaching can help with the creative aspect of education, but it is not restricted to the creative function. The phenomenological method can be applied in education in the following ways:

- Speaking about one's experience
- Writing about one's experience
- Making drawings related to one's experience
- Interviewing others about their own experience
- Preparing a project proposal
- Preparing a research proposal
- Making observations
- Engaging in brainstorming
- Preparing project studies
- Applying creative drama techniques

All of these recommendations emphasize an individuals' first-person description of some specified domain of experience. Students should describe their experiences, and teacher should ask questions related to these descriptions. For example: What was it like? How did you feel when it happened? What did you feel just before eating lunch? What did you think at your first sight of the picture?

It is very important to choose a topic and design the learning-teaching process to best evoke descriptions of the self-experience. The descriptions of an experience emerge in a particular context related to a student's intuition, constitution, intention, and perception (Pollio et al., 1997). This description reflects the student's phenomenological perspective on his or her experiences related to learning context.

In the words of Moustakas (1994, p. 62), "I must arrive out my own sense of the nature and meaning of something, make my own decision regarding its truth and value before I consider the point of view of others." Phenomenological learning-teaching methods and techniques improve individual first-hand experiences in contrast to the abstract experiences of others.

#### CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has discussed the necessity of a phenomenological approach in education. In such an approach, learning is based on the individual's experiences, in accord with the phenomenological view that all knowledge is derived from experience, which finds meaning in situations by using our perceptions. In a formal learning system, students are not given a chance to share, develop, and realize their intentionalities and personalities. This has negative effects on their attention, motivation, perception, experience, and learning. They become alienated from their intuitions and intentionality related to learning.

It is difficult to acquire knowledge if it is based on the structured experiences of someone else. Students have many problems in handling other

individuals' ways of thinking, perceptions, imaginations, and so on. Therefore, they are likelier to have learning problems in the existing educational system, in which their capacities to imagine, think, invent, perceive, and sense things are blocked. This can cause damage to their self-actualization, capacity to create, and imagination.

Pre-school children are very creative and imaginative. Children are allowed to explore their world (Vandenberg, 2002) and are very creative because they have a phenomenological way of thinking. Scientists often have a child-like way of inventing or creating new things or ideas. The phenomenological way of thinking requires the investigation of meaning by focusing on the description of a thing. The lives of children and youth are characterized by not having adult ways of thinking imposed upon them (Vandenberg, 2002).

The notion that each individual has his or her characteristics and learns with his or her style reinforces the need for a phenomenological approach. Phenomenology has developed learner-centered and flexible learning systems that contain individual and self-structure learning situations. Self-experiences and autonomy are important to learning, although the learner's autonomy is ignored in current education, which is based on directions, aims and objectives, rules, and facts. Individuality, autonomy, and immediate experience of everyday life are downplayed. In contrast, phenomenological intuition and description focus on students' feelings, perceptions, and values, allowing for the observation of things and a description of their life-world.

The phenomenological approach in education creates the motivation and desire to learn about self, others, and things. The descriptions of spontaneous experiences create natural awareness and attention. Students become aware of the importance of creating knowledge based on their own experiences.

Educational studies should aim at the full development of the student. The phenomenological approach contributes to individual development by attending to intuitions and the intentionality of self-esteem and the authentic experiences of students. As Patmann asserted, "life is always more than what science can say at any given time" (cited in Aoki, 2004, p. 103).

With a phenomenological approach, students' knowledge and their levels of sensory perceptiveness, willingness to learn, feelings towards school subjects, and participation in lessons can all be analyzed. This can take place at any phase of the learning process.

The phenomenological approach in education includes educational experience, processes, and means of learning and teaching. The curriculum is connected to the teaching-learning process and experience within each situation by methods that bring out students' perceptions and descriptions of their experiences.

Educational science is concerned with how to learn about phenomena and their significance for human experience. Curriculum development specialists

should be interested in learning and experiences for effective curriculum development studies. According to the phenomenological approach, a curriculum is defined as a process in which students and teachers construct their experience in school studies. The curriculum should be planned so that it is flexible for students and teachers to construct and interpret their experience. Education should focus on individual knowledge, opinions, values, and understanding by means of the curriculum. To ensure freedom of learning, it is important to know students' thoughts, desires, beliefs, and preferences.

How can the students' self-knowledge be developed? The first condition is to emphasize that concepts such as true, false, good, bad, beautiful, ugly, successful, and unsuccessful are ....

The curriculum developer should be aware of the importance of different levels of students' perspectives, self-reflection, and interpretation in learning situations. Aoki (2004) pointed out the growing interest among educators in phenomenological approaches. To date, implementation of the phenomenological method in education has been very limited, although it is easy to create and be involved in research situations, project studies, and creative studies based on this approach.

Phenomenological descriptions involve personal and social groundings of situations. Intuition, intentionality, and perception of situations have personal and social perspectives. The phenomenological approach improves social understanding and tolerance in school. Phenomenological investigation encourages relationships and attention to others. It focuses on individual experience, autonomy of thinking and freedom, personal intuition, and a broader perspective on the world.

Application of the phenomenological approach in education will provide the opportunity for the self-actualization of students.

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POETRY AND KNOWLEDGE IN PLATO'S CRITIQUE  
OF SOPHISTIC EDUCATION

But it is the sea  
That takes and gives remembrance,  
And love no less keeps eyes attentively fixed,  
But what is lasting the poets provide.

F. Hölderlin, *Remembrance*

In his outline of the ideal state, Plato introduces his educational program, which could be thought of as the first source of the scientific theory of education. He offers this program to oppose another educational experiment as implemented by the sophists. However, what Plato does have in common with the sophists in this famous dispute is the understanding of *logos* as the faculty that makes human being what it is. This “pedagogic” dispute is therefore all about language, the power of speech. Traditionally, the power of speech appertained to poetry. But the power of poetic speech does not belong to human beings, it does not stem from the soundness of judgment, but rather from being overwhelmed. Poetic speech is musical language, coming from the Muses, and poets are but its mediators. (So that poets belong to the “word” rather than the other way round.) The rhetorical speech of the sophists no longer belongs to the poetic world of theogonies; on the contrary, it originates from specifically human speech as the ability of “giving reasons” (*logon didonai*). However, therein is the rub. *Doxa*, public opinion (as the main target of rhetorical persuasion), cannot be changed by merely providing reasons. It needs to be moved by affect, put off stride, and only then overturned. This is why sophistic rhetoric makes use of “poetic” techniques: By evoking pathos, it moves its audience, which is, according to Plato “rhetorical pathology” (*Phaedrus*, 272), calculated to cause mental confusion.

It is for this reason that Plato rejects rhetoric as an appropriate form of providing education through reasoning speech. According to him, the ability to provide reasons cannot be of useful service in the formation and transformation of public opinion; such service reduces it to the mere conformation

to majority opinion and renders it manipulative. Therefore the receiver of education should first and foremost gain insight into true reasons. Such knowledge, which makes it possible to take a stand against the whole world, is accessible only to philosophy. Philosophy is therefore *episteme* (true, right science), which sophistic rhetoric, always aiming at doxic understanding in its common aspect, has never been able to reach.

Philosophical language is not is not poetic (musical) language; philosophy can try its strength against it and replace it, that is, assume its role of educating man and his community. Still more: It can re-educate and transform him into a new man of a new community, in which there is no room for (old) poetry, since

we are ourselves authors of a tragedy... Thus you are poets, and we also are poets in the same style, rival artists and rival actors, and that the finest of all dramas, one, which indeed can be produced only by a code of true law (*Laws*, VII 817b).<sup>1</sup>

Plato is ready to banish poetry together with sophistics and the sophistic appropriation of poetry from “his state” until “sufficient reasons are provided for its return.” Even today, this disreputable decree<sup>2</sup> and his *State* still evoke a full measure of resentment both in poets and “advocates” of democracy and at the same time a certain amount of cynical approval from critical intellectuals. However, Plato’s antagonism is full of ambiguity: Such offended poets and cynics are, after all, what Plato has left to us, as Nietzsche would say. If we are to judge Plato’s decision we should, as Gadamer puts it, first of all understand the criterion for measuring and rejecting the class of poets: “To understand the meaning and justification of Plato’s criticism of poets is perhaps the most difficult, and for the self-conscious of German spirit by far the most difficult task set in confronting the spirit of Antiquity.”<sup>3</sup>

According to Plato, “as is well known,” the entire poetic art is imitation; the poet does not proceed from his knowledge, but from divine inspiration, just like clairvoyants and prophets. In this way, imitation acquires an odd position: Poetic language could well harbor the right answer to the question of concern, even though the poet knows nothing about it and quits the task before the question is actually raised.

In *Phaedrus* (229c), however, Socrates says that he should be foolish if he disbelieved what the poets say (supposedly, a maiden was seized by Boreas, god from the north) and would rather speak as the “man of wisdom” (sophists) do (that she was blown by a gust of wind down from the rocks). Of course, he “has no knowledge” of this and has no time for the business because he obeys the inscription at Delphi and finds it ridiculous to inquire into extraneous matters, given his inability to know himself in the first place. This famous

Socratic “know thyself” as knowing ignorance establishes a new presence of mind, so it seems, which we resort to even today for our benefit. We are leaving this benefit behind; we should first of all follow the course of Plato’s *Phaedrus* to move a bit closer to what (in this new presence of mind) takes man outside himself in enthusiasm (and gets subverted in irony).

Those whom Plato’s Socrates here (in *Phaedrus*), well, not really banishes, but rather cannot enter the dialogue with, are not poets, but those who are all too wise for the poets. Socrates rejects the “rustic sense” (*agroiko tini sophia*) (*Phaedrus* 229e) that “better is one, who does not love, than a lover,” on the ground that the latter is mad (*mainetai*), and the former is sound of mind (*sophronei*). “If it were true, that madness is an evil (*mania kakon*)”, he says, “that would be right, but in reality, the greatest blessings come by way of madness” (*ta megista ton agathon—dia manias*) that is, heaven-sent. “It was when they were mad that the prophetess at Delphi and the priestesses at Dodona achieved so much, for which both states and individuals are thankful; when sane, they did little or nothing” (Ibid.) The heaven-sent madness is better than man-made sanity. Socrates refers to this “conviction of the ancients” one summer afternoon by the banks of the Ilissus. He was just about to cross the river when he was hold back by voice of his *daimonon* (reminded of the divine nature of Eros, about whom they spoke).

So, rather mad than sane, God willing? With what “slackness of the soul” and what “deep openness of the world” (as Fink says<sup>4</sup>) does Plato address us here? And can we actually ponder it with “hopelessly sober dryness”?

There are two kinds of mania, the one resulting from human ailments (rhetorical pathology included), the other from a divine “disturbance” (*exallages*; *Phaedrus* 265a). This disturbance is *being out of one’s mind* in the sense of leaving behind, being lifted from common reasoning, habitude. It is divided in four types according to which of four gods is involved. The inspiration of the prophet is ascribed to Apollo, that of the mystic to Dionysus, that of the poet to the Muses, and the madness of the lover to Eros: This erotic mania is philo-sophy—love, obsession with wisdom.

What makes man beside himself and possesses him is a god. In this being overwhelmed, man is no longer beside himself, but rather overcome and filled with the divine (*entheos*). Enthusiasm as moving in the beyond is not only the rapture of clairvoyants and the ecstasy of Corybantes, but also the inspiration and enthusiasm of poets. Inspiration (*katokoche*) with the Muses dazes the soul in songs and poems:

But if any man comes to the gates of poetry without the madness (*mania*) of the Muses, persuaded that the skill (*techne*) alone will make him a good poet (*poietes*), then shall he and his work of sanity with him be brought to nought by the poetry of madness. (*Phaedrus* 245a)

Whoever takes poetry as an acquired skill (*techne*) without due openness of mind (and that is exactly what sophists do) remains outside the door and in the shadow, and all his works of art show no thing, bring nothing to the light of day. The light in which everything is revealed comes but from gods and from being possessed by them.

These subversions in Plato's making fun of poets bring us back to his early dialogue *Ion*, in which Socrates uses his questions to force a rhapsode to confess that his interpretation of Homer is neither skill nor knowledge (*techne kai episteme*; *Ion* 532a ff.). Ion's gift of being well spoken about Homer is not a skill, but rather some sort of divine power (*theia dynamis*), which moves just as magnet moves iron. A magnet not only attracts iron rings, but also imparts to them a similar power of attracting other rings. In like manner, the Muse first of all inspires the poet, and from this inspiration a chain of others is suspended who take inspiration. For, all good poets compose their beautiful poems not by art, but because they are inspired and possessed (*entheoi*). Good poets therefore do not write poems because they have the skills, because they "master the technique." The poet is a light and winged and holy thing, and there is no invention in him until he has been inspired and is out of his senses and the mind is no longer in him, composing beautiful poems not by art, but because they are inspired and possessed. When he has not attained to this state, he is powerless and is unable to utter his oracles. The poets are only the interpreters (*hermenes*) of the gods, rhapsodists are the interpreters of the poets, and thrilled (*ekplexes*) spectators are the last in the series. But it is the deity who, through all the series, draws the spirit of men wherever he desires.

Does this dialogue on enthusiasm become enthusiastic itself? Or perhaps ironic? What is the difference between enthusiasm and irony? It does seem, of course, that irony (as a Socratic trial that uses derision)—depriving poetry (and everything else, including the gods?) of their seriousness and reality—is diametrically opposed to enthusiasm.

Socrates' dialogue with *Ion* does not only reveal the ignorance of the rhapsodist; the poet, just like the rhapsodist, has no knowledge of what he is speaking when he has so many beautiful things to say about everything. This well-proportioned conduct is itself a gift of the goddesses, which bring together both gods and man in the world of ancient poetry. But divine inspiration cannot sink in ignorance. Or can it? Is this perhaps the primary implication of this irony? In other words: Is not this subversion (of omni- or over-presence into total absence) what the irony is all about?

The poet speaks not out of himself, but rather when he is beside himself. His speech reveals something surpassing him and by which he is possessed rather than that which is man-made. He is met by the divine revelation in

total absence, absent-mindedness. He is borrowed by the divine revelation. It is therefore not a question of whether such divine revelation conceals itself in human speech; the question is, rather, how can divine words reach this total ignorance? How are we to understand this "dissimulation," "subversion," and "disguise" (*eironeia*) of unconcealment into concealment, of knowledge into ignorance?

It lies in the essence of poetic enthusiasm that it mirrors all, without any knowledge of the whole (*Ion* 531c; cf. *Apology* 22b-c). The irony of poetic enthusiasm, which can talk about and answer everything without knowing what is being talked about, is actually not about derision or pretence. The pretense of poetic disclosure, which knows when knowing nothing, reaches its great turnabout in the pretense of Socrates' questioning, who knows but that he knows nothing<sup>5</sup> in knowing ignorance, which is questioning itself. Despite the seeming likeness of the poets' unquestionable speaking about everything and the sophist's enlightenment zealotry, this poetic knowing in ignorance opens up a different possibility of irony; namely that there is no ignorance without prior knowing.<sup>6</sup> The poet does not deceive like the sophist with his pretended omniscience; all he wants to do is mirror the world in its beauty, in its transition from nonexistence into existence (this is exactly the meaning of *poiesis*; *Symposium* 205b). The whole world in its unfolding is revealed to him in enthusiasm, that is, without knowing about it as a whole. He is possessed by and filled with the splendor as divine superiority in which everything is revealed. The question is, how does enthusiasm enter the realm of philosophy?

After describing the voyage of the soul, following the gods to the "place beyond the heavens" (*Phaedrus* 247c) of which no earthly poet ever did or ever will sing worthily, Plato in *Phaedrus* returns to the "fourth mania" (249d), to the erotic inspiration of philosophy. Like poetry, philosophy is a state of being seized by the beautiful, though of a different kind. The beauty in the soul is awakened by love. In being in love (as in every mania), the soul is possessed by a superior power that draws it away from its habitualities into the vicinity of the distant. This unceasing yearning as a sort of overbrimming missing, nostalgia amid the uncanny, filling the soul with erotic love, is a recollection of the nearness of the origin. When beholding the beauty of the world, man is reminded of true beauty and all he wants is to fly upward. He will divert his attention from the beauty of the bodies, souls, and knowledge toward the open sea of beauty, "initiated in the mysteries of Love and having viewed all these aspects of the beautiful in due succession, at last draws near the final revelation, ... bursting upon him that wondrous vision (*exaiphnes*

*katopsetai ti thaumaston ten physin kalon* (*Symposium* 210d-e). It is “the best of all forms of divine possessions (*enthousiaseon ariste*)” (*Phaedrus* 249d).

It is rather difficult to gain remembrance of what subsists in itself in eternal oneness and is dispersed among the things partaking of it. And when a soul sees anything alike, which reminds her of the true beauty, she is taken aback and is beside herself. This condition is called Eros. In erotic enthusiasm, the soul loses her composure because everything reminds her of that which possessed her. In this being out of her mind, shaken in remembrance, the soul recognizes in this world the reflection of that splendor, finding herself beside herself and no longer knowing what is going on. She resorts to the experience of the beautiful. The beautiful is namely that which “shines out the most” (*ekphanestaton*), what is most unconcealed and most conceivable; the presencing from out of self-withdrawal and self-concealment is that which shines. The experience of beauty is a becoming susceptible to understanding; it is a readiness to being possessed by the unconcealment itself in the reflection. The soul possessed by the flash of beauty is beside herself and outside the world, like a madman filled with things divine (*enthousiazon*).

These “troubles with memory” are the exact opposite of that familiar fear of oblivion that impels us to write everything down; for they demand “courage for oblivion,” which helps to create memory, the unforgettable within the oblivion. What should be forgotten here is dispersion in variability, which embraces us and fills us up, but never can be collected. Philosophical disturbance is, like the poetic one, primarily a certain kind of oblivion.<sup>7</sup> In poetic oblivion, the soul surrenders herself to the play of beautiful show and presentation (to “fantasy”), whereas in philosophic oblivion, this show shows itself, re-presents itself, leading to unity in which this very brilliance of the visible is collected and from which it springs again, spilling over and reflecting in all that comes out of darkness into the visible. Philosophical recollection is the oblivion of the visible world in careful consideration of that which brings about the world as visibility itself.

In philosophical enthusiasm, the divine voice is not lost in human language as in erroneous flickering; it is speech, the understanding *logos*, in which man encounters the divine. Understanding speech is the *midst* in which man dwells, but only after he transcends his humanness; the midst that retains and keeps the difference. Recollection, which like the possessedness of love, moves the soul away from that which is usually close to her, is not remembering of what has just been lost in oblivion, but rather ecstasy, ascension into the sky. It is this very ascension into the incomprehensible that opens up understanding. Beauty takes possession of the soul and takes away its words, but love derives from it understanding. In understanding, we are always different and changed,

all familiar things are powerless. It is but fascination that is able to open up new sceneries of understanding. The root of *logos* lies in the mythical power of Eros.

The midst in which human being dwells (as one determined by Eros) lies between (*metaxy*) ignorance (*amathia*) and knowledge (*sophia*), as prophesied by Diotima to Socrates (*Symposium* 202ff.). Without providing reasons (*logon didonai*), correct opinion (*ortha doxazein*) is not knowing (*epistasthai*)—without reasons (*alogen*) there is no knowledge—nor ignorance (*amathia*).<sup>8</sup> Eros is something in the middle, something between (*metaxy*; *Symposium* 202b). He is neither god nor mortal man, but a mediator; he supports relations, and transports and interprets human prayers and the offerings of man to the gods and the gods' responses and commands to people. In doing so, he opens up the midst of understanding between the full wisdom of the gods and impenetrable ignorance. This midst actually belongs to human beings, but opens up, as this midst, only through reaching beyond the “just-human” (the human in its daily preoccupations), transforming it by bringing together the *dynamis* of the demonic with both the mortal and the immortal.

Alcibiades thus speaks about “philosophical frenzy” (*philosophou manias*; *Symposium* 218b), which subverts all customs and beliefs among people. Alcibiades also says that it was the *logos* of philosophy that brought him into the situation of no longer knowing what he is talking about and doing. He was so overwhelmed by Socrates' speech that he was stricken and spellbound. *Logos* is that which is common to all people and at the same time forgotten by this very community. Only after oblivion has shifted through the erotic enthusiasm of philosophy into recollection and the habitual recollections sink into oblivion can the community reach that which gives understanding.<sup>9</sup> Recollection thus never “brings back” what was already known (that place beyond the heavens has so far never been celebrated in verse by any poet; *Phaedrus* 247c), nor is it simply “collection,” but is rather prior to it (as that which is prior to the “always already known”). Recollection is the pursuit into the place beyond the heavens, which is beyond people and gods and which opens up the midst, in which the mediator first has to settle. He is only capable of founding the staying because of his leaving into the beyond.

In *Ion*, poets are named *hermenes* (534e) of gods as witnesses of genuine immediacy through “divine possession” (*theia moira*), although they are kept in divine inspiration without any wisdom (*aneu nou*; *Meno* 99b). In *Symposium*, the mediator is Eros. He offers another way of unification—philosophy as erotic hermeneutics. In his discussions with Diotima, Socrates understands Eros as an in-between that first opens the midst in which man is placed (as the one concerned with truth between total ignorance and divine

wisdom; *Symposium* 202). Here, Eros first appears to be diminished into half-god, half-man, who is half-beautiful and half-ugly, but at the same time in this very ambivalence—demonic: ugly in lacking beauty; beautiful in being intoxicated by it—he is actually a human being in his demonic displacement, being out of his mind. Socrates. And it is here that the intoxicated Alcibiades comes in, recognizing Eros in him.

The one who is in the midst (moving beyond the present in his recollection) and understands the priority of that which is anticipated, thus opening up the midst of the human, is actually the philo-sopher (possessed by) Eros. In *Symposium*, Eros is represented as *philosophos* (*Symposium* 203d, 204e) precisely in his demonic medial position between ignorance and wisdom, who in the awareness of his ignorance finds a way out of pathlessness (with Socrates acting as the one initiated into erotic matters, casting a spell on others with the help of Eros). The lacking, the inconsolable thirst, the procreative urge for beauty leads to beauty, which

neither comes nor goes, which neither flowers nor fades, for such beauty is the same on every hand, the same then as now, here as there, this way as that way ... nor something that exists in something else, such as a living creature, or the earth, or the heavens—but subsisting of itself and by itself in an eternal oneness, while every lovely thing partakes of it. (*Symposium* 211a-b)

Beauty as such is this very prior disclosedness of the world: because it gives this shining light in which things appear themselves, and in doing so conceals the possibility in advance of being able to deem it as (something) beautiful.

Man is not mortal just at the very end, but is always in transition. In what way, then, is he mortal? He delivers himself to that which comes. Eros is not only the love of the beautiful, but also a longing for the conception and generation in the beautiful (*Symposium* 206e), for bringing its splendor into the light, which for a mortal being is something immortal and eternal—to be able to touch the eternal in his own time. Eros, this immortality of mortals, is the creation of memory, not only in the preservation of his species, but also of knowledge: “It leaves behind new life to fill the vacancy that is left in its species by obsolescence” (*Symposium* 208a).<sup>10</sup> Care (*melete*) actually creates the erotic stirredness between being out of one’s mind, the leaving (*exhodos*) of oblivion (*lethe*), and recollective anticipation: It inserts, sets up (*empoiousa*), this very midst. Being out of one’s mind recognizes that which is here, thinking of that which is beyond, and which in incessant coming remains as always anticipatory.

The midst in which human being moves is not a rootedness in one’s own, but rather the very thrownness in the recollection of the primordial anticipation (which is only gathered and only dwells in recollection). Philosophical speech

thus brings (wise) man into the situation of no longer knowing what he speaks. This ignorance not only takes possession of Alcibiades, who is intoxicated "as if bitten by a snake," it also takes hold of Socrates. The opening up of the midst of (mutual) understanding in philosophy is a certain kind of conversion, which binds what is usually unified only through resistance and only in being possessed. Thus Socrates is like Silenus from outside and full of temperance and sobriety from within (*Symposium* 216d). Even in his speeches are like Silenus—he is always repeating the same things with the same words from the outside while being divine from within. It is exactly in this repetition of the same, this monotony, that the understanding *logos* of philosophy stops circulating within the expressible and suddenly starts circulating around the inexpressible; it is drawn by the anticipatory disclosure of the present, which is always already withdrawn into absence. With this repetition he does not repeat what has already been heard, but rather tears away oblivion as if blowing up a spark from out of the ashes. "Suddenly from a close companionship, like a blaze kindled by a leaping spark, light is generated in the soul and at once becomes self-sustaining" (*Letters* VII, 341c-d).

The Eros of philosophy is recollection—the nearing of the distant, which only from distance brings closer and gives understanding. At the same time, this very drawing away brings one out of oneself. Without being possessed by the divine, speech falls into self-oblivion; it loses its nearness, no longer providing understanding. It ceases to mediate and draw into its midst. It stays in moving away; it is permanence, constancy, composure in never-ending moving away—pursuit of the origin as a recollection of that which is anticipatory and prior.

If *Symposium* is about Eros as the opening up of the medial place, which is a crucial determination of man's existence, *Phaedrus* is about enthusiasm into the beyond.<sup>11</sup> Possessed by Eros, the human being, the philosopher (the one who loves and lovingly "thinks about," "remembers" that which he loves) is so filled with god that he becomes only half-human, barely human and possessed by the divine. Erotic enthusiasm is a *mania* of a special kind. Eros attracts that which draws away, staying retained in this infinite drawing near and drawing away—the paradoxical nearness made possible by absence. Lingered by the beautiful is like waiting to be struck by unconcealment of the unforgettable, the "truth," within the concealment of oblivion. In being thus struck, human being sets aside all usual things and starts circulating around that which reveals itself in this manner. The circulation around the beautiful brings one close to the final goal (*Symposium* 211b).

The divine itself is indescribable in any *logos*, at the same time drawing near *into the midst* in the very *logos*. In the light of the divine, every speech

is ambiguous, which is the only way a dialogue (by letting things come in-between and sundering into the other) can become philosophical. Socrates' speech on Eros is itself twofold: as inclined and disinclined, arguing for and against. However, both speeches reveal frenzy in us as one and the same, though using different names for it—as “dialectical” separation and then unification, as both one and manifold, present and simultaneously absent. This dialectic is Eros himself, the demonic midst. And such is the human nature: possessed by the divine, enthusiasm draws near “great things,” which are subverted and kept hidden in human dialogue. It is none other than this subversion and overturning,<sup>12</sup> with one thing turning into another (opposite) thing, that opens up this midst as the intersection of lack and overabundance, of the infinite breaking into the finite, keeping it in tension. Thus, *Symposium* ends with Alcibiades' speech on sobriety and Socrates' about drunkenness, making the sleeping understand at the break of dawn how tragedy and comedy belong to the one and the same (*Symposium* 223d).

Is it now perhaps clearer what the word is about? What intervenes in philosophical being out of one's mind? Hardly, just. In *Ion*, poets are the messengers of gods, who step outside themselves in musical inspiration, excluding themselves from human community to be able to become the messengers between gods and men. In *Symposium*, the philosopher in erotic dialogue opens up the midst of understanding by reaching into the prior in recollection. Gods are what human beings, despite their astounding, and at times even horrifying, enterprise, cannot master; they can only be possessed by them. They revealed themselves to the Greeks as light, in which everything is shown and visible, and which can also suddenly reveal everything “in a different light,” giving understanding in man's stirred being out of his mind. Through this astonishment and being out of his mind, the human being can reach into the overpowering, not with the presumptuousness of his own powers, but in being possessed. In *Phaedrus*, gods are called companions and guides of the human soul. Possessed, the soul follows gods out: of itself, of its midst, its earthly abode, and ultimately out of the heavens themselves. From this most extreme openness, so it seems, springs the light of the sky itself and heavenly creatures, which reveals everything that belongs to the earth and its dark background. It opens up the world (as an open, widespread harmonious order of worldly things)—through veiling itself.

Philosophical love is absorbed within Zeus (*Phaedrus* 255d). Just as Zeus determines all other gods, philosophical love shows that which is in the clearest way. What in philosophical enthusiasm strikes man is the divine as such, the divinity of the divine—as lightning, tearing apart the darkness, unconcealment strikes through concealment. What is revealed in under-

standing, which opens up in this being out of one's mind, is not only the familiar in its unfamiliarity, but also the revealing nature of the light itself. The new scenery of understanding as the unconcealment of beings opens up when the prior openness as such comes in-between. *Logos*, which is otherwise common to all people, cannot penetrate oblivion (*lethe*) if the soul has failed to preserve the anticipatory readiness at the time of birth for being struck by the "truth" (*aletheia*) itself, drawing it to untiring drawing near.

Let us return once more to the "*topos*" (*Phaedrus* 246e ff.) that the soul follows (with superhuman efforts) along with gods themselves on their way to the feasting. The path to this "most extreme place" whence the gods feast and draw their vital strength is the ascension of the soul from its earthly abode and its finality into a certain (prior) openness and "immortality":

For the souls that are called immortal, so soon as they are at the summit, come forth and stand upon the back of the world, and straightway the revolving heaven carries them round, and they look upon the regions without (*exo tou ouranou*). (*Phaedrus* 247b-c)

In this most extreme exposure, the heavens open and revolve. *Uranos* is this very openness and exposedness of the world itself as the self-withdrawing giving of space and place to all there is.<sup>13</sup> Of that "place beyond heavens" (*hyperouranion topon*) none of our earthly poets has yet sung, nor shall, according to Plato, any of them sing worthily. If anything, we must "speak the truth" (*peri aletheias*)—without concealment—about this extreme exposedness. "The true being without color or shape, that cannot be touched" (*achrematos te kai aschematistos kai anaphes ousia ontos ousa*) can only be seen by reason itself with "true knowledge" (*aletheous episteme*, *ibid.*). This is the gods' nourishment (divine *dianoia* is nourished by reason and knowledge); or the other soul that best follows a god and becomes most like thereunto (*hepomene kai iekasmene*) raises her charioteer's head into the outer region and is carried round with the gods in the revolution (*Phaedrus* 248a). From here stems her eagerness to "behold the plain of Truth" (*to aletheias idein pedion*; *Phaedrus* 248b). The pasturage that is proper to its noblest part comes from that meadow.

This "hyper-heavenly," "over-heavenly" place is an "ultimate place," which turns into "beyond" through its own overturning, through concealment, oblivion, and exposedness into the circle of openness and circulation in this disclosedness. The exposedness into the unconcealed is thus transgression (of concealment, of the overall mixture in oblivion), which gives the soul its wings. However, in this drawing near the distant, it turns around so that all the things within the circle are given their appearance. What in philosophical mania takes possession of the soul is the prior splendor of "truth," which

opens up the circle of the visible, reflected in all there is, so that in this reflection it assumes its disguise.

The soul that has never seen the unconcealment (*idoua ten aletheian*; *Phaedrus* 249b) “will not pass into the human form (*schema*). For a man must have intelligence of universals (*eidōs*) and be able to proceed from the many particulars of sense (*xynaairoumenon*) to one conception of reason (*logismo*) (*Phaedrus* 249c). This is the “recollection” (*anamnesis*) of those things that our soul once saw while following (*symporeuomai*) God, when regardless of that which we now call being she raised her head up toward the true being (*ontos on*). And therefore the mind (*dianoia*) of the philosopher alone has wings; and this is just, for he is always, according to the measure of his abilities, clinging in recollection (*mneme*) to those “for ever”–“every time” (*ekeinois aei esti*) in which God abides, and in beholding which He is what He is (*pros hois per theos on theios estin*).

Philosophical thinking and consideration is remembrance, recollection as a loving setting up of the midst between the for ever-every time (*aei*) that unites gods and people in their inequality. Eternity recurs in the renewed recollection of man in his passing over and continual celebration of the gods. Gods are what they are due to eternity, in which the divinity of gods finds its nourishment. The place where the gods feast is in the extreme openness and beyond (every inwardness, closure, entrapment among things, self-withdrawal into “one’s midst”). Enthusiasm as being possessed by gods derails man from his sphere of finality into extreme exposedness. In this being out of one’s mind, the withdrawal into the concealed and forgotten gives way to eternity. Eternity strikes suddenly like lightning into darkness. This strike overturns the circle of the visible. “So soon as they are at the summit, come forth and stand upon the back of the world, and straightway the revolving heaven carries them round, and they look upon the regions without.”

Philosophy is the extreme condition of man, in which it becomes evident that man finds no place to rest in himself, but rather outside (and that without this resting place at the summit of the heavens there is no steadiness of man) in relation to the flash of eternity, that man is this relation in himself. He is the one who in the ambivalence of this *aei*, in the moment between always, for ever and every time, encounters the divine. The essence of enthusiasm is in drawing near god, becoming god-like (*homoiosis*), as far as it is possible for man: through the likeness. “When they behold here any image of that other world, are rapt in amazement; but they are ignorant of what this rapture means, because they do not clearly perceive.” And the one “who forgets earthly interests and is rapt in the divine (*enthousiazon*), the vulgar deem him mad, and rebuke him; they do not see that he is inspired.” (*Phaedrus* 249c-d,

250a). It is but this drawing near the immortal that gives man the measure of mortality. The sense of this overstepping ("flight from here to there," "exercise in dying," "breaking free from the shackles and the revolution of the soul"<sup>14</sup>) is mediation, which is why the "coming back," as most accentuated<sup>15</sup> in *Republic*, is of key importance.

It seems as if Plato's thought of going away almost supplants the thought of coming, despite the fact that recollection in its recurrence is related to the necessity of oblivion. Not only won't the coming back into withdrawal, into concealment and invisibility step to the foreground: there is nothing that can keep him from persevering in its invisibility. We venture the thought that this coming into self-withdrawal, in all its complexity, was given heed by Hölderlin, who in so doing provided the most distant reflection on Plato ever given, a poetic reflection from the very beginning. It first points to the fact that all previous understanding of Plato was wrong: "I do believe that we shall all say in the end: saint Plato, forgive us! They [originally: we] wronged you ever so much."<sup>16</sup>

With Hölderlin, there opens up another possibility—as fragile and narrow as it may be—of thinking about Plato. Yet on the other hand we cannot ignore the distrust and overcoming of Plato within the "post-metaphysical critique," which can be summed up in the question of whether Plato's recollection is not forgetfulness itself. This question first of all shows that our present evinces its "Platonic" character. The first characteristic of this seeming unacceptability of Plato's views for today's use and taste is the inability to tolerate this very present, as in the joke about the bad memory that "it's not good to be without soul at the time of death." The core of coming back is not to think Plato in terms of the "transcendence of ideas" back to "the Earth" ("Plato's ideas" are themselves the way of "thinking back"),<sup>17</sup> but rather how to reflect upon (one's own) forgetfulness, the known unknowability, the "turning away."

In the "Egyptian tale" at the end of *Phaedrus*, Socrates speaks about the oblivion of recollection itself, which starts with Theuth's invention of letters. He raises the question whether in the age of forgetfulness, in knowing many a thing and its taking notes, there remains in the end something that cannot be forgotten, something unforgettable that precedes the known, concealing itself in it, and then filling us (over and over again) with wonder and amazement—recollection as primordial "awareness,"<sup>18</sup> as that dance of the Muses by the spring. Just as memory alone could keep this unforgettable in poems, this unforgettable could only be experienced in recollection; outside recollection, there is but forgetfulness. In this respect, recollection is not remembrance of things past, "memory" of lost times, but rather experience, the manner of encountering what is absent, distant, locking thinking to that which comes

about from the origin and itself “establishing” the greatness of time. Such recollection precedes all vision, since it opens up the temporality of that “which is, will be or was before,” just like the prophet Kalchas in the *Iliad* (1,70). Such recollection therefore is not the reproduction of the past in the present, which supposedly belongs to us, even though everything escapes it; rather, the present is the greatest (self)oblivion, which can only, due to the anticipatory nature of recollection, give the impression of that which is known in advance and is self-evidently understood, or reaches renewed recollection.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> All quotations from Plato’s work are taken from *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969.

<sup>2</sup> Which in its disrepute proves anything but new; Heraclitus, for example, is no less tolerant in his incomprehension in stating “Homer deserves to be thrown out of the contests and flogged and Archilochus too” (Diogenes Laertius XXXX). Poets, on the other hand, did not spare the philosophers, especially in comedies, which for Plato proves the lastingness of the quarrel between philosophy and poetry and which has only been settled by him.

<sup>3</sup> H.-G. Gadamer, Plato and the Poets, in *Dialogue and Dialectic: Eight Hermeneutical Studies on Plato*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980, 39ff.

<sup>4</sup> E. Fink, Vom Wesen des Enthusiasmus, in *Zeit und Leben im Geiste des Ganzen*, Freiburg: Chamier, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> On this subject see Herman Gundert, Enthusiasmus und logos bei Platon, *Lexis* 2:25–46, 1949, 30ff.

<sup>6</sup> Besides the poetically gifted, it is also the man of *doxa* who is always ahead of himself by always knowing what he is looking for, who he carries within himself the latent knowledge of the unforgettable.

<sup>7</sup> According to Hesiod (*Theogony* 55), the Muses, daughters of Mnemosyne, memory, care, and consideration, who is herself daughter of Heaven and Earth, bring about “a forgetting of ills and a rest from sorrow” when they dance around the spring, bringing festivities and the celebration of the memory of Heaven’s communion with Earth. What the Muses give, what inspires the poet is, as in Homer, memory, the recollection of what “they alone have witnessed and know” (in the original sense of the Greek *eidenai*). Bruno Snell, Mnemosyne in der frühgriechischen Dichtung, *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 19:19, 1964.

<sup>8</sup> One indication of true understanding of “knowing in ignorance” can be found in *Meno* (85c-e): “So the man who does not know (*ouk eidoti*) has in himself true opinions (*aletheis doxai*) on a subject without having knowledge.—It would appear so.... This knowledge will not come from teaching but from questioning (*erotesantos*). He will recover it for himself.—Yes.—And the spontaneous recovery of knowledge that is in him is recollection (*anamimneskesthai*), isn’t it?” Furthermore, (97e–98a): “True opinions are a fine thing and do all sorts of good as long as they

stay in their place, but they will not stay long. They turn away from a man's mind; so they are not worth much until you tether them by working out of reason (*logismo*). That process, my dear Meno, is recollection (*anamnesis*), as we agreed earlier. Once they are tied down, they become knowledge and are stable. That is why knowledge is something more valuable than right opinion. What distinguishes them is the tether.”

<sup>9</sup> There is no philosophical speech—nor that of poetry—without enthusiasm, without divine abolition of the habitual ordered condition (*Phaedrus* 265a). However, sophistic speech also persuades by converting the common opinion. It is for this reason that rhetoric is also a special sort of mania, the mania of persuasion (*Phaedrus* 260a). But what this mania lacks is divine inspiration; its persuasiveness is a matter of dexterous skill, manipulation, although it might seem, as it actually does, that what associates it with philosophy is precisely well-considered human speech. However, the philosophical being out of one's mind now shows that this consideration, which is a general feature of human speech, stems from being struck with the divine, which can only tear out the hidden content of oblivion.

<sup>10</sup> M. Scheler (*Liebe und Erkenntnis*, Bern: Francke Verlag, 1955) is convinced in this respect that love in Plato only favors preservation rather than ascension and creation of species, that it is not understood prospectively, but rather retrospectively, as a longing for an older stadium (of inseparation) “just as repeated recollection is but reproduction of representations.” Scheler even thinks that “this clearly evinces his utterly romanticist doctrine on loving longing of the soul for renewed looking at the pre-existent world of ideas” (pp. 15–16).

As far as the first citation is concerned, Plato says quite the opposite in *Symposium*: “For what is implied in the word ‘recollection’ (*melete*) but the departure of knowledge (*episteme*), which is ever being forgotten, and is renewed and preserved by recollection, and appears to be the same although in reality new” (*Symposium* 208). This is how all things mortal are preserved—they only appear to be the same. As for the second citation, I simply couldn't resist it.

<sup>11</sup> Hartmut Buchner (*Eros und Sein. Erörterungen zu Platons Symposium*, Bonn, 1965, pp. 8 ff) raises the question whether Eros is the prior of (Plato's) philosophy (in the myth of Eros' birth he is presented as *philosophos*; *Symposium* 203d, 204b) or whether he is perhaps determined by this philosophy and its ideas; in *Symposium*, the dialectic is the basic trait of Eros, whereas in *Phaedrus*, Eros is himself dialectically unfolded, on the one hand understood as *metaxy*, *syndesmos*, *dialektikos* among mortals and immortals, and on the other as the mortals' means of achieving immortality. But then again, Eros is still understood as the way out of pathlessness (between Poros and Penia-Aporia), as being in pursuit of gods into the place beyond the heavens, with man, as Plato sees him, being determined with Eros in his very essence as well as by this essential place *metaxy*, which is governed by Eros.

<sup>12</sup> There is perhaps an “old tale” on the “crossing” of ironic distance and enthusiasm that says that one day Apollo and Marsyas competed in playing their instruments. Apollo won, but only after having suggested to the Muses in his divine pretense that he play the instrument overturned. He could overturn his lyre, whereas Marsyas could not play his flute in this manner, which is why the winner “overturned” his skin, and made an instrument from it so that the loser could feel this overturning on his very skin. In another story (about Apollo and Daphne), Apollo, who always

arrives with and in an air of distance, cannot enforce (erotic) nearness. Whomever he draws near is ultimately drawn away; the moment the god touches them, they turn (into something else).

<sup>13</sup> See K. Held, Welt, Leere, Natur, in *Philosophie der Struktur—“Fahrzeug” der Zukunft?* Freiburg, 1995, pp. 109–132.

<sup>14</sup> *Phaedo*, 64a ff., *Theaetetus* 176a-b, *Republic* 500c-d, 613a-b.

<sup>15</sup> Particularly in Heidegger's interpretation of the Metaphor of the Cave (Plato's Doctrine on Truth, *Phainomena*, 2, 1991). In *Republic*, Plato speaks of this coming back in two ways: in the aforementioned metaphor and in the myth of Er at the end of the dialogue.

<sup>16</sup> From the draft of the foreword to *Hyperion* (II, 546). Hans-Dieter Jünger (*Mnemosyne und die Musen: vom Sein des Erinnerns bei Hölderlin*, Würzburg, 1993) argues in this respect that, for Plato, musical poesis is not imitating “mimesis” but rather “mnemesis,” saying that his philosophy, without which, arguably, Hölderlin's thinking cannot be understood, is much closer to the Muses of Mnemosyne—that it is primordially “musical” and directly “mnemisyonic,” that is, anamnestic. See p. 11.)

<sup>17</sup> Beda Allemann interprets a line from Hölderlin's *Notes on Antigone* that Zeus “turns the aspiration from this world into the other and from the other into this one” as follows: “For us, for we are under the most authentic Zeus, who ... for man *more resolutely forces back to the earth* the eternally hostile natural course.” Hölderlin und Heidegger, Zürich/Freiburg 1954 (5, 269, 24) It is we as Hesperics, and not the Greeks, who need this, Zeus' most authentic intervention.

<sup>18</sup> B. Snell (op. cit.) interprets recollection in ancient Greek poetry as primordial “awareness,” “conscience,” “consciousness,” in which, for instance “forgetting about the struggle” would mean something like “being a weakling, coward” rather than “not knowing history.”

CIVILIZATIONAL CONTEXTS OF THE  
CONTEMPORARY EDUCATIONAL CRISIS

*Anthropological, philosophical, and axiological approaches*

The educational crisis is an acknowledged fact, yet it has not been sufficiently discussed and explained. First, there is no unambiguous understanding of the core of this crisis and its cultural conditions or of its consequences for civilization and humankind in general.

Those who do not perceive this educational crisis in its full dimensions and with all of its negative consequences some authors in Poland use terms with weakened and more equivocal meanings to denote this situation, such as “crossroads,” “threat,” “malfunction,” “failure,” “collapse,” “deviation,” “pathology,” and so on.

Even if one took a comprehensive understanding of the term “crisis” as a loss of internal balance, a disappearance of the principle and force that integrates a structure as a whole, a radical decrease in the efficiency of this structure’s functioning, and the accompanying feelings of chaos, insecurity, anxiety, and concern<sup>1</sup> with experiences, regard to contemporary educational reality, it would not encompass the entirety of the situation.

Phenomenalistic descriptions and characterizations of this phenomenon abound, including descriptive representations of its typical symptoms and consequences, structures and conditions, and mechanisms and possible directions of transformation. Yet there is a lack of analytical investigation into the fundamental sources of this phenomenon that treat it in a truly scientific and philosophical manner.

According to B. Suchodołski, a contemporary educator and philosopher, “we live in the period of the twilight of education, or even its liquidation,” and “we are not a society without schools [as I. Illich promised some time ago] but we are a society without schools providing education, and possibly a society without true education at all.”<sup>2</sup> I will address the nature of this crisis, its most serious consequences, and possibilities of solving it.

First this is not an autonomous and independent crisis, nor one of the educational function of the schools, which in most cases do as much as possible in this respect. It is, however, an element of a wider process, related to

and dependent on a number of other trends. It is one of the most characteristic and most important manifestations of a general crisis of modern civilization, in particular Western civilization. Along with social, cultural, moral, and axiological crises, it reflects the main deficiencies of this type of civilization in its current globalizational stage of development. Therefore, it cannot be detached from the context of the “post-modern world,” nor can it be explained apart from it.

It is an integral part of a specific type of civilization and its main sources and conditions are to be found in the basic contexts and factors of this civilization, including the changes it faces. This also means that this crisis has a significant impact on the functioning of this civilization and its cultural and moral shape, and in particular on its future and developmental perspectives.

The characteristic feature of this crisis is that the scale of factors generating it is constantly extending and escalating, and thus its scope is being continually increased and its negative manifestations intensified. It has long since gone beyond the walls of schools and universities and beyond traditional institutions and educational centers, including the family and the church. It has spread into the entire society.

This crisis comprises the intentional, teleological, and axiological aspects of education, that is, its objectives and values, as well as its technological and instrumental aspects, that is, its methods and means. It also reaches to the sphere of pedagogic theories and the subjective factor in the educational process, that is, “teachers” in the widest meaning of this term. Therefore, this crisis is not only general, but also *total*, and due to this it is very difficult, if at all possible, in the context of the current condition of Western civilization, to solve it, or at least to reduce it.

Another characteristic feature of the crisis is the fact that education is being removed from the arena that is most natural and efficient for it, the school and the family, and being taken over by of extraschool and extrafamily institutions and communities, which in principle offer little hope at best. The hope for “educating society” is becoming increasingly futile. The most influential agencies of this society, such as the mass media, state and local government institutions, business structures, and political organizations, are becoming anti-educational factors. In more positive terms, they are simply pseudo-educational or educationally helpless.

Generally speaking, these deficiencies are increasingly affecting children and youth because of these institutions and the entire society.<sup>3</sup>

The following question arises: What does the educational crisis comprise in contemporary times?

I assume the following premises:

- During the educational period the teacher directly and palpably contributes to the revelation of values to the pupil, who, in an independent and conscious manner joins that individual system of values, creating his own personal identity in this manner.<sup>4</sup>
- The educational process (despite historical, social, and civilizational relativization of teleological intentionality and educational practice) in principle relies on (disregarding its historical, social, and civilizational context) providing pupils with a canon of basic and universal values and shaping their personality accordingly; providing a basis for qualities shaping a human being, such as altruism, tolerance, responsibility, freedom, justice, righteousness, honesty, truthfulness, dignity, charity, honor, respect for fellow human beings, conscientiousness, diligence, kindness, ability to coexist and cooperate with others, and so on.
- Education always refers to (according to Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka) a comprehensive formation of the pupils' personality, their preparation for social and individual life, and their preparation for active participation in culture and taking part in its creation.
- Education relies on the development of the pupils' spirituality and moral culture,<sup>5</sup> or, as Maúrice Debés claims, "raising him [the pupil] to a human status,"<sup>6</sup> or, as the priest Janusz Tarnowski postulates, education relies on finding and realizing "the deepest I"<sup>7</sup> of the pupil.

Thus, it has to be acknowledged that the contemporary crisis of education refers not only to its structural aspect, its teleological and axiological contents, and not so much to its technology, that is, the manner and the skills for its implementation, but that it concerns the possibilities of effective educational activity and the essence of modern education. Against all appearances, the question is not how to educate, but whether it is still possible to educate effectively.

As far as the main conditions of the contemporary educational crisis are concerned, two different types can be distinguished, which are incorrectly confused with each other in the literature: (1) historical and social, and (2) civilizational, cultural, and axiological.

The first group comprises those negative processes and phenomena that have cast a shadow on modern history: world and local wars, totalitarian ideologies and genocide, racism and nationalism, religious fanaticism and xenophobia, poverty, violence and aggression, hatred and intolerance, crime and drug abuse, and social pathologies. These negative factors include the effects of economic, social, and cultural globalization, such as the division into a deteriorating South and a rich North, the transfer of riches from poor countries to wealthy

countries, the reduction of economic and political sovereignty of nations, the increase in unemployment and poverty, the weakening of the social state and the feeling of existential safety, the diminishing of cultural and individual identity, spiritual autonomy, and culture, and so on.<sup>8</sup>

These global phenomena and social and economic processes have influenced education in various ways. Generally speaking, they limit education and deform it. However, it is necessary to emphasize that these phenomena have not had a deciding impact on the genesis, character, and vitality of the modern educational crisis. The original and deciding impact has been exerted by other factors, of an axiological and cognitive (moral) character. These factors determine the core and dynamics of this crisis.

Two factors are included in this group, “axiological transfer” and the “entropy of social reality.” The first factor denotes the radical axiological reorientation of Western man and the fundamental change in his lifestyle toward material and utilitarian values, with scarce respect for spiritual and autotelic values. This orientation is toward the principle “*to have*” rather than “*to be*,” focusing more on consumerism and commerce than on the spiritual, connected with experiences and reflections. This results not only in downplaying and draining individual life and impoverishing spirituality, but often also in causing psychical and health deformations, as well as numerous negative social and cultural phenomena in the form of various social, legal, moral, and educational problems.<sup>9</sup>

This axiological reorientation of the majority of individuals and entire societies within modern Western civilization constitutes the prime cause of the modern educational crisis. This crisis is, in reality, an axiological crisis, a *crisis of values*; it is a consequence of allowing the desire “to have” to overrule the desire “to be” in the deeper layer of consciousness, needs, and motivations.

The hypothesis that this essentially negative impact of the dominance of material values over spiritual ones has led to the so-called educational crisis requires detailed analyses, is beyond the scope of this chapter. It is not possible to omit at least a brief reflection on what can be done for the sake of education. Some, following Abraham Maslow, might claim that there is hope because after satisfying material needs, the urge to satisfy “higher” needs will appear—the urge to satisfy “*meta-needs*” or spiritual needs. Richard Moore claims that the more, and more quickly, people gather material goods, the quicker and more willingly they will reach for spiritual goods. In other words, “material well-being” (economic well-being) will, sooner or later, be followed by “spiritual well-being,”<sup>10</sup> and this will open better perspectives for education. Others, who hold that there are no limits to human possessiveness,<sup>11</sup>

are not so optimistic. They might believe in the possibility of attaining some sort of axiological compromise in specific conditions, a balance in human choices between material and spiritual values, a sort of internal “alliance” between them, and simultaneously hope for increased educational possibilities.

Another important cause of the educational crisis in modern times is the so-called “entropy” of social and civilizational reality, that is, the increasing complexity of this reality and the fact that it has become less clear and understandable for people. Education becomes more and more difficult; it becomes more complicated, and finds itself in a state in which its teleological and axiological structures are confused.

This increasingly complicated reality relativizes the world of values, alienates itself, becomes unclear and impossible to understand, and less communicative and accommodating toward man; it arouses anxieties and frustrations. Under these conditions, it is more and more difficult to formulate and introduce the appropriate educational objectives and practices.<sup>12</sup>

It is also difficult to determine objective criteria for values and effectively motivate the correct and desired selection of values. As a result, it is difficult to program and pursue educational activity. Cognitive interpretation of this complicated and confounding world needs to be significantly improved and made more effective so that it goes beyond the ever-tightening circle of possibilities; this is very difficult in a situation of standstill, or at least a situation in which it is impossible to keep pace with the accelerated rate of transformation in the social, humanistic, and psychological sciences and educational philosophy.<sup>13</sup>

Analyses of the existing situation that propose solutions in the form of various projects of educational reform very often face challenging problems. Some examples are presented below:

1. One of the most important ways to improve education would be to share among the entire society, reaching far beyond the school system. However, this would be very difficult or almost impossible because these social structures lack the educational capacities or are rapidly losing them. This “educating society,” in which much hope has been placed, in fact does not exist today.
2. Fixing education requires a radical increase in knowledge of the external world as well as breakthroughs in the development of social, humanistic, and pedagogical sciences. Yet the fact that the world is becoming more and more complicated and the accelerated rate of change mean that this type of knowledge cannot keep up with these processes. In consequence, various searches for new intellectual paradigms in educational theory have not

brought significant results. Nothing indicates that this unfortunate situation will change in the nearest future.

3. Certain hopes for the improvement of the situation with respect to education have been connected with some democratically decided upon initiatives in educational activity to make it more international, uniform, and universal. However, the international institutions that have been operating within this field for decades, with UNESCO in the lead, have obtained only moderate success. Current globalization processes have a number of negative effects on education, such as a lowering of the level of education in many countries, disregard of the principle of equal access to education, destruction of cultural and personal identities, and stimulation of ideological and religious conflicts. All of these constitute impediments to methods and actions aimed at raising the standards and effects of education on a more international and universal scale.

These reflections lead to a certain scepticism: The educational crisis understood as the impossibility of sufficiently effective educational activity is constantly growing, whereas in the context of contemporary civilization and the social and cultural reality shaped by it, there are no serious and hopeful means of solving it or at least reducing its rate. Nevertheless, one must hope because there is no good alternative. Andre Malraux claimed that the twenty-first century will be the age of religion or it will not exist at all. Adam Chmielewski a modern Polish philosopher, claimed that “the twenty-first century will be the age of moral diversity or it will not exist at all.”<sup>14</sup> It is possible to venture a statement that the twenty-first century will be the age of *revived education* or it will not exist at all.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Cf. R. Ricour, *Kryzys—zjawisko swoiście nowoczesne*, in *O kryzysie*, preparation and Foreword, K. Mikulski (Warszawa, 1990).

<sup>2</sup> B. Suchodołski, *Wychowanie mimo wszystko* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, 1980), p. 306.

<sup>3</sup> W. Hock, *Social Destruction in Our World* (New York, 1995); H. Weil, *The Social Problems of Our World* (New York, 1995); Irena Wojnar (ed.), *Edukacja wobec wyzwań XXI wieku* (Warszawa, 1996); A. M. de Tchorzewski (ed.), *Współczesne konteksty wychowania. W kregu pytań i dyskusji* (Bydgoszcz, 2002).

<sup>4</sup> A. Tehorzewski, *Z problematyki metodologicznej teorii wychowania* (Bydgoszcz, 1994), p. 20.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. J. Szmyd, *Modern Civilisation in the Paradigm of Educational Thought*, in *Phenomenological Inquiry*, Vol. 29, October 2005, 15–28.

<sup>6</sup> M. Debés, *Etapy wychowania* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo "Zak", 1996), p. 120.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. B. Sliwerski, *Współczesne teorie i nurty wychowania* (Kraków, 1998).

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Z. Bauman, *Globalizacja. I co z tego wynika* (trans. E. Klekot) (Warszawa: PIW, 2000); W. J. Cynarski, *Globalizacja a spotkanie kultur* (Rzeszów: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, 2003); W. Sztumski, *My zagubieni w świecie* (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2004); J. E. Stoglitz, *Globalizacja* (trans. A. Simbirowicz) (Warszawa: PWN, 2005); J. Szmyd, *Tatsamość a globalizacja* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Krakowskiej Szkoły Wyższej im. A. F. Modrzewskiego, 2006).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. C. Grunde, M. Meyer, *Die Hauptprobleme der hentibgen Mensch* (Mainz, 1994).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. A. Masow, *Motywacja i asobowość* (Warszawa, 1986); R. Moore, *Values and Economy* (Princeton, NJ, 1996).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. J. Bańka, *Etyka prostomyslnosci* (Katowice, 1985).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. A. Tymieniecka, *Ontopoiesis of Life as the Measure for the Renewal of Education*, in *Paideia Philosophy (Phenomenology of Life Inspiring Education for Our Time)*, Anna Tymieniecka (ed.) (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2000), 9–22.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Educational reports of E. Faure, *Uczyć się, aby żyć*, trans. Z. Zakrzewska (Warszawa, 1975); J. Piaget, *Dokąd zmierza edukacja*, trans. A. Domanska (Warszawa, 1977); J. Deloros, *Edukacja. Jest w niej ukryty skarb* (Warszawa, 2001); B. Suchodolski, *Edukacja permanentna Rozdroża i nadzieje*, (Warszawa, 2003); A. Horbowski, *Kultura w edukacji* (Rzeszów: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, 2004).

<sup>14</sup> A. Chmielewski, *Dwie koncepcje jedności. Interwencje filozoficzno-polityczne*, (Bydgoszcz-Warszawa, 2006) p. 51.

## SECTION II

BEYOND KNOWLEDGE

*Questioning the episteme through art's alterity*

Nothing can and will perfect education without perfection in self-realisation.

*Sri Chinmoy Kumar Ghose*<sup>1</sup>

In Western civilisation, at least since the time of Plato, the pursuit of knowledge has tended to focus upon the outer world—the world of objectivity. Within and through the gradual development of this type of knowledge have come all of the advances of science and technology that we are accustomed to today. But in its Greek origins, what we in retrospect call “natural science” was bound up with a relationship between the outer world and an inner being, variously called the ‘mind’ or the ‘soul.’ In turn, this inner being had need of another kind of knowledge, that which could bring it into not only the most satisfactory co-relation with the particular circumstances of its personal and social reality, but also a universality consisting of what it perceived to be more general conditions of existence. Just as they sought to apply knowledge of these general principles in the outer world through natural science, so the Greeks sought also to apply them in the inner world of the ‘mind’ or ‘soul’ in a way that we have come to define as moral or ethical. Thus for the ancient Greeks the universality expressed as *logos* was almost synonymous with a logic that governed not only the certainties of mathematics and geometry, but also the ideals of truth and virtue within personal and social behaviour; thus, the same principles applied in the outer world as in the inner. The purpose in pursuing knowledge, both in the outer and in the inner world, was to realise the ‘good’ in both, that is, to seek ways of effecting an improvement in humanity’s situation in relation not only to the material or physical world in terms of survival, politics, health, and comfort, but also to the inner world in terms of peace and happiness. For the ancient Greeks these two aspects of existence, it may be simply argued, were inextricably bound to one another, and fulfilment could not be found without both being equally addressed. In Greek philosophy this idea had its apotheosis in the work of Plato, in which there is a constant search for the fusion of the outer and the inner and the

concord of man's knowledge of the true nature of the material world with the "city which is within him."<sup>2</sup>

Experience teaches us that of the two, the inner aspect seems by far to be the more difficult to resolve, perhaps because it is, and has always been, more often neglected. It may well be as a result of this lack of understanding of the inner world that peace and happiness are still a far cry from manifestation in the world we see around us. Now, that everyday world of ours, at least in Western civilisation, has increasingly in the last few centuries put its faith in education as the way to improve its condition and ensure its future. If we bear in mind the proposition, implicit to the original Greek pattern, that the inner and the outer are co-operative and interdependent, then it follows logically that education ought therefore to bear a responsibility of not only inculcating instruction on how to make progress in a 'world' perceived as a material construct, but also of fostering an acute awareness of the importance of the inner world and the dangers of neglecting it.

Ironically, when we remember that it is the philosophy of the ancient Greeks that underpins not only our Western epistemological, political, and moral traditions, but also our scientific and technological outlook, this neglect of the inner world has arguably been exacerbated by the growing attention given to the outer. The more science and technology can provide us with answers to the problems of material existence, the more we are likely to seek in them a panacea for all ills. Our everyday focus of attention is invariably upon the outer world, to the extent that we do not even think about it as being 'the outer world'—it is simply the world, life, existence. Our life, our problems, and our joys and sorrows are all bound up with this outer—and fundamentally objective—world. Even that which we identify as our 'subjective' self—the 'real' person engaged with the world—is a 'personality' that is more often than not formed by a perception of ourselves or of how others perceive us. Thus the outer personality, which we mistake for the whole 'self,' is the focus of our own and others' attention rather than the inner experience of a deeper—and perhaps truer—self.<sup>3</sup>

Well, we might say, is this not where psychology and psychoanalysis come into their own, as instruments of science whereby the 'inner' can be known, rationalised, and thereby brought under control—control exerted by the conscious mind, whether that of ourselves or of the specialist qualified to interpret our psychological condition—and any difficulties it may have in aligning itself to the outer world can be comprehended and overcome? The answer is yes, but a qualified 'yes.' Again, we could say, is this not also why we still have religion? Much as it may be said to be out of tune and out of touch with modernity, is it not the role of religion—for those who can

still believe in it—to take care of these ‘inner’ needs and to modify one’s behaviour in the outer world accordingly? Again, the answer must be yes: but yet again, it is a qualified ‘yes.’

The scope of this chapter is too limited to furnish even a partial discussion of the subjective/objective inferences of either psychology or religion that could possibly hope to do justice to them. But the point may perhaps be made quite simply: Both psychology and religion often surrender the very nub of their concern—the subject—to what in fact turns out to be an objective treatment. The subject is not permitted to deal with itself, on the strength of its own experience, its own intuitive powers, or indeed its own reason. While this is indeed a problem, and surely logic shows it to be so, it is also true that certain types of psychology (I am thinking of the Jungian) and the esoteric branches of the major world religions (Sufism in Islam, mysticism in Christianity, Zen in Buddhism, and the Yogic tradition and Upanishadic lore in Hinduism) place the true subjectivity of the subject at the centre of any real knowledge—not only self-knowledge of the inner being, but also, and this is important—a consequentially truer knowledge of the objective and material world. According to these traditions, in order to know and understand the world, one has first of all to know and understand one’s self.

From a rational point of view, the mystery here is “how can it be possible for the subject to know and understand one’s self if one is both the knower and the intended known?” The logical problem is that this suggests a priori a subject/object approach, and moreover one in which the self is both subject and object. Although this is seemingly a logical impossibility—simple logic dictating that, for example, a proposition cannot be both true and false at the same time, or two entities occupy the same space—nevertheless being both the knower and the known is a real phenomenon actually experienced by everyone, and can be understood as such by a moment’s simple reflective contemplation. Once this is admitted and we attempt to apply logic to the phenomenon, we can see that we must be capable of assuming the character of something like a ‘third person’ that is able to observe and assimilate the other two aspects of self as subject and self as object. This third person, or principle, however, cannot logically be governed by the same system that governs the other two—otherwise the pattern of subject and object is repeated infinitely, finding resolution in either an illusion of closure or a confrontation with the abyssal.<sup>4</sup> Thus the phantasmal ‘third person’ would have to be in a position of complete detachment and auto-control to be able to contain both subject and object without ever being wholly either, while observing and understanding them both fully and implicitly at the same time, and furthermore be able to instigate action on their behalf in the light of that understanding. The third

person would thus be either a sheer impossibility, and therefore its existence—and logical necessity—denied, or it would bear a relation to our knowledge of reality that can perhaps best be described as absolutely ‘other’ to what can be known objectively, or in terms of subject/object. In other words, it—or the concept of it—would bear with it the condition that it always remain beyond any objective description, and any attempt to reify it in terms of objective knowledge, whether scientific or theological, must remain incomplete. Since this aspect of our consciousness is, as we have seen, neither subject nor object nor even both at once, it must occupy a ‘space’ of unnameable dimension that, as much as it is absolutely ‘other’ to all concepts regulated by thought and by language dictated within a subject/object system, we might call ‘Alterity.’<sup>5</sup>

As soon as we broach the subject of this ‘Alterity,’ it becomes clear that we can know absolutely nothing about it as an objectified entity. We must be conscious of the fact that we are treating thematically something that can only exist for the moment as a theme. Therefore we require an attitude to ‘knowing’ that is willing to surrender its ability to ‘know’ in the particular sense we have become used to in our Western traditions of epistemology. That is, where knowing is a kind of appropriation that enables one to have some sort of control over the object that is known: For there is a sense in which to know something is to subject it to the power of the self as the one who is in control—or desires to be in control—of the world at large: “Only in possession does the I complete the identification of the diverse. To possess is, to be sure, to maintain the reality of this other one possessed, but to do so while suspending its independence.”<sup>6</sup>

Or where there is a ‘ground’ for the existence of a known object within any kind of ‘reality’ that is deduced by reference to the material world—a world that actually depends for its conceptual existence as ‘the material world’ upon that same subject/object approach: a world that we have—by way of our logical apprehension of the possible existence of a third principle beyond both subject and object—rendered at least questionable in its assumed reality as objective fact regulated by and in turn regulating thought: thought which in its turn governs what we permit ourselves to perceive as objectively real. Those very thought processes are now revealed, paradoxically, as belonging to a materiality that we have managed to put into question. We are therefore, theoretically, in a state of suspension from the very world that we ourselves have created as materially ‘real,’ and we are therefore no longer subject to its (our own) constraints upon logic.

Instead another world beckons. This world is the world of creative imagination in tandem with the possibilities of logic now released from materiality through the transcendence of the material ‘fact.’ This logic reveals to us

possibilities of existence always tacitly inherent in the everyday, but concealed by our preconception of self and world in the subject/object relationship. It is founded upon the existence of the ‘third principle’ as described earlier, which opens a space of infinite possibility in tune with a similarly emancipated reason. Just as the knowledge that this space offers us is familiar to us as knowledge of the world that we know and have always known, yet fulfilled and transcended, so also the knower within this space is none other than the self we have always known, yet enlarged with the possibility of infinite existence and at peace with the ever-evolving universe. This completion of knowledge—the realisation of a Self that at once transcends and fulfils—is not fanciful and irrational, but on the contrary confirmed by the highest power of the imagination in perfect accord with logic and reason. It is not ‘pie-in-the-sky’: it is imminently realisable and real.

If this is the case, and its reality approachable and realisable, then it must be possible to foster the awareness of such an inner ‘self’ through education. If so, then how? First of all, by giving our rational tradition in philosophy the prominent position it deserves within education, and, by encouraging research, allow it to run its full course. Furthermore, we must permit the fruits of this philosophical thinking to permeate all other modes of learning in an open and reciprocal attitude, for if there really is, as Hegel advocated, an “unconditional generality of logic,”<sup>7</sup> then that unconditionality underpins all rational thought, and our entire civilised tradition relies heavily on this aspect of reason as its guiding principle. Secondly, by allowing philosophy to thus ‘run its course,’ if that leads us, as I believe it inevitably will, to revisit other ways of thinking about knowledge of self and world that our Western culture has by tradition largely excluded on the grounds of their perceived irrationality or lack of empirical evidence, then we must remain open to those ideas and influences insofar as they might be seen to be in perfect accord with the new horizons opened for us by the pursuit of imaginative reason unbound by and indeed unbinding its own rational constraints.

This opening up of the horizons of reason to include what has previously been deemed irrational or even impossible has important ramifications for the concept of ‘truth,’ which is at the core of the pursuit of knowledge. Heidegger may well have been on the right track when he differentiated between “propositional truth” and the “*lichtung*” or “clearing” of the revealed truth of being.<sup>8</sup> To see clearly what unconditionally ‘is’ in a phenomenological sense is to feel the presence of truth as an open and nonconceptual experience that might be described as ‘the truth of existence.’ In the experience of this kind of truth, the subject—the percipient—goes beyond the modality of subject/object, reality/illusion, truth/opinion.

It is perhaps no surprise that Heidegger saw poetry as approaching the 'truth' he spoke of. For when poetry, or any art form, is of the highest calibre, then one feels the presence of a deep and all-pervading truth accompanied by peace, delight, and satisfaction. In art—and here it is necessary to say that not all that is called by that name is necessarily authentic—something of this truth, the truth of our life-consciousness, is communicated. This is perhaps because art ventures beyond the bounds of the strictly rational, but nevertheless adheres, in co-relation to its degree of authenticity, to a logic recognised by something deep within us. This logic is in turn in keeping with the highest aspiration of the imagination: one might say in keeping with the ideal, if the ideal were to be thought of as never taking any form whatsoever, except one of complete openness. That is the power of art: it carries with it, in a word, transcendence. Only through transcendence can reason and the imagination be in perfect accord, recognising the truth of existence: a truth that lies at the root and core of universal life, and is at the same time its dynamic and sustaining power.

However, it is not enough simply to say that by giving more importance within education to philosophy and to art, we can help redress the balance of the outer and the inner that is displaced by overemphasis on other, more empirically based subjects. This is undoubtedly true, but traditionally both have nearly always been allocated a place—varying in degree of value—throughout our history, without achieving that result. Moreover, in the case of art, it has progressively in recent years been allowed to claim validity as a research subject within higher education.<sup>9</sup> The problem here is that instead of art uncovering ways of knowing that are valid, if not essential to the realisation of the inner self, its research activity has to a large extent been delimited by the research paradigms of the very rationalism that it by nature seeks to transcend. Thus it has often been given a supplementary role in the exposition of a social-scientific, political, or critical 'truth.' Perhaps worse, in its design aspect it is often researched principally for its possibilities as an engine for the generation of economic return. What is needed in fine art is to redeem it from its singular and limited role as a necessary foil to and relief from the rigours of a too rational episteme or an auxiliary tool to explore some other aspect of rational knowledge or economic gain, and instead to use philosophy to credit and to align art with a new thinking and feeling of what reason really entails. This is an exigency of reason that is, as Derrida says, "a responsibility of 'thought' ... that is not strictly the same thing as philosophy, science, or literature as such."<sup>10</sup> Nor even perhaps 'art' as such.

The purpose of education must not simply be to furnish the individual with the necessary tools to mark his or her place in an increasingly materially

and economically driven society, but also to provide a base of knowledge that will engender the kind of ‘thought’ that is necessary to make sense of the material world and the place of the inner being within it. Indeed, this precept was at the core of what is now seen as ‘old-fashioned’ classical education, which encouraged the mind to utilise its power of reasoning in what would now be termed a ‘cross-disciplinary’ way. That education was seen as a preparation for any vocation in life, in contrast to modern education, in which the emphasis is upon narrow vocational or specialised training within a practical and economic exigency. In spite of its limitations, classical education encouraged the individual to think for himself or herself, which capacity is also the basis of a truly phenomenological approach. It was founded upon reason, from Plato through the Enlightenment. What needs to be questioned now, by that same power, is its own legitimising factor—it’s inherited ‘right’ to be right—in a spirit of unconditional criticality that is prepared to venture beyond the bounds of rationalism into the realms of the creative imagination in tandem with the propriety of reason.<sup>11</sup>

Art, as the presentation of non-rational form, its self-evident non-reality, relies upon the dubiety of rational thought and presents to it its inherent contradictions: pattern and form, reality and illusion, idea and representation. Art is hybrid form that demonstrates difference within a fleeting image, showing sometimes one, sometimes the other, and both at the same time. It crosses same and other horizontally as reality and semblance, and vertically as perception and self. From the crossing of these emerge the double of transcendence and Alterity. True art serves always to open the door to the experience of phenomenal truth. As Alterity, it is the possibility of the experience of truth as transcendence. This transcendence can teach us about ourselves and foster the realisation of that Self which is beyond knowledge.

Thus, indeed, we may say that until education allows for this possibility—which is entirely logical and reasonable, and, what is more, open to the individual’s inner experience—it will not achieve it’s capacity for human progress and perfection.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Sri Chinmoy Kumar Ghose, *Meditations: Food for the Soul*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> Plato, *Dialogues*, trans. B. Jowett (Chicago: William Benton, 1952), *Republic*, X, [608], p. 434.

<sup>3</sup> In this projection of our self into an objective personality lie all the opportunities for manipulation of our mind and actions by others, for example, politicians and salespersons.

<sup>4</sup> The ‘third person’ referred to perhaps appears in—or as—Plato’s *khôra*. Although this third “class” of existence—*khôra*—which he sees as essential to sustain the two opposing classes of truth and opinion, can never be properly determined, Plato concedes that it can be likened to a “space” or “place,” (op. cit., *Timaeus*, [52], p. 457) and also to a “mother” or “receptacle” ([51], p. 457). These descriptions imply something without boundary, beyond definition, that is also somehow substantial. Derrida muses on the possibilities here of a ‘deconstruction’ of ‘Platonism’ through *khôra*’s relationship to *différance*. See Jacques Derrida, *On the Name*, trans. D. Wood/J. P. Leavey/I. Mcleod (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), “Khôra,” pp. 89–127.

<sup>5</sup> Realising of course that to call this ‘thing’ Alterity is to subject ‘it’ to language and to metaphysics, thus suspending (for the sake of argument) its true alterity to both.

<sup>6</sup> Emmanuel Levinas, “Philosophy and the Idea of Infinity”, in *Collected Philosophical Papers*, trans. A. Lingis (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1998), p. 50.

<sup>7</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*, trans. B. Johnson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p. 18. Derrida cites Hegel’s *Phenomenology*, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> Martin Heidegger, “On the Essence of Truth”, in *Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings*, ed. trans. D. F. Krell (London: Routledge, 1978), pp. 137–138.

<sup>9</sup> I am referring here to art in higher education research specifically in the United Kingdom, although at the time of writing it remains to be seen how it will be treated in the United States.

<sup>10</sup> Jacques Derrida, “The Almost Nothing of the Unpresentable”, in *Points... Interviews, 1974–1994*, ed. E. Weber, trans. P. Kamuf (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 80.

<sup>11</sup> See in this regard Derrida’s essay “Form and Meaning: A Note on the Phenomenology of Language”, in Jacques Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. A. Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), pp. 155–173.

PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEM AND ART EXPERIENCE  
IN HEGEL AND GADAMER

## I

The task of this chapter is to illuminate Hegel's and Gadamer's concepts of art. This will be done through a confrontation. But before examining and bringing to light the opposition between them, we need to better define the common denominator that enables this confrontation to take place at all. Both use art as a demonstration of truth. But art cannot be taken as a mere paradigm, a "corpse," an allegory, because in order to be able to serve as a demonstration in a system, it must retain something of its original meaning as art. Consequently, art has no less bearing on the system than the system on art. At stake are not only Hegel's and Gadamer's different philosophical attitudes and the work of art itself as phenomenon, but, more important, the relation between philosophy and art. In Hegel, art is one among different parts of a whole philosophical system. There is yet something very peculiar in art itself, which distinguishes it from other parts of the system. The developing process of the spirit, as it described in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, is characterized by the fact that each stage (with the exception of philosophy as the summit, the climax of the system, as an absolute form of knowledge, as science) presents itself as the truth but is revealed from the next higher stage as false, or, more accurate, as partially true. That is to say, it *appears*, it *pretends* to be the whole truth, but in fact it is revealed to be only part of it. This is what Hegel calls "*Schein*" (appearance, pretension). Art is peculiar in that its *Schein* is double. First of all, it is *Schein* just as each step is before absolute knowledge. Second, it is *Schein* because the job of art is to present something that is not, to create an illusion. One could never have an idea of what a work of art should be like, had one taken it to be nothing but sheer illusion. It therefore seems strange that Hegel takes pains to combine art with his system.<sup>1</sup>

Alas, art enjoys no better fate in Gadamer's thought. In Gadamer's thought, it is not system but the lack of it that threatens to destroy it. Art is no more than a phenomenological means, a paradigm, to demonstrate the way of Being as a whole. Consequently, art becomes too wide, and one can no longer

speak about different kinds of art, successful and unsuccessful art, techniques, artists, and so on.

Both Hegel and Gadamer see art as the arena of truth, of Being. The artist is, therefore, secondary. They hold, however, different concepts of truth. For Hegel, truth is an absolute adequate correspondence. For Gadamer, on the other hand, truth is the process of human existence as being equally covered and discovered,<sup>2</sup> or, as Heidegger calls it before the *Kehre* (his turning point in philosophy), *aletheia*. The essential difference between them is rooted, however, in a basically different experience of time. For Hegel, “primal” time is the absolute presence. This absolute presence is also an absolute knowledge that enables one to evaluate the knowledge or the lack of knowledge in regard to each former step in the system. Art as well as religion and philosophy share in the reflection of the absolute: In them, the absolute reveals itself to itself, or grasps itself in the other, which is the meaning of being absolute.<sup>3</sup> Art does it through sensual perception, which means that its mode of time is successive: The experience of the work of art takes place progressively. And this progression occurs also in space in the case of architecture, sculpture, and painting. This means that the absolute, the timeless presence, is not yet properly demonstrated. For, though this progression is endless, it is absolute only *potentially* and not actually; it is contingent, and, therefore, not really infinite. Being potential means dependency on the existence of the other, lack of adequacy and necessity—what seems to be true is not essential and is therefore false. This infinite is in fact finite because it is nothing but the limit of the finite. Being limited, they are both finite. This is what Hegel calls “false infinite.” The falsity consists in its not being actually infinite, but merely a potential linear *succession*. True infinity is like a *circle*—it has no beginning and no end, but it is an end and beginning at once.<sup>4</sup> Given that truth, according to Hegel, is sheer correspondence, or, as Werner Marx puts it, that Hegel belongs to the philosophy of logos,<sup>5</sup> the absolute cannot find its full truth in the work of art.

The system necessarily co-exists with the absolute, and it enables Hegel to distinguish not only among art, religion, and philosophy, but also within art itself between different styles, namely, different revelations of the timeless in the temporal. On the other hand, it gives unity and continuity not only between the different styles of art, and not only between art and the other parts of the system, but for each individual work of art as an organic unity and in the relation between different performances of it.

The first style is the symbolic. It is characterized by the striving to reflect the absolute. Here the spatial-temporal form is dominant, and the absolute is still something to be achieved. In the second phase, the absolute, the timeless,

is well balanced with its spatial-temporal expression. This phase is classical art, and in it sculpture is dominant. To be absolute means to grasp itself in the other. The absolute, the spirit realizes itself in the form of the human being, and in sculpture it has a good opportunity to meet itself, albeit this confrontation is still wanting because it does not meet itself in a living spiritual form.<sup>6</sup> In the last stage, the spatial-temporal external expression—which is essential to art—is minimized in favor of the internal, which means that art is less spatial and more temporal. This is the romantic stage.

The question concerning the status of knowing, of thinking, of the absolute lies beyond the scope of this chapter. It is clear, however, that the absolute should have been presumed in advance by Hegel as demonstrable. But a brief glance at Hegelian scholars reveals the problematic of this presumption. Glockner describes the philosophy of Hegel as an organism, in which each part contains the other parts. So logic is based on art no less than art on logic.<sup>7</sup> Cassirer accuses Hegel of assuming the absolute in advance, that is to say, in each step of the deduction.<sup>8</sup> But contrary to Glockner, he sees in the widening of the system to everything, including things that in principle cannot let themselves be systemized (and the work of art might serve as a good example), the destruction of the system itself in mingling the timeless presence with the temporal presence.<sup>9</sup> Hartmann argues that the Hegelian process of deduction is intuitive and creative like any work of an artist, and, therefore, cannot be taught.<sup>10</sup> According to Gadamer, Hegel knows that the ideal of completed system is unachievable in a subjective sense. And so the methodic necessity, in which the inner relationships of the concepts unfold themselves due to their own dialectic, presents no necessity in subjective terms.<sup>11</sup> Schelling puts art at the top of his system, for the absolute cannot be demonstrated, but just reflected or hinted by the work of art. “The work of art only reflects to me what can otherwise be reflected through nothing, that is, the absolute identity, which has already divided itself in the I.”<sup>12</sup> It seems that at the core of the theses mentioned is the problematic status of the absolute.

The problematic status of the absolute threatens the system in that it seems to turn it into a work of art. This is the turning point toward Gadamer. In Gadamer, contrary to Hegel, the absolute, the infinite, is seen from the finite. The infinite is an abstracted-poor-secondary mode of time, which Gadamer calls “empty time” (*leere Zeit*).<sup>13</sup> What reveals truth, Being, cannot therefore be a system grounded on the absolute, but a work of art. The reason is, contrary to Schelling, *not* because the absolute cannot be demonstrated, but because there is *no* absolute, no first principle, and, therefore, no system. (For the present one should leave aside the objection that first comes to mind,

according to which Gadamer turns the finite into infinite by making finitude his basic principle.)

Art experience is the alternative to system. It is not the timeless infinite presence from which existence is to be understood, but a temporal finite presence that lies at the basis of each human experience. In other words, Being is not timeless, but finite. Gadamer calls it “gnomic presence” (*gnomische Gegenwart*).<sup>14</sup> In this presence, time as human existence is seen as it is in truth: not an endless stream of timeless now, but a finite presence. This basic experience of time, in which it is understood as finite, Gadamer calls “fulfilled time” (*erfüllte Zeit*). This authentic mode of time does not consist of a homogeneous, continuous stream, but of “leaps,” of discontinuities. Suddenly what has existed until now becomes old and something new appears: A new “monad” in which the past and the future are formed anew comes to light.<sup>15</sup> This fulfilled time is the source of time as a chain consisting of timeless presences. For only the *finite* rational being needs to plan, measure, and fix time. For the sake of precision in measuring, time is abstracted from its primal meaning as finite and understood as an infinite chain of timeless presences. This Gadamer calls “empty time” (*leere Zeit*).<sup>16</sup> Gadamer uses art as a phenomenological mean to demonstrate finite temporal Being.<sup>17</sup> Two points will make clear how art is competent to expose Being as this finite presence.

1. One has learnt from Heidegger that the work of art is not a thing, an object. That a skilful-dexterous-brilliant master has produced a perfect object is neither a sufficient nor a necessary condition that an experience of art will take place. The material or the act of the artist cannot explain how it has become a work of art. Some “miracle,” a sudden event (*Ereignis*) or stroke (*Stoss*),<sup>18</sup> is need, that in a moment turns the thing and the observer into “another world,” an experience of art. From this experience the artist and the thing are understood.<sup>19</sup> To put it in other words, the artist and the object are essential. But they owe their existence to the experience of the work of art, to this event. In *Truth and Method*, Gadamer calls this event “transformation into form” (*Verwandlung ins Gebilde*):

Transformation ... means, that something is suddenly metamorphosed into a wholly different entity, so that this different entity that exists as transformed, is its true Being, in regard to which its previous Being is nothing. ... Here, there can be no transition of gradual change, which leads from one to the other, for it is a negation of the other.<sup>20</sup>

In other words, the experience of art does not enter into existence by accumulation. On the contrary, this transformation brings to a halt any accumulation and creates a new temporal presence in which the past and

the future are seen and understood in a new way. The transcendence here is of a special kind: it is a “*sublation*,” to use Hegel’s famous keyword (*Aufheben*), which transcends the old historical situation and attains a new temporal presence that in turn should be sublated. This is an experience of Being as temporally finite: One can never get rid of being situated in a temporal context in which the past and the future are always formed and seen in a new perspective. This means that truth, or what has been revealed, is always concealed. Truth, in sharp contrast to Hegel, cannot be a correspondence. The core of the difference between Hegel and Gadamer is, however, not in the concept of truth, but in that of time.

2. This phenomenological means of art is exemplified most clearly by the poet. As was explained, the authentic mode of time does not consist of a homogeneous, continuous stream but of “leaps,” of discontinuities. Gadamer uses Heraclitus in order to explain it:

The experience of time, which continues on by itself, is the becoming-other—not, as it were, a change on an unchanging substrate, but in the immediateness of the having-become-other. The living creature passes into a new age and leaves another age behind itself.

His temporality obviously has a peculiar discontinuity about which Heraclitus had already thought when he referred to sudden change, the immediate appearance of the new and the sinking of the old, as the secret truth of Being. “Children throw away their toys, when they grow up.”<sup>21</sup> This sudden event Gadamer calls an “event making period” (*Epoche machendes Ereignis*). The old does not get lost, but is seen from a new point of view. This event is linguistic: It happens by confronting the new with the alien. In order to cope with this, one has to “translate” it, to find the right word and to bring it to his language. Hence the poet serves as a good example: He must find *his own* word instead of applying the well-worn conventional uses of language, if he does not want to be ignored: “In the crust of empty chatter it [the poet’s word] recognizes ‘breakthrust-points’—only then does it succeed as a poem.”<sup>22</sup> In breaking through the “crust of empty chatter,” the poet creates an epoché: The conventional uses become old, seen in a new light, and new ones appear.

In Hegel, it appears that the absolute enables adequacy and unity not only in aesthetics as a general species, but also in regard to each particular work of art. The absolute, which is the sole theme of art,<sup>23</sup> makes it possible to deal with art as a *unique species* in regard to the other parts of the system as well as to its different phases, styles, and periods. In different periods of history, the absolute has appeared in different sensual forms and created different epochs of art.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, it ensures the coherent unity of the

work of art itself. The problem of grasping the absolute, however, threatens to collapse the system and turn it into a work of art. In addition, it is not clear at all how a work of art could have come to existence out of the matching of the absolute content with the material form. That is to say, these two entities cannot explain the *Being* of the work of art. Here Gadamer, following Heidegger, can be of aid. He rejects the system as the primal absolute timeless entity<sup>25</sup> and puts in place of it the finite temporal presence. This presence is created by discontinuities, by leaps, and in it Being is understood. This is seen in the work of art: Suddenly it becomes what it is. But the work of art as a phenomenological means to demonstrate the occurrence of Being becomes too wide. With the renunciation of the timeless presence, the border between the work of art and the ontological occurrence gets lost. Consequently, there is no room to speak about different kinds of arts, of techniques, of artists.<sup>26</sup> Even more serious, given that Being is understood out of these leaps, it is not clear at all what gives it unity and keeps it from getting lost in a state of chaos. What makes the work of art be a *work-of-art*? In other words, the problem with this mode of time, as will be shown, is how it can ensure an adequate unity of the work of art, not only in relation to itself and to its different performances, but also in relation to other work of arts.

Gadamer seems to be attacked from both sides and can either shrug his shoulders or fall into the trap he set for himself by saying that this temporal presence-leap ensures the required adequate unity. In arguing this, the temporal presence-leap, the *Ereignis*, becomes timeless absolute presence.

## II

### A

Hegel's aesthetics is introduced in different forms in his writings. Although it is an ingredient of the absolute knowledge, in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*<sup>27</sup> it is still a part of religion. In the *Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences (1830)*<sup>28</sup> it already stands apart from religion. In the *Lectures on Aesthetics*<sup>29</sup> written and edited by Hegel's pupil Hotho, there is a detailed treatment of art. Hotho's edition as well as his additions invite the publication of a more meticulous scholarly edition. This wish is realized in the new edition of Hegel's aesthetics edited and introduced by Gethmann-Siefert.<sup>30</sup> The different references to art in Hegel's writings should be a subject of serious scholarly research. But all these references have a common denominator, which is the appearance of the absolute in sensual form. The absolute is the theme of art, which, in turn, can be grasped and articulated from the aspect of neither the object, the observing subject, nor the creating subject, but only from

the aspect of the absolute. This means that art can neither be explained in terms of imitating nature nor be reduced to individual creativity. According to Rosenkranz, in 1802 to 1803 in Jena, Hegel spoke for the first time in a most determined way on his concept of the absolute as spirit, as an absolute subject, in which all the oppositions actual and potential are retained.<sup>31</sup> From this period 1802 to 1803, one finds Hegel's description of art as follows:

The Mnemosyne or the absolute Muse, the art, undertakes to represent the forms of the spirit externally visible and audible. This Muse is itself the general speaking-out conscious of the people. ... Those called genius have achieved a peculiar spirituality, by which they make out of the general forms of the people their work of art, as others make something else. What they produce, is not their invention, but the invention of the whole people, or the finding, that the people has found its essence.<sup>32</sup>

Hegel goes on to describe the artist as one who takes part in erecting an arch, who happened by chance to put the last stone.<sup>33</sup> He sums up by saying the "work of art is the work of all. But there is one who completes it and brings it into light, in that he works on the last thing in it, and he is the beloved of Mnemosyne."<sup>34</sup>

Gadamer should have been satisfied with these expressions. Indeed, in *Truth and Method*, he gives Hegel the precedence over Schleiermacher,<sup>35</sup> for Hegel accepts the historical being of the spirit, whereas Schleiermacher wants to overcome it.<sup>36</sup> Prima facie, this part is well suited to the Gadamerian framework. For, in rejecting the transcendental timeless, what is left is the traditional context. But one knows quite well (as Gadamer admits<sup>37</sup>) that the appearance of the absolute in the sensual, in the temporal, the beauty (*das Schöne*) should be sublated in favor of a more adequate way to grasp the absolute. For this purpose the temporal should be sublated.<sup>38</sup> The tension between the one who sublates and the one who is to be sublated loosens the bond among the artist, the observer, and the work of art. The balance is aspired to in symbolic art, achieved in classical art, and destroyed in romantic art.<sup>39</sup>

Symbolic art aspires to let the absolute appear in it. But the absolute can merely be symbolized in an arbitrary way. The source of the inability of the symbol to let the absolute appear is caused by its double representation. Once it points to something else of which it is a symbol, it also indicates itself because it possesses what the thing symbolized possesses as well. For example, the lion indicates power because it is itself powerful. It is, however, not necessary that each lion be a symbol of power, as it is not necessary that the lion who symbolizes power is actually meant to symbolize it.<sup>40</sup> The symbol is hence ambiguous, equivocal. At this stage the spirit aspires but has not yet reached a clear conception of itself. The obscurity is rooted

in the dominancy of the material, which does not let the spirit appear to itself: The triangle or the lion is capable, of course, of indication beyond its physical existence, but it does so by no means necessarily. Materiality, which is particularity, makes them contain much more than is needed to let the absolute, the general, appear. The *false infinite*, which consists here of a potential infinite spatial-temporal divisibility of the material, allows the true infinite, the absolute spirit, to appear in a very deficient way.

Hence a more appropriate way is needed. The first thing to be done is to get rid of the excess of materiality, the accidental, the finite. This is achieved in classical art. "The purest form of the ideal is the presence of God in itself, in its form, without being affected by the finite and the external."<sup>41</sup> According to its essence, God, the absolute spirit, must appear. Because for Hegel, God is the one who is believed in Christianity, the absolute spirit appears in the human body. But in the classical form of art, contrary to the symbolic, the human body is no longer a *symbol* of the spirit, but the appearance of the spirit itself.<sup>42</sup> The classical form of art uses symbolic material, but in its hands it becomes united in the activities of the agents.<sup>43</sup>

The downfall of classical art is rooted in its inability to overcome the material, the false spatial-temporal infinite, as is the case with the revelation of God in human form and the overcoming of this form in the crucifixion.<sup>44</sup> The inability to overcome the materiality means that the spirit cannot meet itself in its work, but only a dead-artificial reflection of itself. In other words, the absolute still has its existence in the other and not in itself, as is the case with the false infinite:

But the kingdom of the beauty is for itself not yet completed, since the free concept exists in it only sensually and holds no spiritual reality in itself. This inappropriateness demands from the spirit to overcome it and to live in itself, and in no other than itself.<sup>45</sup>

The last stage is the romantic form of art. The fall of the two previous stages consisted in disagreement among the timeless presence, the absolute, and the spatial-temporal of it. Romantic art is aware of this discrepancy, and, realizing that it is the fault of the material, it tries to overcome the sensual. "The principle of the romantic form of art is, accordingly, absolute interiority."<sup>46</sup> Romantic art is, on the one hand, a matter of thought. On the other hand, being a work of art, it must appear necessary in the sensual. The abstraction from the spatial-temporal loosens the bond among the work, the artist and the audience. The realization that art can no longer reflect the truth causes a gap between the artist and his work. The artist is no longer obliged to and united with the themes. He becomes, therefore, an imitator of previous styles and themes, which are anachronistic in his time. This creates a distance

between the work and the audience as well. Romantic art has achieved indeed a high dexterity and the artist masters an impressive technical virtuosity, but, due to the fact that he extricates the themes from past times, his work is dreamlike and lacks vitality.<sup>47</sup>

In the last stage of romantic art, the formal activity of art production has set itself, being free and absolute for itself, indifferently opposite to the material. Consequently, according to its concept, art is a bond between the absolute spirit and its sensual reality, and has sublated itself in itself.<sup>48</sup>

The absolute spirit appears to itself in the human form. The human form as the appearance of the absolute spirit becomes the center of the classical form of art. Due to the exteriority of classicism, however, the spirit cannot conceive itself in its otherness appropriately, but can obtain from it only a dead-material reflection of itself.<sup>49</sup> Thanks to the interiority of romanticism, the absolute spirit has its real other and can conceive itself in it.<sup>50</sup> On the other hand, the concentration on subjectivity compels it to deal with the trivial, with the banality of life. Consequently, the false infinite becomes much more dominant, and art finds itself at a greater distance from the principle of the system. The best example is music: On the one hand, it is the most extreme abstraction from the spatial-material element, but, on the other hand, because it exists solely in time, it indicates in the clearest way the false infinite: "The I in the tone is pure in itself, it is the expression of the I itself,"<sup>51</sup> and "Time belongs to music. The tone, in that it is, is not."<sup>52</sup> (That is to say, since music consists in a chain of tones, each tone in this chain must disappear so that the next can appear.) Because of the inadequacy between content and form in romantic art, the symbolic form reappears in it.<sup>53</sup> Comedy is the end of art, for in it objective reality is nothing but a comic play of the spiritual subject. Art is, therefore, *passé* regarding the possibility of exposing the truth; it is having-been (*Gewesenes*). Art can of course continue, but not as means of conceiving truth.<sup>54</sup> One needs, therefore, new ways to conceive the absolute, God; one needs thought.<sup>55</sup>

Seen from the absolute, art is having-been. From this absolute point of view, the finite spatial-temporal is incapable of conceiving the infinite, and, therefore, is sublated in a higher form of knowledge. Let us see what happens when the finite is the point of view.

### B

Gadamer's refusal to accept the chain of now (*Jetztfolge*),<sup>56</sup> which consists of the timeless now, as the ground of the human experience gives the relation between the transcending and the transcended a new peculiar meaning. According to Hegel, this relation is between the dynamic and static, the

temporal and timeless presence, the false and true infinite. According to Gadamer, the relation is interplay between two dynamics: (1) meaning as a whole, which is presumed in each interaction with an expression, and (2) each component in the process of the understanding. The meaning as a whole is changed and corrected in the process of understanding and causes, in turn, the parts to be ordered and related in a new way. This is the *hermeneutic circle*. It does not describe a methodological-scientific process of interpretation, but the very being of human existence.<sup>57</sup> The difference between art as a symbol and the absolute as the symbolized is canceled.<sup>58</sup> Consequently, the difference between the work of art and its realizations, its performances, is abolished. Furthermore, due to the lack of sustaining unchangeable presence, the border between art and life collapses.

There is neither a permanent subject nor a permanent object that stands at the base of the work of art. Gadamer compares the experience of art to play. The players should lose and forget their daily existence, their substance, in order to be able to play. The play, in turn, has its existence not in the corpus of rules, but in its being played. Neither the play nor the player is unchangeable subsisting substance. The Being of playing is *medial*.<sup>59</sup> The question is what gives the work of art its permanency in each individual performance as well as in the different performances of the *same* work of art. Concerning the individual performance, Gadamer speaks about the special time experience (*Eigenzeit*)<sup>60</sup> of the work of art. Each work of art demands its particular time experience to be realized. This means to overcome the flow of now and to be suspended in a special kind of temporal presence.<sup>61</sup> The work of art as well as the audience are steeped within and mediated by this presence and become one. This, Gadamer believes, gives art experience its coherence and unity. "The essence of the time experience of art is that we learn to suspend. This is perhaps the finite correspondence, which is proper to us, to what one calls infinite."<sup>62</sup> The question is how this special time experience can create a unity between the different performances of the work of art. In this special presence, which achieved by suspension, the work of art, as something that belongs to the past, is mediated by present realization. This realization points in each step to further possible realizations in the future.

Gadamer's answer to the question concerning the unity of the work of art is insufficient because the temporal presence cannot be both the principle of the time experience and a part of the temporal itself. He needs an additional component in order to maintain the required unity. Gadamer, on the base of the phenomenological principle, refuses to admit any component of this sort. He therefore follows Heidegger, who says

If the access to God is belief, and the being involved with the infinite is nothing but this belief, then philosophy could never have the infinite, and the latter, accordingly, can never be methodically used as a possible component in the discussion of time.<sup>63</sup>

If one does not push Gadamer to accept an additional component, art collapses into the process of life, which, in turn, sinks into chaos.

### III

Hegel's motivation is to present the principles of absolute knowledge as a system. As a way of self-knowledge, of self-presentation, art belongs to this system. If the absolute cannot be given, the system turns into a work of art. If, however, it can be given, as Hegel believes, it is possible to discuss and classify its different periods and styles. It enables one to understand what keeps the work of art as a cohesive unity in itself as well as in regard to its different performance and to other works of art. On the other hand, as part of a method, art loses what makes it a work of art. It is unmasked and naked in its illusion, and is seen as a mere symbol of the absolute. Once it has lost what makes it a work of art, it is not clear at all how it can serve as a paradigm for the revelation of truth. In addition, it is not clear at all how the work of art can come into existence out of the combination of the sensual and the absolute.

Gadamer pretends to be more radical than Hegel. Like Heidegger,<sup>64</sup> he finds that Hegel overlooks the occurrence of truth, which takes place beyond the logical formation of the concepts, beyond the system:

Does not the logic of the concept, which unfolds itself, point necessarily beyond itself, namely, to the "natural logic" of the language itself? The self of the concept, in which the pure thought conceives itself, is at the end not self-demonstrating, but is active in everything that also exists as language. The more radically the presenting thought meditates on itself and the experience of the dialectic unfolds, the more clearly it indicates that which it itself is not. Dialectic must be included in the hermeneutics.<sup>65</sup>

In order to have a glimpse of this primal happening of the truth, Gadamer turns to the work of art. This yields an understanding of the Being of the work of art, which is Being in general. But what makes the borderline between the work of art and the ontology to collapse is the renunciation of the first principle. Art as the demonstrative of the ontological happening becomes too wide and is no longer a special phenomenon. There is no point in speaking of different styles and periods of art. The lack of a first principle also makes it impossible to understand what gives the work of art its unity.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Hegel seems to be well aware of this problem, as he writes “Hence the wrong concept must be removed, as if art could have had an external in-and-for-itself existing purpose, for the sake of its realization it is nothing but a mere means” (Dabei ist die schiefe Vorstellung zu entfernen, als habe die Kunst ausser ihr einen an-und-für-sich seienden Zweck, zu dessen Realisation sie blosses Mittel sei) (Hegel, 2003, pp. 30–31). “The work of art as an absolute has its end in itself” (Das Kunstwerk als Absolutes hat seinen Zweck in sich selbst) (ibid., p. 31).

<sup>2</sup> Gadamer (1985–1995), Vol. 3, p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> “Denn der Geist ist das Wesen ist das Wissen, seiner selbst in seiner Entäuserung; das Wesen, das die Bewegung ist, in seinem Andersein die Gleichheit mit sich selbst zu behalten. Dies aber ist die Substanz, insofern sie in ihrer Akzidentalität ebenso in sich reflektiert, nicht dagegen als gegen ein Unwesentliches und somit in einem Fremden sich Befindendes gleichgültig, sondern darin in sich, d.h. insofern sie Subjekt oder Selbst ist” (Hegel, 1988, pp. 494–495).

<sup>4</sup> See Hegel (1966–1967), Erstes Buch, Erster Abschnitt, 2. Kapitel, “Das Dasein. Unendlichkeit.”

<sup>5</sup> Marx (1971), p. 18.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Theunissen (1970) undertakes to reduce the philosophy of Hegel as a whole to revelation and the incarnation. In this way he explains the work of art as well.

<sup>7</sup> “Hier haben wir also ein System, in welchem nicht nur die Ästhetik auf der Logik, sondern auch die Logik auf die Ästhetik beruht! Ein ästhetisches Element waltet hier bereits im Reiche des Logos!” (Glockner, 1969), p. 430.

<sup>8</sup> Cassirer (1999–2000), p. 352.

