

AN ANTHOLOGY OF PHILOSOPHICAL STUDIES VOLUME 11

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**AN ANTHOLOGY OF
PHILOSOPHICAL STUDIES
VOLUME 11**

**Edited by
Patricia Hanna**

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Introduction

Patricia Hanna

This volume is a collection of papers selected from those presented at the 11th International Conference on Philosophy sponsored by the Athens Institute for Research and Education (ATINER), held in Athens, Greece, 23-26 May 2016.

This conference provides a singular opportunity for philosophers from all over the world to meet and share ideas with the aim of expanding the understanding of our discipline. Over the course of the conference sixty-three papers by philosophers from twenty-six countries were presented. The nine papers in this volume were selected for inclusion after a process of blind-review.

The papers chosen for inclusion give some sense of the variety of topics addressed at the conference. However, it would be impossible in an edited volume to ensure coverage of the full extent of diversity of the subject matter and approaches brought to the conference itself by the participants, some of whom could not travel to one another's home countries without enormous difficulty.

Since its inception in 2006, the conference has matured, reaching what might be seen as adolescence. Part of this maturity is reflected in the nature of the proceedings. We now have a group of dedicated philosophers who serve as the reviewers for the proceedings. They are committed to raising the standards of this publication; as a result, we are now able to ensure that each submission is blind-reviewed by at least two readers, as well as the editor and/or a member of the Editorial Board. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their extraordinary work.

CHAPTER ONE

The Phenomenology of Consciousness and the Deconstructed Identity of the Human Subject

Simon Glynn

Phenomenological Consciousness

Everything that exists stands in correlation, and this correlation is the veritable nature of every existence. The existing thing in this way has no being of its own, but only in something else. (Hegel)¹

Descartes viewed the mind as essentially a *res cogitans*, an at once reified or substantial, yet (in contrast to *res extensa*) an enigmatically un-extended or immaterial, substance, while Locke's blank piece of paper analogy nevertheless suggests that it might in fact be an extended substance.

However, following the archetypal empiricist Hume, who noted that we have no experience of a mind as such, Husserl states the obvious fact that "... psychic (conscious or mental as we would call it) being in and for itself has no spatial extension and no location."² But neither, as close attention to phenomenal experience reveals, do we have any non-sensory experience of an immaterial mind *as such*, understood as a reified, albeit immaterial, thing or object either. As Heidegger informs us "A person is not a Thing, not a substance, not an object,"³ material or otherwise. Indeed, Hume observed that we had no experience of an empirical subject or *experiencer*, existing independently of what he called the "bundles of perceptions" etc. constitutive of the "objects" of our experience; the subject or *experiencer* therefore merely being the co-arising correlate of the *experienced*, with which it is indissolubly united in *experience*. A view to which -- at least with regard to the empirical subject or ego⁴ -- Husserl also subscribes, referring as he does to the subject or

¹ Hegel, G. W. F. 1975. *The Logic of Hegel*, (or "Lesser Logic"). In *The Encyclopedia of the Philosophy of Science*. W. Wallace, Trans. Clarendon Press, Oxford. 191.

² Husserl, E. 1970. *The Crisis in European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, (hereinafter *Krisis*). D. Carr, Trans. Northwestern University Press, Evanston Ill. 216. My addition in parentheses.

³ Heidegger, M. 1962. *Being and Time*. J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson, Ed. Harper & Row, NY. 72.

⁴ In addition to an empirical subject Husserl, following Kant, also subscribes to the notion of a transcendental subject or ego, an entirely empirically indefensible notion for which Jean-Paul Sartre takes him to task. [See Sartre, J-P. Undated. *The Transcendence of the Ego*. F. Williams & R. Kirkpatrick, Eds. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, NY. esp. 33-54.]

experiencer and the object or *experienced*, as "Poles" of *experience*.¹ It being from such experience, and upon the basis of reflection, that, as Husserl rightly recognizes, the notion of consciousness arises. "...it is only through reflexions ... that such a thing as consciousness or conscious content ... can become known"² he insists, while elaborating elsewhere he tells us that:

"...we continue to distinguish -- despite the necessary interrelationship -- the *experience itself* from ... the ... *content of experience* ... *between a subjectively and an objectively oriented aspect* ... to this two-sidedness there corresponds, to a considerable extent at any rate, a division, (though not any real separation) between...pure subjectivity (and)... objectivity..."³

In other words so far from consciousness, that quintessential aspect of subjectivity, being experienced as a reified mind or mind-like *thing* or *object*, rather, it is a *subjective mental state* of awareness, which as such is always *intentional*, which is to say conscious, aware or mindful, of "objects" or/and ideas of one sort or another;⁴ objects and ideas which may range from the desk at which I now sit, to the itching of my left foot, and from gold mountains and unicorns, to the square root of minus one etc. "It is intentionality which characterizes *consciousness*..."⁵ Husserl affirms, while explaining that "We understand under Intentionality the unique peculiarity of experiences "to be the consciousness of something."⁶

Not a thing or object, then as Existential Phenomenologist Jean-Paul Sartre points out, consciousness, that quintessential aspect of "Human reality is itself a nothingness."⁷ The reification of consciousness, and the resulting misconception of the human subject as an object or thing, arising, as Sartre explains,⁸ from the failure of the Cartesian *Cogito* to realize that in self-reflection "the one who is reflecting on me is ... myself,"⁹ that the *reflecting* consciousness and the consciousness *reflected upon* are one and the same,¹⁰ and from the concomitant misconception that in reflection consciousness "stands outside" or "takes a point of view" upon itself. This, *impure reflection*, as Sartre dubbed it, erroneously introduces a dualism, between *reflecting* (subject), and *reflected* (or reflectively reified) consciousness (object), into consciousness, which in reality is pure subject through and through.¹¹

¹ Husserl, E. 1970. *Cartesian Meditations*. D. Cairnes, Trans. Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague. 66.

² Husserl, E. 1962. *Ideas*. W. R. Boyce-Gibson, Trans. Collier, NY. 210.

³ Husserl, E. *Ideas*. 214-15. Second parenthesis mine.

⁴ Husserl, E. *Cartesian Meditations*. 65, 68, 75 & 82-3.

⁵ Husserl, E. *Ideas*. 222.

⁶ Husserl, E. *Ideas*. 223. See also 222 & 214.

⁷ Sartre, J-P. 1956. *Being & Nothingness*. H. Barnes, Trans. New York Philosophical Library, NY. 440.

⁸ Sartre, J-P. *The Transcendence of the Ego*. esp. 33-54.

⁹ Sartre, J-P. *Being and Nothingness*. 153.

¹⁰ Sartre, J-P. *Being and Nothingness*. 151-5

¹¹ Sartre, J-P. *The Transcendence of the Ego*. 44.

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Furthermore, mistaking itself for the *reflected* object or reified ego -- which, in taking the perspective of the *reflecting* subject, it has precisely ceased to be -- consciousness concomitantly misconceives itself as a thing, albeit an immaterial thing, a mind or realm of closed "interiority," standing over against the supposedly "external" or "real" world of material objects and events etc. This then not only poses the insoluble problem of how such a mind can come to know *what* the supposedly real world is like -- which is to say how the "*appearances*," supposedly "in," or at least present to, the mind, of a *reality* which allegedly exists "outside" or beyond the mind, can be known to correspond to, or accurately reflect such a reality -- but, even more fundamentally, how such a mind can even know *that* there is an experience transcending, supposedly "real" world at all. A concern which was, of course, the basis for Husserl's famous phenomenological *epoche* or bracketing.¹

Now the recognition of the shortcomings of such "*impure*," or reifying, reflection necessarily implies some alternative, non-reifying, or "*pure*," reflection; a non-reifying reflection paradigmatically instantiated in the philosophical reflection in which we are here engaged. A reflection resulting in the consciousness or awareness of the subject, of itself as conscious awareness *per se*.² Thus upon reflection we first progress, as per Hegel, as well as cognitive and developmental psychology, from what Hegel called "*sense certainty*," which is to say from a primordial awareness of relatively undifferentiated sensations or pre-predicative experience, to the "*perception*" or experiencing of discreet objects, differentiated both from one another, and from a reflectively reified subject (misconceived as separate from, and independent of, both such objects, and other such subjects). While a more profound, philosophical, reflection (of the sort engaged in by Husserl, and articulated by Sartre) has lead us to an *understanding* that although consciousness may be epistemologically *distinguishable* from the "world" of objects, states and dispositions etc., like the two poles of a magnet, consciousness and world, subject and object, are ontologically *inseparable*;³ that the subject and the object, which is to say the (intentional) *consciousness of "objects"*, and the (intended) *objects of consciousness*, are, like the *experiencer* and the *experienced*, the analytically distinguishable, yet nevertheless ontologically inseparable, co-arising correlates or "poles" of conscious *experience*.

¹Husserl, E. *Ideas*. 96-100 & *The Idea of Phenomenology*, 1970, W. Alston & G. Naknnikian, Trans. Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague. "The Train of thought in the Lectures" & Lectures 1-3.

² For Sartre's discussion of this see particularly Sartre, J.P. *The Transcendence of the Ego*. 44-5, & *Being and Nothingness*.

³ See Hegel, G.W.F. 1967. *The Phenomenology of Mind*. J. Baillie, Trans. Harper, NY. esp. Ch. IV, pp.217 ff, and *The Logic of Hegel*. 191.

Deconstructed Identity

Proceeding further, Hegelian Phenomenology suggests that subjects no more exist as atomistic egos, isolated from other subjects, than they exist independently of the world of objects; that although each subject is epistemologically distinguishable from others, subjects' *identities*, which is to say *who* as well as *what*, they are, and even *that* they are self-conscious individuals, are all dependent on their relations to others.¹

Beginning then with self-consciousness, with the subject's consciousness *that* it exists as such, Hegel informs us that "Self-consciousness exists in itself and for itself, in that, and by the fact that it exists for another self-consciousness."² In other words any subject's consciousness of itself presupposes the existence of other self-conscious subjects; each always discovering itself as self-consciousness *per se* in reciprocally co-constituting (ontologically holistic) relation to others. Thus, paralleling the double nuance of the term "*reflection*", which may be taken to signify both "external" mirroring and "internal" self contemplation, it seems that it is only insofar as we become "*self-conscious*" in the (psychological) sense of conscious of ourselves as being reflected or "externally" mirrored to ourselves by others, that we become self-conscious in the (philosophical) sense of "internally" reflective or contemplatively (self) conscious of ourselves; an insight implied in the Eden Myth according to which Adam comes to "see himself as naked before God," which is to say comes to self-consciousness through the "look of the Other" (in this case God) as Sartre puts it. The consciousness of other reflective consciousnesses reflecting me to myself being, as claimed by Hegel and demonstrated by Sartre,³ the precondition of my reflecting upon myself, and thus of my becoming self-conscious. As Husserl therefore recognizes "...self-consciousness and consciousness of others are inseparable."⁴ In which case if Heidegger's *Dasein*, or "*being-in-the-world*," is self-reflective, then not only is it *Mitsein* or "*being-with-others*,"⁵ but if it necessarily so.

This is not, of course, to imply that once having been made self-conscious in the "psychological" sense as a result of having been "externally" reflected or mirrored to oneself by others, that subsequently, finding oneself alone, *a la* Robinson Crusoe, one could no longer be "internally" self-reflective, which is to say self-conscious or self-contemplative in the "philosophical" sense. For it seems clear that even though all others might die or otherwise disappear, in

¹ See Hegel, G.W.F. *The Phenomenology of Mind*. 191.

² Hegel, G.W.F. *The Phenomenology of Mind*. 229.

³ See Sartre, J-P. *Being and Nothingness*. 259-61.

⁴ Husserl, E. *Krisis*. 253. It is of course clear that even at this time Husserl remained ambivalent as is evident, for instance, from his claim, elsewhere in the *Krisis* that, "... the ego ... starting from itself and in itself ... constitutes transcendental intersubjectivity" that "... only by starting from the ego and the system of its transcendental functions and accomplishments can we methodically exhibit transcendental intersubjectivity and its transcendental communalization ..." [Husserl, E. *Krisis*. 185-6.]

⁵ Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*. 155.

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which case one would no longer be “psychologically” self-consciousness, the previously established bent towards “philosophical” self-contemplative consciousness would nevertheless persist.

Furthermore, the very concept of a “self” is delineated or defined, *a la* Hegel’s logic, diacritically or differentially, in terms of its relationship to an other or others (and, to come full, holistic, hermeneutic circle, *vice versa*) in which case the very conceptualization, much less the recognition, of reflective consciousness as being *self-consciousness*, must therefore *logically* presuppose an other or others.

Moreover, insofar as language is understood as a system of both signifiers, and the concepts signified by them,¹ then, as philosophers as diverse as Ludwig Wittgenstein and Willard V. O. Quine have noted, not only do we think in language, but, insofar as any system of concepts and their associated signifiers may thus be considered a “language” of some sort or other, we *can only think in language*. Thus, as Derrida affirms, "...the subject (in its identity with itself, or eventually in its consciousness of its identity with itself, its self-consciousness) is inscribed in language, is a "function" of language..."² In which case, insofar as language presupposes a linguistic community, the existence of other subjects is, additionally in this regard also, the precondition of my awareness or understanding of myself as consciousness, which is to say of my self-consciousness.³

Turning from *my self-conscious awareness* of the fact *that* I am, to my *extrinsic identity*, or *what* I am, this too, as Hegel’s “Master/Slave Dialectic”⁴ demonstrates, depends upon my relations to others. Which is to say that just as per the Structuralist account of language, by which each word derives its meaning or significance from its relations to, and differences from, other words,⁵ so too

¹ As Ferdinand de Saussure has convincingly argued:

“Language can also be compared with a sheet of paper: thought is the front and sound the back; one cannot cut the front without cutting the back at the same time; likewise in language, one can neither divide sound from thought nor thought from sound; the division could be accomplished only by abstraction ...” [Saussure, F. de. 1959. *Course in General Linguistics*. C. Bally & A. Sechehaye Compiled. McGraw Hill, NY. 113.]

² Derrida, J. *Margins of Philosophy*. 1982. A. Bass, Trans. University of Chicago Press, Chicago. 15.

³ See for example Schutz, A. "The Social World and the Theory of Social Action", in Schutz, A. *Collected Papers*, Vol.II. 1962-66. Nijhoff, The Hague. 4.

⁴ Hegel, G.W.F. *The Phenomenology of Mind*. 229-35.

⁵ See Saussure, F. de. *Course in General Linguistics*. Esp. 113-120. Thus Saussure tells us for instance that:

"The conceptual side of value is made up solely of relations and differences with respect to the other terms of language, and the same can be said of its material side. The important thing in the word is not the sound alone but the phonic differences that make it possible to distinguish this word from all others, for differences carry signification." [Saussure, F. de. *Course in General Linguistics*. 117-18.]