<sup>9</sup> “Es genügt nach Hegel nicht, die ‘mögliche Erfahrung’—dies Wort in seinem weitesten Sinne genommen—zu umgrenzen und zu bedingen: sondern die wirkliche will begriffen, wird aus der reinen Idee abgeleitet sein” (ibid., p. 351). “Das Ziel, an welches die Entwicklung des Geistes gelangt, bedeutet also zugleich ihren Stillstand und hebt sie damit, als Entwicklung, auf. Hier erkennt man die Schwierigkeit und die innere Zweideutigkeit des Wortes, dass die Idee nicht in einem unendlichen Fortgang bestehe, sondern daß sie präsent, dass sie ‘wesentlich itzt’ sei. Denn dem Jetzt der reinen Idee und ihrer Selbstvollendung droht sich beständig ein einzelnes empirisches Jetzt als seine Erfüllung und sein adäquater Ausdruck unterzuschieben—eine bestimmte zeitliche Gegenwart droht sich an die Stelle der ‘Substanz, die immanent, und d(es) Ewige(n), das gegenwärtig ist,’ zu setzen” (ibid., p. 354).

<sup>10</sup> “Es ist mit ihr (der Dialektik) wie mit aller tief produktiven Geistestätigkeit: man kann, wenn man das Organ dafür hat, sie wohl besitzen und fruchtbar anzuwenden wissen, aber man kann deswegen noch nicht sagen oder lehren, wie man es macht” (Hartmann, 1957, p. 327).

<sup>11</sup> Gadamer (1985–1995), Vol. 3, p. 71; Vol. 8, p. 239.

<sup>12</sup> “Das Kunstwerk nur reflektiert mir, was sonst durch nichts reflektiert wird, jenes absolut Identische, was selbst im Ich schon sich getrennt hat” (Schelling, 1992, p. 296).

<sup>13</sup> Compare *Truth and Method*: “Zeitlosigkeit ist zunächst nichts als dialektische Bestimmung, die sich auf dem Grunde der Zeitlichkeit und auf dem Gegensatz zu der Zeitlichkeit erhebt” (Gadamer, 1985–1995, p. 126).

<sup>14</sup> Gadamer (1997), p. 83.

<sup>15</sup> This “monad” has a similar meaning in Benjamin’s *Geschichtsphilosophische Thesen* (1965). It has, however, nothing to do with the Leibnizian monad, which is partial because of its partial reflection of the absolute monad.

<sup>16</sup> The thesis of the “fulfilled time” and “empty time” Gadamer intimates and develops in the article dedicated to Heidegger, *Über leere und erfüllte Zeit* (1972), and in the book *Die Aktualität des Schönen—Kunst als Spiel, Symbol und Fest* (1976).

<sup>17</sup> Gadamer sees his hermeneutic phenomenology as being in agreement with Husserl’s: “Husserl hat, wie ich meine, einen guten Wink gegeben, wie sich die Aufhebung der Realitätserwartung im Falle des Kunstwerkes vollzieht, ohne dass man ungemässe Kategorien von Fiktion, Illusion usw. ins Spiel bringen müßte. Er bemerkte öfters im Zusammenhang der Lehre von der eidetischen Reduktion, dieselbe sei im Falle des Kunstwerks ‘spontan erfüllt’” (Gadamer, 1985–1995), Vol. 8, p. 255.

<sup>18</sup> Gadamer (2001), p. 106. (1985–1995), Vol. 8, p. 277.

<sup>19</sup> “Trotzdem das Werk erst im Vollzug des Schaffens wirklich wird und so in seiner Wirklichkeit von diesem abhängt, trotzdem, *sogar* gerade deshalb hängt das Wesen des Schaffens vom Wesen des Werkes ab. Wenngleich das Geschaffensein des Werkes zum Schaffen einen Bezug hat, so muss *dennoch* auch das Geschaffensein so wie das Schaffen aus dem Werksein des Werkes bestimmt werden” (Heidegger, 1952, p. 48). “Vom Werk und keineswegs von seinem dinglichen Unterbau her ist solches Hervorkommen von Wahrheit, wie in ihm geschieht, allein zu denken” (Gadamer, 2001, p. 105).

<sup>20</sup> “Verwandlung dagegen meint, dass etwas auf einmal und als Ganzes ein anderes ist, so dass diese andere, das als Verwandelt ist, sein wahres Sein ist, dem gegenüber sein früheres Sein nichtig ist. ... Es kann hier keinen Übergang allmählicher Veränderung geben, der von einem zum anderen führte, da das eine Verneinung des anderen ist” (Gadamer, 1985–1995), Vol. 1, p. 116.

<sup>21</sup> “Die Zeiterfahrung, die hier von sich geht, ist das Anderswerden—nicht als irgendeine Veränderung an einem bleibenden Substrat, sondern in der Unmittelbarkeit des Andersgewordenseins. Das Lebendige tritt in ein Alter und lässt ein Alter hinter sich. Seine Zeitlichkeit hat Diskontinuität eigentümlicher Art, über die offenbar schon Heraklit nachgedacht hat, wenn er den Umschlag, das unvermittelte Hervortreten von Neuem und das Versinken von Altem, als die geheime Wahrheit des Seins denkt: ‘Kinder werfen ihr Spielzeug weg, wenn sie erwachsen werden’” (Gadamer, 1972, p. 230).

<sup>22</sup> Gadamer (1997), p. 118.

<sup>23</sup> Hegel (2003), p. 4.

<sup>24</sup> “Der Begriff beim Kunstwerk ist substantiell Subjektivität und die Darstellung dieser für die sinnliche Vorstellung. Auf diese zwei Seiten bezieht sich der Unterschied der Kunstformen” (Hegel, 2003, p. 119).

<sup>25</sup> “There is no hermeneutic method. ... Hermeneutics means not so much procedure as the attitude of a person who wants to understand someone else, or who wants to understand a linguistic expression as a reader or listener” (Gadamer, 1997, p. 161).

<sup>26</sup> Compare Gadamer’s introduction to Heidegger’s *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*: “Was so am Kunstwerk seine Ausweisung findet, soll aber das Wesen des Seins überhaupt ausmachen. Streit von Entbergung und Verbergung ist nicht nur die Wahrheit des Werkes, sondern die alles Seiden” (Gadamer, 2001, p. 110).

<sup>27</sup> Hegel (1988).

<sup>28</sup> Hegel (1991).

<sup>29</sup> Hegel (1993).

<sup>30</sup> Hegel (2003).

<sup>31</sup> Rosenkranz (1977), p. 177.

<sup>32</sup> “Die Mnemosyne oder die absolute Muse, die Kunst, übernimmt die Seite, die Gestalten des Geistes äusserlich anschaubar und hörbar darzustellen. Diese Muse ist selbst das allgemeine

aussprechendes Bewusstsein des Volkes. ... Diejenigen, welche Genies genannt werden, haben sich irgend welche besondere Geistlichkeit erworben, in welcher sie die allgemeinen Gestalten des Volkes zu ihrem Werk machen, wie Andere Anderes. Was sie producieren, ist nicht ihre Erfindung, sondern die Erfindung des ganzen Volkes, oder das Finden, dass das Volk das Wesen gefunden hat" (Rosenkranz, 1977, p. 180).

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> "So ist das Kunstwerk das Werk Aller. Einer ist, der es vollendet und an den Tag bringt, indem er das Letzte daran arbeitet und er ist der Liebling der Mnemosyne" (Rosenkranz, 1977, p. 181).

<sup>35</sup> Gadamer's hermeneutics, which exposes the basic finite temporal experience of the human being, takes its departure from Schleiermacher's ambition to overcome the historical temporal being. This thesis is prominent also in the lectures published in *Das Problem des historischen Bewusstseins*, on which *Wahrheit und Methode* is based (Gadamer, 2001). A great part of Manfred Franck's introduction to Schleiermacher's hermeneutic writings is dedicated to Gadamer's misunderstanding of Schleiermacher (Schleiermacher, 1977).

<sup>36</sup> Gadamer (1985–1995), Vol. 1, p. 174.

<sup>37</sup> Gadamer (2001), p. 107.

<sup>38</sup> "Die Zeit ist der Begriff selbst, der da ist, und als leere Anschauung sich dem Bewußtsein vorstellt; deswegen erscheint der Geist notwendig in der Zeit, und er erscheint solange in der Zeit, als er nicht seinen reinen Begriff erfasst, das heisst, nicht die Zeit tilgt" (Hegel, 1988, p. 524).

<sup>39</sup> Dieter Henrich (2003) undertook to show that the "objective Humor" is to achieve this balance at the end of the romantic period. So, on the one hand, art is no longer the highest way to conceive the absolute, but, on the other hand, it continues.

<sup>40</sup> Hegel (2003), p. 119.

<sup>41</sup> "Die reinste Form des Ideals ist das Beruhen des Gottes in sich, in seiner Gestalt, ohne Berührung des Endlichen und Äusserlichen" (Hegel, 2003, p. 170).

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 157.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 173.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 159.

<sup>45</sup> "Aber das Reich des Schönen selbst ist für sich schon unvollkommen, weil der freie Begriff nur sinnlich in ihm vorhanden [ist] und keine geistige Realität in sich selbst hat" (ibid., p. 179).

<sup>46</sup> "Das Prinzip demnach der romantischen Kunstform ist die absolute Innerlichkeit" (ibid., p. 180). One knows this already from Schiller's (2002) *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*. This form of art he names "sentimental." It transcends the material in order to grasp the pure intellectual. "Der Idee nach geht nehmlich die Veredlung immer ins Unendliche, weil die Vernunft in ihren Forderungen sich an die notwendigen Schranken der Sinnenwelt nicht bindet, und nicht eher als bey dem absolut Vollkommenen stille steht" (p. 92). Schiller's distinction is based, however, on the Kantian difference between reason (*Vernunft*) and understanding (*Verstand*). The sentimental poet tries to cut the essential knot between sense and the intelligible world and to create a sheer nonsensual intelligible work of art.

<sup>47</sup> See Hegel's saying from the Jena period: "Wenn zu unseren Zeiten freilich die lebendige Welt nicht das Kunstwerk in sich bildet, muss der Künstler seine Einbildung in eine vergangene Welt versetzen; er muss sich eine Welt träumen, aber es ist seinem Werk der Character der Träumerei oder des Nichtlebenigseins, der Vergangenheit, schlechthin aufgedrückt" (Rosenkranz, 1977, p. 181).

<sup>48</sup> "In der letzten Stufe aber der romantischen Kunst hat sich die formelle Tätigkeit der Kunstproduktion für sich frei und als absolut gegen den Stoff gleichgültig gesetzt. Somit aber hat sich die Kunst, welche wir ihrem Begriff nach als die Einheit des absoluten Geistes und seiner sinnlichen Realität, an ihr selbst aufgehoben" (Hegel, 2003, p. 204).

- <sup>49</sup> Näher betrachtet aber müssen wir sagen, dass die Skulptur in betreff auf die Natürlichkeit einen Nachteil habe, denn die Natürlichkeit ist nur die der äusseren Materialität, nicht die Natur des Geistes als (des) Geistes.... Wenn die Skulptur also materiell natürlich ist, hat sie das Nachteilige, den Geist nicht in seinem eigentlichen Elemente darzustellen" (ibid., p. 229).
- <sup>50</sup> Ibid., pp. 184–185.
- <sup>51</sup> "Das Ich im Ton ist rein bei sich selbst, er ist die Äusserung des Ich selbst" (ibid., p. 263).
- <sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 265.
- <sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 189.
- <sup>54</sup> Compare Gadamer (1985–1995), Vol. 8, pp. 228–229.
- <sup>55</sup> Hegel (2003), pp. 311–312.
- <sup>56</sup> Gadamer (1985–1995), Vol. 8, p. 277.
- <sup>57</sup> Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 298–299.
- <sup>58</sup> Gadamer (1976), p. 49.
- <sup>59</sup> Gadamer (1985–1995), Vol. 1, p. 109.
- <sup>60</sup> Gadamer (1976), pp. 59–60.
- <sup>61</sup> Note that in *Truth and Method* Gadamer distinguishes between his "*Gleichzeitigkeit*," which is a mediated time experience of the three time dimensions, and Schleiermacher's "*Zugleichsein*," which is the cancellation of the historical gap between the past and the present (Gadamer, 1985–1995), Vol. 1, p. 132.
- <sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 60.
- <sup>63</sup> "Wenn der Zugang zu Gott der Glaube ist und das Sich-einlassen mit der Ewigkeit nichts anderes als dieser Glaube, dann wird die Philosophie die Ewigkeit nie haben und diese sonach nie als mögliche Hinsicht für die Diskussion der Zeit in methodischen Gebrauch genommen werden können" (Heidegger, 1989, p. 5).
- <sup>64</sup> Heidegger (1969).
- <sup>65</sup> "Weist nicht die Logik des sich selbst entfaltenden Begriffs ihrerseits notwendig über sich hinaus, nämlich auf die 'natürliche Logik' der Sprache zurück? Das Selbst des Begriffs, in dem sich das reine Denken begreift, ist am Ende selber nichts Sichzeigendes, sondern in allem, was ist, ebenso wirksam wie die Sprache auch.... Je radikaler sich das vergegenständlichende Denken auf sich selbst bessint und die Erfahrung der Dialektik entfaltet, desto klarer weist es auf das, was es nicht ist. Dialektik muss sich in die Hermeneutik zurücknehmen" (Gadamer, 1985–1995, Vol. 3, p. 86).

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DISTANCE EDUCATION “HERE” AND “NOW”

*Rereading the Transcendental Aesthetics of Edmund Husserl*

*The crucial thing for civilization is to find the measure of things*

Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka. Interview.

*Philosophy is neither “high” nor “profound”: it holds itself strictly at the height of things, the world, and man.*

Jean-Luc Nancy<sup>1</sup>

AT THE HEIGHT OF THINGS

Distance learning—Web-based training—defined as the application of electronic means to education, is the fastest-growing area in the so-called hospitality industry, of which education has turned into a part. Nevertheless, information technologies not only present vast potentialities for real life learning, but also bring with them new challenges and demands to traditional schooling and the future of the humanities.<sup>2</sup> Sven Birkerts, in his introduction significantly titled “The Reading Wars” to his book *The Gutenberg Elegies*, describes his worries about one of the main props of education as well the whole Western culture, that is, reading:

What the writer writes, how he writes and gets edited, printed, and sold, and then read—all of the old assumptions are under siege. And these are just the outward manifestations. Still deeper shifts are taking place in the subjective realm. As the printed book, and the ways of the book—of writing and reading—are modified, as electronic communications assert dominance, “the feel” of the literary engagement is altered. Reading and writing come mean differently; they acquire new significations. As the world hurtles toward its mysterious rendezvous the old act of slow reading a serious book becomes elegiac exercise.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Nancy, J.-L., *Hegel. The Restlessness of the Negative*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 2002, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Compare, for example, various publications of Derrida on this theme in *Jacques Derrida and the Humanities: A Critical Reader*, Ed. by Tom Cohen, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002.

<sup>3</sup> Birkerts, S., *The Gutenberg Elegies. The Fate of Reading in an Electronic Age*, Boston, Faber and Faber, 1994, p. 6.

### When in his Vienna lecture Husserl speaks about

A new and intimate community, “a community of ideal interests,” cultivated among men—men who live for philosophy, united in their dedication to ideas, which ideas are not only of use to all but are identically the property of all,<sup>4</sup>

he speaks about our reading and writing habits, an educational culture already in crisis.

An understanding of space and time occupies the very heart of the discussion of various contemporary problems of education and life. In this regard we are in debt for a new, subtler philosophy of space and time to the phenomenology of Husserl. The Husserlian stress on “freedom from presuppositions” as a principle in epistemological investigations helped him to “shed light on the Idea of knowledge in its constitutive elements and laws.”<sup>5</sup>

In this chapter, I outline certain aspects important for the Husserlian project of renovation of transcendental aesthetics in a reflection upon the “living present.” Our life is placed in time and space, technologically supported measurement of which allows us to distinguish between objective and lived time and between physical space and home.

Our increasing ability to control vast areas of space and time is leading to the disappearance of old types of jobs and to the transformation of work as such. But as disturbing as this is, it is only one aspect of a deeper problem, the problem of “lived” experience, “orientation,” and meaning, which can be felt in oppositions between scientific representations of space and time and the intensity of affective lived space and time.

For more than a century, the phenomenological philosophy of Husserl has served as a productive source of reference for discussions and various schools of thought looking for the meaning of philosophy and the sense of human life. Blamed for a strong Cartesianism, criticized for a transcendental “turn” to idealism and a radical rationalism, and avoided for its metaphysical ontology, Husserl’s phenomenology has not yet been exhausted of all of its possibilities. It has been and still is extremely productive in urging philosophers to pose questions about life’s orientation and manifestation of its vitality, as well as the future of humanity. According to Husserl,

To the philosopher and to a generation of philosophers, acting responsibly in a human and cultural space, there accrues, also deriving from this cultural space, responsibilities and corresponding actions. It is the same here as it is generally for men in times of danger. For the sake of the life-task that has been taken up [e.g., reflective thinking, and the reconstruction of the social

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<sup>4</sup> Husserl, E., *Philosophy and the Crisis of European Man* (Lecture delivered by Edmund Husserl, Vienna, 10 May 1935; therefore often referred to as “The Vienna Lecture”).

<sup>5</sup> Husserl, E., *Logical Investigations*, Routledge, 2001, p. 178.

world as self-reflective, self-accountable community], in times of danger one must first let these very tasks alone and do what will make a normal life possible again in the future. The effect will generally be such that the total life-situation, and with it the original life-tasks, has been changed or in the end has even become fully without an object. Thus reflection is required in every sense in order to right ourselves.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, Husserl opts for a solution within the field of “normal life,” where neither the rationalistic nor the humanistic worldview has to be given up. Husserl is sensitive to the sense emerging in the opposition between human life’s measurable and unmeasurable aspects.

As early as his lectures on the phenomenology of the internal consciousness of time, Husserl stresses, “Phenomenology, of course, excludes the actuality of nature, the actuality of heaven and earth, of men and beasts, of one’s own Ego and the Egos of others; but it retains, so to speak, their soul, their sense.”<sup>7</sup> Thus, Husserl opens up a new space for sense and meaning, but as well a space for a renewed reevaluation of the whole corpus of knowledge and the intrinsic relations between philosophy, natural sciences, and the humanities and, it is necessary to add, a new sense for space and time of philosophy itself. The task of phenomenological reduction is to avoid psychologism and relativism, as well as naive realism and naturalism. If Husserl thus is trying to find a way out of the positivistic, neo-Kantian impasse of philosophy, Hans George Gadamer entrusts the hermeneutic philosophy with an analogous task, what he describes as the need to “go beyond the bourgeoisie’s blind faith in education, where the tradition survived, and to bring it back to: its original powers.”<sup>8</sup>

If Gadamer’s philosophy strives to appropriate what calls “Bildung,” which he maintains stand, in for knowledge constituted into the humanities, Husserl, even if his understanding of philosophy differed remarkably from that of Gadamer, in like manner seemed to accept the absolute character of the presupposition. Nevertheless, it is often declared that their respective views regarding the status of the presupposition can be described as asymptotic and even opposite. Hermeneutics, poised on interpretation, defines the presupposition as a tool for mutual understanding and a base for its “universality claim”; phenomenology acknowledges the so-called “natural attitude” as that area of our knowledge to which we should return constantly to renew our reflection on the “things themselves.” If Gadamer, following Martin Heidegger, favors

<sup>6</sup> Husserl, E., *Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, Northwestern University Press, 1970, p. 392.

<sup>7</sup> Husserl, E., *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, Springer, 1991, p. 347.

<sup>8</sup> Gadamer, H.,-G., *Philosophical Apprentisage*.

tradition and is rather critical of what he calls Husserlian Cartesianism,<sup>9</sup> then Husserl, though he is not lobbying for neo-Cartesianism, retains not only the “spirit of the new kind of rationalism,”<sup>10</sup> but also urges us to “inquire back into those things taken for granted.”<sup>11</sup> In *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to Phenomenological Philosophy*, Husserl stressed

In fact, what, above all, must be brought to insight is that *extensio*, rightly understood, distinguishes nature in the first sense from the nature in the second sense, although the fully comprehensive essential attribute of material being is not mere extension but is, instead, materiality, so far as this latter in itself requires temporal as well as spatial extension.<sup>12</sup>

In his phenomenological striving to be more radical than Husserl, Heidegger nevertheless asserts that “thematic field of phenomenology is not derived phenomenologically by going back to things themselves but by going back to a traditional idea of philosophy.”<sup>13</sup> Impressive as it is, such a formula weakens the radicalness of Husserlian “beginning”; Heidegger stresses only the Husserlian striving for the ideal of *mathesis universalis*, taking it in the perspective of the “elaboration of pure consciousness as the thematic field of phenomenology,” but not in the perspective of the things themselves. But it is exactly with the inherently phenomenological striving of the incessant return to the things themselves that the Husserlian development of the transcendental aesthetic is linked.<sup>14</sup> Husserl’s transcendental aesthetic is part of his transcendental philosophy with its phoenix-like renewal of life and the duties of reason. In this it is both a continuation and a denial of Kantian transcendental aesthetics settled on the unformed sensibility<sup>15</sup> and form-giving

<sup>9</sup> Gadamer, H.-G., *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, University of California Press, 1977, p. 187. Thus, for example, he writes “Husserl acknowledged explicitly that the problem of intersubjectivity did not receive sufficient consideration within the framework of his appropriation of Cartesian . . . doubt. The same holds for the problem of the life-world. Nevertheless, even more than the problem of intersubjectivity this problem remains alive and unsettled in Husserl’s later works.”

<sup>10</sup> Husserl, E., *Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* Northwestern University press, 1970, p. 83.

<sup>11</sup> Husserl, E., *ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>12</sup> Husserl, E., *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, Springer, 1990, p. 32.

<sup>13</sup> Heidegger, M., . . .

<sup>14</sup> Thus J.-F. Lyotard reevaluating Husserl’s ambitions, writes “Kant had already investigated the a priori condition of knowledge, but this a priori already prejudiced the solution. Phenomenology wishes to avoid even this hypostasis—thus its interrogative style, its radicalism, its essential incompleteness.” *Lyotard, J.-F., Phenomenology*, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1991, p. 32.

<sup>15</sup> Donn Welton writes that “What Kant called the mainfold, Husserl shows, is not formless but preformed, yet it has a type of perceptual or aesthetic significance that Kant could only think of as ‘preconceptual’ and, therefore, ‘precategorical.’” *Welton, D., The Other Husserl: Horizons of Transcendental Phenomenology*, Indiana University Press, 2002, p. 299.

understanding, leading to modernist art philosophy. From the point of view of Heidegger’s criticism of Husserl as expressed by Dan Zahavi, “because of his exclusive interest in intentionality, Husserl identified the Being of consciousness with the Being of objects and consequently failed to uncover the unique mode of Being characterizing intentional subjectivity itself,”<sup>16</sup> which is analogous to Husserl’s critique of Kant, when he claimed that Kant limited his treatment of objectivity to that of physical things.

The thing as an object of theoretical knowledge is no more than a limit of human consciousness, but thanks to Husserl’s idea of intentionality, it is not left inscribed in the context of the Kantian division of human capacities, but is placed instead between the realms of passivity and activity of human consciousness. Thus, as will be outlined later, the very presentation of the presencing of the actuality of the living present is de-presencing. In a way, this is illustrated by the concept of “horizon.” Each object we encounter has both internal and external horizons, and as it is proper to the horizon, it hinges us on a possibility and a limit. Thus, the object’s “outer horizon” is indefinitely extendible until it embraces the whole world. Heidegger seems to think that the concept of horizon is linked with the epistemic and therefore is too limited, which is why he looks for another, more fundamental concept, which he describes as the concept of region. But also in this case, he is doing no more than developing the impetus of the Husserlian “radical beginning.”

#### ELLIPSIS: PASSIVITY AND DISINTEREST

*Why are things as they are? Why is life as it is? Why do human beings strive in such a way and no other? Answering these questions is the vocation of philosophy.*

Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka. Interview

*A vivre autrement, et mieux. Non pas mieux, plus justement.*

Jacques Derrida, *Spectres de Marx*, 1993, p. 15.

What is the exact distance that permits us to see things as they are? The instrumental attitude is well known, and, although richly criticized, it still pervades our practical solutions, through self-interest, whereas the so-called aesthetic attitude, according to Immanuel Kant, is founded on disinterest. Based on a peculiar way of contemplation, the aesthetic attitude in its turn has been traditionally seen as the bedrock for a specifically Western kind of reasoning and experience. It has been regarded as a way of excluding “minor” arts and other means of artistic production as well as everyday aesthetic practices of non-Western cultures. The instrumental and aesthetic attitudes

<sup>16</sup> Zahavi, D., Inner Time-Consciousness and Pre-reflective Self-awareness. In *The New Husserl*, Ed. by Donn Welton, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2003, p. 157.

were subjects to philosophical research and criticism in the twentieth century. The main impulse toward rethinking our stance things and thus allowing us to re-open our Western ways of aesthetic reasoning has come from the movement initiated by Husserl. The radicalism of his phenomenological aesthetics is based on a suspension of the differences between the theoretical, practical, and aesthetic<sup>17</sup> He asserted.

Als das reflektierende Ich bin ich dann nicht dasjenige Ich, das Wahrnehmungsglauben vollzieht, in dem das Kunstwerk als Ding die subjektiven Geltung als daseiendes gewinnt; bin ich auch nicht dasjenige Ich, das in seinem wertnehmenden Tun, in seiner vielgestaltigen Erziehung wertender Intentionen, der Wertgestalt des Kunsgebildes Gemuetgeltung gewinnt, „ in der sie“ dem Gemuete zueignet ist; und ebenso bin ich dann nicht das Ich, das ev. Noch, in einer Aenderung der Einstellung, theoretisch, beschreibt un kunsthistorisch einordnet.<sup>18</sup>

In his essay “Eye and Mind” (1964), Merleau-Ponty stated that sight is the feeling of distance, and that it is the intimate relation between sight and touch that allows us to be more immersed in the world; “sight-space” and “touch-space” are in the same world, a world that, by being embodied and having the requisite senses, we all share.

Descartes saw the necessity of the connection, but let philosophy and natural science be developed on the basis of the polarity between the *res cogitans* and the *res extensa*, resulting in an extremely successful natural science. Husserl based his analysis on the inseparable connection between *res cogitans* and *res extensa*, thus paving the way to a new balance. If Husserl in his transcendental aesthetic avoided the division between *res cogitans* and *res extensa* and thus left open the link between the material and the sublime, then Heidegger with his theory of *Dasein* in disconnection with “reality” took an anti-aesthetic stance. Thus Heidegger took sides with Hegel and elaborated his philosophy of art from the perspective of the “death of art,” while a genetically oriented analysis remains in touch with the Kantian approach. For Levinas, on the basis of Kantian distinctions, the artist is not interested in the intelligibility of the object; instead of a concept, he prefers an image, which helps him to neutralize all real relations with the object.

In art, that which vanishes into utility and knowledge reappears outside its usefulness, outside all real relations, in a space strictly uncrossable, infinitely fragile, only proximally there at all,

<sup>17</sup> Husserl, E., *Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Philosophy*, Northwestern University Press, 1970, p. 341.

<sup>18</sup> Husserl, E., *Erste (1923/24). Zweiter Teil Theorie aer phaenomenologischen Reduktion, Philosophic*. Haag, Martin Nijhoff, 1959, p. 107.

as if its existence had been paralyzed, or as if the object led a phantom existence parallel to its truth.<sup>19</sup>

The image occupies an empty space and therefore is essentially passive.

As remarked by John Sallis, “In lieu of looking for the reduction of the distance, aesthetics simply takes distance as a constitutive feature of art.”<sup>20</sup>

#### “HERE” AND “NOW”: SPACE OF AESTHETICS AND OF ART

*The earth is the matrix of our time as it is of our space.*

Maurice Merleau-Ponty

*We can have each other to dinner. We ourselves, and with each other by our converse, can create, not an architecture of global scope, but an immense, intricate network of intimacy, illumination, and understanding.*

Robert Oppenheimer

*The vocation of philosophy in the West from the time of the ancient Greeks has been that of answering the questions that no other branch of knowledge can answer.*

Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka

It is language that makes possible the aesthetic distance between myself and the world through which I can speak about the world and the world in turn speak in me, asserts Merleau-Ponty.<sup>21</sup> Edward Bullow maintains the idea of aesthetic distance,<sup>22</sup> which, he believes, contains more than just the physical or temporal aspects of distance. He stresses “That all art requires a distance-limit beyond which and a distance within which only, aesthetic appreciation becomes possible.”<sup>23</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Wall, T. C., *Radical Passivity: Levinas, Blanchot, and Agamben*, SUNY Press, Albany, 1999, p. 14.

<sup>20</sup> Sallis, J., *Die Verwindung der Aesthetik*, *Heidegger-Jahrbuch* 2, p. 194.

<sup>21</sup> Merleau-Ponty, M. *Prose of the World*, Northwestern University Press, 1973, p. XXXV.

<sup>22</sup> The frame of reference that an artist creates by the use of technical devices in and around the work of art to differentiate it psychologically from reality. The German playwright Bertolt Brecht used his dramatic theory, known in English as the alienation effect, to accomplish aesthetic distance. Aesthetic distance sometimes is described as “An antiromantic term describing the desired distance between the subjective reality of the individual who undergoes experiences and the objective reality of the art that dramatizes experiences through its impersonal form. The term may also be used to describe the proper attitude of the reader, who should recognize the autonomy of art from its creator, neither identifying with the characters nor supposing that the attitudes, ideas, values, emotions, and norms embodied in the work have any necessary or immediate connection with those endorsed by the author in real life.”

<sup>23</sup> Bullow, E., *Psychical distance as a Factor in Art and Aesthetic Principle*, in Bullow, E., *Aesthetics Lectures and Essays*, Stanford University Press, 1957, p. 107.

What interests me is not well-known differences between these philosophers, but the similar striving to rethink the thing, which goes back to Kant's *Ding-an-sich* as well as the Cartesian *res*:

"The encompassing earth, he suggests, provides the most immediate, bodily awareness of space, from which all later conceptions of space are derived. . . . Further, while contemporary science maintains that 'in reality' the earth is in motion (around its own axis, and around the sun), Husserl maintains that the very concepts of 'motion' and 'rest' derive all their meaning from our primary, bodily experience of being in motion or at rest relative to the 'absolute' rest of the 'earth-basis.'

The Copernican Theory does "not agree with our spontaneous sensory perception, which remain[s] the experience of a radiant orb traversing the sky of a stable earth."

Husserl is pointing to the "here" and "now" as the crucial point of our earthly being, which we are anxious to keep. As Edward S. Casey, remarks "Husserl agrees with Kant that the orientation of things around me depends on my body; but Husserl locates the source of such orientation not in the body's two-sidedness but in its exceptional position as an "absolute here."<sup>24</sup>

Contact aesthetics involves a certain kind of making (*poesis*) in which life is exposed to its temporal limits, thereby releasing experience as an entanglement of the body in affective history. The body is made to feel this contact through a rearrangement of perception (for instance, through visual bricolage), so that what was once seen to be natural and self-evident becomes fraught with an invasion of materiality from the 'outside'. The critical work here is to expose this outside materiality as part of the substrate of perception itself, its regional terrain, repressed, overlooked, or discarded in the drive for purity and originality. To do this is to rethink the experience of the present, to submit it to experimentation, to expose it to the trauma of the past as an affect in the real time of present experience, and to release it into the global field as potential for new ways of thinking and feeling—at the very edge of the earth.

Thus, phenomenology (Husserl, Heidegger, Levinas, Nancy, and others) poses significant challenges to traditional aesthetic teachings, pushing forward an aesthetic reflection that is sensitive to openness, and singularity that is ethical in its responsibility to others. Levinas poses the question

Is to disengage oneself from the world always to go beyond, toward the region of Platonic ideas and toward the eternal which towards above the world? Can one not speak of a disengagement

<sup>24</sup> Casey, E. S., *The Fate of Place. A Philosophical History*, University of California Press, 1998, p. 225.

on the hither side—of an interruption of time by a movement going on the hither side of time, in its “interstices”<sup>25</sup>

The opening between measured space and time and lived space and time allowed by Husserl’s phenomenological analysis offers a more hospitable attitude to culture as potentiality:

Reading-as-culture produces an attitude of readiness for companionship; and in this, it is like dance, where movement is autonomous yet also ready for relation with—hospitable to—movements of other partners. Cultural reading such as this is that which happens between determinacy and indeterminacy: culture, we might say, is the potentiality for culture.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Levinas, E., Reality and its Shadow, in *The Continental Aesthetics Reader*, Ed. by Clive Cazeaux, Routledge, London, 2000, p. 118.

<sup>26</sup> Docherty, T., Aesthetic Education and the Demise of Experience, in *The New Aestheticism*. Ed. by J. J. Joughin and S. Malpas, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2003, p. 33.

ART AS THE POSSIBILITY OF PHILOSOPHICAL  
*PAIDEIA*

At a first glance, the title “Art As the Possibility of Philosophical *Paideia*” may seem somewhat weird and problematic, perhaps even pretentious. How *could* art be the possibility of philosophical *paideia*?

According to Plato, philosophical *paideia* is the dialogue of the soul with herself. But in *Laws*, Plato plays with the words *paidia* and *paideia* on the basis of the experience that it is art itself that opens the possibility of philosophic *paideia*. However, what are the options for this possibility in today’s “technological” time and world?

This discussion of art as the possibility of philosophy has no pretense of providing the reasons for art’s influence on philosophy by making it more productive, an issue of minor importance since it neither stems from the inner essence of philosophy nor recurs to it. The basic issue is rather art as the *inner and essential possibility* of philosophy.

But doesn’t this prove even weirder, more problematic and pretentious? It most certainly is. Especially if it lacks the basic insight into the historical possibility of philosophical thinking, or even denies it. But still, what could be the meaning of the historical claim for philosophy as science, even the strictest science? Is it perhaps that, in view of its method and content, philosophy should subject itself to one of the existing sciences? Ever since the full swing of the so-called positive sciences in the nineteenth century, such attempts have proved unsuccessful in the long term. The claim for “philosophy as science” goes as follows: In its development, philosophy is supposed to ascend to the level of science, that is, become science all by itself for itself. The same thing happens if we attempt to meet the claims for philosophy as art, although it remains in the shadow of the first claim. The development of philosophy witnessed the interweaving as well as antagonism between the two endeavours—the first endeavour for scientific philosophy realized in Hegel, the second one for artistic philosophy perhaps reaching its peak in Schelling. Philosophy as art, philosophy as science—these are two traditionally asserted ideas of philosophy, which are in total opposition, but still pertain to one another. However, is this still true?

It appears as if the endeavour to take philosophy as the strictest science reached its final relevant movement with Husserl. We can be less certain about the endeavour to take philosophy as art, which was also advocated by Nietzsche and his followers all the way to the phenomenologists and deconstructivists. This giving vent to anti-Platonism can well conceal the ambiguity in Plato's doctrine of art, which is further determined by its mysterious doctrine of ideas. What is certain, however, is that, ever since Plato, the idea of art has been an issue for philosophy, which has tried to discover the essential origin of art in the phenomenon of *mimesis*, imitation.

However, if we talk today about art as the possibility of philosophical *paideia*, either together with Nietzsche and against Plato or without them, we can certainly no longer hope for the possibility of developing philosophy from the idea of art as either mimesis or the sensible shining of the Idea. *We have no idea of art at all.* Likewise we have no idea of a philosophical *paideia* that could provide us with such an idea and set it as an ideal. At the utmost, every now and then attempts are made to offer some synthetic reflection on past and present artistic production as the basis of learning about various theories of aesthetics and art. There is no trace of a philosophical idea of art, only a piling up of representations, views, impressions, observations, turning head over heels at symposia on aesthetics.

However, even the most serious philosophers of the previous century did not see any real possibility for philosophy to be able to provide an idea of art and set it as its own canon. The future possibility of the "eidetic coexistence" of art and philosophy concerns a *fundamental impossibility*, which is itself more powerful than any possible coexistence. Today, art and philosophy are drawing closer to one another only in the *necessity* of mutual impossibility. The topic "art as the possibility of philosophical *paideia*" therefore stumbles upon an impossibility that could be expressed in a well-known phrase: *art at the end of philosophy—philosophy at the end of art.*

In the common understanding, the state of ending is seen in the exhaustion of all possibilities or in cessation. However, coming to an end can also mean reaching a goal. The end can also mean the reached goal, and therefore accomplishment in the sense of perfection. If this goal is understood in the original sense of the Greek *telos*, the end as such perfected accomplishment is far from implying the cessation of further possibilities; rather, it implies the gathering of all possibilities as the enabling of all possibilities—the peak of possibilities.

The end of art at the end of philosophy would therefore mean: *the gathering of all existing possibilities in their infinite perspective.* Anyone acquainted with the events in the art world at the end of the nineteenth century and in

the twentieth century will most surely accede to this. We could even say that art has definitely become empowered or that it has moved in the constant becoming of its empowerment. At its end, art therefore does not imply the cessation of art, but rather its ultimate will to power, which also enables philosophy as “artistic metaphysics.”

But where does then the horrifying needfulness and emergency stem from if art today assumes the appearance of power? Does this needfulness perhaps lie in that art assumes the mere appearance of power and *is* lost in the truth of its essence? The end of art does indeed enable the unending unleashing of artistic production, which, however, reveals the essential *loss* of art.

Bearing in mind the aforementioned relatedness of the end and end point of possibilities, we could illustrate this condition of art with the metaphor of the javelin thrower (how very Greek it is!) in his most intensive and powerful moment, but with the point of his javelin pointing nowhere, aiming at no goal, aimlessly suspended in the void. This is the artistic endeavour in its ultimate possibilities today. What is it that allows such a strong judgement?

We are not passing any value judgment on art. The word is about the eventuating of the essence of art. The word about the essence of art is all but a theoretical or critical treatise on artistic phenomena and their essences beyond phenomena. It is not about the essence lying hidden in the artistic appearance, which should be brought to light; neither is it about the essence in the sense of inner condition of possibility. Rather, it is about the eventuating essence in the sense of eventuating differentiation, which brings us face to face with a certain kind of *essential decision*. And from this essential decisive perspective, we can well take the risk of, and are even obliged to pass, a judgment: Despite all of the artistic production, despite all of the obsession with artistic consumption, and particularly because of it, the human being of today is *essentially without art*, slithering into the *abyss of inessentiality*.

It would be therefore more appropriate to speak of the condition of *artlessness* rather than of the end of art, which relates to Hegelian topics.

“Artlessness,” “*Kunstlosigkeit*,” is an indication that Heidegger played with in the closing chapter of his “second capital work,” *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*.<sup>1</sup> This is by all means a formulation worth considering within the framework of his thinking of enowning, particularly in view of Heidegger’s essay on the origin of the work of art from 1935, which announces the shift to the level of the thinking of enowning. The very fact that Heidegger includes art by way of the indication of artlessness into the thinking of the history of Being points toward a possibility of co-possibility of philosophy and art, which is different from the one we are used to:

The art-lessness stems not from the impossibility and decay but rather from the power of knowledge of essential determinations which demand from us to pass through all that has so far, and rather rarely, happened as art. On the horizon of this knowing, art has lost its relation to culture: here it unfolds solely as the enowning of Being.<sup>72</sup>

The artlessness is an appeal to the essential decision on art from out of its impossibility, which is itself more powerful than all its possibilities and actualities. And since this is the essential decision on the origin of art, it is here that, as Heidegger indicates in the title of his Athens lecture of 1967, *The Provenience of Art and the Definition of Thinking*,<sup>3</sup> the place of the essential determination of philosophy looms on the horizon.

What is it that allows Heidegger to express this indication? With what right do we speak of artlessness? Whether and how can artlessness be, or needs to be experienced in the art work itself if it is said to disappear in view of its artlessness in its essential presence? Whether and how can the experience of artlessness be affirmed by the artwork itself, or at least by the shift in the understanding of the artwork, which overcomes the aesthetic relationship of philosophy to art?

These questions are immediately related to two views that philosophy in its changing relationship with art or the artwork has attempted to put into force after Hegel. What is problematic and questionable more than the artwork itself is therefore the experience of art, that is, the experience enabled by the artwork.

Overcoming aesthetics in the philosophical experience of art is determined by a *shift from the perceptive experience within consciousness to the event in the world*: An artwork cannot be experienced on the basis of the so-called aesthetic feeling but rather as an artistic event. We have to avoid using the phrase "aesthetic event" since aesthetics itself is closely related to the sphere of the perceptive consciousness in general. The character of the artwork as an event becomes more understandable if we relate it to the basic claim that art should be understood from the perspective of art itself, which means *from its own truth*. *The artwork is therefore an event, which comes out from the truth of art itself*. If we spoke earlier of the shift from aesthetic consciousness to event, which is characteristic of attempts at overcoming aesthetics in the philosophical relationship with art, we can now claim that such a shift takes place *in the very manner in which the artwork discloses perception itself*. This aspect of the artwork, namely that it discloses perception, is especially conspicuous in the art of the twentieth century. It is of course quite obvious that the perceptibility thus disclosed, which can be identified with the openness of experience in general, cannot be reduced to any epistemological model of perception. Artwork has a constitutive character of being-in-the-world, it is

world-constitutive. It is on this ground that we can explain how the artwork has entered the field of aesthetics in the first place, namely as *aisthesis*. By perceiving the artwork as an event in the world rather than as a product of conscious experience, we are, at least preliminarily, set free from the prevailing aesthetic relationship of philosophy and art itself, that is, from its specific worldly character.

This of course raises the question as to what happens to the world itself. If it is art itself in its world-constitutive dimension that opens up the experience of the world, then it is obvious that we cannot reckon upon some extant experience of the world that would help us explain art, and this is exactly what happens if we take aesthetic perception and experience as our point of departure. Quite the contrary: Art itself essentially determines how real the reality is, as well as the power of appearance in which this reality reveals itself. This is why in the artwork the truth of the world shines forth.

What does “artlessness” mean within the context of this world-constitutive character of art? It could well be put in accordance with some sort of *worldlessness* as the presently generally acknowledged condition of human history. However, this leaves us with at least two unknowns: *artlessness* and *worldlessness*. What is their mutual relationship? Perhaps the way to the answer could be paved more easily if we refer to Heidegger’s 1935 essay on the origin of the work of art, in which a special emphasis is laid on the tension between the world and the earth in their mutual opposition, as harmonized by the artistic image. The mutual relationship of the earth and the world is revealed from within the experience of Greek *physis* as the self-concealing unconcealment (*aletheia*). Hans-Georg Gadamer, who received the impulse for his hermeneutics of artwork from Heidegger, in his introduction to the Reclam publication of this essay, put special emphasis on the extraordinary introduction of the earth as a philosophical concept. What is so unusual in the concept of “earth”? Does the earth itself mysteriously point to the truth of art and even artlessness? This vein of thought was indicated by Gadamer’s student Gianni Vattimo. In *The End of Modernity*, as in his other works, Vattimo draws attention to the significance of the concept of earth in Heidegger’s understanding of the world-constituting nature of art:

The earth and *physis* are that which *temporalizes*: literally, that which matures and also ‘temporalizes’, if we pursue the etymological usage of this word in *Being and Time*. The world’s Other, the earth, is not constant, but rather, and quite the contrary, it shows itself as that which always withdraws into ‘naturalness’, which gives temporalization, generation and passing away with the marks of time on the face. The work of art is the only type of product which deems ageing a positive phenomenon, which is actively involved in determining new possibilities of meaning.<sup>4</sup>

Vattimo sees that the earth, understood in relation to *physis*, creatively mediates at the time of the end of art; he likewise acknowledges that the end should be understood as letting artistic production be what it is; however, he does not see through all the implications and remains philosophically distanced from the notion of the earth, even in view of what he reveals as the “structure of artistic revolutions.”

If we previously determined the historical essence of art in its world-constitution, this proves to be only one half of the truth, which has itself the character of the beautiful appearance of the world. The full truth as the revealing of artwork lies, according to Heidegger’s explication in *The Origin of Work of Art*, in the mutual counter position of world and earth, in a founding that founds the strife between the earth and the world and implies the artistic framework of truth as concealment of the self-concealing unconcealment. It is in this context that the full meaning of Greek words *aletheia* and *physis* comes to light, and Greek art thus becomes a historically determining art, that is, the world-constituting art. And this is also where the major predicament of searching for the origin of art comes about. Not only is it unrepeatable; it also holds sway in its withdrawnness. We are thus compelled to search from a certain end point rather than from a certain beginning, which means that the very drawing near of the origin must necessarily include the experience of withdrawnness, and this is only possible in the experience of artlessness. Furthermore, if we read Heidegger’s treatise on the origin of art carefully, we cannot but notice that the experience of artlessness is always latently present throughout the work, without ever becoming explicit:

Are we in our existence historically at the origin? Do we know, which means do we give heed to, the essence of the origin? Or, in our relation to art, do we still merely make appeal to a cultivated acquaintance with the past?<sup>5</sup>

Obviously in Heidegger, both in view of the experience of the origin and of the primordial experience of the artwork, there lies a considerable predicament, which is to a large extent related to the fact that the origin is historically Greek and indicated in the words *physis—poiesis—techne*. This predicament becomes ever so apparent in the very determination of the essential origin of art. In the supplement to the treatise on the origin of the work of art in the Reclam edition in 1960, Heidegger admitted to it—it is the phrase “*Ins-Werk-Setzen*,” “setting-into-work” in the determination of art as “*Ins-Werk-Setzen der Wahrheit*,” setting-into-work of truth, which comes really close to the determination of modern technology as *Gestell*, enframing (this is the expression he actually uses in *The Question of Technology*<sup>6</sup>). Heidegger is opposed to such levelling and rather sheds

light to its terminological background, indicating “Enframing, as the essence of modern technology, derives from the Greek way of experiencing letting-lie-forth, *logos*, from the Greek *poiesis* and *thesis*.”<sup>7</sup> However, this close interrelation of “art” and “technology” at the Greek beginning is something entirely different from the levelling of art and technology in the times of the technological reproduction of art, to use Benjamin’s expression. Thus this reflection on the essence of art unavoidably raises the fundamental question of the essence of technology.

Today, there is no balance between technology and art. In view of its essential production, art is entirely dependent on technology. The epochal movement of technology is characterized as a cybernetic levelling of everything according to everything and therefore also of art itself. And in this respect the end of art, in the meaning of letting its ultimate possibilities be, is caused techno-poetically—as unconditioned. Within the framework of the spreading of the so-called media culture as the sphere of techno-poeticity, art is facing numberless possibilities, which, however, are lacking in essentiality. Art has lost its essential world-constituting possibility and has, *in its essence*, become estranged from itself—artless.

This estrangement is *essential* “estrangement on earth.” Earthly estrangement (homelessness) is an essential characteristic of the very “lessness” of artlessness and worldlessness.<sup>8</sup> In view of this estrangement, there arises the question as to what is going on with the earth and the world in the times of techno-poetical reproduction? Is it today, in view of the Greek origin, still possible to talk about the mutual relationship between the world and the earth and the harmonization of the strife between them, which is the basic distinctive mark of the Greek origin of art? If we treat the artwork as the harmonization of the strife between the earth and the world in the shining of beauty of the self-concealing unconcealment, we could then say that, at the Greek beginning, the earthly in the manner of *physis* so to say let from itself the world shine forth, a certain historical world; and vice versa, that the world let from itself the earth back into concealment. The human being was let into this circular game of answering of the earth and the world in the manner of *techne* and could thus serve as the very origin of the artwork.

What about today, in the age of technology? It seems as if the earth and the world no longer evince any mutual interrelationship and that they are in a state of some sort of mutual non-letting, which enables the spreading of techno-poiesis. Today, worldlessness as the general spiritual condition implies that the earth is without the world, just as we could on the other hand speak about the world without the earth. Earth is estranged from the world and the

world is estranged from the earth. It is in this co-estrangement that artlessness is rooted as the speechlessness in the face of the unsettledness of the world and the earth.

But did we not say that it is the end of art that gathers infinite possibilities of art? Is not then the condition of the earth without the world and the world without the earth merely a simple fiction? Exactly so, but it is the kind of fiction that supports itself and enables the piling up of all possibilities of art into a whole of what we are striving to put into force within the framework of media culture as virtual reality. All this is of course possible, even more than possible, but it is also lacking in any essence. In this respect, the essential experience of artlessness redeems us from the idols of this manipulative fictionality, which art itself is pouring into techno-poetically. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Hermann in this regard mentions so-called abstract art:

Abstract art gets its determination from the self-withdrawal of the world from the innerworldly, world-gathering things, which belong as things to the self-secluding earth. In abstract art, the struggle of the world and the earth has been replaced by setting up bringing into the fore for the sake of constructivist creation.<sup>9</sup> It is of no avail to take the side of concrete art; concreteness is solely the other side of abstractness and “in the thing” or “in the illusion” one and the same mechanical fictionality, in which the earth appears as the “unworld of going astray.”<sup>10</sup> Heidegger pays particular attention to the fictional character of the techno-poetical rearrangement of the earth:

It is the will, universally regulated in technology, that tears the earth into weariness, exploitation and changing of the artificial. Technology forces the earth over the circle of its possibilities into what is no longer possible and is therefore impossible.<sup>11</sup> We are here dealing with power that ignores all that is possible, turning it into the impossible. The power of the impossible is the essential power of fiction. And the most powerful is the fiction of the unsettledness of the earth and the world.

This impossibility of fiction as earth empowering and disempowering is the essential origin of the mutual impossibility of art and philosophy today. Nevertheless, we need to raise the question as to where art as the needfulness of artlessness can still become the essential possibility of philosophy. The question does not ask about a certain place that art could occupy, but rather about a certain possibility of art in its end as infinite illusion to finally become a place of creative dwelling on earth.

Insofar as it settles us in the place of the possibility of the possible, art, drawn into the needfulness of artlessness, is the possibility of philosophical *paideia*, of the essential decision on dwelling on earth under the sky as the possible entirety of the world. In the poverty of its “less-ness,” artlessness fills us with the wealth of Being. The more art is drawing away from art, the more art is becoming artless, all the more mysterious is the *paideia* of dwelling on

earth, in which the world eventuates. Poetic thinking, which stems from this possibility of the possible, comes from the heart of dwelling. It brings about the measure of Being, which is lightest in its bringing down the sky to the earth. And it is the most difficult measure of all measures in its pulling up the earth into the sky.

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#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> M. Heidegger, *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*, GA 65, Frankfurt am Main, 1989.
- <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 505.
- <sup>3</sup> M. Heidegger, Die Herkunft der Kunst und die Bestimmung des Denkens, in *Distanz und Nähe. Reflexionen zur Kunst der Gegenwart*, ed. Petra Jaeger and Rudolf Lütke, K&N, pp. 11–22.
- <sup>4</sup> G. Vattimo, *La fine della modernità*, Milan, 1985, p. 52.
- <sup>5</sup> M. Heidegger, The Origin of the Work of Art, in *Basic Writings*, London: Routledge, 1993, p. 203.
- <sup>6</sup> M. Heidegger, Die Frage nach der Technik, in *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, Pfullingen: Neske, 1984, pp. 9–40.
- <sup>7</sup> The Origin of the Work of Art, *op. cit.*, p. 209. (“Das Ge-stell als Wesen der modernen Technik kommt vom griechisch erfahrenen Vorliegenlassen, *logos*, von griechischen *poiesis* und *thesis*”; *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*, Stuttgart, 1960, p. 89.)
- <sup>8</sup> The strange, “*fremd*,” is understood here in the meaning emphasized by Heidegger in his explanation of Trakl’s poem and its line “the soul feels like a stranger on earth” (*Es ist die Seele eines Fremdes auf Erden*): “somewhere else onwards, on the way to . . . , towards that which withholds itself” (M. Heidegger, Die Sprache in Gedicht, in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, GA 12, Frankfurt am Main, 1989, p. 30).
- <sup>9</sup> F.-W. von Herrmann, Technik und Kunst im seynsgeschichtlichen Fragehorizont, in *Kunst und Technik. Gedächtnisschrift zum 100. Geburtstag von Martin Heidegger*, ed. W. Biemel and Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, Frankfurt am Main, 1989, p. 42.
- <sup>10</sup> M. Heidegger, Überwindung der Methaphysik, in *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, Pfullingen: Neske, 1990, p. 93.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94.

CAN ART BE TAUGHT?

The question of whether art can be taught has come up recently in the general literature: Calvin Tomkins' April 15, 2002, *New Yorker* article of the same name<sup>1</sup> and James Elkins' 2001 *Why Art Cannot be Taught: A Handbook for Art Students*.<sup>2</sup> Tomkins exposes the politics of art education at Harvard; Elkins focuses on the realities of the training of artists in American universities, colleges, and schools of art, arguing that the teaching of art cannot be improved by trying to rationalize the arts-education system (grown to this point through much trial and error) because art itself cannot be rationalized. "There is no way to know if it is a good idea to understand something that works by not being understood. ... It does not make sense to try to understand how art is taught."<sup>3</sup> He concludes that even "if it were possible to produce a full account of how art is taught it might be a boring, irrelevant, pernicious document, something that should be locked away."<sup>4</sup> After being associated with higher education for more than thirty-five years as a professor and a student, I have decided to "speak my piece."

SOURCES OF THE ARGUMENT

I have relied on a number of sources for the major arguments of this chapter:

1. Anna Teresa Tymieniecka,<sup>5</sup> because she sees the creative imagination as the fountainhead of the *logos* of life.
2. Jacques Maritain<sup>6</sup> for references, and because, like Tymieniecka, he refuses to give reason primacy over art. Rather, his Thomist system insists that art follows an order superior to that of reason, Augustine's *ordo amoris*, the order of love.
3. Physician Phil Overby, whose discussion on the moral education of physicians has much to bear on the training of artists.<sup>7</sup>
4. The accounts of contemporary, exemplary masters who choose to teach and thereby share their joy with another generation.

It is my own experiences and those of my colleagues, however, that provide a structure for my arguments. We attempt to teach art, I through its history and theory, they through the studio. We all have our doubts about our effectiveness as well as the legitimacy of trying to teach this highly individualized and

subjective activity. We all agree that teaching technique, methods, or theory—all the constitutive matters of art training—is not to teach “art,” any more than learning to measure the acceleration due to gravity with Fletcher’s trolley is science. These are but instrumental to the reality of art or of science.

While we in the humanities teach through lecture and discussion, scientists and artists insist on another component, indeed the major component: learning in a laboratory or studio where at least an attempt is made to educate the whole, at least more than mind and memory. Studios provide a balance that offset the deleterious effect purely of “philosophic” training so decried by Augustin Cochin in 1920:

Teaching in school instead of forming in the studio, having someone learn lessons instead of having him practice making—explaining instead of showing and correcting—it is this that constitutes the reform conceived by the philosophers and imposed by the Revolution.<sup>8</sup>

In my colleagues’ studio classes, the instructor works with each student individually to help him or her to develop. In Münir Beken’s basic music composition course, the students work out their own compositions with the help and advice of the teacher. Sometimes they do not follow advice or “rules,” insisting that the way they have designed the work is best. At the end of the term, their best composition is played by professional musicians, who critique its musicality and playability. Often students write music that is not possible for the instrument; they learn in a concrete way that writing music is not only about theory, about *their* will, but an *ars cooperativa*. It is *of* and *by* this world of things and their operators. They have learned that the great difficulty of art is tuning their creative imaginations to the realities of the world. It is also the difficulty of teaching, tuning the pedagogical creative imagination to the reality of the students—and vice versa.

#### TEACHING FREEDOM

Teaching art is more than training in technique or art history. What is essential to art is freedom to be creative. It may seem strange to make this argument in the twenty-first century, a period synonymous with freedom and even license. But this is a period when the world is indeed too much with us, enveloping our minds and spirits with prefabricated constellations of commodity and entertainments. Answers are so immediate to our fingertips that questions are merely ways to play with accumulated knowledge. Why self-search when we have Google?

Teaching creativity is a matter of setting up an environment in which the student can grow in knowledge and wisdom, an environment that is conducive

to fostering the possibility of art-making, by *not impeding* creativity. A good example of the latter is the career of pianist Gabriella Montero, who in her early twenties was told *not* to improvise by her teacher; this turned her completely away from the piano. It was not until she met the great Argentinean pianist Martha Argerich, who encouraged her to creative improvisations, that she grew into her own. Argerich's philosophy is clearly creative, not limited by "taste" or fettered by musical convention: "I think that that is life: until we die, we are always constructing ourselves."<sup>9</sup>

Maritain explains: "In every discipline and in all teaching the master only assists from the outside the principle of immanent activity which is within the pupil. From this point of view, teaching relates to the great notion of *ars cooperativa naturae*."<sup>10</sup> For him, rules and formulas are merely orthopedic and mechanical armatures, which replace the development of the *habitus* (activity immanent to the artist).<sup>11</sup>

An example of this can be found in the pedagogical history of Martha Argerich, who contrasts the methods of an early teacher with her best teacher, Friedrich Gulda, an extraordinary musician whose sound was unique:

[Gulda] achieved maximum expression without making any change of tempo, not even between the first and second theme. He was so immaculate and, at the same time, he had such a special sound. It had nothing to do with what Scaramuzza [an earlier teacher] told me, who always spoke of 'song,' of 'expressiveness.' This question of rhythm fascinated me totally with Gulda. Furthermore, Scaramuzza put emphasis on the round sound and Gulda at times achieved a sound that could be unpleasant for people. And that enchanted me.<sup>12</sup>

Art cannot be taught as a thing, a product; it can only be taught by shepherding the immanent creative imagination (Maritain's *habitus*) into fruition and just accomplishment.

#### THE HIPPOCRATIC METHOD

Thus, it seems to me that the first rule of teaching, like the first rule of doctoring, should be: "First do no harm." Hippocrates might seem a strange reference in the world of art, but remember that the aphorism *Ars longa, vita brevis* is also associated with him. It makes more medicinal sense in its context: "Life is short, art is long, opportunity fugitive, experimenting dangerous, reasoning difficult: it is necessary not only to do oneself what is right, but also to be seconded by the patient, by those who attend him, by external circumstances."<sup>13</sup> The art of medicine is not just about doling out pills. Healing consists in the cooperation of the patient, his caretakers, and the *umwelt*, not just the physician's expertise.

The great harm the teacher may do to his or her student is not a matter of technical mistakes, but the harm of lowering expectations of what art is, of its work, of its psychological challenge, of where the joy truly lies—in the conquest of these things as well as being relieved for a time of the pressures of self. The artist’s fulfillment lies in cooperating, in dancing with the other of the medium, its situational challenges and pains.

Indeed, Maritain insists that art works “for the good of the work made, *ad bonum operis*,”<sup>14</sup> the fact that it exists apart from oneself (as is the joy of parents; in this way J. M. W. Turner considered his paintings his children). Anything that turns the artist from that end diminishes the work. Anything that is self-seeking diminishes the work.<sup>15</sup> This being said, art making has the curious effect of transmuting pure self-interest into disinterestedness; see, for example, the great self-portraits that, according to my colleague Barbara Fugate, seek the experience of being alive in and through the process of making. The subjective act of looking into a mirror becomes the objective act of looking through a window, but all the while the artist fully participates in the process, moving from one “place” to another—“It’s a part of me and I’m a part of it”—in emulation of the process of life making.<sup>16</sup>

The process may start in the artist but moves between artist and work in such a way that the act rather than the product is the focus of enjoyment for the artist. There is no self-serving, self-glorification either in Maritain’s explanation, which emphasizes product, or in Fugate’s, which emphasizes process. The situation is the same for the teacher.

#### CREATIVE DESTRUCTION

If the teacher interjects himself or herself not as a problem presenter but as a problem solver, he or she has lifted the creative pressure in the artist’s work. By solving the problem for the student, by hurrying through his process of contemplation and struggle, by removing the probability of failure, the “teacher” cuts away any chance of true success. Part of the slow process of learning involves the student’s letting go of his or her old ways, submitting himself or herself to the other of the work—therefore the itchy process of shedding old constrictive skin. Part of the teacher’s mission is to offer the student opportunities for such creative destruction. Degas’s aphorism about painting applies to teaching as well: “It is a thing which requires as much cunning, rascality, and viciousness as the perpetration of a crime.”<sup>17</sup>

Tymieniecka explains that the initial stage of the creative process “breaks in the rigid structuring rules [already set us, so that a] reorientation of life’s avenues” might occur.<sup>18</sup> The art teacher should provide the student with the

opportunity of inventiveness. The art studio is the perfect place to exercise such creativity, for art is a harmless activity. The only harm is when students do not allow themselves the freedom to challenge what is in them, to work on the fringes of what they know, to construct their present rather than reconstruct their past.

Teaching creativity and inventiveness—and, therefore, teaching art—requires teachers to be ready to abandon constraints both for themselves and their students, as shown in the recent report of the Lemelson MIT and National Science Foundations Committee on the Study of Invention:

Effective inventors tend to display personality characteristics [Maritain's *habitus*] including resourcefulness, resilience, a commitment to practical action, nonconformity, passion for the work, unquenchable optimism, high persistence, high tolerance for complexity and ambiguity, willingness to delay gratification, and a critical stance toward their own work. They are able to embrace failure as a learning experience.<sup>19</sup>

Successful inventors are self-critical of their own work. They learn to abandon knowledge that may be too constraining, and they embrace failure as a learning experience. They show an alertness to practical problems and opportunities and an ability to match their talents with the problem using a tool kit of effective ways to conceptualize and break down the problems. Characteristically, inventors are deeply knowledgeable about their areas of endeavor, on both a theoretical and “hands-on” basis, while they are also comfortable working on the margins of established knowledge.<sup>20</sup>

Good teachers construct devious methods of foster inventiveness. In the theatre, in order to get nuances of meaning from a statement, actors do repetitions, repeating a phrase 25 to 30 times each with different inflections. Graphic design students make at least 125 thumbnails sketches for any concept they want to develop; only when they have reached 100 do they come close to novelty.

Novelty and inventiveness are part of the creative process, but do not completely define creativity, which is a complex process that involves several factors, as Tymieniecka distinguishes. While invention aims at one particular problem or endeavor, creation aims at the

instauration of a novel, original significant complex as a *matrix for unifying questions and answers of multiple issues* [emphasis added], ... [at] finding an embodiment ... of a type of independent ‘beingness’ within the formal structure of an independent object that will stand on its own ... in the world, and lastly, the object is not constructed in discreet phases, that is without apparent discontinuity which is so characteristic of inventiveness.<sup>21</sup>

Two examples will suffice. The first is Marlon Brando’s construction of one of his finest roles, an “independent being that stands on its own in the world,” the gunslinger in *Missouri Breaks*, by the process of *dis-emulation*, by creating a character unlike any of the stereotypes.<sup>22</sup> The character, while independent, is a part of the greater whole of the film. The second is of the

artists of Vilnius, Lithuania, who used the political system against itself when they instituted the tongue-in-cheek Respublika Užupis, with its own flag, president, constitution, and army of twelve, as a protest against the economic conditions of the city's artists.<sup>23</sup> The rights listed in their constitution include the following:

- 15. Everyone has the right to be in doubt, but this is not an obligation.
- 17. Everyone has the right to have faith.
- 21. Everyone has the right to appreciate his unimportance and magnificence.
- 38. Everyone has the right not to be afraid.<sup>24</sup>

Such an improbability is almost a perfect expression of the needs of a creative state (pun intended).

#### DEEP LEARNING

If the goals are sufficiently high, the student's deep learning<sup>25</sup> will not be direct, but tortuous and chaotic.<sup>26</sup> A comparison with medical training applies here. Phil Overby, a Fellow in Pediatric Neurology at Johns Hopkins, explains the medical graduate's grueling internship program in similar terms. As interns spend long days and nights in the hospital, "running from patient to patient," they let go of their old life and gain confidence in their abilities in their new life. Rewards grow as their devotion to their patients grows:

indeed, at some point in the year, if it goes as planned, the patients truly become his. He watches over them carefully, thinks of them at night. In this way, the ideals that brought the eager medical student to the profession are inculcated as moral virtues. The intern is broken down, and day after day his responsibilities are internalized until it becomes second nature to place his patients' need above his own.<sup>27</sup>

Maritain explains the artist's learning process in a similar way:

The artist has to love, he has to love *what he is making*, so that his virtue may truly be, in Saint Augustine's words, *ordo amoris*, so that beauty may become connatural to him and inviscerate itself in him through affection, and so that his work may come forth from his heart and his bowels as well as from his lucid spirit. This undeviating love is the supreme rule.<sup>28</sup>

It is appropriate then that this discussion should take place in Daugavpils, the birthplace of an artist who completely devoted himself to art, Mark Rothko, né Rothkowitz. His style changed so much over the years because he "was always looking for something more ... to paint both the finite and the infinite." Rothko warned that there is no art without idea, that if the work is good only technically, it was not art.<sup>29</sup> In 1966 he wrote the following in a letter to Dominique and John de Menil, who commissioned him to paint what would be called the Rothko Chapel:

The magnitude, on every level of experience and meaning, of the task in which you have involved me, exceeds all my preconceptions. And it is teaching me to extend myself beyond what I thought was possible for me. For this I thank you.<sup>30</sup>

*Mais, ô mon coeur, entends le chant des matelots!*  
Stéphane Mallarmé<sup>31</sup>

The de Menil's commission presented Rothko with a blank canvas, a situation sometimes terrifying to the artist. Mallarmé's description in his 1856 *Brise Marine* captures the feeling: "The blank paper, its whiteness defending the immense and lonely sea in which the poet is lost." Maritain uses this line to make his point about the difficulty of making art, of incarnating the transcendent. "The artist is faced with an immense and lonely sea, *sans mats, sans mats, ni fertiles ilots*, and the mirror on which it is reflected is no bigger than his own heart."<sup>32</sup>

For me, the poem describes writer's block, a factor that is often an obstacle to students, who must be fixed not to their own schedules, but to ours and the university's. I notice that art students respond to my presentations very differently from humanities students. Often, rather than taking notes, they sketch a slide. At heart, they are more interested in how the artist has coped with the blankness of the *Il y a*, both a space and a feeling of terror of being without any *thing*. To overcome the emptiness, action must be taken, but how emptiness immobilizes! How and where to make the first stroke, the next, the next and finally ... when *is* the last? One of my colleagues forces the student to make a stroke, any stroke. "We can work with anything, but are blocked by no *thing*!"

Mallarmé's *Brise Marine* helps us to understand one of the most significant roles of the teacher, so let us look at it closely for a moment to capture—or for many of us to recapture—the experience of writer's block. The poet is stymied. His very body weighs on him even though—or perhaps because—he has read everything. In Tymieniecka's words, his constitutive intellect is intact, but his creative imagination is corroded by *ennui*. The comfortable life of the everyday has stifled his heart, a heart that had been nourished, or better, tempered by the harshness of the sea. He waivers in the safety of the harbor. He longs to slip away to a more exotic life, yet he is attached to his home (*Croit encore a la'adieu supreme de mouchoirs!*) Even so, he will be off, onto the sea on a ship whose very masts (i.e., nature) invite destruction. In the penultimate line, incomplete for it is one beat short, he finds himself adrift on the sea, his mast gone, with no sight of even a little place where he can flourish. Despair!

*Mais o mon Coeur, entends le chant des matelots!*—but, and the BUT is key here—in this last line he finds solace not in the grasp of structured and

constitutive reason, but in his heart; not in his eye (traditionally linked with intellect), but through his ear, where in Geiger's words, it can be drunk up and absorbed as he listens. His salvation is the presence of those who survived the sea, the sailors. For me, great teachers are such sailors.

#### THOSE WHO CAN DO *ALSO* TEACH

A repudiation of the popular motto "Those that can, do; those that can't, teach" is found in the examples of major artists who have sacrificed their performance time and fame in order to educate a new generation of artists.

#### *Robert Rauschenberg*

Robert Rauschenberg teaches art teachers in a course called "The Power of Art: Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities" at The Lab School of Washington, D.C. (<http://www.labschool.org/powerofart.html>).

#### *Itzhak and Toby Perlman*

About ten years ago Itzhak and Toby Perlman founded a summer camp for music students on Shelter Island, New York. An informal radio interview demonstrates one of the problems of the discussion about teaching art: definition of terms:

Toby: "Great art is magic. I don't think you can teach that."

Itzhak: "I don't think you can teach magic, but you can teach great art. With proper teaching the student can get up to a very high level. Gift you cannot teach [but] the innately talented child needs to have lessons to bring out his talent."

The Perlmans disagreed over whether art can be taught, but clearly the disagreement was over the confusion of the terms "great art" and "gift." For our discussion we define "great art" as product and "gift" as innate talent. Toby Perlman elides the two, using "great art" for the level of performance of, for example, her husband. Itzhak takes a more pragmatic view. Words obscure the reality of living art.

They discussed their early experience of being taught. Although Toby had studied violin from the age of six, it was only when she was twenty, at Julliard, that she realized that the "teacher didn't have to yell or make me cry to make me understand."<sup>33</sup>

Itzhak: "Often teachers try too hard."<sup>34</sup> Maritain uses the same argument when he quotes Pascal:

"True eloquence makes fun of eloquence, true morality makes fun of morality; to make fun of philosophy is to philosophize truly"... to which the most tyrannical and the most radical

of academy heads [Jacques Louis David] adds this savory gloss: “Unless you care a rap about painting, painting won’t care a rap about you.”<sup>35</sup>

### *Leonard Bernstein*

We learn about teaching art from descriptions of what has been possible, from the examples of artists who have shared their “magic” in education. Returning the gift of his own great teacher, Sergei Koussevitzky, Leonard Bernstein spent years teaching, individually and to the huge audiences of his televised *Young People’s Concerts with the New York Philharmonic*; his pedagogy continues in the GRAMMY Foundation’s Leonard Bernstein Center for Learning:

Instead of being highly prescriptive, the Bernstein Model depends on professionals bringing their own strengths into a cooperatively developed, ever improving plan based on best practices and continual learning. Both students and staff gain the capacity to guide their own learning, using the lens of the artist, the mentorship of the teacher, and the discipline of the scholar ... as Leonard Bernstein himself exemplified.

By sharing his vision, he continued the life of music, for example, in the work of his student Seigi Osawa.

### *Conclusion*

Great artists have given large parts of their talent and time to sharing their “magic” as teachers. Their examples *in life* allow us to see and to hear—not necessarily to understand, cognize, or formulize<sup>36</sup>—that art is indeed being taught.

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### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Tomkins describes the politics and educational philosophy of the changes in the Harvard department in which art was taught: Visual and Environmental Studies. In 1995 the university decided to build up its studio arts (there was no studio arts program at Harvard); Yale has a School of Art [Can Art be Taught? *The New Yorker*, vol. 78/81 (4/15/2002), 44ff.]

<sup>2</sup> James Elkins, *Why Art Cannot be Taught: A Handbook for Art Students*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001, p. 109. He allies himself the classical skeptics, the Pyrrhonists, who were unable to make judgments on any side of an issue because we can know so little of the world. “We should not have confidence even in the little we know about art teaching. What we can discern about the way art is taught is unpersuasive, self-contradictory and limited, and therefore not a good basis for action of any sort, even the conventional, ill-informed kind.”

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 190.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 191.

<sup>5</sup> *Logos and Life: Creative Experience and the Critique of Reason*, Book 1, *Analecta Husserliana* XXIV, Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1988.

<sup>6</sup> *Art and Scholasticism and The Frontiers of Poetry*, transl. Joseph W. Evans, New York: Scribner's, 1962 (from the third and final edition of *Art et Scolastique*, 1935.)

<sup>7</sup> "The Moral Education of Doctors", *The New Atlantis*, vol. 10 (fall 2005), 17–26 (also see <http://www.thenewatlantis.com/archive/10/overby.htm>).

<sup>8</sup> Augustin Cochin, Les Sociétés de pensée, *Correspondant*, February 10, 1920, as cited in Maritain, op. cit., note 86.

<sup>9</sup> Diego Fischerman, La mujer del piano, interview in *Revista Clásica*, 1999, translated at <http://www.andrys.com/revista.html>.

<sup>10</sup> Maritain, op. cit., p. 43. "Whereas certain arts apply themselves to their matter in order to dominate it, and to impose on it a form which it has only to receive—such as the art of a Michelangelo torturing marble like a tyrant—others, because they have for matter nature itself, apply themselves to their matter in order to serve it, and to help it to attain a form or a perfection which can be acquired only through the activity of an interior principle; such are the arts which 'cooperate with nature,' as, for instance, medicine, with corporeal nature, or teaching (as also the art of directing souls), with spiritual nature. These arts operate only by furnishing the interior principle within the subject with the means and the assistance it avails itself of in order to produce its effect. It is the *interior principle*, the intellectual light present in the pupil, which is, in the acquisition of science and art, the *principal cause or principal agent*."

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>12</sup> Fisherman, op. cit.

<sup>13</sup> Hippocrates, *Epidemics*, Bk. I, Sect. V. This is one of a collection of about sixty treatises written between 430 BC and 200 AD by a number of people from varied of points of view. They were probably assembled under the designation "Hippocrates" at the Library of Alexandria.

<sup>14</sup> Maritain, op. cit., p. 15.

<sup>15</sup> Contemporary education theory supports this. See Philip Schlechty, *Inventing Better Schools: An Action Plan For Educational Reform*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992: "Teachers ... must assess their own success through others rather than directly through their own performance," as cited at <http://www.naschools.org/contentViewer.asp?highlightID=87&catID=189>.

<sup>16</sup> See [www.fromlife.blogs.com](http://www.fromlife.blogs.com) for discussion of her approach.

<sup>17</sup> Quoted by Maritain, op. cit., p. 48, from Etienne Charles in *Renaissance de l'art français et des industries de luxe*, No. 2, April 1918.

<sup>18</sup> Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 334.

<sup>19</sup> For example, Thomas Edison's aphorism: "I have not failed. I've just found ten thousand ways that won't work."

<sup>20</sup> [http://web.mit.edu/Invent/npressreleases/downloads/report\\_web.pdf#search=%22teaching%20inventiveness%22](http://web.mit.edu/Invent/npressreleases/downloads/report_web.pdf#search=%22teaching%20inventiveness%22).

<sup>21</sup> This list is a paraphrase with quotes from Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 202.

<sup>22</sup> *Missouri Breaks*, directed by Irving Penn, 1976.

<sup>23</sup> See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Užupis>; also see <http://travel.guardian.co.uk/countries/story/0,7451,433402,00.html> for the story of their tearing down Lenin's statue to replace it with one of Frank Zappa. Vilnius is also the home of the founder of Fluxus, George Maciunas.

<sup>24</sup> [http://wiki.uzupis.com/index.php/Užupis\\_Constitution](http://wiki.uzupis.com/index.php/Užupis_Constitution).

<sup>25</sup> Analogous to Pauline Oliveros' Deep Listening @: "listening in every possible way to everything possible to hear"; see, e.g., <http://www.deeplisting.org/>. This is what for Maritain would be training the *habitus*.

<sup>26</sup> Tymieniecka (op. cit.), unfolding the wings of creative consciousness.

<sup>27</sup> Overby, op. cit.

<sup>28</sup> Maritain, op. cit., p. 47.

<sup>29</sup> His thought corresponds perfectly with that of his contemporary, Maritain (op. cit., p. 48): “This artistic prudence, this kind of spiritual sensibility in contact with matter, corresponds in the operative order to the contemplative activity and the proper life of art in contact with the beautiful. To the extent that the rules of the Academy prevail, the fine arts revert to the generic type of art and to its lower species, the mechanical arts.”

<sup>30</sup> At the Chapel’s inauguration, Dominique de Menil described what Rothko achieved in his art, “Only abstract art can bring us to the threshold of the divine. [...] Rothko was prophetic in leaving us a nocturnal environment. Night is peaceful. Night is pregnant with life.”

<sup>31</sup> BRISE MARINE

*Stéphane Mallarmé*

La chair\* est triste, hélas! et j’ai lu tous les livres.  
 Fuir!† là-bas fuir! Je sens que des oiseaux sont ivres  
 D’être parmi l’écume inconnue et les cieux!  
 Rien, ni les vieux jardins reflétés par les yeux  
 Ne retiendra ce coeur qui dans la mer se trempe‡  
 Ô nuits! ni la clarté déserte de ma lampe  
 Sur le vide papier que la blancheur défend,  
 Et ni la jeune femme allaitant son enfant. Je partirai!  
 Steamer balancant ta mâture,§  
 Lève l’ancre pour une exotique nature!  
 Un Ennui, désolé par les cruels espoirs,  
 Croit encore à l’adieu suprême des mouchoirs!  
 Et, peut-être, les mâts, invitant les orages  
 Sont-ils de ceux qu’un vent penche sur les naufrages  
 Perdus, sans mâts, sans mâts, ni fertiles flots...  
 Mais, ô mon coeur, entends le chant des matelots!

translation by Jack Foley

The flesh\* is sad, alas! and I’ve read *all* the books.  
 To run away†—to run away *down there*. I feel that birds are drunk  
 They want to be in unknown foam and skies!  
 Nothing—not even the gardens reflected in your eyes—  
 Will hold this heart that drenches‡ in the sea—  
 Ah, nights!—not even the desolate brilliance of the lamp by which I see  
 The blank paper whose white-  
 Ness defends it, nor the young wife  
 With her child suckling: I’m leaving§—  
 Weigh anchor!—going to a place where there is no grieving.

\* pulpy substance, meat

† fly away / feel / escape / elude / slip away/ leak/ recede/ shun / shrink from

‡ tempered in/ by the sea.

§ By omitting this line in his translation, Jack Foley loses the image of the poet’s physical hesitation, rocking. See the overtones of *Steamer balancant ta mature*: Steamer “balancing” your

An immense Boredom—thrust from Hopes to Griefs—  
 Believes still in the supreme goodbye of waving handkerchiefs!  
 And perhaps the masts will summon storms  
 That blast the sails and wreck the oars:  
 Lost, without sails, without sails, or beating oars...  
 But oh, my heart, listen to the song of *sailors*.

<sup>32</sup> Maritain, op. cit., p. 44.

<sup>33</sup> It's amazing that she persisted! Putting the student through great unpleasantness to see his or her commitment was Lewis Thomas' method of weeding out true field biologists; see *The Lives of a Cell: Notes of a Biology Watcher*. New York: Viking Press, 1974.

<sup>34</sup> *Studio 360*, Public Radio International and WNYC, <http://www.studio360.org/show011004.html>.

<sup>35</sup> Maritain, op. cit., p. 39.

<sup>36</sup> Maritain (op. cit., Ch. VI) emphasized that we can only learn the "rules of art" through a study of what artists have done. Moreover, "often those who best possess the rules of an art are the least capable of formulating them." Nor, I might add, are they interested in formulating rules, except when they have the occasion to teach.

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masting: i.e., swaying to and fro, balancing, poising, rocking, weighing, considering, counterbalancing, holding undecided, to throw away, to hesitate, to be in suspense, to wave, to fluctuate. *Se balancer*: to swing, to make up for, a bird hovering in the air. *Se balancer sur ses ancre*: to ride anchor (see next *Lève l'ancre*.)

## SECTION III

ETHICAL VIEW UPON THE HUMAN  
SITUATION WITHIN THE  
“UNITY-OF-EVERYTHING-THERE-IS-ALIVE”

A leitmotif of the phenomenology of life is the approach to human beings within the unity-in-diversity of the whole life system, as manifesting itself in a relational attitude of “sharing-in-life” with others, humans as well as nonhumans.

By emphasizing the distinctness of the creative human condition in its own self-individualizing course in the “ontopoiesis of life’s design,” Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka points out humanity’s kinship and community with the entire web of life in nature, as being “a part of,” and not “apart from,” the great cosmic order. For the phenomenologist of life, to comprehend the fullness and the singularity of a human being in the vital network of existence is conditioned, among other things, by a peculiar status-role, namely “Custodian of everything-there-is-alive.” Attributing such a position to human beings in the universe of life raises some pivotal issues for an ethics that claims to provide an adequate education aim at the “good of life” generally.

In considering the human condition in relationship with nature in the context of the phenomenology of life’s cosmology and anthropology, we face a paedieutical-ethical issue: the current global ecological crisis threatening life on Earth. In its approach to environmental concerns, the message of phenomenology of life is to educate ourselves as “biotic citizens” able to understand and to act within an ecological lifestyle. In the “open system: autonomy-dependence in nature,” as Edgar Morin has depicted the human being in the world,<sup>1</sup> man finds himself in a situation in which he needs to reconsider fundamentally his position in the cosmos.

In Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka’s vision, man has to realize the necessity of satisfying a particular status: that of “Custodian of the all-alive-unity,” meaning the All “from the germinal preorganic and organic circuits ... till the sentient, sympathetic, psychic, social and cultural circuits of life.”<sup>2</sup> This ethical imperative is a valuable reminder of the moral relatedness of man to the ecosphere that surpasses the old dichotomies of culture/nature, physical/mental, and reason/emotion and aids us to bridge the chasm between humans and nonhumans, and finally, to find a solution to man’s alienation

from nature. An overcoming of such oppositions is offered by the life-centered philosophy of Tymieniecka, through a unified picture of the “logos of life” unfolding in its workings from vital to human existence, from biotic to spiritual settings, within the “ontopoiesis of life” manifesting “in the spectacle of the All, cosmos, world, nature, life, the works of human spirit.”<sup>3</sup>

From an ethical point of view, the phenomenological category of “Custodian of everything-there-is-alive” underscores man’s “ecological identity” in the sense of kinship with other creatures in the world; beyond human differentiation, there is a profound relationship of man to the whole system of nature. We have to understand the “unity-of-everything-there-is-alive” as forming around the axis of the “self-individualization in life”—one of the major themes of the phenomenology of life; there is autonomy, but also interdependence of different organisms relating even to the functioning of the cosmic order from which life emerges. According to Tymieniecka, “self-individualizing activities” occur from “contrast” to “harmonization” in life’s totality as “the key factor of all ordering” of life,<sup>4</sup> in which man is a “link”—indeed the central one.

First, we have to note that “Custodian of everything-there-is-alive” covers much more than what John Passmore identified as one of the three major traditions in Western ethics regarding man’s relation to nature: “the despotic position,” with man as a “tyrant”; “the stewardship position, with man as *custodian*”; and “the co-operative position with man as perfecter.”<sup>5</sup>

Tymieniecka suggests a paideutical-ethical direction in which man should activate his *creative power* (which makes him singular in the world) for self-fulfillment even in the face of ecological problems. As one of the most salient terms of the phenomenology of life, it offers a prime purpose in educating humanity for *life* in its harmonious unity of vegetal, animal, and human configuration, from organic to creative levels; it represents an urgent objective of a “fitting education for *life*” considered to be “the nervous system of all philosophy.”<sup>6</sup> Seeing himself as a biological-social-cultural entity in the “crucial web of all-there-is-alive,” man has to comprehend that the *humanness* to which he is trying to elevate his beingness-in-becoming demands an adequate education in an ecological aspect grounded in the idea of *man’s moral reportedness to life* generally.

Thus, to become “Custodian of everything-there-is-alive” engages man as the moral agent in his in-depth ties with the entire world to which he belongs by activating reason, feelings, emotions, passions, tendencies, inclinations, beliefs, motivations, interests, good will, choices, decisions making, attitudes, and conducts. It is complex and difficult to mold, first, a moral conscience acknowledging the fact that man is not alone in the world and does not have supremacy over it as though he was a kind of god; on the contrary,

by developing the faculty of being a competent evaluator, he becomes aware that he is a member of a great interdependent community, a participant in the cosmic order, the actor who must assume the *responsibility* for its existence and good. Only by educating his conscience and behavior under the auspices of an ethical view can man manifest himself as an agent of right and duty and connect his existential fulfillment with other existential entities and, at the same time, with the existential whole to which he has access. Thereby, we find an important way to encompass the meaning of the "Human Creative Condition as the Archimedean point" in the evolutionary radiation of the "logos of life," as Tymieniecka has emphasized, one of *moral commitment and responsibility* toward all; it is "the Archimedean point from which reason and rationality may be differentiated into several types and innumerable strands that sustain the cosmos, life, and the orbit of specifically human life circumscribed by the radius of the human creative genius."<sup>7</sup>

The human condition establishes man at a position of unique responsibility with respect to the totality of life. According to Tymieniecka, the attainment of this position within the "unity-of-everything-there-is-alive" is an outcome of the "moral sense" that allows man "to estimate the life-situation within the living kingdom as well as his own."<sup>8</sup> Man is able to put into act his creative forces for the affirmation and defense of his well-being to connect to the ecological soundness of other individuals and communities. As Tymieniecka asserts: "To be human means to act, to invent, to create"<sup>9</sup>; not to harm, not to destroy (!). Speaking in utilitarian terms, we would say that human creativity must be oriented to maximize the balance of benefits over harms, or, at the least, to minimize the negative (in any sort of embodiment). There is a vital interest for man to use his creative energies to strive for the preservation of minerals, plants, and animals. By maintaining suitable conditions to realize their good, man essentially works for his own good. As "Custodian of everything-there-is-alive," he must act within the ecosphere, striving for its survival, safety, and flourishing—for increase in the quality of life.

An ethical education that would shape an ecological conscience, what Aldo Leopold named "a land ethic," would change "the role of *Homo sapiens* from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it," implying "respect for his fellow members, and also respect for the community as such."<sup>10</sup>

Educating for the role of "Custodian of everything-there-is-alive," or "Custodian of all-alive-unity," requires educating for *life* for both individuals and the whole, the present and the future alike. We see an openness to individualism *and* holism in Tymieniecka's conception of the "ontopoiesis of life"—the core of her phenomenology—in the constitutive circle of its forces,

energies, and directions, by considering individuals as well as the global reality in the “Great Plan of Life.” In the framework of the phenomenology of life, we decipher an obvious interest in the uniqueness of the All, and no less for that of its constituents, starting from the “seminal/generative” natural resources making the “womb of life”—a metaphor designating “the receptacle and matrix of the generation of life”<sup>11</sup>—from which the lines of the “logos of life” radiate following its constructive process of growth, on the basis of the dynamic principle of “impetus and equipoise.” According to Tymieniecka,

The vast network of vital linkages and relevancies comes together in the crucial web of the unity-of-everything-there-is-alive. Manifesting the vibrant workings of life pulsing through all its circuits, this web comprises all types and concrete individuals into an infinitely flexible, movable, changeable, transformable whole that is necessarily tied together for success or failure, for flourishing or destruction.<sup>12</sup>

Tymieniecka is accounting for the entire community of life and its interactive elements, which she calls the “web of symbiotic/sympathetic linkage in every circuit of life,” in conserving a harmonious existential unity, with man, as “an inextricable segment within the unity-of-everything-there-is-alive,” being the main actor in sharing the vital nature with all the other things belonging to it, manifesting himself as overseer, guardian, treasurer of the *common good*. Here we encounter “the moral sense with its concern, its meaning well, its recognizing of every living beingness’ appropriate due and of its right to live and exist,” evaluating “the status quo of life, its dangers and its causes,” and prompting us “to action to redress wrongs and avoid perils.”<sup>13</sup>

To be “Custodian of everything-there-is-alive” supposes being aware of fundamental duties toward life’s environment, valuing of life in its all forms, being mindful about the significance of working for the wellness of the existential whole at different levels (mineral, vegetal, animal, human) in their interaction, regarding oneself as a link in the interconnectedness of humans and nonhumans, caring for the environment and ecological balance, and serving the *common good* of the physical, biological, and human reality.

So, man is in a most particular situation of *responsibility* and *responsiveness* in dealing with nature as a moral agent: He has not only rights, but also obligations; he may not do merely as he pleases; he may not care only for his own interests and act exclusively for human ends; he must avoid using nonhumans just for his immediate purposes; he must stop doing deliberate harm to ecosystems; he needs to demonstrate tolerance and prudence and not waste or destroy soil, water, air, minerals, plants, and animals; he needs to assume the role of a wise manager of nature and defend its gifts, protect its stability and balance, and promote the common good on the planet. This

implies reshaping his general vision and changing his behavior, considering the inherent worth of everything that exists. A stringent moral duty is at stake: *to respect* the integrity and the health, the authenticity and the beauty, the stability and the complexity of the ecological community and its components. As Aldo Leopold said many decades ago, “It is inconceivable ... that an ethical relation to land can exist without love, respect, and admiration for land, and a high regard for its value.”<sup>14</sup>

In the phenomenology of life, the key position of “Custodian of everything-there-is-alive” attributed to man does not view him as just a rational actor, but also as a sentient, emotional, and sympathetic central force in the complex web of life, becoming, and beingness, showing *benevolence*, *respect*, and *sympathy* toward other participants in the biotic community and exhibiting “the symbiotic sharing-in-sympatheia” of which Tymieniecka frequently writes—a play of living forces in their interactive experience.

Coming from the intrinsic human desire for communion in society, the “sharing-in-life,” as “the basis for the formation of the network or fabric of communal existence among particular types of living beings,”<sup>15</sup> can be viewed more generally operating in the realm of the human interaction with nature. It connects with the symbiotic sympathy that man is able to develop from his location as center within “all-is-alive,” sustaining the vital sense of *measure* in the entire expanse of life. The conception of “sharing-in-life” defines for the moral agent to the task of adopting the unique status of “custodian of life’s equilibrium”; this requires a “creative wisdom” to maintain man’s ties to nature, by realizing that “the existence of human beings is conditioned by the situation of nature-bios (as its foundations in the cosmos)”; as Tymieniecka stresses, “life on earth depends on the measuring and creative wisdom of human beings.”<sup>16</sup>

The benevolent sentiment in which is founded the “moral sense” functions beyond sociocultural boundaries as a significant feature of man having a harmonious coexistence with others in the broadest sense (from the low stages of life to its most complex manifestations). Introducing the moral valuation into the living arena, the sentiment of benevolence operates

toward other living creatures, toward oneself, and toward life in general. ... With it the objective neutrality of self-interest finds a balancing counterpart in the acting agent’s subjective attitude toward the other man, the other living being, in which not only one’s own but also his vital interest are considered.<sup>17</sup>

From *benevolence* and *sympathy*, we may go to *love*—the supreme value and universal principle of Christian morality as stated by the commandment “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself”; herein,

we aim at a *self-love* and a *love of other* extended to God's entire creation, enfolding all the entities together with which man has continuously to learn to live as members in the same biotic terrestrial team. To play the role of "Custodian of everything-there-is-alive" means to evince a measured altruistic attitude built on man's *loving power* toward living beings and the all as consistent with the *good life*, leading, finally, to the accomplishment of the *love of life*.

Pivotal to education for becoming "Custodian of everything-there-is-alive" is the development of a set of *ethical values*, like care, toleration, ecojustice, responsibility, solidarity, moderation, wisdom, respect, benevolence, sympathy, and love (of life generally). At the same time, it such an education internalizes classical *principles of ethics* and extends their action beyond the human subject to include other forms of life that are affected by man's conduct. In the interactive experience of life, in the context of the cosmos, man has to consider equally the interests of all beings to which he is connected. So, without exaggerating the interpretation, the 'other' must include, not exclusively fellow persons, but any kind of entity having an intrinsic value and a right to exist. In such a larger perspective, one needs to apply *the golden rule*—"Do what you want done to yourself to others" or "Don't do what you don't want done to yourself to others"—as well as *the principle of measure*, with the imperative to avoid extremes and keep the mean between excess and deficit, in particular by exercising moderation in conceiving the discontinuity between humans and nonhumans. These will lead to a well-balanced conception of the attitude that man might build in his relationship with the nonhuman world. The notion of *measure* is highly valued within the framework of the phenomenology of life. Tymieniecka considers "the golden measure," "the measure of all things concerning life," as "the key issue" of an ethics "in a New Enlightenment" that challenges us "to enter into our depths in order to achieve a new understanding of our place in the cosmos and the web of life, to find new wisdom for charting our paths together and fresh inspiration to animate our personal conduct."<sup>18</sup>

Significant in the same context is *the principle of utility*:

To produce/to augment benefit, advantage, pleasure, good, happiness or to prevent/to diminish the happening of mischief, pain, evil, unhappiness to the party whose interest is considered: if that party be the community in general, then the happiness of the community: if a particular individual, then the happiness of that individual."<sup>19</sup>

Actually, "the *benevolent* sentiment and attitude" so important according to the phenomenology of life can be nurtured for the "common good of life" in resonance with the *commandment of universal love* represented as "doing good to others," "not doing harm to others," "doing something for the sake of others." What Immanuel Kant tried to emphasize by his *categorical imperative* regarding the value of "human dignity" may and must be extended to other

living things and to nature, considering their inner worth and treating them not merely as means to our ends, but as ends in themselves. Speaking in Kantian terms, it would be beneath human dignity to be not seriously concerned with the environment in an immediate as well as a long-term perspective, for the benefit of present and future generations; it would be beneath man's self-respect to not manifest respect for others—humans and nonhumans alike.

So, responsibility, respect, care, devoutness, love—in the most general, deep, and sublime meaning—are needed to define the role of human beings in the world. All of these make us to reflect again on the *creativity* of man, which appears also as a moral power to develop a fundamental *life wisdom*. A “creative wisdom” defines the viable situation for man—“Custodian of everything-there-is-alive”—showing explicitly that the moral community is not just an interhuman one, but must be extended over the planetary ecosystem as the community of life.

Phenomenology of life promotes a moral education that is relevant for facing the present acute global environmental crisis; it teaches our coexistence with nature by cultivating an ecological lifestyle and an understanding of the need to transcend a selfish attitude of domination, control, and exploitation of nonhuman natural entities merely to satisfy our immediate cravings; simultaneously, by recognizing that there is “intrinsic value of life beyond humanity,” man can discover “some degree of intrinsic value in every living thing” and not subscribe to the attitude that has been called the “human blindness to nature's moral worth.”<sup>20</sup> As “Custodian of everything-there-is-alive,” man has to work with nature and not against it and cooperate with the ecosphere for the planetary good and for that of its components, all of which must be treated as worthy of consideration for their own sake.

In pointing out the special role of man in the ecological system and his biointerdependence with other things and the whole viewed as having equal moral importance, Tymieniecka's views are consonant with other environmental studies and ethical systems, for example, the “reverence-for-life” ethic of Albert Schweitzer, the “land ethic” of Aldo Leopold, “the respect for ecosystems” of Holmes Rolston III, “the equal treatment of all animals” of Peter Singer, the “animal rights” postulate of Tom Regan, and “the ethics of respect for nature” of Paul W. Taylor.

Tymieniecka's “Custodian of everything-there-is-alive” overcomes the usual oppositions of “humanistic” versus “naturalistic” ethics, “anthropocentrism” versus “biocentrism,” and particularly the individualistic versus holistic approaches, synthesizing them in terms of an integrative phenomenological discourse structured on the ecological order of the micro- and macrocosmos and the *creative human condition within the unity of life*. The paedetical-ethical message focuses on the possibility and the necessity of man showing a

*vital wisdom*, one embodied in the major truth that he is in the position of being a participant within nature, a reasonable being able to put into act his creativity following the work of the “universal logos of life”—making cosmos and not chaos, constructing and not destroying. It is in the capacity of man to reach this *wisdom* and enlighten himself about his status as a constructive agent, a creator, a protector, a lover of life, namely the “Custodian of everything-there-is-alive.” The term should enter environmental philosophy not only as enriching its vocabulary, but also especially as a useful instrumental notion contributing to a better understanding of present ecological problems and their possible solutions.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Edgar Morin, *Le paradigme perdu: la nature humaine* (Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1973).

<sup>2</sup> Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *Logos and Life*, Book 4: *Impetus and Equipoise in the Life-Strategies of Reason* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2000), p. 629.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 344.

<sup>5</sup> John Passmore, *Man’s Responsibility for Nature: Ecological Problems and Western Traditions* (New York: Scribner’s, 1974).

<sup>6</sup> Tymieniecka, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 187.

<sup>8</sup> Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *Phenomenology of Life and the New Critique of Reason: From Husserl’s Philosophy to the Phenomenology of Life and of the Human Condition*, in *Analecta Husserliana*, Volume XXIX (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1990), p. 16.

<sup>9</sup> Tymieniecka, *Logos and Life*, Book 4, *op. cit.*, p. 490.

<sup>10</sup> Aldo Leopold, *The Land Ethic*, in *Environmental Philosophy. From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology*, ed. Michael E. Zimmerman (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1993), p. 97.

<sup>11</sup> Tymieniecka, *Logos and Life*, Book 4, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

<sup>13</sup> Tymieniecka, *Phenomenology of Life and the New Critique of Reason*, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

<sup>14</sup> Leopold, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

<sup>15</sup> Tymieniecka, *Logos and Life*, Book 4, *op. cit.*, p. 522.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 625.

<sup>17</sup> Tymieniecka, *Phenomenology of Life and the New Critique of Reason*, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

<sup>18</sup> Tymieniecka, *Logos and Life*, Book 4, *op. cit.*, p. 615.

<sup>19</sup> Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, excerpted in *Introductory Readings in Ethics*, ed. William K. Frankena and John T. Granrose (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1974), p. 131.

<sup>20</sup> Roderick Nash, *The Rights of Nature: A History of Environmental Ethics* (Melbourne: Primavera Press, 1990), p. 172.

THE EDUCATIONAL ASPECT OF THE PRIMORDIAL  
SITUATION OF ONE'S BEING-IN-THE-WORLD

*How we learn about our facticity according to existentialism*

The ambiguous term *education* in the title of this chapter has had a checkered history in European culture. It is not a mere accident or coincidence that it was mentioned for the first time as early as in the fifth century B.C. along with another essential term, *philosophy*. Education, or *paideia* in Greek, was closely tied to the ethical idea of the emergent “nation,” or better still, the upper, most valuable aspect of its society (free citizens and warriors), in the arduous process of gaining its unique national, social, and historical self-awareness. The core meaning of *paideia* embraces the notion of both teaching and learning as the process of reaching truth (*aletheia*), which is deeply rooted in what subsequent metaphysics called the three *transcendentia*—goodness, beauty, unity. This idea always implies the existence of two free agents: a teacher and a learner. In other words, the person who presents various ideas is somehow related to a person who is expected to receive them. This somewhat simplified pattern of the educational process has been present (although influenced by various ideologies, world views, and pedagogical approaches) in European schools and universities. Moreover, throughout the centuries, education, both its theory and practice, has been so closely attached to particular philosophical backgrounds that one might think that many versions of pedagogical ideas, proposals, or solutions do nothing other than reflect some aspects of philosophical belief. The present chapter considers the educational implications of existentialist philosophy (philosophical existentialism) as a possible foundation for certain pedagogical ideas and notions. However, it should be borne in mind that existentialism as such has never presented a coherent theory (not even an outline) of education proper. However, the Greek interpretation of *paideia* (free agents in search of axiological knowledge) allows one to read the work of some existentialists in this light. It stands to reason that such a project involves posing questions to the most important philosophers of this persuasion—Kierkegaard, Sartre, Shestov, Heidegger, Marcel, and Merleau-Ponty—in order to create a kind of existentialist *paideia*

of a human being in sharp contrast with the opaque, absurd, and hostile reality of beings-in-themselves. There is, as Heidegger would say, a pre-understanding on our part of existentialism as a philosophical background, a theoretical domain teeming with fascinating ideas and “projects” that may serve among many other things as a basis for pedagogical theory. Although many attempts have been made, it is still difficult to provide a precise description of this philosophical movement. Both the adherents and the critics of existentialism unanimously underscore that such disparate personalities as Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Sartre, Camus, and Merleau-Ponty would (as in Heidegger’s polemic with Sartre) protest against any academic procedure of “lumping together” their ideas and putting them under one category of “an existentialist way of thinking.” What I mean by the term “existentialism” in this chapter is the philosophical reflection, as sharply opposed to such phenomena as the literary expression of the human predicament, humanity’s condition, or a certain way of life, especially in the first decades following World War II.

It cannot be denied that both philosophical and non-philosophical existentialism were spontaneous reactions to the absolute disillusionment evoked by the horrors and atrocities of the war. However, on no account can this feeling of abandonment and the awareness of the lack of moral or ethical orientation so prevalent among members of that generation, which also shaped the very most form in which they voice their attitudes, be identified with existentialism proper. It was a passing fad that was soon to be superseded by other, more “constructive,” more balanced, and hence more optimistic, movements: structuralism, poststructuralism, and finally postmodernism.

In *L’existentialisme est un humanisme*, Sartre requires that a clear terminological definition be made for the abused and misused term *existentialism*. In fact, the philosophy embraced by this term had become prey to the process of vulgarization. According to Sartre, existentialism is a strict philosophy, and hence all misapplications of the term (along with ensuing the misinterpretations) needed to be radically eliminated. What, then, is existentialism and to what extent can one apply its ideas for such purposes as, for instance, the *paideia* of modern humanity?

The first to use the term existence in reference to the problem of Man (human beings) were Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, the progenitors of the movement. What really counts is not, however, the term itself, but the change of perspective, in which the so-called essentialist (*sub specie aeterni*) approach was to be superseded by a new type of reflection.