In other words not only are the sensible signifiers (or words in a symbolic language) identified by their relations to other words, but the intelligible meaning or concept signified is also differentially constituted.

Indeed:

individuals' relations to, and differences from other individuals, are constitutive of individuals' identities. Thus, just as the master derives his identity as such from the fact that he owns slaves, and the slave derives his/her identity from his/her relationship to the master, my identity as a white, male, parent and teacher is similarly, reciprocally co-constitutionally dependent upon my relations to people of color, females, my children and my students. While given that the extrinsic (synchronic) relationships between these different individuals is -- like those between the linguistic signs by which their extrinsic or social identities are at once both understood (signified) and articulated (signifier) -- constantly (diachronically) differing or changing, then like the *meanings* of such linguistic signs, individuals' identities are constantly changing, and accordingly, far from being definitive, are always deferred.¹ Thus Derrida concludes that "Subjectivity-like objectivity-is an effect of *differance*, an effect inscribed in a system of *difference*."²

While turning from my *extrinsic identity, or what I am, to my intrinsic identity, or who I am*, I find that those values, attitudes, beliefs and aspirations, and the consequent choice of those projects which, as Sartre claims,³ constitute this *intrinsic* identity, are, not dissimilarly, and to no small degree, delineated by the holistic system of relations of each individual to others, constitutive of society and culture; socio-cultural relations which, as Lacan insists "pre-exists the infantile subject and in accordance with which he [sic] will have to structure himself."⁴ Indeed as Michel Foucault further explicates:

"... the subject constitutes himself [sic] in an active fashion, by the practices of the self, these practices are nevertheless not something that the individual invents by himself. They are patterns that he finds in his culture and which are proposed, suggested and imposed on him by his culture, his society and his social group."⁵

"Whether we take the signifier or the signified, language has neither ideas nor sounds that existed before the linguistic system, but only conceptual and phonetic differences that have issued from the system." [Saussure, F. de. *Course in General Linguistics*, 120.]

"In language, as in any semiological system, whatever distinguishes one sign from the others constitutes it. Differences make character..."[Saussure, F. de. *Course in General Linguistics*. 121.]

¹It being precisely these two sorts (synchronic and diachronic) of difference that Derrida attempts to capture by the double nuance of the term *differance*, (with an "a") which he takes to mean both to differ or be distinct from, and to defer or put off. See Derrida, J. *Margins of Philosophy*. 7-9, and *Positions*. 1981. A. Bass, Trans. University of Chicago Press, Chicago. 27.

² Derrida, J. *Positions*. 28.

³ See Sartre, J-P. *Being and Nothingness*. 443, 453, 464 & 480.

⁴ Lacan, J. 1977. *Ecrites*. A. Sheridan, trans. Norton, NY. 234, quoted in Boothby, R. *Death and Desire: Theory in Lacan's Return to Freud*. 1991. Routledge, NY & London. 123.

⁵ Foucault, M. "The Ethics of Care for the Self as a Practice of Freedom" in *Philosophy & Social Criticism*. Vol.12. 1987. 22, quoted in McGowan, J. *Postmodernism and Its Critics*. 1991. Cornell University Press, Ithica. 140-41.

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In sum then it is from the patterns and practices of the socio-cultural world and the conceptual system or *language* concomitant therewith and inherited therefrom, that I derive the resources by which I come *both to constitute, and understand* myself respectively. While as with the *semantic* significance or meanings of linguistic signs which, as de Saussure and Derrida have shown, are dependent upon *syntactical* relations, and therefore change with changes to such relations, so too human identities, whether extrinsic or intrinsic, are similarly dependent upon, and change with changes to, the forms or patterns of individuals' socio-cultural relations and interactions. And just as the meaning or significance ascribable to a linguistic sign is, therefore, never definitive, always being deferred to changes in the syntactic relations and interactions which constitute it, so too is human identity, not unlike Heraclitus' river, or the Zen Master's candle flame, in a constant process of change correlated with changes in the socio-cultural relations, and patterns of interaction, which, we have argued, constitute it; a *substantial, unchanging* self being, as Buddhism has long since recognized, an illusion.

Nor indeed do even such supposedly *natural* features of human existence and identity as one's emotions escape *cultural* mediation, as is clearly demonstrated by the evident differences or cultural relativism of emotions evoked by funerals to give but one example. Participants in an Irish Wake, for instance, display an exuberance very different from the emotionally staid, not to say often bodily rigid, participants in a typical English funeral, which in turn stands in marked contrast to the wailing and throwing of the self over the coffin, accompanying many funerals in the Middle East.¹

Furthermore if, as Lacan famously claims, "the unconscious is structured like a language,"² then, language being a cultural artifact, even the supposedly most *natural* desires emanating from -- that alleged fugitive from the super-ego's socio-cultural repression -- the unconscious Id, are *culturally* mediated. A proposition attested to by the cultural specificity of the contexts in which foot binding, ear lobes stretching, lower lip and/or neck distention etc. are regarded as sexy, not to mention the differences between plump, white, Rubenesque, nudes, and the firm bodied, silicone injected, sun tanned Playboy pinups. Thus, as Foucault informs us, even "Sexuality must not be thought of as a kind of natural given which power tries to hold in check, or as an obscure domain which knowledge tries gradually to uncover. It is a name that can be given to an historical construct."³

While if even this last bastion of supposedly untamed *human nature* "in the raw" so to speak has fallen -- our deepest, supposedly *natural*, feelings and desires, being thus revealed as *culturally* constituted artifacts -- then it would seem apparent that there is nothing *natural* left of humankind at all. Indeed Foucault insists that:

¹ For a more detailed discussion of the cultural relativity of our feelings see Harre, R. *The Social Construction of Emotions*. 1986. Blackwell, Oxford.

² Lacan, J. *Ecrits*. 298.

³ Foucault, M. *The History of Sexuality*. 1979. Allen & Unwin, London. 105.

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“As the archeology of our thought easily shows, man (sic) is an invention of recent date. And one perhaps nearing its end. If those arrangements were to disappear as they appeared ... then one can certainly wager that man would be erased, like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea.”¹

Indeed, one may go even further, insisting, with the International Situationists, that even with regard to the sand “Beneath the Beach there are Cobblestones.”

¹ Foucault, M. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. 1970. Random House/Pantheon, NY. 387.

CHAPTER TWO

Rational Self-control

Atli Harðarson

Introduction

Imagine a man watching a child, say a two-year-old, running down a slope towards a river. This is a fast-flowing and treacherous stream. He knows that down by the riverbank the path is wet and slippery, and has good reasons to believe that the child may fall into the water. He is standing beside a fence. It would take him two or three minutes to climb over it and reach the child.

On the other side of the fence a few long-horned bulls are grazing. The man is afraid of the animals, although he knows that they are supposed to be harmless.

The brave and right thing to do is obviously to run past the cattle and save the child. There are, however, a number of different ways in which our protagonist might fail:

- He could misconstrue the situation, convincing himself that it is not as serious as it seems. He could, for instance, say to himself that most children know how to swim and the water is probably quite shallow near the bank. This seems crazy, but so are many real life examples of delusion and self-deception.
- It is also possible for him to decide not to bother. He might assess the situation correctly and know that the right thing to do is to save the child, but decide not to inconvenience himself. If he does this, then he is selfish and callous rather than deluded.
- He could jump over the fence but give in to fear and turn back when one of the horned beasts looks up.
- He might muster up all the courage he has, climb over the fence and attempt to go past the animals, but be too late to reach the child because of, say, a fainting fit or a panic attack.

In what follows, I will argue that these four examples of how one can fail to be brave belong to four different categories of how rational self-control can be deficient or inadequate. I will call these different types of failures type i, ii, iii and iv.

It does not follow from my analysis that lack of self-control is always involved when people fail to be virtuous. Nevertheless, actions often run contrary to virtues other than courage for reasons similar to i–iv above. As regards i, self-deception makes people, for instance, fail to be temperate when

they believe that excess is laudable, and unjust treatment of others is, at least sometimes, due to cognitive failures where their rights, interests or needs are not seen for what they are. It is also easy to imagine examples of how people fail to be temperate or just in ways similar to ii, iii and iv.

What is Rational Self-control?

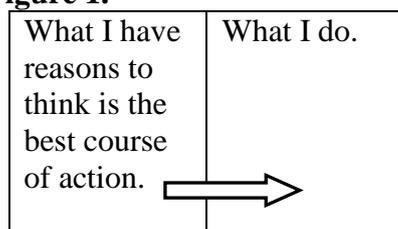
In the seventh book of his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle (2009, p. 1150b) writes about lack of rational self-control. The word he uses is *akrateia* (ακράτεια), sometimes written *akrasia* (ακρασία) that means literally lack of strength or control. He says that *akrateia* is of two types, weakness (αδυναμία) and impetuosity (προπέτεια).

For some men after deliberating fail, owing to their emotion, to stand by the conclusions of their deliberation, others because they have not deliberated are led by their emotion (Aristotle, 1941, 1150b).

In both cases one is led by emotion to do something reason does not endorse. The word that is here translated as *emotion* is *pathos* (πάθος), which can also refer to misfortunes, sufferings and accidents. Jumping over the fence and then giving in to fear when a bull looks up would be an example of weakness whereas a rash or impetuous person would probably be impelled to keep away from the animals and not even attempt to save the child.

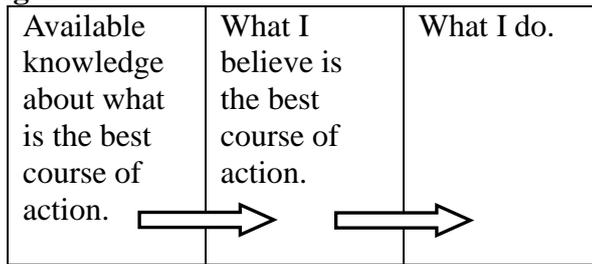
If my understanding of Aristotle is right, he took rational self-control to involve, primarily, the ability or good fortune to do what one has reasons to think is the best course of action. Figure 1 shows a schematic view of Aristotle's theory. As in the figures that follow, what the arrow points to is determined by what it points from.

Figure 1.



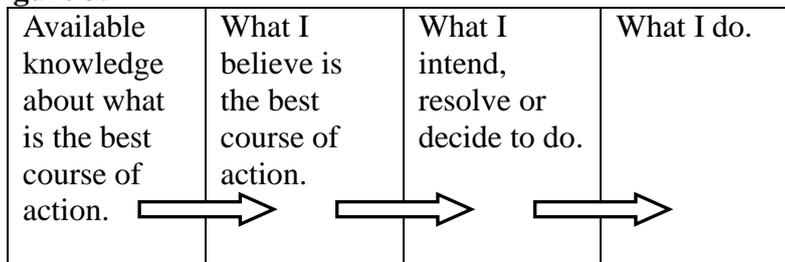
This simple schema does not help us much to distinguish between different ways in which rational self-control fails. Some contemporary accounts are a bit more complex. In a recent publication, Walter Sinnott-Armstrong (2013) describes rational self-control as two relations: on the one hand between what an agent has a strong overall reason to do and what she believes she has a strong overall reason to do; on the other hand between what she believes and what she does. His view is depicted in Figure 2.

Figure 2.



This model allows us to distinguish between failures of type i that are due to self-deception and the remaining three types. A more nuanced account is presented by Richard Holton (2009) who argues that paradigm cases of self-control involve an ability to form intentions and stable resolutions and act on them in spite of contrary desires or temptations. If this insight is added to the model presented in Figure 2, we get Figure 3.

Figure 3.

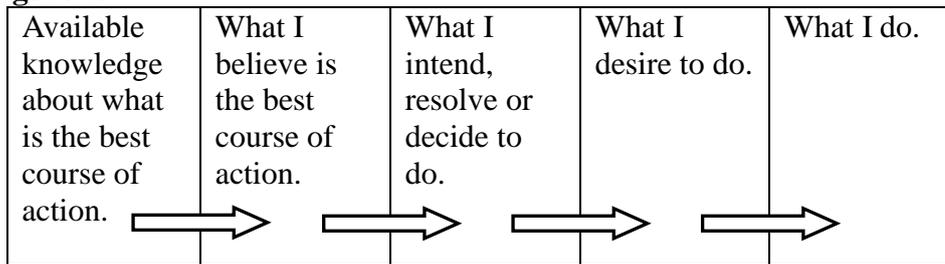


With this diagram we can distinguish failures of types i and ii from the remaining two possibilities. It does not, however, help us to distinguish between failures of type iii and type iv. The difference between possibilities iii and iv in the story is that in iii our hero yields or gives up because of a desire he cannot resist, namely a fear-induced desire to stay away from the bulls, whereas in iv the strongest desire of the agent may very well be in accord with his resolution. A fainting fit or a panic attack does not exclude a strong desire to continue.

To accommodate all four types of failures we need a diagram with at least four arrows and five boxes, and the box that is missing in Figure 3 should contain what I desire to do.

In the light of what I have said so far, it may seem tempting to represent rational self-control as in Figure 4, i.e. think of it as the ability to: let the best overall reasons control what one believes; one's resolutions be determined by such beliefs; one's desires be controlled by such resolutions; and actions by what one desires. This can, however, not be the whole story because, as Holton (2009) has argued, I can have full self-control even though my actions run counter to my strongest desires. If someone, for instance, resolves to quit smoking, and consequently does so, that person shows self-control even though the desire for tobacco is not subdued.

Figure 4.



Sometimes all sorts of preferences are lumped together and called desires. If we do that, we may think of a firm resolution as some sort of a calm desire. On such a view it is an empty tautology to say that no one willingly does anything other than she desires. If, on the other hand, we think that nothing can be called a desire unless it is experienced as a longing, then we can distinguish, as Holton (2009) does, between actions that are controlled by our resolutions and actions that are controlled by our desires.

Those who think actions are always guided by desires, in a substantive and non-tautologous sense, may suggest that when I act on my resolutions I am driven by a desire to stand by my decisions. If I point out that I do not experience any such desire, they may claim that it is an unconscious desire. I would respond by asking whether that claim is supported by anything other than a general belief to the effect that all actions are driven by desires. If it has no other support then it cannot be used as a premise to argue for that very generalization. The truth seems to be that if we do not call anything a desire unless it is felt as a desire then it is not plausible at all that each and every action is caused by a desire. When people say something like "I didn't really want to but I had promised", then they do, at least sometimes, seem to mean frankly that their actions are guided by resolutions rather than desires. The burden of proof rests on those who gainsay such honest reports.