Thus, we count as a philosophical existentialist any philosopher who subscribes to this “new” approach and treats it as the fundamental yardstick

by which to measure human reality. The motif of this rejection becomes a recurrent theme in all versions of existentialism proper. What Kierkegaard and Nietzsche did was to turn attention away from the general, universal topics of all-embracing metaphysical systems, full of unchangeable, immortal essences, and turn it to that which is particular. In his *Philosophical Fragments* Kierkegaard declares philosophical war on all forms of the abstract and general: "Abstract thought is *sub specie aeterni*, it makes an abstraction from the particular, from the temporal."<sup>1</sup> This is not the approach designed for man as "he thinks and exists, and existence separates thought from being, keeps them successively distant from each other."<sup>2</sup>

In other words, what Kierkegaard proposes is that philosophy has to address itself to the concrete human being, treated both as *the object* and as *the subject* of philosophical analysis. To my knowledge, apart from the aforementioned diversity, all philosophical existentialists regard every human being—the man-in-the-situation, the individual—as the only valid object of analysis. Thus, all types of existentialism deliberately and self-consciously address the human situation as the philosophers themselves are involved—or still better—engaged in it. In this sense one is justified in referring to philosophical existentialism as a kind of specific, unique anthropology, one that does not aim at creating an abstract theory of humanity as such, but that strives to reflect on the individual, a concrete man in a concrete situation.

Apart from there being no common body of doctrine to which all existentialists might willingly subscribe, the aforementioned thesis allows us to treat them as representatives of a unified movement. Overall, what we find in the early stages of existentialism is the strict stipulation to study concrete human existences (so vividly distinguished from all other sorts of beings). This contrast of being (essence) versus man (existence) is constantly reflected in the history of existentialism.

It was Heidegger and Jaspers who undertook the core study of the term. In the first volume of *Nietzsche*, Heidegger points to the root of the term *existence*: It denotes an act of emergence, a "standing out" from nothing while having place and time in the real world. This linguistic "afterthought" throws penetrating light on the doctrine in question. Not only is the universe of discourse in a different position—so to speak—being radically altered, but in addition the path of philosophical research is clearly delimited. One can hardly conceive of a philosophical existentialist who does not take into account these aspects of man's existence: his nothingness (ontological lack of justification), lack of essence, and specific structure, his temporality. These reflect the fundamental view that man is intrinsically a finite "being," a temporal being for whom the category of becoming is most essential. One

can even state that all categories of his existence are in a way *reducible* to the problem of time; they must participate in temporality. This is one of the most crucial aspects so aptly observed and so vividly described by Kierkegaard as the phenomenon of Don Juan—the tragic existence that tries to overcome its finality. This motif is found in one of the most creative and iconoclastic books of the twentieth century, namely *L'Homme Revolté* by Albert Camus. Don Juan is regarded there as the very special case of existential revolt, a revolt carried out in the name of beauty and the *aesthetics of life*.

Almost every existential thinker attends to the phenomenon of the strong discrepancy between the finite and the infinite, man in search of (temporal) fulfillment, and the *Deus absconditus* he would like to experience. The motif is easily discernible in both the atheistic and the theistic versions of twentieth century existentialism.

Being finite and temporal, man, according to every version of existentialism, finds himself in his so-called facticity. In other words, he is always in a concrete situation. As Jaspers states, “Let us take a look at our human state. We are always in situations. Situations change, opportunities arise.”<sup>3</sup> This stands to reason along with the very fact of my existence being irreplaceable: *I am* in my situation, *I inhabit* my milieu, *I bear* the indelible stigma of my personal history, *I speak* my language. Situations pertain to the existence of man, in fact they constitute its very core and “its substance.” The pattern of thought is taken up and analyzed by Heidegger and Sartre.

Introducing the category of *Dasein*, Heidegger restricts it to the being always exemplified in man. *Dasein* is an ontological term denoting that his *ex-istence* is enlarged to embrace the world (*In-der-Welt-Sein*). The existential task (incumbent on each *Dasein*) is to pose the question concerning his Being in the context of Being qua Being (*Sein*). In doing so, man is always conscious of his unique existential situation, his predicament: being aware of “himself” (*Je meines*)—a meaning peculiar to this entity that is me/us—*always-of-the-world* we are in. So our situation is never to be embraced by “objective,” “essentialist” categories. This being (*je meines*) is a kind of project—still better, an ever-open possibility. Thus, Heidegger can rightly say that *essence* does not pertain—as it were—to *Dasein*; its (his or her) essence consists in its existence, always implying not actuality, but possibility. The latter characterizes a human being, in other words, it is the sphere reserved (designed) solely for man. In the Heideggerian version of existential philosophy, the being of man is not something ready, given a priori. It is just the other way around. *Dasein* is to be “built,” “constructed,” or, still better, “projected.” But this *project-to-be-man* is always to be realized within the horizon of the world. As there is a strict dependence of *Dasein* on worldhood

(or rather, a mutual interdependence), each *Dasein* expresses care (*Sorge*) for the world and Being. Heidegger admits that the world itself is a characteristic of *Dasein*. This means that it is not actual for *Dasein*, but, in the deepest revelation on the part of aware *Dasein*, the world turns out to be at-hand—being full of *Zeuge* (tools). The latter are by man and for man. They come (appear on *Dasein*'s horizon) to serve us and be handy; they play a specific role in our existence. We are in a way united with them, as—by virtue of the constitutive nature of *Dasein*—we are united with others. Being in the world, each *Dasein* enters into a special relation with others, thus initiating the process (characteristic of man's world) of *Mitsein*. We coexist with others the very moment we become aware of the authentic mode of our existence, treating other *Dasein* as part and parcel of *worldhood*. Thus one can easily discern that the most important “source” of Heidegger's existential philosophy is the interpretation of this fundamental opposition between *existence* and *essence*. His existential analysis sees man as a special, ontologically unique entity who is ever open-in-the-world, who is just a possibility. Moreover, *Dasein* is always supposed to transcend itself, to break away from all the limitations and all that being imposes. There is only one way in which Heidegger expects us to understand this: by the very act of transcending itself and the world, *Dasein* points to things, exerts his freedom in the world in which he is. The transcended things are given meanings and significances. The world ceases to appear as something additional, something added to man, but “displays” a different aspect. It is, as it were, simultaneously given along with all *Dasein*. Heidegger underscores that each particular and single *Dasein*, owing to the category of *Mitsein*, is thus ontologically open to worldhood's “showing off” itself, its *aletheia* emerging on the horizon. So, there is truth in so far as and only while there is an aware *Dasein* responsible for and taking care of the world and Being (*Sein*). As totally free, “unhampered” existence in the world, man takes (or is supposed to take) full responsibility for all the plans he makes, has already made, or will be performing in the future. This existential theme is closely connected with the very fact (a given) of our being deprived of a priori norms and values that we might look to for orientation. The common idiom of existentialism is that man is free, alone, and wholly responsible for everything in this world. I will soon return to this motif.

For Sartre, Jaspers, Buber, and, in part, Merleau-Ponty, it is self-evident that each version of philosophical existentialism must take into consideration the fact of existence (man) and its ever open and *free* structure. Sartre, in his patently atheistic version of philosophical existentialism, succinctly states that existence always precedes essence, which is in a way the end result of our

lives. In undertaking his existential analysis, he makes some references to his former preceptors Husserl and Heidegger, but to a great extent modifies their views and theses (according to some writers, Sartre was their most unfaithful disciple).

The central point of Sartrean existential philosophy is the *ontologie radicale* presented in his monumental *L'Être et le Néant*. Both in his philosophical and literary work, Sartre introduces the category of *pour-soi*, a far cry from Heideggerian *Dasein*. The basic structure of *pour-soi* (being-for-itself) is its free and spontaneous freedom-in-the-world. In other words, Sartre treats it as consciousness of and in the world. Consciousness, in every act, conceives of itself as an ever-open possibility, unlimited freedom-in-the-world, in a given situation. Having been thrown into its present facticity (for no reason whatsoever), in the act of existential nausea, it experiences the transcendent world as something totally contingent and absurd: hence the “feeling” of being *de trop*, wholly unjustified for ever and ever. Existence—so sharply opposed to the massive, non-transcending being-in-itself—is an everlasting enemy of *en-soi*. The sharp contrast between these two kinds of beings makes *pour-soi* acutely aware that “it is never free not to be free” *en face* the hostile, massive, non-transparent world—the sphere of antagonistic and indifferent Others (*Les Autres*) and of all forms of being-in-itself. The latter poses a concrete threat to us. Each *Dasein* and *pour-soi* (the existence opposed to being) are always in danger of being turned into “something inauthentic,” “something reified.” In this respect we can discern a strong affinity among Heidegger, Sartre, and Jaspers, who unanimously (although applying different terminology) think of man in terms of existence, bearing the indelible stigma of freedom, lacking essence, and, what is most crucial, facing the world of both beings we have not created and others whom we must encounter. It is the concept or, better, the experience of existence as something potential, free, and “transcending” that introduces a kind of unity into the vast range of existential writings. This conspicuous and strong *cri de coeur* directed to man to come to himself in spite of his so-called facticity, to exercise his freedom—although it seems like something destructive and demanding—is the call to realize one’s essence, which is not given beforehand. In spite of the specific terminology used by particular thinkers, they regard man as an ever open, unpredictable structure. The existential paradox lies in the fact of our being immersed in a set of pre-conditions that we “find” at the moment of our coming into the world—a dramatic, if not tragic event.

Jaspers devoted much of his philosophical effort to illuminating the nature and scope of our being-in-the-world. He states

We are all in situations, but there are situations which remain essentially the same even if their momentary aspect changes and their shattering force is obscured: I must die, I must suffer, I must struggle, I am subject to chance, I involve myself inexorably in guilt. We call these fundamental situations of our existence ultimate situations. This is to say, they are situations which we cannot evade or change.<sup>4</sup>

Such themes as finitude, guilt, alienation, and despair are constant motifs in philosophical existentialism. But it is the problem of death that deserves special attention. Being a free and contingent structure, man is fully conscious of his ever-open possibilities. Death is the ultimate one. For Heidegger it defines, as it were, the existential mode, a category so vividly described in *Sein zum Tode*. It is *je meines* possibility; no other save myself can experience or can go through it. Having a priority—as J. Marías says—over all other entities, *Dasein* must be and is mortal. Thus, death is an essential characteristic of each man, each *Dasein*. Moreover, being thus elusive “not yet,” being-toward death is an indispensable part of *Dasein*’s worldhood, coloring all projects and understanding of our situation. To put it differently, dying from the point of view of this ontological possibility is by definition based on *Sorge* (care for). According to Heidegger, it is the most authentic possibility of our existence. In the authentic mode Heidegger prompts us to realize that it plays the role of a specific yardstick with which to measure and gauge our condition, our attitudes, and the level of our involvement in the world and with others. According to the philosophical version of existentialism, all we are likely to undertake must be put in the perspective of our demise. This notion is taken up by Sartre and Camus. For the latter, death (closely related to various issues of suicide) is better described than philosophically analyzed: Being a man requires an authentic engagement that is reduced to our decision and free choice: *vivre ou non?*<sup>5</sup> For Sartre, death is always analyzed in terms of the nothingness we are and which, in the inauthentic mode of life, we try to shirk with all our might. Both the *mauvaise foi* and *esprit de sérieux* allure us into false and untrue attitudes, leading us eventually to avoid the acute consciousness of our being finite and free till the very end. But these “defensive strategies” are of little help to us. The “vortex” of freedom that constitutes our experience is not to be “insulated” or “gotten rid of.” As in the case of Heideggerian *das Man* (the “they”), in which death is hidden in trivial everyday existence, it is simply impossible to overcome it. The stance expressed by the univocal and inauthentic voice of “the they”—“death will surely come, but not yet”—leads man into the trap of falsehood. It is dying in the absence of **aletheia**—the sphere of forsaken Being. In authentic existence, such illusions of *Das Man* are radically overcome. *Dasein* is free for death, which is the most authentic possibility of existence. What

is more, philosophical existentialism offers no shortcuts toward the solution of metaphysical or ontological problems: Since man is bound to die, he must form a kind of preparatory consciousness that will get him ready to face this final and unique possibility. Sartre analyzes this problem in the context of our being responsible for every act and choice: Death and our attitude toward it define the domain of our responsibility. Because any attempt to avoid death is likely to end in failure and despair, we had better face it with full responsibility.

The problem of “our” death, so closely connected with our being-in-the-world and being-with-others, is among the most fundamental existential topics. In fact, the idea (or rather the ideal) of an authentic existence, which is understood by existentialism as that which existence strives to achieve, constitutes the only real project that makes our essence conceivable. In other words, in an act of authentic existence, we, as it were, mold ourselves in our own image. It is the projects, choices, and values that we would like to see constituted and introduced into the world that make us authentic. Without this project, we could not be called human at all. In the inauthentic mode of our being, we are willingly molded by external influences, whether they be circumstances, moral codes, political or ecclesiastical authorities, or whatever. All philosophical existentialists want us to take their criterion of an authentic existence as a formal rather than a material one. It is the form and shape of an existence that, according to them, is the very measure of our authenticity. The brunt of our responsibility, the challenge undertaken and accepted by us, is a factor allowing us to achieve a unity rather than being scattered and chaotic in our projects.

In the atheistic version of existentialism (as expounded by Sartre and Camus), authenticity is a peculiar and arduous task. Sartre, in a talk with a former pupil, stated, “Since You are free, choose—that is to say, invent. No rule of general morality can show you what you ought to do, no signs are vouchsafed in this world.”<sup>6</sup> In this concept of abandonment, Sartre and, to some extent, Camus underline the terrifying fact that since there is no God (no metaphysical basis to look to for orientation) who establishes values or sets a general, universal ideal of humanity, we should endeavor to invent our own values and norms. This should not be read in nihilistic terms, however. Not everything is permitted. In every choice, I am committing not only myself, but also all mankind (hence the anguish arising the moment we choose). It appears as if Sartre were trying to smuggle in some principle or value that we do not (or by no means can) invent on our own and whose characteristic is that it seems to be prior to me. This is true in part, for the concept in question, that of *humanité*, appears to be a new and hardly predictable element in his

*ontologie radicale*, stressing the fact that *pour-soi* is unique, individual, and free. Of this concept, Sartre gives only some vague suggestions: Being alone in the world, facing the absurdity of it, we may look for partners and be responsible for them. This might remind one of the Buberian *I-thou* relation.

Camus is much clearer about this problem, having introduced the concept of rebellion (which seems to be a common, universal mechanism in our projects toward an authentic existence). He states that “I proclaim that I believe in nothing and that everything is absurd, but I cannot doubt the validity of my own proclamation and I must at least believe in my protest.”<sup>7</sup> Thus, man must—better, is obliged to—rebel (because man must choose and invent values). Each act of rebellion is a kind of a refusal to be treated as an object that is wholly passive, non-transcending, and lacking form and dignity; it is a call to freedom and responsibility.

As we have seen, there is a commonality to all of the philosophical versions of although it would be almost impossible to treat them in terms of a system. The ontological and ethical aspects, whether for the “unsystematic” Kierkegaard, the “scientific” Jaspers, or “essayistic” Camus, constitute the common ground of what we refer to as philosophical existentialism. This is reinforced by the methodological strategies adapted by it.

Existentialism is closely related to phenomenology (the study by Shestov is very useful in this respect). As Mary Warnock categorically stated, no serious existentialist lacks phenomenological affinities.

Husserl’s rigorous science aiming at grasping the essence of things irrespective of individual prejudices attracted new philosophers of existence, including Shestov, Jaspers, Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, and to some extent Buber. The concept of *Evidenz* propounded by Husserl was readily taken up by them and used in existential analysis. As human existents, we have first-hand acquaintance with what philosophical existentialism calls the *human condition*. Such *existential phenomena* as the incompleteness and fluidity of each particular being (human being), its ontic, ontological, or ethical uniqueness, its latent possibility for realizing itself, and the problem of experiencing total abandonment were excellent material for phenomenological, that is, unbiased and uncommitted description. Husserl’s methodological proposal to set aside or “bracket” questions concerning transcendent reality along with the genesis of the objects of consciousness was supposed to lead to the overcoming of all forms of dualism, be they Cartesian or Kantian. The main purpose of Husserl’s laborious efforts consisted in setting us free and returning the world to us. In this respect existentialism and phenomenology shared the same attitude: We need to clear the mind of all paralyzing presuppositions

and prejudices and face the transcendent world as it is, that is, as it appears to us. As Sartre put it in his philosophical manifesto,

That is why we can equally reject the dualism of appearance and essence. The appearance does not hide the essence, it reveals it, it is the essence. The essence of an existent is no longer a property sunk in the cavity of this existent; it is the manifest law which presides over the succession of its appearances; it is the principle of the series . . . . The phenomenal being manifests itself; it manifests its essence as well as its existence, and it is nothing but the well-connected series of its manifestations.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, Husserl seemed to have opened a new vista for philosophical research: The age-long dilemma of dualism appeared at last to have come to an end. Philosophical existentialists took enormous interest in the opposition of essence and existence. Because, as Sartre underlined, existence is the manifestation of essence, it is incumbent on the philosophers of existence to describe it *in statu nascendi*: to analyze and describe all projects, intentions, and choices on the part of a human being (existent). Moreover, Husserl made the almost axiomatic assumption that it is the consciousness of man that should constitute the field of philosophical discourse. Consciousness or human awareness was proclaimed to be a kind of matrix ruling all intentional acts. The latter were always intentional or “thetic,” that is, they were directed at something transcendent, something “out there.” It was the consciousness-in-the-world that gave them meanings and made them valuable or worthless. The idea of the constitutive role of our awareness was widely approved of by the existentialists. Was the idea not in accord with their notion of the human being as creative, free to change and rebuild the world around him? Had it not been for the very nature of so-called transcendental Ego (the idealistic element in phenomenology), the drastic rift between Husserlian phenomenology and existentialism would have never emerged. For Sartre, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty, the essence-less nature of man as he is given in our *Evidenz* (experience) shows itself as a double nothingness: “Something” is being born the very moment we try to organize the world, the reality we have been thrown into. Placing a constant, universal, and ontologically stable element inside, as it were, the transparent, ecstatic consciousness would inevitably lead to its immediate reification—the loss of its primary status. This source of everlasting spontaneity, unhampered freedom was turned into a predictable and transcendental structure characteristic of being-in-itself. In other words, existence was taken to the other side of Being (*Sein*)—as Heidegger would say—to the side of things (*Seinde*). Being intentional, consciousness is never, the existentialists unanimously proclaim, to be identified with what it is conscious of. Thus, the very “nature” of consciousness proves, or, points to the created and constantly re-created nature or essence of man. In this

respect, philosophical existentialism modified and changed the main ideas and postulates of the phenomenology worked out by Husserl and his supporters. However, it should be borne in mind that existentialism *sensu stricto* drew heavily on this philosophy insofar as its description and insight into the human condition was concerned. Where Husserl would like to have referred to the structure of transcendental consciousness, the existentialists preferred to talk (in dramatic, and thus more humane terms) of man: lonely, contingent, abandoned, absurdly free, and wholly responsible—until the ultimate moment comes.

It is extremely difficult to evaluate the vast and elusive phenomenon that is philosophical existentialism. What we can be certain about, however, is that its delimited scope of interest should not to be reduced to sociology or ideology. That it was a kind of living anthropology cannot be denied; that it introduced new elements into age-old problems and philosophical puzzles sounds like a mere cliché. What I have been trying to do here is to show that this style of philosophizing has a rare and unique appeal to something that is deeply hidden in us. The ideas of Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Sartre, Shestov, and Jaspers, to mention but the most prominent representatives of the movement, belong, as Malraux said, to the living museum of ideas, and so it seems to be a philosophical necessity to visit them at least once in one's lifetime.

Let me recall my initial assumption. Philosophical existentialism quite justifiably may be regarded as a possible basis for educational ideas, both theoretical and practical, with a link between this form of philosophical anthropology and a general program of revision, reform, or "revalorization" of a fully humane curriculum. Apart from various forms of "applied existentialism"—psychiatry, psychology, or sociology, to mention but a few—there has been no attempt to develop an education founded on existentialism. The fundamental tenet of the existentialist way of thinking—that "we are beings of and in the world"—might serve as an initial step toward creating this kind of educational theory and practice. This would be based on a strong link with outer reality, the transcendent world we are "thrown into." The link with a series of beings we are not to be identified with is the rule of intentionality worked out by Brentano and adapted later by Husserlian phenomenology. Since we always are (such is our condition, or essence not given *a priori*) conscious of "something" out there, "something" totally, absolutely, radically different from our conscious acts, yet dependent on them (due to the so-called constitutional procedure), we are active agents in the world. Being active, we create ourselves (we are not endowed with a "ready-made" *essentia*) as well as what we refer to as the human world. In every aspect of man's activity,

existentially oriented *paideia* would have certain aims (goals) to fulfill. In other words, for any existentialist philosopher (irrespective of the differences already referred to), there is a chief aim (a project) we all strive toward. As specific, unique, inimitable entities, human beings lack (and this is an uneasy, even tragic *consciousness* so vividly described by the existentialists) an essence—for example, a *humanity* that could pertain to all men. Hence, most of our choices, actions, and undertakings aim at constituting one. It is our freedom that “pushes us,” as it were, toward the ever-renewed, open-ended region of something that promises us such fulfillment. But this *aventure de la liberté*, as Sartre says, is condemned to take place in the concrete framework of a given reality we exist in. Moreover, we can never leave this region of “strife” unless we want to be turned into things, inanimate beings-in-themselves. Intentionality, as Sartre and Merleau-Ponty aptly observed, has this dynamic yet sinister aspect that we would like to ignore on many occasions, but to no avail. We are freedom itself—moreover, freedom in a concrete situation. We have not chosen, but were “born into.” It seems obvious that each educational process belongs to this series of conscious, hence free, activities, that is, to the uttermost existential reach of our life. Viewed from this angle, an existentialist *paideia* may be regarded as a kind of specific interaction, or rather an encounter of two beings-for-themselves within the framework of a given reality, a given situation. The first element, so to speak, is those who teach, whereas the other is those who are (being) taught. One can immediately sense (discern) a difference if not a discrepancy between the active aspect and the passive (receptive) aspect of this process. I do not intend, however, to deprive the “receptive element” (the learner or a student) of his or her freedom, that is, his or her spontaneous intentionality. The existentialist theory and practice of educational freedom (no matter how arduous it may seem to appear) is an indelible stigma of our being human. Thus, existence is a free action, a movement toward the world out there no matter whether we create something new or receive something that has already been constituted by some other human beings. Let me expand on this motif a little. From the standpoint of teachers, the so-called educational program they are supposed to cover and pass on to their students is, to use existentialist terminology, nothing other than a thematized vision of a fragment of a given world. To put it differently, it was or must have been someone’s realized choice, a materialized project, an act of spontaneity, that concentrated on this and not that particular aspect of the constituted world. On the other hand, it is the teacher’s freedom to make a free, unhampered (e.g., by the recommendations of authorities, official curricula, etc.) choice insofar as his or her vision of the world is concerned. In doing this, teachers react to a primordial fact of “their”

facticity, which marks off, as it were, being-in-the-world. What actually takes place during this interactive discourse (teachers make known to students their “version,” their thematization of the part of what Jaspers calls *Umgreifende* or Heidegger names the worldhood of the world) is a mutual attempt to grasp some hitherto unexperienced aspect of a given facticity.

For those who would like to apply existentialist tenets to an educational, pedagogical program (of which I am giving only the most general outline), the assumption of our almost unlimited freedom-in-the-situation is crucial. Each educational interaction—the encounter of two free agents—must take this into consideration. Those who teach must never make their students, that is, their existential partners, follow blindly a vision of the thematized world (reality) as presented to them in a classroom situation. What teachers should do instead during this unique process of exchange is to suggest of some vision of the world. They should not impose on their students ideas that are “generally” thought to be right, “well established”, “unquestionable,” and not to be tested. Because the teacher’s and student’s existential condition is exactly the same (both face the same hostile and opaque reality), they, and we, are all equals in the face of, as Pascal said, “this eternal silence of metaphysical nebula.” Moreover, existing (as) free, spontaneous consciousness, we are expected to respect the freedom of other beings-for-themselves. This might seem to the reader yet another unrealistic idea, a utopian call for an educational system that would be totally without foundation and lack any substantial *raison d’être*. But a careful reading of Heidegger, Sartre, or Merleau-Ponty suggests that no human being—whether philosopher, artist, teacher, or educator—is to regard himself or herself or let himself or herself be regarded by society as a privileged being in both the epistemological and ontological senses. The vehement accusations leveled by Sartre against *les salauds* who unjustifiably claimed to know more and better than others owing to their “elevated” position are based on the disastrous effects the reification of others can bring about. Free agents—on opposite sides of the classroom—face the same sort of existential predicament, the same *Marcelian* mystery of being. Their active role is to choose themselves in the world, which means choosing the most adequate (in light of their present situation) way of being, or to use the Sartrean phrase, “existing oneself to the very end.” In this context, one is fully justified in evoking here an ethical note. Existentialists, time and again, referred to the issue of mortality, but they did so in a completely different manner than nineteenth-century ethical systems. The modern existential *paideia* needs to avoid a destructive power inherent in human beings: the ability to lie to oneself and to other human beings about the nature of freedom. Because

we are condemned to be free (for no reason whatsoever), we are filled with overwhelming anxiety that we want to hide, suppress, or ignore.

One aspect of this destructive power is “the spirit of seriousness” (*esprit de sérieux*), which can lead the inauthentic teacher to refer to a fictitious, nonexistent, and hence inhuman hierarchy of illusory, “quasi absolute” values and norms. In this condition, the teacher not only surrenders his or her freedom (“I am only the spokesperson, the voice of the commonly shared views”), but also demands the same from his or her students. By pointing to an established set of solutions based on ready-made experiences, this type of teacher moves within what Heidegger would have called a closed horizon. This type of teacher presents illusory causes in bad faith and the spirit of seriousness, with hackneyed versions of history, literature, and even science. The inauthentic teacher impedes all possible creative and spontaneous efforts by his or her students. Even the language used in the classroom can reflect this attitude: *It is taken for granted; don't ask too many questions; because it just is*. Pseudo-questions are posed and answers are known beforehand. Such an attitude imposes limits on free and spontaneous contact with the transcendent world. Any attempt at an unhampered world-constitution is nipped in the bud at the very beginning of a student's activity. The final argument used by such teachers is that our tradition, religion, history, or cultural code forces us to follow in the footsteps of those who “know and knew better.”

Another stratagem the teacher may adopt is bad faith, by which he or she shirks the burden of freedom and stifles spontaneity by taking on the role of liar and victim at the same time: “I am exactly the very person whom I am supposed to teach.” The teacher pretends to know nothing about the fundamental truth concerning our condition as “worldly beings” condemned to making consistent choices and constituting our nature for which we are responsible. What his or her students learn is always tinged with the insumortable division between “me” and “the world,” for the basic truth that *we are in the world* is totally ignored. Students, treated as passive objects, get an incoherent vision of the world. Although they may understand certain aspects of the surrounding reality, they are taught to regard it as independent of a creative human being. Treating the human world in reified categories leads eventually to turning oneself into a mere object as well. The existentialist philosophers exhort us to be true to our essence in the making. This burdensome, often dramatic process implies an everlasting transcending of ourselves as well as of the outer reality—the world we were thrown into. Bad faith and the spirit of seriousness promise a kind of relief, but they distort the very existence of being-for-themselves: free, responsible, and conscious all the time of their “staying-in-the-world.”

The nature of the specific subjects in the curriculum exert a considerable influence on what I have referred to as the vision of the human world. Each subject is supposed to reflect, explain away, or investigate a different aspect of the world in which we live. Leaving aside the details concerning the division between the sciences and the humanities, we might say that the age-old “conflict” can serve as an apt illustration of diversified approaches to reality. No matter what and how the particular disciplines embrace their subjects, existentialist philosophers ask that they fulfill a fundamental goal, that of revealing the existential situation of any inquiring human being-in-the-world. Only in this way will one be able to get to the real structure of the world. Of course, there is a great difference between the vision of reality produced by molecular physics and, say, the history of the Roman Catholic Church. The same holds true with Euclidean or Riemannian geometry and the sociology of mass culture. But the problem of creative education remains the same. If we want to teach our students about many diverse subject matters, we need to always refer to *the world of*. The latter must have been constituted at one point or the other in the long history of the human, that is, conscious encounter with transcendent reality. It would be pointless, as Marcel remarked on one occasion, to treat disparagingly or suspiciously the humanities in comparison with the strict (in the positive sense) paradigms of knowledge. Geometry and mathematics have been regarded in the tradition of Plato and Descartes as paragons of clarity, lucidity, and exactness. But the universal knowledge they represented, their theorems and equations, were nothing but the reflection of man’s creative establishment of a new way of understanding points, lines, or figures. The world of mathematics and geometry, like the world of physics or chemistry, is intersubjective, and hence its overall meaning addresses human beings. To put it differently, in the absence of human factors, it would be nonexistent. Existentially oriented education aims primarily at getting rid of the positivist one-sidedness. The golden rule of Husserlian phenomenology—intentionality—makes us responsible for the particular worlds of physics, chemistry, literature, and philosophy. Moreover, the relation “we”—“the world” underscores the most vital fundamental trait of our essence-in-the-making, that is, freedom. Heidegger made us aware that the authentic mode of our existence is based on a proper stance toward Being qua Being. Traditional metaphysics prompted us to conquer particular beings. As a consequence, we forgot about their ultimate meaning—Being. That attitude, characteristic of the sciences and technology, dominated European culture in its pursuit of certainty, precision, and a false and complacent feeling of having whole knowledge.

This type of inhuman knowledge was aimed solely at appropriating ever more regions of reality. According to Heidegger, however, the triumphant technocrats became slaves because the conquered beings made humans totally dependent on them (as in the Hegelian parable of master and slave). That attitude toward the world made *Dasein* (the human being) prey to the inauthentic mode of existence—*Das Man*. The falling-into-inauthenticity became part of the official social program: One does, learns, thinks, acts, and wears one's clothes as one is supposed or expected to do so. "One should do as they" might act as the motto of every collective, mass society. Applying this warning to the problems of education, one may add that teachers should never prompt their students to master the world, to conquer new regions of reality. Hence, if one deals only with an atomized, so to speak, version of the world we are in (e.g., things treated as tools, facts as the only admissible sphere of human knowledge, particles as the founding blocks of every substance, social life as a series of reduced, simplified relations), the world becomes a dreary place.

An existentialist *paideia* would propose a valuable insight into the Whole, Unity, or Heideggerian *das Sein* of which we are an inseparable part. Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty speak of Being-as-Being closely related to truth, and vice versa, truth as a part of Being; the latter, treated as the sum total of all meanings and senses—past, present, and to come—should play a more prominent role in any educational program. All "single," particular truths of physics, chemistry, sociology, and history reveal only fragments of the pair being-qua-being and truth. As partial solutions hide the true aspect of the human freedom-in-the-world, why not teach about the horizon of all horizons? Both teachers and students might find this project—making our nature more humane, truer to our genuine condition—instructive and creative.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Søren Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Papers*, Toronto, 1959, p. 90.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Karl Jaspers, *Way to Wisdom*, New York, p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> Jaspers, *op. cit.*, pp. 12–13.

<sup>5</sup> Albert Camus, *The Rebel*, Toronto, 1965.

<sup>6</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'existentialisme est un humanisme*, p. 9.

<sup>7</sup> Camus, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

<sup>8</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'Être et le Neant* [English translation, New York, p. 20].



Figure 1. Maja de Keijzer, Zaiga Ikere and Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka in front of the *Analecta Husserliana* book exhibit

## ACTION, WORK, AND EDUCATION IN BLONDEL

To discuss the correct role of education, and in particular the best way in which it can affect our lives, we need to take into consideration the work of Maurice Blondel.<sup>1</sup> He elaborated an original vision of action, using this notion as the basis for a new philosophical position and making it a fundamental principle of pedagogical theory. It is possible to find in his writings reflections on life and the role of education. In this chapter, I first examine the reasons for the reformulation of philosophy as inspired by the emergence of “life” as the most comprehensive object of study; then, I show the assumptions and applications behind the “integral” reflection that allowed Blondel to inquire into the anthropological and, in the true sense, ethical constitution of education. To this end, the chapter is organized along the following lines.

First, I introduce Blondel’s theories, showing how his elaboration derived from the need to reconstruct philosophy according to a principle of integral understanding. I highlight the centrality of the notions of action and work in reflecting on “life,” which makes it possible to understand individual and social development. I then show that these notions have an intrinsic educational value and that it is precisely on this basis that Blondel elaborated an ideal that is pedagogical and at the same time ethical. Secondly, I consider the possible applications of these general ideas to the improvement of teaching practice. Blondel’s work has profound pedagogical implications in its reference to a complete vision of life.<sup>2</sup>

1. THE REFORMULATION OF PHILOSOPHY AS A *CRITICISM OF LIFE*

Maurice Blondel’s best-known work, *L’Action* (1893),<sup>3</sup> bears as a subtitle a programmatic expression that is indicative of an original methodological attitude: *An Essay about a Criticism of Life and a Science of Practice*. It is possible to find in this subtitle the true sense of his attempt to reformulate philosophy. The use of the expression “a criticism of life” is particularly striking. The purpose of Blondel’s study does not seem to be a criticism either of speculative reason or of its practical or technical applications; it

is not even a transcendental region of reality, retraceable in the categorical structure of the intellect, the sphere of an authentic “critical” reflection. The expression he uses suggests instead a detachment from this approach and indicates a different priority for critical study: the sphere of life. So, what is the significance of this research orientation for Blondel? With the agility and profound reflection that might characterize the fragments of a most intimate diary, he writes

*La philosophie est la vie prenant conscience d’elle-même et des fins où elle tend, se réalisant, se spiritualisant, se parfaitant.*<sup>4</sup> (Philosophy is life which becomes aware of itself and of its purposes, realizing itself, spiritualising itself, perfecting itself.)

Blondel does not limit himself to declaring that life is the privileged object of philosophical reflection, but he discovers it in the very essence of philosophy; life is, therefore, not understood as one of the many possible spheres of research—like, for example, the natural sciences or the social sciences—but it is their unifying common basis, the primary root, the source from which the various forms of being emerge. However, if life is, from this point of view, the “way of being” of that entity that asks questions and at the same time it is the modality that is common (although differentiated) to every possible object of research, in that case the widest and most radical philosophical inquiry redefines itself as life that questions itself about itself. Therefore, it is precisely this “transcendental” characterization of the notion of life that is at the basis of the attempt to construct a “criticism” of life that coincides with the aim of Blondel’s philosophy. In fact, if by its very nature philosophy is the most comprehensive and concise expression of thought, it is inclined to be structured as a reflection on reality in its totality. So, Blondel concludes, it is not acceptable to reduce reality to that which is homogeneous to analytical and abstract thought; on the contrary, in authentic philosophy, thought can attain the possibility of a conscious reintegration with one’s vital roots:

*La philosophie est identique au mouvement qui nous fait être et vivre. Elle est la prise de possession, non stérile, mais intégrante et efficace de la vie humaine par elle-même: la pensée de la vie dans la vie de la pensée. Une vie qui se pense dans une pensée qui se vit.*<sup>5</sup> (Philosophy is identical to the movement which makes us be and live. It is the taking possession, not sterile, but integral and effective, of human life by itself: the thought of life in the life of thought. A life which thinks about itself in a thought which lives itself.)

Philosophy is life itself that becomes aware of itself and that, by this awareness, is called to follow new directions, to raise itself to a higher level of being, to become open to further realizations. Philosophy, when analyzed in its essence by Blondel, becomes the conscious expression of

life and consequently criticizing, broadening, integrating, and evaluating the movement of life:

La philosophie ... non seulement manifeste de plus en plus distinctement l'unité complexe de cet effort spontané, mais elle l'oriente et le prolonge délibérément: elle n'est pas simplement une image, un projet de la vie; elle contribue à la porter à son terme, et à en découvrir, à en accroître les richesses, les responsabilités et les sanctions.<sup>6</sup> (Philosophy does not only show more and more distinctly the complex unity of this spontaneous effort, but it deliberately directs and prolongs it: it is not simply an image, a project for life; it contributes to bringing it to an end, and to discovering and increasing its richness, its responsibilities and its sanctions.)

La philosophie est l'intégration, spéciale et technique par sa forme, universelle et populaire par sa matière, des efforts hiérarchisés de la vie humaine pour réaliser notre être en réalisant les êtres en nous, c'est-à-dire en les connaissant, en nous y adaptant, en nous les assimilant.<sup>7</sup> (Philosophy is the integration, special and technical in its form, universal and popular in the matter, of the hierarchized efforts of human life to realize our being realizing the beings in us, that is knowing them, adapting ourselves to them, assimilating them to ourselves.)

Therefore the essential movement of philosophical inquiry becomes the cognitive integration of the vital reality of the different forms of its unfolding and the extension of the same effort common to all beings. Thought sees the disintegration of the assumption of the priority of the analytical intellect over other manifestations of life; the consequence is a reformulation putting life itself in the first place and a renewed attention to the expressions of its multiple dynamism on the various levels of its unfolding.

However, Blondel's methodological approach does not limit itself to uniting philosophy and life in a striking but indefinite statement. On the contrary, the subtitle of *L'Action* allows us to underline the precision of his study. The exercise of philosophical thinking is not only a criticism of life, but also a *science of practice*.<sup>8</sup> This second aspect becomes understandable if we highlight the value given to practice as the primary form of living and hence able to be studied. Only a science of practice is therefore a true science because it aims at the joining of method and object, of questioning and living<sup>9</sup>:

Vraie science est en effet que celle-là, où rien n'est communiqué du dehors, où tout croît du dedans, où l'on n'apprend que ce qu'on fait être, où les conséquences sont déduites avec une infaillible sûreté des prémisses confiées au travail de la vie, et où la nécessité rigoureuse des conclusions ne fait qu'accoucher le fruit de l'initiative première.<sup>10</sup> (True science is in fact simply that in which nothing is communicated from outside, in which everything grows from within, in which one learns only what makes something be, in which the consequences are deduced with infallible certainty from the premises entrusted to the work of life, and in which the severe need for conclusions merely gives birth to the fruit of the first initiative.)

The science that possesses these characteristics of exactness, fruitfulness, relation to the concreteness of life, infallible necessity, and constant adherence

to the “work of life” is the study of action; action is, in fact, the comprehensive and original modality of all the vital expressions. This centrality of action in philosophical reflection comes to light when one considers that no individual can exempt himself from answering to the problem posed by action: In living, one cannot avoid acting, canceling hypothetical alternatives by effective practice. One cannot wait for total intellectual certainty about the conditions of a problematic situation because life always expects us to find a practical solution—and we always do. Therefore, in the affirmation of the existential unavoidability of practice Blondel finds conclusive proof against the pretensions of intellectualism<sup>11</sup>:

Ce n'est point par la vue seule, mais par la vie que nous avançons dans l'être, en faisant comme un saut de générosité au-delà de la portée des justifications intellectuelles.<sup>12</sup> (It is not only through vision, but through life that we advance in being, making a leap of generosity beyond the reach of intellectual justifications.)

For Blondel “life” and “action” are synonyms: The first word expresses in general what the second characterizes more specifically inasmuch as it defines its necessary practical modality. However, it should not be understood that life is only action, nor should the theory be read as a reduction of the notion of life to that of action, but on the contrary it must be seen as a widening of the meaning of the term “action” until it sums up in itself the very wide meaning of life.

In fact, it is important not to make the mistake of interpreting the word “action” in Blondel in a limited sense. With this term he indicates not only the applicative or implementary aspect of the subjective intention, but the reason that originates every expression of life, both cognitive and specifically practical. In Blondel’s work, action rises to the principle of reality precisely because reality is seen in its dynamism, in its character of ontological *novelty*. In fact, what substantiates this centrality of the notion of action is the idea according to which every modality of existence is possible only because it is active and creative and therefore is the realization of an action.

So in this sense the criticism of life is also a science of practice because its aim is to trace the precise modalities, the necessary elements, and the antecedent and determining conditions, but also the free results and the original products of action. To this end, criticism will make use not only of the opening of the conscience to the vital datum and to concrete individuality, but also of a method that is able to discover the deterministic aspects of the dynamism of action:

La force d'une vraie Critique de la vie, ce doit être de retrouver, sous les déviations superficielles et temporaires, cette logique cachée de l'action dont les lois ne sont pas moins rigoureuses que

celles des sciences abstraites.<sup>13</sup> (The strength of a real Criticism of life must be in finding, under the superficial and temporary deviations, this hidden logic of action, whose laws are no less exact than those of the abstract sciences.)

In short, for Blondel, life is not only creativity and novelty, but also an expression of a dynamism that, in order to grow, assumes the form of a chain of necessary events; therefore, the criticism of life, as a study of action, grasps both the deterministic and the free aspects of the same dynamism. The same thought, Blondel writes, “is not exclusively representation or light,” but it is “a force, a mechanism of the dynamism of mental life.”<sup>14</sup> Philosophy has to accept the challenge of never growing apart from life itself, constantly comparing itself with practice. In this way, it becomes an “inclusive” not “exclusive” science, lending efficiency to the project of a “logic of action” fully open to moral reality, directly originating in the unfolding of vital dynamism:

À l’abstraite et chimérique *adaequatio speculativa rei et intellectus* se substitue la recherche méthodique de l’*adaequatio realis mentis et vitae*.<sup>15</sup> (The abstract and chimerical *adaequatio speculativa rei et intellectus* is substituted by the methodical research of the *adaequatio realis mentis et vitae*.)

The conformity of the mind and life is the new definition of truth, believed to be capable of respecting, on one hand, the opening to the reality that becomes and questions the formative and productive response of the subject and, on the other hand, the precision of scientific analysis. Philosophy must, then, seek a “living truth,” the expression of the vital rootedness of thought, and be aware that thought does not substitute for, but, if anything, integrates action in the real context of life:

L’être n’est jamais dans l’idée séparée de l’action; et la métaphysique même, considérée d’abord sous son aspect spéculatif, n’est vrai alors qu’autant qu’elle rentre, comme un échelon du système des phénomènes, dans le dynamisme général de la vie: l’action ... contient la présence réelle de ce que, sans elle, la connaissance peut simplement représenter, mais de ce qui, avec elle et par elle, est vivante vérité.<sup>16</sup> (Being is never in an idea detached from action; and therefore the same metaphysics, considered above all in its speculative aspect, is not true except in what comes under the general dynamism of life as a step in the system of phenomena: action contains the real presence of what, without it, knowledge can only represent, but which, with it and through it, is living truth.)

#### ACTION AS SYNERGY: THE ROOT OF INDIVIDUAL LIFE

In explaining the fundamental points of Blondel’s reformulation of the philosophical question, I have shown how thought, in its integral cognitive effort, is inclined to take into consideration a dominion of reality that is wider and

at the same time deeper than the traditional one, and it becomes aware of its own original rootedness in a *being* that is not immediately intellectual but constituted of life itself. Now we move on to a reading of Blondel's work in order to discover the theories that form the basis of a pedagogical ideal coherent with this idea of philosophy as a criticism of life and a science of action. Let us start by looking at Blondel's definition of action:

J'entends par *action* ce qui enveloppe l'intelligence, la précédant et la préparant, la suivant et la dépassant; ce qui par conséquent dans la pensée, est synthèse interne plutôt que représentation objective.<sup>17</sup> (By *action* I mean whatever encloses intelligence, preceding it and preparing it, following it and overtaking it; consequently, that which in thought is an internal synthesis rather than an objective representation.)

Action is wider than thought, it is the horizon of existence; it provides the necessary conditions for thought to be able to emerge as a peculiar expression of a living being, it prepares it as its preceding and most original order. Therefore, thought is indeed action, inasmuch as its very being is intimately active and dynamic, but it does not exhaust action, it does not dominate it completely, it is not able to mirror it, except progressively and by means of symbolic and hence inadequate reductions. In other words, thought cannot cover the entire spectrum of the realities of action precisely because it is a particular dimension of it, a unique and original but inevitably partial form. Therefore, action in comparison with thought sees its supremacy strengthened; Blondel affirms that it does not merely produce thought or transform itself into thought, but that it also constantly follows and surpasses it, precisely because it is its ontological source.

This greater inclusion of the practical—and vital—dimension in the intellectual one can be explained by referring to the most intimate essence of action<sup>18</sup>: This is not simply an objective representation, the product of an “idea-reflection”<sup>19</sup>; it is instead an *internal synthesis*. The relation between the concept of action and that of education becomes clear: the synergetic and synthetic character of action, which underlies even the action that forms an idea. We can hence investigate the main reason for what I have called the “supremacy” of action in reality and in thought: Action is an internal synthesis, not because it is the subsequent product of a given cause, but because it is the very cause of the unity of the living being. In fact, it is thanks to the “creation” of an unedited unity that every being (indeed every specific and distinct natural entity) exists, establishing an original relationship with the surrounding world. Action represents the event of what is *new* in the world in the form of an original and dynamic unity that is realized as the creation of an organic whole and hence of an internal synthesis. Blondel explains why this synthesis is essentially action when he shows that it is precisely under

the impulse of the realization of a certain aim that the parts can converge to form a whole because they are already dynamic expressions of energy:

Tout naturellement l'action enveloppe et emporte les tendances les plus opposées; elle en fait un corps unique.<sup>20</sup> (Action completely naturally absorbs and encloses opposite tendencies; it makes them a single body.)

Therefore action is an internal synthesis in every living being since it is a synergy,<sup>21</sup> that is, a “concert” of multiple directions of energy, a convergence of perhaps conflicting tendencies in a single body, constituted as tension coherent to one purpose. These observations are equally valid on different levels of natural life, as, for example, in all the organic forms of life in which it is possible to grasp the “concerted” action of a plurality of parts and partial actions. However, although this synthetic “originating” character of action can be traced to various stages of development, it acquires greater significance and effectiveness in the case of human life. In fact, if every being operates through a synthesis, even in spontaneous and determined ways with respect to given vital needs, then we can observe that this synthesis acquires a further character in man of having a more pronounced autonomy and awareness.

In substance, in man, action involves the initiative of will in as well as a plurality of organic elements. This synthesis is continually renewed and is reached in a new way through a constant effort of creation and an original contribution of awareness and intentionality. Man, therefore, is continually creating himself and his individuality in reflected action that is generating a synergy of thought and will and impressing on itself the mark of liberty and creativity. Consequently, human life presents a particular combination of necessary conditions (“antecedent determinism”) and original contributions, which, in turn, have to be articulated in the form of actions that are necessarily linked together (“consequent determinism”). Human action is, more clearly than any other, synergy, because in order to be carried out it cannot rely only on spontaneity nor can it lower itself to biological life and simply organic action. On the contrary, man is intrinsically *free* action: no person can exempt himself from the exercise of this freedom, from the capacity to promote his life coherently, to shape it consciously by choosing objectives, to bestow on it a constant movement to transcendence.<sup>22</sup>

Therefore, action rises to the origin of a *dynamic unity of life* as the synthesis in thought and living realities. It is by studying its mechanisms and its outcomes that Blondel gives content to “practicing” philosophy and the criticism of life. But what type of anthropology is implied by such a definition of action? If action is synergy, in what way does it contribute to giving shape to a complete vision of man? This question brings us closer to

the central topic of this study: the elaboration of an educative ideal in terms of a complete vision of man and society:

L'action unit en un faisceau les forces éparses de la vie pour constituer la synthèse organique et pour servir de médiatrice entre toutes les formes de l'activité corporelle et spirituelle; ... elle enrichit la volonté, en répondant au premier mouvement d'expansion centrifuge, par un mouvement centripète dont le retour compose le rythme vital et ferme le circuit de la vie individuelle.<sup>23</sup> (Action unites in one body the scattered forces of life, in order to constitute the organic synthesis and to act as mediator between all the forms of bodily and spiritual activity; it enriches the will, responding to the first movement of centrifugal expansion with a centripetal movement whose return constitutes the vital rhythm and closes the circuit of individual life.)

At the basis of the entire process of the constitution of individual life lie the syntheses put into practice thanks to action: In effect, for the subject, as a set of strengths and tensions, to be able to give itself unity and form its own dynamic equilibrium, it is necessary for this energetic plurality to find an effective factor of *coordination*: "There is no unity, in our complex organism, except for cohesion, and cohesion except for cooperation."<sup>24</sup> Now, in order to make the constituent parts of the self cooperate, it is necessary to establish a mediation between the different directions of activity and between the different or even opposing tendencies that make up the most intimate nucleus of the individual. This occurs by acting, coordinating the multiple tendencies according to a predominant motive of action, and making a whole out of the self and its obscure powers. Only in this way can the energies be ordered according to an unequivocal "inclining" (*syn-ergy*):

Pour devenir un principe efficace d'action, les énergies diffuses ont besoin d'être recueillies en une synthèse mentale et représentées sous la forme unique d'une fin à réaliser; elles se confirment et s'avivent par l'effort même qui les exprime.<sup>25</sup> (To become an efficient principle of action, the widespread energies need to be gathered together in a mental synthesis and represented in the unique form of an aim to be realized; they are strengthened and revived by the same effort which expresses them.)

Consequently, action returns to the center of Blondel's analysis not only as the key for scientific coherence and vital adherence of knowledge, but also, on a deeper level, as an interpretative principle of the same individual life. In this way, action provides the philosopher with the key to an understanding of personal becoming and the *forming* of individual existence:

L'action est le ciment de la vie organique et le lien de la conscience individuelle: dans l'acte, il y a plus que l'acte même; il y a l'unité de l'agent, la conciliation systématique des forces, cohésion de ses tendances.<sup>26</sup> (Action is the bond of organic life and the link of individual conscience: in the act, there is more than the act itself; there is the unity of the agent, the systematic conciliation of forces, the cohesion of its tendencies.)

Action is, therefore, a “living synthesis”<sup>27</sup> because it is the constituent modality of life, the generating process, and at the same time it is the renewed expression, the continual creation of the living being.

WORK AS A NECESSARY STAGE IN THE EFFECTUATION  
OF ACTION

Action is, hence, for Blondel the “spring” at the basis of the unity of subjective, vital dynamism. It is only by acting that the “scattered forces” and “widespread energies” of life are reunited in the subject and provided with a determinate power and an unitary direction of development. The *completed work* is the final term for this dynamic of action; it represents its completed result, at first only represented and intended, then brought to life in practice. The effective work, and therefore with it the *effected* action, are clearly central in Blondel’s ideas: In fact, could there be full action, complete convergence of the subjective powers, and therefore real synergy, without the “test” of practice, the efficiency of the coordination being verified until the last stage of the implementation?<sup>28</sup> It is therefore a question of examining the degree to which action can constitute a principle of unity and creativity in subjective life and the conditions under which this occurs. Consequently, a final aspect of action must be carried out so that it completely fulfils its synergetic virtualities:

C’est qu’en effet l’action réelle ne saurait être partielle, divisée, multiple comme peuvent l’être de la pensée ou le rêve. Ce qui se fait est fait. Tout ou rien.<sup>29</sup> (In effect, real action cannot be partial, divided, or multiple as thoughts or dreams can be. What we have done is done. All or nothing.)

Peu importe que je sois encore hésitant et combattu: si j’agis, j’entraîne d’un côté la machine tout entière; et tout suit, par la persuasion ou par violence, mais en tout cas par nécessité. Le système organique est intéressé au moindre acte conscient et voulu, sans duplicité possible dans l’opération même.<sup>30</sup> (It matters little that I am still hesitant and undecided: if I act, I pull the entire machine to one side; and all the rest follows, through persuasion or violence, but in any case through necessity. The organic system is interested in the smallest conscious and deliberate act, with no possible ambiguity in the operation itself.)

A fundamental characteristic of action emerges from these observations: its tendency to move toward totality, completeness, the realization of power, the rescission of every ambiguity or hypothetical state; action forms existence, through will, as the practical question of conformity between the ideal and the real, as the constant search for completeness, for pacification of desire. However, in subjective vital experiences, action is not only a factor of unity, of interior convergence, but is also always an uneliminable factor of imbalance, an uneliminable need for further adaptation. The concert of powers has to make itself

effective or else it will remain unsatisfied tension; the synergy can persist only by changing form, and therefore identifying itself with the world of things, strengthening itself by resisting the material alterity or the modifications of the internal balance. Action is hence either all or nothing; it is nothing, it ceases, if it does not follow to its consequences, in other words, if it does not realize itself and if it does not bring to completion the tension of which it is an extension. It is not sufficient for it to remain something that is thought of, conceived, desired, planned; if it is authentic synergy, the outlined action necessarily becomes a free act,<sup>31</sup> it becomes an *operation*.

So a discussion of the effectuation of action, of action that becomes the *setting up* of energies for the fulfilment of a purpose, also belongs to an analysis of action. How could there be a partial action? It would be no more than an instability generating another action; in fact, not being completed, the action would go back to being a game of fluctuating energies, a conflict of motives, a disorderly alternation of ideas. On the contrary, action, inasmuch as it is a proven concordance of energies, is a single whole and therefore *cannot* be partial.

Now, it is precisely the notion of work that names the last, but essential, level of action. In fact, work represents the stage of concrete realization of action, and for this reason it is the necessary condition for progress. If action is “the geometric place”<sup>32</sup> where knowing, being, and wanting intersect, we must conclude that work, understood as an activity aimed at the transformation of matter in conformity with a desired purpose, is the “place” where human desires and knowledge approach the transcendent being, the power of being, and fulfil the ideal completion that appeared to the will as desirable. This centrality of work can be clarified further by remembering the difference posed by Blondel between act and action:

*L'acte, c'est... l'initiative première de l'effort interne, soit que par nature tout doive se corner à cette opération spirituelle, soit que l'on envisage, dans l'œuvre même, la part toute subjective de l'agent. Le mot action indique plutôt le passage de l'intention à l'exécution qui l'incarne, et souvent, par suite, le résultat ou l'œuvre même de cette opération transitive.*<sup>33</sup> (The *act* is the primordial initiative of the internal effort, both when by nature everything must limit itself to this spiritual operation, and when one bears in mind in the work itself the absolutely subjective part of the agent. On the other hand, the word *action* denotes the passage from the intention to the execution which embodies it, and often, consequently, the result or the work itself of this transitive operation.)

Therefore, in order to act, it is impossible to set aside the execution, the transitive operation, which consents to the implementation of a passage from the hypothetical to the real, the completion of an irreversible transformation. However, in order to efficiently carry out a change in the surrounding world, action needs to adapt itself to the conditions of the world, its materiality, the

connections of phenomena. So work is necessary because it represents the configuration of a connected series of subsequent actions, the proof of the solidity of the act conceived against interior and exterior resistance. Only thanks to work can action close its circuit.

However, this question should not be mistaken for a moralistic apology or a mystique of work. In fact, although it always needs work to be fulfilled, action does not coincide with work; instead, it is its informing principle. The finality of acting does not emerge from work: This can come to light only in the interior tension of will, which is orientated by action. Work, as a predisposition of a series of means useful to a determined realization, is only possible because the subject has already set itself an aim. However, in this teleological determination, action is necessarily inclined to compare itself to passivity, given by a matter that is refractory to the desired modification. Therefore, part of action is *effort*, which originates when the synergy of motives and subjective powers takes form in relation to a resistance<sup>34</sup>:

L'intention a du, pour demeurer sincère, se jeter à l'exécution; l'exécution a réclamé l'effort; et, dans l'effort indispensable à l'opération volontaire, est apparue encore une nouvelle nécessité: l'action ne peut se produire qu'en suscitant une lutte intestine et qu'en triomphant, dès l'origine, du système antagoniste qui s'est formé contre son initiative.<sup>35</sup> (The decision to remain sincere has had to commit itself to the execution. Execution requires effort. And yet another new necessity has appeared in the effort which is indispensable to the voluntary operation: Action can produce itself only by giving rise to an internal struggle and right from the start emerging victorious from the antagonistic system which has formed against its initiative.)

Therefore the subjective, energetic cohesion has to strengthen itself through work, to choose between disintegration and the difficult confirmation of the unitary direction. So we can see why work has a vital importance for Blondel: It is in fact in work, as the implementation of action, that the action becomes strengthened and enriched in comparison with resistance, and that the subject confirms itself in its will and its generative power. If action is not whole and lacks execution, that is, without a fruitful connection with means, then, as with every other form of passivity (including intellectual), a real development of personal life is not conceivable; the often-difficult application of subjective energy to the outside world is needed, to the assistance of other desires, to natural powers.

#### THE EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION AND WORK

If, therefore, it is true for Blondel that action, together with work, its indispensable articulation, is the origin of individual growth, the source of all interior modifications, the process through which will and thought are

inevitably defined, then we can understand how it is *intrinsically* a learning process. Action is a universal law of humanity, the route to acquiring self-awareness, and hence a modality that cannot be disregarded and through which we all relate to our existence: Blondel defines it as *apprentissage*, that is, “learning.” I now explain the characteristics that make action the fundamental modality of learning that is common to all humanity.

The first element that emerges from the analysis of action and provides pedagogy with a firm basis because it derives from the vision of human nature is that of *self-knowledge*. “Until you act, you don’t know yourself.”<sup>36</sup> This means that there is an essential link between action and self-knowledge. Action does not offer knowledge only a material verification or a guarantee of efficiency and practical use. For Blondel, the supremacy of action does not mean the reduction of man to *homo faber*, who relates every personal experience, be it emotional or intellectual, to its practical usability. Instead, action has a cognitive value especially with reference to the complex reality of the self, of its “interior universe”:

Comment connaître tout ce qui s’agit en notre univers intérieur; comment savoir si l’on a une attention assez nette, une intention assez précise, ... une volonté vraie? mais justement on n’a pas besoin de le savoir au préalable. La garantie et le critérium de la sincérité, c’est l’acte, qui tranche les incertitudes et manifeste les plus intimes secrets ... qu’on se cache à soi-même. Il nous est donc une révélation sur notre état profond.<sup>37</sup> (How can we know everything that moves in our interior universe, how do we know if our attention is lucid enough, our intention precise enough, our desire true? However, we don’t actually need to know it in advance. The guarantee and the standard of sincerity is the act, which cuts off uncertainties and reveals the most intimate secrets that we hide from ourselves. It is, therefore, a revelation of our profound state.)

The act—and action, as the greatest extension of the conceived and desired act—constitutes the authentic examination of the *sincerity*<sup>38</sup> of the self with itself in its various manifestations, instinctive, emotional, intellectual, voluntary. Until we act, that is, until we break possibility off from the hypothetical level and we fulfil it, we are not able fully to understand the most intimate aspirations of our will or evaluate the real strength of our energies, like the univocity of desire and the concreteness of reflective knowledge. Only through acting can the hidden difficulties of conflicting volitions, the contradictions of motives, and unexpressed desires come to the surface; only through acting can the imperatives and seductions of private interests be heard and end in concrete results. The truth of the synergy is fulfilled only in action, in the implementation of which all unequivocally coordinated subjective energies must converge.

It is therefore precisely inasmuch as it is a demand for tangible verification of the sincerity of the intention that action appears to Blondel to have the status

of authentic “revelation” about the profound state of a person. Action is, hence, a principle of self-knowledge because it gives the vital and original content for which philosophy looks as the standard of sincerity: Self-knowledge can only be reached when it is built progressively by our acts, when it becomes a “living truth,” when, that is, our self-awareness is enriched with shadings, with psychological variations, with interior motives that have come to light, and been resolved, as a test of action. Therefore, there is no clarity about our interiority or truth of consciousness except through the “concrete definition” that it acquires in action, or, at least, that it continually tries to acquire.

So let us go back and find a further meaning in Blondel’s epistemological approach: Truth is not such if it is not living, if it is not fruitful of transformations, if it does not take itself to the smallest aspects of everyday existence. According to Blondel,

By clearly giving us awareness of what we want and what we are, the act is for us a sign and an aid. It gives us a concrete definition of the idea that it expresses; and like every distinct perception it is a sort of nutriment which increases our strength.<sup>39</sup>

Therefore, action is intrinsically instructive because it is the essential way through which each man learns the truth about himself and learns to moderate, to order, and to bring to a successful conclusion the application of his will and his strength in the surrounding world. Creating the form of all knowledge that is not merely intellectual but instead tangibly vital, action is the radical principle of learning about oneself and the world and the laws of physical, moral, and spiritual growth. In this capacity to give a concrete, not abstract, definition of truth, action is “the guarantee of every intellectual sincerity.”<sup>40</sup>

The second intrinsically pedagogical element of action is seen in its characterization as a *substantial bond* of body and soul:

C’est par l’action que l’âme prend corps et que le corps prend âme; elle en est le lien substantiel; elle en forme un tout naturel.<sup>41</sup> (It is through action that the soul takes a body and the body takes a soul; it is the essential bond; it forms a natural whole.)

Action is a factor in the unification of the various dimensions of the person. In fact, as in the case of the plurality of reasons and motives, which are all assimilated in a common direction of development, so all the expressions of personal life must be organically developed. The materiality and spirituality of man are not two parallel lines of life or two radically heterogeneous substances; on the contrary, they are partial aspects of a single being.<sup>42</sup> Blondel affirms that we never use one single capacity exclusively in any act or work. Both in so-called material work and in intellectual work, both the materiality and the spirituality of man are, in reality, always used, although in different ways. This is due to the synergistic nature of action, which exists inasmuch

as it involves all of man in his intimately complex, “social,” polyphonic individuality. Therefore, it is action that constitutes the whole, the essential bond of body and soul, of organic and psychical energy; action is the concert of subjective forces and tendencies. Therefore action is educational because it is, after all, the nucleus of verification of the coordination between the components of the self:

Cette unité des actes a pour corollaire forcé la solidarité de la vie physique et de la vie morale. L'action fait participer l'organisme matériel à l'intention qui l'anime ... ; ce corps même, elle l'associe étroitement aux démarches de la pensée, au point d'en faire un instrument de plus en plus vibrant et docile aux touches secrètes de la volonté.<sup>43</sup> (This unity of acts has as a corollary the solidarity of mental life and moral life. Action makes the material organism participate in the intention which animates it. It associates this same body with the movements of thought, so that it makes it an ever more vibrant instrument, ever more docile to the secret touches of will.)

A third educational implication is traceable to the *creativity* that is expressed in action: Not only is the cognitive aspect of the process carried out by action in the subjective life educational, but so is the novelty that its concrete result confers to the world of beings. In fact, action pursues an end, which represents the result of an initiative of the subject, the expression of an initiating capacity. By means of the representation and realization of a desired result the person understands that he is able to bring something new to the world. Thanks to his action, man becomes aware of his ontological peculiarity, which is the molding capacity, the original initiative. This awareness becomes, for Blondel, the condition of the moral life, inasmuch as it finds the possibility of the assumption of responsibility for acts and for decisions about purposes.

The last intrinsically pedagogical element implicit in Blondel's conception of action and work underlies all the previous ones: the moral character of action,<sup>44</sup> relating in particular to its *transcendent opening*. Pedagogy is to be found in action not only through teaching cultural contents, but also and more deeply as the original exercise of liberty, as the acquisition of one's individuality through the progressive construction of a synthesis of the self. So, *self-teaching* is the first of the effects that action endows on the individual, and it is characterized as moral because in every moment it involves the will and decisions about purposes. In addition, in action, the individual is led to open up, to turn to others, to discover the way in which one's desire can unite itself with that of others and hence establish a more complex collaboration. Therefore, in its social importance, action is not only a factor of unity of the self, but also the drive for social unification among men, expressed as a common realization. We can also see the value Blondel gave to cooperation in this light.

THE PEDAGOGICAL AND ETHICAL IDEAL OF THE INTEGRAL  
DEVELOPMENT OF THE PERSON

We have seen how action and work constitute educational principles that are always inherent in personal life. Now we must see how these elements are useful for pedagogy. In effect, if it is true that action, as we have seen, is the founding modality of every subjective production, it is not limited to the single realization; that is, it is not exhausted in the partial and temporary result to which it must aim in order to give a determined form to the agreement of powers, and therefore, all things considered, to derive a prospective cohesion from the conflicting plurality of subjective tendencies. In other words, the act does not exhaust the action, and the implemented work—and hence with it the completed action—is not able to fix the further direction of action.

On the contrary, a characteristic that I would call *eccentricity* is part of the nature of action as it is understood by Blondel. By “eccentricity” I mean the constitutive tension of the active being to be continual exceeding its own limits, its impulse to transcend itself and objectivity. These factors constitute the fundamental value of action: It is only thanks to the continual “emission” of action from itself that the possibility of a synthesis and of an organic formation, the creation of a whole, can take place, as they actually do. The whole (whether it be made of material and organic parts, or of rational motives or voluntary tendencies, or even of ideas) exists because it reveals the presence of a factor of unity superior to the mere sum of the elements, therefore transcending any motive of mechanical aggregation. In other words, action is by its very nature “eccentric” precisely because it is at one with the most profound nucleus of life, given by its continual going beyond itself, forming new expressions of synthesis, involving alterity in an original relationship.

Therefore, action not only indicates a form that is common to many separate acts and operations, but, much more radically, it also constitutes the unitary guiding thread, the original drive, the ontological source. Action is not defined the “bond” of the different expressions of life, or the “geometric place of intersection between being, wanting, and knowing” only because it is, let us say, the analogous trait, the modality of passage from one to another; it is the bond because it is the common nucleus, the convergence of directions because it is the source of their differentiation.

In this light, the reason we can think about the notion of action not only as a guarantee of the efficiency of knowledge, but also as a guiding principle of authentic formation, which is then the ethically richest purpose of education, becomes clearer. In fact, if action, as well as the *expression* of a being, is also and above all a principle of the *formation* and *genesis* of a being, then it becomes the bearer of an autonomous line of development, or at least of the

constitutive *need* of a development. In essence, action is the name Blondel gives to the necessity that the human being, endowed with self-awareness and free will, aims, as far as possible, to develop himself fully and incessantly go beyond himself:

L'action humaine, envisagé dans son ensemble, du premier jusqu'au dernier acte, est en réalité un travail, le travail de l'enfantement de notre être-voulant à la plénitude de son épanouissement vital et spirituel.<sup>45</sup> (Human action, considered on its whole, from the first to the last of its acts, is in reality a work, the work of the birth of our being-wanting to the fullness of its vital and spiritual development.)

Moreover, action not only represents this desire for further attainments, but it also confers a specific direction to this dynamism: The development to which it leads is not simply *increase* or *growth*, but *integral development*, which is complete and harmonious. It is an increase of the subjective powers, but it must also be their constant interaction and *integration*. Here we see again the previously enunciated idea of synergy, now represented explicitly in its moral significance: Action is the work, universal in its essence, selective in the way in which it is consciously welcomed as a task, of *promoting* the dynamic unity of the self, which in its turn is only possible in the search for a better and more effective cohesion between the capacities. Consequently, the role of education is to help, to sustain, to enrich this integration of the personal components, making use of those instruments that can better succeed in stimulating the unity, activity, and totality of the personal energies. Therefore, this work can be carried out by promoting the same action, that is, by activating what is asleep or embryonic; in practice, education is realized by giving suggestions and instruments for the *activation* of the faculties. This is possible thanks to the energetic nature of individuality, given, that is, by a concurrence of energies; but every energy is a *tendency* and consequently becomes the bearer of an orientation toward ontological completion. In effect, the tendency as such expresses a determined inclination, a power capable of concentrating on the effort for completion.

Consequently, the ideal of integral development provides a rich pedagogical orientation because it connects what is already present in every person, as the active form of his existence, with the task of education: The idea of integral development allows Blondel to give pedagogy an ethical orientation related to the vital needs of the person. The ethical nature of the idea of integral development lies in its being the expression of a longing for the fullness of being, and therefore of a fundamental need for respect for the being revealed in the person, both in his powers and in his weaknesses.

However, this does not mean that, aiming at the integral development of the person, one ignores every other possible educational purpose: On the

contrary, it becomes possible to restore every formative utility to the root from which it must never be separated, which is the fullness of life and personal possibilities, their greatest *flourishing*. It cannot even be said that this formulation ignores the educational task of increasing *sociability*: In fact, it is a guarantee of full legitimacy in that sense, in its character of “eccentricity,” that is, its continual opening to alterity, to helping others, to participation in common work, and to “social action.”<sup>46</sup> Action is not only the bearer of an instrumental look at the beings of the world, but it also expresses the capacity of man’s spiritual horizon to widen and consider the transcendence of God as the final end of the indefinite inclination of the will.

In fact, as every “level” or “stage” of action requires the principle of the unity of the whole, in its turn transcendent with respect to its parts, or as subjective action must also be social action (so synergy overflows, pushing itself to encompass the opening of liberty to others), so not even the social sphere equals the inexhaustible tension of the will, and this foreshadows a further opening, this time maximum and metaphysical, to divine action (*theoergy*).<sup>47</sup> In this way, action takes on a significance that is not limited to that of simple practice, but is enriched, in Blondel’s ideas, by a fundamental anthropological and ontological sense. The transcendent opening of action expresses the peculiar factor of human life, given by the exceeding of biological life that we have, thanks to our awareness of liberty and our capacity to propose our own aims.

#### THE PRACTICE OF INTEGRAL EDUCATION

As we have seen, Blondel’s reflections provide valuable ways of thinking about the intrinsically formative role of action and to define in an integral sense the task of education. Thus, we can see the need for a complete pedagogy formulated in terms of the complete activation of personal capacities, the increase of liberty through the promotion of initiative and reflection on aims, and the harmonious development of energies. By underlining this awareness of the role of education, we have seen how action and work, as one of its essential stages, provide an effective anthropological foundation to that what we could rightly define as a “pedagogy of action.

” Now we consider how these principles can guide the concrete practice of teaching. In fact, Blondel did not limit his reflections to the “applied” aspect of pedagogy, but also was passionately concerned with the problems of teaching.<sup>48</sup> The discussion of the consequences of the pedagogical ideal of integral development of the human being is divided into two sections: In the first, I discuss certain inadequate educational practices and tools, whereas

in the second, I briefly relate what Blondel considers to be the most suitable routes to the authentic education of a person.

*The Limits of the Positivist Educational Model and the Role  
of the Specialization of Knowledge*

As an acute and passionate interpreter of the culture of his time and a teacher in constant contact with the real difficulties and demands of the practice of teaching, Blondel noted a “crisis of intelligence.” This crisis was partly due to the difficult material and economic situation of the time, which formed the background for a transformation of structures and social relationships that also disrupted the model of traditional teaching. However, this crisis more radically affected the cultural world, modifying its basic orientation. Blondel noted that the cause of this transformation lays in the “orientation of the intellectual culture towards ... a specialized culture, to the detriment of the equilibrium and the freedom of the widely and simply human judgement of the concrete.”<sup>49</sup> Therefore, the fulcrum of this crisis of intelligence was, above all, a particular direction of culture, which, based on the organization of the relationships of industrialized civilization, led more and more to a particular orientation of teaching, which tended to an extreme specialization of competences and methodologies, perfectly symmetrical to the diversity of social functions and productive tasks.

However, it is wrong to think that Blondel longed for a return to a classical model of education, abstractly formulated according to rules that were detached from the real needs of society and the imperatives of the division and specialization of work. Blondel supported his criticism with a different justification, claiming that his ideas were concrete and coherent. The exaggerated specialization of culture goes against its intended result: scientific adherence to what is true, acquisition of the “concrete,” adjustment to the definition of truth of the positive sciences, the use of methodologies of research believed to be exact, and the precise explanation of the world and human reality. But what is the “concrete” that Blondel appeals to in order to criticize the cultural model of specialized intelligence? It is a different definition of “concrete” to that adopted by the natural sciences: The concrete that every authentic knowledge and every profitable education must follow is not necessarily what is objectifiable and definable on the basis of quantitative canons, nor is it a reality that can be reduced to intellectual categories. This inadequate idea of the concrete derives from an assumption that does not do justice to the complexity of the real, but has been deliberately elaborated to reduce what is originally concrete to a numerically defined group of data and analysis procedures.

On the contrary, the concrete is reality approached with special care for its particularity, with an attention to what reveals itself as different from the categories of the intellect or the quantitative method. The object does not cease being what it is because the person looking at it is trying to mentally separate it from the rest of the world; the appropriate way of looking does not alter the “whole” that the thing is in its uniqueness, but is capable of maintaining an opening to its originality and thus to the truth of that being. According to this approach, a true science of the concrete cannot exist except through research that can remain open to what is expressed autonomously in reality and can grasp whatever, peculiar and essential, acts in it that remains irreducible to a mere sum of its parts. This “knowledge of the concrete” reflects an ideal of knowledge that is radically different from the analytical one; it is instead the expression of an attempt to express what is vital, and therefore not immediately intellectual in the real.

Now, if we apply this idea of the difference between positive science and concrete knowledge of life to the sphere of education, we can grasp the nature of a “concrete judgement” on man as the understanding of man in his complex, stratified, unpredictable totality. The concrete that must make up the primary interest of knowledge and the direction of education cannot be divided into its components or that original “whole” will be lost; therefore, there is no real development if we take into consideration a single direction of being, but we must maintain the plurality of dimensions, interests, and capacities. This principle is closely linked to the criticism of education formulated on the basis of the priority of the sciences, which does not promote integral development because it only encourages certain capacities, to the detriment of personal equilibrium and self-knowledge, of decisional and reflexive force, and of intersubjective and spiritual opening. Culture centered unilaterally on the supremacy of the positive sciences, as well as being the fruit of a reductive supposition, that of the self-sufficiency of their research methodologies, does not even satisfy the principle of the concreteness of knowledge because it leaves out the most essential part of individual reality, which consists of freedom, creative capacity, voluntary and ethical dimensions, opening to transcendence, and the problem of the meaning of life.<sup>50</sup> These are the dimensions that an authentic pedagogy must promote:

La culture des sciences positives exerce certaines aptitudes et développe certaines qualités, on peut même dire certaines vertus intellectuelles. Mais elles ne peuvent suffire à former l’homme; car elles portent, soit sur des abstractions, soit sur des objets dont nous pouvons user comme des moyens, mais sans que nous puissions nous borner à cette maîtrise de nos instruments; car il s’agit avant tout de nous connaître, de nous régler, de nous élever, de nous maîtriser nous-mêmes.<sup>51</sup> (The culture of the positive sciences exercises certain aptitudes and develops certain

qualities, even certain intellectual virtues. But these are not enough to form the man; since they are based both on abstractions and on those objects which we can use as means, but without us being able to limit ourselves to this control of our instruments; since we must above all know ourselves, regulate ourselves, raise ourselves, and dominate ourselves.)

So what matters most in the various forms of knowledge is not only their instrumental use finalized to the control of the outside world; their real aim is the control of ourselves. It is not a question of putting into practice a form of self-domination, becoming our own masters in order to use our capacities as instruments, risking a more devious self-exploitation. The control that Blondel is aiming at as the objective of educational work has a moral nature: It consists in the capacity to build, modify, strengthen, and integrate the *harmony* of the self at all times under the stimuli coming from the needs of the world and from one's own interiority.

Blondel's use of the ideal of the integral development of the human person can be clearly seen even in the criticism of the educative principle based on the supremacy of the positive sciences; it is on the basis of this planning that every scientific discussion, every specific knowledge, and every technique learnt find a meaning. Education is the work of promoting the whole human being, not simply the dispensing of knowledge or the teaching of techniques capable of reaching a result. Certainly these forms of knowledge are useful and indispensable, but they cannot take a priority role in the formation of the person: However, they can be fully included in educational practice if they are used as instruments for attaining a richer finality in relation to the completeness of the personality:

Non pas que la spécialisation soit à éviter, non plus que la technique à sous-estimer, mais les vraies compétences n'atteignent leur plus haute puissance et leur meilleure application qu'au prix ... d'une culture plus générale et plus profondément humaine.<sup>52</sup> (It is not that specialization is to be avoided, nor techniques underrated, but the real competences do not reach their highest power and their application except at the expense of a more general and more deeply human culture.)

Technical knowledge also has considerable value and is also an expression of individual and social needs, but it always has meaning in relation to the whole man; therefore, education can rightly take advantage of it, but it must also know how to clarify the link with the other expressions of thought and existence. The very development of these sciences and techniques requires attention to a synthesis of the expressions of cognitive experience and their unity and organicity.

In this way, Blondel proposes a reversal of priorities contrary to the prevalent direction of the reforms of his time: Instead of the supremacy of the part, he emphasizes that of the whole, which does not repudiate the part, but

instead grasps its essentiality in relation to others. What emerges is a proposal for a “human” culture that is the expression of the plurality of thought, feeling, and acting, which knows how to address humanity’s deepest needs, confers on the man the instruments with which to interpret his existence in relationship to others, and gives voice to the components of our interiority.

These principles of synthesis and entirety provide ethical and anthropological guidelines for a new formulation of the relationship between subjects to be taught and directions of research; philosophy acquires a central role, as a reflection that can go beyond consideration of specific methodologies and yet at the same time be open to the specificity and the totality of reality. Only in this way can it throw light on the principle of unity and the links among the various sciences,<sup>53</sup> precisely because it is not assimilable to any single science; this is why philosophy can provide the principle of unity of education:

Ce qu’on reproche justement à nos programmes, c’est de juxtaposer trop de connaissances éparées sans offrir un principe d’unité, et surtout sans former d’abord l’instrument intellectuel, sans fournir la clef qui ouvre le sens de toutes ces données subies plutôt que comprises et digérées.<sup>54</sup> (What we rightly criticize in our syllabuses is that they juxtapose too many different facts without offering a principle of unity, and above all without first of all forming the intellectual instrument, without providing the key which unlocks the meaning of all this data which is imposed rather than understood and assimilated.)

Just as the specialization of knowledge can be disorientating if it lacks a principle of unity, so an education consisting of tightly closed sectors can be harmful; on the contrary, the child needs to exercise his capacity for synthesis, unifying the various dimensions of learning, as a first exercise in self-unification. Philosophy is “the synthesis and unity not only of knowledge, but of life.”<sup>55</sup> Therefore it must permeate education and personal research, unifying them. The exercise of philosophy in itself is educational because it offers an understanding of the synthesis of the reflexive sphere and the active one and coordinates pluralities, harmonizing intellectual, practical, and interior conflicts; it is a useful remedy against the negative consequences of the separation between the activities of the spirit. What Blondel criticizes about the positivist model is the leveling of education to a reductive idea of man, incapable of being faithful to individual differences and the internal coexistence of different capacities:

En voulant rendre les enfants trop tôt utilitaires et positifs, on risque de stériliser leur vie en la fermant à l’appel du dévouement, du labeur difficile, et de l’abnégation. C’est d’ailleurs une grave et funeste erreur que de croire qu’il y a plus de réalité dans l’expérience des phénomènes qu’étudie ... la science que dans l’activité intérieure de l’âme et que dans les vérités psychologiques ou morales dont la culture littéraire développe en nous la connaissance ou la

production même; et c'est par là que nous sommes en effet, non des machines, mais des hommes, capables d'initiative et d'invention.<sup>56</sup> (By wanting to make children utilitarian and positive too soon, we risk sterilizing their lives by closing them to call of dedication, hard work and abnegation. However, it is a serious and fatal error to believe that there is more reality in the experience of phenomena which studies science than in the interior activity of the soul and in the psychological or moral truths of which the literary culture develops in us the knowledge or the production itself; and it is in this that we are, in fact, men capable of initiative and invention, and not machines).

Here we can find further confirmation of what has been said about the attribute of "concrete" knowledge: Reality is not only what can be symbolically expressed by a number or intellectually reconstructed by a calculation, but it is also the nucleus of liberty and creativity that underlies every intellectual procedure. As for education, it cannot allow itself to ignore the activity of the soul, its moral development, its infinite tension. Consequently, children would be greatly harmed by an education that ignored the capacity for spiritual invention and aimed only at the effectiveness of accomplishment, although this has considerable educational value.

The orientation toward the exclusive development of technical competences cannot even be redressed by education, which is abstractly equal for everyone, insensitive to the specificity of personal experiences and the singularity of each person's aptitudes. It is because of this and because of the exclusive supremacy of science in the educational field that Blondel opposes generalized, standardized schooling in which the contents and methods are the same for everyone. Although this approach has the admirable intention of giving the widest possible education to the greatest number of people, Blondel sees in it the risk of a destructive homogenization of education. We must make sure that education does not only express the demands imposed by the specialized division of labor: From the viewpoint of a rigid division of labor, general education could easily become an instrument for a levelling of individuals to a pre-established model of efficiency and productivity, directed toward an interchangeability of individuals in relation to their functions analogous to the mechanisms of a machine.

Once again Blondel defends the value and profound utility of the pedagogical ideal of the integral development of the person. This would ensure full individual growth and active increase of his capacities at the same time as it favors the subject's creative initiative; therefore, work is, indeed, a means for man's education because it increases his mastery of energies and directs them toward a chosen aim, but it must not become itself a principle for the definition of education:

Soyons en garde contre cette théorie de la division du travail, qui réduit l'être humain à n'être qu'un produit et par là même un instrument de la collectivité.... On veut aboutir à faire des

êtres qui ne sont que des fragments d'humanité, *Teilmenschen*...; et voici que pour arriver à cette spécialisation qui rend chacun esclave de tous les autres et l'enlève à lui-même, on prétend former tous et chacun de la même manière, ce qui est absurde.<sup>57</sup> (Let us be on our guard against this theory of the division of labor, which reduces man to being merely a product and hence an instrument of the community. Its aim is to make beings which are simply fragments of humanity, *Teilmenschen*; and to arrive at this specialization which makes everyone a slave to all the others and takes him away from himself, the intention is to form everyone in the same way, which is absurd.)

The disastrous consequence of an extreme division of labor is the reciprocal slavery of men among themselves, the coercive establishment of social relationships on the basis of simple needs. For Blondel it is wrong and harmful to feed this interdependence through a false common education because it does not constitute a way to realize authentic collaboration, but rather only a way toward conflict or the breaking of social bonds. It is true that man cannot be reduced to an instrument of the community, but this does not mean that, through our work, each of us does not contribute to the common good with our own strengths and initiatives.

Moreover, this form of division of work and education involves a fragmentation of the subject: The unilateral development of a single capacity or the exercise of a single technique make man disproportionate, excessively identified in a single direction of life or thought, incapable of restoring self-harmony. So the art of the educator consists precisely in knowing how to exploit every activity in the direction of the harmonious development of the individual and his collaboration with others; in this sense, even the division of labor, if it is restored to its authentic root, can express positive educational value. The greatest obstacle to the attainment of that pedagogical ideal of completeness, inspired by the awareness of the supremacy of action in the constitution of individual and social life, is the partial and excessive development of one human capacity or dimension to the detriment of a person's totality. The "fragment of a man" (*Teilmensch*) and the "fragmented man" are the spectres that a bad education produces under the influence of a rigid division of social roles and forms of knowledge.

As I have tried to show, the contribution of work also comes into the planning of educational practice. Blondel also presents a multiplicity of shadings and modalities of application in this respect: The division of labor represents the constant danger of fragmentation and slavery, but if it acknowledges individual autonomy, it can also lead to a fruitful collaboration that is not limited to being "an expedient to allow people to live together," but also a way of making "ideas live together."<sup>58</sup>

*Appropriate Paths to Education: Exercise of the Faculties, Art,  
Collaboration, Religion*

As he did for the role of science and the social value of the division of labor, Blondel also evaluated the other expressions of human culture as possible instruments for education. After having outlined the reasons for the inadequacy of reductive approaches to education, I now summarize what Blondel considers to be the most fruitful approaches. He wrote that although teaching is sometimes a “popularization,” it must be principally a “promotion of the intelligence.”<sup>59</sup> This affirmation could be wrongly interpreted as referring to a purely intellectual education; on the contrary, even in the conception of the nature of intelligence there is the expression of the idea of the complex stratification of human action, of the plurality of the dimensions of the soul and of its essential link with the body and its powers:

Les emplois inférieurs de l’intelligence ne sont possibles, ne sont réels en nous que par la présence efficace de ses virtualités supérieures; la fonction suprême de l’intelligence présuppose en nous l’exercice des puissances subalternes, la traversée des phases moyennes.<sup>60</sup> (The inferior uses of intelligence are not possible, are not real in us except for the effective presence of its superior virtualities; the supreme function of intelligence assumes that we exercise the subordinate powers and pass through intermediate phases.)

There is an essential coexistence between the superior utilization of intelligence and the subordinate powers. This idea draws substantially on the results of the analysis carried out in *L’Action* of 1893 and it makes its consequences clear: Intelligence is not a function that is closed in itself, but it comes from antecedent conditions, from the exercise of powers and intermediate phases that are inferior, in terms of their level of clarity and determinability, but are as necessary as the other expressions of physical and organic life in man.

So there is a need for a form of education that not only regards the intellectual expressions of culture, but also attends to the exercise of the corporeal powers of the subject and the coordination of movements as the modalities of the development of personal life. There is no real harmony if some essential dimensions of individual life are left to wither; the best education encourages harmony. Therefore, if there is a priority of the intellectual and moral faculties of man, it is also true that this is all at one with its antecedent conditions. I now concentrate on precisely this new element because it points the way to a deeper understanding of the task and the instruments of integral education.

Blondel affirms that not only does the most complex faculty needs the full efficiency and the full coordination of the activities from which it emerges, but also the subordinate activity necessitates the already active presence of a superior virtuality that sustains the unity and effective movement toward a finality. Otherwise, how could we explain that the part, in itself unrelated

and self-sufficient, organically connects to the others to form a comprehensive whole if the principle of unity, which is then action, were not actively present? So we can conclude that the development of the inferior powers is as necessary as that of the superior potentialities, not only for themselves, but also for the consolidation of the harmony of the whole and the development of the same organic and physical components. There is, therefore, a further confirmation of how the ideal of integral development of the human being necessitates a concrete, not piecewise, application, which, in fact, involves all the expressions of personal life, in its different levels of complexity and awareness:

En elle [l'intelligence] et par elle il n'y a pas seulement une réalité reconnue, reflétée, calquée sur du préexistant; elle est essentiellement vie, expansion inédite, réalité neuve, enrichissement du monde spirituel; elle n'est pas seulement spéculaire et reproductrice, pas seulement assimilatrice et digérante; elle est promotrice, productrice, multiplicatrice. Sans perdre en nous le caractère de dépendance qu'elle garde à l'égard de son Objet suprême, elle a ce qu'il y a en cet Objet d'activité souveraine et d'initiative créatrice. Elle fait œuvre divine.<sup>61</sup> (In intelligence and for it there is not only a recognised, reflected reality, pushed onto something preexistent; it is essentially life, original expansion, new reality, enrichment of the spiritual world; it is not only mirror-like and reproductive, nor only assimilating and digestive; it is the promoter, producer, multiplier. Without losing in us the character of dependence that it conserves towards its supreme Object, it has what there is of sovereign activity and creative initiative in this object. It makes a divine work.)

Therefore, intelligence is not only calculation or scientific analysis, but life itself that expands and finds its peculiar human expression in the opening of the spirit to the supreme Object, God. Thus, education is called to conclude its task, not obstructing but, rather, promoting the personal connection to the Principle. Therefore, integral human development is not only development as an end in itself or the construction of an interior harmony devoid of orientation: For Blondel, it is the path to the opening to transcendence. It is not that education must necessarily make use of specifically religious contents, but rather that it must initiate a journey of metaphysical research to which each of us is called to give our own answer and meaning.

It is, hence, thanks to the preservation of a constant opening of the person to what surpasses him that the conception of intelligence as a “new reality” and as “enrichment of the spiritual world” acquires effectiveness and so, consequently, does the concept of “life” itself. In fact, life is characterized by its active opening to the future, to the unpredictable, to others and to the Other. The growth of this “promoting, producing, multiplying” capacity of intelligence and personal life has various modalities.

An essential pedagogical role is played by the *work of art*: This is, in fact, the symbol of a spiritual synthesis, it is the truth expressed in beauty,

it is the appeal to an interpretation; through sensation, it puts into action the immediate sign, the sensitive form, a search for meaning by the individual.<sup>62</sup> In the work of art, man puts all his faculties into practice and involves them in the expression of a perfection, in an original and significant integration of elements. For a full development of the human being it is necessary to take advantage of the contributions that enrich knowledge and action and confer further perfections to the active synthesis of man and world and of God with Himself through beings. Therefore, in this sense, art is the home of a fundamental learning, which consists in the active spiritual participation in the whole universe; in art, man becomes the true “universal bond,”<sup>63</sup> a sort of microcosm whose many powers and forms of energy converge and attain freedom, generating something new. In art, man does this in a way that is different from but not completely dissimilar to the way he does so in the other expressions of action.

Blondel also underlines the value of the other forms of learning and spiritual opening. One of these can be found in international and *intercultural collaboration*, understood as a work of participation in a common aim. The awareness of the value of the *plurality* of the directions of development and of the contributions to a common work is subordinate to this idea; in fact, there is no real collaboration except between multiple efforts and motives.

The notion of *work* occupies a separate space in the idea of integral development. In fact, what distinguishes every subjective acquisition, every stage of expansion of human initiative, is the comparison with the alterity, which appears as the nucleus of passivity refractory to action. As we have seen, work is the only possible modality for this comparison and the only way through which we can examine the effective harmony of the subjective energies. It is precisely this characteristic of work that places it at the center of every educational work and every stage in the growth of the individual; in fact, there is neither real acquisition nor increase of the physical powers and those of the intelligence without the pupil’s action. The action of the educator cannot be limited to the dispensing of ready-made, “digested” knowledge, but it must provoke the pupil’s active contribution to the work of his own education.

In other words, the most important aspect of teaching is this activity of promotion, which I have already spoken about; but this cannot be realized except as the *activation* of individual powers, as an impulsive initiative, as the *putting-into-action* of energies and the subjective autonomy of the pupil. So work takes on the role of an indispensable instrument of all education, understood in its fundamental sense as the effectuation of an action that is directed toward the production of a result. Therefore, if authentic education is a work of promotion and growth of harmony, of liberty and of personal openings,

work becomes an indispensable instrument in allowing this development to acquire concreteness and strength, in consolidating the coordination of powers of the self in effective practice, so that every purpose is fully achieved through hard work.

Blondel was certainly not the first to understand that a component of *hard work* is implicit in educational work (since education is not unilaterally the work of the teacher, but also and above all that of the learner). So this is the element that, more than any other, shows us the close relation of work to every learning process: Hard work denotes the active *exercise* of energies, the tension and toil of a generation, the meeting or clash of the creative initiative with the surrounding or interior world. Through work and more than in any of its other expressions, action shows itself to be a real and difficult process of existential learning. Therefore, if well used, work can become a useful instrument of education, as well as an activity that is in itself educational: It is with the exercise of the faculties, put into action in view of a particular task, that a *habit*<sup>64</sup> that strengthens an efficient tendency is generated.

#### CONCLUSION: THE COMMON GOOD AS THE AIM OF EDUCATION

In the previous sections I have tried to give an account of Blondel's pedagogy inspired by the new formulation of philosophy as a criticism of life and a science of action. From the idea of action as an intrinsically educational stimulus, generally innate in every being but in an original and free way in man, Blondel arrived at the elaboration of the pedagogical ideal of integral development of the person. We have seen the ethical breadth, the concreteness, and the elasticity with regard to the plurality of the human dimensions expressed through this approach, and at the same time I have presented its relation to the notion of work, which is just as central in a discussion of education on the basis of the necessity for an effectuation of action. The last part of the analysis concerned the applications of the general principle to education and the choice of appropriate tools for the practice of teaching, which is an important area of education, but not the only one.

In conclusion, I mention an issue that underlies the whole analysis: the problem of the purpose of education. Blondel examined the main aim of education. I have already explained how this involves the promotion of the autonomy and creativity of the person, attainable through the progressive achievement of self-control and the mastery of one's own powers, and the capacity for orientation of the tensions of the will. However, Blondel does not limit himself to outlining the purely subjective aspect of the utility of

education. Consistent with his emphasis on the social importance of the dynamism of action, he affirms that “the purpose of education is the *common good*.”<sup>65</sup> Therefore, the integral development of the human being cannot be separated from that of the whole of *mankind*, just as the development of action cannot be stopped on the level of subjectivity, for the very structure of free will it necessarily leads us to look for collaboration with others and the participation in a common good.

Therefore, the common good is indeed the purpose of education, but at the same time it is not attainable without an education that shows its necessity. So the pedagogical ideal is enriched by a further nuance, which can be expressed as the opening of every free human work to *communication* with another human. Therefore, what lies behind Blondel’s pedagogical vision is the awareness that there is no individual existence except when it is immersed in society and realizes that relations with others are necessary and that nothing can be achieved effectively without cooperating with others’ creativity. This happens for every activity, including that of education: Cooperation is put into action in an exemplary way in the relationship between teacher and pupil, in which each is active and puts his or her energies into action for a common aim.

Therefore, the final purpose of education is in line with that of any other ethical praxis: Humanity, as an original community of intentions and a shared ground for action, can become the home of reciprocal learning, of constant teaching of difference and the convergence of efforts, in other words, it can be a place for the construction of *peace*. Therefore, the imperative of the common good is not an abstract affirmation of obligation, but as complete as possible a direction of development of the whole of humanity, which disdains the forgetfulness of a part or a capacity, as much as this happens in the single individual. So in human society, every person is called to make his or her contribution in his or her originality to the common work of peace, in the awareness that it is, in fact, in a “multicolored” and “multiform” attempt that the facets of Good are realized:

L’Humanité ... tend à réaliser une union, *unum*, sous une loi de diversité, d’organisation multiforme, de compréhension et de coopération réciproques, d’amour actif et méritoire.<sup>66</sup> (Humanity tends to realize a union, *unum*, under a law of diversity, of multiform organization, of reciprocal cooperation and understanding, of active and meritorious love).

Education, in its turn, does not exempt itself from this tension of reciprocal cooperation and reciprocal enrichment, which represents one of the conditions for the construction of peace:

Ce qu’on peut souhaiter aussi, c’est qu’une compréhension plus complète des peuples et de leurs civilisations permette une coopération pacifique, de manière à enrichir la civilisation générale

non par effacement de ce que chaque idéal national a d'original, mais par un enrichissement mutuel.<sup>67</sup> (What we can also wish for is that a more complete understanding of peoples and their civilizations will permit a pacific cooperation, in order to enrich the general civilization, not for a cancellation of what is original in each national ideal but for a mutual enrichment).

These observations by Maurice Blondel have a deep significance and relevance to the present in the context of a progressive moving together of cultures, which is being realized through the "cancellation" of national particularities. He wish remains valid because it represents the correct direction for a pacific development of the way to live with plurality.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See R. Virgoulay and Cl. Troisfontaines, *Maurice Blondel. Bibliographie analytique et critique*. I. *Œuvres de Maurice Blondel, 1880–1975* (Louvain: Peeters, 1975); II. *Études sur Maurice Blondel, 1893–1975* (Louvain: Peeters, 1976); see also <http://www.ruf.uni-freiburg.de/theologie/forsch/blondel/blondel0.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> There have not been many attempts to analyze Blondel's pedagogical ideas. The most notable was by E. Carpita, *Educazione e religione in Blondel* (Florence: Vallecchi, 1920).

<sup>3</sup> M. Blondel, *L'Action. Essai d'une critique de la vie et d'une science de la pratique* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1893); reprinted in M. Blondel, *Œuvres complètes*, Vol. I (Paris: PUF, 1995). As an introduction to this work, the following essays may be considered: J. Leclercq, *L'azione come principio etico. Sguardo sul progetto filosofico di Maurice Blondel*, in L. Alici, ed., *Azione e persona: le radici della prassi* (Milan: Vita e pensiero, 2002); S. Sorrentino, *Crisi o invenzione del senso? La filosofia dell'azione come impegno radicale per dare ragione dell'universo del senso*, introduction to M. Blondel, *L'azione. Saggio di una critica della vita e di una scienza della prassi* (Milan: Edizioni Paoline, 1993), pp. 5–42; R. Saint-Jean, *Genèse de L'Action. Blondel 1882–1893* (Desclée de Brouwer, 1965); J. M. Somerville, *Total Commitment. Blondel's Action* (Washington, DC: Corpus, 1968); R. Virgoulay, *L'Action de Maurice Blondel 1893. Relecture pour une centenaire* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1992); D. Cornati, *L'ontologia implicita nell' "Action" (1893) di Maurice Blondel* (Milan: Glossa, 1998).

<sup>4</sup> M. Blondel, *Carnets intimes*, Vol. II (1894–1949) (Paris: Cerf, 1966), p. 178.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 179.

<sup>6</sup> M. Blondel, *Le point de départ de la recherche philosophique*, in *Œuvres complètes*, Vol. II, p. [249] 568.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> S. D'Agostino, *Dall'atto all'azione. Blondel e Aristotele nel progetto de "L'Action" (1893)* (Rome: EPUG, 1999), pp. 387–391.

<sup>9</sup> Blondel writes, "La science pour la science, la vie pour la vie, ce sont deux formules également mensongères." M. Blondel, *Le point de départ de la recherche philosophique*, in *Œuvres complètes*, Vol. II, p. [356] 545. M.-J. Coutagne, *Au cœur d' "Histoire et dogme"*, le concept de vie, *Théophilon*, IX, 1, January 2004, p. 155.

<sup>10</sup> M. Blondel, *L'Action*, p. [101], 135.

<sup>11</sup> M. Blondel, *Collaboration au "Vocabulaire" de Lalande. Au mot Action*, in *Œuvres complètes*, Vol. II, p. [190] 342, Appendice A, Lettre de Maurice Blondel sur l'Action: "En étudiant l'action, je puis dire que ..., j'ai tendu à rendre de plus en plus profondément *intelligible* ce qui n'est pas immédiatement et spécifiquement *intellectuel*" (Studying action, I can say that I have tried to make more and more deeply *intelligible* what is not immediately and specifically *intellectual*).

<sup>12</sup> M. Blondel, *L'illusion idéaliste*, in *Œuvres Complètes*, Vol. II, p. 213.

<sup>13</sup> M. Blondel, *L'Action*, p. [471] 505.

<sup>14</sup> M. Blondel, *Collaboration au "Vocabulaire" de Lalande. Au mot Action*, in *Œuvres complètes*, Vol. II, p. [190] 343.

<sup>15</sup> M. Blondel, *Le point de départ de la recherche philosophique*, p. [235] 556.

<sup>16</sup> M. Blondel, *L'Action*, p. [478] 512.

<sup>17</sup> M. Blondel, *Collaboration au "Vocabulaire" de Lalande. Au mot Action*, p. [182] 341.

<sup>18</sup> That the sphere opened in action is more inclusive than the intellectual one does not mean for Blondel disproving the cognitive validity of reflective reason, but only bringing it back to the root that founds this same validity. To claim the supremacy of action does not mean that it is necessary to deny the legitimacy of the attempt for speculation or science, but instead to renew it in the direction of a greater attention to something that is not itself of an intellectual nature.

<sup>19</sup> A. Fouillée, L'évolutionnisme des idées-forces, *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger*, XXIX, February 1890.

<sup>20</sup> M. Blondel, *L'Action*, p. [182] 216.

<sup>21</sup> M.-J. Coutagne, *Le concept de vie*, p. 157: "Sans doute le texte de 1904 [*Histoire et dogme*] ne définit-il jamais explicitement le terme de *vie*, mais on pourrait facilement découvrir que, comme dans la thèse de 1893, la *vie* est une 'synergie', une force interne, un principe qui affermit les êtres et qui peut aussi les ruiner selon qu'ils coopèrent ou non au dessein d'où ils procèdent et au destin auquel ils tendent... La clef du vivant n'est pas dans l'univers biologique de même que la clef de l'histoire n'est pas dans l'historicité elle-même. Si l'histoire est *vie*, c'est que la vie est à la fois être, connaissance connaturale à son objet, qui instaure assimilation ici, sympathie et amour là, blessure pour l'esprit qui tâche à s'y élever sans jamais y parvenir. La vie en effet est toujours ouverte sur l'au-delà d'elle-même: elle est *élan spirituel* qui préfigure et prépare dans les cycles biologiques, dans les réalités historiques, dans des déchirements de l'âme, l'assomption des personnes."

<sup>22</sup> J. Leclercq, *Maurice Blondel lecteur de Bernard de Clairvaux* (Brussels: Lessius, 2001), p. 190: "La liberté est effectivement au cœur de *L'Action* et en est même la question déterminante et intégrale. Elle informe la trame de l'œuvre et se révèle être intimement liée aux questions de l'option, de la volonté ou encore du consentement. Toujours en mouvement, selon une dynamique des dépassements, elle se conquiert, se fait et demeure encore en devenir; son assimilation est lente et progressive, mais elle évite le dualisme de l'action et de la contemplation. On peut en conséquence parler d'une réelle génération de la liberté dans la "phénoménologie" de l'action."