If what I have said is right, and a resolution can guide action without intervening desires, there should be a fifth arrow on Figure 4, a long one connecting what I resolve or decide and what I do. As far as I can see, we should also draw a long arrow from what I believe to what I do, because sometimes action seems to be guided by cognitive content without any intervening desires or resolutions. Suppose for instance I am adding two numbers,

$$\begin{array}{r}
 123 \\
 + 256 \\
 \hline
 \end{array}$$

Below the rightmost column I write 9. I do this almost automatically and without stopping to think or form any resolution or desire. Writing the number 9 is still a voluntary action and it is guided by my knowledge that $3 + 6 = 9$.

Finally, it seems that some desires are guided by knowledge without any intervening decisions or resolutions. My knowledge that there is chocolate in a

box can, for instance, give rise to a desire to open the box. This completes the diagram:

Figure 5. Rational Self-control

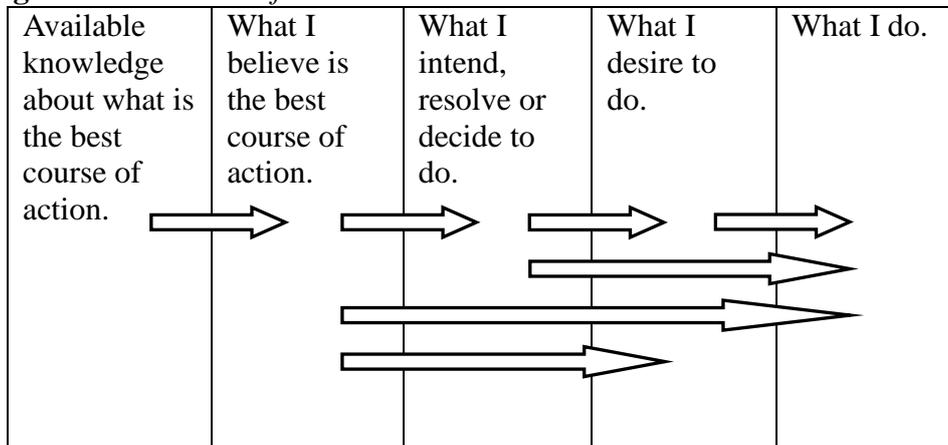
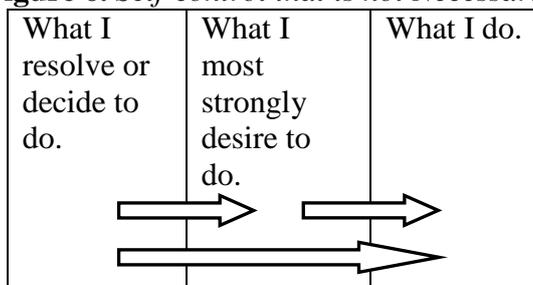


Figure 5 is meant to show that I have rational self-control if and only if I can go from the box farthest to the left to the one farthest to the right by following arrows that signify determination, i.e. where what an arrow points to is determined by what it points from.

As Holton (2009) argues, one has self-control if what one does is determined or controlled by what one resolves or decides. Someone who either does not bother to save a child that is about to fall into a river or interprets the situation in some irrational way, may resolve to leave the scene and act on that resolution without losing control. Such self-control (depicted by Figure 6 that is identical to the last three boxes on Figure 5) is however not fully rational.

Figure 6. Self-control that is not Necessarily Rational



From what I have said it follows that an agent, A, has rational self-control if and only if all the following four conditions hold:

- A's belief about what is the best course of action is determined by available knowledge, i.e. by what A has strong overall reason to do.
- If A has made a decision or formed an intention or resolution it is determined by A's belief about what is the best course of action.

- If A's action is determined by a desire, that desire is determined by what A intends, decides or resolves, provided A has made a decision or formed an intention or resolution, or else by A's belief about what is the best course of action.
- A's action is determined by what A believes is the best course of action or by what A intends, resolves or decides to do or by what A desires.

The failures of type i, ii, iii and iv correspond to these four conditions, i.e. we have failure of type i if condition i does not hold and so on.

To have rational self-control all the four conditions have to be satisfied. That an action is right, in the sense of being justifiable by appeal to available knowledge, does not suffice. The following example, borrowed from Alfred Mele (2010) shows why this is the case: A man resolves to break into a neighbour's house with his friends although he decisively judges it best not to do so. At the last minute he refuses to enter and leaves the crime-scene, simply because of fear.

What the man does can be justified by appeal to available knowledge. If, however, his running away is induced by fear rather than apprehension of how stupid and wrong it is to break into the house, he does not have rational self-control because conditions ii and iii both fail. Number ii fails since his resolution is not determined by what he believes is the best thing to do and number iii fails because his action is determined by a desire that is not determined by his resolution.

That completes my explanation of what rational self-control is. I shall now consider how it fails.

How does Rational Self-control Fail?

For ordinary humans rational self-control often fails: Sometimes people quarrel when they intend to have good time together; students sleep in although they want to get up early and read for an exam; in spite of intentions to the contrary smokers fail to quit smoking; good people want to forgive but can't get rid of angry thoughts. We have all sorts of plans that do not succeed because our minds are restive and ungovernable.

Most philosophical accounts of rational self-control highlight some, and only some, of the four types I have described. In her paper on where the akratic break takes place, Amélie Rorty (1980) describes for instance weaknesses of types i, ii and iii. Philip Pettit and Michael Smith (1993) discuss frailties similar to types ii and iii. Annemarie Kalis, Andreas Mojzisch, Sophie Schweizer and Stefan Kaiser, who draw simultaneously upon research in philosophy, psychology and biology, argue that "dysfunctional decision making can be organized within a common theoretical framework that divides the decision making process in three different stages: option generation, option selection, and action initiation" (Kalis, Mojzisch, Schweizer and Kaiser, 2008,

p. 402). The first stage in their framework corresponds to type i, the second stage to types ii and iii, and the third one to type iv. Holton (2009) presents an analysis of the roles played by decisions and resolutions. Mele (2010) portrays two types of incontinence that he calls *evaluative* and *executive*, the former corresponding to types i and ii and the latter to iii and iv. As I have already mentioned Sinnott-Armstrong (2013) defines self-control as involving two factors, where one is similar to i and the other lumps together ii, iii and iv.

To the best of my knowledge, no one has described self-control as four different abilities as I do. It does not follow from this that I have any profound disagreement with the authors mentioned above. Different descriptions of how action is, or is not, guided by knowledge, do not have to be contradictory any more than two different maps of the same terrain with different elevations between successive contour lines. The pathways through the mind connecting knowledge and action can be segmented in different ways. I think, though, that the fourfold distinction I have made is helpful to understand some of the conceptual issues involved in psychological research on self-control. This applies both to psychological descriptions of addiction and to general accounts of abilities to exercise will-power and delay gratification.

Some authorities on addiction and substance dependence, such as George Ainslie (1999), maintain that addicts fail to form resolutions that accord with their knowledge of what is for their own good because they discount future wellbeing or exaggerate the value of short term pleasure. Think for example of a cigarette smoker who values pleasure today more than an equal amount of pleasure in the future. Suppose he also knows that in the long run his life will be more pleasant if he quits smoking. For such a person the options may be, in order of preference:

- A. Smoke today and quit tomorrow.
- B. Quit today.
- C. Continue to smoke.

If the smoker resolves every day to opt for A, he ends up with the worst option, namely C. The tendency to see A as the most desirable option leads to a new resolution every day that makes the smoker act contrary to what he believes is best for him. On this account, the addict's problem is of type ii. Some other researchers describe addiction as failure of type iv. One of them is Timothy Schroeder (2010), who argues that addictive behaviour is typically much less rational than Ainslie maintains.