<sup>23</sup> M. Blondel, *L'Action*, pp. [181–182] 215–216.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. [182] 216.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. [106] 140.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. [180] 214.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. [187] 221.

<sup>28</sup> J. Leclercq, *L'azione come principio etico*, p. 53.

<sup>29</sup> M. Blondel, *L'Action*, p. [182] 216.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> In action, Blondel sees not only free acts, those that originate in an autonomous determination of desire, but also a determinism of causes. However, it must be noted that there is no

contradiction between these. Indeed, he believes that through action we arrive at a “conciliation” between necessity and liberty. On the theme of the relationship between necessity and liberty, see M. Renault, *Déterminisme et liberté dans “L’Action” de Maurice Blondel* (Lyon: Vitte, 1965).

<sup>32</sup> M. Blondel, *Lettre-Préface*, in J. Paliard and P. Archambault, eds., *Etudes Blondéliennes*, fascicule 1 (Paris: PUF, 1951), p. 17.

<sup>33</sup> M. Blondel, *L’Action*, p. 116 [82].

<sup>34</sup> S. D’Agostino, *Dall’atto all’azione*, p. 339.

<sup>35</sup> M. Blondel, *L’Action*, p. [187] 221.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. [187] 221.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. [188] 222.

<sup>38</sup> For the notion of sincerity in Blondel and the connection to the philosophy of Bernard de Clairvaux, see J. Leclercq, *Maurice Blondel lecteur de Bernard de Clairvaux* (Brussels: Lessius, 2001).

<sup>39</sup> M. Blondel, *L’Action*, p. [188] 222.

<sup>40</sup> M. Blondel, *Carnets intimes*, Vol. I, p. 97.

<sup>41</sup> M. Blondel, *L’Action*, p. [186] 220.

<sup>42</sup> M. Blondel, *L’Action humaine et les conditions de son aboutissement* (Paris: PUF, 1963), p. 489: “L’acte proprement humain est toujours un travail mêlé de matérialité et de spiritualité, comme de peine, de joie, de dignité. Et c’est pour cela qu’il doit aussi mêler et unir les personnes humaines qui, non seulement ne peuvent se passer matériellement et empiriquement les unes vers les autres, mais qui, moralement et spirituellement, ont à porter le fardeau les unes des autres, à s’engendrer méritoirement à une vie d’entraide et d’union.”

<sup>43</sup> M. Blondel, *L’Action*, p. [187] 221.

<sup>44</sup> On the theme of the moral sphere revealed by Blondel’s notion of action, see A. Fumagalli, *Il peso delle azioni. Agire morale e opzione fondamentale secondo L’Action (1893) di M. Blondel* (Milan: Glossa, 1997).

<sup>45</sup> M. Blondel, *L’Action humaine et les conditions*, p. 485.

<sup>46</sup> M. Blondel, *L’Action*, part III, stage IV, pp. [201–244] 235–278. On the theme of social action see L.-P. Bordeleau, *Action et vie sociale dans l’œuvre de Maurice Blondel* (Ottawa, Canada: Editions de l’Université d’Ottawa, 1978).

<sup>47</sup> M. Blondel, *L’Action*, p. [352] 318.

<sup>48</sup> M. Blondel, *Carnets Intimes*, Vol. II, pp. 195–234.

<sup>49</sup> M. Blondel, Où va l’intelligence? réponse, *Le sol français*, 9 May 1934.

<sup>50</sup> J. Leclercq, *L’azione come principio etico*, p. 48.

<sup>51</sup> M. Blondel, Réponse au questionnaire, in Fr. Charmot, Enquête sur l’humanisme gréco-latin, *L’enseignement chrétien*, 51, 8 (May 1932), p. 357.

<sup>52</sup> M. Blondel, Philosophie de l’action, *Les études philosophiques*, 1946, January–March, p. 8.

<sup>53</sup> D. Cornati, *L’ontologia implicita*, pp. 9–121.

<sup>54</sup> M. Blondel, Réponse au questionnaire, p. 357.

<sup>55</sup> M. Blondel, *Carnets Intimes*, Vol. II, p. 203.

<sup>56</sup> M. Blondel, *Réponse au questionnaire*, p. 355.

<sup>57</sup> M. Blondel, Notes sur la Réforme de l’Enseignement et les projets d’Ecole Unique, *Politique*, 4 (September 1930), 9, p. 773.

<sup>58</sup> M. Blondel, Pour les syndicats féminins d’Aix-en-Provence, 29 March 1920, manuscript, Centre d’Archives Blondel, 243, ff. 50912–50913.

<sup>59</sup> M. Blondel, *Carnets Intimes*, Vol. II, p. 200.

<sup>60</sup> M. Blondel, *Le procès de l’intelligence* (Paris: La nouvelle journée, 1922), p. 41.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> S. Babolin, L'estetica di Maurice Blondel, in P. Henrici, R. Crippa, S. Nicolosi, et al., eds., *Attualità del pensiero di Maurice Blondel. Atti del I Convegno di studio sul pensiero di Maurice Blondel tenuto all'Aloisianum di Gallarate il 21 e 22 marzo 1975* (Milan: Comunità di ricerca –Massimo, 1976).

<sup>63</sup> M. Blondel, *L'Action*, p. [224] 258: "Entre l'agent et ses coopérateurs, il s'établit une relation analogue à la finalité qui associe les membres d'un même organisme. Aussi la volonté devient-elle comme l'âme du déterminisme qu'elle fait servir à ses fins. L'homme est vraiment 'toute nature', le lien universel."

<sup>64</sup> F. Ravaisson, *De l'habitude* (Paris: Alcan, 1927).

<sup>65</sup> M. Blondel, Notes sur la Réforme de l'Enseignement, pp. 774–775.

<sup>66</sup> M. Blondel, *Patrie et humanité, cours professé à la Semaine Sociale de Paris, juillet 1928* (Lyon: Chronique sociale de France, 1928), p. 26.

<sup>67</sup> M. Blondel, Réponse au questionnaire, p. 357.

HUSSERL'S PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS  
OF ETHICS AS A FOUNDATION FOR PEDAGOGY

An attempt to delineate a Husserlian analysis of ethics to provide a foundation for would be difficult if not seen through his reflections on intersubjective life and how it is related to different forms of community life, in particular, to that of a "state." An ethico-political dimension can be seen in his analysis even though Husserl uses the term "politics" very little; in fact, he does deal with society, the state, law, community, and the spheres of life that in one way or another are related to the practical dimensions of human affairs. According to Angela Ales Bello, according to the Husserlian analysis<sup>1</sup> in Ms. A II 1 as transcribed by Van Breda, in the human community, persons live a social life together on the basis of the law.<sup>2</sup>

Husserl analyzes *Gesellschaft* (society), the network of rational relationships among individuals that are directed toward an aim,<sup>3</sup> and *Gemeinschaft*<sup>4</sup> (community), which is attached to a language and has rules and regulations but not the ethical obligations that represent the particularity of a state. As Ales Bello also affirms, according to Husserl, *Gesellschaft*, *Gemeinschaft*, and *Staat* can be the fruit of a "natural" attitude, that is, one that is instinctive and mediated.<sup>5</sup> In fact, Husserl distinguishes among groups of individuals who live in symbiosis (*symbiotischen Gesellschaften*) and societies that have a *finalità* (*Zweckgesellschaften*), communities that arise naturally and have an aim (*natürliche gewordene Gemeinschaften* and *Zweckgemeinschaften*), *natürlichen Staaten*, which are born from the will of a despotic or tyrannical authority, and *künstlichen Staaten*, in which people get together willingly and consciously. This willingness and consciousness distinguish different manners of being of society, community, and state.<sup>6</sup> A small community like a family can be transformed into a group whose members are reciprocally responsible and are guided by an obligation (*Pflicht*, *Sollen*) and this way is characterized as *Willenszusammenhang*. In the manuscripts of *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität II* Husserl delineates the structure of analysis *von unten* and in this manner brings forward a clear distinction between a community and a society; a community is an important way to establish this intersubjective relationship, which is conscious and willed (and in this way also can be called spiritual) and is the ethical moment of this community. This ethical

moment strengthens the natural basis without annihilating it. According to Ales Bello, this possibility is witnessed by “ethical love,” which finds its maximum realization in love of Christ “who loves the sinner and the enemy, transfiguring in this manner any type of ‘human’ love, also that among the members of a family, among the friends and like this generating an authentic community of love (*Liebesgemeinschaft*).”<sup>7</sup> We meet with ethical love, which is conscious when

I love like him who loves truly (that is, ethically) and I love intentionally in communion with the other and live in a soul which is waking up, in the ethical subjectivity of the other who is flowering, developing and becoming, or I live in the subjectivity who is fully awake and fights and struggles, develops fully in the ethical sense, in all that flowers from its habitual positive ethics as its personal ethical life.<sup>8</sup>

This kind of spiritual union among the members of the community who communicate with one another respects the individuality of each of its members, every one of which is guided to realize this ethical ideal.<sup>9</sup>

The maximum expression of this love (ethical ideal) is the love of Christ, which has its teleological dimension attached to the destiny of humanity. This argument is developed further by Husserl in his manuscripts of the 1930s, especially those of group E III 1; he clearly explains the teleology considered in the ethical ideal with an “essential” question:

Through intersubjectivity in its generative relationship, in its finiteness (at this point death), the manner in which one lives the experience of death, the life, the destiny, the contingency, one does not reveal the necessary tendencies in an internal praxis which tries to give a single and to the human being a teleological form and, correlatively, a tendency towards happiness?<sup>10</sup>

In this manner, in Ales Bello’s interpretation of the ethical ideal, we have an ideal of a teleologically true world, in other words, we have an idea of an *intersubjektiver Gemeinschaft* that is absolutely perfect and tends toward the infinite, but in this way it is possible only to approximately realize this ethical ideal and it is possible to “fall.”<sup>11</sup>

The society of human beings is not “one” group of persons who live together and communicate, but we live in a world in which there are many communities, ethnic identities, societies, countries that interact with each other at different levels—social, economical, political, and religious. Husserl asks about the concrete existential dimension of the world in this manner: “How is the world which matters for me, what is it for me in an the attitude of an awakened being? What does this how mean?”<sup>12</sup> For Ales Bello, in Husserlian terms, this world is of things, in which I move with my body, through which I feel, see, touch, and have control over these things. This world in which human subjectivity lives is situated in historical time and is

the time of this life.<sup>13</sup> Human beings live according to the laws of a state in which they find themselves, which exposes them to private and public life, and both these dimensions are present at each level at which human beings live in the *Gemeinschaft*.

According to Ales Bello's analysis of Husserl's manuscripts on political and ethical arguments related to the social life of human beings, these political and ethical moments can be used to evaluate the validity of the norms that regulate life in a state in which law governs the life of the individual, ensuring respect for individuals so that the human person does not disappear.<sup>14</sup>

Ullrich Melle, in an analysis of Husserlian ethics and axiology, also holds that "love in addition or even in opposition to reason comes to be seen as the fundamental ethical motive,"<sup>15</sup> where love serves the purpose of self-regulation in a person's life.

Taking ethical love as ideal, Husserl's phenomenological analysis of human free will in the *kunstlichen Staaten* regards the realization of objective good, which brings forward our reflection over judgments made by individuals who live in a community. These judgments are in relationship to values and the knowledge of things. The subjectivity that evaluates and produces these judgments works through formal logic on the dimensions of desire and will, which makes possible the analysis of values, goods, and aims. Values, which can be taken into consideration from an ethical point of view, constitute an important relationship between persons in a community. According to phenomenological analysis, this kind of relationship is a spiritual one and is at the basis of an ethical life. Only a true knowledge of ethical values can motivate humans to search for a complete realization of the objective good toward which they are oriented naturally.

"Love" as ethical ideal delineated by Husserl and as something to be achieved in human lives also can be a spiritual ideal for the phenomenology of pedagogy, in that it means forming the consciousness and the moral sense of different types of humans. In order to educate people to conform to this ideal, we need teachers who have a vocation for this and feel it as an interior need to communicate what they live and reflect on during their search into the problems that concern ultimately Being. Teachers can have an influence in many ways, as in the case of Edith Stein, who was not only a faithful follower of Husserl's thought,<sup>16</sup> a philosopher, and a saint, but also an exemplary teacher for ten years at the Dominican Institute in Speyer and in 1932 at the German Institute for Scientific Pedagogy in Münster. The work of the teacher can be effective in three forms: through the word that teaches; through pedagogic action; and through his or her personal example. In these ways, the teacher can move his or her disciples or students toward an intimate

participation in the formative process in which the teacher is a guide into the profundities of the interior realms of the human person, even as each educative process remains mediated because every education is a self-education and each formation is a self-formation.<sup>17</sup>

Each person who is being educated needs to be guided in several aspects of his or her life; Stein gives three motives for spiritual pedagogy: the harmonious education of human beings; the religious motivation of educative acts; and the particularly female character of education in the family, in the state, with the help of parents, and with teachers who use their language and personal example as instruments of education.<sup>18</sup>

Husserl never dealt with pedagogy as such, but his personal search for truth encouraged his disciples to enter this area. With Stein's help, we can reconsider Husserl, seeking for implications for pedagogy. *Ideen II* proposes a phenomenological anthropology with a description of the spiritual encounter of human persons because, according to Husserl, human persons should be treated as human beings: "I am, in empathy, directed to the other Ego and Ego-life and not to psychophysical reality, which is a double reality with physical reality as the founding level."<sup>19</sup>

In conclusion, the aim of education is to provide a harmonious equilibrium in satisfying several diverse needs of human beings, whether physical, psychic, or spiritual; education helps the learner to acquire opportunities to develop his or her potential talents. In a way, it is a spiritual instinct of human subjectivity to search for the equilibrium of the talents that he or she has been given.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> "Es setzt voraus eine Gemeinschaft von Menschen, die eine Gemeinsamkeit der Überzeugung von allgemein für jedermann Gutem haben, von jedermann in Hineinsetzung in jedermann Anzuerkennenden und zu Schützenden" (Ms. trans. A II 1 p. 15).

<sup>2</sup> Angela Ales Bello, *Fenomenologia e Politica*, in *Fenomenologia e Politica. Esposizione e analisi di testi Husserliani*, Milan, Franco Angeli, 1986, p. 40.

<sup>3</sup> *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjectivität I*, p. 105.

<sup>4</sup> "Die menschliche Gemeinschaft ist als staatliche (und kirchliche) eine Einheit, die sich konstituiert durch Normen . . . . Diese Fakta der Staaten mit ihren Geltungen unterstehen der 'ethischen' Beurteilung aus den absoluten (rein idealen, apriorischen) *Ethischen Normen*." *Ibid.*, p. 107.

<sup>5</sup> Ales Bello, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* See the continuation of the paragraph.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46.

<sup>8</sup> *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjectivität II*, p. 174.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 204.

<sup>10</sup> Ms. trans. E III 1: *Metaphysik, Teleologie*, undated, p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Ales Bello, op. cit., p. 48, and see Ms. trans. E III 1: p. 4, where Husserl considers sin as negation of oneself, not as an external obstacle, but as an ethical non freedom as consequence of being evil and of being sinners.

<sup>12</sup> Ms. trans B I 15 II, untitled, 1934, p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> Ales Bello, , p. 48.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. p. 50: "Conclusivamente si può dire che all'interno della sfera politica, che può essere esaminata da diversi punti di vista, Husserl tende a legare momento politico e momento etico non nel senso della teorizzazione di uno stato etico, ma nel senso della esigenza di risolvere i problemi della vita associata sul piano dei rapporti etici che in qualche modo rappresenterebbero l'ultimo banco di prova per la validità delle norme che regolano la vita associata stessa. L'insistenza sulla necessità di un'organizzazione, di un ordine, e quindi del diritto o dello stato, non implica che l'individuo scompaia all'interno di tale organizzazione; si potrebbe dire, al contrario, che essa è in funzione del singolo."

<sup>15</sup> Ullrich Melle, Husserls personalistiche Ethik, in *Fenomenologia della Ragion Pratica, L'etica di Edmund Husserl*, edited by Beatrice Centi and Gianna Gigliotti, Rome, Bibliopolis, 2004, pp. 327–356.

<sup>16</sup> Edith Stein, *Die Frau. Ihre Aufgabe nach Natur und Gnade*, in *Edith Steins Werke*, Vol. V, edited by L. Gelber and P. Romaeus Leuven, Nauwelaerts, Leuven, 1959. See the preface by Angela Ales Bello and the introduction by L. Gelber for the Italian edition, translated by Ornella M. Nobile Ventura as *La Donna, il suo compito secondo la natura e la grazia*, Rome, Città Nuova, 3rd ed., 2001. See p. 190 of the Italian edition.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. See pp. 132–136 of the Italian edition.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. See pp. 238–243.

<sup>19</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, Second Book*, translated by R. Rojcewicz and A. Schuwer, Kluwer, Dordrecht, 1989. See Supplement XII, II, §§4–5.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL ROOTS OF THE CONCEPTS  
OF EQUALITY AND JUSTICE IN EDUCATION

## REMARKS ON EQUALITY

“Equality” is an ambiguous word: It can mean (1) the equivalence relation that partitions expressions, such as numerals, according to a co-reference, say to the same number; or (2) the socially recognized prerogative granted to citizens on the basis of which they are not discriminated against in benefiting from certain rights. This chapter is concerned exclusively with the second, more familiar sense. A brief glance at the history of the notion of social equality will serve as a basis for suggestions for a re-evaluation of the esteem this has commanded in recent public affairs, as well as a re-definition of its proper scope.

Until the Renaissance, social equality served in terms of a partitioning of citizens according to the privileges they were allowed to have. Each member of a given social class enjoyed the same privileges, but societies were composed of various different social classes, members of which were pronouncedly differentiated with regard to the privileges they were granted. Social strata were in effect ordered according to membership in this or that class, and members of higher strata did not at all relish being considered equal to members of lower ones. Consequently, it has always been members of less-privileged classes who have demanded equality, which in their case has meant sharing the superior privileges of higher classes.

Only with the Renaissance did such pleas turn to demands and come to the forefront of public opinion. The guillotine was the major equalizer of the French Revolution. From such bloody beginnings onward, social movements bent on attaining equality have succeeded only in equalizing downward, pulling all citizens into the morass previously reserved for the lower classes. The squalor of the community formerly ruled by the major heir to Marxism, the most exaggerated claim to total equality yet to be made, is a lamentably edifying demonstration of this observation.

In many stratified societies, one is born into the class one's parents come from, and usually can only adopt membership of that class. Interclass mobility

is laborious, precarious, and onerous, when at all tolerated. This aspect of social stratification is at odds with the personalistic approach of the post-Renaissance era, fervently advocating the principle that individuals ought to be the only authors of their fate, emphatically of their own social standing. Hence the time-honored institution of stratified societies has succumbed to the demand for facilitated vertical social mobility, which in turn would, asymptotically, merge into a classless social structure, with no strict divisions being enforced. This unhindered social mobility would appear to be the basic claim inspiring contemporary demands for equality.

Social mobility itself draws upon personal differences of merit, however: those higher up the social ladder, it is assumed, attain that precedence on the force of personal qualifications allowing them to surpass their competitors in their reach for privileges. The resulting stratification is not, on the face of it, an ordering of dynasties, houses, or families, but rather an ordering of individuals alone, but even from this facile viewpoint it still is a stratification: The very point in vertical social mobility is to allow for and facilitate inequality among competitors.

In the past, social systems accumulated differences of power, as reflected primarily in differences of wealth, carried across generations in social structures, in the form of officially supported institutions of nobility and suzerainty. Today the state has withdrawn from the mechanism that transmits social superiority from generation to generation, but this by no means implies such transmittal no longer takes place and that there is no accumulation of power in families: Banks have replaced royal decrees as the primary instrument. Lamentably, this has not facilitated horizontal mobility, despite exhortations that working will get one rich.

Equality of opportunity, particularly in obtaining education, considered to be the necessary and sufficient condition for breaking through upward mobility barriers, has recently been held in high esteem, although real-life situations appear to indicate that young professionals come, for much the greater part, from families of professional parents, and children of working class parents still tend to be workers. The best that can be said is that upward mobility has become easier in contemporary society than it used to be, but the other side of this coin is that downward mobility has also become easier, and whether the sum of all motion involved adds up to a positive or a negative result is certainly debatable.

So the excessive value attached to equality merits at least a dispassionate reappraisal. Some might suggest that the time and effort spent running after what are unmistakably utopian goals would be better spent in implementing more readily attainable objectives.

FROM PAST TO PRESENT: SOME PHILOSOPHICAL  
VIEWS ABOUT EQUALITY AND JUSTICE

“And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness ... male and female created he them.” Today it seems that the concept of equality has become a hybrid, vacuous concept, used only in the service of political propaganda. However, the history of the concept is very rich, and the clarification of that historical background will be helpful in many respects. In this chapter, I will try to apply lessons from this history about the satisfaction of equality and justice to education.

Today in Turkey every family has a dream for its children. People boast that their children will be doctors or engineers. They feel that a child can always become successful by following an ideal that is imposed upon him or her, and that a good education is enough to attain that ideal. We spend a lot of money to help our children to attain that ideal. One basic presupposition behind this attitude is that our children are all equal at birth and that in their later lives, opportunities determine everything. This naive influential idea has very old, mostly unconscious philosophical roots.

In addition, as a society, we believe that we can be successful by increasing the level of standardization and collectivization. For instance, in the educational system, by creating central institutions or by giving tests that cover thousands of students, we think that the level of education can be raised. In a sense the key to success is thought to be in collectivization based on equality. Although one might say that this situation is a necessary result of empirical conditions like the increase in the population of students, I think the philosophical inclination behind centralization is very strong in our society, no matter what the empirical conditions are. This idea of standardization is very closely connected with the idea of absolute equality and it is accepted as a virtue in our society. Although we mostly think that this is a contemporary value, the roots of the idea of equal individuals lie in the distant past.

Moreover, there are trends that reject all social distinctions. Behind many arguments there are traces of a utopian notion of equality. Some people claim that while there are workers, there are also tradesman who do not work. So they try to question the rationale of this distinction. In particular, the student movements in Turkey have taken a hostile stand against examinations and teachers. They have rejected the distinction between teachers and students. A great number of young students still think that the distinction between ruled and ruler is very insignificant and must be rejected.

From these examples we can see that an ideology of absolute equality is very influential in our society. This is not surprising in a Muslim society because Islam has close connections with Christianity, and the early Christian

view of equality has close connections with the Stoic conception of equality. The approach that defends the absolute equality of individuals is a mixture of Stoic and Roman-Christian conceptions. For the Stoics, the entire universe was the creation of reason, and man could understand it if he used his own reason. They identified reason with God. God was not transcendent or external to the universe. Wherever there was reason, there was God. From this metaphysical doctrine the Stoics drew a conclusion which was very important socially; namely, any rational creature has a share of the divine reason and therefore human beings are equal. Therefore for Stoics the institution of slavery was unnatural.

Later the Romans and Stoics developed this concept of equality. The divine law of the early Stoics was turned into a written "Law of the Peoples" or "Jusgentium." Christian thought reinforced the absolute equality of all human beings. According to St. Paul, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). In early Christian thought, fellowship with God transcended any human distinctions. This idea of absolute equality was later rejected by the Augustinian doctrine of election, which claimed that God extended grace to some but not to others.

I will not go into the details of the Stoic-Christian conception of equality. At first glance this conception resembles the conception of equality that I presented in the foregoing examples. But there is a very important difference between the two. While a modern person who regards all children as equal cannot support this conclusion with any philosophical perspective, the older Stoic-Christian conception was supported by a metaphysical belief. Moreover, this metaphysics was mixed with a religious belief. The Stoics saw the universe as a product of divine reason. Reason was itself equal to divinity. To reject equality, according to them, was to reject divinity. The universal law was a non-conventional divine law. For the Christians also the equality of human beings was a divine concept. In fact, although early Christian thought proposed something like a communistic equality of good, "the stress was not on a this-worldly sharing of production or goods, but on a generous and spontaneous outpouring of love among spiritual equals" (Abernethy and Langford, 1970, p. 21). The Stoics or Christians could provide a metaphysical justification for their idea of absolute equality. Today as a result of secularism we cannot provide this metaphysical religious justification to our notion of equality in everyday life. The idea of a divine law has lost its importance, and with this change, the telos of the universe that was very important for the Stoics lost its importance. Mostly we use political ideologies to justify absolute equality, but they themselves require justification. Now the only

remaining alternative seems to be to apply conventionalism. We as a society seem to have chosen this alternative, and certainly this alternative has very serious problems philosophically.

Conventionalism in political philosophy is closely connected with the egalitarian turn in the history of the concept of equality. When we ask “in what sense are all children equal” or “in what sense are workers and factory owners are equal,” the justification will be in terms of the nature–convention dichotomy. The answer, for example, will be that the students are unequal with respect to physical characteristics like sex or color, but they are equal with respect to social conventions, which do not come with birth. In Rousseau’s words,

I conceive of two sorts of inequality in the human species: one, which I call natural or physical, because it is established by nature and consists in the difference of ages, health, bodily strengths, and qualities of mind or soul; the other, which may be called moral or political inequality, because it depends upon a sort of convention and is established, or at least authorized, by the consent of men. (Rousseau, 1964, p. 101)

Pure egalitarian theories of justice hold that an action (social structure, etc.) is just if and only if it distributes the relevant goods equally. They assume that equality of well-being or some kind of equality of opportunity is required by egalitarianism. Marxist egalitarians defend economic equality because for them what is conventional is the economical situation of individuals. Mill also foresaw that “individual property is any of provisional existence, though it still has a long term before it, and that the nature of property would change in the course of time” (Ebenstein, 1969, p. 534). Other philosophers tried to reduce equality to political equality; the roots of this approach lie in Calvinist doctrine, with its insistence on the equality of the elect.

The egalitarian approach to equality has two basic weaknesses, both of which appear frequently in Turkish political polemics. One argument is that political authority limits freedom and therefore destroys equality based on freedom. Different political approaches accuse their opponents of being against freedom and equality, each political party defending its own conception of equality. This happens because there is no common metaphysical framework, and every political group tries to realize its own conventions on equality. The variety of definitions of equality is a barrier to political communication. Second, although there is such a variety of definitions, there still exists the ghost of a universal absolute idea of equality that comes from the Stoic approach. Leftist political approaches, in particular, mostly speak in terms of this concept, although it is not a characteristic of only leftists. All egalitarian approaches have this absolute conception of equality because they all are based on the nature–convention dichotomy. To reject

conventional inequalities, one must have a universal definition of equality behind all conventional differences of social status or wealth and so on. So the result of secular egalitarian thought in politics is conventionalism with no metaphysics. As a result, in thinking about political matters, Turkish intellectuals try to set aside ethical considerations, given that liberal thought has tended to separate ethics from politics as two completely separate realms. Moreover, the Turkish intelligentsia tends to regard religious belief as outside the scope of politics. For the Stoic-Christian traditions, however, both ethics and religion were intimately connected to politics. We even can say that for them, they were the same thing. The Stoic tradition, however, was not the only genuine political philosophy in the history of thought. In fact, the Stoic tradition was closer to religion than to metaphysics. This is evident in the obscure Stoic conception of equality. One reason for this was that originally Stoic and early Christian thought were not intended to be a political thought. They even rejected politics. In a sense, equality was possible for them in the rejection of practical political activity. Moreover, the Stoic conception could not explain the source of inequality. One, and the only genuine, alternative to the Stoic-early Christian tradition is the Greek approach to equality.

According to Aristotle, equality is closely related to justice. He criticized the democratic and oligarchic notions of justice. For him, the democrats considered all citizens to be equal because they were equal in the respect to their free birth. The oligarchs, on the other hand, thought men unequal because they differed in wealth. According to Aristotle, both conceptions of equality were too narrow. Neither wealth nor free birth were sufficient for persons to be considered equal because to determine two men as equal we need to take into account all of their qualities, especially their moral and intellectual virtues (*Politics* 1280 a 22). Similarly, in judging between the views of classes, we should consider not only the number of people for or against any measure, but also their qualifications. Justice for Aristotle consists in everyone getting what he deserves. Equal men should have equal shares, but those who are superior with regard to virtue should not be treated in the same way as their inferiors. What ensures stable government is the principle of proportional equality. Aristotle introduced two different conceptions of equality, namely numerical and proportional equality. He considered proportional equality more important. For him, "injustice arises when equals are treated unequally, and also when unequals are treated equally."

It is evident from *Politics* that Aristotle's treatment of equality and inequality are interwoven with his metaphysics. In his metaphysics, each person is a metaphysical individual. Each person exists with his unique potentiality. Although rationality is the essential characteristic of being human

generally, each individual carries essential characteristics that differentiate him from others. For this reason, the Greeks highly valued variety and inequality. Aristotle might have agreed with Kant's comment about the value of variety: "Inequality is a rich source of much that is evil, but also of everything that is good."

In our society we know that to be a politician is a matter of pure chance or opportunity. For the Greeks, however, it was a result of long education. For the Greeks, politics could not be separated from ethics because ethics and happiness were almost requisites for each other and politics aimed at the happiness of a society. Today we regard their separation as a necessity of secularism. Today, given the political disturbances in Turkey, there are politicians who regard depoliticization as a necessity. For the Greeks, however, politics is necessary to be human because human beings, society, and the state are organically connected. Certainly the Greek understanding of politics was very different from ours.

We, as a society, understand by equality what Aristotle calls numerical equality, a concept that is closely connected to the absolutist conception of equality. The absolutist conception has serious metaphysical problems, such as the differentiation of individuals. Aristotle's metaphysics solved this problem by postulating essential and accidental characteristics and differentiated individuals by their essential characteristics. Absolutists lack such a metaphysical tool. In the absence of metaphysical considerations, this problem did not greatly disturb the Stoic-early Christian tradition. Later, however, after the institutionalization of Christianity, the problem of hierarchy and inequality became very serious. Aristotelianism came to the aid of Christian thinkers, and attempts were made to base the hierarchical structure of society on an Aristotelian metaphysics that could explain inequality and hierarchy. An important difference from Greek thought, however, was that now there was an impersonal God and He determined the course of events completely. Humanity as a whole was sinful, but God chose some to be unequal. Ultimately the absolute power was in the hands of God, and God was responsible for inequality. A Christian God cannot be joined coherently with an Aristotelianism that is in conflict with predetermination, but the Christianized Aristotle solved many problems, especially the problem of inequality in this world.

With Protestantism we enter the modern political era with its modern conception of equality. Protestant thought tends to return to the principles of early Christianity, and this strengthens egalitarian ideals. The roots of the modern idea of the supremacy of election and common consent lie in the Protestant Reformation.

Political thought after Protestantism moved basically in a secular direction. This development was strengthened by economic developments. As the economic situations of individuals and societies gained importance, the concept of equality was understood more and more as equality in economical activity. The spiritual equality of the Christian tradition lost its importance. Liberalism tried to equate equality with liberty; utopian Socialism and Marxism with economic equality; and Darwinism and Freudian psychology with the animal nature of human beings. Although liberal and communal conceptions of equality seem to contradict each other, one basic common point between them is that for both approaches equality is a pragmatic, empirical, term that is not justified metaphysically. The communal conception openly takes an absolutist stand. Although the liberal conception seems to defend an Aristotelian conception of proportionate equality, it does not have the metaphysical notions of potential versus actual and essential versus accidental.

#### CONCLUSION

Today there are thinkers who claim that political philosophy is dead. According to them, political science, sociology, and anthropology must take the place of political philosophy. In parallel with this idea, equality is mostly examined as a particular equality, such as the equality of education or races, or of opportunity. Political philosophy books on equality are written in the mode of sociology books. There are very close connections between this fact and the conventionalistic approach to political ideas. On political matters we take a sophistic-conventionalistic stand without a philosophical background. However, on many issues, such as natural law, the state, or equality, we continue to defend older conceptions that are intimately interwoven with political ideas. The contradiction between conventionalism and philosophically derived concepts is most evident in the concept of equality. It is claimed that there are three basic conceptions of political philosophy: liberal, communal, and conservative. In our society, the liberal and communal-absolutist conceptions of equality are understood more or less as the same thing. This is not surprising because the liberal conception is a result of the weakening of the Stoic-Christian philosophy. Contrary to some commentators, I do not think that the liberal conception is very close to Aristotelianism because Aristotle had a comprehensive philosophical system, which we lack.

Equality of opportunity, particularly in obtaining education, considered to be the necessary and sufficient condition for breaking through upward mobility barriers, has recently been held in esteem, although real-life situations appear to indicate that young professionals come, for much the greater part,

from families of professional parents, and children of working class parents still tend to be workers. The best that can be said is that upward mobility has become easier in contemporary society than it used to be, but the other side of this coin is that downward mobility has also become easier, and whether the sum of all motion involved adds up to a positive or negative result is certainly debatable.

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## SECTION IV

OLIVER W. HOLMES

THEORIES OF NATURE AND EDUCATION  
IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE HUMAN SELF  
IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Never will we have good generals, good magistrates, until a sound education has transformed man.

Jacques-René Hérbert, French Revolutionary<sup>1</sup>

From my early youth, I have read with delight those histories that exhibit liberty in its most exalted state, the annals of the Roman and Greek republics. Studies like these excite that natural love of freedom which lies latent in the breast of every rational being till stifled by prejudice, or extinguished by the sordid allurements of private interests.

Catharine Macaulay<sup>2</sup>

This study examines eighteenth-century theories of the mind and how these theories proposed the dual purposes of realizing human potential and improving society through education. The eighteenth century was renowned for espousing the principles of nature, rationalism, freedom, and equality, all of which insisted on the cardinal importance of education. The confluent currents of classicism, rationalism, and romanticism presented a superficial effect of moving in conflicting directions at once. Nevertheless, these currents were all expressive of the new standards of human values. Classicism and rationalism were two methods of search for order and lasting values in human affairs; romanticism reflected the search for the fullest expression of the individual. In emphasizing the less rational side of human nature, the early Romantics accepted the eighteenth-century ideal of the “Natural,” but they gave to it a new interpretation. All of these movements were manifestations of the widespread conviction that human institutions possessed the potential to work for the improvement of humankind. This conviction expressed itself also in a striking growth of humanitarian sentiment and in numerous reform movements directed against poverty, ignorance, injustice, and oppression. Reformers, in a period when all was clearly not well with the world, criticized the imperfections that they abhorred, sometimes in the name of “Classical Tradition,” which enabled them to hope again for “the eternal verities,”

sometimes in the name of "Reason," which taught how things *ought to be*, and sometimes in the name of "Romantic Individual," whose full life would necessarily be "the good life." Theirs was not the first or the last generation to seek salvation through conflicting philosophies. Notwithstanding the conflicts among these schools of thought, education played a prominent part in all their schemes to improve human society.

When English philosophy had spread to the Continent during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, many thinkers believed that Isaac Newton had finally constructed the new and definitive system of the world that had been advertised by Francis Bacon and René Descartes. In this mechanistic world of the eighteenth century nothing had developed historically; all the inhabitants and the creatures of the earth had existed in their present forms from the beginning. During the same period a similar view was obtained concerning the formation of human society. For all their differences, Jean Bodin, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau thought that once upon a time isolated individuals had come to together and had contracted to live together with one another in human society forever after.<sup>2a</sup> In such a world, neither the progress of humankind nor the evolution of the species could be envisaged. However, the extension of the mechanistic viewpoint to another field, psychology, helped to generate the idea of progress and stimulated later writers to develop theories of evolution. The mechanical philosophy was applied to psychology in two ways. First, it was thought that the mind of the individual was determined by the internal physiological mechanisms of the body, which implied that humankind might progress with the advancement of medicine. Second, it was held that the mind of the individual was determined by external conditioning forces, such as education, so that the human individual might progress if education were reformed and liberated from ecclesiastical authorities. The first school of thought was initiated by Descartes. The second extension of the mechanical philosophy to psychology theory was developed by Locke in 1690 in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Claude-Adrien Helvétius pursued the epistemological implications of Locke's theories of the mind in his controversial works *De l'esprit* (1758) and *De l'homme* (1773), in which he postulated that all operations of mind, all ideas, interests, and passions reduced to the "only quality essential to the nature of man," that is, "physical sensibility." Paul Henri Thiry d'Holbach, contributed to the controversy by claiming that "mind is a product of ... physical sensibility" and that from "sensibility flow all the faculties that we can call intellectual."<sup>2b</sup> The word "sensibility" and its cognates denoted the perception of the senses, the material basis of consciousness, and were formulated into pedagogic and moral principles.<sup>3</sup>

For Rousseau, moral learning, as recognized in natural philosophy, became a matter of fostering sensibilities within the individual. In contrast to the utilitarian “felicific” calculation that was gaining ground among progressive thinkers, Rousseau’s notion of “sensibility” and concept of individual self-expression emphasized the education of a morally autonomous individual and portrayed the notion of education as a process of self-development, more dependent upon experience than book learning. Thus, this chapter examines the theories of such French thinkers as Etienne Bonnot de Condillac, Helvétius, Jean le Rond d’Alembert, Diderot, Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas Caritat, Marquis de Condorcet, the Physiocrats, the *Idéologues*, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau and their English counterparts Locke, David Hume, James Mill, Jeremy Bentham, Catharine Macaulay, and Mary Wollstonecraft to ascertain the humanitarian ideal of self-development through education in their thought.

Virtually all the changes and adjustments in educational thought and practices during the second half of the eighteenth century and the period of the Revolution derived from the intellectual foundations of the Enlightenment. Concepts concerning the content and practice of teaching were highly articulate, even though they sometimes echoed more within the walls of the salons than of the schoolrooms. During these years the discussion of education became cognizant of its central place in all thinking about what d’Alembert referred to as “our minds, our customs, our achievements, and even our topics of conversations.” However, to maintain that the developments in educational thought were connected to one or two of the major themes of the Enlightenment would be to oversimplify the issues. Perhaps no one was more astute or in a better position to appreciate the range covered by the intellectual environment than Victor Cousin, who made contact with the thought of the *Idéologues* in the newly opened Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris under the Empire, then made contact with Transcendentalism in various German universities, and lived to promote the reconstruction of French elementary education in the quite different philosophical atmosphere in which planning was accomplished under the Orléans monarchy. The eighteenth century, he observed, had submitted everything to critical examination. This was the period that “made of education at first a problem, then a science, finally an art; hence, pedagogy.”<sup>4</sup> Pedagogy, he was prepared to acknowledge, was a curious word, but the process itself possessed certain “sacred” qualities, and its full flowering as a subject of scientific import had been accomplished in the era of revolutions. Newton had demonstrated the uniformity of nature, which prompted scientific-minded individuals to search for nature’s laws, but the abstract and theoretical form of mathematics set a strict limit to the number of those who could pursue the intellectual paths he had explored. The

intellectual bent of the second half of the eighteenth century turned towards empiricism and ventured beyond Newton to Francis Bacon as its founder.

In various theoretical forms, the idea of nature attained a great deal of prominence in eighteenth-century thought. Diderot, d'Alembert, François Marie Arouet de Voltaire, and other contributors to the *Encyclopédie*, inspired by the Baconian and Cartesian visions of science and equipped intellectually with Newton's "new scientific method," set upon the task of discovering a natural order that comprised both the individual and general facets of experience. The successful synthesis of mathematical analysis and experimentation, and the identification of the natural with the rational upon the entire realm of thought, accounted for their contribution to the idea of nature. Nature became, for them, both a scientific ideal and a normative force in human association. Bacon's contribution to scientific thought in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries lay in popularizing the notion of experimental technique. In his general approach to science, Bacon criticized what he considered "narrow empiricism" and "dogmatic" theories, espousing a combination of experiment and theory. Bacon's "new" natural philosophy compared the radical empiricists with ants, characterized as individuals who accumulated a vast array of facts after having burrowed away at a narrow course of inquiry. The philosophers were equated with spiders who, through the exercise of logic, spun cobwebs from their own bodies. The "authentic" scientists, in contrast, were likened to bees who extracted substance from flowers and thereby transformed it into honey:

The men of experiment are like the ant; they only collect and use; the reasoners resemble spiders, who make cobwebs out of their own substance. But the bee takes a middle course; it gathers its material from the flowers of the garden and of the field, but transforms and digests it by a power of its own.<sup>5</sup>

Where the mechanists applied a single mechanistic method to natural phenomena, Bacon advocated observations over a wide range of phenomena. Bacon's scientific approach draws upon a human analogy instead of a mechanical one to describe a natural phenomenon, which carries his assumptions within the organic tradition.

Through the application of the scientific method, Bacon sought to combine the theoretical interpretation and the technical control of nature. Descartes was familiar with Bacon's emphasis on scientific method and supported the objectives for his own work. However, he thought that Bacon initiated the procedure with the empirical facts of the natural world instead of the general principles which provided a basis for deductive inquiry. Although Descartes's views on the mathematical method developed with the physical sciences, he also acknowledged that there were certain fundamental ideas "given by

intuition” which provided the surest starting point for deductions of a mathematical character. These ideas were those of extension, motion, and divine design. The concept of a divine Creator became fundamental to his natural philosophy; the Creator, for him, made extension and put motion into the universe. However, this motion has been put in the universe only once, at the moment of creation, and therefore the amount of motion in the world was conceived as constant and eternal. Descartes arrived at the principle of the conservation of momentum through this sort of conception, and explained the notion of motion in terms of divine action:

He created matter along with motion and rest in the beginning: and now, merely by ordinary cooperation, he preserves just the quantity of motion and rest in the material world that he put there in the beginning.<sup>6</sup>

The concept of “design” and of a divine Creator implied that once the world had been created, its physical properties remained untampered. The concept of a divine design also presupposed that the Creator ruled the world through “laws of nature,” which had been formulated at the outset, according to Descartes, by the employment of mechanical analogies to describe what divine action had created. Descartes informs us that “the rules of mechanics ... are the same with those of nature,” and in discussing the proof of the existence of a Divine Being, he draws upon the analogy of a machine-maker. The concept of design also implied the “clear and distinct” idea of a Creator who has endowed all individuals with the equal capacity to discern truth from error. The general ordering powers of the mind are a natural ability possessed by each individual, the appropriate exercise of which depends upon an adequate procedure of analysis:

Good sense is the best shared thing in the world: for each of us thinks he is so well endowed with it that even those who are the most difficult to please in all other respects are not in the habit of wanting more than they have. It is hardly to be expected that everyone is mistaken in this; rather it testifies that the capacity to judge correctly and to distinguish the true from the false, which is properly what one call common sense or reason, is by nature equal in all men, and consequently that the diversity of our opinions does not come from some of us being more rational than others, but solely from the fact that we conduct our thoughts along different lines and from not examining the same things. For it is not sufficient to have good mental powers; but the principal matter is to apply them well.<sup>7</sup>

Method, therefore, provided the key to success in science: this very method, which is “a more powerful instrument of knowledge than any other that has been bequeathed to us by human agency, as being the source of all others.”<sup>8</sup> Disillusioned with ancient authority and learning, Descartes joined Bacon in the quest for a new method. Through experience, mathematical analysis, and experimentation, the new method sought to understand and to control nature.

In the successful search for knowledge, the individual scientist attained power, a power achieved over nature rather than over individuals.

The “modern” theories of Bacon and Descartes hardly exhausted all the possibilities of natural phenomena, albeit the methods of observation and analysis they put forward encircled reality with the purpose of exhausting all possible knowledge of natural phenomena. This approach to knowledge, which stressed the role of experience, experimentation, and mathematical analysis, became the intellectual purpose of Diderot, d’Alembert, and other contributors to the *Encyclopédie*. Having been inspired by the Baconian and Cartesian visions of a science emerging from nature, the *philosophes* turned both to them and to others for intellectual guidance. The mainstream thinkers of the Enlightenment endeavored, above all, to present a vision of reality which was ordered by an intelligible set of rules. All who participated in this movement of ideas epitomized the “spirit of the times” in that all were convinced that “human understanding is capable by its own power, and without recourse to supernatural assistance, of comprehending the system of the world.”<sup>9</sup> This “new” way of understanding the world must lead to new ways of controlling it. The most important new development of the scientific mind in the eighteenth century was the application of the scientific method of analysis to the individual, which implied, in the first instance, to individual psychology and then to social life. The Enlightenment accepted the belief of Hume that the study of the individual could and should be based on observation and experiment and that, as d’Alembert pointed out in the article “Experimental” in the *Encyclopédie*, the study of the individual as a social animal, including his or her moral and history, was a proper subject for experimental philosophy. Certain of the *philosophes* accepted the notion that the laws of individual psychology derived from Locke’s *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and developed by Condillac were also those that operated in the progress of civilization. D’Alembert’s “Discours préliminaire,” the introduction to the first volume of the *Encyclopédie*, promoted the proposition of progress. Locke’s belief that all our ideas are the product of sensation dominated eighteenth-century psychological theory as completely as the Newtonian theory of gravitation dominated physics. Its most authoritative exposition was found in Condillac’s *Traité sur les sensations* (1754). Reason discloses progressively an accurate picture of humanity, which constitutes the foundation of civic virtue. Morality becomes linked to nature. The best social order becomes that which corresponds to the permanent need of the individual.

The intellectual antecedents of this belief were Baconian and Cartesian. To Condillac, who preceded the *Idéologues* and the French Revolution of

1789, Bacon's criticism of the "idols" had to be the starting point of reconstituting consciousness, which was the principal objective of the Enlightenment. According to Bacon,

The *Idols* by which the mind is occupied are either artificial or innate. The artificial *Idols* have entered men's minds either from the doctrines and sects of philosophers or from perverse rules of proof. The innate idols are inherent in the nature of the intellect itself, which is found to be much more prone to error than the senses.<sup>10</sup>

Bacon's *idolum*, or *idola*, became Condillac's *préjuges*, an important word employed in the writings of both d'Holbach and Helvétius. The "idols" are "prejudices" which were contrary to "reason." One removes them through the relentless application of critical reasoning, thereby restoring the "unprejudiced" understanding of nature. Helvétius develops this notion within a framework that anticipates late-nineteenth-century sociological theories of knowledge. Namely, "our ideas are the necessary consequences of the societies in which we live."<sup>11</sup> A radical skepticism was limited by the rationalist faith transmitted by Descartes, for whom, as we saw, reason has the power of correcting its own errors. For Helvétius, the idols, or "prejudices," are the necessary consequences of social constraint and selfish interest, but he remained confident that they would be discredited by reason and removed by education: "*L'éducation peut tout* (Education can do everything)." Pedagogy on a national scale became the solution for popular superstition. The principle of the sensational psychology was the belief that, in the words of Helvétius, "Everything in man can be reduced to sensation."<sup>12</sup> The principle extended even beyond Locke, for whereas the latter had attributed to the mind an ill-defined power of reflection, his eighteenth-century disciples explained the development of all complex ideas out of simple ones through the automatic process of association.

Despite the immense contrast between the empirical attitude of British philosophic thought and the rationalism of the continental Cartesians, the British school also took its rise from Descartes. Locke concurred with Descartes in his confidence in clear and distinct knowledge, and in the fundamental difference between thinking minds and extended matter. However, although he was as versatile as the other great philosophers of the seventeenth century, there remains one conspicuous difference between his outlook and that of Descartes, Spinoza, or Leibniz: He was not a mathematician of any note. While at Oxford, Locke was a student of physics and reacted against the Aristotelian tradition. He became a member of the Royal Society and an enthusiast for experimental philosophy. In his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke mentions specifically the mechanistic "moderns," Robert Boyle, Thomas Sydenham, Christiaan Huygens, as well as "the

incomparable Mr. Newton.” As Locke’s own “modern” position began to emerge clearly, a combination of faith in mathematics with a general skepticism concerning the possibilities of reason outside the mathematical sphere becomes discernible. The great exception was in ethics, where Locke maintained that mathematical demonstration was possible. This was an important conclusion to reach, considering that he also perceived morality as the main objective of human existence. Individuals, for him, were better occupied in the pursuit of morality and of utility, and, thereby, Locke became more concerned with “profitable knowledge” than with the abstract metaphysical systems created by scholastic philosophers. Thus, he approached the problems of philosophy in his own manner, contending that these problems entail “the original, certainty, and extent of human knowledge.” The purport of his *Essay* was directed at practical or ethical issues: He wanted to refute the view of knowledge that underlay the opposition to reason and freedom. He wrote with singularly little open allusions to the writings of his predecessors, in the character of the ordinary individual, applying the methods of common sense. This self-assumed character, in reality, failed to dissemble the fact that one of the greatest difficulties in understanding his doctrines entailed disentangling the considerable amount of previous speculation that lies embedded in them. Yet, at the same time, there was something radically new in his method, an approach that extended mechanical philosophy to psychological theory. As a psychological theory, his doctrine emphasized the origins of knowledge and the processes by which it becomes acquired.

Turning to the actual operation of the understanding, Locke denied Descartes’s “innate ideas.” For Locke, the human mind is, in the beginning, entirely empty; that is, the mind of a newborn infant was likened to an “empty cabinet,” a *tabula rasa*, or a blank surface of “white paper.”<sup>13</sup> Individuals, according to the new epistemological psychology, were born neither “good” nor “bad,” but neutral: “white paper” upon which experience made its individual impression. Everything that the mind contains must be impressed upon it by experience, and knowledge was acquired solely by experience, through the five senses:

For, methinks the *understanding* is not much unlike a closet wholly shut from light, with only some little openings left, to let in external visible resemblances, or *ideas* of things without; would the pictures coming into such a dark room but stay there, and lie so orderly as to be found upon occasion, it would very much resemble the understanding of a man, in reference to all objects of sight, and the ideas of them.<sup>14</sup>

It remains in passive contact with reality. The senses and reflection furnish it with simple ideas, sights, sounds, and the like, and also such simple ideas as perception, willing, and remembrance, none of which in either category can

be surpassed in clearness and distinctness. These are the data of knowledge, but they are not the only kind of knowledge. The mind does not merely receive them; it also works upon them. Upon combining them together, it makes complex ideas, ideas like "snow" or "white" or "beauty." "Ideas" arise from an external material thing, for instance, snow, provoking first a sensation and then a reflection which entails an "idea": thus, the sensation of snow would lead to the idea of "white," an "idea" thereby being the "object of the understanding."<sup>15</sup> Therefore, besides sensation, another source of knowledge arises, in the form of reflection, and the two combine to constitute experience. According to Locke, they do not correspond with the real world in similar ways. The simple ideas arise independent of the activity of the mind, and so they must correspond with real causes; but the complex ideas are made by us. Hence, although all knowledge consists solely of a collection or comparison of ideas, it becomes difficult for Locke to avoid the conclusion that everything that results from reflection, that is, the whole of our ordered knowledge, remains further removed from reality than are the data of sensory perception. His theory of knowledge led him to conclude that individuals may be certain of any proposition whose truth may be intuited, demonstrated, or perceived through our senses or through our memory of such perception.

Mapping epistemological pathways, Locke proceeded from sensation and reflection to perception, namely, thinking itself. The process entailed contemplation, the retention of past experiences and the capacity to recall them. Memory was thus integral to the understanding, as were wit and judgment. Wit implied the facile juxtaposition of ideas, if perhaps fancifully and without fixed order; juxtaposition demonstrated a precise discrimination between them. Through exercise of judgment and habitual association of ideas, complex ideas could be constructed, such as those of order, beauty, or freedom. He revives the "nominalism" of one of the opposing schools of medieval philosophers, according to which "universals," all such terms as "a dozen" or "beauty," were merely names, which come into existence after the simple ideas, the units or the color and figure which they group together. He traversed to the opposite point of view from that which led Descartes to claim that the infinite was prior to the finite. Nor did he escape from the disparaging conclusions about human knowledge which this implies. Locke combined loosely his empirical skepticism with a confidence in the general conclusions which had been certainties to the rationalistic method of Descartes, resulting in an unstable union which eventually faltered when critical analyses were applied to it. Subsequent thinkers of the British school and on the continent took him to task. Condillac was one such thinker.

At first, Condillac confined his efforts to systematizing the ideas of Locke, in his *Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines* (1746), succeeded in 1749 by his *Traité des systemes*, a two-volume work in which he examined the systems of Nicolas Malebranche, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, Benedictus Spinoza, and Boursier, and the general validity of hypotheses, and developed a devastating attack on systematic metaphysics. The *Traité des sensations* (1754) derived its inspiration from Locke, but it is nonetheless an original contribution to sensationalist philosophy. Condillac extolled the experimental method, starting from sensory experience, and claiming that perception provides the source of all knowledge: "The main object of this work is to show how all of our knowledge and all of our faculties come from the senses, or, to speak more precisely, from our sensations."<sup>16</sup> Attention and memory derive from the nature of the impression made on our senses. Comparison, reflection, and the power of abstraction necessarily follow, and imagination consists merely in reflection working with images. Locke's doctrine that all knowledge, opinions, and behavior derived from the senses was pushed to its extreme form by Condillac, who contended that even the power of reflection itself was nothing but transformed sensation. Central in Locke's doctrine is the binary of "sensation and reflection." If we derive all knowledge through sense perception, Locke nonetheless continues to argue for an experience of the senses. In his *Traité des sensations*, Condillac eliminates this duality so that mental reflection and analysis also derive directly from sense impressions. Consider the individual as a kind of statue equipped with only one of the five senses. With the sense of smell, Condillac maintained that the statue would be able to receive sensations of smell, which would generate ideas of smell, and the persistence of such ideas would, in turn, constitute a memory, and subsequent combinations of those ideas would form knowledge. In this manner, he concluded that all of the senses were of equal value in obtaining knowledge of the world, and that with one sense alone "the understanding has as many faculties as with the five senses joined together."<sup>17</sup> The other senses did not contribute anything that was qualitatively new to the properties of the mind; they merely enlarged the sphere of its understanding. Impressions from the different sense organs were blended together by a form of mechanical mixing which depended upon experience, but the subsequent sensation and its corresponding ideas differed in degree only, not in kind, from the sensation and idea produced by a single impression. The illustration of the statue which was awakened to life by means of the impressions impinging upon it, and which in this way advanced to increasingly rich and differentiated forms of life, demonstrates clearly that the "natural history of the soul"

which Condillac endeavored to offer remained mired within speculative and constructive considerations.

In his appendix to the *Traité des sensations*, Condillac demonstrated that the “man-statue” may learn, through experience, to deliberate and may exercise free will, and he defined personal freedom in the following manner: “Freedom is only the power to do that which one doesn’t do, or to not do what one does.”<sup>18</sup> Those elements which satisfy the passions and the mind were deemed to be beautiful and good. Through this perspective, all ideas become relative to the sense impressions of the individual thinker: “The good and the beautiful are by no means absolutes; they are relative to the character of the man who judges and to the way in which he is organized.”<sup>19</sup> The problem no longer entailed restraining intractable passions, but providing knowledge. The individual’s sole limitation comprised ignorance, a condition eliminated by the unlimited possibilities offered through science. In emphasizing the need to study the origins of our ideas and the nature of the operations of our minds, Condillac underscored the necessity for a new kind of education and for a new society, change being the very essence of things. At birth we all receive impressions in the same manner, and it is the way in which our sensations are associated or transformed that determines our mental activity. Like Locke, he demonstrated great interest in the young child and the early functioning of the mind. He studied grammar and its origins and wrote on the “art of writing, reasoning and thinking.”<sup>20</sup> Condillac advanced the position, in his text on logic, that the method of analysis permits us to reason correctly only to the extent that, in teaching us to deconstruct our ideas and to discern general relations between them, it also leads us to constitute a well-developed language.

The art of reasoning is only reduced to a well-made language because the order in our ideas is itself nothing but the order in the hierarchy of names given to genres and species; and since we only have a new idea because we form new classes, it is clear that we will only determine these ideas inasmuch as we determine the classes themselves.<sup>21</sup>

Knowledge, thereby, becomes a form of classification, which in turn entails pedagogy. However, according to Charles Pinot Duclos in his *Considerations sur les mœurs de ce siècle* in 1750, “one finds among us plenty of instruction and little education.” Instruction in the arts and sciences had formed scholars and artists of all sorts:

But one has not yet given thought to forming men, that is to say to rearing them one for another, to relating all particular instruction to a basis of personal advantage in the plan of the general good; and that, whatever their profession, they begin by being patriots.<sup>22</sup>

The acceptance of the view implied in these pedagogical interests and in the illustration of the “man-statue” constituted a revolution in human thought. The resulting “sensationalist psychology” contributed appreciably to the trend towards a purely materialist conception of the individual evolving in the minds of radical thinkers such as Diderot and Helvétius. Yet this sensational psychology, as transmitted from Locke and developed by Condillac, did not allow for any change in human nature; hence the observed social changes had to emanate from outside the individual, from historical developments in society. Hence, human methods of education accounted for “everything.”

Through this approach, Condillac realized that the ultimate forces in the growth of the human mind cannot become manifest if we remain in the realm of the concept of theoretical knowledge. The activity of the mind and the vital source of all its manifest energies, he held, lie neither in speculation nor in mere contemplation. For motion cannot be explained in terms of rest, nor can the dynamics of the mind be based upon its static properties. Rather, in order to understand the latent energy generating the mind, which does not permit it to retain any form but drives it on to ever-new shapes and operations, one must assume in the mind an original moving principle. This principle will not be found in mere ideation and thought but solely in desiring and in striving. Thus, for Condillac, the impulse precedes knowledge and forms its indispensable presupposition. For, if the child’s mind was indeed a blank sheet at birth, the presumption of hereditary superiority was merely a deception to sustain aristocratic privilege. Furthermore, if individuals were indeed all “perfectible” by the correct education and environment, then there was no justification for social inequality. In this regard, he utilized from Locke not only the idea of an unchanging capacity of the individual, but also the idea that our minds would be acted upon by our environment, while we, in turn, would act upon our environment once we understood its laws, which also included the laws of human behavior. Since the human mind possessed the capacity for improvement, there remained the potential for a virtuous, upward spiral, the minds of each generation being enhanced by the improved conditions created by their predecessors, and in turn, as a consequence of this enhanced beginning, being enabled to make the conditions even better for the next generation, without any enlarged biological capacity. This potential upward impulse would work because the world, like the human mind, was rational and would respond positively to rational human action. For, as Condillac stressed particularly in his *Traité des systemes*, the principles of the physical universe and the principles on which the mind operated were identical.<sup>23</sup>

The notion that the problem of nature and the problem of knowledge were inextricably linked to each other, so characteristic of eighteenth-century

thought, became apparent in the association of epistemology and psychology. Newton had demonstrated that the world was ordered by “natural laws,” Locke that individuals were reasonable beings who could utilize their knowledge for their own happiness. The fundamental lesson drawn from Newton by the *philosophes* was epistemological modesty and the limitation of human knowledge. They found in the discoveries of Newton a remarkable confirmation of Locke’s insistence that reason was a potent instrument, provided that individuals refrained from employing it to plumb the “Ocean of Being” and avoided questions of final causes for which there were no answers. The understanding of individuals may proceed no further than their observation of phenomena will lead them. The broader ramifications of the new psychology gave rise to new aspirations concerning self-mastery to accompany epistemological modesty. For some thinkers, Condillac appeared to have demonstrated this nascent tendency. The psychological theory proved to be popular in France, where it was applied to the project of improving the lot of humanity. Through this popularity, Condillac’s notion of the omnipotence of the environment provided the basis for the social action philosophy of Helvétius. The latter was among the most influential and original of those thinkers who developed the social and political implications of Condillac’s ideas. His *De l’esprit* (1758), in which he attempted to prove that the sensations which the mind received from external impressions were the source of all intellectual activity, had the dubious distinction of being denounced by the Sorbonne and publicly burned after condemnation by the Parlement of Paris, so that it enjoyed a particularly wide fame and large readership. He was convinced that, given a rational education, there was no limit set to the progress of humanity to becoming “happy and powerful.” For, if both ability and character were the result of experience, social distinctions were either arbitrary or accidental. By nature, one individual was as good as another, a doctrine that undermined the established order and was promptly grasped by those who claimed that all were equally entitled to happiness and power.<sup>24</sup>

These were some of the logical conclusions drawn from the philosophical implications of physics and sensational psychology. As a consequence, the eighteenth century became a century of optimism concerning the individual’s capacity to comprehend and to master natural processes, and Helvétius’s observation reflected this tendency. By proper understanding of the sources of human action, one could expect to uncover the “secrets” of an improved economy and a happier social order. All sensations derived from sensory perception evoked a feeling of pleasure or pain, varying in intensity, which individuals learned through experience to seek or to avoid. Their minds possessed no active, coordinating principle, but their nature

contained the passive and mechanical capacity to either seek or avoid pain. "The pain and pleasure of the senses create action and thought in men."<sup>25</sup> Helvétius perceived in this pleasure-pain principle of psychology, to which he referred as *sensibilité physique* or, in its application to ethics, *intérêt*, the key to the whole of social life. The future of the world depended on a great deal of close observation and comparison of factual findings, whether by introspection in the mind or scientific measurement of things surveyed by the senses. The *philosophes* associated with this form of epistemology became acute observers of the close affinities between knowledge and self-interest. Thus, for the educational thinker, the significance of the prevailing intellectual trend was almost entirely positive. The basis for a new sensational psychology had already been put forward by Condillac and other disciples of Locke. At the very time that David Hartley was formulating the principles of mental association, Julien Offray de La Mettrie was writing that human development consisted in multiplying desires: the higher the organism, the more sensations, and therefore the more cravings, it possessed. Helvétius began by assuming that the individual was a purely physical organism capable of receiving sensations and of forming ideas and mental habits as a result of remembering and associating these processes. This group of *philosophes* were of the view that if the human mind was like a piece of "white paper" at birth, as Locke averred, then it followed that all men were equal at birth and became unequal through different environmental influences, such as the education they received and the laws they were compelled to obey. Helvétius maintained that he preferred the sensational psychology of Locke to the medical psychology of Descartes because the latter was unable to explain why there were different kinds of minds. The sensational psychology, on the other hand, he argued, ascribes "the inequality of the minds of men may be considered immaterial as the result of nature or of education."<sup>26</sup> Anticipating Bentham, Helvétius proclaimed that virtue, or probity, was concerned not solely with intentions or motives, but with the consequences of human actions. True virtue, or "probity, with regard to the public, or to a particular society," was not therefore an individual matter but a national concern, for other than in society virtue had no real signification. The objective of society was to ensure that individuals within that society committed no actions prejudicial to the public welfare, in essence, to identify private and public virtue. This manner of extending the development of Locke's thought appeared to be in line with his own avowed admiration for Newton's physics. Hume, in his *Treatise on Human Nature* (1739), compared the association of ideas as an explanatory principle in psychology with the attraction of gravity in the physical world. As a consequence, explanations of mental processes signified reducing them

to elements of sensation and demonstrating their evolution through the law of association. In this regard, Helvétius believed he had made a discovery, like Hume, comparable in ethics to Newton's findings in the physical sciences. "I believed that one ought to discuss Morals as all the other Sciences, and morals as experimental Physics." Thus, Helvétius thought that to secure the improvement of humanity it was only necessary to reform the legislative and educational systems: for the individual "to be happy and powerful is only a matter of perfecting the science of education." The purpose of education, then, consists in producing individuals who will enhance the happiness of the community and in providing a universal corrective to human and social maladies. Initially, he continued, individual minds are blank sheets upon which the educator can write whatever he or she thinks best, and "morality, law-making and pedagogy" consequently constitute a single science.<sup>27</sup>

The differences between individuals are therefore owed to variety of experience, education, and physical and political environment. Therein lays the connecting link: Because all that constitutes individual beings emanate from experience, all current differences and inequalities must be due to differences in environment, and individuals must at birth be exactly equal. Such was the corollary that Helvétius and similar-minded thinkers drew from Locke's sensationalism, the necessary foundation for the democratic faith that individuals were born equal and that education alone becomes essential to perfect human life and to bring into being the ideal humanitarian society. Small wonder that the thinkers of the eighteenth century were intensely hopeful of the future: All that is wrong in the world was due to a faulty education and a faulty social environment. Once these factors have been changed, there will be no limit to the possibilities of human nature. In view of the fact that so much was hoped for from a change in environment and the fact that this aspiration appeared firmly grounded in the new science of human nature, one may readily see how on one hand that science would have provided so powerful an incentive to social reform and revolution, and on the other how the bourgeoisie, desiring certain definite changes, would have appealed to it as a convincing support.

For Helvétius, allowing for the relatively small number of individuals who are born incomplete, as it were, and obviously below the average, the vast majority of individuals may be understood to be equally susceptible of mental excellence, and remediable causes of their inequalities are discoverable. Certain children, he acknowledged, may be born with more energy than others, but, in terms of natural gifts, all are identical. Nature, he states, "never made a dunce," while genius becomes the result of some accident which directs an individual's mind strongly and continuously to a particular

subject. Genius, in itself, is not a physically endowed gift of nature; rather, individual genius is a product of social circumstances. Under a good, sound system of education and laws, therefore, creative ability can be manufactured. Educational and institutional changes can result in corresponding changes in the character of the individual. For, he writes,

it is certain that great men, who now appear haphazard, will in the future be produced by legislature, and the abilities and virtues of the citizens in great empires need not be left so much to chance: by really good education they may be infinitely multiplied.<sup>28</sup>

Helvétius maintained, further, that the word “education” ought to be understood in the broadest sense:

Everyone, if I dare say, has for teachers both the form of government under which he lives, and his friends and his mistresses, and the people about him, and the books he reads, and finally, chance, that is to say an infinite number of events whose connection and causes we are unable, through ignorance, to perceive.<sup>29</sup>

From this perspective, in contrast to the physical determinism of Charles Secondat de Montesquieu, Helvétius proffers a moral determinism: The individual is not so much the product of geographical as of social circumstances; that is, of education in the widest sense of the word. “It is in moral causes alone and not in a particular climate of a country” he posits, “that the true cause of inequality of minds must be sought.”<sup>30</sup> Intellectual and moral inequalities between individuals emerge entirely from differences in education and social circumstances. The conclusion drawn from this theory states that the individual, owing to the knowledge that he or she acquires of the laws of human nature, becomes endowed with an unlimited power to change or to reform humanity.

Therefore, the legislator becomes a pedagogue, a moralist, since morality and legislation are “one and the same science.” Virtuous individuals are created through good laws alone. The complete art of the legislator consists in compelling individuals, through their feeling of self-love, to be always just to one another.<sup>31</sup> If their character and ability are the product of education and law, Rousseau was incorrect in suggesting that the child should be left completely alone to develop good habits. The latter, at times, had written as though all knowledge, save that derived in the course of everyday life, was actually harmful. Helvétius thought, on the contrary, that the more knowledge could be passed on to the child from the experience of the past, the more virtuous he or she would be likely to become. For virtue was intelligent self-interest, the result of knowing that honesty was the best policy. In a good Civil State such would be the case: The child would see the solid advantages of goodness instead of hearing it extolled in a conventional manner and

supported by supernatural sanctions, the unreality of which it soon discovered. Teaching children the gospel of altruism served no good purpose if they soon learned that it actually paid to be avaricious, intolerant, and cruel. The discrepancy between education and laws accounted, in Helvétius's view, for much of the misery as well as the hypocrisy of the world:

The majority of the people of Europe honor virtue in theory; this is the effect of their education. They despise it in practice, which is the effect of their government.... No one in any case has concurred in the public good to his own prejudice, so that the only method of forming virtuous citizens is to unite the interests of the individual with those of the public.<sup>32</sup>

If the laws were made with this objective in view, the "nobility of soul" that is the habit of finding one's own happiness in the public welfare might become the rule, not the exception, among individual citizens.

The task of the legislator, then, remains simple: The whole study of the moralists consists in determining the use that should be made of rewards and punishments and the help that may be drawn from them in binding together the personal and the general interest. Helvétius perceived in this union "the chief task that morality should set itself." More precisely, he outlined the very program that Bentham soon afterwards attempted to carry forward:

The excellence of laws depends on the uniformity of the views of the Legislator, and on the interdependence of the laws themselves. But in order to establish this interdependence, one must be able *to* refer all the laws to some simple principle, such as the principle of the utility of the public, that is to say, of the greatest number of men subject to the same form of government; a principle whose full extent and fruitfulness are known to no one; a principle which contains the whole of morals and of legislation.<sup>33</sup>

Helvétius's faith in education encouraged him to maintain the equality and similarity of all individuals at birth and, further, to disregard entirely any hereditary causes of individual differences:

Two opinions today divide scientist on this subject. One group says, *the mind is the effect of a certain kind of temperament, and internal organization*; but no one has yet been able by any observations to determine the kind of organ, temperament, or nature that produces the mind. This vague assertion, destitute of proofs, is reduced to this statement, *the mind is the effect of an unknown cause or an occult quality, to which I give the name of temperament or organization*. Quintillian, Locke, and I say; *the equality of mind is the effect of a known cause, and this cause is the difference of education*.<sup>34</sup>

Who can be sure that differences of education do not produce the differences we find between minds; that men are not like those trees of the same species whose seed, indestructible and absolutely the same, never being sown in exactly the same soil, nor exposed to precisely the same winds, or the same sun, or the same rain, must necessarily in developing assume an infinity of different forms.<sup>35</sup>

Judgment itself, hence, for Helvétius, constitutes a physical sensation, a perception of the agreement or disagreement of our ideas. All operations of the

mind may be reduced to judgment, and judgment consists solely in grasping similarities and differences between individual ideas. However, the recognition of similarity and difference presupposed an original act of awareness that is analogous to, or indeed identical with, the perception of a sense quality:

If I could demonstrate that man is truly only the product of his education, undoubtedly I would have revealed a great truth to the nations. They would know that they have within their own hands the instrument of their greatness and their happiness, and that to be happy and powerful is only a matter of perfecting the science of education.<sup>36</sup>

The general conclusion of this Discourse is that genius is common, and the appropriate circumstances to develop it very rare. If we can compare the profane with the sacred, we can say that in this manner many are called and few are chosen.... Thus the whole art of education consists in placing young people in a concourse of circumstances appropriate to develop in them the germs of intelligence and of virtue.... I have felt how strongly the existing opinion that genius and virtue are pure gifts of nature was opposed to the progress of the science of education, and favored, in this regard, laziness and neglect.<sup>37</sup>

In this manner, Helvétius and his contemporaries derived from sensationalist psychology of the eighteenth century the proposition that the opinions of individuals were governed by the legislative and educational institutions of their society. However, they also entertained the opposite view, that social institutions were fashioned and controlled by human opinion: In general, "opinion governs the world," as a phrase of the period put it. Such a view was essential, for if institutions governed opinion completely, all individuals would be perfectly adapted to their institutions, and the need for reform would not arise. Yet, the French *philosophes* considered the reform of institutions desirable, and thus postulated the independent movement of opinion. In their theories, the French *philosophes* never resolved the contradiction between the idea that opinion governs the world and the view that the world governs opinion. Helvétius and Diderot at one point thought that there might be some third factor governing both institutions and opinion, though they did not find it. In general they extricated themselves from difficulty by appealing to the idea of "*un bon prince*" who could simultaneously change his own opinions and the institutions of his land. Thus they addressed themselves to the so-called "enlightened despots" of the age, Frederick II of Prussia, Catherine II of Russia, and Joseph II of Austria, not the Bourbons of France, whom they considered despotic but not enlightened. Helvétius dedicated his second work, *De l'homme*, published in 1772, to both Frederick II and Catherine II, while Diderot journeyed to St. Petersburg to advise Catherine on a plan for a university in person. In a similar manner, Voltaire, La Mettrie, and others gathered around Frederick the Great in Berlin. In 1775, Pierre-Paul-François-Joachim-Henri Le Mercier de la Rivière wrote a treatise entitled *De l'instruction publique* at the request of Gustave III of Sweden;

he also visited St. Petersburg, at the request of Catherine the Great to advise on her plan concerning a new code of laws for Russia. Several of the leading thinkers of the Enlightenment characteristically maintained “despotism” to mean absolute and arbitrary rule, as the Louis Chevalier de Jaucourt defined it in his article on the subject in the *Encyclopédie*. To the skeptics who claimed that the policies of Frederick the Great, Catherine II, and Joseph II were at least as much the offspring of the centralizing tendencies of absolutist regimes that preceded them as of philosophical principles derived from Enlightenment moral and political science, the defenders, who accepted Diderot’s characterization of “enlightened despot” in one of his commentaries on Russia, pointed to Frederick’s prohibition of torture, Joseph’s abolition of serfdom, and Catherine’s steadfast commitment to the improvement of Russian culture following the pattern of Western Europe. Their defenders claimed that, when combined with the constitutional reforms and legal codes introduced by these and other rulers, their policies revealed the influences of the tenets underlying Utilitarianism, Physiocracy, and Cameralism. Clearly, the *philosophes* and “enlightened” monarchs shared a common interest in the powerful potential of education and laws based on rational principles as the process by which to reform society.<sup>38</sup>

Among the particularly prominent characteristics of the age of “enlightened despotism” was a marked increase, demonstrated by the interest shown, in the expansion of educational facilities of various kinds. The diffusion of practical knowledge was accomplished in several ways, including relaxed regulations of censorship to permit the publications or sale of books and pamphlets that contained useful information or ideas lending support to their own reforms. For those instances in which disagreements occurred, some rulers supported the diffusion of enlightened publications as a device to challenge the political positions of privileged groups, particularly the clergy, whose opposition placed serious hurdles in the path of social reforms. Indeed, in a few cases, monarchs participated actively in subsidizing these publications: Charles III virtually established the enlightened periodical press in Spain, and Catherine II licensed several private publishing houses in Russia to translate and to publish Western books; in fact, she offered to help Diderot financially by mortgaging his library. In Tuscany, Leopold provided considerable material assistance to a group of individuals interested in reprinting the *Encyclopédie* in Italian. The original French *Encyclopédie* was devoted to disseminating practical knowledge, technology, and applied science, and an identical note of certainty resonated in the articles on “pure” science, metaphysics, morals, and politics. An encyclopedia, from this perspective, possessed the obvious objective of the diffusion of knowledge. Published in the years between 1751 and 1772,

the seventeen volumes of text and eleven volumes of plates of Diderot and his “men of letters” surpassed the encyclopedic ideal of Bacon. The contributors to the *Encyclopédie* were dedicated to comprehending all knowledge and presupposed both the potential and the utility of the expert informing the common reader. In this regard, the *Encyclopédie* reflected a twofold tendency of the Enlightenment: One tendency espoused the belief that the age had discovered the means of certain knowledge; the other embodied the aspiration and expectation that a beacon would spread from the *philosophes* outwards. The advance of knowledge and the proliferation of the knowledgeable were its dual endeavors. In his “Discours préliminaire,” d’Alembert proclaimed this twofold objective of the *Encyclopédie*:

The work whose first volume we present today has two objectives: as an Encyclopedia, it has to expose as much as possible the order and the connection of human knowledge; as a *Reasoned Dictionary of the Sciences, Arts and Trades*, it has to contain on each science and on each art, liberal or mechanical, the general principles that are the basis of each and the most essential details that make up the body and substance of each. These two points of view, of *Encyclopedia and of Systematic Dictionary*, therefore, will shape the design and the division of our Preliminary Discourse.<sup>39</sup>

Thus, as an encyclopedia, its purpose was to illustrate the interpenetration and coherence of all human knowledge; as a “reasoned dictionary,” its purpose was to present, systematically, the principles of all knowledge derived from theoretical sciences and practical arts. The extended purpose of the encyclopedic enterprise was to create a compendium of human knowledge that might remain for posterity. The eighteenth century proved to be an era in which the various branches of knowledge were laid out on paper in a manner purportedly accessible to people outside the aristocratic, intellectual salons and the formal university system. For these reasons, Diderot and d’Alembert made it clear that the *Encyclopédie* was more than a “dictionary.” In his article on “*Encyclopédie*,” published later, Diderot declared the objectives at which the enterprise purported to aim:

The aim of an Encyclopedia is to reassemble all knowledge scattered over the surface of the earth, to expose to men the general system with which we live, and to transmit it to men who will live after us; so that the works of past centuries have not been useless works in the centuries that will follow; that our descendants become more educated, that they become at the same time more happy, and that we will not die without having deserved well of humankind.<sup>40</sup>

All the variegated energies of the mind are concentrated in the collective creation of the *Encyclopédie* and articulated through the collective voices of the talented “society of men of letters and artists.” The writings of these talented thinkers exuded confidence in the ever-emerging capacities of humanity and an equally persistent passion to trace the genealogy of this

liberation. D'Alembert was among those most attuned to the unique role of his age and conscious of the historical epoch within which it had emerged. The expressive form of this collective enterprise, for Diderot and d'Alembert, was revolutionary. Hence, the encyclopedic enterprise accepted the implicit mission to continue the struggle along the revolutionary path paved by seventeenth-century philosophical and scientific truths. "Once the foundations of a revolution have been laid down," d'Alembert remarked in recognition of this revolutionary moment, "it is almost always the succeeding generation which completes that revolution."<sup>41</sup> D'Alembert's observation of the revolutionary implication of their mission points to yet another objective of the *Encyclopédie*: to document the historical moment and to provide a "reasoned history" of the recently founded "society" of learned scholars.

In his "Discours préliminaire," d'Alembert invited a comparison between the political world of revolutions and the political implications of revolutions in science. He proposed a novel approach to the issue in the context of Descartes's contributions to "modern" science. D'Alembert characterized the concept of revolution, concerning Descartes's contribution to "modern" science, as having taken a "daring" stance:

To show good minds how to shake off the yoke of scholasticism, of opinion, of authority, in a word, of prejudices and barbarism; and by this revolt whose rewards we are reaping today, Philosophy has received a service from him, perhaps more difficult to render than all those that Philosophy owes to his illustrious successors. We may regard him as a chief of conspirators, who had the courage to protest first against an arbitrary and despotic power, and who, in preparing a resounding revolution, laid the foundation of a more just and happier government which he had not been able to see established.<sup>42</sup>

Another particular and distinctive character of the concept of "revolution" was elucidated by d'Alembert in the form of specifying the scientific sense of the word, hitherto the physical rotation of celestial bodies, as an intellectual process characterized by the notion of "successive generations." This latter sense of the word "revolution" provided the conceptual framework within which to formulate his "reasoned history" and thereby to resist "arbitrary and despotic" authorities in thought—an intellectual history that was dynamic, provided process and demonstrated different lawful principles.

The French *philosophes* contributed to the *Encyclopédie* to enlighten the opinion that governed the world, and when they attained political authority, as Turgot did when he became minister to Louis XVI (who tried, but failed, to be enlightened), they attempted to reform the institutions that governed opinion.<sup>43</sup> The *Encyclopédie* was immensely effective, illustrating, so thought the *philosophes*, the contention that opinion governs the world. Séguier, the Avocat Générale, confessed in 1770 that, "the *philosophes* have shaken the

throne and upset the altars through changing public opinion.” Finally when the political revolution arrived to France in 1789, certain of the *philosophes* perceived the events as the days when the indefinite progress of humanity was at hand. In 1795, during the Thermidorian Reaction, constitutional monarchists and republican Thermidorians were divided as to the title and attributes of the head of the executive power; however, in drafting the Constitution of the Year III, they agreed on the necessity of reestablishing an elective and liberal government, as well as on the place of the “notables” (that is, well-to-do men of property) in the political and economic leadership in the country. According to Boissy d’Anglas,

We should be governed by the best. The best are those who are the most educated and the most interested in maintaining the laws. With few exceptions, you will find such men only among those who, owning property, are attached to the country in which it is located, to the laws which protect it, to the peace and order which preserve it, and who owe to this property and to the affluence which it yields, the education which makes them the ones to discuss, with wisdom and accuracy, the advantages and disadvantages of the laws that determine the fate of the land.... A country governed by landowners is in the social order; that which is governed by nonlandowners is in the state of nature.<sup>44</sup>

This concept exerted a tremendous amount of influence on the positive work of the Thermidorians, which was considerable. True to the spirit of the eighteenth century, like the Montagnards, they continued the preparation of the civil code and the metric system. Moreover, they proceeded with the creation or the restoration of research agencies and higher education: the Bureau of Longitudes, the Museum of Natural History, the Museum of French Monuments, the Polytechnic School, and the School of Medicine.

The theory that through education individuals are taught to identify their interest with the general interest was adopted by James Mill, a disciple of Bentham, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Bentham and William Godwin were both disciples of Helvétius who came under his influence independently. Bentham informs us it was in the works of Helvétius that he first read that the “greatest happiness of the greatest number” became the criterion by which individual and governmental action ought to be judged. Godwin adopted Helvétius’s theory that individual natures and characters were formed entirely by environmental factors. As we saw, these external factors were more intellectual and moral than physical and, consequently, were capable of indefinite modification. An individual, born into the world without innate tendencies, develops a pattern of behavior that depends on his or her own opinions. Alter the opinions of individuals and they, in turn, will behave differently. Transform the ideas of individuals, and society will be transformed. In accepting the notion that all the inequalities among individuals

arise from moral causes, it became logical to hold that the inequalities between the sexes must originate in a similar manner. The differences between the sexes were due more to causes that are social and modifiable than to physiological factors, which are immutable.<sup>45</sup> In company with Condorcet, Helvétius was one the rare *philosophes* who championed feminist causes.

In 1792, Mary Wollstonecraft, the cerebral spouse and intellectual companion of Godwin and the mother of Mary Shelley, founded British feminism with her *Vindication of the Rights of Women*. As one of the ardent supporter of the French Revolution in England, Wollstonecraft believed that the events of 1789 would quickly establish an enlightened republic, one that would respect the natural rights of every person. Not surprisingly, Wollstonecraft was appalled when she read in 1791 that the French Minister of education for the new Constituent Assembly had proposed a state-supported system of public education for men only. Immediately, she composed a lengthy response to the former Bishop of Autun, Citizen Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, and his *Rapport sur l'Instruction Publique, fait au nom du Comité de Constitution*, in which he presented his influential plan for universal public education to the Constituent Assembly on September 10, 1791. The report referred to the principles of "liberty" and "equality," maintained in the constitution, and made apparent the importance of education in realizing these principles. The notion of education "recognized men as equals," yet

this equality of rights would be little felt, [or] would be not so much real amidst so much inequality of fact, if education did not attempt without ceaseless effort to reestablish the level, and to weaken less the deadly disparities that it cannot destroy.

The overall objective of education, for Talleyrand, is "to improve" the individual because "one of the most striking characteristics in man is *perfectibility*, and this characteristic, perceptible in the individual, is even more so in the species." The Legislative Assembly established a Committee of Public Instruction, which drafted a project on the "General Organization of Public Instruction," which, on April 20, 21, 1792, was read to the Assembly by Condorcet. The project, one of the most important of those presented to the revolutionary assemblies, symbolized the eighteenth century, both by its profound optimism and by its breadth of vision. It proposed to develop all talents and all abilities through education and "thereby to establish between citizens an equality of fact, and restore actual political equality recognized by the law," which would help to eradicate inequality. In this manner, the Revolution would contribute towards "the general and gradual improvement of the human species, the ultimate goal towards which every social institution

ought to be directed.” In his continuing attempt to guide public opinion in accordance with rational principles, Condorcet developed a similar theme in a lengthy series of articles on public education. However, the Legislative Assembly did not have sufficient time even to initiate debate on Condorcet’s proposal. Wollstonecraft’s response to Tallyrand appeared in her *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, which completed two editions in 1792. Independent of French feminist thought of the time, Wollstonecraft perceived that the gender inequality at the core of both the revolutionary French nation and of British society threatened the development of a genuine democracy. She recognized that the denial of education to women was tantamount to the denial of their personhood, to their participation in the natural and civil rights of humanity:

Contending for the rights of women, my main argument is built on this simple principle, that if she be not prepared by education to become the companion of man, she will stop the progress of knowledge and virtue; for truth must be common to all, or it will be inefficacious with respect to its influence on general practice.<sup>46</sup>

Wollstonecraft’s contemporary female kindred spirit in the early debates and struggle surrounding gender equality was Catharine Macaulay, whose death in 1791 occurred while the former was reacting to the French Legislative Assembly. Wollstonecraft referred to Macaulay as

the woman of the greatest abilities, undoubtedly, that this country has ever produced; and yet this woman has been suffered to die without sufficient respect being paid to her memory. Posterity, however, will be more just, and remember that Catharine Macaulay was an example of intellectual acquirements supposed to be incompatible with the weakness of her sex.<sup>47</sup>

In her *Letters on Education* (1790), employing the epistolary style of the eighteenth century, Macaulay responded directly to Rousseau’s ideas concerning women’s nature and the appropriate education for girls in *Emile*. Macaulay based part of her pedagogic position upon the principles derived from Locke’s sensationalist psychology and the followers of Condillac, and, like Helvétius and Condorcet, she perceived several cultural practices grounded solely in custom as antithetical to the principles of an egalitarian associational psychology. Through this perspective, she advocated the equal worth of each person, presuming a universal, natural capacity for logical reasoning. The perspective also placed enormous value upon the power of the human mind and the power of reason. Accordingly, the very presence of human rationality sufficed to grant equal access to education and to acknowledge the need in both girls and boys, for intellectual development. However, unlike Locke, and more consistent with her contemporary Hume, Macaulay posited that the powers of perception and analysis were only

useful in conjunction with the universal natural expression of sympathetic benevolence. Thus,

It ought to be the first care of education to teach virtue on immutable principles, and to avoid the confusion which must arise from confounding the laws and customs of society with those obligations that are founded on correct principle of equity.... There can be but one rule of moral excellence for beings made of the same materials, organized after the same manners, and subject to similar laws of nature.... The notion of sexual difference in the human character has, with a very few exceptions, universally prevailed from the earliest times, and the pride of one sex, and the ignorance and vanity of the other, have helped to support an opinion which a close observation of Nature and a more accurate way of reasoning, would disapprove. [It follows] that all of those vices and imperfections which have been generally regarded as inseparable from the female character, do not in any manner proceed from sexual causes, but entirely the effects of situation and education.<sup>48</sup>

The extensive writings of Wollstonecraft and Macaulay demonstrated a definite commitment to education and to equality and freedom through parliamentary reform. Helvétius and his contemporaries carried forth this commitment and developed the doctrine of the equality of individuals as a support for the reforming benevolent monarchs; he concluded his *De l'homme* by stating "These principles, adopted by an enlightened and benevolent prince, could become the germ of a new legislation, more suited to the happiness of men."<sup>49</sup> To be sure, in practice, the French *philosophes* applied both of their views. Eventually they availed themselves as readily of the democratic faith, when supported by the further conviction of civil and moral equality, and they formed, together with the ideas of Rousseau, the basis of that ringing statement in the later revolutionary documents: "All men are born free and equal."

In his article "On the Admission of Women to the Right of Citizenship," Condorcet makes a cogent case for the rights of women, in which he refers to Catharine Macaulay and poses the question, "Does one believe that the Mistress Macaulay would not have expressed her opinion in the House of Commons better than many representatives of the British Nation?" What to some may have appeared undoubtedly as a rhetorical question was not his intention. No one perceived more clearly than Condorcet the broader implications of the principles of freedom, equality, civil rights, and humanity. Nor did anyone express more eloquently the aspirations that, in the mind of the third generation of *philosophes*, exalted the objective assigned to the notion of national education. Condorcet, the last great *philosophe* of the eighteenth century, was a mathematician of repute, an economist, statesman, revolutionary, and educator. His life and works epitomized the heart of the Revolution and the thought of the Enlightenment. He believed that the Revolution was beholden to itself to organize education so that "an always

increasing progress of enlightenment may open an inexhaustible source of assistance according to our needs, of remedies according to our ills, of means to individual happiness and common prosperity.” Condorcet singularly emphasized the significance of democratic humanism through education. This intellectual spirit became manifest as he assigned national education the goal of “assuring every individual the opportunity of developing to the fullest extent the talents with which nature has endowed him; and thereby to establish among citizens an actual equality.”<sup>50</sup> Thus, it became a matter of providing all with the means by which to attain the enjoyment of rights within the framework of bourgeois society. This process would assist in eradicating inequality that emanated from the property franchise and, thereby, the Revolution would contribute towards “the general and gradual perfection of the human species, the ultimate end towards which every social institution must be directed.”<sup>51</sup> For national education, he proposed primary instruction, for females as well as for males, which would include an elementary section and secondary schools, then an intermediate level provided by “institutes,” and finally a higher stage composed of nine *lycées*. A certain number of selected young people would pass from one grade to another as “national scholars,” at the expense of the state. A National Society, divided into four classes and recruited by cooptation, would assume the direction of national education and research. Teachers, formerly chosen by a selection committee, were to be appointed by the departmental administrators. While the curriculum and methods of the central schools were thoroughly in keeping with the ideological movement of the Enlightenment, the conservative reaction became apparent in the absence of “free” schooling, though this was admittedly overcome in the granting of scholarships to *élèves de la patrie*.

Higher education attracted the attention of the Thermidorians for similar reasons. They early demonstrated a great interest in institutions of higher learning. The old universities and academies had been suppressed, accentuated by the expulsion of the Jesuits from their schools in 1762. The proponents of sensationalist pedagogy in the Revolutionary Committee of Public Instruction, advocated theories of civic education that demanded pedagogy by which students’ sensibilities would be shaped through the careful management of their sensory experiences. The Committee demonstrated these tendencies in stating the “whole art of instruction” must be in the “linking of sensations.” They maintained, further. “It is by way of the senses that the virtues enter the heart... [and] vices enter by the same door.” As in cases of natural philosophy, virtues originated in sensibility, “physics ... [should] serve as an introduction to moral education.” In physics, as in morals, education was less a matter of enlightening the mind than of cultivating the “body and

heart.”<sup>52</sup> The scientific contributions made in chemistry by Antoine François Fourcroy, Claude Louis, Comte Berthollet, and Louis-Bernard Guyton de Morveau indicated that science could solve the technical problems of the period, and advance all of the sciences of the old institutions which were reformed and of the new institutions which were formed. On 14 June 1793, the Montagnards transformed the Jardin du Roi into a new body, the Museum, whose objective was “publicly to teach natural history in all its aspects, and applied in particular to the advancement of agriculture, commerce and the arts.” On 7 Vendémiaire Year (28 September 1794), the National Convention formed the Central School for Public Works, which one year later became the Ecole Polytechnique. The Ecole Normale Supérieure also was founded in 1794 and, together with the Polytechnique, became an important institution devoted to scientific education and research in France throughout the nineteenth century. The Supérieure was shut down after four months and remained unimportant until 1808, when Napoleon Bonaparte reopened it. After becoming emperor, in 1808, he organized the University of France as a form of national educational board, which strictly centralized the university system. Meanwhile, the Polytechnique, which flourished from the outset, opened with four hundred students and a staff composed of the leading scientists of the eighteenth century. Mathematical physics was taught by Pierre Simon, Marquis de Laplace, and Joseph Louis, Comte de Lagrange, geometry by Gaspard Monge, Comte de Peluse, and chemistry by Berthollet. Under Bonaparte, several other military, medical, and technical colleges were founded by the chemist Fourcroy, who was appointed minister of public instruction, although they were of less importance. One of the most remarkable features of Bonaparte’s educational system was the emphasis placed upon mathematics and the natural sciences. Over the course of the Enlightenment, the study of mathematics proved to serve a pragmatic function for military leaders at the Ecole Militaire. These instructors perceived in mathematical analysis a vehicle by which to instill mental precision, a sense of solidarity and an *esprit de corps* and to inculcate the military values of subordination. Mathematical testing, in addition, served as an “objective” device by which to admit potential officers without making invidious distinctions, and thereby became one of the practical mechanisms by which to democratize the officer corps. Bonaparte himself encouraged the practical side of science by offering prizes for useful discoveries.<sup>53</sup>

On 19 Vendémiaire (10 October 1794), on the recommendation of Abbé Henri Gregoire’s report, the Conservatoire of Arts and Crafts was created for applied science. The decree of 14 Frimaire, Year III (4 December 1795), created three schools of medicine, in Paris, Strasbourg, and Montpellier and,

eventually, an Institute for Deaf-Mutes. The latter establishment demonstrated the concern with the sensory impaired and revealed the implications of Locke's epistemological psychology for the mental processes of blind and deaf students. "If, in fact," stated an appeal to the committee of Public Instruction, "our sensations are the only channel for our ideas," the petitioner on behalf of special institutions of blind and deaf education requested that the Convention remain mindful of the difficulties encountered by the sensory impaired.<sup>54</sup> The Bureau des Longitudes or Central Astronomical Office, with which a course in astronomy at the Paris Observatory was associated, was established on 7 Messidor, Year III (25 June 1795). Languages, archeology, and the arts also received their share of attention. This recognition was realized through the establishment of the School of Oriental Languages on 10 Germinal, Year III (30 March 1795). The Museum of French Monuments and the Conservatory of Music were formed on 15 Fructidor, Year III (1 September 1795).

On the eve of its dissolution, 3 Brumaire, Year IV (25 October 1795), the Convention finally proposed a National Institute of the Arts and Sciences to direct all intellectual activity. The Academy of Sciences was reconstituted as one of the several classes of the Institute de France, the other classes covering literature and the political and moral sciences. Just as in Condorcet's plan, the National Institute included a "class" comprised of the "moral and political sciences." The "class" of Moral and Political Sciences, initially devised by Condorcet, embodied the recent thinking of Locke and his disciples, generated by the Revolution, through its emphasis on the analysis of sensations and ideas. However, the Institute designated only three "classes" in lieu of Condorcet's four, in that it excluded the applied sciences, which was the largest of the four for Condorcet. The first "class" comprised the mathematical and physical sciences; the second, the moral and political sciences, which included the sections "Analysis of Sensations" and "Ideas, Morale"; and the third, literature and the fine arts. The Institute proclaimed as its aim "the perfection of the arts and sciences by uninterrupted research, by the publication of discoveries and correspondence with learned and foreign societies." One scholar of the period noted, "It has often been observed that in a broad sense the *Institut* derives from Diderot's *Encyclopédie*."<sup>55</sup> Each of the three classes consisted of several sections, with each section composed of six members residing in Paris and six in the remaining regions of France. The scientific section of the Institute of France consisted of some sixty members, who, like the members of the old Royal Society, had an equal voice in managing the affairs of the organization. However, also like the members of the old Academy of Sciences, they remained salaried officials paid by the state. Thus, the new institution realized Condorcet's vision of a National Society, but without granting it

the administrative authority that he had attributed to it. These developments in the educational sphere, then, bear traces of the democratic and utilitarian character of the Revolution. Though these innovations in education were considerable, war and insufficient resources, as well as limited experience, severely hindered their achievement. The Revolution abolished the Church's monopoly and inaugurated public, secular education. It gave priority to the exact and experimental sciences, always remaining mindful of the connection between the knowledge of nature and that of the individual and society. One of its distinguishing features entailed the principle that schoolmasters would combine research, technical application, and teaching of youth. Though, in social terms, the revamped educational system remained the privilege of a minority and, thereby, incomplete, the *philosophes* would have recognized these establishments as their offspring.

The Institute de France established by the Thermidorians became the intellectual center where Antoine-Louis-Claude Destutt de Tracy and the *Idéologues* engaged their theories. "*Idéologie*," the "science of ideas," was a word invented by Destutt de Tracy, who also distinguished the examination of thought in accordance with the methods of Locke, Condillac, and Helvétius from traditional metaphysics. Through the concept *Idéologie*, Destutt de Tracy proposed to transform philosophy into the science of ideas. According to Karl Mannheim, the word "ideology" "had, to begin with, no inherent ontological significance; it did not include any decision as to the value of different spheres of reality, since it originally denoted merely the theory of ideas."<sup>56</sup> Destutt de Tracy, the founder of the Institute, proposed to determine, through observation, how ideas were formulated—hence the name of the school—and defined the "science of ideas" in the following manner:

The science may be called ideology, if one only pays attention to the subject matter; *general Grammar*, if one only allows for the methods, and *Logic*, if one only considers the purpose. Whatever the name one gives to it, the term necessarily contains these three parts, since one cannot be treated adequately without treating also the two others. *Ideology* appears to me to be the generic term because the science of ideas contains both that of their expression and that of their derivation.<sup>57</sup>

The *Idéologues*, Destutt de Tracy and Pierre-Jean-Georges Cabanis, were narrower in their scope than their predecessors, and, consequently, advocated a system of education that should gradually improve the individual's mind by a "science of ideas," or "ideology." This new science examined the origins of ideas in "sensibility" and their interpenetration in the sentiments. Destutt de Tracy postulated that "Ideology" underlay all the moral sciences: "grammar, logic, teaching, private morality, public morality (also referred to as social art), education and legislation."<sup>58</sup> As an approach to the "moral and political

sciences,” the Institute investigated the subject by introducing the analysis of sensations, developing the principles of grammar and language and of the logic of the sciences, and ultimately demonstrating the application of these principles to the moral and political sciences. Cabanis wrote that one could no longer possibly doubt that “physical sensibility is the source of all the ideas and all the habits that constitute the moral existence of man: Locke, Charles Bonnet, Condillac, Helvétius, have carried this truth to the last degree of demonstration.” For them, morality became a “science of morals.” The structural explanations of human nature and behavior put forward by this science entailed the idea that physicality determines morality, and that morality (*les mœurs et les manières*) determines politics, instead of the reverse, as understood earlier, in the tradition of classical Greek thought.

Throughout the revolutionary period of Thermidor, several of the *Idéologues* and their associates at the section of moral and political sciences developed these ideas into general propositions concerning the physiological sources of morality, that is, an understanding of human nature as being constituted by shaped elements within the human body itself, rather than from metaphysical abstractions. The *Décade philosophique, littéraire et politique* (1794–1807), of which the economist Jean-Baptiste Say was one of the founders in 1794, became the intellectual organ through which their ideas were disseminated. Pierre Cabanis foreshadowed experimental psychology, and emerged as the founder of psychophysiology. In 1795 and 1796, Cabanis read to the Institute the first six of the twelve papers that eventually appeared in his *Rapports du physique et du moral de l'homme* (1802). In these papers, he expressed a concern to form a system of moral sciences that would equal the physical sciences in certitude and would provide a firm foundation upon which a morality independent of restrictive doctrines may be grounded. These papers revealed how he perceived in the study of the physical organism the key to the intellectual and moral improvement of humanity. For, if our knowledge derived solely from our sensations, our sensations depend upon our sensory organs, and mind thereby becomes a function of the nervous system. It is through knowledge of the relations between his or her physical states and moral states that the individual may attain happiness; through the enlargement of his or her faculties and the myriad possibilities of pleasures, the individual perceives the potential of “human perfectibility.”

Concurrently, Philippe Pinel, the doctor at the hospital of La Salpêtrière and the Paris prison, studied mental illness and inaugurated the discipline of psychopathology. His *Traité médico-philosophique sur l'aliénation mentale ou la manie* was published in 1798. Pinel, in company with other physicians influenced by materialism, perceived the symptoms of mental disorders in

purely physiological factors. He assisted in eradicating the torture to which the mentally ill were subjected. Pinel proclaimed that those who were afflicted with madness were neither “criminals” nor “possessed” by the “devil” but truly sick individuals. Through his intervention and cure of King George III of England in 1789, Pinel contributed significantly to insure a more humane treatment of the mentally disturbed. The King’s dementia had become manifest two years earlier, when, in Windsor Great Park, he had descended from his carriage to address an oak tree as the King of Prussia.

Destutt de Tracy lauded the authority of Locke and Condillac for their “natural history of ideas” through their scientific description of the human mind. The natural history of the mind entails the manner in which our thoughts are formulated. The “science of ideas” then yields true knowledge of human nature and thereby the means of defining the general laws of sociability.<sup>59</sup> As with Condorcet, Destutt de Tracy’s objective remained pedagogical, that is, the avowed aim consists in laying bare the guiding principles of citizenship for the “Society of Republicans.” These “republicans” considered that a reformed system of educating children would entail one of the most powerful means by which to promote the indefinite progress of knowledge and to institute the reign of reason. Condorcet’s blueprint of universal state education envisioned this inexorable progress of humanity.

Napoleon Bonaparte arrived in Paris on 22 Vendémiaire (14 October 1799) amid great fanfare. He displayed a thoroughly republican discretion and disposition, frequenting the Institute and fraternizing with the *Idéologues*.<sup>60</sup> In December 1797, after having been elected to a vacancy in the section of mechanical arts, Bonaparte became an honorary member of the Institute. As the political realities of the period changed after the *coup d’état* of the eighteenth of Brumaire (9 November, 1799), Bonaparte’s perception of the *Idéologues* also changed. In an interesting way, Bonaparte’s political ambitions combined with the eighteenth century’s cosmopolitan ideals of a world government ruling over equal subjects. Bonaparte, with his vision of Universal Empire, served as the best embodiment of the century’s ideals. The concept of reform from above was consistent with the tradition of the *philosophes*. Bonaparte represented the culmination of one tendency in eighteenth-century political thought, whereas the “democratic,” republican experiment of the Revolution constituted another. Before he was distracted by the imperialist urge, he resembled the Physiocrats’ notion of a “legal despot.”