Schroeder's account is based on a biological account of how the reward system of the brain uses dopamine. We tend to repeat acts that lead to an increase in dopamine levels. Since the level normally rises when something has better effects than we expected, this tendency normally makes us learn to do again and again what is good for us. Some substances make the brain produce dopamine regardless of whether or not the consumer experiences any good effects. These substances tend to be addictive because they trigger a tendency to repeat the consumption even though the afflicted person does not expect any

benefits from it. If we think of desires as involving two factors, where the first one is some uneasiness or craving and the second one expectation of some pleasure or benefit, then we can simplify Schroeder's theory by saying that it describes craving after addictive substances as something less than a fully-fledged desire, since the second factor is missing.

These two different descriptions of what goes wrong when people get hooked on tobacco or other addictive substances do not contradict each other. We know from Mele's example of the man who ran away instead of breaking into his neighbour's house that rational self-control can fail simultaneously in two different ways. It seems plausible to me that Ainslie's and Schroeder's accounts both contain important elements of truth. It also seems plausible that distinctions like the ones I have drawn are needed as a preliminary to combining the insights provided by these two approaches.

I hope my analysis is also relevant to psychological work on the interplay of trait self-control as defined by Walter Mischel (1996), and what Roy E. Baumeister, Ellen Bratslavsky, Mark Muraven and Dianne M. Tice (1998) have described as ego-depletion.

In the 1960s, Mischel developed methods to measure what is called trait self-control, i.e. the ability to delay gratification of a desire when it is in one's own best interest to do so. Much later, in the 1990s, Baumeister et al. published results showing that soon after people have resisted one temptation they are less likely to hold out against a different temptation. This gave them reason to think of self-control as analogous to a muscle that gets tired after work. This self-control fatigue is called ego-depletion in the psychological literature, and psychologists have developed methods to measure resistance to ego-depletion. Research published by Baumeister and his co-workers indicates that this ability can be improved through training (Baumeister, Gailliot, DeWall and Oaten, 2006). We, therefore, have two different psychological measures of self-control. To the surprise of some researchers, there are people who soon get depleted when they use the self-control "muscle" but who nevertheless score high on tests of trait self-control (Hofmann, Luhmann, Fisher, Vohs and Baumeister, 2014; Imhoff, Schmidt and Gerstenberg, 2014; Hofmann, Kotabe, Vohs and Baumeister, 2015). If we think of self-control as a single ability, these results seem contradictory. Once the concept has been analysed the way I do, they can be shown to be compatible. Those who are less likely to yield to "fatigue" (i.e. be depleted) are good at forming firm resolutions. In them the connection shown by the arrow from the 3rd and the 5th box on Figure 5 is strong. Those who score high on tests of trait self-control seem to be good at using knowledge to modify their desires. For them the connection shown by the arrow from the 2nd and the 4th box on Figure 5 is strong. People who are better able to modify their desires have less need to work against them so it should not come as a big surprise that those who do well on tests of trait self-control rarely train the ability Baumeister et al. compare to a muscle.

Much of the philosophical literature on rational self-control emphasises failures of types ii and iii. In my view, types i and iv are no less interesting. I will conclude with a few remarks about failures of these two types.

Failures of type iv occur when people do something they neither intend nor desire. In some such cases, like when someone faints, we are not talking about voluntary actions. We are, however, still talking about self-control because self-control is not limited to control over voluntary actions. Suppose for instance I have to break some bad news to somebody. I intend to speak calmly but as I speak, I tremble and tears spring to my eyes. I may also intend to relate some incident in a serious tone of voice and start laughing. Being unable to control tears and laughter exemplifies lack of self-control even though crying and laughing may not be voluntary. To some extent people can learn to control such non-voluntary behaviour. It may also be possible for some people suffering from anxiety disorders, like in example iv, to learn to decrease the frequency and severity of panic attacks (Wesner et al., 2014).

A panic attack or a fainting fit are not actions in the ordinary sense. There are, however, examples of actions that people are responsible for although they are neither guided by belief, intention nor desire. Many examples of inadvertent or thoughtless behaviour fall under this heading. One such example would be a driver who has always driven on the right side of the road. She travels to the UK, rents a car and knows of course that she should stick to the left side, but one day she forgets and drives on the right side as she is accustomed to. To have full self-control it is not enough to have one's beliefs, intentions and desires guided by sound knowledge. One also has to be alert.

This was about failures of type iv. Let's look at type i.

In the heroic literature of ancient Greece, persons distinguished by courage and nobility fail because they lose their proper reserve. One instance of this is in the 19th book of the *Iliad* where king Agamemnon apologises for his lack of self-control, saying:

Zeus, Fate, and the Fury who walks in darkness are to blame, for blinding my judgement that day in the assembly when on my own authority I confiscated Achilles' prize. What choice did I have? There is a goddess who decides these things, Ate, Zeus' eldest daughter, blinds us all, accursed as she is. Those tender feet of hers never touch the ground, but pass through men's minds causing harm, ensnaring this one or another. (Homer, 2009)

The weakness Agamemnon describes is clearly of type i. He lost his clear-sightedness and sound judgement. Similar thoughts about delusions leading to wayward conduct can be found in Sophocles' play about Antigone where king Kreon brings destruction to his family because of his pride and lack of judgement. The choir comments on this and reminds the audience that "if God wishes to guide a man to ruin, that man will see good in evil" (Sophocles, 2004).

Homer and Sophocles describe loss of self-control as, primarily, an epistemic failure. Still today, people sometimes look back on what they have done wrong and say “how stupid I was”. In my view, one of the interesting questions about virtues that require self-control is how they overlap with epistemic or intellectual virtues. It seems as true now as it was in ancient times that illusions and self-serving beliefs stand in the way of virtuous conduct no less than selfish desires.

This overlap between moral and intellectual virtues is pointed out by Aristotle towards the end of the sixth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* where he says that moral virtues, in respect of which a man is called good without qualification, are not possible without practical wisdom, and with practical wisdom “will be given all the virtues” (Aristotle, 1941, 1145a). This seems to imply that no one can have one virtue without having them all. I do not know whether Aristotle meant this quite literally but I am fairly sure that nothing I have said here supports such a sweeping generalization about the unity of all the virtues. Nevertheless, my account of self-control makes it at least plausible that to be brave, temperate and just one needs self-control that involves many virtues, and hence learning to be virtuous requires cultivation of diverse intellectual abilities and moral qualities. In order to do what is right under difficult conditions, one may need to be simultaneously astute, resolute, firm and alert.

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CHAPTER THREE

Global Ethics, or Global Harmony of Ethical Diversity

Chin-Tai Kim

Introduction: Fusion of Morality and Ethics

In this essay I will address the following questions relating to the topic: What is morality? What is ethics? What is it for ethics to become global? Must ethics become global? Should ethics become global? What are the conditions of the possibility of ethics becoming global? Can such conditions be satisfied and, if so, how?

A distinction between morality and ethics is bound to be more or less arbitrary. The question which term should be made to express which concept is less important than the question what the two concepts are and how they are related. Let us use “morality” to mean phenomena of people making judgments of value and obligation, thinking and discoursing about principles of valuation and obligation, deliberating in search of an optimal choice, making and justifying a choice, executing a choice, instituting practices incorporating moral principles, defending, destroying or changing them. Such moral acts show differing degrees of immediacy and reflectivity. They may be habitual, or even ritualistically uniform.¹ On the other extreme, atomized individuals may find it necessary to invent a norm and its rationale whenever a moral judgement or decision is to be made. A lonely Sartrean existentialist comes to mind as an example.