The contemporary conception of ideology began to take shape when Bonaparte, discovering that the Institute’s association of *philosophes* opposed his imperial ambitions, contemptuously designated them “*Idéologues*.” Later, during his successful military campaigns in Germany, at Erfurt, Bonaparte

conveyed his contempt for this philosophy of “sensations” and “ideas” in his conversation with “a distinguished group of academicians from Weimar,” which included Johann Wolfgang Goethe. Tallyrand recounts, in his *Mémoires*, how Bonaparte spoke directly to them, “in these last moments to leave them with an impression” of his understanding of the intricate relationship of ideas and political reality. He asked them whether there were many *Idéologues* in Germany, to which one responded, “Yes, Sire, a large number of them.” Bonaparte replied in the following manner:

I pity you. I have some of them in Paris; they are dreamers and dangerous dreamers. They are all disguised materialists and are not too disguised. Gentlemen, [he said raising his voice] the philosophers worry themselves to create systems. They will search in vain to find a better one than Christianity which, in reconciling man with himself, assures at one and the same time the public order and the peace of States. Your *Idéologues* destroy all illusions, and the age of illusions is for peoples as for individuals the age of happiness.<sup>61</sup>

Henceforth, the word assumed a derogatory connotation, much like the word “doctrinaire.” However, according to Mannheim, “if the theoretical implications of this contempt are examined, it will be found that the depreciative attitude involved is, at bottom, of an epistemological and ontological nature.” In examining these implications, he proceeds to explain:

What is depreciated is the validity of the adversary’s thought because it is regarded as unrealistic. But if one asked further, unrealistic with reference to what? –the answer would be, unrealistic with reference to practice, unrealistic when contrasted with the affairs that transpire in the political arena. Thenceforth, all thought labeled as “ideology” is regarded as futile when it comes to practice, and the only reliable access to reality is to be sought in practical activity.... The new word gives sanction to the specific experience of the politician with reality, and it lends support to that practical irrationality which has so little appreciation for thought as an instrument for grasping reality.<sup>62</sup>

For Destutt de Tracy, no supersensible reality exists behind individuals and their many “ideas,” which consist of “sensations” and “notions.” He noted,

It is only to observe that in reality only individuals exist, and that our general ideas are not at all of real beings existing outside of ourselves, but are pure creations of our minds, as a way of classifying our individual ideas.<sup>63</sup>

Upon reflecting on these ideas created from our sensations, Condorcet posed the following question: “The perfecting of laws and public institutions, following the progress of those sciences, are they not at all for the effect of reconciling, [and] of identifying the common interest of each man with the common interest of all?” Just as Condorcet’s purpose was pedagogical, with the view of providing principles by which to govern the “citizen,” so did Destutt de Tracy’s theorizing provide a practical, normative purpose:

liberating the human mind from ignorance, superstition, and intolerance and delivering the mind from errors to enable it to perceive the universal principle in nature. These guiding rules become principles, according to Condorcet, which demonstrate “the moral goodness of man” and “that nature connects truth, happiness, and virtue by an indissoluble chain.”<sup>64</sup>

Whereas Bonaparte encouraged the practical aspect of science, he also discouraged the “progressive,” speculative *philosophes* who continued the intellectual tradition of the earlier materialist philosophers such as Cabanis and Destutt de Tracy. As indicated through his later remarks in Erfurt, the materialist implications of Cabanis’s formulation of the mind as a function of higher nervous organization, in his *Rapports du physique et du moral de l’homme*, perplexed Bonaparte. This concern became particularly acute after Bonaparte “reconciled” himself with the Roman Catholic Church in 1801 when he concluded a concordat with the papacy. To Bonaparte, as noted earlier, the primary function of all religions was to assist in the maintenance of law and order and, thereby, serve as a semiofficial agency of the state. The persistent ideological discomfort he felt with the “materialism” of the *Idéologues* prompted him to become proactive, and in 1803 he shut down the second class of the Institute of France, which had been devoted to the study of the political and moral sciences, distributing its member among the other sections. In the name of administrative efficiency, the decree abolished this class by separating and moving the *Idéologues* into the new literary and politically conservative section of French Language and Literature and the new third section of History and Ancient Literature. According to the new academic rules, thinkers in the latter section, which consisted of the majority of the *Idéologues*, were permitted to broach sensitive questions of ethics, economics, and legislation only insofar as they pertained to historical problems. Lacking the intellectual forum within which to propagate their “science of ideas,” Cabanis, Destutt de Tracy, Dominique-Joseph Garat, and other fellow-travelers retreated to the salon of the aging widow Madame Anne Catherine Helvétius in her suburban villa at Auteuil and to that of a much younger widow, Madame Sophie de Grouchy, Marquise de Condorcet, where they began their careers as social theorists and reformers. Thus, French science became more practical and experimental during the Napoleonic period and, at the same time, the techniques of the French industries were advanced.<sup>65</sup>

If, as Helvétius contended earlier, education was all-powerful in the formation of character, then education became the instrument by which the nation was converted to the moral principle of utility. The principle of utility may be traced to Hobbes and the seventeenth century. Helvétius made utilitarian principles a program for the reforming legislator, one who can utilize the

mechanism of human motives to carry private happiness and public welfare into the most complete accord. Hence, he made the “greatest happiness” principle an instrument of reform and passed the legacy on to his followers, Cesare Beccaria and Bentham. James Mill was a proponent of this vehicle as the means by which to convert the nation to the ethic of Utilitarianism. In his important study of the English Utilitarians, Eli Halévy states,

What is known as Utilitarianism, or Philosophical Radicalism can be defined as nothing but an attempt to apply the principles of Newton to the affairs of political and of morals. In this moral Newtonianism the principle of the association of ideas and the principle of utility take the place of the principle of universal attraction.<sup>66</sup>

Bentham mentions that it was in the works of Helvétius that he first read about the “greatest happiness of the greatest number” as the criterion by which individual and governmental action ought to be judged. The idea of utility, the conception that actions are to be judged good or bad by their effect upon human happiness, had been implicit of course in the works of secular theorists throughout the eighteenth century. However, Helvétius explicitly put forward for the first time the notion that if we would judge correctly of laws,

one must be able to ascribe to all of them a simple principle, such as the one of the utility of the public, that is to say, the greatest number of men submitted to the same form of government: a principle of which no one knows all the extent nor fecundity; a principle that contains all moral and legislation, which many people repeat without understanding it, and of which even Legislators still have but a superficial idea, at least if one judges it by the unhappiness of almost all the Peoples of the earth.<sup>67</sup>

In Helvétius’s writings Bentham encountered the notion of the “genius of legislation” and thereby recognized his own intellectual ambitions: “What Bacon was to the physical world, Helvétius was to the moral. The moral world has therefore had its Bacon; but its Newton is yet to come.”<sup>68</sup> As indicated earlier, Helvétius, a disciple of Hume, aspired to “treat morals like any other science and to make an experimental morality like an experimental physics.” The first principle of conduct contains the fact that individuals must of necessity pursue their own interests; self-interest in the “moral sciences” has the same place as motion in physics. He also aspired to found ethics and politics on a scientific psychology.

If Poetry, Geometry, Astronomy, and, generally, all the sciences lead more or less rapidly to their perfection, while morals seem barely to come out of the cradle; it is because men, forced, collecting in society, to give themselves laws and customs, were obliged to form a system of morality before they had discovered from observation its true principles.<sup>69</sup>

Bentham subscribed completely to Helvétius’s notion that education was the medium for transforming human character to an unlimited extent, thereby

making all individuals intellectually equal and therefore worthy of possessing equal wealth. In his *Tracts on Poor Laws and Pauper Management* (1797), Bentham addressed the pedagogic problem. He outlined a program of popular education, particularly with respect to “pauper education,” and advocated the method, initiated by Dr. Bell, of teaching by monitors. After 1808 and his acquaintance with James Mill, Bentham’s pedagogic ideas received all of its development through the person of John Stuart Mill. Through this relationship, “Bentham gave Mill a doctrine, and Mill gave Bentham a school.” John Stuart Mill, born in May 1806, was two years old when his father met Bentham. When the young Mill turned three, James Mill assumed the education of his son on a systematic plan.<sup>70</sup> James Mill had his own ideas about pedagogic method, which he tested on his children. In the article “Education” that was published in the supplement for the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Mill demonstrated that, in defining his Benthamite-influenced pedagogy, he derived inspiration as much from Locke, Condillac, and Helvétius as from Hartley, Cabanis, and Erasmus Darwin:

Education, then, in the sense in which we are now using the term, may be defined, the best employment of all the means which can be made use of, by man, for rendering the human mind to the greatest possible degree the case of human happiness. Everything, therefore, which operates, from the first germ of existence, to the final extinction of life, in such a manner as to affect those qualities of the mind on which happiness in any degree depends, comes within the scope of the present inquiry.<sup>71</sup>

From this point of departure, Mill “tried on the person of his eldest son, John Stuart, the first experimental verification of Helvétius’s theory.”<sup>72</sup> He experimented with the method of using a monitor on young John Stuart, who, as he learned Latin, taught it to his younger brothers and sisters as a supplementary method of learning it himself:

In my eighth year I commenced learning Latin, in conjunction with a younger sister, to whom I taught it as I went on, and who afterwards repeated the lessons to my father: and from this time, other sisters and brothers being successively added as pupils, a considerable part of my day’s work consisted of this preparatory teaching. It was a part which I greatly disliked; the more so, as I was held responsible for the lessons of my pupils, in almost as full a sense as for my own: I however derived from this discipline the great advantage of learning more thoroughly and retaining more lastingly the things which I was set to teach: perhaps, too, the practice it afforded in explaining difficulties to others, may even at that age have been useful. In other respects, the experience of my boyhood is not favorable to the plan of teaching children by means of one another.<sup>73</sup>

In the later stages of his education, John Stuart Mill remarked how, on his return from France, his father placed into his hands “Condillac’s *Traité des Sensations*, and the logical and metaphysical volumes of his *Cours*

*d'Etudes*.”<sup>74</sup> John Stuart’s return, in 1821, occurred between his father’s article “Education” and his larger work, *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind*, which appeared eleven years later. In the latter work, James Mill made his contribution to the theories of the human mind and their “importance to the doctrine of education.”<sup>75</sup> The confluence of these theoretical tendencies gave rise to the growth in “philosophical Radicals in England.” “The French *philosophes* of the eighteenth century,” John Stuart Mill recalled, “were the example we sought to imitate, and we hoped to accomplish no less results.”<sup>76</sup> James Mill’s *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind* assisted in determining the psychological doctrine of Philosophical Radicalism and the inexorable link between education, morals, and legislation.

As we saw in D’Alembert’s statement in the “Discours,” the new, progressive element that had been absent in previous generations was knowledge, and because of that lack, the past had been hindered by “obscurantist” tendencies. The *philosophes* perceived their generation as having had, for the first time, achieved the power that comes with knowledge. The indebtedness of the *philosophes* affiliated with the *Encyclopédie* to Locke’s sensationalist theory of knowledge becomes apparent. Many of the *philosophes* acknowledged the influence of experience and sensation on the power of education instead of revolution, both of which were considered key in attaining progress in society. Locke, Helvétius, and Bentham laid the foundations for this perception of human improvement. Finally, humanity possessed in its own hands the key to its future development. By destroying the foolish errors of the past and returning to experience and to a rational cultivation of nature, the limits to human welfare were surmountable. The Enlightenment belief in the inevitability of progress through reason was contested by Rousseau in the prize essay he wrote for The Academy of Dijon in 1750. He wrote his essay in response to the question “Has the Renaissance in the sciences and the arts contributed to the purification of morals?” Rousseau’s answer was no, in his *First Discourse*, where he claimed: “Our souls have been corrupted to the degree that our arts and sciences have advanced toward perfection.”<sup>77</sup> Rousseau proceeded as far as any of the rationalist thinkers in extolling the “natural individual.” However, his conception of what became natural in human nature was derived, not from the mechanical order of nature of Newton or the sensational epistemology of Locke, but rather from the personal experience of the individual. For him, the natural individual was not the rational thinker, judging everything by its usefulness to himself or herself; rather, the individual was a person of passion and feeling. Although Rousseau emphasized the primacy of sentiment, he refused to repudiate reason entirely. In emphasizing the less rational side of human nature, Rousseau and other

late-eighteenth-century early Romantics accepted the Enlightenment ideal of the “natural” but gave to it a new interpretation. In a different vein, eighteenth-century thinkers assisted in preparing the path that strongly emphasized the individual. “Intelligence” and “reason,” for Rousseau, were primarily the products of social experience, an environment that grasps the plastic nature of the child and distorts it by pressing it into a traditional model that must remain foreign to it. In *Emile, ou De l’Education*, Rousseau’s book on education, psychology, the theory of human nature, and moral philosophy, he emphasized preserving the child from any formal teaching by other human beings. It is primarily negative, consisting, “not in teaching the principles of virtue or truth, but in guarding the heart against vice and the mind against error.”<sup>78</sup> Rousseau proposes this approach to education because “everything degenerates in the hand of man.”<sup>79</sup> Thus, the primary objective of education must seek to preserve the natural individual and ensure that the habits he or she forms are not the artificial ones of custom, tradition, and reason, but rather those in which the individual’s nature will flourish. Once this endeavor has proved to be successful, the authentic education of the child will emerge from the free development of his or her nature, powers, and natural inclinations. He observes

All that we lack at birth, all that we need when we come to man’s estate, is the gift of education. This education comes to us from nature, from men, or from things. The inner growth of our organs and faculties is the education of nature, the use we learn to make of this growth is the education of men, what we gain by our experience of our surroundings is the education of things.<sup>80</sup>

Rousseau begins *Emile with* the challenging phrase: “Everything is good when it comes from the hands of the Author of nature; everything degenerates in the hands of man.” Taking the path pursued in the *First and Second Discourses*, Rousseau thereby faults humanity for society’s errant ways. In evoking the image of different pairs of hands, these lines in *Emile* point to the degree to which each pair has effected the transmission and debasement of the Author’s “natural” design in the world. Nevertheless, what the individual has destroyed, he or she also may transform for the better. A natural education will produce the natural life. During his early years, Emile will spend most of his time outdoors, running about barefoot and thinly clad, leading the vigorous, natural and free life of a young animal. The barefoot child symbolizes the human being who remains in harmony with the natural world and moves freely across all sorts of boundaries. “Exercise his body,” Rousseau instructs, “his limbs, his senses; his strengths, but keep his mind as idle as long as you can.” In this connection, Rousseau joins other thinkers who followed Locke in advocating that more attention ought to be given to physical education. Emile

will read no books. "I hate books," Rousseau pronounces, "they only teach people to talk about what they don't know." The sole book that he excepted from his attack on education was *Robinson Crusoe*. The vivid narrative of how the mariner shipwrecked on an island learned little by little how to do everything for himself with his own hands appealed to Rousseau. He found the greatest interest and value in Defoe's novel, particularly as a work that exemplified the principle that moral education derives more from action than from "dry precepts." In addition, it was the boy's book *par excellence* in that Emile, too, will learn by doing. The tale of an individual's survival on a desert island extolled practical ingenuity. As for Sophie, her favorite book will be not *Robinson Crusoe*, but Fénelon's *The Adventures of Telemachus* (1699). The liberal political viewpoint and the high moral teachings of the seventeenth-century Archbishop of Cambrai had strong appeal to Rousseau and to several of his contemporaries. However, in general, Rousseau, unlike Montesquieu, Condorcet, Helvétius, and Voltaire, regarded woman's position as subordinate to man's and withheld from her a broad intellectual training. In this regard, Rousseau stressed the educational ideals of simplicity and frugality so prominent in the *Treatise on the Education of Girls* (1687) of his mentor, Fénelon. The treatise, widely read throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, emphasized the importance of female education and ascribed broad domestic duties to aristocratic women.<sup>81</sup>

In Book V of *Emile*, Rousseau outlines the education he proposes for Sophie in order to prepare her for marriage to Emile. This preparation stresses that one ought not to train her intellectual faculties or powers of criticism, but seek to preserve her natural feelings and innocence and prepare her to serve her husband and future sons:

The children's health depends in the first place on the mother's, and the early education of man is also in a woman's hands; his morals, his passions, his tastes, his pleasures, his happiness itself, depend on her. A woman's education must therefore be planned in relation to man. To be pleasing in his sight, to win his respect and love, to train him in childhood, to tend him in manhood, to counsel and console, to make his life pleasant and happy, these are the duties of woman for all time, and this is what she should be taught while she is young.<sup>82</sup>

The specific details of Sophie's education, for Rousseau, follow from this basic belief that "woman is specially made to please man," and "to be agreeable to man instead of provoking him."<sup>83</sup> Emile discovered how not to be swept away by the passions and opinions of other individuals, how to observe with his own eyes, to feel with his own heart, to reason with his own mind. The object of education, in Rousseau's view as in Montaigne's, does not consist so much in broad factual information as in the development of independent judgment. Through Emile, Rousseau promoted the principle of

the education of a morally autonomous individual and portrayed the notion of education as a process of self-development that was more dependent upon experience than book learning. The “sure guide” that teaches the individual to distinguish between “good and evil” is conscience, that “divine instinct.” It will never betray us if we listen closely and honestly. “Now is the time for real freedom”; the tutor exhorts Emile, “learn to be your own master; control your heart, my Emile, and you will be virtuous.”<sup>84</sup>

At variance with the prevailing materialism that several of his contemporaries were beginning to expound, Rousseau advocated a profound spirituality in which the individual must commune in solitude with the world of nature; this experience alone will sharpen his or her religious or spiritual sensibility. His primary considerations were the moral potential and dignity of the individual. Helvétius was as contemptuous of Rousseau’s notion that individuals were naturally “good” as he was of the theological view that they were born “wicked.” Individuals, he argued, were not born with any “innate principle of virtue” or “natural compassion,” but they may learn both when they recognize the punishment that society inflicts on injustice and cruelty. Originally, their minds were blank sheets upon which the educator may write whatever he or she thinks best, and “morality, law-making and pedagogy” thereby, constitute a single science. If, he said, individuals are born with substantially identical faculties, if their ideas are the result of their education and environment, if they must seek their own interest and are capable, with instruction, of perceiving the right way of attaining it, then the argument for social and political equality remains unanswerable.

Helvétius’s polemical diatribe against Rousseau resulted in statements by the former that invited comparisons with the latter. According to Helvétius, all operations of the mind, namely, all ideas interests, and passions, are reduced to the “only quality essential to the nature of man,” that is, “physical sensibility.”<sup>85</sup> In *Emile*, Rousseau advised that as long as the child’s “sensibility remains limited to his person there will be no morality in his actions.” Only after his sensibility extended beyond himself would Emile acquire “sentiments ... of good and evil that constitute him a true man.”<sup>86</sup> In this connection, moral learning, as in the case of natural philosophy, was a matter of fostering sensibilities. Helvétius equates moral sensibilities with the passions. “The passions are to the moral,” he noted, “as movement is to the physical; it creates, annihilates, conserves, animates everything, and with out it all is dead: it is they likewise that vivify the moral world.”<sup>87</sup> From an epistemological perspective, Hume had already observed that “cold reason” required the corrective assistance of “passion.”<sup>88</sup> Again, passions remained unrestrained and were guided to expression through knowledge. Locke and

his successors traced emotions to the operations of the five senses, assumed a liaison between the emotional and the rational faculties, and put the passions to work alongside reason in both philosophy and social life.

Condillac's epistemology, psychological writings, and discussions of scientific method provided the point of departure for a host of attempts at educational, economic, social, and political reforms throughout the latter half of the eighteenth century. Helvétius was one of the most influential and original of those who developed the social implications of Condillac's ideas. Helvétius was a proponent of the physiological basis for the emotions, and hoped that educational reform sparked by scientific-minded *philosophes* would succeed in producing peaceful reform. In espousing an epistemological psychology to promote the notion that the mind alters with each new sensory perception and each change in its milieu, Helvétius averred that every person becomes no more than the product of his or her social conditioning. In contrast to Rousseau, who, in *Emile*, proposed a system of negative education designed to free children from their dependence upon others in order for them to learn by their own experience, Helvétius made the counterproposal, especially in his posthumously published work, *De l'homme*, for a system of rigorous instruction so as to enlighten pupils in the ways of social utility and spark their enthusiasm for the interest of society, the vehicle by which their self-love would be best realized. However, the reactions of ecclesiastical and governmental officials to the 1758 publication of his *De l'esprit* convinced him that progressive change was unrealizable without revolutionary change. Through this revised conviction of reform, Helvétius became one of the first thinkers to advocate the establishment of an egalitarian society by the overthrow of the existing authorities.

During this period of Helvétius's writings, 1758–1778, a group of economic thinkers who identified their intellectual orientation as "Physiocracy" espoused an empiricist sensitivity to connect nature's intentions to the individual. The utilitarian principles that Helvétius maintained as a theory of morals and legislation were extended by this group of thinkers to economics and to political "authority." Like Helvétius, the Physiocrats viewed pleasure and pain as the sources of human actions and enlightened self-interest as the rule for a well-regulated society. Unlike Helvétius, they allowed no such role to the legislator; his task remains easy, that is, to avoid interfering with the natural operations of economic laws. The essence of the Physiocratic system lay in their conceptions of the "natural order." The designation "Physiocracy," coined by Pierre-Samuel Dupont de Nemours in 1768, signifies "the rule of nature." What they preferred in a sovereign was the minimum of legislation with a maximum of authority. The liberal policy of limitation of authority and

control were by no means incompatible. They preferred to have a sovereign authority in the form of a hereditary monarchy, one that would at the same time seek to “secure obedience,” defend every legal right, and secure personal security. By dint of its origins in the collective will of the community, the sovereign “tutelary authority,” as Mercier de la Rivière characterized it, was comprised essentially by “the physical power to make itself obeyed.” However, it is by virtue of its function in realizing *l'évidence*, the self-evident truths of the “natural order,” that the “tutelary authority” becomes what Mercier de la Rivière came to designate “legal despotism.”<sup>89</sup> Although the positive disposal to despotism by a group of philosophers who espoused the doctrine of “laissez-faire” may appear paradoxical, despotism, from the perspective of the Physiocrats, assumed a peculiar connotation of its own. Through this perspective, despotism came to signify the rule of the benevolent despot, poised to promote the happiness of individuals within his or her domain, irrespective of their collective wills. The benevolent despot became nothing more than the sovereign of the “natural order.” Under such conditions, every “reasonable” individual perceived himself or herself obligated to obey the “natural order” and was cognizant that only through such compliance might the “truth” conceivably become known. This form of despotism was embodied in the person of the king or sovereign. The latter, however, became primarily a vehicle by which the transmissions of those higher laws were given to him or her. Mercier de la Rivière epitomized this perspective as follows:

Euclid is a genuine despot; and the geometrical truths which he has transmitted to us, are real despotic laws: their legal and personal despotism of the Legislator are only one, the one of the irresistible force of evidence: by this means, the despot Euclid reigns for centuries without contradiction over all enlightened peoples.<sup>90</sup>

In regard to the operative conceptual categories, the economic historian Georges Weulersse made the following observation:

There is hardly a word the Physiocrats have used with more attachment than the noun “evidence,” the adjective “evident,” and the adverb “evidently.” In effect, their whole moral philosophy, as all their politics, rest upon the notion of *evidence*. It is the evidence that assures the conciliation of the private interest with the general interest and its agreement with justice; it is evidence that guarantees the community interests between the sovereign and the nation; it is evidence that allows the obedience and cooperation of man to the natural order.<sup>91</sup>

“Evidence, says one of our most celebrated Moderns,” Mercier de la Rivière observed, “is a clear and distinct discernment of sentiments which we have, and of all the perceptions that depend on them.” The “Modern,” to whom Mercier de la Rivière refers and identifies as “the creative genius that I

have just cited” appears to be Descartes.<sup>92</sup> The article “Evidence” in the *Encyclopédie* was one of François Quesnay’s first contributions to the enterprise. The word “evidence” for him “signifies a certainty so clear and so manifest by itself that the mind cannot refuse it.” As a manifestation of this certitude, “Evidence necessarily results from the intimate observation of our own sensations.... These sensations are received through the track of senses, which is the unique source of our natural knowledge and the unique principle of the evidence of true reality.”<sup>93</sup> Through the notion of evidence, these thinkers maintained the view of a natural economic order that should be inviolable by government and, to this extent, shared with the general principles of economic liberal thought an overall faith in the beneficence of *laissez-faire*.

The operative category, “natural order,” was understood by the Physiocrats as the order that the “Author of Nature” has ordained for the happiness of humanity. It comprises the providential order, the understanding of which becomes our paramount duty; the comportment of our lives in conformity with it constitutes our next obligation. The “natural order,” then, consisted more of a principle from within the individual than a result of the observation of external facts. As a consequence, the individual seeks not only to possess knowledge of the “natural order,” but also to bring everyday life into conformity with this knowledge. The interpenetration of knowledge and action produced practical results that disclosed the creative powers of the “natural order.” These practical interactions culminated in three important functions of the sovereign: protection, administration, and education. The principle of the guiding concept of the “natural order” discloses the transition of seventeenth-century theories of natural law to eighteenth-century natural rights principles of political legitimacy. The two theories traversed from the orderly, security state of seventeenth-century natural law to the active, reform-minded, welfare state of late eighteenth-century political and social thought. The transition entailed the move from political authority based on the “safety principle” to one on the “welfare principle.” This shift to promote human welfare by several sovereign authorities very often was identified with the emphasis on the principle of earthly happiness, measured by maximal pleasure and minimal pain and the right to property, during the second half of the eighteenth century. Mercier de la Rivière, one of several Physiocrats who espoused the principle, expressed this issue in the following manner:

Men, in joining together in society, had no other object than to institute amongst themselves the rights of common and private properties, to the aid of which they were able to procure the entire sum of happiness that humanity can allow, all the enjoyments which it administers openly to us.... It became necessary to institute a tutelary authority, in the protection of which the social body found the assistance and guarantee that they would desire....

As soon as the multiplication of men's progress compel them to employ their ingenuity to multiply their subsistence, the need they have in culture, the strength of instituting among themselves landed property that should in this manner, from a necessity and in absolute justice...thus the conventions that establish this security are of a necessity and of an absolute justice...one must institute absolutely a tutelary authority; consequently, that from one side the protection which this authority ought to reconcile them, and from the other side obedience to the orders of this very authority are of a necessity, and of an absolute justice ... This balance, of obligations and of reciprocal and proportional rights, establishes one over the other find itself to be the same within the obligations and rights of the tutelary authority...one sees that this authority is the first link of the political body...that this authority holds the happiness of men in his hands.<sup>94</sup>

The Physiocrats posited ambiguous theories of “legal” or “enlightened” despotism in signaling the combination of security and comfort under human welfare. In identifying this interrelationship, they distinguished between the sovereign's legitimate authority and the additional power he or she possessed such that the sovereign directed individuals to the realization of political ends that only they could realize and that the tutelary authority could not compel. From this perspective, Quesnay, the founder of this group of political economists, traced the origins of social life to primitive people's “involuntary sensibility to physical pleasure and pain,” which motivated them to provide for their own subsistence. The “natural order,” in this sense, assumed the conception of a state of nature uncorrupted by “civilization” and discernible through the recall of its origins. To assure the “peaceful possession of the fruits of their labors,” they needed “to live in society.” By this process, nature became “the first teacher of social man.” It was nature who

wanted the reunion of men in society; it was she who dictated the essential conditions of this reunion; it was she finally who makes sensible to them the necessity of society, and that of the conditions to which they must submit in order for society to form and perpetuate itself.

From another perspective, the “natural order” may be conceived to connote that human societies are subject to natural laws such as they govern the physical world or exercise an influence upon organic life:

Men reunited in society ought, then, to be subjected to natural laws and to positive laws. Natural laws are either physical or moral laws.

By physical law, one understands here, the regulated course of the entire physical event of the natural order, evidently, the most advantageous to the human race.

By moral law, one understands here the rule of all human action of the moral order which conforms to the physical order evidently, the most advantageous to the human race.

These laws form together what we call natural law. ... The positive laws are authentic regulations established by a sovereign authority, in order to stabilize the order of the administration, of the government, in order to secure the defense of society, to observe regularly the natural laws of society, to reform or to maintain the customs and usages introduced in the nation, to regulate the particular laws of subjects relative to their different conditions, to determine the positive order

in the uncertain cases reduced to the probabilities of opinion or of conventions, to establish the decisions of distributive justice. But the first positive law, the most fundamental law of all the other positive laws, is the institution of public and private instruction of the laws of the natural order, which is the sovereign rule of all human legislation and of all civil, political, economic and social conduct.

But enlightened reason, guides, and attains to the point of knowing with evidence the working course of natural laws, becomes the necessary rule of the best possible government, where the observation of these sovereign laws will multiply abundantly the necessary wealth to the subsistence of men and to maintain the tutelary authority, which guarantees protection, to men reunited in society, the ownership of their wealth and the security of their person.

Therefore, it is evident that the natural law of each man extends to reason by which one attaches to it the observation of the best possible laws that constitute the most advantageous order to men reunited in society.<sup>95</sup>

In recognizing these natural precepts, the preservation of the “natural order” and the protection of its foundation—private property—against the onslaught of ignorant and sacrilegious individuals become the first and, therefore, most important obligation of the sovereign. Dupont de Nemours observed,

As kings and governors, you will find how easy it is to exercise your sacred functions, which simply consist in not interfering with the good that is already being done, and in punishing those few persons who occasionally attacked private property.

For, “no order of any kind is possible in society unless the right of possession is guaranteed to the members of that society by the force of a sovereign authority.”<sup>96</sup>

For Mercier de la Rivière, the self-evident truths of legal despotism were founded not so much on the authority of positive laws themselves as on the authority of the reason behind the laws. Nicolas Baudeau separated “authority” from what he designated “superior force,” categorizing the former as “the capacity to secure the best possible execution of the natural law of justice and the natural order of universal beneficence.” The sovereign reinforces his or her authority, in this regard, by encouraging individuals to pursue and to “study the secrets and fecundity of nature.” Thus, for Baudeau, the “public authority” of the sovereign ought to be divided into three main functions: “education, protection and administration.” Instruction, based on the “utility principle,” then, becomes the first duty upon which the Physiocrats lay stress. “Universal education,” Baudeau stated, “is the first, true, social tie.” This “first education, uniform in its universality, of which the purpose would be economic morals, is the foundation of every orderly State.” Quesnay underscored the importance of instruction for discerning the “natural order” and the means by which one becomes cognizant of it. Moreover, one of the most important guarantees against personal despotism consists in general instruction and an educated public opinion. For, if public opinion is to lead,

Quesnay reasoned, it should become enlightened. For DuPont de Nemours, Badaeu, and Quesnay, only the sovereign “tutelary authority” who has been “enlightened by the flame of reason ... and knowledgeable through reason” would be able to teach and enforce the natural laws that regulated the natural rights of individuals in conformity with the natural order of physical entities because both the individual and the society constituted parts of the situation to be regulated. Under these conditions, then, only the “tutelary authority” or “tutelary sovereign” administers natural laws in a manner that at once “expands rather than restricts the individual’s use of their natural right” and guides its exercise in accordance with the “rule” constituting the beneficent “physical and moral order of nature.”<sup>97</sup>

For Quesnay and his disciples, the economy, like the individual human, was a body, and exchange was the means by which wealth, produced originally from the soil, circulated naturally through it. Quesnay’s analogy of the economic process to the circulation of blood provided to individuals by nature was simply a literal reference to a natural science that was generally deemed applicable to society. The *Tableau économique* (1758), a mathematical model of circulation of money in an economy, was among the physiocrats’ most important technical developments.<sup>98</sup> In this connection, economics was constructed as the form of human activity closest to nature. Physical evidence becomes manifest in the organic mechanism of the economy.

Rousseau was friendly with the Victor de Riquetti, Marquis de Mirabeau, one of the influential members of the Physiocrats, but never became a member of the school. The Marquis de Mirabeau, father of the prominent orator of the French Revolution, made unsuccessful attempts to secure his allegiance. The failure of these efforts did not hinder the continuous correspondence between the two friends. In one of these letters, Rousseau proffered a response to the Physiocratic doctrine that there was a single natural system, the observation of which would solve all social problems. To Mirabeau he wrote

It seems to me that compelling evidence can never be found in natural and political laws, unless in considering them through abstraction. In a particular government composed of so many diverse elements, this evidence necessarily disappears. For the science of government is solely a science of combinations, of applications and of exceptions, according to the time, the place, and the circumstances. The public can never perceive with certainty the relations and workings of all that. ... But let us suppose all this theory of natural laws always perfectly certain, even in their application, and of a clarity to which the eyes adjust; how can the *philosophers* who know the human heart assign to this evidence so much authority upon the actions of men; how can they be ignorant that each one guides himself very rarely by the light of evidence and very frequently by their passions? ... Gentlemen, allow me to say to you; you give too much force to your calculations, and not enough to the leaning of the human heart, and to the workings of the passions. Your system is very good for the men of Utopia; for the children of Adam, it is worth nothing.<sup>99</sup>

The “children of Adam,” the “father,” as it were, of humankind, listen to the “celestial voice” of nature. In his article “Moral and Political Economy” in the *Encyclopédie*, Rousseau’s introductory remarks pointed to an analogous relationship between the family and the state and the treatment of the family as one of the natural bases of the state. A political society constitutes a “moral being,” emanating from the “true bond” that connects individuals. Rousseau’s conceptions of the “common self” and the “general will” were central to the article, and, accordingly, conveyed the need for public education as a moral and social discipline. Education in this broader sense entailed the “connection between the family and the state,” in which “the duties of the father are dictated to him by natural sentiments.” For, “the voice of nature” constituted “the best counsel that a good father ought to listen to in order to fulfill his duties well.” Through this relationship, political society provides public instruction and guarantees personal freedom:

The political body is therefore also a moral being which has one will; and this general will, which always tends to the conservation and to the welfare of each and every part, and which is the source of laws, is for all the members of the state with regard to them and to it, the rule of the just and of the unjust; truth which, is to say it in passing, shows how many meanings so many writers have treated of stealing the subtlety prescribed to the children of Lacedaemon [Sparta], to gain their frugal meal, as if everything which arranges the law could not be legitimate. *See the word Law*, the source of this great and luminous principle, from which this article develops. ...

These wonders are the work of the law. It is to the law alone that men owe justice and liberty. It is this salutary organ of the will of all, which reestablishes within the law natural equality between men. It is this celestial voice that dictates to each citizen the precepts of public reason, and teaches him to act according to the maxims of his own judgment, and [dictates to each] not to be at variance with himself. Also it is this voice alone that the chiefs ought to make speak when they govern; because as soon as independently of laws, a man seeks to subject another to his private will, he leaves immediately the civil state, and goes opposite it [the civil state], in the pure state of nature where authority is never prescribed save by necessity.<sup>100</sup>

The laws of political society, then, become the medium through which all individual citizens come to apprehend the proper rules of human conduct. The moral implications of sensational psychology were invoked persistently during the Revolutionary debate over public instruction and thereby became conspicuously political. One theorist of civic education, speaking before the Committee of Public Instruction, made the following proclamation: “It is by way of the senses that the virtues enter the heart ... [and] vices enter by the same door.” Another suggested that moralists search for the source of social ills in the physical sensation that first gave rise to harmful ideas. This person posited that “physics [should] always be the guide of morality” and demanded, “Let a course of experimental physics ... serve as an introduction to moral education.”<sup>101</sup> Sensory experience, as the origins of ideas, had become,

for several radical Republicans, a political doctrine of the source of good citizens. Through an egalitarian spirit, the most radical legislators advocated the establishment of primary education for the practical preparation of future citizens. On June 18, Maximilien Robespierre persuaded the Convention, which was in the process of preparing a new republican constitution, to include *une instruction commune* among the rights guaranteed to all citizens. A month later, 13 July 1793, he informed the Convention of the proposal prepared by Louis Michel Lepeletier de Saint-Fargeau, and on the 29 July, on behalf of the Committee on Public Instruction, he proposed its adoption. The plan instituted a state monopoly. The Republic would take charge of primary schools: girls between the ages of five and eleven, boys between five and twelve. However, the school was placed under the direction of a council of fathers of families, which made it a sort of cooperative. "Fathers, mothers or guardians," the procedure mandated, "who neglect to fulfill this duty will lose their rights of citizenship and be subjected to a double rate of direct taxation for as long as they withhold the child from *education commune*."<sup>102</sup> The pupils were to be inculcated far less with intellectual learning than with moral and professional principles. The influence of Rousseau's *Emile* becomes apparent. Lepeletier de Saint-Fargeau approved the higher levels of learning envisioned by Condorcet, but he failed to mention the nature of their organization. Lepeletier's plan, like Condorcet's, was more meritocratic and *sélectionniste* than egalitarian. In making the usual distinction between education and instruction, he observed that instruction, though offered to all, would "become the exclusive possession of a small number of members of society because of differences in occupations and talents," but that education must be "common to all and universally beneficial."<sup>103</sup>

The Convention, whose members proved to be quite practical, in the decree of 29 Frimaire, Year II (19 December 1793), rejected the plans of both Lepeletier and Condorcet and became concerned solely with "primary schools." The ambiguities inherent in the concept "common education" or "education in common" led to different understandings to different members. Accordingly, the Committee extended the idea to include younger children at the primary level and to apply to all such children "a public instruction common to all citizens, and free for those parts of instruction indispensable for all men" was mandated for both boys and girls. Education was to be free, and no technical probation was imposed on the schoolmasters in proportion to the number of pupils. The Committee of Public Safety was to publish the books that the schoolmasters would have to utilize for teaching, and in these books the Declaration of the Rights of Man was to receive prime importance. This form of education, which was strictly controlled by the state yet

decentralized, was concomitant with the *sans-culottes* perception of social and political reality.<sup>104</sup> The revolutionary legislators devoted a great deal of thought to education, but lack of finances and qualified instructors limited their projects. Despite the setback in instituting the “common education” projects, the French reading public, particularly in Paris, was widespread. In the waning years of the eighteenth century, Louis Sébastien Mercier recounts in his *Tableau de Paris*,

Such is my motto: Paris is the country of a man of letters, his only country. Why, one will ask? First, it is because he finds himself at the center of all types of education, libraries, lectures, [and] enlightened people; at each step he can educate and enjoy himself; one is worth the other. ...

People certainly read ten times more in Paris than one read one hundred years ago; if one considers the multitude of small bookshops scattered in every place, that are entrenched in booths at street corners, and sometimes in open-air stalls, that resell old books or some new brochures that appear without interruption. ...

One sees groups [of readers] who remain around the counter like [they were] magnets; they inconvenience the merchant, who, to keep them standing, has removed all the chairs; but they remain for more hours perusing books, occupying themselves leafing through brochures and deciding in advance on their merit and fate, after having read only a few lines.<sup>105</sup>

As a consequence of theories of knowledge, exhortations and projects on behalf of educational reform. and the dissemination of knowledge, Daniel Roche, the cultural historian, remarked:

Many businesses developed to meet the needs of the exploding market: lending libraries charged fees and cut books into parts in order to rent them to more readers simultaneously; reading rooms offered a variety of fare and sold annual subscriptions for the right to consult newspapers on the premises. “The hands of the multitude are sullyng the great works”: clearly the general cultural level had risen.<sup>106</sup>

As noted earlier, Helvétius had posited that “education can do everything.” In the context of the passages cited here, although education may have failed to achieve everything toward which eighteenth-century theorists aspired, evidently it succeeded in accomplishing something toward the improvement of humanity.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Hébert urged the National Convention in 1793 to hasten and “to provide education for the sans-culottes, in order to free them from the tyranny of the legal profession and men with the gift of gab.” Quoted in Albert Sobul, *The Sans-Culottes: The Popular Movement and Revolutionary Government, 1793–1794*, trans. Remy Inglis Hall (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980) p. 88.

<sup>2</sup> Catharine Macaulay made this statement concerning her education in the introduction to Vol. 1 of her *The History of England From the Accession of James I to the Elevation of the House of Hanover*, 7 vols. (London: Mall and W. Johnston, 1766), Vol. 1, p. v.

<sup>2a</sup> Jean Bodin, *Methods for the Easy Comprehension of History*, trans. Beatrice Reynolds (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945); Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (New York: Penguin Books, 1968); John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* (Cambridge: University Press, 1960); Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Social Contract*, ed. Ernest Barker (London: Oxford University Press, 1948).

<sup>2b</sup> Claude-Adrien Helvétius, *De l'Esprit*, (Paris: Fayard, 1988), pp. 15–22, 50, 337; Helvétius, *De l'Homme*, 2 vols. (Paris: Fayard, 1989), Vol. 1, pp. 171–179; Vol. 2, pp. 950–952; Paul-Henri Thiry Baron d'Holbach *La Morale Universelle ou les Devoirs de l'Homme Fondés sur sa Nature*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1970), Vol. I, pp. 6–10.

<sup>3</sup> Denis Diderot *Oeuvres Complètes*, ed. Roger Lewinter 20 vols. (Paris: Le Club Français, 1970), 11 Novembre 1760, Vol. 4 p. 981. Sensibility signified both physical and moral sensitivity; Diderot counseled Madame Sophie Volland concerning the rearing of her young niece, stating that moral sentiments emerged from sensibility after having exposed the “soul” to the vivid impressions of a “delicate world.”

<sup>4</sup> Jean-Roland d'Alembert, *Eléments de Philosophie*, in *Oeuvres Complètes de D'Alembert*, 5 vols. (Paris: A. Berlin, 1821), Vol. I, p. 121; Victor Cousin, *Instruction Publique*, in *Oeuvres de M. Victor Cousin*, 3 vols. (Paris: Pagnerre, 1850), Vol. I, pp. 2–22.

<sup>5</sup> Francis Bacon, *The Works of Francis Bacon*, 10 vols. (London: C. and J. Rivington, 1819), Vol. 8, p. 131; *New Organon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1889), Part II, XCV.

<sup>6</sup> René Descartes, *Les Principes de la Philosophie*, in *Oeuvres de Descartes*, 4th ed., 11 vols. (Paris: Leopold Cerf, 1897–1909), second part, Vol. 9, pp. 83–84.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, *Discours de la Méthode*, in *Oeuvres de Descartes*, 4th ed., 11 vols. (Paris: Leopold Cerf, 1897–1909). Vol. 6, pp. 1–2.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, *Rules for Direction of the Mind (Regulae ad Directionem Ingenii)*, Rule 4, in *Oeuvres de Descartes*, 4th ed., 11 vols. (Paris: Leopold Cerf, 1897–1909), Vol. 10, pp. 371–372.

<sup>9</sup> Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, trans. Fritz C. A. Koelln and James P. Pettegrove (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), pp. 3–36.

<sup>10</sup> Francis Bacon, “The Great Renewal,” in *The New Organon*, ed. Lisa Jardine and Michael Silverthorne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) p. 18; Helvétius, *De l'Esprit*, pp. 91–92; Etienne Bonnot de Condillac, *Traité Des Systèmes* (Paris: Fayard, 1991), pp. 55–66.

<sup>11</sup> Helvétius, *De l'Homme*, Vol. 2, p. 879.

<sup>12</sup> Helvétius, *De l'Esprit*, p. 21.

<sup>13</sup> John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Roger Woolhouse (London: Penguin, 1997), Book II, Chapter 1, Paragraph 2, p. 109.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, Book II, Chapter 11, Paragraph 17, p. 158.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, Book II, Chapter 1, Paragraph 5, p. 110.

<sup>16</sup> Condillac, *Traité Des Sensations* (Paris: Fayard, 1984), p. 285.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 217.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 273–274.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 238.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 403.

<sup>21</sup> Condillac, *Oeuvres Philosophique de Condillac*, ed. Georges Le Roy, 3 vols. (Paris: Presses Universitaires 1947), Volume II, p. 403.

<sup>22</sup> Charles Pinot-Duclos, *Considérations sur les Moeurs de ce siècle*, ed. F. C. Green (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939), p. 20.

<sup>23</sup> Condillac, *Traité des Systèmes*, pp. 4–8.

<sup>24</sup> Helvétius, *De l'Esprit*, pp. 452–453.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 250. Nietzsche invited a comparison between this emphasis in Helvétius's philosophy and his own concept of "the will to power": "And Helvétius demonstrates to us that men strive after power so as to possess the enjoyments available to the powerful: he understands this striving for power as will to enjoyment! as hedonism!" Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will To Power*, ed. & trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), p. 397.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 233.

<sup>27</sup> Helvétius, *De l'Esprit*, p. 115, Preface, p. 9; Helvétius, *De l'Homme*, Vol. 1, p. 45; Vol. 2, pp. 921–924. The influence that Helvétius exerted on Bentham can be discerned in the opening paragraphs of the latter's *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1876), pp. 1–3. Compare: "Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure*. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do.... They govern us in all we say, in all we think: every effort we can make to throw off our subjection, will serve but to demonstrate and confirm it.... The *principle of utility* recognizes this subjection..." *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>28</sup> Helvétius, *De l'Esprit*, pp. 562–563.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 230.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 391, 400.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 219, 211.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 555–559.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 203, 163–164.

<sup>34</sup> Helvétius, *De l'Homme*, Vol. 1, pp. 140–141.

<sup>35</sup> Helvétius, *De l'Esprit*, p. 233.

<sup>36</sup> Helvétius, *De l'Homme*, Vol. 1, p. 45.

<sup>37</sup> Helvétius, *De l'Esprit*, pp. 417–418.

<sup>38</sup> The page preceding the Preface, Helvétius made the following dedication: "TO HER IMPERIAL MAJESTY VERY HIGH AND VERY AUGUST PRINCESS CATHERINE II, EMPRESS OF ALL RUSSIA, PROTECTRESS OF THE ARTS AND SCIENCES; DESERVING BY HER MIND TO JUDGE ANCIENT NATIONS AS SHE IS DESERVING TO GOVERN HER OWN," in Helvétius, *De l'Homme*. Louis Chevalier de Jaucourt, "Despotisme," in *L'Encyclopédie ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, ed. D. Diderot and J. d'Alembert, 17 vols. (Paris: Chez Briasson, David, Le Breton, Durand, 1751–1765). Reprinted in 5 vols. (New York: Readex Microprint Corporation, 1969), Vol. 3, pp. 886–889. Leonard Krieger, *An Essay on the Theory of Enlightened Despotism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975); Geoffrey Bruun, *The Enlightened Despots* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967); Elie Halevy, *The Growth of Philosophical Radicalism*, trans. Mary Morris (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960); Charles Gide and Charles Rist, *A History of Economic Doctrines* trans. R. Richards (Boston: D. C. Heath, 1944); Albion S. Small, *The Cameralists* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1909); Derek Beales, *Joseph II: In the Shadow of Maria Theresa, 1741–1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

<sup>39</sup> D'Alembert, "Discours préliminaire," in *L'Encyclopédie*, Vol. I, p. 1.

<sup>40</sup> Diderot, "Encyclopédie," in *L'Encyclopédie*, Vol. 4, p. 635a.

<sup>41</sup> D'Alembert, "Expérimentale," in *L'Encyclopédie*, Vol. 4, p. 299b.

<sup>42</sup> D'Alembert, "Discours préliminaire," in *L'Encyclopédie*, Vol. I, p. xxvi.

<sup>43</sup> Louis XVI had administrators within his government who perceived the future of the monarchy as depending on the ability of "enlightened despotism" to enact necessary reforms. In the princely curriculum of the young Louis, according to Daniel Roche, "we see a reflection of the century's interest in educational reform. Along with history, the key discipline for learning the art of

government, concrete geography, from the theoretical treatise to the practical exercise, taught mastery of space in a manner that combined serious study with amusement, and it was in space, after all, that political forces operated and military forces deployed. Geography also instilled curiosity about the world.” D. Roche, *France in the Enlightenment*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), p. 20.

<sup>44</sup> Quoted in Georges Lefebvre, *The French Revolution: From its Origins to 1799*, 2 vols., trans Elizabeth Moss Evanson, John Hall Stewart, and James Friguglietti (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), Vol. 2, pp. 160–161.

<sup>45</sup> Helvétius, *De l'Esprit*, pp. 539–541.

<sup>46</sup> Charles-Maurice Tallyrand-Périgord, *Rapport sur l'Instruction publique* (September 1791), in Bronislaw Baczo, *Une Education pour la Democratie: Textes et Projets de l'Epoque Révolutionnaire* (Geneva: Droz, 2000), pp. 111, 113; Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas Caritat de Condorcet, *Rapport et projet de decret sur l'organisation générale de l'instruction publique Présentés à l'Assemblée nationale, au nom du Comité d'Instruction Publique, les 20 et 21 avril 1792*, in Baczo, *Une Education pour la Democratie*, pp. 181–182. Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (New York: Penguin Books, 1975), pp. 85–89, 305–306.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 210.

<sup>48</sup> Catharine Macaulay, *Letters on Education* (New York: Garland, 1974; reprinted from 1790 London edition), pp. 201–204.

<sup>49</sup> Helvétius, *De l'Homme*, Vol. 2, pp. 952.

<sup>50</sup> Condorcet, *Oeuvres de Condorcet*, ed. A. Condorcet O'Connor and M. F. Argo, 12 vols. (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1847–1849), Vol. 10, p. 123. Condorcet, “Rapport Sur L'Instruction Publique,” in *Condorcet: Ecrits sur l'instruction publique*, 2 vols. (Paris: Les Classiques de la République, 1883), Vol. 2, pp. 81–82.

<sup>51</sup> Albert Soboul, *The French Revolution, 1787–1799* (New York: Vintage Books), p. 602.

<sup>52</sup> Rabaut St-Etienne's National Educational Project, in *Procès-Verbaux du Comité d'Instruction Publique de la Convention Nationale*, annotated by M. J. Guillaume, 7 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1891), Vol. 1, pp. 232–233; *Ecrits sur l'instruction publique*, Vol. 2, pp. 232–233.

<sup>53</sup> *Procès-Verbaux*, Vol. 2, pp. 233, 278; R. R. Palmer, *The Improvement of Humanity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), pp. 121–139; Roger Chartier, Dominique Julia, and Marie-Madeleine Compère, *L'Education en France du XVIème au XVIIIème Siècle* (Paris: Societé d'Editions d'Enseignement Supérieur, 1976), pp. 291–297. See David Bien on the development of a “mathematical culture” in *Ecole Militaire* as a means to instill mental and comportment discipline, “Military Education in 18th Century France; Technical and Non-Technical Determinants,” in *Science, Technology and Warfare, The Proceedings of the Third Military History Symposium*, ed. Monte D. Wright and Lawrence J. Paszek (Washington, DC: United States Air Force Academy, 1971), pp. 54–55. Also see the article by Diderot's nephew, Paris de Meyzieu, “Ecole Militaire,” in *L'Encyclopédie*, Vol. 4, pp. 307a–313b; and Ken Adler, “French Engineers Become Professionals or, How Meritocracy Made Knowledge Objective,” in *The Sciences in Enlightenment Europe*, ed. William Clark, Jan Golinski, and Simon Shaffer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), pp. 94–125.

<sup>54</sup> *Procès-Verbaux*, Vol. 2, p. 278; Lefebvre, *The French Revolution*, Vol. 2, pp. 289–291.

<sup>55</sup> John Lough, *The Philosophes and Post-Revolutionary France* (London: Clarendon Press, 1982), p. 266; Dominique Julia, *Les trios couleurs du tableau noir: La Révolution* (Paris: 1981), p. 309; Palmer, *The Improvement of Humanity*, pp. 231–236; Roger Hahn, *The Anatomy of a Scientific Institution: The Paris Academy of Sciences, 1666–1803* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), pp. 205, 296.

<sup>56</sup> Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, trans. Louis Wirth and Edward Shils (New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1936), p. 71.

- <sup>57</sup> Antoine-Louis-Claude Destutt de Tracy, *Éléments d'Idéologie*, 2 vols. (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1976), Vol. 1, pp. 4–5, n., 340–349.
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.* Vol. 1, pp. 116–117, 308–311; Vol. 2, pp. 8–20.
- <sup>59</sup> François Picavet, *Les Idéologues: Essai Sur l'Histoire des Idées et des Theories Scientifiques, Philosophique, Religieuses, etc. En France Depuis 1789* (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1891), pp. 205–398; Pierre-Jean-Georges Cabanis, *Rapports du physique et du moral de l'homme*, 3rd ed., 2 vols. (Paris: Caille et Ravier, 1815), Vol. 1, p. 72; Martin S. Staum, *Cabanis: Enlightenment and Medical Philosophy in the French Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), pp. 166–265; Jessica Riskin, *Science in the Age of Sensibility: Sentimental Empiricists of the French Enlightenment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp. 4, 25. For a systematic compilation of the articles and reviews of important writings produced by the collaborators of *La Décade*, see Josiane-Boulad-Ayoub, *La Décade Philosophique Comme Système, 1794–1807*, 7 vols. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de Rennes 2003). For King George III, see J. H. Plumb, *England in the Eighteenth Century, 1714–1815* (London: Penguin Books, 1959, p. 192.
- <sup>60</sup> Lefebvre, *The French Revolution*, Vol. 2, p. 253.
- <sup>61</sup> Charles Maurice Tallyrand-Périgord, “Entrevue d’Erfurt, 1808,” in *Mémoires du Prince de Tallyrand*, ed. Paul Leon, 7 vols. (Paris: Henri Javal, 1953), Vol. 1, p. 262.
- <sup>62</sup> Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, p. 72.
- <sup>63</sup> Destutt de Tracy, *Éléments d'Idéologie*, 1:399.
- <sup>64</sup> Marie-Jean Antoine-Nicolas, Condorcet, *Esquisse d'un Tableau Historique des Progrès de l'Esprit Humain* (Paris: Bovin, 1993), pp. 227–228.
- <sup>65</sup> Martin S. Staum, *Cabanis: Enlightenment and Medical Philosophy in the French Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), pp. 292–295; Hahn, *The Anatomy of a Scientific Institution*, pp. 294–312; Emmet Kennedy, *A Philosopher in the Age of Revolution: Destutt De Tracy and the Origins of “Ideology”* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1978), pp. 84–111.
- <sup>66</sup> Elie Halévy, *The Growth of Philosophical Radicalism*, trans. Mary Morris (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), p. 6. In his *Autobiography*, John Stuart Mill states that he derived the word “Utilitarian” from the novel by John Galt, *Annals of the Parish* (1821). The word “Utility,” which was in common currency throughout the second half of the eighteenth century, may be traced back to Hume. See Mill, *Autobiography*, p. 56; David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* (New York: Penguin Books, 1969), pp. 625–678.
- <sup>67</sup> Helvétius, *De l'Esprit*, pp. 163–164.
- <sup>68</sup> Halévy, *The Growth of Philosophical Radicalism*, p. 19.
- <sup>69</sup> Helvétius, *De l'Esprit*, p. 9; 204.
- <sup>70</sup> John Bowring, *The Works Jeremy Bentham*, 10 vols. (Edinburgh: Simpkin Marshall and Company, 1843), Vol. 8, pp. 395–397; for reference to Dr. Bell’s account of “the charity schools at Madras,” see Vol. 8, p. 427, note; Mill, *Autobiography*, pp. 70–71; Halévy, *The Growth of Philosophical Radicalism*, p. 251.
- <sup>71</sup> James Mill, *Political Essays: On Government, Jurisprudence Liberty of the Press, Prison and Prison Discipline, Colonies and Law of Nations, Education* (Supplement to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1825), p. 3.
- <sup>72</sup> Halévy, *The Growth of Philosophical Radicalism*, p. 282.
- <sup>73</sup> Mill, *Autobiography*, pp. 6–7.
- <sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.
- <sup>75</sup> James Mill, *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind*, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1878), Vol. 2, pp. 176–326; “Education,” p. 5.
- <sup>76</sup> Mill, *Autobiography*, pp. 76, 77–92.

- <sup>77</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *First and Second Discourses*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964), p. 39.
- <sup>78</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile*, trans. Barbara Foxley, intro. P. D. Jimack (London: Everyman, 1992), p. 68.
- <sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- <sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- <sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 97–98, 176–177, 440.
- <sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 393.
- <sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 385.
- <sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 7–8, 304, 489.
- <sup>85</sup> Helvétius, *De l'Esprit*, pp. 2–7, 41, 324, 368; Helvétius, *De l'Homme*, Vol. 1, pp. 123–133; Vol. 2, p. 60.
- <sup>86</sup> Rousseau, *Emile*, p. 501.
- <sup>87</sup> Helvétius, *De l'Esprit*, p. 297.
- <sup>88</sup> Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, pp. 460–462, 509.
- <sup>89</sup> *Physiocrates: Quesnay, Dupont de Nemours, Mercier de la Rivière, L'Abbé Baudeau, LeTrosne*, 2 vols., ed. & intro. M. Eugene Daire (Paris: Librairie de Guillaumin, 1846), Vol. 1, pp. 52–53, 341–351; Vol. 2, pp. 127ff, 202, 307, 575–577, 610–619, 678.
- <sup>90</sup> Pierre-Paul-François-Joachim-Henri Mercier de la Rivière, *L'Ordre Naturel et Essentiel des Sociétés Politiques* (Paris: Chez Desaint, 1767), p. 185.
- <sup>91</sup> Georges Weulersse, *Le Mouvement Physiocratique en France (de 1756–1770)*, 2 vols. (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1910), Vol. 2, p. 120.
- <sup>92</sup> Mercier de la Rivière, *L'Ordre Naturel*, pp. 58, 59. Compare Descartes's conception of "clear and distinct perception" in his second Meditation, in *Meditationes De Prima Philosophia*, in *Œuvres de Descartes*, Vol. 7, pp. 33–34.
- <sup>93</sup> François Quesnay, "Evidence," in *Encyclopédie*, Vol. 4, pp. 146a–157b; also in François Quesnay, *Œuvres Economiques et Philosophiques*, ed. & intro. Auguste Oncken (New York: Burt Franklin, 1969), pp. 764, 765, 780.
- <sup>94</sup> Mercier de la Rivière, *L'Ordre Naturel*, pp. iv, 20, 21, 24.
- <sup>95</sup> Quesnay, *Œuvres Economiques*, pp. 374–375, 377.
- <sup>96</sup> Dupont de Nemours, *Physiocrats*, Vol. 1, p. 351.
- <sup>97</sup> Mercier de la Rivière, *L'Ordre Naturel*, pp. 130–157; Quesnay, *Œuvres Economiques*, pp. 329–332, 359–377; Nicolas Baudeau, *Première Introduction a la Philosophie Economique, ou Analyse des Etats Polices*, in *Collection des Economistes et des Reformateurs Sociaux de la France*, 3 vols., ed. A. Buboïs (Paris: Librairie Paul Geuthner, 1910), Vol. 2, pp. 17–20; Baudeau, *Physiocrates*, Vol. 2, pp. 678, 800–801, 817.
- <sup>98</sup> Quesnay, *Œuvres Economiques*, pp. 661–665. Also see Gide and Rist, *A History of Economic Doctrines*, pp. 22–25.
- <sup>99</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Correspondance Complète de Rousseau*, 52 vols. (Oxford: The Voltaire Foundation, 1979), Vol. 33, pp. 239–240.
- <sup>100</sup> Rousseau, "Economie," in *L'Encyclopédie*, Vol. 4, pp. 338a, b, 339b.
- <sup>101</sup> Riskin, *Science in the Age of Sensibility*, pp. 257–258.
- <sup>102</sup> *Procès-Verbaux du Comité d'Instruction Publique*, Vol. 2, p. 163. Palmer, *The Improvement of Humanity*, p. 139.
- <sup>103</sup> Palmer, *The Improvement of Humanity*, pp. 138–139.
- <sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 140; *Procès-Verbaux du Comité d'Instruction Publique*, Vol. 2, pp. 278, n. 2; 3: xliii, n. 3. Between June 1793 and the winter of 1794, the Parisian Sans-Culottes, a popular movement, contributed to the consolidation of power of the Jacobins and forced the Convention

to enact measures for the *menu peuple*. On their role in promoting public education, see Albert Sobul, *The Sans-Culottes* pp. 85–94.

<sup>105</sup> Louis Sébastien Mercier, *Tableau De Paris*, 2 vols., ed. Jean-Claude Bonnet (Paris: Mercure De France, 1994), Vol. 2, pp. 1315, 1425, 1427.

<sup>106</sup> Roche, *France in the Enlightenment*, p. 662.

SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE AND THE FOUNDATION  
OF EDUCATION  
*A Tagorean Approach*

There are unending controversies concerning the subject matter of spirituality. Some scholars say spirituality is purely the subject matter of religion, whereas others say spirituality is much wider than religion. It is obvious that religion in its true form must be understood in its spiritual aspect, but spirituality is not the monopoly of religion. In the broader sense, spirituality is an inner uplift for the individual as well as society. Besides religion, education is a way for attaining the spiritual experience and discipline that can human life and society. The Upanishadic form of spirituality stresses this fact and encourages people to acquire a higher category of knowledge to attain consciousness and perfection. It calls for transcending the finite ego and the self-boundary. People who are more ego conscious erect walls of difference related to caste, creed, race, and geography. But the total deliverance of humanity, the unity of man, the kingdom of God, and the highest good are present in the Upanishadic teachings, where knowledge is free, the mind is without fear, and the notion of each for all and all for each is deeply entangled with its nature.

Rabindranath Tagore, as a follower of the Upanishadic form of religion, believed in the Oneness of Reality (*ekam Brahma dvitiya nasti/ek me ba dvitiam*) as a spiritual foundation and goal of education that includes everything in its fold. He apprehended that this spirituality is a life spontaneously outflowing from the innermost spirit of the human soul, where the intensity of the overall benefit is implicitly associated. The Upanishadic precept "*atmanam vridhhi*" is an eternal spiritual message propagated also by Socrates in the phrase "*know thyself*" and by Muhammad as *ilm/marifah* in the Qur'an by the words "*rabby zidny ilman, by*" (O my Lord! Increase my knowledge) as an unshakeable spiritual message of education. Man in his phenomenal outlook can feel his unity with the entire universe. This is the foremost formula of realization of the spirituality that lies in the entire existence. The Upanishad asserts the unity between the outer and the inner faculties of human beings as "*ekam sat vipra bahudha vadanti*" (the one reality becomes many) as an invaluable message of unity for the whole of mankind that eliminates all discriminations.

Spiritual experiences can find their true road only when they open these hidden powers and support the lasting change and divinization of human life and nature. Man now lives for bread, satiation, and pleasure. He needs freshness and purity through spiritual awareness and higher consciousness so that he can see the light that can help to transform him into a divine personality. A person who is able inculcate divine attributes in himself works for all and not for himself only. In ancient times, religion had a prominent educational place in society, but at present some claim that with humanity as standard bearer of progress, spirituality is a futile endeavor. The notion of humanity is itself spiritual if utilized in the right sense; it can remove the narrowness and ignorance of mankind. Sometimes spirituality is substituted in the form of nationalism, especially in India; this is purely antagonistic to the nature of spirituality and increases distrust, disunity, and aggressiveness. Spirituality demands a complete removal of ignorance in achieving consciousness and breaks the narrow wall of the ego and converts it to an ego-free universalism.

Spirituality is a highly disciplined life; it aspires to the total nullification of impurities in the life of the human beings and helps people to acquire some sort of supernatural power by which they can emerge in an enlightened form that ultimately transforms them into a real and perfect man.

At this time, civilization is on the brink destruction even though man has acquired enormous control over natural and phenomenal objects. The unimaginable progress of material science and technology has undoubtedly added enjoyments in every sphere of life, but the mental qualities of man have yet to develop in the same order. So far as we are concerned, Indian spiritualism first understood these problems, related to the material prosperity that ultimately can lead toward complete destruction of human civilization. Hence, its slogan is "*jio aur jine do*", or "*live and let live the others.*" It advises the people of the globe to promote liberty, equality, fraternity, universal love, and justice, which would enliven or mitigate the evil properties of human beings. The European development of civilization, of science and technology, undoubtedly is an invaluable addition in the annals of mankind; however, it lacks many spiritual elements. It treats the human being as a machine by ignoring his true needs. Its mechanical regimentation of society is like a totalitarian regime that cannot allow a transition from necessity to freedom, where the choice, strength, fraternal approaches, capacities of the agent, and so on are overlooked. Unless we synthesize our mind, body, intellect, and soul we can never gain real peace and satisfaction. In this regard, Sri Aurobinda says, "nothing can be made real in spirit."<sup>1</sup>

The human being is mainly the composition of body, mind, and spirit, and every person is different from the others. Man as a spiritual being is

higher than merely rational man (in the Aristotelian sense). According to Sri Aurobinda, spirituality is related to spirit, not to the body, mind, and life. It is the fourth dimension of human being; body, mind, and life are the three dimensions only.<sup>2</sup>

Rabindranath Tagore was ever conscious of unity. India is a country with multiple religions, languages, beliefs, and cultures. Therefore, it is very difficult to maintain its integrity in preserving their respective identities. However, Tagore tried to unify them through education that not only strengthened national unity, but also extended towards human unity. He wrote

bharatvarsher ekmatra cesta dekhitechi prabheder madhye oikya sthapan kara, nana pathke eki lakshyer abhimukhin kariya deoya (The utmost endeavor of India is to establish unity in diversity and entangle various paths for the one goal.)<sup>3</sup>

ek ke visver madhye o nijer madhye anubhav kara. sei ek ke yicitrer madye sthapan kara, jnaner dhara aviskar kara, karmar dhara prathistita kara, premer dhara upalavdhi kara (Establish oneness in the universe and apprehend it within thyself and at the same time it needs to transplant that oneness within all varieties discovery of several paths path knowledge and its transplantation through action and also an apprehension of love for all.)<sup>4</sup>

Tagore greatest contribution lay in a deep spiritual understanding that was essentially anthropocentric and social. He uncovered dimensions of Indian spirituality that were inherent in Indian culture and civilization. He was not only a poet, but also a constructive social worker and philosopher who diagnosed the crisis of human civilization. Tagore believed that this crisis was due to the ambivalence about the real teachings and messages of unity in India, as he expressed in the term “*sabhyatar Samkai*,” or the crisis of civilization. Tagore held that the glorious tradition of India was neither biological nor linguistic in nature but taught a purely spiritual unity, with man as the center of this unity. He attained his insight from the utterances and teachings of ancient Indian sages and seers, the real builders of India’s common heritage. Hence, he tried to preserve this magnificent and magnanimous spiritual unity through the process of education, which he held to be the key to all developments, which can help to remove the ignorance, sorrows, and miseries of all people of the globe. Therefore, he maintained “*E abhaga deshe gnaner aloke ano*” (bring out the light of knowledge/education in this below-standard country), and “*mastak tulite dao ananta akashe, udar aloke majhe unmukta batase*” (give the right to raise the head towards infinite sky, in the unbounded light and in the unpolluted airs).<sup>5</sup>

How did Tagore acquire this idea of education? His father, Maharshi Devedranath Tagore, was a follower of the Brahma movement and Rabindarnath Tagore inherited this Brahma liberalism. He also very impressed by Raja Rammohan Roy, a pioneer of modern India as well as Bengal. Rammohan

sought to utilize the best intellectual traditions in the contemporary thinking of the East and the West and established a new school that is basically a new approach to Indian religion and cultural tradition.<sup>6</sup> The Tagore house at Jorasanko, Kolkata, was the center of the Brahma movement which was mainly based on the ideas and messages of the Upanishads, the core of Hindu Vedantic philosophy. Rabindranath Tagore grew up in this family in an egalitarian atmosphere, whose ideas of cultural unity and integrity of soul ultimately touched his heart. Tagore's father, Maharshi, developed the idea to establish schools a just like the *Brahmacarya Ashrama* of ancient Aryan brahmanical families, where pupils would learn Vedantic thought by staying with teachers (gurus). This may be considered as a germ of Tagore's educational policy. Later Rabindranath Tagore developed this idea and intended to found an educational institution where East and West would meet. According to him, education does not mean only the acquisition of bookish knowledge; it is an all-round development that can be achieved in a natural and spontaneous way and not within the four walls of a building. His educational center was under the open sky and beneath the trees, where students could take fresh air and the unlimited joy that enlarges the creative pursuit and develop the finite spirit through the knowledge of nature. In Tagore's education policy, the fraternity of faiths, the assimilation of cultures, and the cultivation of human values, fellow feeling, social service, sacrifice, love, tolerance, and so on become the main objectives. He sought to awaken the intelligentsia to proceed along the path of liberalism and rationalism. He said that nonviolence, love, and brotherhood are the eternal values of the Upanishads. In his poem "*Nirjharer Swapnabhanga*" ("Awakening of the Waterfall"), he proclaimed, "Let the crowd of the world rush in, greeting each other."

One of the main objectives of Tagore's education policy was to assimilate all of humanity. He felt that India never had any serious policy concerning the matter of education for her people like the West; only the religious teachers of India had taken on the responsibility for education as an obligatory religious duty (*vidya dana*). Tagore realized the importance of education. His idea of *Visva-Bharati* is not only a unique initiative for India to form real human beings, but it is also equally efficacious for the peoples of the entire globe. It is an open invitation to all so that all of mankind may be united. His aim can be summarized as "*yatre visvam Bhabatyeka nidam*" (where the world makes its home in a single nest).<sup>7</sup> His system of education was not mechanical but spiritual in nature. He was not very satisfied with Western educational policy:

ei videshi shiksha vidhi yena raikamar dviper mato, kamrata vesh ujjal kintu ye yoyan yoyan path caleche gadi chute taha andhakare lupta, shaharer ek dal lok man pela sambhram pela ar tarai

holo kirul enlightened arthat alokito ar baki deshtite lagilo purna grahan! (This foreign educational system is just like the lamp of the train's compartment; its compartments are enlightened but the path on which it is running is totally in darkness. Some citizens of the urban areas only obtain honor, sophistication in life and become enlightened (in this foreign educational policy) but the mass people of it is detached from this education system and they have drowned in the total darkness.)

Modern education, according to Tagore, is impersonal and mechanical and suffers from a lack of personal interaction between students and the teachers. More stress is laid on intellectual input and less on the moral, social, creative, and spiritual aspects of education. Finer emotions need to be tended and cultivated carefully, and there is an acute dearth of such sincere efforts.<sup>8</sup>

Tagore was not against English learning; his theory was mainly of an assimilating education, inculcating the best of world culture. Education must "study the mind of Man in its realization of different aspects of truth from diverse points of view."<sup>9</sup>

#### 1. AIM OF EDUCATION

According to Tagore, the aim of education is to realize oneself fully through union with all, to disentangle and dissolve the knots of difficulty within one's own personality through activity, to become pure and full of joy, find poise, and the consummation of one's aspiration in all good with the knowledge of Reality. The aim of education must be spiritual and value oriented. The main objective of education is to achieve freedom, love, and good in life through the process of self-adjustment and self-government.

Tagore's educational approach reflects the his ethos of making a complete human being out of everyone. The object of education is not simply the acquisition of knowledge; although acquiring knowledge is essential, it is not the only string of the guitar. Education is the all-round development of the human personality in which physical, mental, intellectual, aesthetic, and spiritual growth is harmonized in one integrated process.<sup>10</sup> Tagore's concept and program of education are comprehensive, taking in the whole of life and touching life on every side.

Tagore strongly supported instruction through the mother tongue of the students. This, he says, is the best way to extend education to the door of every family, whether it is in the village or the town. If the Western education system and language were to be imposed on Indian families, it would frustrate students, just as a hungry man cannot satisfy his hunger if he is asked to use the fork and the spoon to which he is not accustomed. His educational policy to rediscover the human values where different

cultures and civilizations can exchange their own ideas and knowledge. Tagore emphasized the search for creativity in all students so that human potentiality can be realized in the proper way. His *Visva-Bharati* is “a great meeting place of individuals from all countries, who believe in the divine humanity, and who wish to make atonement for the cruel disloyalty displayed against her by men.” His teaching methods and lessons on art, music, crafts, dance, fine arts, sculpture, painting, drama, literature, philosophy, science, social science, and so on are accompanied by higher human values for producing true human beings. He disliked the Western educational system on the ground that was removed from the everyday life of the Indian people:

sakal deshei shikshsar sange desher sarbangin yatrar yoga ache. Amader deshe kevalmatra keranigiri, okalati, daktari, deputygiri, darogagiri, munsefi prabhiti bhadra samaje pracialita kayakti vyavasara sangei amader adhunik shikshar pratyakshya yoga. Yekhane cas haiteche, kuhur ghani o kumarer caka ghuriteche, sekhane e shikshar kono sparsha o poinchai nai. (In each and every country, education is intimately connected with the life of its people. But in our country, education is directly related to produce clerks, advocates, doctors, deputy, police inspectors, etc. only. It does not reach where the farmers are working, where people are producing oils, potters are making their pots; it has not reached them.)<sup>11</sup>

He further stated,

We have taken up the task of discovering the fundamental unities of our culture of bringing our people together on the abiding basis of all that is essential in our civilization. We are here to offer humanity the deepest and divinest India's cultural heritage with unflinching faith in the spiritual unity of man.<sup>12</sup>

This idea is also seen in John Stuart Mill's educational system:

Universities are not intended to teach the knowledge required to fit men for some special model of gaining their livelihood. Their object is not to make skillful lawyers or physicians or engineers but capable of cultivated human beings. . . Men are men before they are lawyers or physicians or engineers, but capable and cultivate human beings. Men may competent lawyers without general education to make them philosophic lawyers, whose demands are capable of apprehending principles, instead of merely creaming their memory with details.<sup>13</sup>

Tagore in his *Religion of Man* explicitly mentions the divine element in his concept of the universal man and frequently uses the term “universal person” to denote his educational spiritualism and idealism. He appeals repeatedly to the Indian people to break their narrow-minded as attitude: “apan hate bahir baye baire danda, citta majhe visva loker pabisada” (come out from your own narrow boundary and stand up in the outside, then you will feel the response of universal man in your heart).

In another poem he appeals

*bhenge mor gharer cavi niye yabi ke amare! na peye tomar dekha eka eka din ye amar kate nare*  
(Who will come to rescue me after breaking the lock of my room! I do not perceive you [God],  
how shall I live alone in this room?)

Tagore proclaims, “tor dak shune keu na ase tave ekla calo re” (if nobody comes after listening to your call, let’s move alone). Here Tagore is again following the Upanishadic message “careiveti careiveti” (Go forward! Go forward!).

Tagore’s spiritual foundation for education is based on the following systematic principles and values:

1. **Environmental Education:** Tagore’s spiritual educational system is deeply entangled with the environment, where the learner gathers knowledge from the open sky and the shade of the tree, which enables students to grow in a natural way. His educational institution is a hallowed place of learning cradled in a serene environment in the lap of nature, where man and nature enter into an immediate harmonious relationship. To keep apart from the hustle and bustle of the city, the educational center is to be set up somewhere far from the city, and be surrounded by small and big trees, not by concrete walls. Fresh breathing is essential to mental peace and tranquility. Man should learn from nature to live better with more direct personal experiences as an active citizen.<sup>14</sup> In his poems, Nature in all her beautiful forms and colors and all her moods is dear to him, similarly to man. Even a particle of dust is important to him.<sup>15</sup>

Thus he says,

I have tried to develop in the children of my school the freshness of their feeling for nature, a sensitiveness of soul in their relationship with their human surroundings with the help of literature, festive ceremonies and also the religious teachings which enjoin us to come to the nearer presence of the world through the soul.<sup>16</sup>

2. **Knowledge of Reality:** Tagore’s spiritualistic educational system is highly attuned to the attainment of knowledge of Reality. Teaching must begin with a certain prayer (Reality, *Brahma upasana/baitalik*), where teachers and pupils will together and show their submission and salutation in the Upanishadic way. Here all of the accomplishments of the students and the teachers are considered the part of education. Purification of body, mind, and soul leads the pupils to achieve truth/Reality. The Upanishadic prayer and synthesis of body, mind, and soul keeps students cheerful and free from all fears and doubts so they can be motivated for the well-being of all, accompanied by self-sacrifice and the realization of Brahma/reality.

In Tagore's word, this is "*Brahmanubhuti*."<sup>17</sup> The student will feel the fragrance of *Reality in his mind for the whole day*.

3. **Value-Oriented Education:** Tagore sought the realization of intrinsic value based upon spiritual experience. His educational center and curriculum depart from the usual models and methods of education, and the sense of humanism naturally grows in the minds of the students.
4. **Self-discipline:** Tagore is against any outside compulsion upon students; rather, he believes in the inner obligation of the students that will direct them towards self-discipline and modest behavior. He opposed any kind of punishment in the educational system. He wanted learners to be free from all fears, open-minded, self-reliant, and full of the spirit of enquiry and self-criticism with their roots of deep understanding, neighborliness, cooperation and material and spiritual progress. He advised teachers to give students opportunities to learn by trial and error system. This will all them to apprehend what is right and what is wrong, what is wholesome for them and what is harmful. Any outside compulsion or obligation creates a sense of reaction and violence in the minds of the learners. Only an inner compulsion/obligation enlarges their creativity.<sup>18</sup>
5. **Self-building and Self-improvements:** These depend on the awareness of one's self, which can be revealed through self-purification by controlling the senses and conquering lust, anger, passion, greed, and so on. One needs to dispel egoistic ignorance by attaining wisdom (*Jnana*). Tagore said that the soul is in the body as fire is hidden in the smoke or as dust covers the mirror. This ignorance has to be destroyed by the true attainment of knowledge; it will not only illuminate the soul, but also everything, just as the sun shines. When a pupil achieves the capacity to control his evil tendencies he obtains a spiritual knowledge called *sthiti prajne*, the higher category of knowledge. Self-building is accompanied by self-adjustment, self-support, and self-help, which ultimately lead the student to complete self-improvement. In this regard Sri Ashok Kumar Mukhopadhyaya's remark about Tagore is very noteworthy: "His belief in the efficacy of self-initiative and self-help was deep and unadulterated. On this he was always uncompromising."<sup>19</sup>
6. **Character Building:** If wealth is lost, nothing is lost; if health is lost, something is lost, but when character is lost, everything is lost. Students are to be taught to be aware of the value of their character. Self-respect can draw the respect to others. The Gita and the Upanishads frequently emphasize character building. Tagore respected the free and spontaneous self-expression, of all men, showing how it can be applied in social and cultural life.

7. **Self-awareness:** The student needs self-awareness by which to understand what is really beneficial and what is really harmful for him. A sense of identity with the whole universe helps the pupil to uncover the soul and see it in everybody. Pupils will grow by learning to delight in nature's perennial festivals, discovering an inner connoisseur and thus become free personalities.
8. **Pupil-Teacher Relationship:** For Tagore, the relationship between the teacher and the taught must have a spiritual tone. In this regard that education is a *brata* (vow) and *Brahma* is the *Bratapati*. We need to go beyond our pettiness and cultivate virtues like heroism, truthfulness, goodness, and so on along with the great and eternal values of the world. In Tagore's institution, a learner is like a brother or sister and all are joined in a brotherly relationship. Tagore sought students and teachers who are dedicated to adhering to the noble truth and ideals of the Upanishads. Pupils are to be generously sensitive, inspiring, and capable of leadership. The pupil and the teacher learn simultaneously and mature gradually.
9. **Habits and Foods of Students and Teachers:** Tagore preferred an filled with ashramite (hospice) life that is simple, ideals, and free from the tyranny of artificial and unnecessary needs. His simplicity in education is an idealization of poverty, completely devoid of vanity and pride. This poverty is only a spiritual poverty. He was fully against the burden of furniture in the educational institution: "This bareness of furniture and materials—not because it is poverty, but because it leads to personal experience of the world."<sup>20</sup> Tagore's spiritualistic education prescribed simple foods that are purely vegetarian but full of vitality and vigor. This simple food eliminates all drowsiness so that students can devote more for study and service. Simplicity here is the cardinal principle that creates true ways to express the manifold faculties of human personalities.
10. **Social Environment:** Tagore's spiritual-based educational policy is applicable to all communities and all groups. According to him, the benefit of education is never confined to learners only; a true education helps to uplift learners as well as others. Knowledge that is not applicable to all is partial and leads society backwards. Learners should construct their society in peaceful environment so that the following generations can benefit. He believed that students should have regular contact with their guardians or family members, who should be invited on certain occasions or festivals to share in the enjoyment of learning and pleasure of nature along with their children. Tagore's spiritual-based education is a model

not merely for the intellectuals, but also for the social, moral, cultural, and economic life of all human beings, although he lays stress particularly on rural development and social reconstruction as well.

11. **Procedures of Education:** Tagore's educational system is not only based on spirituality, but he also includes reading, questioning, enquiry, criticism, expectations, judgments, observations, exercises, and experiments. His education system allows students to explore their creativity and freely express their feelings and imagination.
12. **Means of Education:** Tagore's system of education aims not only at the creation of a just, democratic, and peaceful order based on nonviolence, but also to provide clearly and precisely the methods of achieving such an objective.
13. **Personality Development:** The educational system should help in developing the full personality of the student, drawing out all his talents and bringing them into harmony with each other. This means education of the mind and the intellect together with that of physical skills. Children growing up with the love and pride of productive work become trained in self-government and self-assessment.

Tagore's educational spiritualism means an all-round development of the student. This education does not rely on formulating of any precise spiritual or religious faith or cult and imposing it everybody, but on making a living, vividly real, and effectively operative sentiment for the new and the unforeseen, a belief in the possibility of unlimited self-growth for everybody.<sup>21</sup> In removing all rigidities, Tagore established his institution at Santiniketan as a unique and unparalleled educational center. His multidimensional concept of educational and cultural assimilation is wider than the Kantian schema of perpetual peace. Kant emphasized human and social values like truth, beauty, peace, and nonviolence. He projected a cosmopolitan plan for the United States and Europe, but Tagore's vision is spread over the whole universe. Tagore's method of education is an awakening of man, and man in his eyes

has his other dwelling place in the realm of inner realization, in the element of an immortal value. This is a world where from the subterranean soil of his mind has consciousness often, like a seed unexpectedly sends up sprouts into the heart of a luminous freedom, and the individual is made to realize his truth in the universal man.<sup>22</sup>

Thus Tagore's educational policy is an illumination of the inner soul and harmony, a synchronization of the true, the good, and the beautiful. It is a philosophy that speaks of fulfillment through harmony with all things. It also marks an attitude, a value, a way of life that suffuses the educational process, contains it, sustains it, yet transfers and transcends it. Such an approach can

educate people to overcome artificial barriers and live together as one entity, which is, I think, the crying need of all educational institutions around the world.

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#### NOTES

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- <sup>2</sup> Nirod Baran Chakravarty, Sri Aurobinda's Concept of Spiritual Unity, *The Visva-Bharati Journal of Philosophy*, op cit., p. 26.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup> Soumen Ghosh, Rabindranather Dhyana Dharana O Jatiya Samhati, *National Integration—Vision of the Poet*, Edited by P. Jash, Indira Gandhi Center for National Integration, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, 1995, p. 38.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 8.
- <sup>7</sup> Rina Roy, Rabindranath, Spiritualism and National Integration, *The Visva-Bharati Journal of Philosophy*, op. cit., p. 130.
- <sup>8</sup> Swati Datta, Idea of Tagore and National Integration, *National Integration—Vision of the Poet*, Edited by P. Jash, op. cit., p. 105.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 104.
- <sup>10</sup> G. Ramachandran, Tagore and Gandhi, Educational Revolutionaries, *Proceedings of the Conferences, Rabindranath Tagore Birth centenary Celebration*, Edited by Sunil Chandra Sarkar, Vol. 1, *Education*, 1961, p. 50.
- <sup>11</sup> Uma Dasgupta, *Santiniketan o sriniketan*, Rabindra Paricya, Visva-Bharati, 1889 (Bengali Year), p. 95.
- <sup>12</sup> Sudhir Ranjan, Some Aspect of Rabindra Genius, p. 95.
- <sup>13</sup> Soumen Ghosh, op. cit., p. 3.
- <sup>14</sup> Sobhanlal Mukherjee, National Integration as Integral synthesis, *National Integration – Vision of the Poet*, Edited by P. Jash, op. cit., p. 31.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 31.
- <sup>16</sup> Sudhir Ranjan, op. cit., p. 153.
- <sup>17</sup> Sunil Chandra Sarkar, *Tagore Educational Philosophy and Experiment*, Visva – Bharati, Santiniketan, 1961, p. 146.
- <sup>18</sup> G. Ramachandran, op. cit., p. 50.
- <sup>19</sup> Swati Datta, op. cit., p. 114.
- <sup>20</sup> Sunil Chandra Sarkar, *Tagore Educational Philosophy and Experiment*, op. cit., p. 162.
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 159.
- <sup>22</sup> Rabindranath Tagore, *The Religion of Man*, Visva-Bharati, Calcutta, 1931, p. 53.

SELF-CULTIVATION AND EDUCATIVE  
RESPONSIBILITY

*Features of a dual anthropology*

In order to engage in the project of cultivating oneself in Western culture, it is assumed that one has a clear consciousness of oneself, and in order to have one, it is necessary to have learned to go from singularity to universality. While all this is said on the intellectual and theoretical level, that of culture and erudition, one must also invoke the great effort of praxis, using the process of instruction (more than that of education) to facilitate this dual movement. Certainly, Westerners hold that theory is important, in fact, decisive for practical orientation. How many of us actually manage to reach the goal is unknown, although we flatter ourselves with the belief that everyone can reach it.

In making these observations, I do not wish to nurture a pessimism that does no one any good; rather, I would like to take into consideration the division in Western culture, because self-cultivation cannot be proposed in a purely abstract manner. But since I also believe in the power of theory and in the power of word and example, I want to demonstrate in an exemplary and also ideal way how a project for cultivating oneself could be elaborated in the continual exchange between the human singularities that meet each other and that also act following the criteria of universality, because it is on the level of the discovery of common and universal elements that the human encounter can happen.

Moving from “essential” descriptions and the “ideal” proposals that arise from them, I would like to describe here some criteria that seem to me to be convincing, chosen from the vast range of anthropological and pedagogical approaches available in our culture’s theoretical reflections. It seems useful to base this examination on the analyses of the “classic” phenomenologists, not because of a pre-existing and biased liking for them, but because their descriptions allow us to reach the meaning of the “things” examined, and here we are examining the human being.

THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL METHOD AND THE ANALYSIS  
OF THE HUMAN PERSON

I would like to dwell first on the spirit of phenomenological inquiry that enables the results I mentioned to be obtained.

This type of inquiry is characterized by a great attention to the reality surrounding us and to ourselves, an attention that must cause reality to issue its meaning. The phenomena that we encounter, which should be understood as “manifestations” offered to us, present themselves with a meaning that we must track down.

Thus, Edmund Husserl, the founder of the phenomenological school, had great faith in the search for meaning regarding phenomena; he had a conviction—which we could define as optimistic, but can and must be confirmed and verified through the results of the search and cannot be established *a priori*—that human being can manage to a certain degree to grasp “the meaning of things.”

The term “thing” has a host of meanings, not limited to the physical sense—the German *Ding*. It also refers to *Sache*, the question, the issue, the fact that must be understood; among facts, and thus the phenomena he encountered, Husserl was most interested in that of the human subject. This work excavates not only our singularity, but moving from it, the common humanity we find in ourselves and in others. Husserl was confident he could grasp the meaning of the phenomena that characterize us and that characterize the human being in its complexity.

It is necessary to underline in the sphere of phenomenological analysis the importance of the moment of “discovery,” of pointing out, of the fact that nothing is already taken for granted or assumed, that it is indispensable to put in parenthesis every previously formed definition of the human being, both from the point of view of philosophical tradition and from that of the natural and human sciences—Husserl preferred the expression widely used in his philosophical environment: sciences of the spirit. The reasonableness of this operation of *epochè*, of suspension of judgment, of reduction, lies in the fact that every solution, even if it claims to be one, cannot propose itself as absolute, as definitive and indubitable, but always raises questions and problems. Thus, this beginning again from the start means assessing whether what one says is said because it shows the thing examined in its essence, that is, in its structural characteristics through a purified gaze in such a way as intuitively to grasp what is given, not stopping at the surface, but proceeding on in a work of excavation. This ensures the validity of the results.

Drawing inspiration from the inquiries of Husserl, who was her professor, in particular those collected in the first volume of *Ideas for a Pure*

*Phenomenology and a Phenomenological Philosophy* (1913), Edith Stein chose for her dissertation, defended in 1916 at the University of Göttingen, the theme of knowledge of the other, pursuing the meaning of a particular act that we constantly accomplish, that of *Einfühlung*, which we can translate with the term empathy.<sup>1</sup>

In his work of excavation within subjectivity, Husserl explored precisely the terrain that Kant had identified and defined with the term “transcendental.” Husserl’s efforts, however, led him to different results, identifying the acts that we live, and that thus are our “lived experiences,” *Erlebnisse*, that characterize our “interiority”; this expression is not Husserl’s, but I use it to give an idea of the sphere being examined. Lived experiences, or acts, are structural elements that we all possess, while their contents can be extremely subjective, relative, and changeable.

To understand the itinerary Husserl traveled, we must briefly trace some of his fundamental analyses. He began with an act that he considered very important because it puts us in correlation with the external world: the act of perception. Examining it in an essential way in itself, and trying to understand what it consists of as act, one understands that it puts us in immediate, direct contact with reality; it is an act that all those in normal conditions can do, but the content of the perception is changeable because it depends on the circumstances and the objects perceived.

In conducting this analysis, however, we have isolated it because we live it together with a series of acts of which we are aware; it is the consciousness of these acts that accompanies us—Stein would say that it is like a light that illuminates the lived experiences<sup>2</sup>—but before examining these acts, we need a further, particular act, that of reflection, which enables us to place ourselves before the acts we live, taking a step back from them in order to grasp their meaning.

If we analyze what happens in ourselves, we realize that not just the act of perceiving is present, but also that of remembering, imagining, fantasizing, and thinking, and we can go on and on, identifying a host of acts or lived experiences, a task that Husserl pursued throughout the long arc of his research. In addition, our consciousness registers acts related to impulses, instincts, and tensions, that is, those proper to the psychic sphere, and in addition, those of decision, the will, and the conscious forming of opinion, which in turn qualitatively constitute another grouping and lead to the spiritual function. Among the identifiable acts, Husserl had the merit of highlighting one in particular, that of empathy.

Examining this peculiar act of knowing the other through empathetic knowledge, Edith Stein asked what we grasp of the other, and what instrument

is used; the result of her analysis of these two questions further confirms the complexity of the human being. While Husserl conducted his research by moving prevalently from the human structure as such, his disciple drew the fundamental lineaments of anthropology precisely from the analysis of empathy.

She discovered that the human being is a psychophysical individual; in fact, on one hand, corporeality is involved as the necessary go-between of consciousness itself, while on the other, corporeality is animated, living (*Leib*), the seat of affections and drives, but also of thoughts, reasonings, decisions, and volitions. Are these acts qualitatively equal? Can they be placed without distinctions on the same level, or do they refer to different potentialities, implying different values as well? In other words, what is the genesis of the traditional interpretation according to which “soul” and “body” can be found? And thus in what sense is the human being not reducible entirely to corporeality, even while this is an indispensable dimension of life as it gives itself, that is, as we observe it?

The terrain of lived experiences, that is, of acts of consciousness, is fundamentally where we identify the affinities that constitute the groupings that refer to the configurations—consolidated by a long tradition and also present, albeit in different forms, in all cultures—indicated by the terms “body” and “soul.” The pain or the joy that the other experiences must be grasped first through a perception linked to the organs of sense, but what we discern on his or her face refers us to such a profundity of life that it is impossible to liken it to any physical object, seen or touched. The dimension thus discovered is the place of the affections, drives, and emotions; it is what we indicate with the term *psyche*.

But one could ask—and Edith Stein did so in the second decade of the 1900s—if here we have not finally found a discipline that inquires into the *psyche*, that truly shows us what it is like, scientifically reducing it to its structure, which is of the mechanistic type: action and reaction, association, and so on, as the emerging field of psychology seemed to say, using precisely the method of the natural sciences. This question gave rise to her long and detailed essay, *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities*, published in 1922 in the phenomenology Annual directed by Husserl.<sup>3</sup> Her intent was not to eliminate this discipline in favor of a purely philosophical inquiry, but rather, to show the insufficiency of the psychological point of view and that of the new human sciences established in the second half of the 1800s, both in terms of the deepened understanding of the human being and in terms of the justification of their own constitution. In fact, these sciences require a preliminary inquiry to clarify the foundational moments

upon which they are based. For example, psychology cannot avoid asking what the psyche is, and must also ask whether the body and the psyche are sufficient for comprehending the human being in its entirety, questions that call for philosophical reflection.

Analysis of lived experiences highlights the existence of a psychic sphere characterized by a “lifeforce,” a psychic energy that plays a fundamental role in the very survival of the human being and its ability to act. It is structured according to a kind of causality, inasmuch as it is the seat of links that, to a certain degree, can be considered deterministic. But is it truly so deterministic that it is the only source of direction of the human being? For example, are freshness or tiredness of the psyche always and exclusively at the basis of our actions, and thus of our decisions, or do the choices refer us on to “motivations” that reveal a different source of decision? Here we see the emergence of the sphere of the spirit (*Geist*).

Empathy had already been identified as the instrument for comprehending what moves within the life of the other, and not just in terms of his feelings and emotions, but also the interior world of his decisions, volitions, his world of creativity. If there are sciences of the “spirit,” they concern that which is connected with this sphere, that of cultural, artistic, and political production, among others. From the philosophical point of view, the presence of the dimension of the spirit in the human being makes it possible to affirm that the psychophysical reality that likens us to the animal world is overcome through an element that defines the human being as “person.”

This interpretation remained fundamental for Stein, even when her research turned to ancient and medieval thought. Actually, she found here a confirmation of her phenomenological analyses. The results thus obtained flowed into the works, *The Structure of the Human Person* (1932)<sup>4</sup> and *Finite and Eternal Being* (1936).<sup>5</sup> In the latter, Stein inquired into finite beings. Now, among these we find the human being, and if we examine him or her, we must observe that “his or her body” is a *material body*; but, not *only* this. Already, and at the same time, he or she is also an *organism* that takes form and acts from his or her intimate interior. Furthermore, man is not just organism, but an *animated living being*, that in a particular way—perceptively—is open to himself or herself and to the surrounding world, and finally a *spiritual* being, who is cognitively open to himself or herself and to the rest, and can freely shape himself and the rest,<sup>6</sup> and, as such, we can add on the basis of other indications provided by Stein, he or she is a “person.”

Here one can see the extraordinary continuity with the analyses conducted with the phenomenological method; Husserl’s work clearly included the term person as related to the triple aspects of the human being described above.<sup>7</sup>

## THE INTERPERSONAL DIMENSION

In light of the books cited, it is clear that we are dealing with an analytical work conducted by Edith Stein for over two decades with sensitivity, acumen, and the capacity to grasp the essential. Following the itinerary of her analyses, one can observe that while she considered the human being taken in his or her structure, and thus relative to himself or herself, it was never a solipsistic closure; the theme of empathy in and of itself established the foundations for considering the intersubjective dimension. If the individual maintains his or her own uniqueness—and I return to this later—openness to others is truly constitutive of his or her way of placing himself or herself, as demonstrated by the intentionality that characterizes every living experience. Profound existential, affective, and spiritual bonds are to be found between the individual and the community, which constitutes the key component of human association, as exemplified in the second part of the 1922 essay *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities*, dedicated to examining the theme of Individual and Community.

Since every associative moment is linked to an aspect of the person, the community also possesses an organic character, to be traced to the life force that is of a psychic nature. However, this is not to be understood as something above the individual, or independent of individuals; rather, it is the presence of a relationship of mutual exchange between the two moments. In fact, the life force of individuals contributes to forming the community, but, once objectified, it can serve as stimulus for each in the sphere of his or her particular community, and in addition, each individual can also belong to different communities, giving and receiving from them without depleting his or her life force.

Just as psychic force in the individual is strictly connected with spiritual force, so it is equally linked in communities, especially in the community *par excellence*, the people: it is possible to find peoples that remain unproductive on the cultural level, but normally the life of peoples manifests itself on the spiritual level, giving rise to formations that can vary notably in quality and intensity.

In any case, in order to comprehend what happens objectively and on the communitarian level, it is necessary to return to the subjective manifestation of spirituality and examine the influxes, the contributions of individuals. Interchange between individuals happens through social acts. One can speak of social acts when they are done by a person and concern his or her stance, which can be positive or negative. Not only are love, trust, and gratitude social acts, but so are distrust, hatred, and dislike. The positivity or negativity of these acts is ascertainable only in their effects: Love is a productive force,

while hatred is destructive, and positivity becomes a value not in an abstract sense, but inasmuch as it is indissolubly linked to the being of the person. "If I take a positive or negative stance, he/she proposes himself/herself to me as worthy or unworthy."<sup>8</sup>

In this way, we come to the central point of the inquiry, which refers to associated life. It is precisely this attitude of availability toward others assumed by the human being that forms the foundation for solidarity—and it should be remembered that this question, so in style these days, was already the subject of Stein's work in 1922. Solidarity, according to Stein, is constructive in the communitarian sense, and is achieved

when individuals are open towards each other, when one's opinion is not rejected by the other, but penetrates in him, spreading to the full its efficacy; *there subsists* a communitarian life in which both are members of a whole, and without this reciprocal relationship, there cannot be a community.<sup>9</sup>

While the reciprocal influx between individuals is a characterizing element, what essentially connotes a community is a common objective and purpose. In this sense, one can speak of the personal character of the community itself, a character that emerges when individuals live as members of the community, that is, they have a common purpose. One can say, then, that a community has a soul (*Seele*) and a spirit (*Geist*) when there is a reciprocal openness of the members and when unity in a qualitative sense is established: having a soul means carrying within the focal point of one's own being; having a spirit means being configured as personalities unto themselves.

The importance of the community is such that it grants stability to higher organizations such as society and the State. In fact, society, precisely because it ensures the rationalization of intersubjective relationships, objectivizes them. While this is necessary for certain aspects, it must not eliminate the fact that the individuals also are and must remain active subjects, as happens in communitarian life.

#### DUAL ANTHROPOLOGY

The analyses conducted to this point identify a structure common to all human beings that rises above historical, social, and cultural situations in which the individual is inserted, and also the connotations of gender. For this reason, it would be well to descend from the level of universality to the intermediary one of gender difference in order to proceed with further analysis.

However, if we want to move from the experiential level, which is the one we live on daily, it is necessary to observe that the women we meet—and

also the men—present themselves in their individuality. We never meet a person in the abstract: we always meet a woman or a man with her or his peculiar characteristics. This in an incontrovertible datum of our experience, but our language as well pushes us to generalize when we reflect on the difference of gender, and in particular on the feminine, and thus we speak of woman, looking for precisely that characteristic element present in every woman. This type of inquiry is exalted and considered fundamental in the sphere of research we call philosophical. We do not settle for grasping the singularity, but always strive for a generality, or to put it better, a universality, the universality of structures that we recognize as present when we encounter one or more women, and thus we say, recognizing them, that they are women. But what do we truly “recognize”? They come to us with a certain physical structure, which already carries with it and proposes to us a great paradox: each of them is unique, one of a kind, and yet they are all women.

This fact moves us to analyze their corporeality. We know that Western culture with the elaboration of a scientific mentality has sought to penetrate within this very corporeality, examining it from myriad perspectives under the profile of physiology, anatomy, and genetics, highlighting in this way the characteristics of the female body that then are articulated in a particular way in each woman. As we know, medicine operates on this basis, observing the variations and proceeding with therapy.

At this point, two questions arise. The first concerns the fact that woman has a particular anatomical configuration, but that she also shares many characteristics with the other human being, man. In fact, one can speak in general of the human body beyond specifications of female and male. Precisely this observation leads us to the second question: if one cannot analyze woman without taking into consideration that she is a human being, then it is necessary to correlatively examine man as well.

So already in this stage of research a hierarchy emerges that can be traced from low to high, but in any case indicates the correlation of the two moments. In fact, the human being is articulated as male and female, and a correct analysis forces us to keep in mind both aspects.

How can we theorize all this from a broader point of view that we can define as philosophical? Precisely the examination of the individual refers us to the universality of the human being, but once again we are forced to descend toward the partition of male and female before reaching the individuality. In reality, as mentioned above, it is possible to travel the opposite road, and thus the two paths are correlative and circular.

All this, before continuing the analysis of the human being in its female and male articulations, causes us to reflect on the fact that one cannot examine woman without examining man in more general terms; if one wishes to

proceed to an analysis of the human being, thus to an anthropology, it must be a dual anthropology. In fact, while it is true that one can indicate some universal elements that distinguish, for example, the human being from the animal or vegetable, a necessary in-depth examination of the human structure leads us to grasp duality as an important and unavoidable element of the analysis.

This observation allows us to evaluate the phenomenon of feminism, because, while acknowledging the importance of this phenomenon that characterized the twentieth century in Western culture, now we can denounce the unilaterality of its stance, since for the most part it claimed to describe the autonomous characteristics of the feminine and to demand the just rights of women without proceeding to a radical inquiry into the female and the male as determinations of the human being. While it is true that we do not encounter the human being in its generality, but as individuals, the latter are either men or women, and thus our attention should travel from the particularity to the universality, passing through the duality.

In this journey that is prevalently philosophical, but that also requires physiological, psychological, sociological, and theological inquiry, we are helped by Pope John Paul II, who indicated the foundational itinerary in his apostolic letter *Mulieris Dignitatem*, and by Edith Stein, the philosopher who was the first to insist on the need to keep in mind a dual anthropology.

Setting out in the direction indicated, we can journey further on another section of the road, observing that the human being, considered in its universality, is not just a body, but possesses a psyche and is characterized by the dimension of the spirit. All this is not given as an assumption, but can be observed through analysis of our interior states in terms of drives, instincts, and strivings—we are in the sphere of the psyche—or conscious stances, acts of will, intellectual acts—we are in this case in the dimension of the spirit. Even the simple encounter with another person and the relationship we form with her makes us discern the presence of the acts indicated, acts that we realize we experience in our interiority as well.

These dimensions of the body, the psyche, and the spirit, even as they appear univocally structured in the human being, take on specific connotations in the case in which this human being is a woman or a man. We can quote a thought of Stein's that is the result of a very long and complex process of inquiry, certainly not a hurried affirmation or an assumption. She writes, comparing woman and man,

Not only is the body structured differently, nor are only some particular physiological functions different, but the entire life of the body is different, the relationship of the soul with the body is different, and in the soul itself the relationship to physical sensation, as is the relationship of the spiritual powers with each other.<sup>10</sup>

There is a difference, then, one revealed in the interiority of the human being and that gives a specific imprint to man and to woman. Continuing with Stein's affirmations, we can say that "The female species says unity, delimitation of the entire corporeal-spiritual personality, harmonic development of powers; the virile species says elevation of the single energies to their most intense performance."<sup>11</sup>

Unity, delimitation, and harmonic development indicate woman's capacity for hospitality; she possesses a unitary structure the parts of which are harmoniously connected, and harmony is the characteristic of womanliness.

Without going into inopportune idealizations, and seeing as well woman's limitations and the risks to which she is exposed, one can underline that the same corporeal continuation is the indicator of that capacity for openness and welcoming that must certainly be put into use, because we are speaking of potential that must be developed. Here one understands the importance of education for the individual human being so that the characteristics of the species to which it belongs and its personal characteristics can be brought to completion.

#### THE EDUCATIVE PROCESS

In order for the human being to truly become such, it must be raised and educated, and the task of raising and educating is prevalently carried out by women. Is this a kind of cultural coercion, or are the feminine qualities such that women are assigned a particular centrality in the formative process?

One can certainly hold that every human being is capable of educating, and that man, too, can and does in fact have an educative function, that education not only means formation in childhood and adolescence of the human being, but that in every phase of human life it is possible to actuate a reciprocal relationship of education. Certainly, the formative moment *par excellence* is that of youth, and for this reason attention is focused here. Formation and education are like a chain that should not be broken because those who educate must in turn be educated. At a certain moment of the historical process there can be increasing awareness of the need for conscious education and formation, not left to chance.

Therefore, a solid anthropological foundation in its essential lines is needed in the educator, an awareness that reaches the deepest level of the soul and that does not neglect the intellect and the cognitive and spiritual potentials. Certainly this task is entrusted first of all to parents, and to the mother in particular. However, we realize that it cannot be exhaustively completed

within the family, and that school and the community where one lives, society, and the State must contribute in different ways.

An educative process of this kind cannot and must not do without women, especially because they constitute the strongest link in the educative chain. Developing women's capacities and potential—intellectual as well—is important for promoting the development of society as a whole. It is true that women have a natural and spontaneous educative sensitivity because of their capacity for welcoming and attention, but these abilities must be fostered through a broadly cultural formation that helps them become conscious of themselves and of their own gifts.

All this is very important: The transmission of knowledge cannot be left in the hands of men alone. Since women have the same abilities as men, albeit with different shades of sensibility, they must have access to the same levels of instruction as men. Given her abilities, woman can exercise an important role not only in the family, but also as educator in the social field through teaching and the care of others in many sectors, and thus contribute to the development of a people, carrying out a fundamental function in the State—in short, holding a public role.

One can ask why women have been held back for so long from cultural formation and activity in public functions. Many prejudices, generated for the most part by the male mentality, have impeded their engagement in the cultural social dimension and they themselves for a long time were not able to comprehend their abilities. For this reason, it is necessary to proceed to an examination of the very structure of the human being in the two connotations of male and female in order to grasp the common potential and different aptitudes. Together with Stein, we acknowledge that every human being has its peculiar characteristics, and thus it is possible that women possess those aptitudes that are prevalently attributed to men, and vice versa, and thus that some roles are not exclusively of one gender or the other. While it is true that the characteristic of the male is to prefer some activities over others—and this is also the reason for success in the intellectual field, in philosophical and scientific research, for example—none of this excludes women. They may have an additional characteristic, that of keeping in mind different spheres, and they have a greater variety of interests that do not exclude, however, the ability of some to distinguish themselves in intellectual work. It is necessary, then, that every human being be known in its peculiarities and particularities, so that the formative process may prove successful.

What has been said to this point enables us to conclude that the project to cultivate oneself, is elaborated through an interpersonal journey that involves a continual movement from oneself to others. The criteria that should guide

this elaboration are of a theoretical order—the more one comprehends the meaning of human existence and the meaning of one’s own existence, the more one can proceed toward an orientation—and of a practical order—the conscious choice within particular existential situations. Orientation in the direction indicated should be the task of educators, who in this way promote the free appropriation of self by each person. I realize that on the basis of the essential description of the human being in its two connotations of male and female proposed here, an ideal perspective is elaborated that does not and cannot always find an effective match in reality. This should not be a source of discouragement; each in his sphere of possibility of action should proceed with awareness and coherence. Here we touch the nucleus of the moral attitude: the journey, threading its torturous way through desires, drives, needs, and free choices, from which emerges, with greater or lesser success, the project of self-cultivation.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See Edith Stein, *Zur Problem der Einfühlung (On the Problem of Empathy)*, Buchdruckerei des Waisenhauses, Halle, 1917.

<sup>2</sup> “‘Being conscious of oneself’ is not exactly an act; rather, it is an ‘interior light’ that illuminates the flow of living and in the very flow itself clarifies it for the living ‘I,’” E. Stein, *Einführung in die Philosophie, (Introduction to Philosophy)*, ESGA, Vol. 8, Herder, Freiburg, 2004, p. 106.

<sup>3</sup> E. Stein, *Beiträge zur philosophischen Begründung der Psychologie und der Geisteswissenschaften (Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities)*, M. Niemeyer, Tübingen, 1970.

<sup>4</sup> E. Stein, *Der Aufbau der menschlichen Person (The Structure of the Human Person)*. ESGA, Vol. 14, Herder, 2004.

<sup>5</sup> E. Stein, *Endliches und ewiges Sein I (Finite Being and Eternal)*, ESGA, Vol. 11, Herder, 2006.

<sup>6</sup> E. Stein, *Die Frau—Fragestellungen und Reflexionen (Essays on Women. Nature and Grace)*, ESGA, Vol. 13, Herder, 2005, p. 161.

<sup>7</sup> See in particular Volume II of *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and a Phenomenological Philosophy*, translated by R. Rojcewicz and A. Schuwer, Kluwer, Dordrecht, 1989.

<sup>8</sup> E. Stein, *Beiträge zur philosophischen Begründung der Psychologie und der Geisteswissenschaften*, op. cit., p. 191.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 232.

<sup>10</sup> E. Stein, *Die Frau*, p. 167.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

MERLEAU-PONTY'S IN NORTHERN FEMINIST  
EDUCATION CONTEXT

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I discuss phenomenology and the way it is linked to my educational research, which refers to feminist (Ruth Behar 1996; Norman K. Denzin 1997; Amanda Coffey 1999; Beverly Skeggs 2001; cf. Judith Stacey 1988) school ethnography concerning girls' experiences of studying in a middle-sized (about 300 students), nongraded upper secondary school in northern Finland. My task is to describe the positions which girls take and are given during their studies in the context of girls' culture research (e.g., Valerie Walkerdine 1989, 1990; Jaana Lähteenmaa & Sari Näre 1992; Valerie Hey 1997; Ulla Kosonen 1998; Tuula Gordon, Jane Holland, & Elina Lahelma; Helena Saarikoski 2001; Tarja Tolonen 2001, 2001a; Sanna Aaltonen & Päivi Honkatukia 2002; Sinikka Aapola, Marnina Gonick, & Anita Harris 2004; Tuula Gordon, Elina Lahelma, & Jane Holland 2004; Sari Näre 2004) and nongraded upper secondary school studying (e.g., Jouni Välijärvi 1994, 1997; Raimo Vuorinen & Jouni Välijärvi 1994; Jouni Välijärvi & Pertti Tuomi 1995; Jouko Mehtäläinen 1998; Maija-Liisa Ojala 2000; Jouni Välijärvi & Anssi Kuusela 2001; Anssi Kuusela 2003).

I also describe my field work in autumn 2002. The scientific and philosophical basis (ontological, epistemological, and methodological) of my research is based on the phenomenological theory of Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962, 1964, 1964a, 1968, 1993, 1993a; see also Ilja Maso 2001), from which comes the concept of *position* (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 193; Sara Heinämaa 94–95; Sara Heinämaa & Martina Reuter 140–141).

In this chapter I begin with Edmund Husserl's development of phenomenology and then discuss Merleau-Ponty's ideas. I discuss Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology in the context of feminist ethnography. I describe the positions taken by and given to one a girls, Hille (a pseudonym), from the Lapinkulma (fictional name) research school. Thus, the theoretical frame of the paper is mostly (scientific) philosophical, and to some extent feminist and educational. I discuss the following questions: How does Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology continue Husserl's, and what is their shared ontological

commitment? How can Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology with its ontological commitment be applied to feminist ethnography relating to girls' studying in a nongraded upper secondary school in northern Finland?

#### HUSSERL'S PHENOMENOLOGY

The German philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859–1938) is considered the founder of “pure” phenomenology. His aim was to return to things themselves, “zu den Sachen selbst,” as the idea is expressed in German. That means return to the beginning, to things themselves as they appear in immediate experiences. Husserl (1995, 41) defined phenomenology in the following way: “Phenomenology means science, the connection of science doctrines. At the same time, phenomenology means, above all, a method and a way of thinking: a special philosophical way of thinking, a special philosophical method.” This method and way of thinking aimed at something new, a questioning of ontology, including the world, physical and psychological nature, ourselves, and all of the sciences concerning the world (44–45). The natural method or natural way of thinking (the scientific attitude), as Husserl called it, takes a natural attitude towards everything and therefore does not question any ontological aspects. In doing so, it at the same time causes problems concerning knowledge because it becomes impossible to try to reach the absolute foundation of knowledge (33–35, 40).

Using the phenomenological method, starting from questioning ontology itself, Husserl (44–45) pursued the essence of the special sciences, the absolute foundation of knowledge. This is done by holding on to the experiences received through sense perception (107–108) and by describing the phenomena through the intersubjective meanings attached to these experiences (84; Markku Satulehto 9). According to Husserl (59; see also Heinämaa 18, 44–45), this route to the essence of knowledge goes through several reductions. Through these reductions, the phenomenon being researched is regarded without a natural or scientific attitude. It was Husserl's purpose to use reductions to reach the Pure I, meaning consciousness, which has free access to the essence of phenomena through the phenomenological attitude it has experienced through all reductions (Matti Juntunen 95–96).

In spite of all his efforts, Husserl's ambitious goal of reaching the unshaken essence of knowledge through the phenomenological attitude of the Pure I has left some problematic questions. These questions concern the possibility of reaching the Pure I in general (Merleau-Ponty 1962, xi–xiv) and of associating the link between theory and the lived world to that (Juntunen 115–123).

Husserl apparently thought that he could bypass the link between theory and the lived world through the last reduction, *epoche*, which was supposed to lead to the Pure I, consciousness (97–98, 121–122). However, according to Herbert Spiegelberg (69, 147), the link still remains to be bypassed: “how far it is possible to present his [Husserl’s] philosophy as a systematic whole, all the more since its final stage embodies by no means its most complete form ... the many inspirations that have resulted from his partial successes as well as from his failures secure him the place of the ‘venerable beginner’ of a new way of philosophizing.”

#### MERLEAU-PONTY’S PHENOMENOLOGY

Husserl’s work had a great impact on the French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s (1908–1961) thinking and work. Merleau-Ponty’s aim continued from where Husserl’s phenomenology, or rather phenomenological method or thinking, met some problematic questions. Merleau-Ponty did not think like Husserl that the Pure I, consciousness, could be the goal in phenomenology. Actually, it is not possible at all from Merleau-Ponty’s (1962, xiv; 2000, 176) point of view: “The most important lesson which the reduction teaches us is the impossibility of a complete reduction ... If we were absolute mind, the reduction would present no problem.”

Merleau-Ponty (1962, xiv; 2000, 176) underlines the fact that we are not absolute minds. He continues that the body forms the basic presupposition for a human being to be in a world: “The body is the vehicle of being in the world” (1962, 82). Thus, the body connects us inevitably to an existing world. The body is a medium through which we can be conscious of the world in general, and therefore the body does not build or form the reality, the world. Instead, the body, which already is in the world, merely describes the existing world, reality (1962, x; 2000, 172).

This leads to the following, inevitable conclusion: The body, which is “the vehicle of being in the world,” does not set the world, but simply is in an already existing world (Heinämaa 62) and describes this state of existence. From this basic idea I understand that a body in a world always perceives something: There has to be something behind a perception in order to form the perception, a perception about something. Husserl states that experiences in connection with phenomenology are temporal and always intentional, aiming at something. Every experience is directed to something: Perceiving always means perceiving something, just as sensing means sensing something (37–38).

*Shared Ontological Commitment*

The ontological roots of Husserl's phenomenological method are located in an existing world and lived experiences, in spite of the method's transcendental efforts (Merleau-Ponty 1962, vii; 2000, 170; Kimmo Pasanen 83). Whereas this method connects to the ontological statement according to which an experience is directed to something, at the same time it aims to go on to "things themselves" through several reductions. In spite of the differences between the views of Husserl and Merleau-Ponty, there is a shared ontological commitment between them. Their ideas connect to ontological materialism, a starting point that in connection with phenomenology excludes ontological idealism. This is inevitable because idealism is based on an assumption of reality as being mental or ideal (Pentti Määttänen 40). I will argue this ontological attachment a little further.

Idealism can be divided into objective and subjective idealism. According to objective idealism, a perception through the senses is inconstant and misleading. This is why it leads to pure ideas, which cannot be reached through perception but only through reason. Therefore, according to objective idealism, reality means pure ideas through reason, which is not a lasting basis regarding phenomenology. On the other hand, according to subjective idealism (synonym: phenomenalism) the world of ideas is dependent on the subject. Ideas are phenomena, which are to be perceived by the senses: Reality means these ideas perceived through the senses. Subjective idealism does not trust the existence of reality without knowledge through sense perception (37–38, 40–45).

Phenomenology's connection to ontological materialism, when linking it to subjective idealism, is not problematic: They both agree with reality's connection to a subject's knowledge through sense perception. What is not lasting in phenomenology is that ontological knowledge, according to subjective idealism, is formed by ideas: Reality is basically idealism based on sense perception. The following question remains unresolved: Where do ontology's constituent ideas, defined by sense perception, come from?

Ontological materialism maintains that matter does exist in spite of consciousness. The characteristics of consciousness are explained without assuming independent ideal or mental creatures (39.) According to my interpretation, this concept continues to support the Cartesian dualism of mind and body. I agree to a certain point that the material does exist in spite of consciousness. For example, we all know that the globe exists. However, in order to know this, I, as a being in a world and a chiasm of body (including mind), world, and Being (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 130), must have had knowledge (in this case experiences) about the existence of the globe.

Being just a mind or a body and possessing this knowledge does not seem to be possible or relevant. Thus, when committing to ontological materialism in the context of phenomenology there is no reason to ask what is. Instead we have to ask how this something that is appears to us (Husserl 1995; Heinämaa 1996).

Ontological materialism in the context of phenomenology means that reality consists of different kinds of material things: physical (e.g., school as a building, culture) and mental (e.g., subjective feelings and thoughts, also culture). According to my interpretation, mental material also appears or materializes in some form. For example, subjective feelings can become materialized as different facial expressions or written discourses. Culture can materialize as different positions that human beings take or are given to in relation to it. And even if I here itemize physical and mental material separately, it is essential to notice that they are inevitably included in each other: There is not one without the other. The possibility to be able to perceive or sense something in general proves my argument. That is why ontological materialism in fact connects the body and consciousness and excludes the possibility of separate ontological idealism (Määttänen 37) Merleau-Ponty (1968, 57, 103) expresses the same ontological and epistemological crossing in the following way: “I am in the world. Idealism and the reflective cramp disappear because the relation of knowledge is based on a ‘relation of being’.”

### *Chiasm*

Merleau-Ponty’s theoretical discussion and its relation to ontological and epistemological starting points sharpen and become stronger in his later thinking. In *Sense and Non-Sense* (1964, 17; see also 1993, 39) he describes his ideas by quoting the thoughts of the painter Cezanne, in a passage from which one can read the total intertwining of body (including mind), world, and Being: “The landscape thinks itself in me ... and I am its consciousness.” Merleau-Ponty (1964a, 48) continues these thoughts in *Signs*, where he also uses an art-related example: “There is no choice to be made between the world and art or between ‘our senses’ and absolute painting, for they pass into one another.” Thus, it seems impossible, or irrelevant, to make an ontological or epistemological choice regarding the world (and art) or our senses (and painting), because they are included in each other: The world is in (art and) our senses (are in painting).

According to Claude Lefort (xxi), Merleau-Ponty (1968) is committed to a new kind of ontology in *The Visible and the Invisible*, the philosopher’s last and partly unfinished work. The work’s translator, Alphonso Lingis, states in the Preface (liii) that Merleau-Ponty is committed to an ontology that tells

us “the invisible substructure of the visible is the key to the unconscious structure of consciousness.” According to my interpretation, this thought crystallizes and describes further Merleau-Ponty’s (1962, 1964, 1964a, 1993, 1993a) earlier theoretical discussion about the union of the ontological and epistemological starting points. This union can only appear when asking questions about one’s relationship to the world (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 103): “Philosophy is the perceptual faith questioning itself about itself.”

Merleau-Ponty (1968, 200) also admits in *The Visible and the Invisible*, in the unfinished Working Notes, that the starting point of Cartesian dualism in *Phenomenology of Perception* was not to last: “The problems posed in *Ph.P.* are insoluble because I start there from the ‘consciousness’–‘object’ distinction.” Merleau-Ponty (176) reminds himself to make it clear that what he means in *Phenomenology of Perception* is not psychology but ontology: “Say that I must show that what one might consider to be ‘psychology’ (*Phenomenology of Perception*) is in fact ontology.”

This union of the visible and the invisible that Merleau-Ponty now presents means a kind of chiasm, an intertwining of the body (including mind), world, and Being (Merleau-Ponty 130), which one could interpret to contain fibers from ontological idealism, a thought which appears in a new concept Merleau-Ponty (152) now uses, the flesh: “We will therefore have to recognize an ideality that is not alien to the flesh, that gives its axes, its depth, its dimensions.” The flesh is a kind of element of Being, not material or mind, but something in between: It is a physical fiber of being, which appears as a certain style (139). However, in my opinion Merleau-Ponty (152–153) still rejects the possibility of pure ontological idealism by binding perception and the body:

But, however we finally have to understand it, the “pure” ideality already streams forth along the articulations of the aesthesiological body, along the contours of the sensible things . . . . Let us only say that the pure ideality is itself not without flesh nor freed from horizon structures: it lives of them, though they be another flesh and other horizons.

#### *Lived Body in a World*

This is Merleau-Ponty’s starting and ending point, the lived body in a world, which unpacks the Cartesian dualistic concept of a separated mind and body. The lived body in a world makes it possible and gives us permission to describe also the human experiences, which the scientific view of the world does not recognize (Heinämaa & Reuter 149).

According to Martina Reuter (269), Merleau-Ponty’s aim is to describe this pre-reflexive, physical relationship with the world, which points at the meaning of perception, the relationship with a world created by the senses.

Our scientific way of relating to the world first demands a relationship with the world through perception (Merleau-Ponty 1962, viii). Merleau-Ponty (1993, 16) stresses that science is only a construction built on a ground formed by the natural world. Our physical relationship with the world always comes before our scientific relationship with the world. Merleau-Ponty's (1962, xiii) concept of the body means no less than a total relationship with the world: The body is saturated with being in the world.

Consequently, Merleau-Ponty's (1962, vii) phenomenological aim is to describe the lived experience of the body in a lived relationship with the world. Describing the lived experience of the body means excluding rigorous scientific explanations while perceiving and describing. Through them we cannot reach the lived experience of the body. In Merleau-Ponty's (1993a, 17, 20) thinking, this kind of lived relationship of the world, the body (including mind), and Being can be totally reached only in art: "the painter puts the whole body into his work." How could the spirit paint? In fact, "the painter changes the world into a painting by lending his own body to it." This forms a perfect example of the ontological and epistemological union of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology.

#### *Phenomenological Position, Meaning, and Style*

When I linked phenomenology to ontological materialism, I meant that reality consists of physical and mental material (Määttänen 37). I also stated that physical and mental material always appears as, or become, material in some form: For example, physical material can appear as a building, and culture can appear as work of art. Mental material, such as subjective feelings, can appear as different facial expressions or spoken and written discourses, and culture can become material as different positions that human beings take or are given to in relation to it. Physical and mental materials are also inevitably included in each other. Ontological materialism connects the body and consciousness, and relates strongly also to subjective feelings and thoughts (37). Thus, it is connected to Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, which overcomes the Cartesian dualism that portrays a separate body and consciousness, and tells us that the intentional, living body with all its feelings and experiences takes and/or is given a position in a world (Heinämaa & Reuter 140–141).

Merleau-Ponty (1962, xix; 2000, 181) describes phenomenology as an association of extreme subjectivism and objectivism within the concepts of world and reason. This association can occur through experiences and the intersubjective meanings attached to them: Different experiences strengthen each other, and their common meaning arises. It has to be noticed that we

cannot reach another person's experience as such. But what we can reach and what is intersubjectively divided in another person's experience is the meaning of it (Merleau-Ponty 337; Paul Ricoeur 43–44), which is also tied to culture (see Heinämaa 100).

Alfred Schutz (171) points out that we who share the same environment, the one and common intersubjective world, are able to interpret the meanings of other people's experiences exactly from this foundation. Through these intersubjectively divided meanings of our experiences in a certain culture we must also describe the positions that we take and/or are given to in relation to prevailing culture. This leads to the following conclusion: In the same culture we attach intersubjective and invisible meanings to our experiences and feelings. According to Merleau-Ponty (1962, xix–xx, 337; 2000, 181), this means the miracle of joined experiences. That kind of miracle is with us all the time, in ourselves. This approach makes it possible and gives us an opportunity to try to understand each other (Susan Krieger 220; Marja-Liisa Honkasalo 125).

Merleau-Ponty (1968, 155) writes about meaning "The meaning is ... the totality of what is said, the integral of all the differentiations of the verbal chain; it is given with the words for those who have ears to hear." Here, he folds the world, the body, Being, and meaning as chiasm, where the invisible inhabits the visible, making the world visible (151): "Rather it is the invisible of this world, that which inhabits this world, sustains it, and renders it visible." Meanings are the invisible, of which Merleau-Ponty (215) writes and through which the concept of style (139) is to be described by interpretation:

Meaning is *invisible*, but the invisible is not the contradictory of the visible: the visible itself has an invisible inner framework (*membrure*), and the in-visible is the secret counterpart of the visible, it appears only within it, it is the *Nichturpräsentierbar* which is presented to me as such within the world—one cannot see it there and every effort to *see it there* makes it disappear, but it is *in the line* of the visible, it is its virtual focus, it is inscribed within it (in filigree) (215).

#### NORTHERN FEMINIST ETHNOGRAPHY

In my feminist ethnography the interest is focused on the concept of identity, which I will describe from the phenomenological viewpoint as girls' taken and given positions (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 193; Heinämaa 94–95; Heinämaa & Reuter 140–141) in the context of girls' culture research and the study of nongraded upper secondary schooling. Heinämaa (1996) describes a new way of understanding sexual difference according to Merleau-Ponty's (1962) and Simone de Beauvoir's (1993). Heinämaa (1996) describes sex from the

phenomenological viewpoint as a way of acting and a style of being (see also Iris Marion Young 1990; Tuija Nykyri 1997).

I have applied the idea of girls' styles to my own research. I have analyzed collected data (field notes, interviews, and writings, see below) in a phenomenological-hermeneutic way (Ricoeur 2000; Timo Laine 26–27) by reading the positions that girls take and are given to by interpreting culturally sexed meanings of girls' bodies and their intentionality, language, and communication, and also sexuality (Heinämaa 87–109, 153–157). The intentionality of girls' bodies refers to feelings and acts and the meanings attached to them—how to be a girl. This way of being signifies girls' styles (153–157) in the context of nongraded upper secondary schooling. As such, this method of analysis connects with feminist phenomenology, which emphasizes the description of a lived experience never outside of its full material context, but attached to the world and thus producing knowledge (Linda Martín Alcoff 48–51).

In the autumn term of 2002 I spent about three months at the Lapinkulma research school, which is a middle-sized (about 300 students), nongraded upper secondary school in northern Finland. I took part in the school's activities mainly as an observing participant (Martin Hammersley & Paul Atkinson 104–105). I wrote notes in the field and interviewed eight girls. Before the actual field period in 2002 I collected writings from the girls of one study group in the school during the spring terms of 2001 and 2002. The writings concerned studying experiences in nongraded upper secondary school. I also made a few short excursions to the research school in the autumn term of 2001 and in the spring term of 2002.

To listen to girls' voices in the context of nongraded upper secondary schooling is interesting because the students in these schools are mostly girls. In 2004 there were 436 nongraded upper secondary schools in Finland, and it was possible to study in the same manner in 43 other educational institutions. The total number of students was 120,500, of which more than half (57%) were girls. In Lapland there 4,832 students, of which more than half (57.9%) were girls as well (Students in Non-Graded Upper Secondary School 120,500 in 2004.)

On the basis of the collected data (Hille's writings from 2001 and interviews from 2003 used in this chapter), I will describe the positions which Hille took and were given to during her studies. This configuration is interesting with regard to nongraded schooling. It allows the student to adjust in an individual way, for example, the amount of time spent studying and to decide on the content of studies (only to a certain point), all depending on the level of "nongradedness" that the school employs. For a single student this ideology

means the possibility of constructing an individual studying path, which he or she can tailor according to his or her facilities, capabilities, goals, and life situation in general. On the whole, nongraded studying means that a single student does not have to study in a fixed group or at a certain time (Väljjarvi 1994, 9).

Genuine nongraded studying should mean freedom, responsibility, individuality, and flexibility. One significant matter concerning nongraded studying is that no norm (of any form) should come up concerning the duration of the studies. This relates to all and everything at the school, the spoken and written discourses (Kuusela 214). Before I go into Hille's experiences of studying, I will briefly discuss the ideology of nongraded schooling in light of the development of Finnish educational policy.

*Finnish Educational Policy. From Collective to Individual*

According to Osmo Lampinen (13, 22), the basis for the Finnish educational policy was created during the time when Finland was first part of Sweden and then part of Russia (1809–1917). The beginning of this educational policy can be placed at the end of the nineteenth century, when the existing institutions of learning and their fundamental ideologies were born. The next, larger transition concerning educational policy happened during the 1960s and 1970s, when it became more uniform and the planning of education became professional. This change was effected by the goal of pursuing equality. Constant training was typical of this new educational ideology. Since the 1980s educational policy has linked educational institutions' educational autonomy to education seen as means to accomplish specific goals.

Since the 1980s educational policy has focused on changing the ideological climate of society. The keyword has been individualism instead of collectiveness. The market economy has become an icon also in the realm of education. This has happened due to changes in working life, which stresses the meaning of constant learning in order to maintain productiveness and high quality. Learning means cooperation in organizations, but it also means individual preparedness and motivation to develop oneself constantly (212–214).

This changing of society's ideological climate and educational policy can also be seen in the process of structural change concerning upper secondary schooling during the last nearly four decades. In addition to nongraded schooling, this has meant changing the ideology of upper secondary schooling to a more individualistic direction, which has led to a connection between ideal nongraded schooling and constituting and following an individualistic studying path in the nongraded environment. The first attempts to reform

the upper secondary schools started in the 1970s with nongraded schooling experiments. They continued in the 1980s as course-form experiments. The second phase of the nongraded experiment started at the end of the 1980s and lasted until 1994, when a new law concerning upper secondary schooling enabled students all over the country to move to the nongraded system. From 1994 to 1996 all upper secondary schools in Finland adopted the nongraded system (Kuusela 31, 225).

According to Vuorinen and Välijärvi (60; see also Anja Hiltunen 23; Kuusela 231), nongraded schooling resulted in the partial disappearance of the class community. This has been seen as one of the essential problems with the nongraded studying system. Traditional class-based studying meant the possibility of practicing one's cooperation skills as well as social subjectivity. These skills have a significant meaning when participating in working life. Interestingly, the possibility to practice these kinds of social skills has also been attached to studying in the nongraded environment (Mehtäläinen 81). However, the meaning of the more unofficial social networks such as school friendships has not decreased (Vuorinen & Välijärvi 60). For example, the support that girls offer to each other at school is very important to them (Gordon, Lahelma, & Holland 189).

One of the essential qualities of the nongraded ideology is that students and teachers vary for different lessons. This has been seen as leading to superficial and temporary relationships. On the whole, the meaning of a familiar group cannot be underestimated. Even though it has been stated that a fixed group is not necessary for pleasant schooling, it seems that a familiar group increases solidarity and one's abilities to get on well (Vuorinen & Välijärvi 61–62; Välijärvi 1994, 54–55.) Kuusela (231) notes that for a young person, a constant group means social support and a feeling of safety. As I stated before, this kind of support is especially important for girls (Gordon, Lahelma, & Holland 189).

#### HILLE'S STUDIES AT LAPINKULMA

In the following, I will discuss the positions given to and taken by Hille in the context of nongraded schooling. The concept of *position* describes more accurately how the body is in a world from the phenomenological point of view (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 193; Heinämaa 94–95; Heinämaa & Reuter 140–141). Position includes an image about the bodily being and how the body is settled in relation to other people and things. Position includes the phenomenological idea of intentionality, which means that our positions as bodily beings sharpen in constant interaction with something and someone.

Merleau-Ponty (1993a, 63) describes this position sharpening of a living being by comparing it to a wavering position in a painting: “A painting brings in front of my eyes approximately the same as real motion: conveniently dimmed, momentary visions in series, and if it concerns a living being, an unstable position that wavers between an earlier and later situation.” The painting or describing of positions should be understood as leaving more space rather than locking or giving definite interpretations.

At the time of the interview (January 2003) Hille was 19 years old. She lived in the same northern town in which the Lapinkulma School is situated. Hille was about to move from her parents to live alone in a rented flat. She worked as a cashier in a grocery shop, and graduated from the Lapinkulma nongraded upper secondary school in December 2002. She studied in Lapinkulma for two and a half years from 2000 to December 2002. Before that she studied in a nongraded vocational upper secondary school for one year, 1999–2000. Hille wanted to change to the “normal,” conventional, nongraded upper secondary school because she wanted to engage in more focused and extensive studying: “Last year I was in nongraded vocational upper secondary school, and there I took much fewer courses than in the first class in normal upper secondary school” (w2001).<sup>1</sup> Hille believed that studying in the normal nongraded upper secondary school was more demanding than studying in the vocational nongraded upper secondary school. She also believed that the nongraded vocational upper secondary system was too fuzzy and the field of business and administration wrong for her:

Hille: Well, that school (nongraded vocational upper secondary school, addition VY) was really unfinished still ... and that field wasn't mine anyway.

Virpi: What was the field you studied there?

Hille: Business and administration. (i2003)

According to Hille, studying in the “normal” Lapinkulma nongraded upper secondary school was more demanding and required more responsibility than studying in the nongraded vocational upper secondary school. For example, one had to make his or her own timetable for the studies. That might not be a very easy task at first:

Hille: Well, in nongraded vocational upper secondary school it was easy, they just brought the timetables and said that you go to these lessons; in Lapinkulma you had to make your own timetables and we were a bit late ... like a year in that. Others had done it already and we who came later didn't know how to do it properly. It was a little difficult, but once you got the hang of it and some friends helped, it went just well. (i2003)

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<sup>1</sup> Data are direct quotations from Hille's interview or writing. Codes at the end of the quotations mean as follows: w2001 writing in 2001; and i2003, interview in 2003.

The ideal of nongraded schooling in Lapinkulma was questioned when Hille described how the students who had moved from the nongraded vocational upper secondary school, could not keep up with the studying pace as compared to those who had started one year earlier. “Being late” with studies or having to hurry them to keep up with other students’ studying pace does not support the ideal of nongraded studying (cf. Kuusela 214):

Virpi: How did you experience the studying pace at Lapinkulma?

Hille: Actually, when I moved to Lapinkulma, it was really strict, because you had to catch up with the others who had started studying one year earlier. (i2003)

### *Pleased Individualist*

I have located Hille’s taken position as that of an individualist in the context of nongraded schooling, where by *individualist* I refer to individual subjectivity as it relates to culture (Lehtonen 177), here represented by nongraded upper secondary schooling. As for Hille, the individualist position indicates general satisfaction towards being able to build one’s own studying path and exploit flexible study times (Ojala 33–34):

In this system you can well decide yourself what to read and when. You can decide yourself your own pace of studying and how long you stay at school. If you want to get out quickly you just take lots of courses, if you don’t have to hurry you can take less courses. What is also good is that you can take first year students’ courses even if you study for the third year and vice versa. On the whole, I have good experiences of the non-graded studying. (w2001)

Her having studied in nongraded schools for 3.5 years and graduating in the autumn term of 2002 connects Hille’s path to the ideology of nongraded schooling, which emphasizes individualism. That means an aspiration to increase individualism by allowing alternative schooling paths, which also makes it possible to disengage from following any particular group. It also means not having to follow the “normal” schooling time (Väljjarvi 1994, 7; Lukiolaki 629/1998 5: 24§). Hille believes that nongradedness worked out at Lapinkulma and with her studies:

Virpi: What do you think about this nongraded schooling, was it a nongraded upper secondary school to which you went?

Hille: Well, yes it is because in my third year I went to first year students’ courses and so ... I didn’t have lessons with my own class, I mean group, always; I was with different students also. (i2003)

I specify the position Hille takes as that of a more searching individualist. This is connected to the lack of clarity in her professional plans and also to her choice of school subjects. Hille considered the “normal” nongraded

upper secondary school, as opposed to the vocational one, as a place in which you do not have to know your future occupational plans exactly. Vocational education leads straight to a certain profession, and Hille did not exactly know what that would be for her: “I don’t know, I wanted to do the nongraded upper secondary school first, because I didn’t yet have any profession that would surely have been my thing” (i2003). For Hille, studying in the “normal” upper secondary school meant more time to think about her career and other future plans, which were mostly open. In this sense, it seems that to some extent the goals of nongraded upper secondary education, which aims at supporting students to become educated persons and giving them useful knowledge and skills concerning their further studies, worklife, hobbies, and self-development (Lukiolaki 629/1998 1: 2§), satisfied Hille.

Because Hille’s occupational plans were unclear, she chose subjects based on her interests rather than certain profession that she would have known about during her studies. Hille said that already from the beginning of their studies at Lapinkulma the students were reminded of their own responsibility to choose subjects according to their further studies and career plans. Hille felt that she was not ready for that kind of responsibility and goal-oriented thinking. At the same time she questioned the meaning of general education in a nongraded upper secondary school (cf. Lukiolaki 629/1998 1: 1§–2§):

Virpi-Hille: Now, when you think about your subjects at school, did you have a certain idea in mind when choosing them?

Hille: Actually, I chose them based on my interest; I think it is very difficult when you are told in the first year that now you have to know where to go to after nongraded upper secondary school, what to study, and so on. (i2003)

### *Orphan and Despised Loser Following Nongraded Ideology*

At the same time that Hille took a position as a (more searching) individualist student, she was given a position of a loser because of her individual aspirations in her studies. Hille said that when nearly all her friends graduated from Lapinkulma in spring 2002, she was left alone. She described how hard it was to be alone when all the other students seemed to belong to a group. She felt lonely, an orphan, and did not have anybody to talk to:

Hille: Well, in autumn when I came to school for the first day and all the others were in groups and I felt alone, I thought, now I’m just here by myself and don’t actually belong to anything anymore; I’m one of those who some students call losers and who stay for the last, stay for the fourth year, for whatever reason, I felt kind of an orphan.

Virpi: You felt lonely.

Hille: Yes, and I felt like an orphan because I didn’t have nobody to talk to, and others appeared to belong to some group, I didn’t actually belong to no group anymore. (i2003)

Hille's discussion confirms what Aapola, Gonick, and Harris state (110–112, 131), that girls' friendships are significant (also) at schools because friendships make it possible for them to mirror their own identity and try out different forms of femininity. Girls acquire friendships within networks, which create a feeling of community. In societies that emphasize individualism and to which the ideology of the nongraded studying ideology is connected (Väljjarvi 1994), the feeling of community seems to have an even more significant meaning for girls, as Hille's discussion shows (see also Näre 96).

Hille specified that it was her decision to use the possibility to lengthen her schooling time. When I asked why she used the word loser, she explained that it did not come from her but from the other students, especially the younger ones. Thus, the position of a loser was given to her. Hille emphasized that the teachers were very encouraging and did not let her think she was a loser:

Virpi: You used the word loser, where does it come from, that over third-year students are losers?  
 Hille: Well, actually, it's not my opinion. It was my own decision to study that long. But many younger students thought so; they looked down their noses at me, saying: "Oh, she is still here, what on earth is she still doing here."

Virpi: Especially students?

Hille: Yeah, students. The teachers were of course very encouraging and all because they knew the situation, but many students who I didn't even know went like: "Oh, that one's still here. She still hasn't graduated, has she?" (i2003)

From the viewpoint of phenomenology and ontological materialism, it is interesting that nobody actually called Hille a loser vocally. There were no spoken words about that, but Hille could read the facial expressions and gestures of the other students. The younger students looked down their noses at Hille, showing her that because she was following nongraded schooling, she was given the position of a loser. Therefore, she was being despised to some extent:

Hille: Nobody said it, but you could see it in their facial expressions and gestures that during lessons, when I many times had to study together with the younger ones, they were like: "Oh, that character is still here."

Virpi: How would you describe those facial expressions and gestures?

Hille: You could say that they were a bit disparaging. (i2003)

This shows how ontological materialism connects the body and consciousness, and relates strongly also to subjective feelings and thoughts (Määttänen 37). In doing so, it is connected to Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, which overcomes the Cartesian dualism of body and consciousness and describes how the intentional, living body with all its

feelings and experiences takes and/or is given a position in the world (Heinämaa & Reuter 140–141).

#### CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have shown how Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology continues Husserl's and showed how their ideas have a shared ontological commitment to ontological materialism. In the context of phenomenology, this commitment to ontological materialism means that physical and mental material cannot be seen as separated parts of ontological aspects: They are inevitably included in each other in such a way that there cannot be one without the other. The fact that I am writing this chapter supports my argument. It also suggests that experiences and feelings have a visible, material way of existing. Therefore, experiences and feelings can be considered as visible and readable signs of epistemological content. To be able to understand this means looking into your heart and believing what you see.

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## HERMENEUTIC EXCELLENCE AS A META-ETHIC

## INTRODUCTION

Alasdair MacIntyre's special concept of *subordination* can serve as a corrective for certain misconceptions about the intersection of morality and tradition. I argue that Hans-Georg Gadamer's portrayal of *hermeneutic excellence* serves as an ideal model of subordination, and therefore serves as a lens through which education in MacIntyrian practices can be better understood. Gadamer's identification of historical consciousness at three moments helps us to distinguish between more and less successful cases of subordination, and his theory shows how the work of understanding involves specific modes of human interaction. From the vantage of a Gadamerian perspective, I show how MacIntyre's theory of moral excellence points to the concept of hermeneutic excellence as a meta-ethic that is grounded in practitioners' formative experiences. To suggest the value of understanding ethics from this perspective, I examine tradition in the arts and the related problem of artistic genius.

## EXCELLENCE IN MACINTYRIAN PRACTICES

How does one learn to be virtuous? Alasdair MacIntyre helps us pose this question when he proposes that the historical concept of virtue can be translated into a framework for understanding contemporary life. He sets out to understand this framework in *After Virtue*<sup>1</sup> and he charts out a path of inquiry that he and his colleagues have followed for now more than two decades. MacIntyre's answer, though by his own admission incomplete, invokes the concept of *practices*: complex social activities by which virtue is attained and manifested. MacIntyre theorizes that the conceptual structure of virtue emanates from the experience of practices, just as it is defined by the cumulative experience of individuals participating in a variety of practices across a lifetime of growth and achievement. This conception of practices, along with a conception of the narrative order of a single human life and a conception of moral traditions, is constitutive of MacIntyre's tripartite view of moral life.<sup>2</sup> Together, these concepts steer moral philosophy toward a meta-ethical narrative that establishes a plausibly universal discourse of "morality" in the contemporary world.

The question of how one *learns* to be virtuous, however, is not clearly addressed by the discourse surrounding this meta-ethical project—MacIntyre does not attend to the matter of learning with professional educators or educational institutions in mind. This is a strange omission for a philosopher who relies so heavily on the structure of social formations, but it is understandable given the scope of his inquiry. In my recent work on the concept of artistic genius,<sup>3</sup> I attempt to do just this: leverage the philosophical (and aesthetic) power of MacIntyre’s meta-ethical project to recommend a dialogical direction for students and teachers engaging in art education. I argue that MacIntyre’s concept of practice, vis-à-vis *subordination*, is crucial to our understanding the concept of artistic genius in a compelling and fruitful way. Subordination, theorized by MacIntyre as an essential experience for entering into a practice, causes judgments about excellence to arise in a systematic way.<sup>4</sup> He points to subordination as a behavioral trait that coincides with the “achievement” of excellence in practices and depicts subordination as instrumental toward the end of achieving “goods”:

[A practice’s] goods can only be achieved by subordinating ourselves within the practice in our relationship to other practitioners. We have to learn to recognize what is due to whom; we have to be prepared to take whatever self-endangering risks are demanded along the way; and we have to listen carefully to what we are told about our own inadequacies and to reply with the same carefulness for the facts.<sup>5</sup>

This is not unrelated to a common sense view of subordination. What makes MacIntyre’s concept of subordination special is its relation to *the good* or the *goods* of a practice. It must now be understood as an ethical concept—by which I mean a concept that partly defines what counts as *moral*.

Explaining the power of genius as an ethical concept remains a difficult project to get off the ground. Partly, the problem of recommending a meta-ethical discourse is like the problem of constructing a coherent theory involving virtue. Like any philosophical concept, virtue is not defined once and for all, and this is to be expected in a world that is similarly unfinished. To overcome this obstacle in my work on genius, I proposed that the definition of virtue be restricted to mean, in MacIntyre’s terms, *excellence in practices*. Though the notion that virtue perfectly corresponds to excellence in practices departs from MacIntyre’s theory in important ways that I will not articulate here, it is a helpful restriction. Philosophically, it amounts to compartmentalizing the aspirations of moral philosophy in favor of educational philosophy. Whether or not this is desirable, I assume, will be reflected in an individual thinker’s interests and aims—presumably this is an orientation that leads professional philosophers to conclude that a particular text is “practical” or “applied” in nature. I hope this distinction can be at least suspended here, and

the matter of what else is to be gained by philosophizing about virtue can be addressed elsewhere.

While the outcome of bracketing out certain historical depths is unenviable, it is also expected and unavoidable. To continue to elaborate on the significance of artistic genius, I will here address readers with an interest in the concept of *hermeneutic excellence*—what I propose as an analog of sorts to MacIntyre’s concept of subordination. I locate this concept in Hans-Georg Gadamer’s theory of philosophical hermeneutics, which lends itself to an educational perspective of social interaction. I will not depart from the matter of genius altogether, for my belief that genius is a key concept for engaging pedagogy is grounded in the operations and nature of historical consciousness. This is the matter I will address below.

The correspondence between a Gadamerian notion of hermeneutic excellence and a MacIntyrian notion of subordination warrants investigation. As in my earlier work, I will here define hermeneutic excellence according to Gadamer’s view of the processes and purposes of *understanding*—a notion itself that represents the achievement of a certain kind of excellence within the practice of philosophy. I will also show how hermeneutic excellence assumes a moral valence à la MacIntyre’s theory of subordination as a necessary step towards the achievement of excellence in practices, and I will inquire further into the meaning of subordination for historical consciousness.

The aims of this discussion are (1) to continue to transfer the power that is traditionally attached to “morality” (and those who extol its meaning) into the hands of thoughtful educators and (2) to invite philosophers with a specialization in hermeneutics to analyze and extend this argument.

#### THE EMERGENCE OF HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Gadamer conveys the notion of hermeneutic excellence as an ideal of the process of understanding, and in so doing, he discloses one aspect of the nature of human relationships. Hermeneutic excellence can also be understood through the lens of MacIntyre’s philosophy as a quality of individuals’ experience of practices, and Gadamer’s theory further defines the historical nature of this experience—this is a somewhat interdisciplinary view that locates philosophical hermeneutics as an extension of ethics.<sup>6</sup>

In this section I arrive at a definition of hermeneutic excellence through an exegesis of Gadamer’s theory of the processes of understanding. Only after a layered description of understanding is at hand can an ideal of historical consciousness be posed as a foundation for ethical discourse. The reason we ought to attempt to disclose this meta-ethic is to understand ethical discourses

as speaking to the qualities of individuals' "embeddedness" in one practice or another. This amounts to understanding the world from a deeply educational perspective.

### *Coming to an Agreement*

To tease out the moral meaning of hermeneutic excellence, understanding must be distinguished from other kinds of communication. Understanding is not a special task, for example, if people are already in agreement with each other; for Gadamer, understanding means *coming to an agreement*.<sup>7</sup> While it is plain enough that a certain amount of agreement is important to communities that engage in practices—where processes of understanding are multifaceted and complex—it is quite another matter to see how agreement is essential to those communities and practices. That is, the key here will be to see how practices hang together only as a function of tradition—that the notions of "the process of understanding" and "experiencing tradition as an event" are intertwined. Both notions must be understood in terms of an agreement, as Gadamer emphasizes the "dialogical process where two positions or points of view find their way to agreement on one and the same particular reality or subject matter."<sup>8</sup> To consider tradition and understanding as a matter of agreement is to consider them with education in mind. This is the first of three perspectives that allow us to distinguish between more and less successful cases of subordination.

If we take art as an example, the matter of agreement is important because it emphasizes the social nature of art practice. Artists are not likely to always (or immediately) agree about the truth of an artwork. The same can be said of artists and their audience. That is, the "facts of life" are often muddled in artistic representation. The work of coming to an agreement about a subject matter involves an "I" and a "Thou" who reconcile different substantive experiences. This may be apparent, for example, when an artist appropriates Picasso's imagery to make meaningful art about war and emotion, as I attempted to demonstrate in a recent exhibition.<sup>9</sup> According to Gadamer, neither Picasso's artworks nor mine represent these subjects truthfully prior to *interpretation*. It is only in and through artistic processes and the interpretation of artistic processes that Picasso and I arrive at an agreement.

Understanding is bounded by a context. To understand a particular work of art, one is limited by the horizon of one's experience and the horizon of the work of art. We look at art through living eyes—eyes that have seen the world in a particular way. A work of art made by another person with different worldly experiences than our own represents a different way of looking. It would not, however, be correct to say that the "true" meaning of the painting

is wholly inaccessible to an audience by virtue of these differences. There are also many things that an artist and his or her audience have in common, and other knowledge of life that it would be difficult to classify other than to simply assert that it is part of *human experience*.

It would be equally wrong-headed to assert, without qualification, that one understands the painting, for with a welcome serious-mindedness about art we would not want to reduce the painting to the mere sum total of the viewer's previous experience. "A work has the character of an event, which goes beyond the subjectivity both of the creator and the spectator or listener."<sup>10</sup> That is, there is a real chance, in front of the *Weeping Woman*, for a person to expand his or her understanding to include something of the world as it was in 1937 amid the atrocities of the Spanish Civil War. Likewise, there is a chance in front of contemporary paintings for a person to expand his or her understanding to include something of the world as it was during the American invasion of Iraq.

Balancing the immediate force of the "languages" one currently speaks (as a viewer) with the strangeness and visual presence of the painting (made by another artist) should be the goal for an observer interested in the meaning of Picasso's work (i.e., with an interest in *historical truth*). In the process of coming to an agreement with Picasso about certain features of the world, there is the possibility of both Picasso and his audience undergoing a transformation. Although Picasso is no longer alive and the notion of him changing lacks sense, there is nevertheless a sense in which his identity, along with a painting, undergoes a change after its having been encountered by others. An art historian interested in the meaning of this painting should have some account of *people like us* taking an interest in it.

#### *A Path of Understanding*

Art making is often a messy undertaking—not only materially, but also conceptually. The scenario of viewing an artwork is a more straightforward case of agreement when compared to "educational" scenarios: when the *I* and *Thou* are more substantial participants in a shared practice. Essentially, such scenarios involve the matter of how artists undergo processes of understanding while also creating works of art. When understanding is sustained over time, as it often is during the production of art, it is more difficult to describe as a Gadamerian hermeneuticist. In this section, the process of coming to an agreement will be subsumed under the matter of a practitioner's experience of a "path of understanding." The basic argument remains: There is a kind of art making that involves coming to agreements with others, but artistic processes allow the content of such agreements to unfold over time.

According to Gadamer, understanding takes the shape of a dialogue. The dialogue leads the interpreter onto a *path of understanding* that is defined as an ongoing movement between understanding “the parts” and “the whole” of a thing. In so describing understanding with the metaphor of a path, Gadamer’s concern is for the possibility of *truth* in the human sciences after the “subjectivization of aesthetics”—his name for the undesirable view of subjectivity that sees individuals’ aesthetic experiences as totally isolated, and, therefore, as yielding knowledge with no claim to truth.<sup>11</sup> Aesthetic experience, on this view, is highly personal, and aesthetic knowledge is really no knowledge at all. To accept this view of human experience is tantamount to believing, in an epistemological sense, that everyone only experiences the landscape of his or her own island: I can tell my friend about the path through the woods and the vegetation on the far shore, but she can only imagine these details in comparison to the Martian topography of her own island. Human experience is imagined to be *radically* individualistic.

In contrast to this unworldly aesthetics, Gadamer argues that we inhabit the same landscape. Our experience is our own only in the sense that we have a “bodied” perspective, but by traversing the same paths, encountering the same horizons, and anchoring our language to shared experience, we are able to map out the shared world. With a view to this alleged case, John Dewey saw both the very essence of science and the possibility of educational relationships. He says, “the map orders individual experiences, connecting them with one another irrespective of the local and temporal circumstances and accidents of their original discovery”<sup>12</sup> and the map “puts the net product of past experience in the form which makes it most available for the future.”<sup>13</sup> Dewey strongly urges us to remember that it is the explorer’s notes from his or her daring, exploratory journey that makes map-making possible. Gadamer’s concept of the path of understanding renews the spirit of this metaphor. Philosophical hermeneutics shows us how we both use the map and live the life of the explorer at the same time.

As the *I*, an artist may encounter the *Weeping Woman* as a depiction of a subject such as *a certain kind of suffering*. He or she is able to recognize this experience because it is a specific case of a broader, widespread human experience. As the *Thou*, the painting represents the suffering known to Picasso. A dialogue begins when the *I* and *Thou* are not in agreement about this subject. One aspect of Gadamer’s view is that there *would be* a common view of this particular kind of suffering were it not obscured by that which makes it present: language, or more specifically in this particular case, *the tradition of painting*. Tradition is the historical condition that is coextensive with the practice. Tradition allows us to expand our knowledge by “closing

a distance” (in this case, the distance of time and place between Picasso and myself) at the cost of possible misunderstandings. Entering into a dialogue about suffering is an event supervened upon by a tradition in which an *I* and *Thou* may eventually agree. This is what is meant when Gadamer says, “[subject matter] is the path and goal of mutual understanding.”<sup>14</sup> Insofar as tradition is receptive to the dialogue, a shared view of suffering becomes (to a greater or lesser degree) part of the *true* meaning of the painting. This only begins to describe, however, the scenario of the *artist as viewer*, which is perhaps more fraught with possible misunderstandings than when a viewer is not an artist.

When the audience for a work of art is another artist, he or she enters into a significant dialogue with a fellow artist. This much is conveyed by the example of someone coming to an agreement with Picasso about suffering. But the path of understanding, as a second perspective from which we can judge subordination, can be more circuitous than a single case of agreement. In this process of coming to an agreement, a subject such as suffering will elicit questions about tradition—questions that will not be equally interesting, or intelligible, to everyone. And not all questions will be equally important to understanding. The most interesting questions may be those that dwell on the relationship between the meaning of a subject (such as suffering) and a tradition of art (such as portrait painting). More knowledge of art, it would seem, raises the stakes of viewership. For the philosophical hermeneuticist, *questioning* is a behavior that tells us more about this relationship for an artist as a *student of painting*.

The significance of questioning for Gadamer is related to his theory of the hermeneutic circle as the form of the process of understanding in historical consciousness.<sup>15</sup> The circle is a metaphor that “describes understanding as the interplay of the movement of tradition and the movement of the interpreter.”<sup>16</sup> It is an idea that captures the dialogical relation between the parts and the whole as opposite poles on a spectrum of conceptualization. In the example of suffering, it is the difference between what suffering *can mean* and what a particular case *adds* to understanding. Neither a general concept nor the meaning of a particular case is independent of one another, and the circle reminds us of their interrelationship during the process of understanding. It is not, however, a metaphor that makes sense of agreement (i.e., a shared experience); our circle is our own.

Questioning is shaped this way because students arrive on the scene with a relationship to a tradition. Indeed, we have a relationship to many practices, and, Gadamer reminds us, these relationships take the form of prejudices. “[An] initial meaning emerges only because he is reading the text

with particular expectations in regard to a certain meaning.”<sup>17</sup> The concept of prejudice is precisely that which makes us expectant of and receptive to meaning. For Gadamer, a prejudice is a positive valence of personality. “The meaning of ‘belonging’—i.e., the element of tradition in our historical-hermeneutical activity—is fulfilled in the commonality of fundamental, enabling prejudices.”<sup>18</sup> In this way, prejudices can both make one receptive to a thing and make one’s reception of a thing unique. Gadamer shows that this is not a *radically* subjective uniqueness because each person has, in their own peculiar way, inherited their prejudices from tradition. Thus, when a thing addresses us, and we wish to understand tradition, we need to foreground our prejudices.<sup>19</sup> If a student is not conscious of his or her biases, he or she will not learn what a practice has to offer. The student will not share the experience of *living as an artist* within a community of practitioners.

The act of posing questions is related to the suspension of one’s prejudices. As Gadamer says “all suspension of judgments and hence, *a fortiori*, of prejudices, has the logical structure of a question.”<sup>20</sup> In this way, the foregrounding of prejudices can lead to the suspension of judgment. To suspend one’s judgment opens a space for questioning. Whereas prejudices normally foreclose the process of understanding, questions embrace dialogue. Questions allow us to look more closely: “Why does she look terrified?” “Why is she painted in primary colors?” “Is that a tissue or a veil of tears?” We look at the painting for questions, not answers. This enables a student to relate to an artist in the way that subordination requires—he or she can “get inside” the mind of the artist and ask the questions that the artist may have asked. It is a first step toward meeting MacIntyre’s requirement that subordination involve a practitioner’s acceptance of the authority of standards of excellence within a practice. To apprehend a painting as a answer to a question is an essential condition for trusting that another artist has achieved excellence in painting. This will become clearer as the relationship between two artists is described as the substance of tradition in the following section. For now it is enough to see that subordination is made possible by questioning.

Gadamer says, “the text must be understood as an answer to a real question,”<sup>21</sup> and by this he means that the viewer discovers something in the painting that *makes a difference* to him or her. The example of contemporary art makes clear how questioning can lead an artist to a subject such as suffering that a painting represents to him. Picasso’s *suffering* may become the subject of our inquiry, and the generative source of our work. For Gadamer, “the most important thing is the question that the text puts to us.”<sup>22</sup> This may be a

question such as, “What does this painting of a weeping woman portray?” I confront Picasso’s art and the ideas of *sadness*, *hysteria*, *grief*, and *suffering* come to mind—responses that reflect how one’s response is complicated by the form of painting (the tradition of which does not have only one weeping woman). The painting “speaks to us from the past,”<sup>23</sup> poses this question to the viewer, and in response to the question the viewer can “attempt to reconstruct the question to which the traditionary text is the answer.”<sup>24</sup> The viewer will remember weeping women he or she has seen, remember what it feels like to weep, and so on. These experiences are not Picasso’s, but his experience, his understanding, and his artistry inform them. In this way, we comprehend and develop a common question with Picasso.

The potential meanings of art are circumscribed by this path of understanding in, around, and through works of art. A painting may contain many questions, however, and some are not recognizably our own—understanding involves these questions too, and “the fusion of horizons” is Gadamer’s name for the convergence of “historical” questions and our own. That is, a question allows us to ask, alongside a text, questions posed by a wider community. The question to which *Weeping Woman* is an answer *for us* encompasses Picasso’s experience as well as ours, and is a question for which artists seek the truth. “The historical movement of human life consists in the fact that it is never absolutely bound to any one standpoint, and hence can never have a truly closed horizon.”<sup>25</sup> A viewer—a visitor to a museum, a researcher on the Internet, or an artist in his or her studio—will not have circumscribed tradition once and for all and achieved an “objective” understanding of suffering through this process of questioning, but the painting creates a shared experience that is made possible by standards of inquiry and obedience to rules.

Artists, on this account, have a very difficult road. The more fragmented artistic practices and traditions become, the more difficult it will be to make art for an audience. Strategy will prevail. Artists who develop oeuvres with pedestrian imagery may increase the likelihood that an audience will be able to understand their work. Galleries and museums that specialize in specific “moments” or “styles” of art may be a bigger draw for field trips. Art that is marketed in a specific region as “local” art may gain a local following. And historians and critics who act as intermediaries between the “artworld” and a wider audience and “make sense” of art may increase their readership over that of their academic peers. All these occurrences can be understood as a response to the difficulty in understanding what artists do and why they do it. Subordination affords viewers access to this experience and allows artists to speak, in this way, on behalf of tradition.

### *A Traditional Event*

The concept of a traditional event is yet a third perspective of philosophical hermeneutics that describes the matter of subordination from the perspective of education. It is clear by now that one may engage understanding to a greater or lesser degree—that there are better and worse ways to seek the truth. Sometimes we have the patience to look closely at a painting, sometimes we are interested in questions a painting does not speak to, and sometimes we have no interest in a dialogue at all. When we do enter into dialogue, and we are lucky enough to have the tools we need to bring our self to the process of understanding, we are still faced with a difficult cognitive task. This is the task of negotiating the process of understanding as a traditional event.

Gadamer discusses the ideal balance for dialogue as a passage between *presentism* and *historicism*. These two terms represent poles on a spectrum of our *familiarity with a thing*, and bear out the optimal orientation for a person seeking to understand a part of the world. To draw out the moral significance of understanding, I will call the successful balance between presentism and historicism “hermeneutic excellence,” and turn to the matter of hermeneutic excellence below. But first the meaning of “familiarity” is discussed as a quality pertaining to things as “traditional material” and their role in traditional events. By the end of this section, the definition of a traditional event should be clear.

The value of art is often judged according to its ability to evoke a fruitful dialogue among experts (and not only *living* experts) about a subject that is preserved “amid the ruins of time.”<sup>26</sup> Yet even experts may not always be interested in the same subject. They may be content with studying Picasso’s technique of applying paint to the canvas, the composition of a painting, or some other aspect of the piece. Indeed, when anyone enters into a dialogue with a work of art, they are able to form questions about what they do not already know because of *tradition*. Tradition is what addresses us—what commands our attention and *speaks* to us—when we enter into a dialogue with a thing. This personification of tradition follows MacIntyre’s claim that a practice is not only a living community:

To enter into a practice is to enter into a relationship not only with its contemporary practitioners, but also with those who have preceded us in the practice, particularly those whose achievements extended the reach of the practice to its present point.<sup>27</sup>

On this account, all individuals who partake in a shared process of inquiry participate in a practice, and MacIntyre’s notion of tradition corresponds to such a practice as it develops over time.

The depiction of the historical nature of practices tends to go along with a notion of tradition as an *unbroken chain* of practitioners in service of a practice. Alas, this is a clumsy philosophical portrayal of the complex situation tradition describes. Because the difference between a community and a tradition is not always well defined, it is important to articulate how these terms will be distinguished here. Henceforth, I follow Gadamer's personification of tradition because it evokes the immediacy of an experience that takes on board the shared experience of a community. But personification also evokes the analogy to individual identity, and begs the question of how individuals within a community are different from one another and may struggle to *extend* a practice in different ways. An important limit of this definition of tradition, therefore, is to allow that it does not encompass all aspects of identity, but is instead the imagined sum total of a community's *shared* identity. It is not understating the case to say that we can only expect to vaguely grasp such a comprehensive visage.

Yet the notion of tradition is too important to cast aside. The confusion about the boundary and nature of a tradition is less important than the way that it modifies the notion of community. To talk about a community of artists, for example, refers to a group that shares values, ideas about art, phone numbers, and so on. To say that a group of artists share a tradition is to invoke MacIntyre's special concept of a practice that, in turn, implies that the group shares a conception of excellence that emerges from the work of a practice—it involves *morality*. Thus, the concept of tradition references timeless features of a practice in a way community does not. If "community" names the individuals who participate in a practice, then "tradition" names the ways in which they participate. A traditionary event is an intersection of individual experience and the *life* of a community. It is a moment when an artist confronts the reality of his or her work—how art can be made, how it will be interpreted, what it means, and what difference it will make. The matter of *understanding* is necessary for capturing (philosophically) what is involved in this confrontation precisely because

Hermeneutical consciousness is aware that its bond to this subject matter does not consist in some self-evident, unquestioned unanimity, as in the case with the unbroken stream of tradition. Hermeneutic work is based on a polarity of familiarity and strangeness.<sup>28</sup>

This concise statement about hermeneutic work belies the richness of it. There is a strong relationship, for example, between the content of both sentences. Gadamer is equating familiarity with tradition's unbrokenness, except that he will later go on to say it is the individual who actually experiences familiarity. In contrast to this quality, he equates strangeness with an individual's

awareness of the brokenness of his historical consciousness. These two terms also describe, in a more direct way, two extremes of a traditionary event for an *I* and a *Thou*—presentism and historicism—to which I will turn below. Between these extremes, there are two prior matters: (1) the hypothesis about the artist (“hermeneutical consciousness”) being aware of the contingencies of nature and (2) the evocative description of a cognitive task as a foundational pillar of hermeneutic work.

The struggle to understand tradition is played out through attempts to understand traditionary texts (traditionary material).<sup>29</sup> To understand the purpose or meaning of *painting*, for example, one must first understand *paintings*, and the quality of one’s *understanding* is predicated on one’s *understandings*. The experience of familiarity and strangeness are implicated in both aspects of this process, and both “levels” of understanding implicate the movement of understanding between familiarity and strangeness—historical consciousness on its “circular” path. Gadamer helpfully distinguishes between these two levels by pushing back the problem of how we arrive at more general (or “universal”) modes of understanding, which he discusses under the rubric of “horizons.” This leaves the matter of how we understand a practice such as painting as the subject of understanding, “properly” understood. From this perspective, tradition is indeed a “self-evident, unquestioned unanimity” because an individual’s historical consciousness cannot overcome his or her situated perspective even though he or she may be aware of its limitations. Indeed, it is this situation that historical consciousness hopes to overcome by understanding history (i.e., the subject of understanding, “philosophically” understood), for the ability to paint for a community is partly discovered in and through encounters with historical horizons. When this hope of historical consciousness supervenes on a practitioner’s work, this work is rightly understood as a traditionary event.

Gesturing towards philosophy, Gadamer says, “everything contained in historical consciousness is in fact embraced by a single historical horizon.”<sup>30</sup> While his words elicit a strange picture of *the artist* in agreement with *the world*, he means this very thing. But this is a claim in opposition with MacIntyre’s concept of a practice and the definition of internal goods it entails. At the very least, the concept of practice helps to tease apart a strong version of Gadamer’s claim from a weak one, and a theory of subordination as an “educational good” shows why we should prefer the weak claim over skepticism about the strong one. Whereas the strong claim takes Gadamer’s claim seriously, the weak claim amends it with the caveat that it is too general to ever be disproved. If it were not for the philosophical purpose Gadamer intends, such a theory may as well be thrown out. That

purpose is, instead, part of his defense of the human sciences. While such an intent may or may not be in service of my work elsewhere to give a more general account of subordination as an educational good, it should be set aside but not thrown out. Preserving the weak claim means we can dodge the outright rejection of the possibility of a unifying horizon, and by association, objectivity. It still aspires to Gadamer's defense of the human sciences, but it is more modest. A weak version of his claim could go as follows: *Most events of historical consciousness may be embraced by a single historical horizon of a practice.*<sup>31</sup> This does, after all, appear to be the *ambition* of tradition, whose appearance as an unbroken stream is an effect of the nature of understanding, and a result of the embodied human experience of horizons.

The concept of the "horizon" animates Gadamer's discussion of historical consciousness because he is concerned with "the superior breadth of vision that the person who is trying to understand must have."<sup>32</sup> Perhaps what is startling about Gadamer's view is that this "superior breadth of vision" is so often associated with philosophical understanding. The introduction of a weak view of tradition may temper his claim yet again. In this case, our understanding of the "person who is trying to understand" is modified by our awareness of practices as a site of understanding. Understanding may be quite different from one practice to another, and one's attempt to understand the arts, for example, must necessarily be different than one's attempt to understand sports. Portrait painting requires a person to engage different processes than fishing—it hardly warrants comparison, except from the perspective of philosophy, and this is Gadamer's (along with my) practice-based point of view. The special case that some practices aspire to have horizons that span the "knowledge" of other practices emerges from history, and it is a nonobvious and nontrivial point that this is ever more than an aspiration. While both MacIntyre and Gadamer explore the possibility and consequences of these cases, I will not explore them further here. It is enough to grant that the world is replete with diverse practices and more and less comprehensive horizons of understanding that emerge from them. This will only be seen as too weak a statement from both Gadamerian and MacIntyrian points of view.

The point of defending a weak view is to envisage a stronger theory. Here, this will come at the cost of admitting to some doubt about the precision of applications of moral philosophy. A stronger theory is imagined here as more closely wedded to educational philosophy (and psychology) rather than normative philosophy. Hence, Gadamer's interest in traditionary events as encounters with historical horizons takes on less significance as it pertains to

philosophical understanding and more significance as it relates to the work of *carrying a practice forward*—MacIntyre’s term for the intersection of practices and moral traditions (by which he means shared visions of virtue and *the good life*). By emphasizing the role of subordination in education generally, I am attempting to shift the burden of proof for moral philosophy to practice-specific cases of achievement. That is, I am interested in committing moral philosophers to a project whereby moral excellence is defined by educational excellence—a kind of excellence that is further defined as the achievement of subordination in a practice, understood as the culmination of a traditionary event. Moral excellence still names what educational excellence cannot: that one cannot attain the vision that a single historical horizon affords by standing outside of tradition. We stand within it, and from this position it is all too easy to think that we are already in agreement with one another. In the following section, this description of historical consciousness culminates in the synthesis of moral philosophy and hermeneutics as an articulation of the process of understanding as an educational ideal.

#### HERMENEUTIC EXCELLENCE

Tradition allows us to negotiate experiences of the present and the past so as to move into the horizon that “embraces the historical depths of our self-consciousness.”<sup>33</sup> To achieve hermeneutic excellence, we must avoid both “historicism” and “presentism”—a wrong allegiance to the past or present that leads to a distortion of understanding. Achieving a balance between presentism and historicism is the key to experiencing hermeneutic excellence, and in this section I fortify Gadamer’s description of what constitutes this kind of balance with a MacIntyrian practitioner in mind.

Gadamer describes presentism as the perspective that overemphasizes *our* language. Presentism could be, for example, to think that the *Weeping Woman* is about wearing unfashionable clothing. Gadamer says,

We are always affected, in hope and fear, by what is nearest to us, and hence we approach the testimony of the past under its influence. Thus it is constantly necessary to guard against overhasty assimilating the past to our own expectations of meaning. Only then can we listen to tradition in a way that permits it to make its own meaning heard.<sup>34</sup>

To avoid presentism, we must bracket out our prejudices to the best of our ability and “listen” to tradition. Presentism is a common mistake of understanding, for it is easy to assimilate a question with what we already know. What we know from one practice may first appear to be perfectly analogous to another practice, but this may not do justice to the distinctiveness

of practices. As MacIntyre tells us, for example, the patience of a fisherman is different from the patience of a chess player because of the technical skills involved and the different ends towards which those skills are directed.<sup>35</sup> When a student enters into a practice, it may be difficult to grasp the particular ends involved, and an experienced practitioner may continue to feel this way as his or her exposure to a practice increases over time. Avoiding presentism means trusting that a practice has a tradition worth entering. And so, avoiding presentism means actively suspending one's judgment.

The matter of presentism brings attention to a parallel between two registers of experience. A student might have a limited exposure to a practice, while a teacher might have spent many years participating in or learning about it. This is an important difference, yet the model of subordination is the same: there is a tradition to which a practitioner subordinates himself or herself. Confusion about this matter may arise for several reasons. (1) Students often subordinate themselves to other people (who are often "teachers"), whereas mature practitioners often subordinate themselves to a network of people, both alive and dead, and this may be harder to see. (2) Students are often more concerned with increasing their exposure to a practice, whereas mature practitioners are often concerned with deepening their understanding of one aspect of a practice. (3) Students may be noncommittal in their relationship to a practice, whereas mature practitioners have often made vocational decisions related to their ongoing commitments to a practice. And finally, (4) Students may literally have to suspend their suspicion about the significance of another practitioner's achievement, whereas mature practitioners, with a more comprehensive understanding of a tradition, may be more willing to accommodate diversity.

These are some key differences between practitioners with different degrees of experience within a practice, yet they suggest a divergence between two registers of subordination—between the subordination of the mature practitioner to tradition, and the subordination of the student practitioner to other individuals. While these are two modes of the same process of understanding, it is now clear why MacIntyre eschews the notion of education, teaching, or learning as a practice<sup>36</sup>—these are all part of the regular operations of other practices. Contrary to MacIntyre, we may recognize these activities as practices in their own right—MacIntyre gives no philosophical reason to do otherwise as he puts forward his definition of a practice. Such a recognition potentially brings attention to the special task of hermeneutic excellence, as well as the distinctiveness of diverse practices as ways of life.<sup>37</sup>

Subordination, as further defined by hermeneutic excellence, is essential to a traditionary event. An *I* and *Thou* do not subordinate themselves to one another per se, but to the tradition of a shared practice. Presentism is the complex mistake of not upholding the process of understanding in good faith at any point during one's work within a practice, and avoiding it is only one part of what subordination entails. To achieve hermeneutic excellence, we must also avoid "historicism," which Gadamer defines as follows:

We think we understand when we see the past from a historical standpoint—i.e., transpose ourselves into the historical situation and try to reconstruct the historical horizon. In fact, however, we have given up the claim to find in the past any truth that is valid and intelligible for ourselves.<sup>38</sup>

Historicism, seen as a mistake of historical consciousness, is the opposite of presentism. It is a loss of self in the process of understanding, an obstruction to inquiry. It is a loss of bearing on why tradition matters for us. Historicism disrupts the connection between the process of understanding and the "good life" that is achieved through a practice. It is the impulse to make "art for art's sake" while we stand idly by and watch a war ravage a nation. The criterion of excellence that emerges from between these two extremes of hermeneutic consciousness is the ability to speak *with* tradition and animate traditionary material as an answer to a common question. It is coming to an agreement about the meaning of a work of art with the intention of making it more powerful. In this way, an exemplary work of art orients us in our time. This does not contradict Gadamer's idea that tradition is embraced by a single horizon. Tradition, Gadamer says, is that which gives us traction to change the world:

In fact the important thing is to recognize temporal distance as a positive and productive condition enabling understanding. It is not a yawning abyss but is filled with the continuity of custom and tradition, in the light of which everything handed down presents itself to us.<sup>39</sup>

Hermeneutic excellence is excellence in education alongside excellence in other practices. It describes an activity that accompanies subordination, and it is central to MacIntyre's concept of morality. It is a quality of our process of understanding that connects our self to other selves—it is an excellence of community building. Subordination does not only consist in hermeneutic excellence, but can follow from it. Subordination may be an attitude an art student adopts, after he or she has understood the *Weeping Woman* for the first time, to suspend his or her prejudices and engage a community of artists as a maker of art.

A so-called "genius practitioner" experiences tradition in the same way as we have seen above, but his or her experience, unlike just any practitioner's,

is attended by a kind of hermeneutic excellence that constitutes the quality of his or her genius. In Gadamer's language, we can describe both the depth and clarity of his or her historical consciousness as a path of understanding, and it is his or her path between presentism and historicism that makes possible a fusion of horizons. With this process of understanding in view, we can now describe subordination from the perspective of a student with two additional caveats. (1) It is what occurs throughout a traditionary event when the person who is *subordinated to*, the teacher, has a prior relationship to traditionary material that a student is confronting. And (2) it is a name for when a student acknowledges that his or her teacher's experience is more nuanced than his or her own.

Subordination can sustain the tension between the activity of making art and the process of understanding art. Historically, this tension is familiar to arts practitioners as the gap between creation and viewership and, as such, is an aporia of aesthetic philosophy. Looking at a work of art, the modern viewer asks, "What does it mean to me?" or "What is the artist saying?"—these are not meant as two sides of the same question, though we are now able to see this compartmentalization of tradition as a mischaracterization of the process of understanding. Recognizing this problem is especially important when the viewer is an arts practitioner, no matter how novice or expert. The subjectivization of aesthetics, for example, can be understood as a deep misconception about artists' ability to oscillate between art making and viewership—between presentism and historicism. For Gadamer, this tension is *positive*. It is the open space for the student-artist's *educational* questions to emerge. According to MacIntyre, this emergence is the essence of the vitality of practices in general, without which (to paraphrase MacIntyre) human powers to achieve excellence and the human conceptions of the ends and goods involved cannot be extended. For pragmatists such as Dewey, this is the ability of a *self* to transform the world.

This picture of practitioners' education reveals unity within tradition. The experience of tradition in the arts—practices in which there are tangible products that are often overtly symbolic of connections between past, present, and future human actions—adds to artists' self-understanding as a community with a shared orientation towards moral life. Genius can be valued as a concept that restores verticality to the experience of interpersonal relationships in practices and, in educational terms, makes the *good* of subordination more intelligible in the multi-practice community educators call "the social world." This is the verticality that hermeneutic excellence makes possible, and in the following section I consider a few aspects of this conceptualization of historical consciousness for the human sciences.

## THE MATTER OF GENIUS

I suggested that a ripened definition of hermeneutic excellence could serve as a foundation for meta-ethical philosophizing—an activity that will here be shown to be particularly well suited for students and teachers embedded in the processes of education. Hermeneutic excellence describes an ideal process of engaging tradition, and it applies equally to the novice and the mature practitioner. Historical consciousness is the broader name for this educational experience—where practices and traditions can represent different sides of an ethical framework.

According to MacIntyre's definition, a conception of excellence is *definitive of* a practice because it creates a sense of verticality in a practice for its practitioners. Once a sufficient awareness of excellence is achieved, it seems, the complex relations among individuals, practices, and traditions are more tractable. Subordination can now be described with the following additional caveat: Hermeneutic excellence partly describes a practitioner's cognitive process of solving the problems of a practice. The example of art making reveals how this framework might apply to the human sciences—an especially interesting set of long-standing and valued practices. Where "art education" is thought to be an oxymoron, there is a resistance to the view that an increasing awareness of the world can proceed by *unscientific* means—and not unjustifiably so. The investigative nature of art making either is deemed too subjective or is disenfranchised as a consistent and reliable source of knowledge. Hence, its "educative" project cuts too harshly against other, more "justifiable" goals of education. The conceptual groundwork here goes together with a critique of the concept of artistic genius as a central feature of a tenable *paradigm of inquiry* in the human sciences.

The concept of artistic genius poses a problem for practicing artists because of its association with "talent" as the "natural" arbiter of artistic success as well as the entrenched and often perplexing philosophical discourse that seeks to explain it. The concept is poised to unhinge young artists from tradition—a potential *educational* disruption that undermines art practice as a site of meaningful (and, therefore, fulfilling) activity. Its role in historical consciousness, however, means it can serve to prepare the human self for inquiry. To position genius as a hermeneutic ideal suggests that art practice can be cultivated as a space for naturalistic inquiry, and Dewey's philosophy of education serves as a touchstone for this naturalistic view.

Subordination, understood as one part of hermeneutic excellence, is a compelling harbinger of genius. Genius is a confluence of many things, but it also has a moral meaning that obtains within a community of artists. For artists, it is important that genius is not only a matter of being the "right person

at the right time,” but instead (or in addition to) it is the achievement of subordination over the course of a lifetime. The embodiment of this achievement as a work of art, or a whole oeuvre, is not only what qualifies one as an excellent artist, but it is also a hallmark of a practice as a moral one—a practice with a “live” (as Dewey might say) tradition. Further development of these themes may show how artists can avoid the idealization of embodied traditional authority in the arts while locating its value as an educational good.

Embracing the concept that subordination is practice specific may allow educators to overcome a resistance to meta-ethical discussion and favor stronger conceptual correspondences between traditions and moralities, and this would amount to a rejection of pedagogy based on the premise that diversity and difference creates insurmountable cultural divides. At present, the argument for conceiving of hermeneutic excellence as a meta-ethic has been limited to an exegesis of Gadamer’s view of understanding and a fairly narrow interpretation of MacIntyre’s conception of virtue ethics. Expanding this dialogue in both these directions could be undertaken for the following educational reasons I have outlined: (1) the work of understanding is a multi-layered process that involves engaging what are often recalcitrant traditions and values and (2) there may yet be better ways to introduce student practitioners to the vertical nature of practices.

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#### REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 2nd ed. (Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press, 1984).
- <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 189.
- <sup>3</sup> Brian Hughes, *The Moral Nature of Artistic Genius*, Ed.D. diss., Teachers College, Columbia University, 2006; available at <http://pocketknowledge.tc.columbia.edu/home.php/viewfile/798>.
- <sup>4</sup> See MacIntyre, op cit., 188.
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 191.
- <sup>6</sup> MacIntyre proposes that hermeneutics may be seen as a subdiscipline of ethics. See Alasdair MacIntyre, “On Not Having the Last Word,” in *Gadamer’s Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), 169.
- <sup>7</sup> Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2nd ed. (New York: Continuum, 2002), 180.
- <sup>8</sup> Rüdiger Bubner, “On the Ground of Understanding,” translated by B. Wachterhauser, in *Hermeneutics and Truth*, edited by B. Wachterhauser (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1994), 69.
- <sup>9</sup> I hung a solo exhibition at Columbia University in 2005 that was comprised of such work. Titled “War Images,” the show featured a series of printed works that were created from thumbnail images of Picasso’s various *Weeping Women* paintings, drawings, and prints (c. 1937).
- <sup>10</sup> Gadamer, op. cit., 118.

<sup>11</sup> Gadamer's concern is for *universal* truth and not merely subjective and contingent *truths*. The difference between these two notions of truth is a persistent worry of contemporary philosophy. Thomas Nagel offers a sober view of the difficulty but also the possibility of arriving at universal truth through his work on objectivity. See "The View from Nowhere," in *Skepticism: A Contemporary Reader*, edited by K. DeRose and T. A. Warfield (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 272–291.

<sup>12</sup> John Dewey, *The School and Society and The Child and the Curriculum* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 198.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 199.

<sup>14</sup> Gadamer, *op. cit.*, 180.

<sup>15</sup> The notion of historical consciousness is central to hermeneutics. For more on historical consciousness as an explanatory framework for knowledge, see Gadamer's critique of Dilthey's analysis of knowledge in Gadamer, *op. cit.*, especially 231–242.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 293.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 267.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 295.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 269.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 299.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 374.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 373.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 374.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 374.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 304.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 289.

<sup>27</sup> MacIntyre, *op. cit.*, 194.

<sup>28</sup> Gadamer, *op. cit.*, 295.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 295.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 304.

<sup>31</sup> It is worth noting here, if only as an aside, that the popularity of sports may be a result of this quality of historical consciousness. Most sports meet MacIntyre's definition of practices. But they are, additionally, surprisingly engaging from a spectator's point of view. Perhaps due to the clear (and visceral) nature of excellence in sports, as well as the clearly stated rules of engagement, it is easy to comprehend a fairly comprehensive historical horizon. That is, sports wear tradition on their sleeve, and often literally so. In light of this example, Gadamer's notion of an embrace makes more sense, for we see how being privy to a single historical horizon makes us *feel good*—we enjoy understanding what is going on, and *knowing* why one outcome is better than another.

<sup>32</sup> Gadamer, *op. cit.*, 305.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 304.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 305.

<sup>35</sup> MacIntyre, *op. cit.*, 193.

<sup>36</sup> Alasdair MacIntyre and Joseph Dunne, "Alasdair MacIntyre on Education: In Dialogue with Joseph Dunne," *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 36(1), 2002, 1–19.

<sup>37</sup> Chris Higgins aptly calls this distinctiveness a "moral phenomenology." See "MacIntyre's Moral Theory and the Possibility of an Aretaic Ethics of Teaching," *Journal of Philosophy and Education*, 37(2), 279–292.

<sup>38</sup> Gadamer, *op. cit.*, 303.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 297.

## SECTION V

SENSUOUS EXPERIENCE AND TRANSCENDENTAL  
EMPIRICISM (F. BRENTANO, E. HUSSERL, P. DĀLE)

I am able to understand only that what I touch, what resists me.

A. Camus

All knowledge falls within the horizons produced by perception.

M. Merleau-Ponty

INTRODUCTION, OR SOME QUESTIONS THAT LED  
ME TO THE FORMULATION OF THE THEME

*Thesis no. 1:* Experience is an integrating notion of modernity, describing both the subject matter and the source of knowledge and serving as the final arbitrator of philosophical truth.

*Justification of thesis:* Modern thinking has developed traditions attempting to grasp the whole of the perceptible world from the point of view of either the object or the subject. The tradition of objective empiricism “seeks to explain consciousness as a mirroring device in which is reflected the real structure of the world of object.”<sup>1</sup> This tradition views experience as being connected with experiments and observation, as in the modern natural sciences. It is represented in philosophy mainly in the form of positivism with its empirically sensuous stance, and is connected also with objectivistic psychology. This trend later shifted in the direction of linguistic analysis and the cognitive sciences. In contrast, the tradition of subjectivity views experience as being connected with the subject, the individual, with the ego, and construes the world as a specific conscientiousness-related expressiveness. Thus a kind of chasm exists between the two traditions, dividing reality from appearance. According to Ferguson, “a rupture appears in being which is at the heart of modern experience.”<sup>2</sup> Both traditions continued to develop in their own ways. In the empirical and seemingly “objectivist” approach within the newly developing sciences of the human soul, the psyche appeared in new ways. The life of the psyche became more diffused through its removal from spatiality

as a form of experience and became redefined as a stream or flux (e.g., on how soul turns into subject, see W. James, *Principles of Psychology*; R. Avenarius, *Kritik der reinen Erfahrung*; J. Deleuze, *Empiricism and Subjectivity*.)

Theoreticians of modernity such as W. Benjamin and T. Adorno, by postulating the “scantiness of existing experience,” reveal new kinds of experience—that of the child, the barbarian, the *flaneur*, and so on; these are not connected only with empiricism, but also with “metaphysical experience” (T. Adorno)—an idea unthinkable following Kant.

Another tradition, largely connected with phenomenology, deals with the undifferentiated unity of consciousness, allowing for no separation between the noumenal and the phenomenal. Here experience in the form of the description of experience of the self tends towards the transcendental Ego, containing in a reduced way the factually given, including the empirically sensual appearances and the appearances of the soul. The experience of the phenomenological act, according to Husserl, constitutes itself by overcoming psychologization and severing ties with objectivistic psychology. However, this type of philosophical reflection, as was pointed out by Ricoeur, ignores

the extremely rich stream of thought which has never been simply contained within the limits of the Husserlian school of phenomenology, whether it be a question of Max Scheler, Munich phenomenologists and Jean-Paul Sartre, or the Gestalt psychologists of the Leipzig School.<sup>3</sup>

One should also mention S. Stresser’s investigations in the phenomenology of feeling as well as A-T. Tymieniecka’s approach based on the theory of the universal life phenomenology. However, this kind of development is not to be attributed to comparatively recent times. Ricoeur concludes that the aforementioned thinkers

thereby reopened an ancient tradition—that of the Treatises of the Passions. Stemming from the Platonic, Aristotelian and Stoic traditions by way of Medieval treatises on psychology and morals, these works were an integral part of philosophical research in the classical age as may be seen the work of Descartes, Spinoza and Hume.<sup>4</sup>

Even now, in comparison with the philosophy of the cognitive functions, or even of the philosophy of action, which today is so full of vigor, the philosophy of affects is in a quasi-infantile state. Or else one has the dire simplification of the term “emotional,” being used to cover anything that is not directly informative or cognitive, or, alternatively, relegating its content to the sphere of pure subjectivity, to the psychic, the empirical.

This leads me to my central question: What are we to make of the separation between phenomenology and psychology? And is such a radical separation, as was envisaged by Husserl, at all possible? In other words: Is Husserlian phenomenology so completely distilled from any residue of

psychology and problematizations of a psychological kind? And to follow up this question: How are we to evaluate the subsequent developments of the Husserlian approach, and in particular the psychological investigations of M. Merleau-Ponty, S. Strasser, and the many volumes of A-T. Tymieniecka in the *Analecta Husserliana* devoted to the problematics of psychology? Could this not serve as a reason to return to the very beginnings of phenomenology and to cover the path once again?

*Thesis no. 2:* The ideas of phenomenology were born of the spirit of psychology—at least in the case of F. Brentano. Already in the foreword to his programmatic work *Psychologie von dem empirischen Standpunkt* in 1874, Brentano stated “My psychological standpoint is empirical; experience alone is my teacher. Yet I share with other thinkers the conviction that this is entirely compatible with a certain ideal point of view.”<sup>5</sup> Brentano considered psychology as a science about the specific regularities of the soul, about that which we find directly in our selves through inner experience and allows us to surmise, on the bases of analogy, about the state of the souls of other human beings.

This leads to the next question: Could it be that Husserlian phenomenology, by taking a radical stance against psychology and the soul, is not to be blamed for fostering—involuntary—the situation, whereby the subsequent development of philosophical psychology has bogged down in the field of materialistic drives and desires, of sexuality, libidinal economics, wishful ethics, and so on? Is it not so that the emotional side of the human soul has been neglected and those aspects of the human life that are connected with intentionality (including intentionality towards the Absolute) have been overlooked? Barthes noticed something of the sort when he commented on the difference between “desire” and “pleasure”:

Pleasure is continuously disappointed, reduced, deflated, in favour of strong, noble values: Truth, Death, Progress, Struggle, Joy, etc. Its victorious rival is Desire: we are always being told about Desire, never about Pleasure: Desire has an epistemic dignity, Pleasure does not.<sup>6</sup>

So much about my initial, preconceived questions; now I turn to the views of three authors: F. Brentano, E. Husserl, and P. Dāle.

#### FRANZ BRENTANO AND THE NEW UNDERSTANDING OF THE OBJECT

Franz Clemens Honoratus Brentano was Husserl’s teacher and, in his own opinion, the founder of a new philosophical era. The history of European culture, according to Brentano, is to be divided into three periods: antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the classical age; each of these periods has four distinct

subdivisions or phases. The first phase is characterized by a lively interest of a theoretical kind, and philosophy is generated of immanent impulses without subservience to any kind of political, religious, mercantile, or aesthetic motivations. To the first phase of the ancient period belong thinkers from Thales to Aristotle; during the Middle Ages, the Arabic commentators and Thomas Aquinas; in the classical period, Bacon, Descartes, Locke. The second phase marks an initial declension of philosophy. Its chief feature is the dissipation of theoretical interest and falsification due to the accentuation of practical concerns and the rapid growth of the number of persons involved in philosophizing. Philosophy is used to achieve success. During the ancient period this is true of the Stoic philosophers and the Sceptics; during the Middle Ages, Duns Scotus and his followers; during the classical period, of the philosophers of the French and German enlightenments. The third phase is marked by general skepticism. Science becomes a market commodity and loses its identity. The capacity of human reason comes under question and no stable foundation for knowledge is found (Pyrrhonists and Sextus in the ancient world, Occam in the Middle Ages, and Hume in the classical period). The fourth phase is characterized by dogmatism with regard to Truth; the foundation of knowledge is looked for in suprasensible or mystical dogma, or at any rate, in something existing beyond experience (e.g., a thing-in-itself). Philosophy becomes conceited, claiming to know everything, but actually knowing nothing at all. It has forgotten even what the previous generations of philosophers had known; philosophy becomes “unnatural” (Neopythagoreans and Neoplatonists in antiquity, Master Eckhart, Lull, and Nicolas of Cusa during the Middle Ages; the Scottish school, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel during the classical period).<sup>7</sup>

Brentano held that sooner or later a new period of global significance will emerge, the first phase of which will produce a rebirth and flourishing of philosophical thought. This is how Brentano positioned his own novel understanding of philosophy and, with hindsight, we can notice here the pretentiousness of the phenomenological approach.

Brentano’s theoretical position and especially his chief work *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt* marks the foundation of a school of empiricism with many followers, including Oscar Krause, Kazimir Tvardovsky, Franz Hildebrand, and others, based in Prague, Lviv, Munich, Berlin, Innsbruck, Gratz, Wirtzburg, and so on. At this stage I propose a pertinent question: Why psychology? Why was it so that the rebirth of philosophy was seen a consequence of psychological studies? One could attempt an answer by saying that this was so because Brentano considered the subject matter of psychology to be related to the life of the soul. In substantiating his view of psychology,

Brentano distinguished between descriptive psychology, called by him psychognosie, and genetic psychology. The latter employs the methods of natural sciences, and its initial stages are inductive and empirical. Descriptive psychology may also be termed empirical, for it rests on inner perception and apperception about mental events in order to ascend to more general ideas on the strength of the intuitions included in that experience, termed by Brentano perceptual intuition. For this reason, descriptive psychology acquires evident apodictic knowledge without induction and obtains an *a priori* character: “nothing can become an object of judgment before being an idea in the mind.”<sup>8</sup>

Knowledge obtained in this way is not about matters of fact, nor does it obtain “existential import,” and therefore it is negative, even when it is of the affirmative form of judgment. O. Krauss considered this to be one of the chief discoveries of Brentano. The seeming contradiction between the negative character of judgment and its affirmative form is resolved by Brentano with the help of a nontraditional understanding of the object. He considers the object in a substantial manner, which leads to a specific definition of the natural sciences: “Natural sciences are not to be defined as sciences about bodies, nor psychology—as a science about the soul.”<sup>9</sup> He connected both fields with phenomena—but only psychic phenomena are characterized by their intentionality, which has to be revealed. Brentano claimed that the scholastics of the Middle Ages used the term “phenomena” to refer to the inner existence of a thing (*Inexistenz* in Brentano’s terminology), or the attitude towards the contents—its movement towards the object. In his work “On the Object,” Brentano claims that the object is something not existing in reality, but is connected with the workings of our psyche, with thinking in the broadest possible sense.

These are manifold ways through which thinking grasps things; three of them can be considered as basic: “acts of presentation, acts of judgment and the work of the soul (appetition).”<sup>10</sup> Brentano classified within the bounds of psychic phenomena any type of emotion, enumerated by him as “joy, sorrow, fear, hope, courage, despair, anger, love, hate, desire, act of will, intention, astonishment, admiration, contempt, etc.”<sup>11</sup>

The object manifests itself in perceptions, yet it is not identical with them. Thus, for example, anger or hate are not only sensuous perceptions, they also are “objective” in the sense of being directed towards somebody with whom I am angry or love, and so on. This chimes in with a comment of M. Merleau-Ponty: “To doubt means always to doubt something, even when one is doubting everything. I am certain of doubting precisely because I take this or that thing, or even every thing and my own existence too, as

doubtful.”<sup>12</sup> The experience does not only testify to the “I” as the center of consciousness, but it bespeaks the wholeness of the existence of the things and of the world. According to Brentano, “If I pronounce just one affirmative judgment about a sparrow I make also a judgment of a bird because ‘bird’ is a logical part of ‘sparrow’.”<sup>13</sup> One can add Merleau-Ponty’s example about the red patch on a carpet: It looks red together with the shadow falling over it, it is seen against a specific surface, and so on, and all this serves to reveal the manifold meanings of these qualities. Such considerations lead him to the conclusion that “But red and green are not sensations, they are the sensed (sensibles), and quality is not an element of consciousness, but a property of the object.”<sup>14</sup>

Brentano’s argument is of a different kind. He concentrates on the synsemantic function of the word “object” and connects the perception of the object as a whole with perceptual intuition. Yet, Brentano holds, without experience the reflexive ideas are unfounded, a thesis he holds against Husserl (letter to O. Krauss of September 20, 1909). Thus, our intuitive perception is object determined but does not determine the object (as it is with Kant).

Of course, Brentano’s ideas about the object, intentionality, and perceptual intuition, his analysis of sensuous and noetic consciousness, fall short of the justification of human existence, or the wholeness of Being; however, his attempts to think along these lines, coupled with the empiricism that lies at the basis of his philosophy, permits us to rank him with both the empiricists and the transcendentalists.

#### E. HUSSERL AND PSYCHOLOGY

Husserl’s phenomenological approach grew out of attempts to overcome naturalism, objectivism, and psychologism in philosophy. His arguments concerning psychology are clearly formulated in the *Logical Investigations*: “That is universally agreed that psychology is a purely factual science.”<sup>15</sup> It may seem paradoxical that soon after the publication of *Logical Investigations* several reviews characterized this work as belonging to descriptive psychology. This led Husserl to explain in *Ideas I* that phenomenology is not psychology. Yet Husserl’s intention to develop phenomenology as a universal science did not permit ignoring psychology, and the *Amsterdam Lectures* contain a justification of a pure phenomenological psychology. More detailed development of this theme requires a separate study. I will only single out several aspects that in my opinion make it rather difficult for Husserl to provide the foundation for pure psychology and to get rid of those features of psychology that bespeak the human soul. At the end of his days, Husserl

himself acknowledged that. However, the dominant Husserlian line of thought postulates that any movement towards the psychic is realized in a reflexive manner, that only reflection brings the psychic life within the scope of apprehension. By applying intentional investigation to the psychology of his day, Husserl came to the conclusion that it completely lacked intentional analysis. Brentano too is characterized as a thinker for whom the “the distinctive meaning and the method needed for a pure analysis of consciousness remained hidden.”<sup>16</sup> Likewise, Husserl considers Gestalt psychology with its holistic approach to be part of naturalistic thinking. Husserl speaks also of emotions, yet these are not—so it seems—objects of sustained intentionality because they melt into reflection: “The ego-pole is, however, not only the point from which my acts stream forth but also a point into which my emotions and feelings stream.”<sup>17</sup> In the same way oft-repeated idea that a phenomenologist is an unbiased observer of the life of consciousness is not conducive to considering emotions. The latter arise out of involvement with the world, not from self-centeredness.

In my opinion, starting from the *Amsterdam Lectures*, Husserl is aware that a aprioristic phenomenology does not cover the whole field of a aprioristic psychology, for psychology is, after all, a science about the psyche, which exists as a factor of the real world and as a psychophysical givenness (§9). It is worth noting that Husserl is not greatly interested in this psychophysical givenness, for its discussion falls outside the precincts of his inquiry. Besides, I am a little perplexed about Husserlian terminology, for he identifies the really human with the really animalistic, with zoology. If that makes sense in the case of Aristotle, it sounds a bit disconcerting nowadays.

Husserl recognizes, by calling it a double paradox, the twofold existence of the subject. The subject has to exist as a man/woman (a person), as a psychophysical subject of the real world, and also, transcendently, as a world-constituting subject of life. Admittedly, the situation of the subject is described adequately, yet one can ask why the life of the soul in the real world could not be viewed as transcendent and transcendental intention. It is hardly likely that all people will become phenomenologists, and thus the capacity of reflection would be denied to most.

It is noteworthy, however, that Husserl allows in this very work for the use of such notions as “life of the soul,” “the subjectivity of the soul,” and so on. But at the very end of the *Amsterdam Lectures* he envisages even such a development as the possibility of interpreting the teaching of transcendental phenomenology along a positive psychological vein. He even introduces the term “empirical phenomenology” for this purpose.

To conclude with one last relevant observation. In *The Crises of European Science and Transcendental Phenomenology* Husserl criticizes Locke's psychology and simultaneously accuses Kant for a total rejection of it. This is because here Husserl develops the idea of the primacy of the world of common experience of humanity, not the primacy of science, and insists that the intellectual activities take place only in this given world through psychological apprehension of the same. In evaluating Kant's idea of transcendental subjectivity, Husserl makes what I consider to be a wonderful comment: "But as soon as we distinguish this transcendental subjectivity from the soul, we get involved in something incomprehensibly mythical."<sup>18</sup>

#### PAULS DĀLE AND THE FULLNESS OF EXPERIENCE

Pauls Dāle (1889–1968) was a highly influential professional philosopher and a progenitor of psychological research in Latvia in the 1920s and 1930s. He was also among the founders of the University of Latvia. Dāle took part in many international congresses of philosophers and psychologists and was also a research associate for the U.S. journal *Psychological Register* (edited by C. Murchison) and a board member of the philosophical journal *Philosophia* (Belgrade).

There are several aspects of Dāle's work relevant to the present context: (1) He was engaged in phenomenological studies in Husserl's seminar, much like T. Celms in the University of Freiburg; (2) he considered the foundations of philosophy to be in close connection with psychology and considered psychology as a kind of introduction to philosophical reflection; (3) he attempted to join together various—even diverse—trends of philosophical and psychological conceptions into a single all-embracing structure of spiritual experience.

Dāle obtained his Doctor of Philosophy degree for "Critical Appraisal of the Psychological and Philosophical Views of R. Avenarius," and the amalgamation of psychological and philosophical research was a hallmark of all of his theoretical endeavors. Dāle extensively commented on psychological themes, such as the teaching on empathy of T. Lipss and W. Wundt's understanding of the subject of psychology; he referred to W. James, O. Külpe, and F. Brentano; he also dealt with the French school of psychologists, including P. Janet and A. Binet. Dāle's philosophical interests revolved around the teaching of Kant (on whom he wrote a book), as well as Plato, Leibniz, and V. Solovyov; he was also interested in such authors as F. Schlegel, F. Dostoyevsky, J. Poruks, F. Bārda, and so on.