A distinction has been made between normative ethics and meta-ethics. The latter is thought to comprise an analysis of moral concepts and an epistemological critique of moral cognition. The definition of “ethics” as a reflection upon morality may generate a false impression that ethics is meta-ethics, not normative ethics, contrary to the obvious fact that rational reflection must be involved in the construction and justification of moral norms and their use in moral judgements as well. In major ethical thinkers like Plato, Aristotle, Spinoza, Hume and Kant we see no sharp distinction between moral experience and rational reflection upon it. In his *Grundlegung* we see Kant proceeding from a phenomenology of moral experience where good will is understood as the will to perform a duty for its own sake, to a metaphysics of morals where

¹ In a consummate moral culture Confucius envisions, righteous acts will become like rituals, choreographed expressions of a harmony of obligation and inclination, an ideal for Kant as well as Confucius. See *Analects of Confucius*, tr. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), Book 2, Verse 4; Book 12, Verses 1-2.

such will is interpreted as the will to act from a sense of obligation to the moral law conceived as a categorical imperative, finally to a critique of practical reason where the moral agent's self-understanding as a rational legislator with an empirical nature is shown to be the source of the moral law and the latter's categorical imperative modality is explained by the objective as well as subjective subordination of the non-rational part of human nature to the law of its rational part.¹ We should wonder what ethics and meta-ethics could respectively be in the Kantian framework. If meta-ethics essentially is an epistemology of moral cognition, Kant's critique of practical reason comprehends it; if normative ethics is to be thought to establish a moral law and explicate its implications, it too is comprehended in the same critique. The critique offers an account of the origin of the moral law and its ultimate justification. In Kant's architectonic the critique of practical reason is a subsystem to be complemented only by a critique of theoretical reason and a critique of judgment. Not only does lived morality presuppose the principles of normative ethics and meta-ethics but a moral subject/agent can and sometimes does subjectively incorporate such principles in its moral experience. "Ethics" can be plausibly understood to mean the reflective dimension of morality including its rational and systematic comprehension.

Kant's critique of practical reason even comprehends a philosophy of religion that views ethics as the foundation of faith against the view that ethics needs a theological foundation. The critique indeed delineates and justifies a comprehensive worldview. His thesis of the primacy of the practical over the theoretical means that the human mind has an inherent need for a worldview that must include pragmatically justified postulates of God's existence, human immorality and human freedom that together establish, in consistency with all actual and possible knowledge, a priori and empirical, the possibility and necessity of the realization of the summum bonum, full realization of every individual's moral potential combined with the amount of happiness exactly proportioned to the achieved moral merit of each, the object of the highest rational desire of humans.² For Kant no region of human experience, be it perceptual, scientific, moral, aesthetic, teleological or religious, lacks rational reflectivity. The distinction between ethics and morality in Kant is blurred to a vanishing point.

¹ Reason, Kant believes, has an inherent authority to legislate over the non-rational. This normative thesis is accompanied by the moral psychological thesis that a mere conception of the moral law can suffice to motivate conformance to it. Thus practical reason that legislates the moral law has the power to oblige the empirical will. See Immanuel Kant, "Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals," in Allen W Wood (ed.), *Basic Writing of Kant* (New York: Modern Library, 2001), 159n, 205. We hear Hume's surprising statement that "reason is, and only ought to be, the slave of the passions." See David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (Ely House, London: Oxford University Press, 1973), 415. Kant's view is a rationalist dogma while Hume's view is expressed as an empirical truth.

² "Critique of Practical Reason," IV and V, in Lewis White Beck (ed.), *Kant Selections* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1988), 311-312.

Situating the Moral Subjects in the World

Even if we accept the generalized Kantian thesis that our subjective conditions must make our theoretical and moral experience possible, we need not further endorse the way Kant conceives humans as epistemic and moral subjects shorn of empirical, historical and cultural properties. For Kant such properties must be possible by a set of a priori conditions of receptivity and noetic spontaneity but they never are or become transcendental conditions themselves. The word “transcendental” is ambiguous. It may mean “making experience possible”; it may additionally mean “ontologically separate from that which is made possible.” The word is useful in the first sense but problematic with the second added. While Kant places transcendental egos/moral agents outside time, nature and history, even letting them make time itself possible (!), we resituate them in time, nature and history. This means, our experience should be thought made possible by natural, historical and cultural conditions as well as our mental faculties and functions, while, for Kant, denatured mental faculties and functions make nature possible without being affected by objects subjectively constructed. The ontological division is accompanied by a theory that introduces, for crucial use in ethics and philosophy of religion, the notion of causality of temporal phenomena by noumena, thinkable but unknowable conditions not in time. This theory remains undeveloped and problematic. Objects of experience can be called transcendental conditions also insofar as they acquire dynamic efficacy to determine future experiences despite their prior subjective determinations. Thinking ourselves to be transcendental subjects or purely rational agents in a quasi-ontological sense does not magically make us into denatured and trans-historical makers of nature or culture. Kant ignores a phenomenologically given human condition, what Heidegger calls thrownness (*Geworfenheit*), namely, existing humans finding themselves being in situations they did not choose or anticipate, let alone create.¹ They find themselves initially passive to effects of history and culture as well as natural conditions. Even the subjective forms of human experience Kant assumes to be invariant and species-universal are subject to change under novel historical and cultural conditions. Science too is a cultural construct and the possibility and historical reality of paradigm changes in science has been recognized since Kuhn.² Granted that people

¹ “As something thrown, Dasein has been thrown *into existence*. It exists as an entity which it has to be and as it can be.” Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, tr. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, 1962), H 276, 319.

² Consider the following. “The transition from a paradigm in crisis to a new one from which a new tradition of normal science can emerge is far from a cumulative process, one achieved by an articulation or extension of the old paradigm. Rather it is a reconstruction of the field from new fundamentals, a reconstruction that changes some of the field's most elementary theoretical generalizations as well as many of its paradigm methods and applications. During the transition period there will be a large but never complete overlap between the problems that can be solved by the old and by the new paradigm. But there will also be a decisive difference in the modes of solution. When the transition is complete, the profession will have changed its view of the field, its methods, and its goals.” See Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1962), 84-5.

construct religions and moralities. No one can deny that already constructed ones exert shaping influence upon people's further experience including their handling of religious or moral affairs—critically discarding religious faiths they have had, revising them, reaffirming them with apologetics, criticizing other religions, arguing for ethical views from religious beliefs, and the like. Kant could not possibly have offered purely subjective, “transcendental” genealogies of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Marxism, Buddhism, Confucianism or Taoism. Could he plausibly explain the current religious conflicts in exclusive reference to transcendental conditions in his narrow sense? And it is equally doubtful that Kant could have successfully argued that his deontological ethics presumed to have a purely a priori origin constitutes the common essence of the ethical systems associated with those religions. The most prominent Western schools of ethical thought that precede Kant, Platonic, Aristotelian and Judeo-Christian are not deontological *à la* Kant but teleological, respectively oriented toward the Good, Happiness and Eternal Happiness. Some of the religious faiths cannot retain their identity if they shed the belief, which Kant urges people to reject in the name of the autonomy of moral agency, that moral rules express God's will. If the label “transcendental” is to be kept as a useful term, it should be made to refer to those conditions that are confirmed by the best theoretical reflection of the time as exerting shaping influence on further experience and cultural constructions. Conditions to which “transcendental” thus redefined applies obviously vary over time.