Dāle's versatile philosophical interests issued in two mutually interdependent trends of thought. The first is energetical idealism, which he connects with two principles: the real, that is, energy as a dynamic psychic and physical element of reality; and the ideal, that is, the Logos, or reason, or idea. Both principles become synthesized in the spirit, but the essence of the spirit resides in deliberate creativity. God is the Absolute Spirit and obtains of the maximum power of creativity; yet the creation of the world is unceasing, and is carried on by humans. This conception was advanced by Dāle under title of pantheism, which is a peculiar synthesis of pantheistic and theistic stances. This is a view postulating that the world is *within* God, and presents God as permanently acting and manifesting Himself in the world, not being identical with it. Dāle mentioned as progenitors of the pantheistic view Plotinus, Nicolas of Cusa, N. Malebranche, G. Fehner, and especially the German philosopher Karl Kraus, author of the term. The Prime Creative Force, the Living Primevality, is differentiated in various substantialized forces. Dāle considered the human soul to be one such entity, radiating from the Divine Primeval Force and developing in diverse ways so as to accomplish the fullness of creative life. The active force and the absolute goal of Being come from God, but conscious striving towards that goal is the act and activity of the free will of intelligent beings. This explains the problem of the evil, for God is not the source of evil; it is the result of individual egoistic wills and acts.

Another topical problem tackled by Dāle is the question of the relationship between the conscience (mind, or the psychic) and the soul. Here we can notice several incipient phenomenological solutions. In trying to identify the subject matter of theoretical psychology, Dāle systematized various approaches to the subject: those that define psychology as a science about the soul (Catholic trends), about psychic phenomena or phenomena of the mind (British psychologists), about inner (interior) experience, from the point of view of the individual (Avenarius, Mach, Külpe, Wundt), and the final way, approved by Dāle, about the psychic, about the *life* of the soul.

It is obvious that Dāle identified the psychic factors, those concerned with the soul, with the actual consciousness, yet, in contrast to Wundt, he augmented these factors with the un-conscious, with what exists outside consciousness. In structuring the contents and processes of the psychic life, Dāle distinguished also between intentional and non-intentional processes: "Perceptions are considered to be non-intentional acts, we do not grasp the thing in them. If we have feeling of joy, we have joy about something. This will be the tacit concerned with the thing."<sup>19</sup> Dāle developed a variety of distinctions, types of analyses, and comparisons used throughout his psychological and philosophical writing. These are used to substantiate his idea of

the soul as the creative center of consciousness, which is defined by him in the following way:

It is the relatively unchanging and sustained bases, or creative immaterial substance serving as the source of the changing and discontinuous processes of consciousness and of the latent, hidden elements of the subconscious, that is capable to perceive, to apprehend to think, to feel, to yearn and to wish.<sup>20</sup>

This creative capacity of the soul in Dāle's philosophy is not so much used for the justification of God's sovereignty as for the accentuation of the possibilities of human development. It is intended to increase spiritual and social self-esteem. Reason and knowledge are not the only marks of the "crown of creation"; much more so are the movements of the soul, which make us sensitive and creative, different and mindful of the presence and needs of others.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Ferguson, H., *Phenomenology and Social Theory. Handbook of Social Theory*, Sage, London, 2003, p. 233.

<sup>2</sup> Idem, p. 233.

<sup>3</sup> Ricoeur, P., Foreword, in Strasser, S., *Phenomenology of Feeling*, Pittsburgh, 1977, p. XI.

<sup>4</sup> Idem, p. XII.

<sup>5</sup> Brentano, F., *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, London, 1973, p. XV.

<sup>6</sup> Barthes, R., *The Pleasure of the Text*, New York, p. 57.

<sup>7</sup> Brentano, F., *Die vier Phasen der Philosophie und ihr augenblicklicher Stand*, Hamburg, 1968.

<sup>8</sup> Brentano, F., *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, London, 1973, p. 201

<sup>9</sup> Idem, p. 9.

<sup>10</sup> Idem, p. 80.

<sup>11</sup> Idem, p. 79.

<sup>12</sup> Merleau-Ponty, M., *Phenomenology of Perception*, London, 1996, p. 383.

<sup>13</sup> Franz Brentano letter to Oscar Kraus, 20.09.1909, in Brentano, F., *Selected Works* [in Russian], Moscow, 1996, 152.

<sup>14</sup> Merleau-Ponty, M. *Phenomenology of Perception*, London, 1996, p. 4.

<sup>15</sup> Husserl, E., *Logical Investigations*, London, 1970, p. 98.

<sup>16</sup> Husserl, E., *The Amsterdam Lectures*, translated by R. E. Palmer, 19 August 1994; <http://www.stanford.edu/dept/relstud/faculty/sheehan.bak/EHtrans/z-amster.pdf>, p. 5.

<sup>17</sup> Idem, p. 8.

<sup>18</sup> Husserl, E., *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, Evanston, IL, 1970, p. 118.

<sup>19</sup> Dāle, P., *Vispārīgā psiholoģija*, Riga, *General psychology* [in Latvian], 1932, p. 11.

<sup>20</sup> Dāle, P., *Gara problēmas*, Riga, *Problems of spirit* [in Latvian], 1939, pp. 129–130.

## LEARNING BY EUREKA

Mathematics and history can, in a Cartesian manner, be labelled as the two main spheres of learning and hence of education. Here, I will take history in a special sense, as comprising all forms of account concerning what others are said to have actually experienced, or what is merely possible as experience in a person's life, as what is meaningful and has a certain value; and I will denote by mathematics all sciences making explicit use of logical or numerical operations, basically, but not necessarily, in application to a physical nature conceived as detached from what has value, or from the historical in the special sense above. In what follows I will argue that this modern dichotomy might have blurred our conception of knowledge of the world, which the ancients conceived as naturally involving both qualitative and quantitative judgements. Attempts to re-unify the world of science and philosophy through new educational practices may be justified by reference to the natural pattern of what the ordinary man and the scientist alike experience in the *life-world*, and to the ancients' teleological perspective. Bringing the mathematical and the historical as close as possible may be a promising method in education to foster a new understanding of knowledge and a remedy for the disharmony and loss of meaning in life due to the hegemony of the mathematical.

## HISTORY, MATHEMATICS, AND VALUE

A historical account refers to particular settings, namely to descriptions of situations causally linked to one another to make up a scene, which one can rebuild for oneself in one's imagination. History in this sense constitutes a general sphere of knowledge which comprises all types of accounts peculiar to human life. Hence, every account which can be translated into elements like desirable, good, beautiful, and their contraries is historical. It is only through recollecting, replacing, and synthesizing the most common, recurrent, and prominent elements of one's experiences that one can imagine anything related to the historical sphere. This is most evident in literature, but even in the most abstract conceptual thinking of the social sciences imagination must always be active in the same sense. A meaningful description or account of anything related to human experience is the product of a power which

synthesizes the elements at its disposal, namely those meaningful elements provided by one's experiences.

Mathematics, on the other hand, is now generally conceived of as devoid of meaning in the historical sense; mathematical objects, whether ideal or actual, and tools of mathematical reasoning are thought to be necessarily invariant with respect to one's inclinations or evaluations. It is a commonplace observation that mathematical objects, unlike those of the historical mode of thinking, are not objects of like or dislike. Similarly, it is taken for granted that one is not affected by the physical or ideal mathematical objects in one's experience of that particular mode of reasoning, unless this process is accidentally associated with some affection.

Perhaps mathematical and historical modes of thinking can only be distinguished in terms of emotions. For, one could hardly assert that mathematics and history involve different logics; if there were not a common primordial logic underlying reasoning of both sorts, they would not be accessible to the same species. Nor could one have recourse to exactness to differentiate the two modes of thinking, since there are cases where one must handle the physical only in terms of probabilities. Thus, indeterminacy due to ignorance about characters, inclinations, needs, and so on in a historical context resembles indeterminacy concerning the behaviour of a group of objects in space-time. Could one, therefore, discriminate between the two modes by reference to emotion? But this too seems doubtful, and even false. For, what we call a scientific discovery is mainly a discovery of regularity, either in nature or in human behaviour. A precise definition that brings seemingly different objects under the same class, a theoretical representation which makes many otherwise indistinct objects knowable—all these instances of "understanding" seem to affect one in the same sense. Joy in discovery seems to be an experience common to all conceivable problem-solvers. The feeling of mastery in such learning must naturally be associated with "pleasure" in overcoming the difficulties presented by what appears to be chaotic and hence painful. "Eureka!" is indicative of nothing but joy.

Furthermore, both the mathematical and the historical modes of thinking, as far as one can consider them as distinct, necessarily involve a personal perspective, one that is set before the "horizons" of the past and the future; one's universe expands as one inquires into definitions, descriptions, accounts or demonstrations already formulated; ever-new objects come into being as combinations of elements already present, new harmonies make themselves felt, one becomes conscious that there is no limit to qualifications and perspectives. Thus, joy appears to be the necessary concomitant of the observation that the corpus of knowledge can expand without limit, that the world

becomes ever more detailed and harmonious, that it grows through constant creation even when one is content with mere representation of the universe of knowledge without oneself discovering further harmonies which did not already exist in the corpus. In this sense mere learning too seems to be a creation in the sense of a “discovery” of human achievements.

As countless examples in history of philosophy, science, and religion show, the structure of legitimate explanation has always been the core issue of methodology, the first step of which is the determination of what is allowed, that is, what is legitimate as a tool, a criterion, in general as a means of explanation. What is a religious explanation is not, and should not be, a scientific one, for example, or vice versa. Methodology begins with metaphysics in the most general sense of the term; explanation is always a metaphysical issue and practices recognized and justified as valid determine the domain of discourse, meaning, and use. Those who are critical of the Cartesian dichotomy and the hierarchy of the sciences or those who argue for a unification of the fields of knowledge are often first critical of the attitude of overlooking the significance of historical explanation. Since historical knowledge has been conceived as particularly related to meanings and evaluations, and since mathematical explanation has been thought to be devoid of meaning, the domination of the mathematical in knowledge is said to impoverish the field and the scope of knowledge, making it meaningless. Once the domain of genuine knowledge is limited to what can be accounted for by the mathematical, value is left out of the domain of scientific, that is, reliable discourse.

Ludwig Wittgenstein’s argument concerning the inexpressibility of ethics and aesthetics constitute a clear example of the metaphysical attitude of expelling meaning from the realm of the mathematical. The expressible is confined, according to this view, to the realm of objective facts which can be marked by the mediation of a well-formed language, by the mathematical in the most general sense. Once one takes the mathematical as the only legitimate tool of *all* judgements, what is not *clearly* expressible in terms of the mathematical, judgements concerning which cannot be shown to be thus clear and necessary, namely those concerning the ethical or the aesthetical, or the historical in our sense, become labelled as groundless. One may wish to assert that such judgements have a transcendental ground. But history seems to have shown us that this is far from being a creative or a useful move. Wittgenstein abstained from calling ethics absolutely meaningless, and seems to have argued that if the ground of the ethical cannot be shown, or if it cannot be represented as entities in nature, the discourse on aesthetical or ethical values must be of a totally different nature than that on facts. It seems that Wittgenstein could admit that discourse on morality is possible,<sup>1</sup> but only in

terms irreducible to the phenomenal, that is, to the mathematical in our sense. This view, I believe, may properly be traced back to the Kantian distinction between the phenomenal and the noumenal.

Life cannot be exclusively mathematical in the sense some may be inclined to think. In fact, this is nonsense; for, what might be called pure mathematical reasoning occupies only an inconsiderable place in the totality of one's experiences, if there is any such pure reasoning. Considering the totality of my experiences, I see that in all those cases I can recall as complete scenes, I have always been intentionally related to objects and states. I also note that mathematical reasoning too has accompanied such experiences; and even it might be said that this intentional relatedness underlies the ability to apply algorithms and practical techniques of all sorts. But, of course, this does not mean that one can have the experience of an algorithm in-itself. Such algorithms and practical orders of operating on things are parts of the acts in which I recall myself to have a goal in my mind, to be affected by certain feelings, sensations, passions, and so on. Hence, there can hardly be an experience of a mathematical operation devoid of all such elements: In all my acts of reasoning I imagine or remember myself as experiencing some sensation or passion, as willing to achieve some goal. A significant achievement, a success in solving a riddle or in the application of a method, a discovery, or an invention, must always involve mathematical reasoning. I cannot recall this achievement without at the same time recalling the affection and the joy that accompanies it. In fact, one could hardly conceive an application of a method without an affection of some kind, and the joy expressed in "Eureka" is indicative of an emotion accompanying a successful reasoning. One may even assert that such emotions or passions, being always associated with the application of a method or algorithm, make mathematical learning possible, for thus they make these tools discernible and hence practicable in similar combinations.

Mathematical reasoning must be a part of my intentional acts; for, in all states in which I remember myself as acting, I discover myself as employing certain logical tools to achieve the goal I am directed to. These tools range from induction to deduction, from basic applications of any primitive skill to make the order of natural things follow the course I want it to follow, from using a stone as an instrument, for example, to most abstruse mathematical or well-formed language operations. Mathematical reasoning is everywhere: One counts as one sings, dances, or tells a history; it matters how long a note is sung, how many times a tune is repeated, how large and in what shape a patch of colour is used, how long a siege lasts, how many people are killed or saved in a war, and so on.

Once we consider the problematic demarcation from the perspective of the historical mode of thinking, we may easily see that the historical mode of thinking too cannot be conceived in isolation. As this mode of thought is generally conceived to be exclusively related to the realm of meaning and value, one must consider what is meaningful and valuable to oneself as one thinks of the past and looks to the future. Value first becomes determined by one's particular experiences. In this primordial state of ascribing value with respect to one's particular aims, mathematical reasoning must always be present; one must always be calculating the prospects of the present thing or state. Is what appears to me as desirable really worth the means? Is there a less costly way to attain the same end? Could what I now ascribe a high value at first sight still be valuable in the long run? Value ascription requires a recourse to one's past; all that is valuable must have its origin in one's past experiences, in one's moral and aesthetic culture. Even the most creative moves require a huge accumulation of past evaluations and mastery in abstractive thinking. And, if a new work or deed is valuable, it constitutes a part of a new past to serve as a foundation for new values. Value is first of significance to the person who conceives to be so. However, if there is a lack of coherence between personal and cultural values, one must look for an inconsistency in one's mathematical, that is, logical, reasoning; for, one could hardly conceive true creativity as discrepancy.

Therefore, it can hardly be argued that mathematical reasoning must be detached from value, nor could one assert that historical thinking is devoid of mathematics or of logic. The teleological attitude in general exemplifies the view that it is legitimate for one to proceed from the mathematical to value or vice versa. The idea of *telos* in nature is hardly sufficient for a rational explanation; it has to be backed up by formal reasoning. Human life, both at personal and societal levels, provide examples which suggest that particular "aims" become intelligible only if an account concerning their use, necessity, probability, and so on can be accounted for in a more or less formal structure of reasoning. There is no practicable aim in life that depends solely on emotions, no end whose means are left undetermined; otherwise, that which is evidently implausible could well be reckoned as an aim, which is evidently absurd. It will be sufficient to consider that education in the most general sense can be conceived as primarily involving teaching methods by which possible means are related to possible ends; education in any matter must necessarily consider only what is "possible."

The ancients did not discriminate sharply between the mathematical and the historical, as we are accustomed to do. Plato, the uncompromising proponent of the view that the eternal realm of truth is constituted by the mathematical,

never thought of detaching value from mathematics. On the contrary, he believed that there must be a close relation between value and geometry. For Plato, geometry, the basic tool for discovering creation's secrets, constituted the model for all rational inquiry, and was at the same time closely related to the ethical, the aesthetical, and the political, that is, to value. Consider the following account in *Timaeus*:

God desired that all things should be good and nothing bad, so far as this was attainable. Wherefore also finding the whole visible sphere not at rest, but in moving in an irregular and disorderly fashion, out of disorder he brought order, considering that this was in every way better than the other.<sup>2</sup>

And he gave to the world the figure which was suitable and also natural. Now to the animal which was to comprehend all animals, that figure would be suitable which comprehends within itself other figures. Wherefore he made the world in the form of a globe, round as from a lathe, having its extremes in every direction equidistant from the center, the most perfect and the most like itself of all figures, for he considered that the like is infinitely fairer than the unlike.<sup>3</sup>

God created a world which represented eternity as orderly shapes and motions, and created it for men as model for value. This conception of the mathematical as embodying what is good has become foreign and incomprehensible to us, but clearly it was not uncommon in Greek philosophy. Almost all pre-Socratic philosophers seem not to have sharply distinguished between rational inquiry into nature and that into human life; anthropomorphic and teleological traits were present in almost all philosophies before and after Plato. Almost all ancient philosophers drew relations between order, measure, virtue, and beauty. Plato, who integrated the Pythagorean world view into his philosophy, had no doubt that justice and beauty are exemplified in the geometrical and dynamic structure of the universe created for the human being.

History shows us that most abstruse mathematical conceptions had their origin in the practical world, and that advances in mathematical analysis were stimulated by practical needs like surveying, architecture, and agriculture, which all require control over the limits and powers of nature. It is a commonplace example that astronomy, which appears to be remote from daily practical concerns, in fact emerged from practical needs; for example, a reliable calendar was necessary for agriculture and in general for all practices which require communal and systematic work. From our historical point of view, it appears that all techniques have been developed out of practical needs and that abstractive thinking is founded upon this worldly foundation. The idealization of the entities of the life-world was possible through the mediation of mysticism, which was present in all early forms of science; the first scientists were soothsayers, astrologers. The ancient Greeks who inherited this mystical anthropomorphic view remoulded it into a teleological form.

Teleology may have more defects than merits, but its rejection by the modern philosophy of nature has led to an unnatural purification of the mathematical, and consequently to the departmentalization of knowledge. Today, we are accustomed to distinguish sharply between the mathematical and the historical, between what can be represented by quantity and quality, between fact and value, and we assume that such distinctions are absolute. History, however, shows that such distinctions may only be peculiar to our particular form of life-world, which came to be shaped by the modern ideal of the mathematization, and hence the objectification, of nature. This new world-view may perhaps have more merits than the teleological philosophy of nature, but it would be very difficult to argue that it has no harmful consequences.

#### MODERN DICHOTOMY

Modern thought distinguishes itself from the ancient and the medieval by having abandoned the teleological paradigm in explanation and by having dichotomized the mathematical and the historical, or the logical and the aesthetical. Although the origins of the modern attitude of relegating the aesthetical to the rank of secondary qualities can also be traced back to antiquity, it has become customary to hold that modern science distinguishes itself from the ancient by its pure appearances, or facts, which, unlike values, are clearly expressible in mathematical language. The ancient atomists' principle that sensations are to be distinguished from movements and shapes, that is, the primary qualities, was rediscovered and made one of the basic tenets of the new world view of mathematical science, but the ancients' understanding of rationality as embracing the aesthetical, the ethical, and the logical as equally significant aspects of existence was forgotten. The Greeks did not limit the domain of true knowledge to the mathematical; they thought that the mathematical and the historical, that is, form and meaning, were interwoven and thus formed the same reality.

The modern rejection of teleology may have enhanced mathematical inquiry, which, in time, certainly proved to be fruitful in explaining and dominating nature. But it seems that this rejection also led to a loss of meaning in the human world, as mathematical science established itself as embodying the only reliable method to attain knowledge. Consequently value was confined to the contingent human world, or was recognized as proper only to religious or metaphysical reasoning. Mathematical science, the model of ultimate rational explanation, in this form had almost nothing to say on value; hence, discourse on value and meaning came to be seen as unscientific,

and science as to be detached from what must remain ambiguous and relative in the human world.

Edmund Husserl, who seems to have related this loss of meaning to “technization” (*Technisierung*) in modern science,<sup>4</sup> drew attention to the oblivion of the life-world as the “meaning fundament of natural sciences”:

Galileo was himself an heir with respect to pure geometry. The inherited geometry, the inherited manner of “intuitive” conceptualising, proving, constructing, was no longer original geometry: in this sort of “intuitiveness” it was already empty of meaning. Even ancient geometry was, in its way, *τέχνη*, removed from the sources of truly immediate intuition and originally intuitive thinking, sources from which the so-called geometrical intuition, i.e., that which operates with idealities, has at first derived its meaning. The geometry of idealities was preceded by the practical art of surveying, which knew nothing of idealities. Yet such a pregeometrical achievement was a meaning-fundament for geometry, a fundament for the great invention of idealization. ... It was a fateful omission that Galileo did not inquire back into the original meaning-giving achievement which, as idealization practiced on the original ground of all theoretical and practical life ... resulted in the geometrical ideal constructions. ... Immediately with Galileo, then, begins the surreptitious substitution of idealized nature for prescientifically intuited nature.<sup>5</sup>

The “prescientifically inherited nature” and knowledge concerning it, Husserl argued, are interwoven in human practices, in the *Lebenswelt*, the “life-world,” for which no exclusive methodology can thus be substituted once and for all, and which, therefore, cannot be said to be devoid of meaning and to be reducible to the so-called objective world of science. The world of the ancient Greeks was not idealized to that extent; I noted that even Plato’s mathematical idealization was interwoven with value. There is an obvious contrast between the modern conception of mathematical nature and the ancient teleological-mathematical accounts.

Alexander Koyré thought that the world of mathematical idealities introduced by Plato was rediscovered in the Galilean science<sup>6</sup>; this rediscovery, according to Husserl, led finally to the modern *Technisierung* of our conception of existence. Thus, a part of the life-world, namely the vocational life-world of the modern scientist, or the so-called objective world, came to be “surreptitiously substituted” for the prescientific world. This prescientific world was, for Husserl both the world of the ancient prescientific and that of ordinary modern man:

Pre-given nature—the domain of the life-world—corporeal nature, [is that] which is familiar to the ordinary man in everyday life and which he can get to know “in more detail” but which he simply has no reason to single out and consider ... in a coherent way in its abstract unitary character, as natural science proposed to do.<sup>7</sup>

The Wittgensteinian argument concerning the inexpressibility of the ethical and/or the aesthetical, by which the logical positivists’ will to limit philosophy

to what can be logically expressed found one of its clearest statements, appears to be the culminating point of this “surreptitious substitution” Husserl was referring to. The so-called objective world was substituted for the life-world in which reality, the correct, the true cannot be limited to the vocational horizon<sup>8</sup> of the modern scientist. The logical positivist or Wittgensteinian view concerning the rejection of the possibility of a reliable ethical or aesthetical discourse seems to be a natural development of this modern dichotomy.

### *The Dichotomy and Education*

Today, this dichotomy and this recognized superiority of the mathematical or the natural scientific above the aesthetical and the ethical seem to have become the creed of the ordinary man, and hence a part of our “life-world.” One could not perhaps say that the “substitution” has been fully accomplished, that the superiority of the mathematical science of nature has been recognized by all, but the current state of education display clear indications that a hierarchical view of the sort we have been pointing to is almost universally endorsed. That the mathematical sciences are superior in exactitude and in prediction to the social sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*) can never justify a belief that the social sciences can or should be reduced to sciences of nature, or the historical in our sense to the mathematical. We cannot deny that these sciences have proper tools and their proper domains, but this cannot justify the belief that methods of one cannot be used to review or complement the other. I have noted cases where logical or mathematical tools are at the service of the historical. Similarly, it is always possible to view the mathematical from the perspective of meaning. The permeation of the historical to the mathematical is visible not only in a philosophical perspective of the history of science, but any critique that employs aesthetical or ethical arguments in the discussion of the use, meaning, or value of sciences that change the world through technology shows that the practice and the results of mathematical sciences, or the life-world that they lead to, are proper objects of the social sciences. Mathematical thought by itself can hardly be substituted for a philosophical perspective. Value necessarily adheres to the mathematical; all tools and methods, like all means for life, have value. And this value of the mathematical can neither be calculated nor understood by mathematical tools. Science and technology are not and *ought not* to be beyond evaluation. It is evident that all political, that is, ethical initiative concerning science, in encouraging or prohibiting a particular practice, in calling its products real or unreal, is evaluative.

The Pythagorean perspective is still significant, and perhaps it will be so in the future. Today we still talk of the aesthetics of theories, of the ethics of science, and of scientific communities sharing truths and principles,

although not as mysteries in the old sense. Today discovery still means for us discovery of order, and we still presuppose and seek harmony in nature and in the human world. However, we seem to have lost the ancients' faith that an all-encompassing explanation of existence is possible. This faith may be naive, and there may not be a unique methodology for understanding all relations between all kinds of things and processes, but the ancients' will to conceive existence as one both in substance and form is still remarkable and will probably be felt to be so in the future. The modern convention of distinguishing as sharply as possible between what I called the historical and the mathematical does not seem to have eradicated this ancient faith. As I have tried to show, this demarcation becomes vague once we see that there is a common rationality in both and a common element of emotion as the motive for and the consequence of all systematic inquiry.

The distinction between the mathematical and the historical, or between the logical and the aesthetical, cannot be grounded in practice since objects never become objects for us in that pure form that the false conceptual scheme I have tried to delineate suggests. A mathematical object cannot be completely devoid of meaning or of value; nor can any object to which one necessarily attaches value be conceived as beyond or recalcitrant to logic. If objects cannot be so experienced, there must be a defect in the conventional conceptual distinction. The problematic demarcation seems to be embedded in, and hence established by, the modern practice of education composed of discrete departments. No doubt, we cannot reasonably ignore the merits of modern philosophy and exalt those of a teleological view, but these cannot be good reasons for rejecting the possibility of such unification in a new philosophical perspective. If experience shows that discovery in any form, in the form of an innovation of any sort, or of learning a method is always a value for life, and that discovery or creation of value is always an object of the mathematical, it is doubtful whether a strict departmentalization in education is natural or necessary. Hence, attempts to bring hitherto distinct practices of education closer by employing certain elements of both in theory and application complementarily may at least give us an opportunity to see whether a better and creative life thus becomes possible. An educational method which fosters the joyful experience of Eureka, both in discovery and interpretation, might create new possibilities for the coming generations whose conceptions of science, art, truth, and value would be different, and perhaps better, than ours. The idea of philosophy as the grounding science in the Husserlian sense and the phenomenological approach that seeks to unify what Cartesian dualism rendered discrete suggest that a revolutionary initiative in education and learning is not without ground.

It may be argued against this view that the unification of the two seemingly discrete fields, the historical and the mathematical, the logical and the aesthetical, may not be a feasible project for the near future, that we do not yet have the proper means to tackle questions concerning value and quantity in one and the same context. Given these difficulties, is it then worth seeking the goal in question? To this I would reply that if in reality, in the life-world, one necessarily considers questions concerning quantity, order, and value as referring to the same object, it must be possible to help children to apply their thoughts according to the same natural pattern. Furthermore, the disharmony of the sciences and the loss of meaning as a consequence of the hegemony of the mathematical of which many complain may be the result of the separation of these two realms in the process of education. The origin of this disharmony or “crisis” in the sciences may, therefore, be traced back to how we learn to apply our thoughts on the objects of knowledge. The unification of the mathematical and the historical requires revolutionary changes in education, which, of course, depend on our perspective for the future.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Although Ludwig Wittgenstein argued that ethics is inexpressible and transcendental [*Notebooks 1914–1916*, ed. G. H. von Wright and G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell, 1979), p. 79; *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (London: Routledge, 1981), pp. 182–183: 6.421], he concluded his “Lecture on Ethics” with the following remark: “Ethics so far as it springs from the desire to say something about the ultimate meaning of life, the absolute good, the absolute valuable, can be no science. What it says does not add to our knowledge in any sense. But it is a document of a tendency in the human mind which I personally cannot help respecting deeply and I would not for my life ridicule it” (Lecture on Ethics, *The Philosophical Review*, 74[1], 1965, p. 12.). Again, Wittgenstein’s continuous reference to issues like the possibility of happiness, the mystical, sin, and so on are clear indications that there is a Wittgensteinian discourse on value, although it concerns the issue of its inexpressibility.

<sup>2</sup> *Timaeus*, 30a. Benjamin Jowett, trans.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 33b.

<sup>4</sup> *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, trans. David Carr (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1997), pp. 46–48.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 49–50.

<sup>6</sup> Alexandre Koyré put the emphasis on the dissimilarities between Aristotelian and Platonic physics rather than similarities and referred to the superior role that mathematics played in the Platonic science of nature to render the contrast between these two paradigms most apparent. (cf. Galileo and Plato, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 4[4], 1943, p. 421). For Koyré, and for

Husserl, who seems to have followed Koyré's view, Galilean mathematical physics marks a turning point in the history of scientific thought. However, Koyré and Husserl seem to be less interested in the obvious fact that Galileo's silence concerning teleology distinguishes him from a Platonist *par excellence*, and that this marks a second but a more important break with the tradition.

<sup>7</sup> *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, p. 381.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 121–129, 379.

RETHINKING EDUCATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE  
OF LIFE

In recent years the problematic controversies inherent in the relationship between science and the sacred, religion and modernity, have intensified. Such dichotomies reappear in the psychocognitive fields under the rubric of doctrinal content and scientific theories in the field of education. This *querelle* is especially evident in the field of education between supporters of evolutionism and creationism, or in its most recent formulation, so-called intelligent design (ID<sup>1</sup>). This clash, particularly evident in the United States, was ignited in Italy in the spring of 2004 following the concerted attempts of the Minister of Public Education to exclude evolutionary theory from the *scuola media* (secondary school) curriculum.

These developments are of particular interest when seen in the light of recent, sometimes tragic, events in the West, increasingly taken as it is with international crises (war, poverty, accentuation of political, economic, and ecological imbalances with regard to Africa, Latin America, etc.) and problems connected with the process of globalization, all of which are present in Europe, not least in Italy, where they underline and give impetus to the need for political and social integration.

The present work analyzes the implications of affirming the evolutionary paradigm in the philosophical and educational fields. Every cultural factor expresses itself in a metaphysical frame, in a sociocognitive scenario. The personal and social expectations of the medium unconsciously form the morphology of the psychocognitive and cultural landscape. This stage determines a pool of socially determined and shared goals and values that we will indicate by the term quality. It is in terms of this that the subject models its social location, develops its cognitive perspective, and defines its own philosophical ethical ideals; in short, it constructs its *Ego Ideal*.

Previously,<sup>2</sup> we proposed a formal classification of theological and cosmological models that delineates a clear theoretical division of possible models of the sacred.<sup>3</sup> That work, corroborated by numerous anthropological and philosophical data, classifies the system under two headings: *religions* and “*theoethotomies*” (a neologism).<sup>4</sup> The *religious* model, due to intrinsic and

exclusive formulas, lends itself to being compatible with the present evolutionary paradigm: In particular, this results in the psychocognitive basis on which the structure of the Ego Ideal typical of such systems is founded.

Currently, the various religions are placed on the formal and anthropological levels in a univocal orientation: The present systems, apart from the doctrinal aspects, are part of an evolutionary paradigm in which they assume a philosophicotheological perspective as an instance of natural philosophy, in which are found conceptions of natural reality, human nature, for example, and which aim to define ethical principles, universal values of man, and so on. It is interesting to note how modern concerns are bound up with substantially different anthropological and cosmological conceptions than those of evolutionary paradigms. This has caused the *querelle* since the time of Darwin, which has led to one evident contrast between evolution and religion *tout court*: a misleading philosophical excess. In particular, the evolutionary paradigm

1. It affirms a conception of biology intrinsically incompatible with the fixed canonical conception of centuries past and the impossibility of affirming an ontological distinction in the origin and nature of man.
2. It is incompatible with the classic telenomic hypothesis of the emergence of living species, in particular, the phyletic positioning and ontological role of man in that natural world.
3. It supports an implicit indeterministic meaning—congruent with other scientific theories—characteristic of natural dynamics (in particular biological).
4. In relation to the mind/body problem, evolutionary biology expresses a monistic meaning antithetical to every animistic and pneumatic dualism of man.

None of these affirmations expressed *ab origine* any theoretical opposition to theism; in contrast to theoethotomistic models, the *religious* models show a natural predisposition to incorporate the evolutionary paradigm. This because they avoid formal difficulties revealed in theoethotomistic conceptions; these difficulties are in contradiction to the evolutionary conception as testified by the continuous and uncertain attempt to synthesize evolutionary concepts and Catholic doctrine.

From a psychoanalytic point of view, the evolutionary paradigm expresses the Ego Ideal differently when associated with the *religious* model: This leads to a new synthesis congruent with the particular concept of transcendence wherein is derived positive psychocognitive dynamics that are positively inaccessible to other cultural contexts. The reason for this is essentially theoretical: Epistemologically speaking, the evolutionary paradigm is to all

effects a scientific theory. The essence of scientific method is the formulation and verification of assertions. As Niels Bohr put it,<sup>5</sup> “it is a mistake to think that physics discovers how nature is organised. Physics treats what can be said of nature.”<sup>6</sup> This approach implies the obvious refutation of every *ipse dixit*, every reference to dogmas and beliefs as well as opposition to every form of logico-intellectual subordination. In the ideal space of scientific theory, there is no place for assertions that cannot be tested or be subjected to experimental verification.

The epistemological principles that underlie the scientific method impose, therefore, a universal and objective approach based on dialectic, rigorous formal logic, and experimental evidence. This fact has an important cognitive implication: On a personal level, adopting this method implies the assumption of its epistemological presuppositions and pervasive existential cognitive praxis. To pursue this scientific approach to its logical end leads, philosophically and cognitively, to a disposition towards objectification and to a critical and rigorous dialectical lucidity. It expresses a *forma mentis* from which flow impulses that cannot be ignored and impel historians to most pressing existential questions when the implications of the scientific theory corrode our ontological positioning in the world. This is especially in evidence in the case of evolutionary theory since it defines in a radical way the phylogenetic and ontogenetic basis of the “human being,” of our profoundest nature.

The concept of evolution finds its most potent expression in the evolutionary theory of consciousness (henceforth ETC): This theory defines an alternative Ego Ideal to that which finds popular currency in our culture: intrinsically fixed, dualistic and pneumatic animistic. The ETC develops a conception of the nature of man, of his origins, of the human condition that radically undermines our daily ontological self-perception.

It is not easy to render authentically an account of our ontological dimension: We are so accustomed to the physicalist/teleological models underpinning our culture that we subscribe to an image of the ontological singularity of man in nature that is absolutely unfounded—an image that relates not only to our daily experiences, but also to the ontological and phylogenetic level of our cognitive and perceptive intellectual praxes—an image that has neither scientific nor formal validity. The evolutionary paradigm, replacing these ideological dichotomies with a continuum that dissolves our origins and our same essence in natural reality in its entirety, affirms instead a univocal monolithic, absolutely nondichotomistic position in which our same Ego generates itself and assumes, in a unitary way, irrenounceable demands of its ontological being also from reality positioned outside.

The evolutionary approach has led to a conception of consciousness and of human awareness, confirmed by ample structural and ethnological anthropological evidence,<sup>7</sup> that extends and grounds that sense of profound Kantian intuition, in all its categories a priori, as conceived by the German philosopher. According to the ETC, the Ego emerged from the joint action of genetics and the influence on the environment; broadly speaking, the subject creates itself. Our knowledge, our sensory perception, represents a sort of “psychic step” that effectively defines our phenomenological representation/perception.<sup>8</sup>

In relation to the definition of the Ego Ideal this matter, secularly and scientifically founded, constitutes an alternative to the canonical if and only if its securely characterizes this epistemological cognitive nucleus while approaching our most universal feelings and perspectives. Our proposal is characterized, therefore, in a fixed association of the evolutionary paradigm and a metaphysical *religiosity*: a new and coherent synthesis that decidedly amplifies the value of the intrinsic logic of the structure of single models. For example, juxtaposing the indeterminism and absolute negation of the common teleological theme of the evolutionary paradigm and the total absence of constrictive ethics and ideas of ontological degradation of the typical reality of *religious* models, there is composed an existential condition in which the individual perceives himself as “unnatural sentient being placed in an unnatural and intact creative manifestation of divinity. A perfect and uncorrupted manifestation of that creative will.” Given the indeterminacy, the causality that flows from the evolutionary dynamic, as Jacques Monod wrote, “man finally knows of being alone in an immense and indifferent universe ... having neither a preordained destiny nor duty.”<sup>9</sup>

This is a vision that seems to lead to nihilism. However, extraordinarily, in a *religious* context, this nihilism becomes the expression of a sacral space of responsible and autonomous ethical expression worthy of a sentient being.” Evolutionary theory describes nature radiating creative freedom and true self-determination: Ontologically there exist neither fixed natural hierarchies nor elite roles. No form of life can aspire to ontological prominence that can go beyond the mere one “to be”; no behavioral pattern can overtake the existential context of other creatures. Transposed into the *religious* perspective, the individual can elegantly transcend the mundane dimension, that ocean of indifference that, from outside a theological metaphysics, would seem to annihilate existential visions mediated from a pure scientific theory, becoming an unheard “factual, neutral and natural affirmation” of an egalitarian and free ethic for man. In this picture the human being in total responsibility and ethical autonomy can then express in a sacred way the complete human being and sentient entity; it is in this, and only in this, way that he realizes his ethically free being, emulating the image and likeness of a supernatural entity.

The message we can draw from this definition of nature is that, so far as natural dynamics are free, each creature, and even more so man, can find himself in the same freedom, in the same condition of a sacred right to ethical freedom.

One notices the elegance and philosophical robustness of such a union: The indeterminacy of the evolutionary paradigm fits naturally with the absolute absence of theological goals of the *religious* model, where the individual exercise of ethical self-determination is not precluded or relativized by norms/rules or transcendental understanding. In *religions* this goal of freedom is proposed as a real dimension and one which is concrete and accessible, sacred and intangible: the ontological personal prerogative—an existential dimension absolutely precluded in every theoethotomistic model. One can already intuit the different psychic formation and fruits that the distinct profiles of the Ego Ideal will bear in the adult phase of the individual.

These values, moreover, with reference to the work of Freud, influence how and to what extent the evolutionary/*religious* pole, as the antithesis to the fixed canonical/theoethotomistic synthesis, can lead to a new theoretical interpretation of many diffusely recognized psychocognitive factors relevant to modern practical psychoanalysis practices. With the introduction of the evolutionary/*religious* perspective, which has been considered up until now a consonant expression of faith, obviously from the theoethotomistic point of view, there seems to be of the possibility of a true psychopathological manifestation. The evolutionary paradigm delineates an anthropology, an understanding of man in the pure etymological sense in which, also accepting the principles of the psychoanalytic theory (the value of concepts such as “unconscious,” “preconscious,” “removal,” etc.), lead to reevaluation of the description of the ontogenetic processes in the psyche and in the personality: a remarkable contribution to the pedagogical perspective. They can therefore propose psychocognitive dynamics centered on the individual as an opportune pool of values through a taking part of retroactive conscience of the individual authentic psycho profile, without obviously ignoring the influence of the unconscious and preconscious requests. Thus we find delineated a pedagogical itinerary with which the individual, attaching himself more and more to psychocognitive value, directs his growth and inner maturation.

This implies, defined in an objective way, the “cultural pool/ethnic goal” of such *qualia*: an objective that leads to the universals of human psychic nature and touches on issues close to the speculative cognitive sphere of philosophy. Here the evolutionary paradigms becomes useful in allowing a definition of highly objective values, which solely for the sake of prudence shall not be proposed as “universal.”

The cornucopia of conditioning attested by cultural anthropology renders it impossible to deduce detailed laws or tight cultural patterns. However, thanks to the theoretical outcomes of ETC, it is possible to have a coarse-grained objective metacultural verification of the relations between culture and personality and examine the universal foundations of the personality where ethnological conditioning is substantially diminished.<sup>10</sup>

The individual is capable of solid intellectual development only in an atmosphere in which there are available cognitive instruments that induce the development of strongly formalized analytical thought. Many authors, such as Piaget<sup>11</sup> and Jaynes,<sup>12</sup> demonstrate that abilities only become totally manifest and explicit thanks to the exposure of the subject to a precise series of cultural cognitive demands.<sup>13</sup> The comparative cultural analysis of these themes, which connect well with the epistemological scientific and logical robustness of the evolutionary/*religious* model, can bring forth a universal and objective definition from that pool of characteristics able to express an authentic anthropology, the authentic humanity that every culture must confront. At this point it is necessary to say that, apart from every socio-affective and psychocognitive positioning, a perfect pure human “nature” does not exist, and is a myth referring to dualistic, pneumo-animistic factors proposing an essence that is alien from this reality—a myth that leads to profound interpretative distortions.

As Clifford Geertz wrote,

The prevailing opinion that the mental dispositions of man are genetically antecedents to culture and that his effective abilities represent the amplification or the extension of these previous dispositions by means of that culture is in error. The obvious fact that the final stages of biological evolution of man came after the initial phase of the growth of culture implies that “pure” and “unconditioned” “basic “human nature, in the sense all of an inmate constitution of man, is quite functionally incomplete ...

The application of this revised conception of human evolution leads to the hypothesis that cultural resources were fundamental ingredients, and not solely accessories, in all human thought... [and therefore] the fact that the large human brain and human culture emerged synchronistically and not in a series indicates that the most recent developments of the nervous system consisted in the appearance of mechanisms which allowed for the maintenance of more complex predominant fields; demands which at the same time made it less possible to give an exhaustive definition of these fields in terms of intrinsic (innate) parameters.

The human nervous system is unavoidably entrusted with accessibility to public symbolic structures to construct its autonomous schema of activity. This implies in its turn that human thought is in the first place a realized evident action of objective materials of communal culture, and only secondary a private affair. ... The isolationist maintains that culture, social organization, individual behaviour or nervous physiology are essentially closed systems; on the contrary, the progress of scientific analysis of the human mind practically presupposes an alliance on the part of all the behavioural sciences, in which the discoveries of each wheel impose new theoretical formulations on the others.<sup>14</sup>

The structuring of the Ego, its psychocognitive nature, is not a mere subjective expression, ontologically independent of external truth, nor is it an instance of psychic Ego perfectly distinct from the origins and nature of the external world. The “conscious I” is instead an inextricable synthesis of factors, relations, and related phenomena also and above all of external reality which expresses itself in important ways, preexisting demands on any states characterized as aware—both on the level of the species and that of the individual.<sup>15</sup>

Contemporary neuroscience is increasingly demonstrating how human reception and cognition are located outside of the individual and his biological cognitive apparatus; they are identified with cognitive cultural factors and affective relations that irredeemably vanish in an ulterior ontological continuum: the psychobiological and ontological reality to which must be addressed authentic conception of “Ego,” “individual,” and human “person.”

This evidence emerges from the work of J. Jaynes, G. Edelman, and, in particular M. Donald.<sup>16</sup> Donald demonstrates how, in modern man, logical performance and reflective thought, the deep aspects of the cognitive sphere (for example, the linguistic control system, the visual/symbolic codes) essential for object recognition and logical semantic composition and manipulation of perceptions, are assumed from important factors of external cultural reality. From this reality we receive, unconsciously, a memory field and an external system of symbolic storage that are closely connected to our endogenic logicocognitive modules, whose activity would be impossible without their fundamental contribution.<sup>17</sup>

Donald proposes a pedagogically interesting perspective, all of whose features derive from a Darwinian approach to the evolutionary theory of the mind and the origins of consciousness. He defines the basic elements of conscious activity by emphasizing the linguistic capacity, usually understood as a canonical form of what constitutes intellectual manifestation, as only an instrument of preexisting metalinguistic capacities of the highest level. Moreover, he demonstrates that these capacities are in reality learned thanks to repeated exposure of the subject to stimuli and external cognitive cultural factors. Interestingly, in the analysis of the emergence of these logico-metalinguistic qualities, Donald follows the consonance between these, Greek pedagogy, the foundations of Platonic rhetoric, and Aristotelian teachings on the mind’s logic and functional dialectic primary to their capacity in the formation of the psyche—elements that seem to evidence the true nature of psychocognitive phenomena and the profound and structuring role of cultural factors.<sup>18</sup>

This new interpretation of nature and the human mind identifies the origin of this “emergent quality” from the environment in which we express our prerogatives of self-aware agencies in an evolutionary process spanning millions of years, therefore well before the emergence of reflective consciousness—a “something” that amply goes beyond the scope of our mere biological interiority, passing the ingenious interface between our Ego and that external reality that we admit in our self-aware daily experience. Such characteristics must, therefore, be comprised, and we must comprise ourselves, as psychocognitively *holistic expressions*: Pragmatic considerations subsume the entire reality of reception. In consonance with Richard Dawkins<sup>19</sup> term “extensive phenotype,” we can say that this extracorporeal and extraneural reality, converging in our brains as a true constituent factor, constitutes “the extended extra biological phenotype” of our Ego and of the human mind.

Man seems to see himself reflected in the entire universe, comprising all of, as Leibniz puts it, the other “monads,” or as K. Lorenz put it, the other “mirrors,” the other “sensory prints.”<sup>20</sup>

The encephalic sensory psychic modules from which we might represent in the final analysis the “logiconeural step” are all environmental characteristics, as the fins of the fish are an expression of the physical and chemical characteristics of water and wings the density of the air. All of these biological structures, the brain, and the nervous system in general, would constitute a psychocognitive print of intrinsic cultural and socioaffective characteristics of the culture in which we find ourselves.

The externality of these factors in respect to that which is tacitly meant by “individual” is demonstrated by the fact that the evolutionary process finally leads to the human mind: a true and inherent emergent quality released by the reorganization of preexisting neuroanatomical elements that were originally used for diverse purposes. Such processes, known as “exaptation,”<sup>21</sup> will lead only much later to the emergence of the mind such that the singular biological components and opportune external sociocognitive factors become available. This confirmation, like the sentient characteristics that we today recognize as the essence of the Ego, cannot be understood as having exploded in a unique event, in a *fiat* arising from a biological container expressing in one blow all the singular oneness of self-awareness—in the last analysis of the Ego.<sup>22</sup> The phylogenetic emergence of the Ego/man is in reality a long and twisting process, an imperceptible continuum, that it is not possible to solve in terms of continuity: no moment or magical instant seals the distinction between “*ante*”—not human—in which it is not possible to speak of the psyche, of logos—and “*post*”—the human, in which all of the instances are of a prodigiously present trait. But this is to signify the impossibility of

understanding in a univocal world a one-sided full Ego, totalizingly monadic, and on the other the perfect opposite, external reality, in opposition to an irreducible ontological interface. This implies the necessity of addressing under new relationships that in reality are between what we intend with the Ego and the external, the non-Ego, to define the authentic psychological and cognitive prerogatives of the Ego.

At this point, we can propose an objective term for the arrival of psychocognitive evolution: an objective coherent pool of *qualia* that would represent the true archetypal profile on which is defined the more authentically human Ego Ideal. This approach, also not ignoring the analysis of lived individuality, which it extends and integrates, points to the value of cognitive reference and educational praxis supporting also other aspects of contemporary psychology and contributing also to the characterization of the personality and preventing psychopathological drifting.

The process can be expressed in the light of a concept from the theory of complex systems, that of topological “attractors,” in the form of “psychocognitive and ontological attractors.” Thus we can identify an ethico-ontological profile, a “basin all of attraction” that progressing, with an awareness of psychocognitive dynamics and not through utopianism, improbably becomes, against the odds, conscious of preceding unconscious elements—mainly of infancy—as orthodox psychoanalysis prescribes. Using Edelman’s terminology, the purpose is to develop an “ethnic culture and metaphysical qualia” as a scaffolding for the new anthropology, giving a new meaning to the term “mental cognitive health.” This point is at the heart of psychoethnological debate and ethnopschoanalysis, and leads to an epistemological and philosophical reflection apt to redefine more objective and universal “anthropic” characteristics of such *qualia*.

But which pool of *qualia*? Which elements to take into consideration? Which bonds/relations exist between the single items? Which associations are allowed and which are inseparable? And finally, which profiles of the personality, but still more, psychopathological dynamics, are associated with the various constellations all of *qualia*?

From the ethnological and psychoanalytic evidence, it can be asserted that in human culture there are present standard constellations of *qualia*. This evidence defines a nonutopian horizon on which to find characteristic aspects of the various sociocultural factors and makes it possible to make some appraisals. In this we can look to authors such as Jung for archetypes and Freud for psychological dynamics, but also to more recent ethnological and ethnopschoanalytic developments. In particular, ethnopschoanalysis evidences the role of the constellation of *qualia* afforded by

religiocultural systems. The application of orthodox psychoanalytic treatments to individuals in cultures distinct from Western culture is ineffective in cases in which theoretical considerations about therapeutic praxis—the nature and role of cultural and cognitive factors on which the subject according to his beliefs attributes his symptoms—are not considered. These studies, identifiable in particular in the religious beliefs of the subject, identify powerful causative and explicative factors of pathological symptoms.<sup>23</sup> According to G. Devereux, it is

legitimate to speak of “typical psychiatric diseases,” determined not by cultural models specific to the group, but from its type of social structure. Murdock is therefore right in saying that the studies of “culture and personality” would have to be completed by studies on the social structure and the personality.<sup>24</sup>

Acting from infancy to maturity, these cultural cognitive *qualia* are expressed in the depths of the personality, structuring all the psychoid aspects, called by G. Devereux, “unconscious ethnic” and “cultural unconscious.”<sup>25</sup> Here are the archetypes of diverse cultures to which belong the figures called the “mother” and the “father,” the common considerations of the body, the uses, customs, and traditions, not to mention ethical values, inherent to sexuality, erotic satisfaction, cultural humanistic and scientific developments, the common meaning of member of the clan and of citizen, and so on. The individual who is formed psychically in a social context assumes these hierarchies of values and factors. This structure must inevitably constitute a complex evolutionary adaptation from which the social structure cannot extricate itself, inasmuch as society, without exclusion, is involved in the process of competition and natural selection. This goal is also at work on the individual level. Authentic mental “sanity” must represent a coherent and efficacious adult personality structure, in psychological and cognitive terms, in tune with bioevolution, with which are structured man’s intellectual capacity and cognitive and sociocultural contents. It is not possible to ignore this continuum and selective pressure in the formation of psychological demands, even if human evolution has arrived at a cultural and cognitive horizon of socioaffective behavior that generates a strong relativization of innate human *patterns* of behavior.

Let us move now to cognitive aspects, which are socioculturally affective and inherent in the distinction between theoethotomistic models and *religious* ones, and concern ourselves with the respective fixed paradigms and associated evolutionary models. Such a collection of characteristics does not represent unstructured aggregations of demands modifiable by pleasure, correlative and functional groups, true psychocognitive systems concurrent with the determination of base personality modal profiles of the personalities

in society. The fixed theoethotomistic/cosmological-anthropological system is characterized by the following *qualia*:

1. The individual and the reality in which he is located do not respond to the metaphysical canon of perfection. The individual is usually understood as an intrinsically imperfect agency, corruptible often as a result of successive degradation following the original phase of divine creation.
2. Ontologically the individual is an ethically dependent entity subordinate *in primis* to divinity.
3. Personal entities of a superior ethical position relative to the individual are affirmed, which affirms the ethical supremacy and license of the same. This can correspond at the worldly level to individuals/social classes in a position to express this code of economic and social supremacy, compulsory to the individual and obviously of the community.
4. Society usually expresses an ontological primacy through pure ethical supremacy, which is still reaffirmed in many societies, and obviously regimes, theocratic or not.
5. The individual is part of a culture aimed at a dualistic anthropology that also asserts an ontological separation of the deep ground of the spiritual Ego and natural reality.

Typical *qualia* of the *religious/cosmological-anthropological-evolutionary* schemata are as follows:

1. There exists neither ontological degradation of the Ego nor that of natural reality, which, inasmuch as they are the direct objects of a creative event, express the original ontological characteristics of the creator.
2. Ontologically what is meant by the individual is intrinsically independent on the ethical level, *in primis*, in relation to divinity.
3. The existence of an entity in a position to assume ethical and ontological supremacy both in the worldly sphere and eventually in the otherworldly sphere is not assumed. Consequently, this such an affirmation denies the eventuality of the existence of any category of the subject/entity and/or classes to which the individual must ethically be subordinated.
4. Society cannot express any ontological supremacy over the individual.
5. The individual is expressed in a profoundly monistic anthropology that affirms a strict ontological correspondence between the I in its totality and natural reality *in toto*.

A synoptic picture of the two systems is presented in Table 1. The theoethotomistic model presents a constellation of *qualia* more directly and decisively addressed to the hypertrophic developments of the Super-Ego. Such elements structure the ontological and sociocultural environment in which the subject becomes aware of itself and its own extremely inadequate ontological nature.

TABLE 1.

Typical characteristics	Theoethotomies	Religions
Concept of a creator God	Yes	Yes
Concept of an omnisciently moral God	Yes	No
Ethical independence of the individual with respect to God	No	Yes
Belief in original integrity and cosmological purity	No	Yes
Affirmation of worldly corruption of the individual	Yes	No
Individual sexual repression in theistic perspective	Strong	Weak/absent
Activity/ethicosocial recognition of a cleric class	Yes	No
Private property, developments of economic activity	Strong	Medium/low
Social-ethical communitarian inhibition	Yes	No
Socioaffective reinforcement of the Oedipal complex	Yes	No
Pregenital syndromes (anal, etc.)	Strong	Weak
Dynamics favorable to hypertrophy of the Super-Ego	Present	Absent
Subjective ethical dependency in the ideal of the Ego	Present	Absent
Dissipation in the adult phase of structuring factors of the Super-Ego	No	Yes
Inhibition of the emergence of and ethic in the autonomous adult phase	Strong	None
Ethicosocial affirmation of the value of the rational subject	No	Yes
Meritocratic ethics associated with subordination	Developed	Minimal/absent
Magico-oracular attitudes	Strong	Absent

These matters condition the psychic dynamics in relation to the development of the Super-Ego and define a profile of the Ego Ideal that is essential to a healthy development of the personality and a positive structuring of positive socioaffective behavior. The typical profile all of the Ego Ideal in the theoethotomistic model is characterized by the following traits:

1. Ethical obedience/subordination.
2. Cult of/subordination to socially and faithfully recognized authority.
3. Explicitly traditionalist faith in socio-intellectual dogmatic line.
4. A disposition to acceptance, especially as the consequence of confessional tasks, of all instinctual repression and affirmation of what to strong-willed people seem to be onerous and often painful demands.
5. A repressive attitude and/or a *tout court* lack of ethical confidence in confronting expressions of sexuality.

6. And individual disposition to order and efficiency, especially expressed in abnormal and pathological ways—although understood as shared and socially normative.
7. A predisposition to valuation and actual isolation of all behaviors and socioaffective practices connected with self-restraint and most of all and behavioral and emotional purity.

One notices that some of these characteristics are invoked, in concert, in the psychoanalytical analysis of the “sadistic–anal” syndrome, as proposed in *Metamorfosi della Ragione* and in the comparison of populations in cultural anthropology (Dobu, Manus, and Zūni).<sup>26</sup>

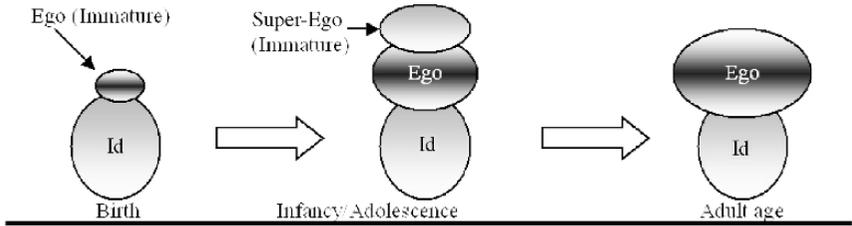
Therefore, we can have a deeper appreciation of the antithesis between the psychocognitive dynamics of the *religious* and theoethotomistic models. In theoethototemistic models, we can find a hypertrophy of the Super-Ego capable of subsisting in an existence ruled by external moral norms. Moreover, here we can find all the instances capable of stimulating an abnormal development of the Super-Ego that are present at the same time, whence derive anxiety, impotence, subordination, and feelings of inadequacy leading to the painful psychopathological neuroses and syndromes.

On the contrary, the complete absence of any ethical subordination of the *religious* models leads to a similar lack of super-egotistic hypertrophy (Fig. 1). The consequence is a completely different personality development, characterized by a limited, transitory, and healthy growth of Super-Ego, which shows, in the adult phase, different psychocognitive functioning related to various cultural realities.

In the *religious* models, along with this essential aspect, we have a definition of the contents of the Ego Ideal, an ideal that is important in achieving individual maturity and reaching the “adult” condition. The *religious* Ego Ideal is characterized by the following features:

1. The individual is understood in an extended ontological sense as a “sentient entity” put in a condition of responsibly expressing, above all in the theological sphere, its ethical self-determination.
2. The adult perfectly expresses a universally psychocognitive human condition. According to some interesting epistemological-philosophical considerations brought to light by TEC, this allows for a high degree of objectification and rationalization in the ethical sphere.
3. Such ontological goals are obtainable only through the achievement of the adult phase and, consequently, are due to the responsible exercise of one’s ethical independence. The psychological ontological development therefore tends to reach expression in this sacred aspect.

**“Religious” Culture**



**“Theo-etho-tomistic” Culture**

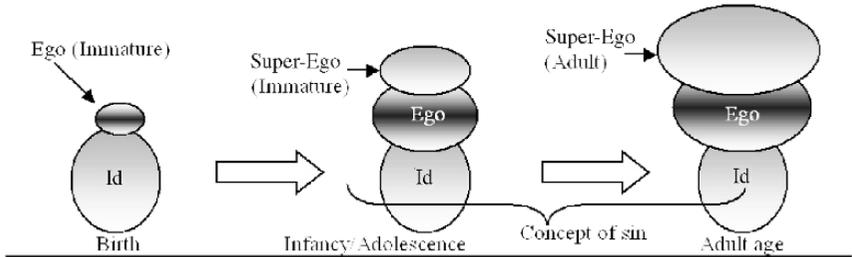


Figure 1.

4. The individual, any individual, is not to be understood as an ontologically corrupt entity, but rather as a “perfect man.” This ontological perfection expresses itself in any aspect of being, from sexuality, to ethical praxis and duty, to perfect and responsible ethical freedom in the personal, affective, and social spheres.

From these we can infer the following:

1. An anthropology converging on matters of ethical objectivity
2. An assertion of the ontological primacy of worldly human nature
3. The acceptance of a natural reality no longer definable in terms of imperfection, decay, corruptibility, and ontological contrast

This Ego Ideal is an easily achievable goal that is within everybody’s reach. Becoming aware of his ontological being, which express a perfect and objective humanity, the subject identifies perfectly with the Ego Ideal.

Regardless of any possible intent or dedication, the individual is no longer in the theoethototomistic condition from which intrinsically ensues alienation from ontological perfection. In *religions*, the awareness of such striving represents a psychocognitive element that has profound implications. These goals are realized in a synergy representing a dynamic “stabilizing

polarization” of the psychocognitive development to which the subject continuously refers during his maturation process. Therefore, we can propose a convergent directionality as a principle of the individual’s personality development—a directionality that, from a psychoevolutive perspective, finds support in the “psychocognitive and ontological attractor” constituted by the Ego Ideal. These elements, therefore, can bring a dismantling of repressions that originate in the cultural affirmation of the principles from which the Super-Ego’s hypertrophy originated.

The concrete achievement of the *religious* profile of an adult individual represents a radical contrast from the Ego Ideal of theoethotomies, whose basis precludes the development of a rational ethic and, consequently, of reaching the properly adult phase, which is distinguished from the expression of the ethical autonomy of the subject.

In a theoethotomy this insurmountable gap, an ineluctable ontological “defect,” in which the Ego is teleologically immobilized is taken as constituting the *summa* of all these psychopathogenic aspects manifesting the conflict/subordination dynamic between Ego and Super-Ego. In these systems the realization of a complete ethical and adult autonomy is averse to existence: This leads to worrying and neurotic Oedipal manifestations when faced with the moral supremacy of the divinity, and, consequently, of all the social, individual, and hierarchical structures embodying such.

From a theoretical–pedagogical perspective, we can observe a very important factor: an innovative collocation of some typical elements of current ethnopsychanalysis and ethnopsychiatry especially in relation to the psychological evaluation of the theological structures from a transcultural viewpoint. Among the most recognized pieces of evidence from these disciplines consists in the acknowledgement of a system’s values, its characteristic contents, and the definition of psychopathologies typical of individual ethnic realities. The peculiarity of these cultural elements allows us to consider them as the core of that *qualia*’s pool that operates in the determination of the so-called “basic personality” in a given cultural reality.

Compared with the orthodox approach to the analysis of the sacred, the division between theoethotomy and *religion* leads to a more pertinent evaluation than has all of the psychoclinical material so far. In our opinion, these have been explained in a partisan and misleading way. From this perspective, the definition of “religious pathology” is no longer reduced to extreme and aberrant expressions as stated even by normal psychoanalytic praxis. Here we propose a larger meaning of “pathology,” addressed not to bothersome and marginal manifestations, but directly to the various manifestations considered “healthy” faith experiences. This allows us to understand the basic core of

theoethotomies as a “pathological” arrangement, in a fideistic attitude as seen by common sense as “normal,” positive, and orthodox expression of faith. At this point, evoking the image of an elderly woman genuflecting in front of a statue in order to satisfy her immediate needs, of the social participation of the more proudly and motivated *theocon*, of the fervent orator and of a refined theologian or officiant mystically immersed in the liturgical ceremony, is no longer a provocation.

This new interpretation includes in the same interpretative ambient, perhaps in a desecrating way for many, either the canonical teleological models or the whole casuistry of paranormal beliefs: from spiritualistic possessions, UFOs, aliens, shamanic praxis, satanic sects, and fideistic psychosomatizations so well explained by psychology and psychoethnology: the “positive” official millenarian universalistic confessions. This applies to the extremist excesses of every *pasdaran*, but also to the orthodox, the believer, the Catholic, and the Protestant.

Starting from this theoretical arrangement, we can in fact assume the emergence of many psychopathogenic movements in relation to the same principles of such models and not only to sectarian behavior or borderline manifestations.

Regarding this issue, we refer to the psychologist Giacomo Dacquino, and particularly to *Religiosità e Psicoanalisi*,<sup>27</sup> a wide-ranging analysis of nosological material concerning the religious sphere. In this book, the author presents interesting definitions of “religious psychopathology” and “healthy religiousness,” providing a rich survey of pathologic religious styles/forms. This work constitutes a useful reference work on the relation between psychopathology and religiousness: religion in the orthodox sense. The author, to whom we have already extensively referred in previous works,<sup>28</sup> taught for a long period in papal institutions.

The elaboration of the concept of “religious immaturity” allows the author to place in this frame different forms of religiousness: “anal,” “oral,” and “phallic”; religious neuroses, in forms such as “narcissistic,” “dependent,” “gratifying,” “masochist,” “maniacal,” and so on; together with interesting forms of “conscious-neurotic atheism,” “unconsciousness,” and “neurotic conversion.”

Moreover, we find very interesting his description of religious psychosis, including cases of manic–depressive psychosis and schizophrenia.<sup>29</sup>

Taking into account the more recent classifications of the psychopathological forms given in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 4th edition (DSM–IV),<sup>30</sup> we are going to follow the author’s proposal, consistent with the ideals of the pioneers of modern psychology,

such as Jung, Freud, Adler, Fromm, Bowlby, and others. This allows us to converge on the explicative modality introduced in *Metamorfosi della Ragione* regarding the psychopathogenic aspects referable to various religious systems.

The distinction between *religions* and theoethotomies leads to a revision of nodal aspects of the psychosociological meaning of the religious phenomenon in Dacquino's thought and, more generally, in the whole of modern psychology. The conception of religion, taken in its "obvious" and "prototypical" senses, to which, besides philosophy, classical psychology and psychoanalysis have referred, always in fact referred to a theoethotomistic model. This modality in fact represents a contingent, partial and elitist form, incapable of incorporating the whole value of human experience of the sacred *tout court*. It is therefore enough to replace the religious concept *tout court* with the theoethotomistic one.

Psychoanalysis demonstrates that, in a theoethotomistic context, there is, beginning with childhood and youth, an inevitable overlap, or identification, of the idea of God with parents and then with educationists and ethical-social authorities with which the subject has to deal in everyday life.<sup>31</sup>

In the course of these identifications, the subject tests the ethical basis of his own culture, his ethical-social dictates, conforming his psychology of interpersonal relationships to the principal moral entities around him (familial relationships and also those in normal social relations).

Consequently, individual psychic development is marked by typical developmental phases, during which the individual interiorizes a "physiologically" immature religiousness due to a still mutable personality.<sup>32</sup> Dacquino proposes that those experiences can deeply impair the individual personality, giving rise to serious "pathological" and "immature" religiousness, manifestations that may continue even in the adult phase.<sup>33</sup> These are the so-called "pathological" forms of religiousness.

The placement of these symptoms in a teleological-ontological frame distinct from the theoethotomical one gives them *in nuce* a substantially different meaning. Here, what for the theoethotomistic manifestations is common sense and "correct," the "normal" modality of faith expression and the relation of man with the sacred, is actually a degeneration of the "healthy" religious manifestation. We want to underline how this perspective is deeply consistent with modern psychoanalytic theory and is not far from the general arrangement of this dimension of human reality in modern evolutionary thought.<sup>34</sup>

Some disorders categorized in the DSM-IV as Axis II suggest a new evaluative perspective on the psychopathogenic influence of certain theistic

models. A first example is the “schizotypal personality disorder,” which leads to the schizophrenic forms mentioned by Dacquino as “religious psychosis.”<sup>35</sup>

This disorder is characterized by social and interpersonal deficits accentuated by acute discomfort and a reduced ability to establish solid relationships. Other characteristics are behavioral distortion and eccentricity; in other words, incorrect interpretations of reality, original beliefs, magical thoughts, fetishism, superstitions, clairvoyance, and belief in telepathy. Culturally determined beliefs and rituals can erroneously appear as “schizotypal” forms as, for instance, in the Voodoo practice, shamanism, glossalia (speaking unknown languages), belief in relationships with other dimensions and entities, and so on. Several authors have independently proposed such an association; for example, regarding the shamanic figures, we mention the neuroscientist R. Sapolsky.<sup>36</sup>

Another pathology that we can associate with animistic-fideistic expressions is the “paranoid personality disorder,” which is characterized by excess of mistrust and suspicion of others. Some characteristics are connected to ethnicity, culture, age, and type: It happens, for instance, between members of ethnic minorities and so on.

Regarding the psychological relations among Ego, Ego Ideal, and Super-Ego, we find “avoidant personality disorder” and “dependent personality disorder” particularly interesting. The former shows manifestations of social inhibition and feelings of inadequacy and hypersensitivity to negative judgment. The degree of wariness and avoidance considered appropriate in different cultural groups varies. The “dependent personality disorder,” which shows a totalizing and hypertrophic need of being attended to, is characterized by submissive and dependent behavior and a dread of separation. The degree of dependent behaviors considered appropriate may vary with age and with sociocultural factors: For example, in certain societies we find an emphasis on passivity, kindness, and deference, while other societies encourage, in a different way, dependent behavior in males and females.

The “obsessive–compulsive personality disorder,” as noted by other authors, presents a quite clear categorization of a strong fideistic background.<sup>37</sup> This description fits easily with manifestations of “anal religiousness” proposed by Dacquino. Especially in its capacity to combine, in an extreme way, other psychopathological factors relating to the influence of such subjects towards other individuals conditioned by theoethotomistic principles, such a syndrome constitutes one of the most common, significant, and dangerous forms of the theoethotomistic tendency. The essential characteristics of this syndrome are a strong predilection for order and perfectionism and a tendency

to exaggerated interpersonal and mental control together with a loss of flexibility, broadmindedness, and efficiency.

As certain cultures give particular emphasis to work and productivity, it is interesting to notice that, in these cases, the related behaviors produced by this kind of system are not usually considered as “pathological.”<sup>38</sup> As such, they show a strong ethnocentric conditioning and remind us of Max Weber’s work on the Protestant ethic and capitalism.<sup>39</sup>

We also consider quite interesting the so-called “mood disorders,” under which we find major depression, bipolar depression and other personality disorders. Dacquino proposes, in parallel with this classification, the introduction of the religious “manic–depressive disorder.”<sup>40</sup> This disorder leads to alteration of the individual’s mood, characterized by maniacal manifestations followed by periods of serious depressive fits and irritable periods in which the individual express a hypertrophic sense of grandiosity, a reduced need for sleep, and so on, alternated with periods in which the subject shows difficulty concentrating, a tendency to self-devaluation, and thoughts of death, suicide, and so on. Put in a fideistic dimension, this disorder manifests as an intense hyperactivity, feelings of omnipotence, and need for assiduous and exaggerated attendance at religious services alternated with profound moments of downheartedness, panic, and a frustrating sense of guilt during which the individual lives with the fear of not having a way to escape from inevitable punishment. In the cycle of maniacal and depressive phases, the subject alternates “periods of hypertrophic Super Ego (with an intense senses of guilt) with periods of hypertrophic Super Ego (with weaker senses of guilt), depressive feeling with omnipotence feelings.”<sup>41</sup> It seems possible to combine this syndrome with many forms of religious immaturity proposed by Dacquino, starting from Freudian theories of pregenital fixation forms—oral, anal, and phallic religiousness—to those identified with the terms “narcissistic,” “dependent,” “gratifying,” “substitutive,” “timorous,” “masochistic,” “hypomaniacal,” and “obsessive.”<sup>42</sup> Addressing the topic of “obsessive religious immaturity,” Dacquino treats the question of “neurotic” religious conversions and atheism (conscious and unconscious) and the sense of guilt, which can also be conscious or unconscious.<sup>43</sup>

With regard to neurotic atheism and religious conversions, we should note that those manifestations underline the influence of structural particulars of a given theistic construct. In addition, the fact that the theoethotomistic model constituted the orthodox ideal reference point of concepts of religiousness and of religion in Western society as a whole impeded a deeper understanding of the meaning of this problem. Dacquino speaks about neurotic conversions as “neurotic subjects joining a religion different from that in

which they grew up or those who easily move from one religion to another or from one sect to another”<sup>44</sup> and describes conversion as something that happens

in an unexpected, sometimes overpowering and even dramatic way: corresponding to an emotive experience, lived with a strong and anxious burden during deep profound conflicts with a new object or religious group. It can originate in a traumatic event, in an illness, from psychical pains or anything else which can awaken elements of already latent intrapsychic conflict<sup>45</sup>.

The model of “neurotic conversion” becomes almost “normal” in Western culture, as shown by the narration of famous conversions in the popular media as well as in literature, for example, Manzoni’s *I Promessi Sposi* and Dostoevsky’s *Brothers Karamazov*; we can even glimpse the salient characteristics of these conversions in the New Testament, of which Saul’s conversion (Acts 9, 1–19)<sup>46</sup> constitutes a prototype. Here are present all of the aspects mentioned: original fanaticism, trauma and elaboration of trauma with visions reminiscent of visual and auditory hallucinations of a schizotypal type, and, afterwards, a maniacal sense of belonging to the new faith. In taking part in this new faith, the subject expresses himself with a militant belonging, expressing and embodying strength, absolutism, grandiosity, and a pronounced manifestation towards a sense of guilt and moral strictness—“*obsessive-compulsive disorder*”?—maybe the beginning of a deep process of “*reaction formation*” through which the individual replaces an ideal that threatens his Super-Ego with its opposite.

These traits are exhibited, for instance, by people who, excited and fascinated by pornographic material, avoid it by attaching themselves to militant organizations that fight pornography.<sup>47</sup>

“Neurotic atheism” appears to exemplify the way in which certain conceptions of religiousness can condition human behavior; it leads to an essential rejection of ethical authority of which the divinity is invested; this neurosis often express the discomfort that the individual already experienced with parental figures. We agree with the Dacquino’s evaluation that

certain cases of atheism do not have a rational base, as believed, but are the consequence of these deep conflicts; they basically go back to unresolved childish problems which prevent the subject from “recognizing” and “accepting” divinity. ... The relation with God has a psychological origin in the early human relation of child and parent. In order to represent God, the child takes unconsciously as a model the most prestigiously persons around him, namely the parents

so that a son who has not gotten past the Oedipus complex

as an adult can assume an atheist attitude and feel a pathological hatred toward God, identifying him (god) as the cause of his suffering, which is instead a consequence of his own conflicts with the father. In that case disowning God is equivalent to disowning the worldly father, of which God is just a projection.<sup>48</sup>

In this regard, we would like to propose a definition that explains the value of the theoethotomies/*religions* antithesis. All of the metaphysical characteristics of considered by Dacquino as manifestations of “neurotic atheism” are exclusively concerned with a theoethotomistic God. This conception of divinity and relative relationship of man and God is not present in the *religious* models, which clearly shows the contingency and partiality of the reference to theoethotomistic models in such an analysis.

Concerning the sense of guilt, the explicit fulcrum of any theoethotomy, Dacquino links the emergence of the conscious sense of guilt with feelings that originated in the early years of life through which the individual interiorizes the categories of “good” and “bad”: motor or behavioral experiences, and so on. Through these the individual begins comparing himself with the norms of the community, parents and educationalists from which, in a broader ethical meaning, the subject develops his own ideal concepts of “Good” and “Evil.”

Through ever-more-differentiated phases—from a passive and reflex behavior of acceptance or refusal and reliance on judgments of external authority or threat of punishments—the subject can reach an ethical and mature interiorization.<sup>49</sup>

The case of an unconscious sense of guilt is different. This refers to a vague feeling of anguish, oppression, restlessness, and uncertainty not deriving from remorse due to actions or behaviors, but from an unconscious mechanism through which guilt is evoked in prelogical functions and magical conceptions. This sense of guilt is

produced by the Super Ego; in fact it's the consequence of the tension transferred from the Super Ego to the I ... related to the onset of the Super Ego, which is a normal unconscious aspect that the child develops as a consequence of his relation with the environment.<sup>50</sup>

According to the classical definition of “healthy” personality in psychoanalysis, the development of the individual should lead to an adult phase in which the subject expresses a healthy and mature Super-Ego. Despite the fact that during adolescence the Super-Ego shows that it originates “from the very clash between the irrational instinct of unconscious and norms imposed by external authority (parents and educationists),”<sup>51</sup> in the development process we can observe a maturation of Super-Ego which represents

an important dynamic element in the individual evolution as, besides restraining the instinctual need of the Id, it corresponds to the ideal of the introjected Ego. In fact the Super Ego, besides being a forbidding force, is also the heir of the Ideal of Ego and therefore represents a model. When the Super Ego isn't pathological, it doesn't disturb the psyche with a sense of guilt and so doesn't cause conscious manifestations. On the contrary, the normal Super Ego contributes to the moral forming of the individual who, in the maturation process progressively subordinates the Super Ego to the Ego. Therefore, the action of Super Ego persists in the adult phase normally

conditioning behaviour in harmonic collaboration with Ego. Thus, the introjected norms of Super Ego contribute not only to the psychological evolution of the individual, but also to his normalization, to his social living.<sup>52</sup>

The proposal of a theoethotomies/*religions* antithesis provides, on the contrary, for a “healthy” maturation achievable through a reabsorption, or at least an overcoming, of the immature and hypertrophic aspects of Super-Ego originating during the childhood phases. This goal should be reached, from an ethical point of view (under an ethical profile), by overcoming the phase of “not-adult,” but the ethical autonomy of the “adult” individual is irreparably precluded in the theoethotomistic situation because of its definition of the relation between man and God. Psychoanalysis demonstrates that the structures introjected during childhood cannot be totally removed without an external cognitive, sociocultural contribution expressly addressing this issue: They will represent an unconscious component preserved in the development of the individual, capable of making the realization of a real nonpathologic personality fruitless. In many traditional cultures, for instance, we can observe a diffused mentality that scholars do not hesitate to define as “prelogical”; this can be found even in modern Western societies, despite the fact that they have reached high educational levels.

Naturally, we are not referring to the real absence of fundamental logical-cognitive categories; rather, we refer to a predominance of conceptions and magical heuristic categories vis à vis verbalized intellectual processes that are made aware and clear in a logically rigorous way. This means that becoming aware, which depends on deep comprehension and the appropriate anthropological setting, is precluded by a praxis that conforms to aberrant metaphysical conceptions of reality and role of the subject.<sup>53</sup> In the absence of an objective point of reference, the subject cannot have the insight with which to overcome these problems nor remove the childish and adolescent circumstances typical of the Super-Ego.

Let us consider certain naturalistic, cosmological, and anthropological concepts such those of time and space, human nature, sexuality, divinity, man and woman, childhood, growth, the body, the psyche, the person, the community, death, and so on; *religions* express, on a teleological level, the need for an autonomous and complete ethical expression of the individual, which involves the absence of superegoistic components subordinated to supernatural ethical values. This understanding constitutes the most powerful attempt to manage the absorption process of the immature aspects of the Super-Ego.

As such, this goal is decidedly not utopian, but stimulates introspection and retrospection into the more or less archaic, unconscious and immature

layers of ethical motivation of the subject and proposes itself as an instrument for checking this maturation process. This defines a psychocognitive goal put in the perspective of the more or less immediate future of the individual, toward which one should head in a dynamics reminiscent of Reichean ideas concerning the releasing of the individual from the defense mechanisms of the psychopathological personality of modern Western society.<sup>54</sup>

Whereas theoethotomistic structures prevent the individual from removing the fixation on a hypertrophic Super-Ego, *religions* propose *qualia* for reaching the adult condition—"objectively healthy," free from immature "contaminations," banishing the sense of guilt and crystallizations of the Super-Ego.

With regard to the sense of guilt, cultural anthropology speaks of so-called "guilt" or "shame" cultures—cultures in which these emotions form a strong part of the development of the individual. The senses of shame and guilt constitute powerful factors in determining pathological manifestations: The former refers to a comparison between Ego and Ego Ideal in which the subject feels observed both from the outside and from his own introspection. This expresses, on a psychological level, a gap between the affective image of the Id and the Ego Ideal due to which the individual can feel alienated or removed following certain behaviors that are felt to be in some way a contravention, as with certain aspects of sexual behavior.

One notices in Genesis the prompt consequence of the knowledge of Good and Evil, which in the exegesis proposed by us would represent the metaphysical formulation of a theoethotomistic conception in the awareness of nudity, a cognitive phenomenon that creates in the protoparents a previously unknown sense of shame.<sup>55</sup> This expresses the total relation between metaphysical-cultural dimensions and deep, often pathological, psychosexual manifestations of human nature and makes the a biblical exegesis based on these new paradigms more intriguing. The sense of guilt is mainly defined in relation to Super-Ego by an awareness of harming someone, violating moral norms, or disobeying an ethical authority; these manifestations can become chronic in theoethotomistic scenario, which, proposing disharmonious pictures of the Id, makes the psychocognitive rationalizations capable of dissolving such aberrations fruitless.<sup>56</sup> From this unresolved problem will derive numerous socially endemic manifestations, such as, for instance, the obsessive-compulsive behaviors and psychosomatisms highlighted by psychology.<sup>57</sup>

In light of the distinction between theoethotomies and *religions*, attitudes, individual and social activities, roles, traditions, and expressions of cults usually seen as "consonant manifestations of faith" are meant to be more

explicative and more open to scientifically verifiable definition. Due to inadequate ethical and cultural conditions, they represent distortions of the inner structure of psyche and of the more explicit conscious part of the personality. The new paradigm eliminates the conceptual space in which the idea of “healthy” as postulated by the psychologically orthodox tradition is “invariantly obvious” in the sphere of (theoethotomistic) faith.

It is no longer possible to propose in such contexts a resolution of pathological forms through psychoanalytical treatment aimed, as it is, at resurfacing of an “nonexistent ‘religious maturity,’ namely a religiousness free from childish mechanisms of reaction or defence, and independent of projections or pathological identifications.”<sup>58</sup> The *religious* model alone has the capacity to provide a psychocognitive dimension consonant with *religious* maturity. As Dacquino also notes, this goal was utopian in the theoethotomistic models:

Religious maturity is not ... a goal fully reachable in the adult stage, just because of the lack of a final and definitive phase in the religious evolution. ... Consequently because an absolute psychological maturity doesn't exist, it is impossible to reach the epitome of religiousness. ... It's obvious that any individual approaches the ideal model of this religious maturity in relation to his individual and environmental experience.<sup>59</sup>

The Ego Ideal and the hypertrophy of the Super-Ego related to the theoethotomistic praxis, based on the need of bringing the Ego toward a continuous mediation of the conflicting aspects of Super-Ego and Id, constitute a socio-cultural dimension and a psychic reality perfectly outlined by Freud with his patients, and constituting one of his great theoretical results, which led to the emergence of the theories of psychopathologies, fixations, and pregenital regressions. The individual, naturally beginning his life as “son,” is irremediably forced to an ethically subordinate filial relationship that is congenital and insuperable if compared to a theoethotomistic God—an ontological limit that blocks growth in an insuperable “not-adult” status.

These “not adults” will then themselves become parents and pedagogues and set the context in which other children will grow up, affirming again the same cognitive-ethical structures, continuously reproducing an incomplete and frustrating development. Therefore, the inevitable crystallization of these roles, immature if compared to a theoethotomistic God, precludes the attainment of the so-called “adult” phase of human existence. This goal is irremediably removed, horribly precluded, alienated from the ontological horizon of theoethotomies; on the contrary, it results perfectly affirmed and even “exactly” in religious contexts, with all of the consequences parallelly involved in psychic evolution (Fig. 2

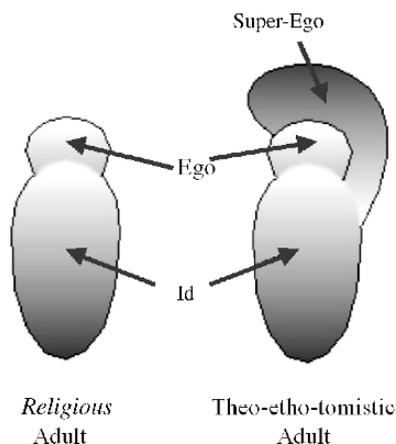


Figure 2.

The different conceptual frame deriving from the distinction between theothotomies and *religions*, although not postulating any revision of psycho-analytic theories, presages a new definition of the relations between culture and psychology, making an indubitable link between maturation *tout court* and the religious sphere.

Addressing this topic, Dacquino writes

A mature religiousness certainly represents a core unifying all the values of personality just because it has a directive character which constantly influences all psychic activity; motivating the initiatives and guiding the modality. A mature religiousness is also a manifestation of psychic health, because correct, indicative and, basilar religious behaviour has a remarkable value as preventive measure in psychic health.<sup>60</sup>

Ethnopsychiatry provides interesting observations on this issue.

The individual derives from culture the most significant categories of thought and the culturally shared manifestation of his psychic discomfort; from it he receives “indications” and by reusing them, these forms of discomfort are actualized. From this we can derive an ethnological and nosological classification involving the so-called traditional etiologies, which include aspects related to the religious sphere, such as the existence of extrasensible dimensions, spirits, phenomena of possession, exorcismal formulas, and so on.

From this the individual derives not only the formulas on which are based his psychic condition and on which his personality is organized, but also, in

the case of pathological manifestations, a real therapeutic contribution and an effective community support in the managing of the discomfort.

For Devereux,<sup>61</sup> this reality organizes the so-called “ethnic unconscious segment”: an unconscious portion that experiences the typical characteristics of a given culture, such as the types of reality and formulations about man and cosmological, anthropological, and animistic-religious structures.

The nature, and consequently the model, of the sacred therefore represent irreducible structural factors, absolutely inalienable components of the person and his psychic reality. This extends in a new way the possibilities for evaluating the cultural basis of the personality and is a key to negotiating transcultural confrontation. This does not occur just as a psychotherapeutic function, but also as an anthropological evaluation of the definition of the “healthy personality” of an individual and society. This evaluation directly concerns our conception of anthropology, the nature–culture relationship, and the definition of “Man.” As Toby Nathan writes,

To own a culture and being gifted of psychiism are two strictly equivalent facts, and ... the cultural difference is not a deviation but a real “human” fact, as indispensable as the existence of brain, liver and kidney. In psychopathology, considering just the “naked man” of which I spoke earlier, this mythical “subject”, insane structural machine born of the brain of a monotheistic scientist seated in solitary meditation on a leather armchair, means committing a crime against reasoning ...; we therefore need ... to consider a metaphorical organ, which Freud called “psychic apparatus” ... as a machine to connect ..., as self-regulator of a similar “machine”, with an analogous function, but with an external origin: culture.<sup>62</sup>

This how the theoethotomies/*religions* antithesis can help us to appreciate the value of constellations of stimuli and psychological dynamics capable of characterizing “normal” and “healthy” personalities. This paradigmatic revolution, while not denying the action of different levels of reality, links psychology and unknown praxes: the spheres of the sacred and psychology. The lack of this understanding until now has orphaned psychoanalysis, and not least philosophy and theology, but even more so the common man, from knowledge and dignity.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> H. Allen Orr, Intelligent design, Il creazionismo evoluto, *Le Scienze*, October 2005, No. 449, pp. 37–43.

<sup>2</sup> Roberto Verolini, *Il Dio Laico: caos e libertà*, Armando, Rome, 1999.

<sup>3</sup> To distinguish this meaning of the term from its normal meaning, the convention will be adopted to write the term “*religion*” and other terms that share the same etymological root in italics. All terms that make reference to such an etymological root written in italics in this chapter will not indicate a theistic model *tout court*, as this term occurs in common use.

<sup>4</sup> The terms “theothotomy” and “*religion*” indicate, respectively, the theistic hypothesis in which creative divinity expresses and does not express the supreme ethics in relation to man. In the first, divinity is understood in a frame in which man is subservient to law through obedience of which various formulations of a netherworld compel him. The second can be expressed as a “theology without sin”: divinity expresses itself only as a creative value, and the human individual is not subordinate to explicit norms or ethical observances of divine origin. This classification, founded on a philosophical scientific basis, is used also as a basis for the interpretation of biblical texts, giving rise to new exegeses.

<sup>5</sup> All the excerpts are translated from Italian editions.

<sup>6</sup> Anton Zeilinger, *Il velo di Einstein. Il nuovo mondo della fisica quantistica*, Einaudi, 2005, p. 195.

<sup>7</sup> Von Ditfurt Hoiman, *Non siamo solo di questo mondo*, Longanesi, Milan, 1982, pp. 137–171; Konrad Lorenz, *L'altra faccia dello specchio. Per una storia naturale della conoscenza*, Adelphi, Milan, 1974, pp. 196–280.

<sup>8</sup> R. Verolini and Fabio Petrelli, Philosophical aspects of the new evolutionistic paradigms, in A-T. Tymieniecka, ed., *Analecta Husserliana XCI*, pp. 119–136.

<sup>9</sup> Monod Jacques, *Il caso e la necessità*, Arnoldo Mondadori, Milan, 1970, p. 143.

<sup>10</sup> M. Harris, *L'evoluzione del pensiero antropologico. Una storia della teoria della cultura*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1971.

<sup>11</sup> J. Piaget, *La nascita dell'intelligenza nel bambino*, Giunti Barbera, Florence, 1968.

<sup>12</sup> J. Jaynes, *Il crollo della mente bicamerale e l'origine della coscienza*, Adelphi, Milano, 1984.

<sup>13</sup> C. R. Hallpike, *I fondamenti del pensiero primitivo*, Riuniti, Rome, 1984.

<sup>14</sup> C. Geertz, *Interpretazione di culture*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1998, pp. 105–107.

<sup>15</sup> Merlin Donald, *L'evoluzione della mente. Per una teoria darwiniana della coscienza*, Garzanti, Milan, 2004.

<sup>16</sup> M. Gerald Edelman, *Sulla materia della mente*, Adelphi, Milan, 1993.

<sup>17</sup> M. Donald, op. cit., 2004, pp. 316ff.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. 400–417.

<sup>19</sup> Richard Dawkins, *Il Fenotipo esteso*, Zanichelli, Bologna, 1986.

<sup>20</sup> Konrad Lorenz, *L'altra faccia dello specchio. Per una storia naturale della conoscenza*, Adelphi, Milan, 1974.

<sup>21</sup> By “exaption” is meant the process by which biological resources suitable for a specific function are used later, within evolution processes, to obtain new structures directed to different functions from the original ones. For example, birds' feathers originally had a thermoregulatory function, and then had an important role in the wings; the internal ear ossicles in present-day mammals carry the sound impulses and are derived from very old Teleostei fish mandible articulation bones. Gianluca Bocchi and Mauro Ceruti, *Origini di storie*, Feltrinelli, Milan, 1993, pp. 195ff.

<sup>22</sup> M. Donald, op. cit., 2004, pp. 116–148.

<sup>23</sup> T. Nathan, *Principi di etnopsicoanalisi*, Bollati Boringhieri, Turin, 1993.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 76

<sup>25</sup> G. Devereux, op. cit., p. 25.

<sup>26</sup> R. Verolini and Fabio Petrelli, *Metamorfofi della Ragione. Esegese evolucionistico psicocologica di Gn 1,3 ed implicazioni bioetiche*, Dipartimento Scienze Igienistiche e Sanitario Ambientali, Università degli Studi di Camerino, Camerino, 1994; F. Petrelli, R. Verolini, and L. Venturi, *Neuroscienze ed evolucionismo per una concezione olistica delle psicopatologie e dei disturbi della personalità*, Università degli Studi di Camerino, Camerino, 2000.

<sup>27</sup> G. Daquino, *Religiosità e Psicoanalisi*, SEI, Turin, 1980.

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- <sup>29</sup> G. Dacquino, *op. cit.*, pp. 119–208.
- <sup>30</sup> F. J. Clarkin and F. M. Lenzenwegere, *I disturbi di personalità. Le cinque principali teorie*, Cortina, Milan, 1997; *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Washington, DC, 1980 [Italian version: *DSM–III. Manuale diagnostico e statistico dei disturbi mentali*], Masson, Milan, 1983].
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- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 127–132.
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 132ff.
- <sup>34</sup> F. J. Clarkin and F. M. Lenzenwegere, *op. cit.*, pp. 223–352.
- <sup>35</sup> G. Dacquino, *op. cit.*, pp. 182–186.
- <sup>36</sup> Robert Sapolsky, *The Trouble with Testosterone and Other Essays on the Biology of the Human Predicament*, Scribners, New York; J. Jaynes, *op. cit.*, pp. 412ff.
- <sup>37</sup> Paul Ehrlich, *Le nature umane. Geni, culture e prospettive*, Codice, Turin, 2005, p. 268.
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- <sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 187.
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 134–164.
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 164–182, 223–235.
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 177.
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 180.
- <sup>46</sup> *Nuovo Testament*, Reader Digest, Milan, p. 155.
- <sup>47</sup> R. N. Carlson, *Psicologia. La scienza del comportamento*, Zanichelli, Bologna, 1987, p. 574.
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- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 224–226.
- <sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 227.
- <sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 230.
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 230–231.
- <sup>53</sup> C. R. Hallpike, *op. cit.*; I. S. Greenspan, *L'intelligenza del cuore*, Mondadori, Milan, 1997.
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- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101.
- <sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 102–103.
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103.
- <sup>61</sup> G. Devereux, *op. cit.*, pp. 45ff.
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## IN SEARCH OF A NEW MODEL OF EDUCATION

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a reflection on contemporary academic education, particularly education aimed at creating leaders of economic life. The starting point is a phenomenological approach to the role of the teacher. In this respect, the teacher's activities (*eidos*) help in uncovering horizons of beings (persons) and not their fulfillment. This help might and should contain certain patterns to aid the development of interpersonal relations (the Committee of Ethics in Science of the Polish Academy of Science distinguishes seven roles for academic teachers: creator, master, teacher, opinion-maker, expert, proponent of education, and member of society and the international community).

Two stages should be distinguished in the didactic process: a learning one and an inventive one (creative). The first stage serves in the acquisition of pre-existing knowledge; the second one triggers the creative potential of a student. The "3P" formula (as it is called in Polish) can be applied at this stage: understand, pass on, remember. It relies on the analysis of sources to understand a problem, realize and grasp its nature, and then pass it on to others so that they also understand and remember it. The "3P" formula finds its application mainly in getting to know reality.

The next formula that allows the inventive creation of reality is the "3I" formula: illumination, inspiration, interpretation. The "3I" formula can serve in the development of the students' creative invention. The process of development (growing up) will proceed in this case from interpretation through inspiration to illumination. Interpretation is the analysis of various schools of thought, conceptions, methods, and management techniques; inspiration is a study of opportunities; illumination is the search for one's own vision of a company with the use of creative thinking methods. In a didactic process, education develops this ability by projects with the use of heuristic techniques. This formula also describes three approaches to the creation and development of a company and other realities:

1. Illumination (enlightenment) describes the process of creating a company according to the autonomous vision of its founder (e.g., Thomas Bata's vision of a company),

2. Inspiration means the process of creating a company under the influence of certain ideas, thoughts, or patterns (e.g., the servant leadership conception, which has a religious inspiration),
3. Interpretation reflects the most common model of funding and developing a company and relies on the predominant theories and fashionable concepts of management (currently a technocratic-managerial paradigm dominates)

#### THE "3P" FORMULA AS A WAY TO EMPOWER STUDENTS

##### *The Function of the University in Contemporary Society*

The contemporary model of the university was formed in the nineteenth century. J. H. Newman contributed greatly in this work. He conducted a thorough analysis of the contemporary university and described its basic functions (Newman 1990, 180–250):

- The task of a university is to cultivate a general efficiency and intellectual culture as well as create attitudes.
- The subject of human knowledge is the whole of information about what exists, particular branches of knowledge need each other, and philosophy is a bond connecting them.
- The creation of a student's attitudes and a personality should be shaped by his or her contact with the representatives of various fields, with the intellectual tradition of the university, and with the general rules of acquiring any knowledge.
- The aim of academic education is not to enhance the amount of knowledge, as in a secondary school, but to open the mind to process information through analysis, synthesis, classification, with constant awareness of the whole and mutual connections, that is to rise to a higher level of knowledge,
- Education is not the aim in itself; it is supposed to help a human being to better conduct his or her functions in society.
- The function of the university is to implement intellectual culture and to create pro-social attitudes.

Moreover, Newman paid attention to life situations that frequently occur and have no associations with education but require proper reacting, that is, reason. According to him, the power of good judgment should be developed by a varied curriculum.

In Newman's program, the university's basic function is changed from cramming students' head with information into helping them with thinking and raising them to a higher level of learning and at the same time preparing them responsibly to perform their roles in society. Do contemporary universities

realize this model in practice? How close are they to the idea of Newman's university? The answers can be given by those in question—namely, students.

*The "3Z" Method: The Answer of Students to the Predominant Model of Teaching in Poland*

Contemporary higher-level schools achieve reasonable results in equipping students with a certain amount of knowledge, but they do not stimulate creativity, they do not spur students into action, and they do not keep up with ongoing changes in society. They lack flexibility both in curriculum and in methods. They do, however, specialize in loading memory with frequently unnecessary and incomprehensible information that students forget after an examination. After all, the power of education does not rely on enriching memory, but on developing mind abilities and interests (Pachociński 1999).

There is a difficult task for academic society because the whole of society bears the consequences of poor functioning of higher education (Śliwerski 2004). Due to the predominant model of education, only a person who is trained in acquiring information without its understanding and who cannot use it in everyday life graduates from a university. The lack of efficiency in combining theory and practice results in further grave consequences. That makes students useless and helpless in the job market.

Moreover, contemporary teachers are frequently helpless in the face of problems connected with cultural changes. Hence, they choose some kind of encyclopedism as the best approach because it does not require effort and personal engagement. They also choose an authoritative and dictatorial attitude—"I am right and only I"—setting themselves up as irreproachable ideals who have already seen and experienced everything and for whom mistakes are only dictionary notions. As a result, some students use a method of receiving credits called in Polish "3Z," which stands for "to memorize, to pass, to forget." Such a state leads to a real depreciation of education! In such a way a vicious circle between lecturers and students closes.

Can we talk about the subjectivity of students when teaching in such a situation? In reality, only an appearance of subjectivity, individuality, and freedom of choice is given. Teachers on many occasions cannot answer how subjectivity should be displayed in the didactic process although in their statements they claim that the relations between a student and a teacher should depend on just that. It is true that one can more frequently talk about some kind of intellectual rape that is committed by the schematic conduct of lectures and classes that convey outdated knowledge and by bureaucratic ways of giving credits. Hence, one can talk about the failure of all the systems

of education unless there is an emphasis on active and creative participation of the student in the didactic process.

*Motives for Taking up Studies versus Students' Attitudes*

It is stated in the literature of education that the most common motives for taking up studies are interests in a particular academic field, the drive to acquire higher social status, the wish to find an attractive job and a high salary, the suggestions of parents or friends, the wish to avoid military service, and beliefs about an easy field of study (Susłowska and Nęcki 1977, 141).

People who are driven by the desire to acquire a higher social rank aspire to graduate because of their belief that a person with higher education has greater opportunities in life than a person without a diploma. In such cases, the nature of the field of study is of secondary significance. A variant is to the desire to find a better post based mainly on the hierarchy of values accepted by society.

The wish to take up a job in a particular profession is another motive for beginning certain studies. It is not synonymous with an interest in a given field. The practical possibilities given by a chosen specialization prevail. Young people often avoid departments in which they have to take entrance examinations in subjects that brought them problems in secondary school. Another motive is the attractiveness of academic society. Such people are characterized by a lack of defined interests and a reluctance to take up a job or military service. They treat studies as a prolongation of adolescence and participation in student subculture. On many occasions parents influence the choice of a field of study. They point to high salaries in a particular profession. They may make it easier to enter a university thanks to personal contacts. The other form of parental influence is through developing a child's interests in a particular field. There is frequently a family tradition under which young people's interests are shaped.

Generally we can distinguish two approaches to the choice of a field of studies. The first one is associated with motives of a utilitarian character: to increase chances in the job market, social and professional promotion, and improvement of the material conditions of life. In such cases, one studies to acquire socially acknowledged competences that give one a chance to occupy a desired place in a social hierarchy. The second approach is associated with the search for a life road, self-realization, and development. Studies in this case are of value in themselves.

Taking into consideration these factors in students' needs and their motivation to work, we can distinguish four categories of students: passive ones, greedy ones, selflessly engaged ones, and engaged-demanding ones.

Passive students do not give much of themselves, but they do not have a lot of demands from the university. They just want peacefully to go through their studies and get a diploma. They are fully satisfied with "satisfactory" marks. They often use illegal methods of getting credits and apply the "3Z" method.

Greedy students want to obtain maximal results doing minimal work. They are often the "good souls" of a group, sometimes leaders; they always complain that teachers require too much, are boring, and present out-of-date knowledge. They also apply the "3Z" rule.

Selflessly engaged students are often called "swots" by their peers. However, this does not put them off because they treat knowledge and studies as a vocation and the main aim in life. They do not usually feel comfortable in student society and rarely participate in student life or culture. Their main place is the library, laboratory, or classroom. They are used to traditional methods of acquiring knowledge.

Engaged-demanding students differ from the previous ones in that they have huge expectations from teachers and university. They are aware that the acquisition of a high level of knowledge depends equally on themselves and their teachers. They appreciate group work. They like experimenting. They are creative and dynamic. They often participate in the cultural life of a university.

From the point of view of the traditional teacher, the best are students selflessly engaged. They work hard and try to solve most problems themselves. They do not bother teachers with news or claims, as demanding students do. Both groups of students deal with the curriculum without any problems.

However, the curriculum also must be dealt with by passive and greedy students. In fact, the first type should rarely occur. Nowadays, however, we deal with students who pay for their studies and think that this is a sufficient argument to get good credits. This phenomenon has a wider perspective: the market economy has created a new image of the university as a company. As a result, universities have become factories manufacturing and producing young people with a merchandized mentality. Merchandizing characterizes people who act not according to their abilities, but to requirements given by the market. They do not care too much about their life and happiness but about their saleability (Kołodziejczak and Sobczyk 2006, 77–83).

*The “3P” Formula: To Understand, Transmit, Remember*

In choosing a particular method of conducting classes one should take into consideration the psychology of learning, theories of motivation, theories of communication, and so on. It is very important to take into consideration the techniques of transmitting and acquiring information that are the most effective. Memorizing information depends on the senses and active engagement of the learner. It is estimated that one remembers 20% of the information acquired through listening, 30% of that acquired through watching, 70% of that acquired through listening and watching, and 90% of that acquired through the independent conduct of tasks (100% when defending one's own theses).

These numbers make it apparent that the highest efficiency of the didactic process is achieved not by classic lecturing but by making students independent and subjective—not only by encouraging them to revise current knowledge, but by scientific creativity, by giving them the right to search and make mistakes and to create new things (Nawrat 2002, 63–75).

Taking these premises into consideration, it would be logical to eliminate tests as a means of giving credits where the “3Z” rule applies and to replace them with individual and team projects, workshops (Pirecki and Soniewicki 2002, 123–131), heuristic techniques of solving problems, formulating hypotheses and theses, and defending them.

The “3P” rule—understand, pass on, and remember—provides the basic criteria according to which teams or individual students realize given tasks. First, they deeply digest a problem, try to understand and grasp its nature, and then pass it on to friends in such a way that they can also understand it and remember.

I apply this method in classes in organization and management. There, students freely form teams and, depending on the study of resources, prepare panel discussions. A team presents its acquired knowledge to the rest of the class members. They are expected to do this in such a way as to interest the whole group. Multimedia techniques of transferring information are preferred. Students use various techniques of conveying information: verbal, verbal combined with visual, verbal combined with music, performing (together with cabaret forms), and seminar forms. One of the most interesting techniques was a production in the form of a VHS video in which the famous experiments of E. Mayo were presented. Students played the characters in those experiments, presenting in a performance the basic problems that Mayo tried to solve.

THE “3I” FORMULA AS A METHOD FOR DEVELOPING  
CREATIVITY IN STUDENTS OF MANAGEMENT*The First Stage: Interpretation. Technocratic Reforms in Semco*

A pattern of “fulfilling” one’s own horizon by a manager, as for every person, relies on a desire to become somebody in life rather than to do something. Such a perspective emphasizes “working on oneself” as a condition of functioning in society: “to become somebody,” “to do something.” Such a pattern of fulfilling a “horizon” can be found in Ricardo Semler’s philosophy of entrepreneurship. He formulated a practical conception of conducting a business of outstanding ethical and didactic value. Semler’s concept serves as a starting point to analyze contemporary entrepreneurship. This analysis was conducted according to the “3I” formula.

When in 1980 young Ricardo Semler took over Semco company from his father it did not differ from others. It had a traditional organizational scheme in a pyramidal shape, regulations, a code of conduct in every situation, and so on. Initially Semler introduced changes that complied with fashionable management concepts—diversification, control, rigid expense monitoring system—in other words, management professionalism. Semler summarized that period thus:

I couldn’t be more proud of the new, reorganized, varied Semco. Everything bore a stamp of professionalism. Nobody could enter a company or leave it without showing an entrance pass. Guards stopped even me. We had special forms to register overtime, we received bills for telephone use, for the use of copy machines, for everything. A new system of expense monitoring was our pride and glory. All the figures, all the financial statements in files of a particular colour were ready on every fifth working day every month. How much coffee workers of Light Production Subdivision drank.... Ernesto transformed us similarly to Firestone, Xerox and Sharp. (Semler 1998, 50)

In the modern and growing Semco, one could investigate precisely every aspect of activity, from the amount of sales to the recording of technical inspections of machines and devices. Managers regarded themselves as the most organized, the most professional, the most disciplined, and the most efficient. They were so impressed by their accounting skills that it took them plenty of time to realize that those figures, statements, tables, and charts were not helping much in the development of the company. Semler noted that most of his directors favored classical authoritarian solutions such as strict control and exhausting long work hours. “Work hard or be fired” was the general rule in the new Semco. Semler was disappointed by the bad atmosphere in almost all of his firms. Finally, he came to the conclusion that his “tough” directors were exaggerating, and although, in the beginning, he liked the idea

of disciplined, tightly kept staff managed by aggressive bosses armed with statistic accounts, he slowly began to change his mind. He was inspired by the tale of three masonry masters. When they were asked what their work depended on, the first one answered that he dealt with processing stones. The second one replied that he used a special technique to form stones in a unique way. The third one smiled and answered, "I build cathedrals." Semler wished his staff to consist of cathedral builders (Semler 1998, 73). This wish illustrates the process of Semler's transformation (growing up) to the inspirational level.

It took Semler almost ten years to realize that his delight over his achievements to date was the expression of infantilism, and the tensions and misunderstandings that constantly occurred were the result of a deep split between those who believed, first of all, in law, order, and organization and those who claimed that people for whom the driving force of motivation is engagement can overcome every obstacle. Autocrats were convinced that nothing would be done if they did not do it or if they did not force their subordinates to do it. The second group did not doubt that there was a better way associated with delegating authority.

#### *The Second Stage: Inspiration. Building Community*

Semler's statement was a guide for changes in corporate culture: "I'm going to be guided by intuition and to listen to experts less." This resolution reflects Semler's way to illumination. He began the process of change with himself. He started with the problem of "lack of time"—the illness a lot of bosses suffer from. He realized its reasons (Semler 1998, 84):

1. The belief that effort and result are directly proportional. It is widely held that long hours are essential. However, this is not true. Hard work alone is not enough; noticing a right moment, the ability to seize an opportunity, having friends in certain institutions, and sheer luck are important factors in success.
2. The belief that the amount of work is more important than its quality. Reasoning like this, one can come to the conclusion that a heart attack from overwork leads to great glory and that it is even better to faint in the office—a Calvinist could say that this would show that you are among the chosen ones.
3. The fear of giving up authority and the belief in irreplaceable people. The fear of sharing duties derives from the conviction that no one but you can solve a problem better. This way of thinking results from the belief that tasks would be conducted badly if they were not handed to the proper

person—people like oneself. This, in turn, leads to a belief in irreplaceable people.

Identifying the causes of his “illness” led Semler to the belief that time should be measured by years and decades and not by minutes and hours. It is impossible to understand life in its enormity and complexity by looking at a watch all the time.

One of his first moves in his new strategy of management was the elimination of regulations and the implementation of common sense. It came from the conviction that regulations make development more difficult:

In my view a longing for regulations and the need of innovation cannot reconcile [either order or progress]. Regulations freeze companies in a glacier; innovations allow them to conquer it by sledges .... There are no absolute truths in Semco, we do not want everybody to act according to one scheme. (Semler 1998, 123)

As a result, Semco’s corporate culture was radically changed—it became a community (culture oriented at persons). Employees decide about the amount of the production and marketing plans, participate in designing new products, make decisions about their salary, have access to all of the firm’s documents, and take part in its decisions.

Semco’s binding rule is the lack of rules: skepticism towards so-called proven recipes and openness towards new ideas (creative thinking). Such an approach relies on having total trust in employees and treating them as equal partners. Semler came to the conclusion that everybody should be a capitalist in capitalism. Hence, a share in the profits and management is a natural element of a capitalistic company. Semler proved that

the engagement of workers in the process of management doesn’t have to mean the loss of authority by the owners. We got rid of blind, irrational autocracy which harmfully influences the productivity. We are glad that our employees are self-governing. It means that they take care of their jobs and their company and it serves everybody well. (Semler 1998, 18)

Decentralization, self-reliance, and responsibility of working teams allowed a reduction of the hierarchy from twelve ranks to three and finally the introduction, instead of the pyramid—the basic organizational rule of contemporary companies—of a concentric structure. Semler experienced illumination suddenly when he was resting on a beach:

I was observing the gentle waves of the Caribbean Sea and suddenly it seemed to me so obvious. Why not replace the pyramid by something more fluid? For example a circle. The pyramid is rigid and creates limitations. A circle is full of possibilities. Why not to try to round the pyramid off? (Semler 1998, 226)

The concentric structure model consists of three circles and several triangles. The smallest, inner circle—The Council—is formed by several of Semler’s

closest co-workers. They are called “counselors.” The Council coordinates Semco’s general policy and strategy and stimulates decisions and activities in the second circle, which consists of seven to ten heads of production companies who in the new structure are called “partners.” The last and biggest circle embraces all the remaining employees, so-called “co-workers.” Triangles are scattered around the third circle to represent coordinators who conduct basic managerial functions.

The introduction of circles allowed the liberation of people from the tyranny of the hierarchy. They could act as leaders, if they wanted, and to earn respect based on their efforts and skills. They can give up being bosses when they want or when the company comes to the conclusion that they are not good enough to be one.

### CONCLUSIONS

The reflections on the economic activity of a man that Semler included in his autobiography count as quality research from the human perspective (phenomenological and heuristic method). His book is more than a case study, although it embraces an analysis of one company, and it is also more than a textbook. I recommend it as a synthesizing guidebook at the close of a series of classes on organization and management.

Students’ state that reading the book allows them:

1. To overcome myths and stereotypes about the relation between an employer and employee
2. To understand how the traditional approach to managing a company can be replaced by decentralizing authority
3. To see how giving authority to employees can improve the profits and position of a company

The value of Semler’s autobiography lies not only in its lessons about entrepreneurship. Students emphasize that in contrast to textbooks that present “dry” information that is difficult to understand and use in practice, Semler’s book is vivid and stimulates the imagination; most important, it is inspiring. The feelings that Semler evokes are best illustrated by the opinion of an extramural student, a specialist in a job center in Elbląg: “A fantastic, open guy, an artist in business, full of engagement and respect for himself and co-workers. Amazing! It is improbable that it happens in our world and more precisely in Brazilian economic conditions—similar to the Polish ones.”

Summing up, one can say that academic teaching that focuses only on passing on knowledge can damage the intellectual and creative development of the student. The emphasis should be shifted to developing creativity,

searching, and experimenting. In the era of computers it is less important to memorize information and remember algorithms. Nowadays, processing information and its proper selection and choice are among the basic aims of the didactic process. But anything that “artificial brains” can do should not be the domain of the student and the scientist, whose task should be the optimal use of contemporary technology and science for the integrated development of humankind. Uncovering horizons by future managers and entrepreneurs must take place respecting their humanity in the educational process – “to become somebody” so that they would do something having respect for themselves and the others.

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## SECTION VI

## ART BETWEEN COMMUNION AND COMMUNICATION

*The Philosophical and Pedagogical Contributions of Lacroix and Mounier*

## INTRODUCTION

One of the themes that has always been dear to personalism but has not always been sufficiently highlighted and studied is art. Emmanuel Mounier dedicated important pages to reflection on contemporary literature, in particular French literature, from Malraux to Camus, from Sartre to Bernanos, but little has been said about what he wrote regarding art and its personalistic pedagogical “rehabilitation.”

To illustrate this point, I should like to consider an issue of the magazine *Esprit* published in 1934 that was completely dedicated to the problem of contemporary art, entitled *L'Art et la Révolution spirituelle*. The issue opened with a contribution by Mounier in the form of an introduction, “Préface a une réhabilitation de l’art et de l’artiste,” and ended with an afterword by Jean Lacroix entitled “L’art, instrument de communion.” Inside the magazine appeared various articles written by a group of collaborators that assessed the situation of the different arts, asking questions about the nature of the art and the artist’s mission.

In fact, the magazine, on Mounier’s advice, widened the subject to painting, literature, theatre, music, architecture, and so on, putting forward an organic proposal regarding a “personalistic” and “community” pedagogical conception of art, which, as Mounier wrote, had to constitute a “spiritual revolution” based on a “rehabilitation of art and the artist.” Several of the magazine’s writers, intent on developing the guidelines in Mounier’s “Préface,” treated the individual arts, from the more traditional ones to the more recent ones, such as the cinema.

Instead of delving into the individual contributions, I think it is appropriate to point out the guidelines regarding the personalistic reflection by comparing

Mounier's "Préface" with Lacroix's "Postface," which integrates and develops Mounier's line of thought, in order to draw together indications that are worthy of reflection.

#### A CLARIFICATION

In the development of my reflections I shall shift from Jean Lacroix's contribution, which I believe offers the right picture in which to develop a personalistic type of reflection. Lacroix provides us with the theoretical picture in which to collocate Mounier's specific considerations. The basic idea that supports Lacroix's reflection is a conception of the art of the ancient school: art is the sphere of an authentic communion and communication, not only between men, but also between man and nature, between man and god.

As Heidegger observed in "Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes," it was in the construction of the Greek temples that the arts found their fulfillment and man his identity, all within the circle of an ideal reunion of the *polis* with nature and god.

Heidegger wrote that

the temple gave things their appearance and gave men the vision of themselves. This vision remained actual while ever the work did, while ever the god didn't run away from it. The same was for the statue of the god, dedicated by the victor during the struggle. It was by no means a question of a type of portrait, carried out because it was possible to know what the god looked like, but it was a work that allowed the god himself to be present and therefore was the god himself. The same could be said about the written work.<sup>1</sup>

Art, as statue and word of the divinity, is the "representation," in the authentic sense, of the latter, its making itself "present," that is to say, historicizing the divinity and therefore the truth. Here that principle is reaffirmed which, in the contemporary period, dominated by science and technology, has been completely disregarded, due to a continuous disorientation: the communication between humanity, divinity, and nature is only possible by means of a felt and participated sharing that is only achieved through art. In ancient times nature incarnated that divine presence, which the Greek temple then celebrated by means of the ritual and the worship of the divinity.

On the human level, without such a mysterious sharing, communication is reduced to the state of external information. In this way the metaphor of contemporary man, who is constantly seeking to be informed of the facts, without, however, obtaining an appropriate culture, expresses an obsessive and inexhaustible quest for an authentic communication, which in ancient times had been expressed through art. This search, in fact, is today frustrated in the nihilism of an information that presupposes a sense of division, of

unbalance and asymmetry, that is very distant from the “communion” that personalism promotes today also referring to the example of ancient art.

Jean Lacroix, in the mentioned article, claims responsibility for an all-round idea of Communion (which in a modern manner he calls “sympathy”), in order to face the depersonalizing intemperance of technical information and mass culture: “Qu’ est-ce-que l’art en effet sinon un merveilleux moyen de communion, non seulement avec les hommes, mais encore avec la nature tout entière: l’artiste est, ou plutôt doit être un état de sympathie universelle.”<sup>2</sup>

#### THE REFLECTION OF LACROIX

The “universal sympathy” that, according to Lacroix, art promises, is the basis of a successful communion and communication that the artist with his works is able to achieve. From this point of view, Lacroix criticizes different artistic experiences that have characterized contemporaneity, such as romantic aestheticism, realism, and surrealism.

For these the affirmation is valid according to which “l’art consiste essentiellement à remplacer un monde réel qui nous froisse par un autre monde, moins vrai, mais plus satisfaisant,”<sup>3</sup> with the consequence that “l’art serait né d’une inadaptation, d’une sorte d’impuissance à vivre la vie normale: il serait une diversion à la vie.”<sup>4</sup>

This is what refers us, above all, to the romantic conception of art as work of the genius, however, this is a completely inadequate conception: more than communion and communication we find only solipsism, individualism, and narcissism, which render the artist anomalous in society and consequently mythicized by his own incapacity.

The figure of the genius is also the exemplary figure of a hidden and mysterious art, only for the initiated, away from the fruition and interpretation of the public. The same genius is initiated into the secrets of nature. The romantic experience, in its attempt to confer its ancient supremacy to art, has separated it from the common feelings of society, rendering it in this way an elitist experience, mythicized and mythicizing. For this reason, Lacroix observed, the artist often lived on the fringe of society:

La société le rejette et il rejette la société. Les romantiques semblent parfois s’être adressés à la nature parce qu’ils étaient incompris des hommes. La rançon du génie c’est sa solitude: investi d’une mission trop haute l’artiste ne peut plus communiquer avec l’humanité. C’est le Moïse de Vigny, c’est le Lazare de Léon Dierx, c’est le poète de l’*Albatros*.<sup>5</sup>

In conclusion, the figure of the genius is formed on the basis of an effective and idealistic incommunicability. From this point of view reality

was conceived, lived, and resolved in a single aesthetic experience: beyond this, reality and its daily routine became inexistent, as they were insignificant. Oscar Wilde pointed this out in the apologue of *The Poet*, where he stressed the superiority of the dream compared to reality.

The edifying horizon of aesthetics was that of the dream (*rêve*) and the imagination, not that of real life, which was intended as something insignificant. Life meanwhile existed inasmuch as it was literarily translated, where it was dominated by the dream; one had only to speak of it and such a world existed to the extent that it was discussed. On this horizon, reality is not the same as nature, intended as unchangeable essence, impartial to the being, but it is that which is realized in the dream-like experience of literature, poetry, and art. Lacroix observed that “Oscar Wilde s’efforçait de montrer que le contact avec la nature est destructeur de tout art et que pour être un artiste il ne faut pas se confier qu’au rêve et à l’imagination.”<sup>6</sup>

Lacroix criticized this conception of the artist, the work, and nature in favor of a committed and integral vision of the aesthetic experience. The artist could not be only an abstract and disembodied figure, but a sympathetic operator and manipulator. He not only used his brain, but also his hands and body, which were continuously involved in the artistic work. The work was not, in a disembodied manner, something already perfectly prearranged in the mind, but something that developed and realized itself in the material work of the artist, that progressed in time and slowly led also to changes of the original idea. This presupposed a close and intimate contact with the material, “une véritable sympathie dont la rêve écarte totalement.”<sup>7</sup>

For this motive the artist had to have not only his sense of reality alive, but also that of a creative, dream-like and imaginative communion with the “entire” nature. Pantheism was nothing more than a poetic feature. In fact, apart from the difficulties regarding the metaphysical order, according to Lacroix it had a great poetic and artistic value, as it sustained a dream-like and integrated vision of humanistic and romantic nature<sup>8</sup> that diverged from the modern positivist and scientific mentality:

Ce contact de l’artiste avec la nature est si puissant, si total, qu’il arrive à lui prêter de son âme.... Je dirais volontiers qu’avoir le sentiment de la nature, c’est sentir plus ou moins confusément que la nature est divine, ou du moins de création divine. Et c’est par là sans doute que le sentiment artistique est proche du sentiment religieux, et même y conduit.<sup>9</sup>

Therefore, pantheism, poetically intended, became the premise and the road for a sacral retrieval of the communion and communication between man, nature, and god that ancient art had affirmed by means of the exemplary figure of the temple. Art experienced authentic communion and an opening to transcendence. Hence the criticism of every realistic conception of art,

especially of the painting and literature of the end of the nineteenth century. Without any doubt, noted Lacroix, art cannot consist in simply photographing nature. Photography, in fact, becomes art insofar as the photographer chooses the angle shots, the poses, the visual cuts . . . and the touching ups. Not even the French naturalism of Zola had professed so much: “L’école naturaliste elle même, par la voix de son chef, Zola, n’a pas osé définir l’art comme une copie de la nature, mais comme ‘la nature vue à travers un tempérament’, ce qui suppose un minimum d’interprétation subjective.”<sup>10</sup>

This *minimum* of interpretation is indispensable for beginning to speak about art. Otherwise one risks flattening the artistic language about reality expressed by means of a sensitive vision. Realism, though legitimate in its attempt to give back to art the dimension of social communication which had been forgotten by Romanticism, has partly sacrificed creativity for this end, without, however, falling, in its most significant exponents, into the mythology of objectivity. Before objectivity there is *temperament*, that is the artist’s way of being, or better still, objectivity is always seen by means of a “feeling” which steers the gaze to it. Jean Labasque points out, with regard to painting, that true art, today as yesterday, is not achieved if not by means of “un dépassement du réel objectivement immédiat.”<sup>11</sup>

Mounier, in his article “Tempête sur l’esthétique,” remarked, for and against the writer Aragon, that realism, even social, is not photography in that it contains “nécessairement une part d’interprétation de la réalité.”<sup>12</sup>

Realism, like romanticism, was paradoxically limitative of art in its dimension of communication—communion: while romanticism pursued a communion as “sympathy” ingenious and idealized to the detriment of social communication, realism, in order to realize a social communication, sacrificed the quest of a complete and integral communion with nature. Realism, therefore, led to a communion of purposes between the artist and consumer that was translated, however, in a superficial communication, of only a denouncement of the ordinary and degenerated aspects of life.

But it is also true, as Lacroix observed, that “tout cela accordé, il n’en reste pas moins que l’art ne peut s’écarter de la nature sans tomber dans le faux, le convenu et l’académisme.”<sup>13</sup>

Naturally the artist’s “temperament” persisted and stopped him from falling into “falsity” and “academicism,” even though he assumed a decentered and reductive position as regards to the expressive and creative potentiality of the language and of the same reality.

The Marxist-inspired surrealism could also be considered a form of realism. This established itself in the French culture of the 1930s as an experience that wanted, through art, above all literature, to propagandize a determined

political ideology. In this way surrealism tried to realize a rhetorical form of communion and a consequent form of conformist communication, as in the case of literature, where its dependence upon Soviet “real socialism” prevented it from conserving the spirit of autonomy and freedom essential to art.

Surrealism, therefore declined into rhetoric, into the construction of effects that translated, as in certain representations, into a sort of ritual consenting to an unrealistic, revolutionary but conformist and ideologized society.

Lacroix, although not pausing, unlike Mounier, for the surrealist movement, nevertheless grasped the sense of this unrealistic and debatable aspect, when he wrote

L'artiste qui se cherche lui-même ou qui travaille systématiquement pour un groupe en est puni par l'infériorité même de l'œuvre produit. Son rôle c'est de faire communier tous les hommes dans un élan de désintéressement et d'amour, parce qu'il commence par s'oublier lui-même.<sup>14</sup>

Working for a “group” or a *chapelle* meant siding with an ideology or a political party, turning the work of art into a means of propaganda and the artist into a passive propagandist with other people’s ideas. Art was, on the other hand, that disinterested activity that had to characterize the work and the artist. This was an issue on which Mounier would dwell when in the article “Tempête sur l’esthétique,” in 1947, in controversy with Aragon, Garaudy, and Hervé, he pointed out the not sufficiently free, in fact, sectarian character of several French literary people with regard to Soviet Communism during the years of its greatest international exportation.

Distancing himself from all this, Lacroix, on the other hand, stressed that the arts were a disinterested, universal language that tended to unite, not divide. Therefore art should not have a prejudiced, sectarian character, but it should generate a dialogue between people and the different artistic languages. “Telle est en effet la fonction humaine de l’art,” he remarked, recognizing in this a true ethical task of public morality.

It followed that there could be no true art outside of a “communion,” and in this way it was a “community,” as the cinema at that time particularly manifested. Lacroix concluded his reflections by referring to the popular character of art, that is to say, it being a universal language open to all. I believe, he wrote, that “ne remplit plus sa mission civilisatrice l’art qui ne fait plus vibrer l’âme du peuple.”<sup>15</sup>

Lacroix confirmed in this way that art is communication and universal communion; therefore, although being the work of an artist, it is addressed to the entire community, not to an *élite* or one “part.” In this sense, it invites us to pass from a superficial communication to a more profound communication. It is for this that it efficiently performs the pedagogical task of acculturation.

## THE REFLECTIONS OF MOUNIER

What was Mounier's position? At the beginning of *Esprit*, as previously mentioned, in his "Préface" he tried to explain the artist's role in modern capitalistic society, the same society that the working classes had been hammering away at for some time. Mounier stressed that spiritual and artistic renewal went hand in hand and that the first would find its "transposition"<sup>16</sup> in the activity and in the language of art.

However, while Lacroix had lingered on the aesthetic and philosophical aspects of the artistic experience, Mounier showed particular attention to the ethical and social role of art, for the realization of a "complete humanism" which would lead to a spiritual elevation of man and society.

This "completeness" was founded upon the same characteristics of the communion and communication of the arts individualized on the aesthetic plane by Lacroix. Such values for Mounier became the essential and pedagogically effective moments of personalism, or of the design of the realization of being a person. Art became *humus*, privileged, and the food of the new personalistic culture. The values of the individual were the same as those of the arts; and vice versa.

Which values were Mounier referring to? From the beginning of his reflections it appeared to be clear that by the term value he intended to refer to the specific area of the ethics and the culture of the "spirit," which was seriously jeopardized by the consumerist, hedonistic, and exclusively material, utilitarian values of modern capitalistic society. This society, dominated by the phenomena of mass production and the financial markets since the beginning of the 1900s, generated notable imbalances, confusion, and disorientation in conscience.

An underlying incompatibility lay between the values of the "spirit" and capitalistic ethics. Capitalism had expelled the values of the "spirit"—therefore also those of art—placing the artist in a difficult and ambiguous situation: to give in to the market or to live his personal experience in a solitary, isolated manner, facing a public that was more and more alienated and distanced in its taste and opinion of art by a bourgeois society that used its money to impose its own preferences, trends, and models on a sophisticated and cultured *élite*.

Mounier wrote:

Le monde de l'argent est donc doublement hostile à l'art: il stérilise ou rejette l'artiste, il stérilise et en désintéresse son public. Celui qui reste fidèle à un art indépendant est à peu près fatalement condamné à la misère et à la solitude.<sup>17</sup>

Now, said Mounier, art must pursue its own ends, freely, autonomously, without being debased for other tasks that are not involved in the growth of the person and that cause the values of indifference, gratuitousness, and contemplation to prevail: “La vie selon l’art et selon la poésie est une des dimensions essentielles de cette activité désintéressée.”<sup>18</sup>

Insofar as it is indifferent and autonomous, life according to art is spiritual; it finds its highest reference in the divine activity, as Mounier states in the opening remarks of his article in the *Esprit*, where he places the artistic activity on an incomparably high level.

At the same time, the free and indifferent character of art sets itself against every form of manipulation and subjection. In this task, the artist is openly involved, in a radical way, not only as an artist, but also as a man:

C’est la révolution politique et sociale, dont la culture a besoin pour trouver à nouveaux une place dans un monde redevenu humain. Il est bon que l’artiste prenne conscience de sa nécessité, y travaille même, en dehors de son art.<sup>19</sup>

The struggle, however, was not aimed at the ideological formation, but rather the cultural and spiritual one. For this it needed, both politically and socially, to place art in the condition of performing its authentic role, in order to realize a society based on the primacy of the person:

On ne fait pas de l’art pour le prolétariat, ou pour la révolution, pas plus qu’on ne doit faire de l’art pour la bourgeoisie. On fait de l’art pour l’homme, pour tout ce qui l’accomplit par les chemins des vraies libertés intérieures, contre tout ce qui l’asservit et le diminue.<sup>20</sup>

In this there is a certain historic urgency, due to the growing intrusiveness of capitalistic ethics. This is why Mounier observed “Si, à un moment de l’histoire, il est impossible d’être homme sans être révolutionnaire, sans rompre avec une classe qui étouffe l’homme, sans prendre le parti de la misère.”<sup>21</sup>

It is from the claim, in the art field, of the values of man and society that Mounier developed the idea of a “personalistic” and “community” aesthetics. Art placed itself as an authentic strategy of contrast against the growing affirmation of the capitalistic mentality which directed the person towards the cult of individualism, that is to say, to his establishing himself by means of an anarchical and predatory practice towards society. He considered such ethics in the first place a practice of self-corruption, even before that of society, a denaturing of the individual in his most authentic spiritual possibility, which led him to fall into an idolatry of profit, enslaved to production and money.

Mounier entrusted art with the task of performing a personalistic reconstruction of the individual in the culture of the capitalism and of its expansion thanks to its continuous technical resources. Art had to recreate the dimension

of spirituality and humanity that would reform the individual in his organic, vital, and noneliminable relationship with the community. In conclusion this meant recreating, through art, the ancient bond of communion and communication on which Heidegger had modeled his reflections on the work of art in the metaphor of the Greek temple.

For this it was necessary to recuperate—or “rehabilitate”—art and the artist in the forms that highlighted the dissimilarity and the peculiarity compared to capitalistic production. This was an art no longer linked, in its production, to the individuality of the genius, to subjectivity, and, in its fruition, to a public of detached and individual spectators, bourgeois consumers looking for a momentary distraction and consumer satisfaction.

Mounier remarked “A ceux d’hier il faut dire: il n’y a pas de tour d’ivoire, il n’y a pas de Mages. A ceux de demain: il n’y a pas d’art collectif, il n’y a pas de public.”<sup>22</sup>

What does he mean by this statement? A work of art in its essential gratuitousness, freedom, and independence is, according to Mounier, the key feature of a cultural identity of a people, of a society. It is a way in which a society reveals its manner of perceiving the reality of the surrounding world and transcendence—visions that are not in fact superficial, transitory, egocentric, and individual, but are profound and vital.

Like Lacroix, Mounier also referred to Romanticism in order to go beyond the sphere of the aesthetics of the bourgeois stamp and reaffirm the rights of the artist and his work by fashioning the individual as a person and society as a solid body. In aesthetic Romanticism the artist’s vision was mistakenly revealed as the one who is alone in creating, that is, “en toute endependance, dans sa matière comme dans sa forme, un monde dont il dispose en demiurge absolu.”<sup>23</sup> Each creation is not without substance nor without dependence, also linguistic, Mounier observed, in order to recall the fact that creation is not a single obscure instinctive fact, but that it is within a real context and lives on acceptance and participation; and the artist is not locked in an ivory tower, he is not a magician, but he is part of a community, of a culture, which deeply roots him into the society to which he belongs. Believing oneself to be uprooted is the fruit of pride and ignorance. In other words, the artist must face reality as an object that he constantly questions and that limits him: He can only restyle it, he can neither nullify it nor recreate it *ex nuova*.

It is really through this continuous comparison with reality that the artist affirms his “humanity” and his taking roots in the art of the community to which he belongs. Only in this way is his work able to create a link of true communication and union that will overcome the indifference towards art by those who lack culture and artistic feeling.

The artist exists as an individual who reassumes and expresses by his work the macrocosm of collectiveness, his most intimate values, and his most authentic ideality. Between artist and interpreter, between creativity and community, there is always, according to Mounier, the miracle of the encounter, "le miracle de la rencontre."<sup>24</sup>

However for this miracle to take place, it is necessary, except in special cases, that the personality of the artist and the vision of man he evokes are not developed autonomously, but according to the "effects" that historically both provoke and have provoked. The contents of a work of art must not be remote from the direct experience of the people belonging to a community of citizens. This does not happen when the artist creates a rift or an obstacle in this communicative foundation of his creativity, as in the case of an artist who is ideologically committed and enslaved by power.

Here the problem is essential. Art cannot be an expression of any ideology, of any class or part of society, if its end is that of creating a bond of communion and communication. If art expressed the interests and the values of a part of the society, it would create a bond of subordination and not one of communication, because the interests and the values it propagandized would not find a common and public correspondence. Art would decline as art, understood as indifferent and emancipated activity. Art is neither right wing nor left wing, it is neither middle class nor proletarian, but it is "of the people," in other words, community. This word is used by Mounier not in a reductive and demagogic sense, but in a productive and suggestive way, to indicate the humanistic and united dimension of the authentic way of being of the individual, the person.

Bringing the work of art and the artist to a sense of belonging and a community taking root, meant also for Mounier appealing to a new type of public. Which public is Mounier referring to? To romantic readers? To the society of the "masses" typical of the 1900s? The public is not an "anonymous," "quantitative" mass, but it is a composition of people who are able to feel, think, and approach all that seems to be "mysterious" in art. We are speaking of a public that finds its most authentic expression and formation in art, in which it sees its deepest values represented. It is through this acknowledgment, borrowed from art, that the masses become emancipated, that is, each member as a person is given the opportunity of emerging from his own anonymity, from an "egoism of the petit bourgeois caste."

It is through the recovery of the personal individual that it is possible to establish an authentic communication and communion capable of reestablishing a true "community" citizenship between the artist and his general public.

The community is far from being reducible to a system of “emotions,” “commonplaces,” “formulas,” “subjects,” “ideas and standardized sentiments.” For Mounier it meant a “harmony of people,” something for which the artist will have “other material” to handle, another “entourage,” not a solitude and a dislike for the individuals who were strangers to him, but an attraction of “profound inspirations” gathered “from all the horizons of the world.”<sup>25</sup>

This poetic vision of the community and its citizenship expresses the design of a personalistic re-founding of art that will have to be carried forward by an avant-garde that is particularly aware of the problem. Mounier speaks of small communities of artists different in techniques and poetics—of “*foyer*”—that share the authentic values of man and art, committed to rebelling against any form of exploitation. The “*foyer*” does not necessarily coincide with art “movements” or “programs,” which are mainly stylistic and elitist:

Nous avons pensé que l’heure était venue de proposer un foyer aux artistes révoltés de l’oppression des valeurs humaines, et spécifiquement des valeurs artistiques, désireux au surplus, dans le mouvement de leur révolte même, de sauvegarder, fût-ce contre des sauveurs indiscrets, la liberté essentielle de la création.<sup>26</sup>

#### EPILOGUE

The “rehabilitation of art and the artist” is aimed at a humanistic upgrading of culture and society, a task that for in Mounier becomes an unalterable personalistic exigency. This task passes through a pedagogical avant-garde that, going through contemporary art, does not impose, but anticipates the possibility of a more authentic sense of the artistic experience. It is about finding through art, in a society torn by conflicts of interest, a true space where the artist and the public, the different parties, can meet and converse as people beyond any prejudicial, political, ideological, and economic positions.

Can this be possible? It was definitely desirable in the 1930s, when Europe was moving towards a crisis that according to the wisest appeared to be unstoppable. Today it is more than a desire; it is a necessity. In an open and multiethnic society, art becomes a fundamental *medium* of knowledge, communication, and communion that goes beyond ideologies and religious and political boundaries. However, only an art that does not bow down to power and that expresses and safeguards the insuppressible dimensions of the person, his alterity, can hope to accomplish this.

Mounier entrusts art with the task of realizing a plural notion of person, as the ability of relating to others through dialogue, as free communion and communication. We are talking about a plan that is an alternative to any

“metaphysics” of the person that intends, in a univocal and unilateral way, to homologize differences and the specificities in the name of an abstract and predetermined notion of person. According to Mounier, achieving the person is always a difficult task of altruistic, relational solicitude, a progressively common commitment.

*San Benedetto del Tronto*

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> M. Heidegger, *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes* in ID., *Holzwege*, Klostermann, GmbH, Frankfurt am Moru, 1950.

<sup>2</sup> J. Lacroix, *Postface. L'art, instrument de communion*, Esprit, no. 25 (1934), p. 79.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 79–80.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>11</sup> J. Labasque, *Préface a une peintre*, Esprit, no. 25 (1934), p. 58.

<sup>12</sup> E. Mounier, *Tempête sur l'esthétique*, Esprit, no. 129 (1947), p. 177.

<sup>13</sup> Lacroix, *Postface*, p. 81.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 86.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> E. Mounier, *Préface a une réhabilitation de l'art et de l'artiste*, Esprit, no. 25 (1934), p. 12.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9–10.

RELATIONS WITH OTHERS IN THE FACE  
OF LÉVINAS' *IL-Y-A*

*The way we perceive the world in view of educational purposes*

The philosophy of dialogue is founded on the basis of a special construct—the relationship between people. The educational process is one of the forms of human relationship. It is structured along a similar dynamics in which patterns of dependence and interdependence are manifest. A certain informality can always develop in any and every encounter between people, regardless of the circumstances or any formal character. It is contingent on the subjects' plans and intentions. The same can happen in a teacher–student relationship. Depending on their attitudes, an element can surface that may lead to a crossing of the borderline of formality. An opposite situation can hold in the case in which the teacher is seen as a “master,” an exceptional person in whose footsteps the student wants to follow. Similarly, a student who asks questions and debates with the teacher can become a guide and thereby expose something new in the situation. In light of the philosophy of dialogue, the process of teaching can be seen not only as the passing of a certain corpus of knowledge, but, first of all, as an event saturated with “content” and meaning.

A relationship between people can function according to two different modes: interestedness and disinterestedness. Disinterestedness means that we do not “recognize” people, that is, their “being” or “existence.” Various reasons or motives can stand behind this attitude of disinterestedness: isolation, egoism, and even shyness. This attitude cancels the very possibility of relationship. Sometimes it can be so acute that it disrupts any connectedness with the world and obfuscates everything around the person who is disinterested; such a person is his or her only point of concern, a world unto himself or herself. At yet other times it is simply a weakness in the person which leads to isolation and disregard to the concerns of others.

The second attitude we can have toward others we may call, after the school of existentialism, an attitude of reification. Jean-Paul Sartre explored this level or type of interaction. As Sartre showed, reification arises from the

everyday actions of man, that is, perceiving. According to Sartre, when man perceives the world, he appropriates that world: The act of perception is an act of appropriation. Thus, in perceiving, man transforms the world, not into being or existence, but into a thing—a thing to have and to hold—a thing to possess. The eye that looks does not see the world; the eye, during this act, this process of vetting, transforms the world. When the eye is directed toward another, it is very easy to treat that person not as somebody but as something. In this process, man cannot see “features” of individual existence; he sees only the generic. In such “objectifying” glances, man loses the other’s uniqueness—he loses the other. Emmanuel Lévinas in a comparable way to Sartre shows what is at stake in such a glance.

Lévinas indicates two different attitudes toward knowing. The first attitude leads to certainty. So-called exacting, scientific, or objective knowledge, expressible in propositional form, provides us with written formulations. The second attitude toward knowing is the first’s opposite. This attitude does not generate exact and objective science and does not lead to the production of general and certain statements. This kind of knowledge is visceral; it does not bring certain communicable theory, but makes man feel the other’s existence.

These two attitudes toward knowledge are connected to the two aforementioned kinds of human relations. Sartre’s concept of “eye” dramatically describes this. When a man is getting to know another, he transforms him into an object. According to Lévinas, this is a process in which there is no room for what is for Lévinas a “proper” relation (such as should be between men). However, it is otherwise in the case of the second kind of knowledge. In Lévinas’ opinion, proper relations are mostly built on the acknowledgment of the “presence” of the other. This is a process of “approaching” the uniqueness and individuality of others. This relation does not permit us to get to know another man in any so-called “scientific way.” This is because this relation does not allow us to explore man as a subject of knowledge, as, as it were, a universal idea. In this relation, according to Lévinas, we do not meet the “idea” of man inasmuch as a thing that can accommodate itself to definition. In this relation, we become acquainted with an existence that is beyond science and conceptualization. In that sense, Lévinas is nearer to the philosophy of existentialism than he is to rationalism.

The philosophy of Lévinas is rooted in the philosophy of dialogue, particularly in the concepts of Franz Rosenzweig and Martin Buber. In Buber’s thought, two terms are essential: I-You and I-It. The state of human consciousness is stretched between these two essential concepts. I-You and I-It expresses not only relation to another, but also toward the world, things, animals, even God. When the attitude of man is rooted in I-You, he can

have a “proper” relation with the world. Furthermore, and consequently, it is possible to be in such relation with God also. The most important in lesson of Buber is that man can choose his attitude and consequently his relation to the world. The attitude of reification is simpler. In that attitude, we can get to know the world, discover its rules, and reach a clear and lucid understanding; this gives us security and provides us with a certain consolation. When man passes from an objective to a subjective relation with the world, his security and “understanding” are lost; man, in this state, is, so to speak, on edge.

Lévinas calls relations that are not based on the attitude of subjectivity ethical. In this way he attempts to point to the demanding nature of such relations. One is forced to take on responsibility for the other. In so doing, the unique existence of the other is attended to. According to Lévinas, I am responsible for the very existence of the relation, and I am responsible for its continuance. This ethical relationship is not symmetrical. One can neither ask for nor expect any reciprocity. One can depict the possible relationship between self and other on a continuum passing from indifference, through the attitude of reification, and finally to the ethical relation. As one passes along this continuum, the level of this responsibility grows and with it the challenge. The recognition of the other’s uniqueness impresses on us the burden of our responsibility. The other man becomes our task, our duty: our care.

Lévinas highlights the specific character of a proper relationship by using the notion of a *face*. Put simply, in the situation of being *face to face* with another human being, the philosopher sees in terms that exceed its, as it were, “face value.” It is in the human face that a message is conveyed, or more poetically and therefore aptly expressed, revealed in the form of revelation, an epiphany. This language of poetry fits the context because Lévinas himself eschews the scientific language of philosophy in favor of metaphor. A face as revelation—the philosopher writes about epiphany—more than anything else is a sign that materializes before a human being. While talking, listening, and standing face to face, one may see primarily and must fundamentally the other’s existence. Lévinas described the defenselessness of face, as it is denuded. It is through the face that we get to know another, both his intentions and his emotions. The face provokes us to engage with another in mutual vulnerability. This is because, as the French philosopher tells us, the face communicates an imperative of *thou shall not kill*. In order to strengthen the basic category of his philosophy, Lévinas indicates that it is the face that shows another human being in all his suffering and poverty. The sign or icon of that kind is the face of the orphan, the widow, the refugee, a face that expresses the ultimate human condition of despair. This is why the face has the power to oblige.

According to this way of thinking, it is obvious that education does not only involve the passing and receiving of knowledge. Learning is not only assimilating theories and definitions, useful as they are in ordinary life or in professional practice. This practical and scientific dimension is set aside from the perspective of ethics. Because the other man is my task, the accomplishment of this task is my education. Learning is the conveyance of ideas; but the process of learning through which we pass when caring for the other is a process of mutual engagement, and is the way in which people can mutually shape each other. This is a mutual process in that the student enriches the teacher just as the teacher enriches the student. This mutuality, however, is not symmetrical. The teacher must give more, and the responsibility is his. This is the basis of that relation. In this case, learning is a special kind of responsibility. Therefore this responsibility is a response to the emergence of the other in my perception; this learning is an expression of this response. When a person as a teacher tries to show some way of thinking, when he tries to convey some important idea, he does this for the student, the person who becomes his task, the person who “demands” his response.

Just as there are different relations between men, there are different ways of learning, and different attitudes that teachers may adopt. In the field of education, we can, of course, find indifferentness. Indifferentness here means that the teacher just communicates his curriculum in a passive way. So-called “scientific” knowledge becomes the only subject of the lecture; the students are robbed of subjectivity, becoming objects of the educational structure.

It is possible to adopt such a reifying attitude toward a student. Then the student becomes a tool, a means to make a living. Knowledge becomes a commodity in a transaction that is by its nature economic transaction. The student is marginalized in this didactic process. Neither of these attitudes toward teaching should be assessed in a negative way. That is, the attitude of a detached professional who passes knowledge onto his students is not bad or unethical. On the contrary, it is such people such processes that allows not only for knowledge to be passed on, but also for it to be developed. Opportunities are provided to know more. There is nothing wrong with that type of transaction. For every teacher or lecturer must, or for that matter can, influence another’s existence. His *raison d’être* is to provide knowledge. Within the philosophy of dialogue, such an attitude is a reification of the student, which means regarding him as merely an element in the educational system. But such a reifying attitude on the part of the teacher will backfire; he himself will become an object in and of the educational system. This numbers the objects of and in the transaction at three: the giver, the receiver, and the commodity itself.

I would like to mention two different ways of understanding knowledge presented by Gabriel Marcel: *problem* and *mystery*. A problem is something that can be understood and resolved. As Marcel writes,

Problem is something which I find in the way, standing in front of me. Mystery is something with which I can engage, and in this sense mystery never gets in my way, never stands in front of me. In mystery such a distinction as: in me and in front of me carries no meaning.

According to Marcel, that which is problematic is possible to understand, to be known. Regardless of how long it takes, the solution is there to be found. Problem allows us to distinguish between subject and object—between ourselves and what is “opposite” to us. Problem allows us to adopt the attitude of subjectivities. Mystery makes impossible the distinction between subject and object. Mystery directs that person to himself, to his existence. Mystery entangles the researcher when he becomes a mystery for himself. Mystery leads to existential questions and existential thinking.

Lev Shestov can help us understand the philosophical distinction between the scientific knowledge and that which transcends all that is certain and clear. His book *Athens and Jerusalem* illustrates these two paradigms of thinking in philosophy. The first paradigm of thinking, related to Athens, is the ruling one. Since the times of the first philosophers, and particularly from Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, who sought comprehension and definition, until the times of more modern philosophers, such as Descartes with his clear and simple judgments and Kant with his pure reason, philosophers have been searching for certitude. Certitude and clarity of scientific method is, Shestov posits, connected with *ananke*: the necessity to dominate nature dragoons us into its cause. Shestov makes a profound accusation against this paradigm: Although it provides us with clear and precise knowledge, it has enslaved us, limiting us to the rules of logical thinking and action consequent on it. As the Russian thinker points out, man allows his own assumptions to enslave him. The law of reason, the rules of logical thinking, are nothing but a human construct—a magnificent construct to be sure, helping us to develop, as it does, our corpus of knowledge. Nonetheless it is dangerous, and paradoxically confining; its authoritarian rule imprisons us. Like every existential philosopher, he recoils from all authority and unifying systems. This is why he accuses Socrates, Parmenides, and Descartes of depriving human beings of their freedom and subordinating them to “necessity.”

The paradigm of Jerusalem is in opposition to that of Athens. According to Shestov’s analysis, the paradigm of this type of thinking is not based on precise, rational rules, but instead on faith. This recalls the rule voiced by Tertullian: “the only certain thing is uncertainty itself.” Writing about the

paradigm of Jerusalem, Shestov posits that, in this case, it is Abraham and Job who are the greatest philosophers, and it is Bible that is the greatest philosophical treatise. According to Shestov, visceral experience is the most fundamental. In Abraham's and Job's experience, the philosopher seeks authentic existence, which by definition exceeds rational schemata, and experiences the absurdity of existence, infinity, and transcendence. Shestov makes an absolute distinction between faith and science. The ordering of "heart" and "reason" that Pascal had written about is not a solution in the view of the Russian philosopher. Shestov, first of all, points at two tendencies in human thought and two tendencies of cognition and, correspondingly, two attitudes toward the world. The paradigm of Athens seeks to appropriate reality, that is, to understand, which in the Baconian sense will allow the human being to gain control over himself and the world. Within the paradigm of Jerusalem, awareness, instead of wanting to possess, seeks existence, seeks to probe the mysteries of the world and its own being. This is why, from Shestov's viewpoint, the biblical story of Paradise is a key to understanding the paradigm of Jerusalem.

According to Shestov's interpretation, man in Paradise has not so much sinned as lost his primordial innocence and freedom. The forbidden fruit is the fruit from the tree of knowledge of Good and Evil. When the parents of mankind tasted the forbidden fruit, they not only broke God's law, but and primarily, performed the first act of knowing. They learned to distinguish, to categorize and dichotomize, that is, to moralize. The fruit of knowledge from this mythical tree opened up the world of categories before man: the categories of truth and falsehood, of good and evil, of being and nonbeing. This exposure seduced man and subjected him to its dictates. In the state of innocence, man, according to Shestov, was alike to God, he was innocent and "beyond" good and evil. In the state of innocence, man existed in authenticity and freedom, uncontaminated by the twin imperatives of categorization and dichotomization. In inauthenticity man cannot but choose Good and Evil. This is why man has been driven away from Paradise (the site of proper existence). Now he must clothe himself, toil, and face suffering and death. Shestov's philosophy tries to recover authenticity and the freedom *from* choices. The struggle with philosophy, which is rooted in the Athenian paradigm, is primarily the struggle against necessity and enslavement. It is the struggle with that consciousness that turns everybody and everything into objects, which obfuscates existence and immures man in a tangled web of categories and concepts.

What is important in Shestov's thought is his presentation of the human condition as primarily innocent. The purity of those first humans (Adam and Eve in Paradise), in his view, lay precisely in their inability to categorize and

divide things into what is good and what is evil, what is right and what is wrong. This primordial purity of human nature is identified with a pristine lack of knowledge, which opens the human condition to an existential directness of living and being in the world. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God's law and ate the forbidden fruit, science and system presented themselves as ineluctable and essential. But this necessity was not the *sine qua non* of human nature. Walking the path of scientific research, innocence, and with it authenticity, was lost.

In such a light we can see not only the particulars of Marcel's thought, but that of Lévinas too. In Lévinas' philosophy, teaching is a process that leads to the existential mood. In that way, the process of education is located in Marcel's mystery or Shestov's paradigm of Jerusalem. This is because all divisions between subject and object in Lévinas' philosophy are connected with the attitude of reification. Marcel's concept can help us understand where knowledge leads. When we solve a problem, we attain clarity and certitude. But according to Lévinas, research into problems leads to reification. If we want to understand ourselves, if we put existential questions about ourselves to ourselves, we do not get an objective solution, but only mystery. Mystery, says Marcel, is impossible to resolve. For Lévinas, every search into objective truth is wrong because it is incompatible with ethical relations. This kind of research encloses everything in definition and leads to generic rules. In that way, Lévinas warns us, we enclose the other in these general definitions, thereby making an object of him. In so doing we miss his diversity, making that which is different similar to us. The mystery of which Marcel wrote is explained through the concept of "face" in Lévinas' philosophy. We cannot get to know "face" in a scientific way, we can only find hidden tokens that are shown to us. Looking at the face of the other helps us to get closer to the mystery of his existence and "presence."

Proper education, and wisdom, toward which man strives, slips away, beyond conceptual footholds. Proper knowledge, the wisdom that desires to capture existence and the other, is juxtaposed in Lévinas' work with the impersonal world of *il-y-a*. In French, the phrase means that something is "being done," that something "happens to." Action has no agent. The sphere of impersonality, in Lévinas' view, is also pertinent to human activity. The man who loses himself in everydayness, falls into structured action, so to speak persists in a state of inattentiveness. This is the "impersonal realm." In Lévinas' philosophy, the category of *il-y-a* is close to Heidegger's concept of *Das Man*. The polemic between Heidegger and Lévinas is one of the more interesting of philosophical debates especially because both philosophers were interested in authenticity and attempted to comprehend human existence.

Heidegger's *Das Man* is nothing other than an "impersonal" state in which man has no awareness and experiences the world passively. This is when man lives not only without awareness and involvement, but, so to speak, in a false, or falsifying, way. Impersonality is manifest in structured action, that is, action that follows known patterns: One goes to work, and there engages in behavioral patterns typical of the position one holds or the job one does. Culture-imposed patterns of behavior are accepted without reflection. Everything in this "passive" existence can be easily explained: This is how things are done, this is how everybody does it, these are the rules of social behavior. In such a state it is impossible to see the essential problems; "mystery" evades awareness. Awareness can switch from this passivity and relative superficiality to an active state, to authentic existence. Heidegger puts it thus: Man can switch from *Das Man* to *Dasein*—human awareness can become authentic, that is, sensitive to existence as such. *Dasein* is primarily being-here-and-now, an existence that is aware of its presence. In this mode of awareness, man does not passively accept the superimposed patterns of behavior, knowing, as he does, that schema will not allow him to grasp the essence of existence. The deepest involvement is required for a human being to become aware of the fact of his own existence and the existence of another human being. Routines, although comfortable and practical, must be transcended if man is to understand who he really is in authenticity as distinct from a mask, pose, or social role. Existence in itself reveals itself as ineffable, beyond intellection.

For Heidegger, authenticity is of the utmost importance because it allows human consciousness to fully grasp the mystery of being. The state of *Dasein*, on the one hand, is natural and associated with the human condition, but on the other, it is a state in which man loses what is most crucial: his individuality and inimitable existence. Also in Lévinas, the state of *il-y-a* is a natural state entangled in everydayness. It is a state in which man assumes a certain role, given him by society and culture. In *il-y-a*, action is habitual. Habit and everydayness provide, first of all, a feeling of security because all has already been planned and set. The security and solace felt in accepting such a role are like those given and known since childhood. But in the security of the everyday, there is an ignorance of what one really is, what it really means to live and what existence really is. Søren Kierkegaard said that the most important philosophical and life issue is to solve the problem of existence. Man is a riddle for himself, the most crucial of all riddles. The Danish philosopher knew that the problem associated with solving this riddle is the fact that, in trying to solve it, one must go deep into oneself. The task of solving the mystery of human existence is taken up by Heidegger, but he

points out that such a pursuit must be done in authenticity and with alertness. The same challenge is taken up by Lévinas. For the French philosopher, transcending the impersonal realm is connected with a specific attitude toward another. To comprehend is, first of all, to grasp the uniqueness of the other human being and thereby enter an ethical relationship.

The sphere of *il-y-a* is, more than anything else, a sphere in which man does not fully understand who he is and wherefore his existence. This lack of such awareness is also associated with a propensity to reify the other. There is no space for the ethical relationship. Instead, a situation is constructed in which people burden each other with cultural and social roles. In this sort of attitude, one loses one's individuality and inimitability. In the sphere of impersonality, what is different and other is transformed into what is known and understandable. In the *il-y-a*, the model of understanding compels us to take possession. As Lévinas notes, the other human being is forced into a definition and a role. What cannot be understood seems, in such a situation, to be impossible or erroneous. To know is to unify; to unify is to know. There is no place for mystery in such a model. It is only when one transcends the impersonality of the *il-y-a* that one will see mystery and understand what existence is. This requires assiduousness. As Kierkegaard said, we always change, and we develop our existence. In his philosophy, Lévinas retains the spirit of existential thinking, showing that a conscious human being with a personal attitude toward the world will always develop and grow. Such a man becomes aware change and development in others and precisely there experiences, as it were, a space or gap between himself and existence. In Lévinas' view, a conscious human being is someone who, more than anything else, respects the otherness of the other human being, grasping the mystery of his existence. But to respect otherness is not to define it. Nor is it to reify it. Such an attitude is the key to the ethical relationship and to existential understanding.

The third way of teaching, connected with relation—in Lévinas' sense of ethical relation—corresponds to the meaning of "master." Barbara Skarga provides us with an explanation of Lévinas' "master" concept. The master is characterized by his extensive knowledge. The master is a teacher who knows and is able to transfer his knowledge to others. Most important, the master is able to fascinate. A teacher who is not a master for us leaves us indifferent to his discourse. In contrast, the master's discourse takes on an importance to his students and his message challenges them.

The master not only fascinates his pupils, he challenges them to think. Skarga emphasizes that the pupil chooses his master, the person who is best able to fascinate him. I would say that a master imparts not only his

knowledge, but also, with it, himself. It is precisely the engagement of the master with his knowledge that creates his authority. The teacher can be forgotten, the master cannot. The master stays with his pupil in this “relation” beyond just one lecture, one meeting. The master is then someone who presents a problem, thus provoking thought, helping the student to reengage with old questions and thereby opening the way to new research.

Maybe that is why Lévinas wrote about the connection between father and master. In his son, the father has his future, not only in the biological sense, but also in a “cultural” way too. We can say, following Richard Dawkins, that “cultural genes” are transferred from father to son. Most important is that the son, in being nurtured, inherits points of view, ideas, and attitudes to the world. However, it is not a question of simply inheriting such ideas, attitude, and norms. It is a creative action. The son may change a lot in the process. For Lévinas, any such adaptation is of secondary importance. The most important thing is that the father lives on in his son.

Likewise in Lévinas’ philosophy, the master continues to exist in the pupil. This kind of existence is very intense. The transference by the master of ideas, thoughts, tasks, and concepts sets up a reference point that may assist in the intellectual development of the pupil. The thoughts of the master comes to serve as a point to which the pupil can return and look for the solution to his present conundrum. So in that sense education is not just a simple conveyance of knowledge; it is not just the teaching of formulas and definitions. Education, in Lévinas’ perspective of ethical relation—is the very teaching of intellection. This is, then, a taking of responsibility for the way the pupil thinks. Education is a revealing of that which was hidden. The task of education from this perspective is to activate, to sensitize the student to new point of view—to point to new horizons to be explored. Therefore, education is a process that does not finish with lectures or lessons. It is a process that may be continued by the pupil by reading other books and posing other questions. When the master is not with his pupil, he can still direct his thoughts and ideas; he can still stimulate his pupil. The master does not transmit knowledge as such; he reveals the problem and teaches the student how to probe. Thus, education has the character of a dialogue, a conversation in which master may become pupil, and pupil, master, together looking for an answer. In such a conversation, every solution found to a given question opens up a new point of view and brings new problems and questions to light. Such a conversation has no limit.

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COMMUNICATION IN THE TEACHER TRAINING  
UNIVERSITY

The factor of communication is the most important one in education. Postmodern culture recognizes communication as a primary form of life. From the chaotic processes that occurred in Russian schools in the 1990s we are gradually passing to a stable modernization of education. New orientations and approaches are appearing. The problems of verbal and nonverbal communicative practice are very acute.

In this chapter, we assume that education is carried out through direct and indirect communication and is embedded into the net of communicative processes. On the other hand, education itself can determine the levels of social, cognitive, scientific, and pedagogical communication. In order to perceive the threat of communicative alienation, it is important to understand how the world of communication is born out of the idea of general mind and individual ethos, out of the spirit of mind and the spirit of culture.

Having raised the problem of criticizing education from the position of interpersonal communication, we single out one theme: communication in the educational space of a teacher training university.

Heidegger wrote that “education captures and changes the soul as a whole” and that the word “to educate” means to put a pattern in front of, to form available inclinations. Education provides a pattern that helps a person to form his or her activity. The idea of “changing the soul as a whole” on the basis of mutual understanding is of great importance. The second important feature of education is an appeal to one’s own originality in development. Education gives a new self-understanding of human objective reality. One cannot buy it or take it. There is personal activity, development, and responsibility behind it. As a third feature, education is possible only in the system of *social exchange and social communication*. Hegel wrote that it is impossible to live as if one was alone in the whole world. A human nature cannot be by nature as he or she must be in reality. A human being must raise his being up to his or her general nature—to educate himself or herself.

To get an education means to acquire in one’s own possession a variety of definite knowledge and skills, the possibility of interpretation and development. In fact it is a way of communication between a personality and society.

Education in the teacher training university as a system of training specialists for general, preschool, primary, and secondary education is defined by higher demands for the profession and personality of a teacher. Pedagogics is a special sphere of social activity, a professional and personal calling. It will be recalled that humanity (Latin *humanitas*—human nature, spiritual culture) is something that refers to a human and his or her culture, to his or her rights and interests. The humanities (history, philosophy, philology), in contrast to the technical sciences, foster humaneness, philanthropy, and respect for people. Pedagogics is the science that deals with how to form such a person. As the subject of pedagogical communication and educational processes, the teacher should possess a spiritual connection that can raise the inner strength and soul of his or her pupil.

The word communication means to connect something or somebody, to associate with people. The Latin-Russian dictionary of O. Petruchenko (1914) describes this in terms of two verbs: *to give* (somebody, a participation in something) and *to receive* (to take part, to have something in common with somebody). So there is an evident connection in communication between receiving and giving. Participation of a subject is a definite feature of communication. Hence we see a direct connection with the idea of education, which implies participation in a pattern or an ideal. We can place education in the context of communication, in the joint effort of a teacher and a pupil in a human, culturally civilized space.

The personal communication of subjects in education, especially in a teacher training university, should be equipollent. The following considerations are important:

- There are no ideological dictates for the world outlooks of teachers and pupils.
- The intent of the school is not to form a human with fixed properties, but one capable of thinking and dealing with changing possibilities.
- Education is guided by culture.
- Dialogue and irony allow more freedom among teachers and pupils. Sometimes it seems that the educational hierarchy is being abandoned. It is true that schools today exist in a different cultural space. But adults will be trusted only if they acknowledge the originality of students and their uniqueness, their fashions, opinions, and tastes, and can speak with them about the latest novels, films, and so on.

The challenge is to support a whole, integral spirituality in communication. Genuine pedagogical (educational) communication is put into effect only by accounting for the spiritual whole.

The idea of integrity in interpersonal communication does not mean overriding individual priorities. It is important to acknowledge the inner status of individual person.

According to M. Mamardashvily, the “average cultural human is sure that in every situation the only real language is his/her own language.... But speaking the language of science, culture, art—he/she should perceive the idea that one and the same thing can be presented differently.” That is, the concept “communication” assumes conditions that make possible the origin of new experience.

Speaking about educational communication, we remark that the sense of education is closely connected with the self-realization of the future teacher. The student needs to be led to a critical position about the sense of his or her activity and taught to overstep the limits of the subjective sphere.

The absence of such conditions has led education to a crisis, as noted by Husserl. In his phenomenology, the idea of the other makes clear the intersubjective structures of consciousness as conditions of self-identity of the Ego. Researchers in phenomenological pedagogics (Rodgers, Bolnov, Sheller, and others) have investigated questions of meaning, which is carried out in the consciousness of a subject of a communicative experience.

Summing up what we have said, we stress that the culture of personal communication is a culture only because its essence cannot be transparent. Communication in education always implies the other. There is always a danger of losing “the universal consent” of communicative activity. It is easy to level the other from the position of authoritative subordination. It is difficult to admit the importance of the other, to display benevolence and respect. This would be an assertion of the whole, that is, the order that is committed to universal pedagogical communication.

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HUMANITIES IN TRANSCENDING THE PERSPECTIVE  
OF EXPERIENCE  
*Problems of education*

The manifestation of life is realized against the background of symbolic forms that are distinctly different for each particular epoch. Any human-made thing—history of ideas, the human world in general—retains a definite form, and thus a culture. Culture can only be a process, a happening, a dialogue between human beings, a transmission of spiritual trends, symbols, ideas, and life forms in education. This is also a way of maintaining a definite form because all that happens in the human world requires effort and respect.

Everyday empirical experience has peculiar forms that transcend it. Husserl's phenomenology makes a sharp distinction between the transcendental and the empirical. No philosophical foundations can be found in empirical consciousness. A phenomenological reduction is required, thus bringing into view the domain of transcendental consciousness. This transcendental consciousness affords the sought-after foundations of sciences and humanities as conceptual, contemplative knowledge.

Post-phenomenological reflection tries to overcome the sharp opposition of the transcendental and the empirical. The inner logic of the development of phenomenology is undergoing a period of transition with a change in basic viewpoint that sets aside the philosophy of subjectivity, *cogito* analysis, a narrow egology (which allows of the recognition of Other only within the framework of subjectivity), which are very characteristic of the Western mind, and places at the foreground the philosophy of communication, solidarity, dialogue, and vision beyond the sphere of pure subjectivity. The gaze of pure subjectivity in the history of Western culture has been translated into therapies and social techniques that form the most effective medium of disciplinary violence that dominates modernity. Michel Foucault recognized that the penetrating gaze of the scientist can occupy that centralized space of the panopticon from which can one look without being seen. The metaphor of the anatomist, trained on the human corpse, represents the "concrete a priori" of the sciences of man.<sup>1</sup> According to Foucault, the humanities take part in the realization of power. He studied the form of knowledge that appears with the claim of purifying the transcendental from everything empirical. It

becomes suitable as a medium of power precisely on account of this separation between the empirical and the transcendental. He believed that scientifically prepared knowledge, including the humanities, can function as a disciplinary violence in the form of curricula, tests, classical texts, research reports, and so on. Foucault was convinced that in their very form the human sciences are supposed to present an amalgam of knowledge and power by using an objectifying, metaphysical approach.

Jürgen Habermas commented on Foucault's views:

He could scarcely have avoided noticing that in the 1970s objectifying approaches no longer dominated the field in the human sciences; they were competing instead with hermeneutical and critical approaches that were tailored in their forms of knowledge to possibilities of application *other* than manipulation of self and others.<sup>2</sup>

Seen from the hermeneutical point of view, culture shows a historically changeable measure of humanity, a way of existence that has emerged historically and according to which a definite experience and skill are embodied in the results of human action. Application and transition are more important than the question of manipulation. In such a case the products of human self-realization can be viewed as meaningful texts and actions, as a unity of signs and symbols. Then there is no need to divide culture, as is often done, into material and spiritual culture and look for an activity or sphere of existence that could be characterized as being a specifically cultural sphere. Culture as a life form of man pervades any sphere of human existence. Culture expresses complexes of meaningful situations, "lived views" that are described and analyzed in the humanities. The task of the humanities is to describe these life forms as forms that transcend everyday experience but are realized namely in cultural processes. Counting the number of books, films, and paintings produced is to no avail, although quantitative computation characterizes another side of life—orientation to money and superficial temporality.

Already at the beginning of the twentieth century concepts began to appear within the philosophy of culture that were fundamentally opposed to the attempt by philosophical naturalism and subjectivism to consider cultural phenomena as facts or objects. Wilhelm Dilthey spoke of the spirit of the times and various historically imposed world scenes. He analyzed life forms that transcended everyday experience. For Dilthey, the task of humanities is to understand and to live through (*erleben*) the objectified forms of human beings—gestures, motions, words, actions. Edmund Husserl looked at the surrounding world (*Umwelt*) as a form of cultural expression and described the concept of a "life-world." Ernst Cassirer saw the cultural world as an ensemble of symbolic forms specifically produced through human actions.

Phenomenology of life represented by Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka analyzes the transcending perspective of everyday cultural experience. Thus, many contemporary philosophical trends pay attention to the forms of life that transcend everyday experience.

Speaking of culture as an organized unity of sense formations, the term “symbolic form” means, in the first place, sense and understanding, which is why symbol analysis does not mean the reconstruction of an object substituted by a sign, but the reconstruction of a subjective situation encompassing both the denotation and the designator sign. The understanding of cultural meanings is based on traditions, habits, and cultural forms of the age. Symbols in the meaning of sense formations are not designations of objective structures, but the results of understanding. Profound and many-sided understanding of the cultural phenomena is possible only on the basis of the humanities. Taking a bowl, for example, as a symbolic form means seeing it is as an embodiment of a definite world outlook, a specific understanding about things and phenomena that has received the shape of a bowl. The embodiment of humanity inherent in the bowl does not mean anything; it is just there if we are able to see it. In culture, two indivisible realities merge into one. The bowl, for example, exists as a physical object and as the form of human action personified in this object. This human form is changeable, different in each historical age. That is what makes the bowl belong to a concrete historical world. Viewing the physical object—the bowl—we see the human being who made it. Symbols do not have a direct relationship with the designator. They are the most complicated signs formed by transcending forms in a wide cultural context.

The humanities are system of knowledge that give an understanding of life forms expressed in texts, symbols, signs, actions, ideas, and images. The main task of the humanities is not to deal with a literary text or action as an accomplished fact, but rather to encounter an ongoing life process in which the human being endows his thoughts and actions with meaning. It is a process of self-understanding and interpretation of cultural phenomena. The humanities give a second-order understanding as a methodological design of interpretations. But today there exist rather different and antagonistic methodologies. This is one of the reasons Calvin Schrag sees for the current crisis in the human sciences. In *Radical Reflection and the Origin of the Human Sciences* (1980), he examines possible factors that might serve as explanations for the current crisis in the humanities: narrow specialization, quantification, formalization and the increasing impact of technology on scientific investigation and human life in general, and philosophical and methodological controversies. Schrag recognizes that the characteristic feature of the crisis in the humanities is that they have been uprooted from their origin, which he characterizes in terms of

reflexivity upon originative experience rather than the self-reflectivity of an epistemological subject:

What is required, in short, for a genuine assessment of the source of the crisis and a pointing of the way to its possible resolution is a move to a more radical form of reflection, a *protophilosophical* and *protoscientific* reflection that antedates the conceptualization and typification.<sup>3</sup>

Schrag suggests the transition from philosophical anthropology to radical anthropological reflection that is based on an originative matrix in which thought and action are positioned. The aim is to overcome the principle of self-reflexivity with its premise of subjectivity and cognition.

A similar movement was seen by Habermas and Foucault. Habermas criticizes a typical feature of the human sciences:

“The human sciences occupy the terrain opened up by the aporetic self-thematization of the cognitive subject.”<sup>4</sup>

The humanities must not be centered on the epistemological subject. This will change the relationship between empirical everyday experience and transcendental principles.

Schrag discusses the relationships between the empirical and the transcendental in the humanities. He poses an objection to Habermas’ viewpoint of a transcendental framework of inquiry that makes possible the explanation of the interconnection of cognition and interest. Habermas recommends a new method for self-reflection. This methodological framework remains admittedly transcendental because there is a search for a priori anthropological dimensions. From this standpoint Habermas sees the foundation of the humanities in the methodological self-reflection of a critical-transcendental anthropology. There is an appeal to transcendental analysis with its universality and necessity. Schrag does not agree with Habermas that he has overcome the opposition between the empirical and the transcendental:

When issues of practice and interest are under discussion, there is recourse to empirical analysis in recognition of the variability of contingent, historical fact. But the theory and practice, knowledge and interest, are allegedly to be understood as being of one piece; hence transcendental analysis must somehow penetrate the contingency of the empirical, and empirical analysis must already in some sense be transcendental. In the end we are not clear where the transcendental begins and the empirical leaves off. The two domains are blended in such a manner that the empirical becomes quasi-transcendental and the transcendental quasi-empirical. The transcendental and the empirical mix and mingle in such a fashion that the contributions of each remain undefined.<sup>5</sup>

The new phenomenological approach moves from the description of the pure structures of consciousness, knowledge, interests, and transcendental research into human existence to the description of the common meaningful

fields of everyday life in which individual egos are not strictly differentiated. Such a life is based on fundamental structures or *life forms*.

The specific situation of consciousness itself as a form of a peculiar world understanding and experience that turns all of objective reality into an aggregate of sense formations is realized only in the context of definite human relations, in an empirical situation. Human activity is a sense-forming activity, and, in its turn, as a human activity it can only take place in the context of already existing human life forms. To understand means to disclose the essence of an element of the human world, the life form. In this unifying cradle of the human forms (culture) any self-expression of the humanities, including art and philosophy, take shape. Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka writes:

The human being is present in the “image” he himself constructs; he is present within it at its center. He is also present in it through *his experienced self-absorption in it*. Lastly, this image is a synthesis of his self and of the life that is uniquely his own, in which he finds himself, and by recognition his place in it within all the ties he entertains (with life’s elements, processes, tasks to be accomplished), he recognizes his *concrete tasks of vital significance and their concatenation*. In this recognition ... he may reflect upon complexes of “situations”; he may ponder the intertwinings of their segments of casual connectedness, priorities to be given in action, the best means to fulfill needs, etc. In short, he may move from instinctive functioning to plotting, appreciating, discriminating, and planning this so very complex “design” or image, this “lived view” we call “reality” ever-progressing in awareness of the circumambient conditions—and so move above them, achieving a global view of his human possibilities and our living condition in general.<sup>6</sup>

Everyday life is realized as a precategoryal and protoscientific meaning formation. The humanities give structural interpretations of the life-world and help to form and explain everyday experience. The second-order interpretation in the humanities remains reflexive upon the primordial level of interpretative meaning formation realized in everyday experience.

Therefore it is very important to include the humanities in the general education process, to teach not only about physical and social reality, but to describe and explain human life forms. Life in its meaningful reality is opposed to illusion, hallucination, and fiction. Reality is the objectivity of the life-world. In the life-world we are intertwined with all of the other living beings and experience the existential reality of this network.

What is the role of the humanities in educational systems today? How do teachers and pupils interpret the meaning of the humanities for their life?

The school is one of the most complicated social formations of the European Enlightenment. Its most clearly defined goals are the following:

- To continue and to transform the cultural experience of the nation and humanity

- To provide the opportunity for obtaining knowledge, developing abilities, acquiring skills, and developing the personality
  - To socialize young people for social roles
  - To realize cultural traditions
  - To model contacts and relationships between generations (children meet adults other than their parents, i.e., people who exercise power over children on behalf of the society)
  - To acquire communicative competence (i.e., to learn to live together with others, to cooperate, to compete, to oppose)
  - To respect power and authority, to win power, to enjoy power, and so on.
- Finnish specialists in education have written:

“Educational institutions have had a central role both in the individualization of socialization, or *enculturation*, and in the *institutionalisation of life-course*.”<sup>7</sup>

Education provides knowledge and significant learning experiences, and shapes the identity and life-course. The humanities have a special role as the basis for understanding cultural process and life forms. Culture comes into being together with the history of humankind. In the course of the development of the regulative world view, specific forms of understanding and existence have taken shape and that in their indivisibility replace hundreds of thousands of human relations and connections. Being postulates of activity and consciousness, they have turned into instruments for understanding and mastering the human world. These forms are constructive in relation to our feasibility to feel in a certain way, to think, to evaluate, to act. They are relatively stable forms of existence that every new generation inherits in the form of traditions and that remain relatively unchangeable during a certain stage of historical development. These forms become instruments, mechanisms for maintaining human existence. The humanities reflect about these forms and try to explain them.

They are the means for transforming natural human powers and abilities with the help mechanisms that take shape and exist in a concrete culture. The stability of such means and mechanisms are a necessary precondition for the feasibility of human communication and mutual understanding. Such formations, beginning with the forms of activity and ending with peculiar primeval images, which determine a human's relations with the world, with the other human beings and the universe, regulate our existence in most diverse spheres. Education gives not only knowledge, but also understanding and a guide to the life-course. The teacher is a bearer of knowledge, a disciplinary power, and a friend. Not everyone can do all of this. There are many people in schools who are unable to sustain the essential level of relationship and

see the humanities as the interpretation of life forms. That causes a host of problems: abstract teaching, the pupils' unwillingness to study, bad relations among colleagues, conflicts with pupils' parents, and what is most important, the teacher's low status in contemporary society. At present many European teachers do not give sufficient thought to their mission, the essence of their work, and the role of the humanities.

Each significant social phenomenon is intertwined with a network of certain *human feelings* created and sustained by culture. The network of feelings is very powerful because of the impact it has on economic or material matters. Thus, for example, the Church has historically been associated with a sense of holiness and faith. The present political institutions have experienced a shift from the manifestation of power and subordination to participation, which is the basic principle of democracy. The school has always been associated with feelings of prototype and respect, at least in the ideal variant envisaged by the scholars of the Enlightenment. The understanding of prototypes and feelings of respect are something more than knowledge, skills, and professionalism. Respect exists where there is truth, honesty, and selflessness, categories that have been seriously addressed in the humanities.

Contemporary society has become very advanced technologically, whereas with regard to human souls it is becoming increasingly uncultivated. The humanities are losing their important role in the interpretation of everyday experience. The spectrum of feelings is narrowing and is becoming unstable. In contemporary educational systems there is no demand for sophisticated and deep feelings. One might notice them only against the background of past memories or as incidents in the lives of unusual people, as ephemeral, beyond pragmatic occurrences of this world. They are becoming ever more seldom and more unusual.

Contemporary society is experiencing a shortage of respect. It is the shortage of a specific, culture-based, sophisticated feeling, on a par with the feelings of holiness, compassion, and humility, all of which have become almost extinct. Feelings are no longer discussed and educated because it is impossible to evaluate them and one cannot find correct didactic methods to cultivate them.

The art of emotions and workshops for restoring lost feelings are within the competence of poets and artists, but the poetic spirit has largely disappeared from in contemporary European culture. It is like a vicious circle in which new developments create new patterns of relationship and level out the old ones, thus destroying the essence of the social institutions that need the presence of cultural feelings.

The first three mentioned functions of the educational system (providing knowledge, interpreting traditions, socializing) can be performed without sophisticated feelings by implementing the curricula, standards, and training skills by professionalized teaching activity. Note how a lesson often begins. The teacher enters the classroom and says: “Now we are going to talk *about* electricity, *about* the Second World War, *about* chemical substance, etc.” About! The focus on “about” that prevails in contemporary thinking and action (to think *about*, speak *about*) indirectly reflects the new approach to thinking that perceives the world as split into two parts: objects and subjects. The subject displays interest in an object (be it a thing, a historical fact, etc.), deals with the object, and acquires knowledge about it. The objects that are taught (e.g., electricity, the French Revolution, carbohydrates, gravitation) are not expected to be respected or communicated. They *must be known* and one must be able to deal with them. The essence of the human being nowadays is bolstered by how much he knows *about something*, how much he *owns*, that is, how much he has accumulated.

The cult of possessions is growing; people are becoming soulless and greedy for information (information also is *about* something). One can talk about something, know about something, and be able to do something. That is how education and thinking capacity are understood nowadays. Knowledge is also *about* something. If the humanities follow this orientation, they become naturalistic, positivistic, and pragmatic. Then they do not transcend everyday experience.

In the nineteenth century, Wilhelm Humboldt separated culture, knowledge, and skills from education. For him, education was something specific. It meant the “subtle string” of inner formation that is never crossed but is in the process of shaping, expanding, and improving. According to him, education is a way of thinking, which, arising from understanding and being sensitive both to intellectual and moral aspirations, harmoniously drifts into senses and character. Here education does not mean the formation of ability or talents. It is something higher. Education in this sense means *creating the form of man’s feelings and comprehension*. This type of education is based on understanding the human’s integrity and on understanding a human being as purposefully implementing content and form. Therefore human beings need the humanities as specific kind of understanding.

If spelling and punctuation have consumed more time than talk about freedom, love, and solidarity, about happiness and death, and pupils have not mastered these capacities, they can start treating this type of formal education with distrust and disrespect. In ethics lessons, if such are held at all, it is customary to talk *about* theories, concepts, cases, and moral norms. Ethics has

been taught as compilation of theories *about*. But ethics must be developed in the practical life, the teacher being an example for children. The contemporary school system gives a different result: Teachers have no followers and no belief in the human values that they teach. It is impossible to accomplish such school functions as creating teenage relationship models and training the abilities to communicate, participate, and show solidarity if there is no respect, authority and serious studies of humanities. Richard Rorty in his article “Education as Socialization and as Individualization” appeals to John Dewey’s opinion:

Dewey’s great contribution to the theory of education was to help us get rid of the idea that education is a matter of either inducing or educing truth. Primary and secondary education will always be a matter of familiarizing the young with what their elders take to be true, whether it is true or not. It is not, and never will be, the function of lower-level education to challenge the prevailing consensus about what is true. Socialization has to come before individualization, and education for freedom cannot begin before some constraints have been imposed.<sup>8</sup>

The past centuries brought to the fore the wish to obtain positive knowledge. We now live in the era of natural sciences, technologies, and computer science, and the teacher who tells his or her pupils about bytes and files is just an intermediary or an appendage to the computer. That is why declarations about ethical and cultural components as the predominant ones in the contemporary system of education are highly questionable.

Why have contemporary societies appropriated the conviction that education is a commodity, as a basis for welfare, but have neglected ideas about the essence of the human being and the study of cultural forms, or about cultivating the human being’s inner capabilities, something that structurally could replace, for example, confession?

Contemporary philosophers have made tentative calls for nurturing feelings and self-understanding rather than filling people with knowledge and training their skills<sup>9</sup>—not to extract something that the system of education itself has filled the human being with, not to test, intimidate, examine, and subordinate, but to develop the values that the human as a unique, cultured, thinking, and even altruistic being possesses.

Contemporary philosophy of education faces great opportunities for conceptual changes, not only in the sense that new methods and didactics should be created, but in the sense that it must take a fresh look at the history of different interpretations of education and the related systems of subtle feelings that permeate all significant social institutions created by Europe, including school.

It is not true that culture develops forward and upward discarding the old and the useless. Nowadays the system of education is structured on the

model created by the Enlightenment and based on technology, pragmatism, professionalism, information, knowledge, and practice, to which philosophers have tried to attach moral and cultural dimensions, although their views have not carried much weight. Transcending everyday experience based on the humanities is not popular. No wonder that even the best system of education creates people who evaluate themselves and other people by their amount of wealth, power, information, and connections.

The problem is not whether to reduce or increase the number of lessons for a particular subject or create an absolutely new curriculum. It is rather the fundamental contemporary question about the essence of human existence and the place of education with regard to it. The question is whether the contemporary school is able to perceive that respect is the highest feeling or the time for subtle feelings has passed, that it has been replaced by pragmatism, formalism, narrow professionalism, indifference, and technological perfection. The humanities have to be the basis for changes in European education and culture.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Habermas, J., *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, Polity Press, 1985, p. 246.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 272.

<sup>3</sup> Schrag, C., *Radical Reflection and the Origin of the Human Sciences*, Purdue University Press, 1980, p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Habermas, *op. cit.*, p. 261.

<sup>5</sup> Schrag, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

<sup>6</sup> Tymieniecka, A.-T., *Logos and Life. Creative Experience and the Critique of Reason. Analecta Husserliana*, Vol. XXIV, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1988, p. 304.

<sup>7</sup> Antikainen, A., Houtsonen, J., Kauppila, J., and Huotelin, H., *Living in a Learning Society*, Falmer Press, 1996, p. 9.

<sup>8</sup> Rorty, R., *Philosophy and Social Hope*, Penguin Books, 1999, p. 118.

<sup>9</sup> See, for instance, D. Vandenberg, Existential and Phenomenological Influences in Educational Philosophy, in *Philosophy of Education since Mid-Century*, ed. by Jonas F. Soltis, Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1981, pp. 38–64.

PHENOMENOLOGY OF MODERN UNIVERSALISM

1. The world is changing quickly, nonlinearly, and often chaotically, and the end of the twentieth to the beginning of the twenty-first centuries has been called “the age of bifurcation.” Modern civilization is at a crossroads. Not later than by the middle of the century it will have become clear whether humanity is following a path of sustainable development or is facing a future of catastrophes, degradation, and destruction. The modern crisis is somehow like the Neolithic revolution of approximately fifteen thousand years ago when the discovery of agriculture, and closely connected with it, cattle breeding saved humanity from disaster. Specific transitional methods have appeared in the modern age of bifurcation, such as poststructuralism, postmodernism, synergism, globalism, ecology, and developing tendencies toward pluralism and diversification.

The present crisis will be overcome only if humanity can place itself within some kind of noobiogeospheric system of coordinates, so that humans and all of their activities can become the elements of a new universalism (Danilova, 2003, p. 145). The development of these new ideas is possible mainly through a phenomenological approach and the most general scientific methods (synergetical, systematical, ecological).

The twentieth century started under the sign of the phenomenological foundation of science and belief in the superiority of positive scientific knowledge, but the universalism formed on such approaches cannot manage the development of humanity, which must be oriented on the processes of forming planetary spheres, based on the idea of noospheregenesis, and synthesizing all spheres of spiritual industry on the planetary level. This must take into account all of the changes taking place in philosophy and conditioned by the modern crisis and the necessity of a full planetary approach to human activity.

The universe that humanity must enter before the middle of the twenty-first century will be a system of integrated whole-planet nets (social, scientific, economical, financial, etc). Culture and its limits will become their foundation. These nets will cross, develop, and complement each other, forming a whole-planet existence and the coordinate system of its self-organization. This

existence will join in itself the natural and the spiritual, the material and the ideal, the existing and the virtual.

2. The universe has always been interesting for human beings: At first this interest was unconscious, gradually obtaining mythological and then religious forms. Socrates was the first to put the question about the internal versatility of the clear mind; he motivated the contents of logos, and formed the definition of notion universality. In antiquity, variants of universalism were suggested by Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, and the neo-Platonists.

In the modern period the question of universalism was put by G. Leibniz, who developed ideas about universal science, universal language, and universal calculation. Contributions to the development of universal ideas were made by H. Spencer, G. Hegel, and, in the twentieth century, by neo-Thomists, Teilhard de Chardin, A. Bergson, J. Maritain, H. Ortega y Gasset, A. Schweitzer, and K. Jaspers.

The development of universalism in Russia was connected with the concepts of cosmism, global union, and the noosphere, which were actively developed during the last third of the nineteenth and the whole of the twentieth century. Cosmism extends evolutionary theory to the whole of space. It was first put forward by D. Fisk in the United States, but it was independently established in Russia. The concept of global union has its own sources in the outlooks of Plato and Aristotle, but it was refined by the neo-Platonists. Contributions to the development of the concept were made by Nicolas of Cusa, F. Schelling, and G. Hegel. The creators of the philosophy of global union in Russia (V. S. Soloviev and S. N. Trubetskoy) and their followers tried to form a methodology to synthesize religion, science, and art on the basis of a free faith and the widest view on the relations of a person with the world.

The types of universalism existing in certain ages were based on the limiting basis of myths, religions, philosophy, and science. The meaning of some spheres of the human spirit and their basis weakened, whereas those of other ones increased. At present, culture has the status of a universe of signs, a supersystem capable of containing all of the other spheres of the human spirit in it. Culture as a supersystem is capable of becoming a basis of planetary universalism and all of its subsystems (mythological, religious, philosophical, and scientific). It will direct the self-organization of all spheres, having balanced all natural processes on one hand and everything created by humans on the other.

3. The process of shaping culture as a planetary supersystem is connected with solving the following problems.

The first problem is connected with the discovery of the multilevel-network structure of such a supersystem, into which the traditional cultural formations must enter as its elements. Variety is a guarantee of stability in nature; the humanitarian and public spheres are not an exception, and the more cultures there are on our planet, then the more stable will mankind's culture become. Certainly, all of them must be tolerant, humanistically oriented, unique, and mutually complementary. Modern multiculturalism means that there is not any special culture, but it does not adopt cultural relativity, according to which all cultures are considered equal. Existing and past cultures are mutually complementary, they are miscellaneous. However, each one is necessary for the further development of civilization, so the real integration of mankind is possible on the basis of all these cultures.

The second problem is connected with the formation of fundamental cells, so-called cultural monads, and their collections at the micro level of planetary culture. Similar monads can unite in modules (mesolevel formations), which perfectly correspond to epochs and their artistic styles and directions. In addition, the shaping of the culturological code must be considered in terms of its levels. The fundamental cells will form this code on the microlevel, the modules on mesolevel, and the planetary spheres and nets on macrolevel. The semiotic space—semiosphere—becomes a planetary code variant. All of the cells listed (the monads) keep their natural wholeness, defined by spatial, temporal, and spatiotemporal closed processes.

The third task is connected with fundamental dualistic tendency of modern culture, in which, first of all, the personal and planetary levels are developed. There are two main types of human interaction—personal networks, which are connected with cultural modules (epochs, styles, etc.), and the planetary network, which provides harmonious interaction of all these levels.

The fourth task is aimed at blending the elements in separate cultures to help them to form knowledge about other cultures and promote interaction between them. A person must actively interact with several cultures, promoting the creation of a united cycle (material, energetic, informative). This will help to identify all existing cultures and discover their borders, to gain transparency for other cultures and maximize their self-determination. Special “blending modules” involve fundamental cultural cells and ethnic cultural covers in interactions of cultures, thus revealing different sides of separate cultures and explaining corresponding concepts.

4. Different types of universalism, existing on certain stages of philosophy's development, are connected with corresponding universal philosophical and scientific concepts. The natural sciences are based on common scientific concepts, theology on transcendentals, different trends in philosophy on

metascientific concepts, existentials, and categories of being, and philosophy of culture on cultural universals. Let us consider the types of concepts that are the most useful for the new universalism.

“Algorithm,” “sign,” “invariant,” “isomorphism,” “information,” “model,” “system,” “element,” “energy,” “entropy,” and many other notions are common scientific concepts. They are not single valued; no one of them can act as the only basis for a theory (there are tens of definitions for the notions of “information,” “systems,” “entropy”). Common scientific categories have their own contents and methods in other areas of knowledge, closely correlating with metacategories developing other universal ideas.

Transcendentals represent the highest aspects of being, the most general features of anything existing. All transcendentals are reduced to three in late scholasticism: unity, truth, and good. In spite of their being criticized by modern philosophers, these three main transcendentals remain important and can be used as landmarks in the concepts of modern universalism.

Philosophical categories have been interpreted in a very broad range in different ages: from the general forms of being (naturalistic ontologization of categories) to their relationships with the forms of predication, characteristics of their fundamental relations, and ways of correlations between sensation and thinking. A philosophical category must reveal an important side of the problem “world-person.” It must be a universal, global concept, occupying a certain place in the established system of common categories. The transition of modern ontology from substantialism to potentialism changes the ideas about categories, inserting them into the description of the forming planetary networks.

Existentials express in themselves the modus of the world’s being in its relationship with human consciousness and with the world alive. After M. Heidegger, they are “world-being,” “being-with-others,” “being-to-death,” “fear,” “determination,” and so on. The collection of existentials helps to divide the wholeness of the united “person-world” into different aspects and to describe each of them so as not to lose the wholeness itself. They are used to recomprehend other universal categories, in spite of serious criticisms.

5. However, cultural universals are the most flexible and the most suitable categories for the development of modern universalism; they are life meanings that provide the understanding of a person, his activity, nature, space and time, causality, fairness, freedom, truth, good, evil, and so on. Universals are the system-creating factor of culture, executing three main functions: breeding, selecting, and inserting the constantly developing social experience in the flow of cultural translation; it is adopted by people in the process of education, and becomes the categorical structure of their consciousness; they

assign a holistic image of the life world of a person by their own cohesion and interaction.

It is possible to underline an original invariant in cultural universals, a certain abstract content, peculiar for different types of cultures and forming deep structures of human mind. But this layer of contents does not exist independently. It is always connected with specific senses, inherent to the historically determined type of culture, that express the particularities of people's contacts and activities, keeping and transmitting social experience and the accepted scale of values. Cultural universals must be considered as fundamental dynamic balances, providing self-identification for separate cultural modules or covers.

6. Sciences of culture of the twenty-first century can develop a modern universalism since they are aimed at studying complex, unique, historically developing systems, in which the main things are interaction with the environment (openness), self-organization, and the forming of multiculturalism. This has brought about the concept of "human-sized complexes" or natural systems in which humans can actively manifest themselves. Shaping such complexes promotes the rapprochement of natural and humanitarian sciences, as well as the mutual influence of poetry and science, intuition and logic, Western and Eastern types of thinking, rational and nonrational methods of study, scientific and nonscientific approaches, cognitive and value parameters of knowledge, and the interconnection between explanation and understanding.

Modern culture faces the problem of distorting natural codes and rhythms, which were protected by mythological and religious systems in former ages. Pseudoscience presents a special danger, taking the most refined forms at present, using knowledge of natural and social laws, but resting on demagogy. We see the distortion of the great heritage of past cultures in anti-cultural concepts, pseudo-cultures, and quasi-cultures, confirming the absolute relativity of standpoints and opinions. The spiritual space, freed from samples of real culture, and losing connections with its ideals, is immediately filled with different simulacra, which actively get into all spheres of a person's spiritual activity. The main antidote from pseudoscience, simulacra, and negative scenarios of mankind's future is the development of modern universalism and planetary-holistic scientific and cultural concepts.

7. The methodology of universalism is based, to a considerable extent, on the systematic, synergetic, and ecological approach and phenomenological method. Natural scientific approaches allow us to form an external look at cultural processes and guide the forming of planetary networks as if it from

outside. The phenomenological methods reveal their internal peculiarities, immanently inherent to the development of culture.

System connectedness in modern conditions suggests the combination of different contexts, providing a view of the same notion or concept from different points (from inside a mouse's burrow, from the top of a hill, from the height of a bird's flight). The synergetic approach organizes the relationship and interaction of nature's separate parts through rhythms and their collections by means of their coherent interaction. It puts the main accent on self-organization and self-likeness, on evolutionary models on all levels of nature's organization.

The unity of the development algorithm is a fundamental idea of modern science, regardless of the nature of its realizing systems and the fact that randomness is inherent to all natural processes. The study of the nonlinearity of modern cultural processes has a special importance because all attempts to develop a civilization in the twentieth century on the basis of linear principles caused the total violation of human rights. World unity from the point of view of nonlinear dynamics reveals itself in the versatility of mathematical models describing reality, in the possibility to build a mathematical description of a given phenomena with different accuracy by means of "cubes" or base models. The use of linearity is necessary in modern conditions, but only in the context of nonlinearity.

In critical conditions (elements of the networks, for instance), the nonlinear approach allows us to describe the system by means of several variables—parameters of order. Another mechanism of simplification is connected with revealing the resemblance of networks referring to different levels of hierarchy. Thus, the main parameters of order are defined; other variables are fixed, wholly subordinated to these main parameters.

The ecological approach suggests the harmonization of existing relationships between separate kernels, modules, and covers of the culture, as well as the improvement and optimization of these relationships.

8. The phenomenological approach allows research into the formation of modern universalism through the internal development of culture. Within this approach, the wholeness of the interconnected cultural network system is the most consequently motivated, as well as the process of its natural self-organization. The method allows transferring from different structures of consciousness, corresponding to the different stages in the formation of culture and whole planetary being. Consciousness, being inside the development, and directing the process from inside, passes through the following stages. (1) A stage corresponding to separate manifestations of everyday ordinary culture, which any individual in any ethnos can face. These are characterized

by primary cultural interests and longings, unconditionally taken as obvious things and common sense. (2) A stage of locking everyday culture into the united whole by means of its sufferings. This stage answers the description of the given separate culture phenomenon. (3) Origin of “modules,” conditioned by interest in other cultures, on the foundation of which a firm dialogue can develop. A natural dialogue to compare all these particularities with other cultures appears when a separate culture realizes its own wholeness, systematic nature, and structure. (4) The discovery of culture’s cognition, essence, and structure, which can lead to shaping kernels and modules of separate cultures. These essences, kernels, and modules are perceived directly, on the basis of structures acquired on previous stages. (5) The formation of the system of diachronic-synchronic interactions between separate culture and their essences. The cultures of vanished civilizations and existing cultures are used equally in this process, along with virtual and ideal constructions, providing communications between them. (6) The preliminary shaping of the planetary cultural networks. The main value of the phenomenological approach is that it is possible to restore the natural view of consciousness, having returned to one of the first stages that let us elaborate the landmarks, invariants, and separate figures of consciousness. (7) Making clear the essence of these networks and their structure is possible when the phenomena of consciousness, corresponding to the stages just described, become more and more clear. Then a linked system of cultural essences appears, uniting all the kernels, mythological, religious, and philosophical modules, scientific frames and networks, the ideal and real being in one.

The essence and structure of cognition within this approach are revealed in one unceasing flow involving a person who has entered the stable interaction with culture. Its development happens by means of internal self-organization, but is well-characterized by the term *paideia* for only a “true culture.” This is the formation of an authentic person, which embraces and develops him, dealing with his whole internal essence, and the person “flows” in such “true culture.”

9. In the modern global world, all cultures are subject to two main tendencies. On one hand, they must identify themselves, reveal clearly their borders and features, and become transparent for representatives of other cultures. The problem here is that many cultures have not yet been defined, having stopped somewhere in their development. On the other hand, they must promote the integration of mankind. This contradiction can be solved through a new type of equilibrium—“an equilibrium-web” emerging on the basis of some chaotic processes (exchanges of different types) in the formation of the planetary cultural networks. The equilibrium-web needs multilayering, depth,

and a mutual binding of cultures because the interaction network itself turns out to be more important than their sources, so the main sources of information and spirituality are contained in the network of equilibrium-forming interactions.

The equilibrium-web provides mutual supplementing of the natural and human sciences in spite of the fact that natural history interacts with one aspect of limiting cultural bases, the human sciences, with the others, and the conceptual organization schemes of these aspects are different. The equilibrium-web promotes the discovery of the firm correlation between these aspects and limiting cultural bases. The concept of universal whole planetary cultural being can be worked out and shaped by means of such mutually supplementing relations.

10. Cultural networks direct the shaping of the noobiogeosphere, a collection of all stable planetary networks and their fundamental elements: noobiogeocenosis, noobiogeosphere personalities. The fundamental equilibrium between the rhythms of cosmos and the main terrestrial spheres (lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere) are very firm, so they have existed for up to four billion years. People have tried to base their mythological and religious rituals, philosophical systems, and natural science theories on these rhythms. The noobiogeosphere forms a new reality, being a natural continuation of terrestrial spheres in accordance with cosmic rhythms. And in the limits of this noobiogeosphere, everything lifeless, alive, emotional, or spiritual forms its firm holistic structures.

Noobiogeocenosis provides the possible mutual development of the person, technology, and nature on basis of the firm quasi-circles of substance, energy, and information. They mostly correspond to the notion of "human-sized complex." A noobiogeospheric personality is homomorphic to the whole of noobiogeospheric mankind, directing the processes of person's development, which means eliminating the relationships with casual phenomena and tendencies, and is aimed at maintaining relationships with fundamental natural structures. The noobiogeospheric personality corresponds to one of the most holistic elements of modern universalism (Danilova, 2004, p. 53).

The shaping of the noobiogeosphere on the basis of cultural networks begins with mutual supplementing uniting synchronic and diachronic cuts of culture. The first is characterized by the firm rhythmic interactions between fundamental elements of national and mass cultures. The second is marked by the firm rhythmic interactions between the best samples of world culture and information society's cultural ideals. Such an association is a dynamic equilibrium, and everything that is unique and useful from different ethnic cultures becomes its elements. At this stage, the interaction of cultures is

realized by personalities selecting necessary elements and samples. Then the forming of planetary covers continues by means of their self-organization.

11. The processes of globalization are also a stage in the formation of planetary networks, and these processes come with feedback mechanisms, that is, regional responses to these processes, able to promote their systematic correlation. It is possible to shape a holistic, multilayered, mutual supplementary global system, correlating with the process of noospheregenesis, only by taking in the account all of these responses.

The stability of global culture is possible only human activity is distributed on the whole planet so as to form within their own toposes a harmonious interaction of the global and the local, thus promoting a real dialogue of different cultures. Spirituality and unity could not take place on a nonplanetary scale. This has been so much spoken of in the great philosophical systems, religions, and cultures. It is impossible to realize the ideas of solidarity, liberty, equality, brotherhood, fairness, tolerance, nonviolence, and cooperation outside the frame of harmonic and humanistic globalization.

All the processes mentioned promote a temporary cultural isolation and even diversification of cultures that precedes the deeper cultural integration that creates a universal cultural being. The development of continually individualistic dualism promotes such integration. It means that all cultural universals simultaneously increase all deeply personal values on one hand and the whole planetary ones on the other.

12. The development of universalism suggests the universalization of modern education and the development of educational philosophy as an integrative science. This is necessary because of the huge volume of surplus information, which is harmful for everybody, lacking criteria and filters to divide this information into useful and useless, as well as to process and improve it. To develop such criteria is a complex problem because they are furcated, multidimensional, nonlinear. Thus it is better to be oriented to biogeocenosis as the most successful example of nature's evolutionary achievements, in which the dynamic balance and firm cycles of materials, energy, and information are saved, and where all these processes can be fully recycled. As for the modern educational noosphere, the biosphere, cognitive sciences, and philosophical faith gain major importance.

At present it is necessary to accelerate the development of the individual's emotional and spiritual ontological spheres by means of educational methods. This suggests a constant combining of several points of view on the same notions and phenomena, first of all, the mixing of external and internal points. This allows combining different scales of study, various corners of vision, and degrees of abstraction, thus identifying any notion as fully as

possible and connecting it with the others within the frames of the unceasing flow of cognitive processes. Only when any element of the knowledge is, on one hand, identified, and on the other hand, enclosed in a system of higher-level structured knowledge will it become possible to speak about the fastest education and its quality. The increasing and decreasing of this velocity comparatively to its optimum causes essential violations in shaping the systems of knowledge and personality.

The modern universal system of education must rest on the “individual self-identification” and “to be beside” principles. The first is aimed at the individual self-organization and shaping of a personality, which must strive to systemization and wholeness of the knowledge acquired, as well as on every level of cognition. The second principle reduces the activity of a mentor to his attempts to give only separate influences, since he must continuously interact with his student, first giving him complete freedom, but then correcting, complementing, and recommending. It is the practical realization of educational methods.

13. In the twentieth century, culture will take a leading place among all of the other spheres of human spirit. At present the third great mutation of cultures is taking place. Two previous mutations (antique and Christian) occurred on the basis of traditional cultures. The modern cultural supersystem is formed on the basis of all contributions: from traditional cultures, diachronic and synchronic interactions between different cultures, planetary spheres, networks, and so on. Certainly, the more cultures there are on our planet, the better it is for mankind, since variety is a guarantee for stability in nature.

The world outlook on universals possesses a significant heuristic potential, and in contrast with other universal notions, they are much closer to people, not possessing any special theoretical preparation, and thus everybody can find his own way to understand them. The main thing is to hear and to feel that such a system of universals exists. Furthermore, it will provide the individual with his existence in “nonsleeping mode” and adjust him to his own rhythms, and will support firm relationships with this person, thus opening more and more to him. To achieve this purpose, it is necessary to use all of the treasures of world culture. More than one hundred years ago, the French poet Paul Valerie wrote that three epochs had struck his imagination: Antiquity, the Age of Enlightenment, and the “Golden Age” of Russian culture. The importance of the “Golden Age” and the following “Silver Age” of Russian culture is great and possibly can become the foundation for Russia’s further development, consolidating all of its constructive power. The philosophy of education must translate the comprehension of the great epochs’ cultural examples to a new level of understanding. The equilibrium-web is capable of including into the

united planetary network all ideas, to research them in the new context, and to comprehend their contribution to the formation of the main concepts of mankind's development.

On one hand, modern education forms systematic networks, and we can watch the division into separate modules that can form the most different, unexpected combinations, promoting new scientific directions. On the other hand, there appears a never-ending education, since a person in an information society must learn for all of his life. The individual directions of knowledge appear, and soon each individual will get the possibility to save his personal layer of knowledge in the planetary-civilization structure and its covers. This will make it possible to eliminate the gap between separate "I's" broken by nonlinearity, the stochastic nature of the surrounding world, and the rapid rate of its development.

14. Modern universalism participates in the process of shaping a new "cultural paradigm" that is capable of providing a consensus between all of modern mankind's elements, as well as the social, political, and cultural processes directing its development. The cultural paradigm will have been formed by the middle of the present century, so mankind can comprehend its further development on the basis of such a paradigm.

The essence of this paradigm is that the person in the modern understanding will become a "network person" who will be able consciously to dissolve himself in cultural nets. In a sense such dissolution has existed for thousands of years, when the human being was, first of all, an element of mythological and then religious networks. Comparatively recently, in the modern age, he freed himself from all networks, became independent, and entered the way of intensive degradation. If he does not find any new networks, he will disappear soon.

The new dissolution of a personality in cultural networks occurs consciously, on its own will, but it is the only chance for it to keep its real existence. It is to a considerable extent defined by the development of nature and all of its ontological spheres (lifeless, alive, emotional, spiritual). The "network person" is the newest stage of the evolution of the personality and mankind.

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