Morality and ethics tend to be narcissistic. Moral subjects/agents construct an ethical system from the perspective of beings like themselves for the sake of such beings. The role of ontology as determinant of ethics is theologically expressed in Hebrew Scripture: “God's way is not our ways (Isaiah 55:89).” Leibniz philosophically elaborates on this point by distinguishing between infinite God's morality oriented to the actualization of the best of all possible worlds and the morality of a finite human individual oriented to fulfilling his/her pre-ordained destiny as a unique part of that best world.¹ Xenophanes, an ancient interpreter and critic of religious anthropomorphism as man's narcissistic self-projection², would have extended the application of his theological critique to ethics. Those of us who have been taught that an essential property of an ethical system is its universal normativity for the entire human species are accustomed to thinking that ethical systems are *at least meant to be normative for all humans*. They should be surprised to learn from the history of ethics that some ethical systems are not even intended by their builders for all humans. The range of people's likely attitudes toward the other

¹ Leibniz Philosophical Writings, ed. G.H.R. Parkinson, tr. Mary Morris and G.H.R. Parkinson (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1973), “Discourse on Metaphysics,” Section 36, 45-47.

² Consider the following fragment attributed to him: “If oxen or lions had hands which enabled them to draw and paint pictures as men do, they would portray their gods as having bodies like their own: horses would portray them as horses, and oxen as oxen.” Philip Wheelwright (ed.), *The Presocratic Philosophers* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1997), 33.

who do not share their identity or have sufficient affinity may include diffidence, dismissive condescension, curiosity, consternation, derision, hostility, contempt, condemnation to pity. Each attitude expresses the willful self-differentiation of people from strangers with whom they fear being grouped. People's expressions of sympathy or compassion tend to be directed toward humans included in their circle of affinity. Racism, religious dogmatism and cultural imperialism share the disposition to exclude from their class of proper ethical subjects/agents those who they think fail their criterion of affinity with them. Kant conferred an unconditional and strictly universal normativity to his moral law by postulating the practical rationality of humans. His postulating that they all are practically rational, however, thinly veils his belief that not all humans actually are. His remarks confirm the belief in the natural inequality of races, hence in a limitation to the scope of the normativity of his ethics.¹ In Hegel's case a phase of the Spirit's self-development is a coherent unity of being, thinking and valuing such that people situated in different historical phases cannot share the same form of morality. His dialectical ordering of forms of being, consciousness and culture accommodates his racist belief.² Nietzsche thought that the ethics of will to power cannot become universal because of the inevitable existence of those who deny the supreme value of power and recoil from pursuit of power in cowardice. Nietzsche's dichotomy of master morality and slave morality not only stresses the connection between identity and morality but also points to the dual possibility of their authenticity or inauthenticity. Inauthentic as the slave morality may be from Nietzsche's point of view, it must reflect the slave identity either as an apologia, or as an ethics recommended for all humanity

¹ "Humanity is at its greatest perfection in the race of the whites. The yellow Indians do have a meagre talent. The Negroes are far below them, and at the lowest point are a part of the American people." Immanuel Kant, selections from 'Physical Geography,' in Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze (ed.), *Race and the Enlightenment: A Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 63. Discussed in Thomas E. Hill, Jr. and Bernard Boxill, "Kant and Race," in Bernard Boxill (ed.), *Race and Racism* (Oxford Readings in Philosophy, 2001), 455.

² "The peculiarly African character is difficult to comprehend, for the very reason that in reference to it, we must quite give up the principle which naturally accompanies all *our* ideas—the category of Universality. In Negro life the characteristic point is the fact that consciousness has not yet attained to the realization of any substantial objective existence—as for example, God, or Law—in which the interest of man's volition is involved and in which he realizes his own being. This distinction between himself as an individual and the universality of his essential being, the African in the uniform, undeveloped oneness of his existence has not yet attained; so that the Knowledge of an absolute Being, an Other and a Higher than his individual self, is entirely wanting. The Negro, as already observed, exhibits the natural man in his completely wild and untamed state. We must lay aside all thought of reverence and morality—all that we call feeling—if we would rightly comprehend him; there is nothing harmonious with humanity to be found in this type of character." G. W. F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, taken from lectures of 1830-1831 (New York: Dover, 1956), 93. We should wonder how Hegel should rate Western nominalists like the Greek Atomists and David Hume who dismiss universals as philosophical fictions. He would probably say that thinking of universals but reflectively denying their reality indicates a high level of thinking to be distinguished from inability to think of them.

from the slave's point of view, or as an ideology for self-liberation.¹ Hume and John Stuart Mill only recognize the instrumental function of reason in the moral sphere, rejecting the Kantian view that reason is independently practical, meaning that a rational subject/agent is capable of legislating a moral law a priori that obliges his/her will independently of and even against natural inclinations. Hume, while holding that humans customarily value things that are pleasing or useful, tries to explain the human capacity of overcoming uncompromising egoism in reference to shared sympathy. But his hypothesis of shared sympathy cannot be a firm enough foundation for a system of morality claimed to be universally binding. But the rationalist thesis that all humans are rational is just as contingent as an empiricist thesis that all humans seek pleasure no matter what they do.

Global Ethics, Globalizing Ethics, and Enabling Conditions

There is no global ethics at this historical time if by the phrase is to be meant an ethics that is uniformly, or at least widely, accepted by human individuals, societies and cultures especially if we consider ethics and morality to be in fusion. Both morality and ethics are integral parts of a worldview that includes religion, myth and prejudice. A condition of the possibility of a global ethics must be all people acknowledging and "living" the same human identity. But as long as humans adhere to their diverse natural and historically developed identities, the variety of which should amaze anyone surveying the history of human civilization, we should wonder how a sharable species identity can ever arise.

The required identity cannot reasonably be thought to imply the evidently impossible absence of all differences. Natural differences in gender, race, color, and adaptive capacity and modality developed through the evolutionary process cannot be eliminated. Women and other oppressed minorities have only recently become aware of their need for and right to construct ethics from points of view shaped by their conscious efforts to break out of the externally forced centrifugal self-oblivion. A mature ethical system to be envisioned should reflect considerations from the points of view of historically silenced minorities gaining voice.

And it is unreasonable to think that a desirable global ethics should eliminate all doctrinal and cultural diversity. It will be as unreasonable to

¹ The slave morality, in extolling equal human dignity and justice, may express a revolutionary intent to destroy slavery to be replaced by a humanitarian society or to devise an ideological tool to unseat the current masters and install themselves as new masters. Given his dogma that will to power is the human essence, Nietzsche would consider the slave morality inauthentic with the first intent but authentic with the second as it will be the current slaves' instrument for regaining power. All possible forms of slave morality stem from *ressentiment*. But Nietzsche's general point that a morality with any aim, in any form, is an action of its builders reflective on their identity remains unchanged. "On the Genealogy of Morals," Section 10, in Richard Sacht (ed.), *Nietzsche Selections* (New York: Macmillan, 1993), 235-6.

suggest, for instance, that all people of the world be made to speak one language, Esperanto, for instance, or that all religions (as Marx advocated), or all but one (as fanatical adherents of some world religions would advocate), be abolished to prevent linguistic or religious diversity from generating ethical conflicts as it will be to suggest that natural attributes and differences be excluded from morally relevant determinants of identity. And there is the question as to how the vying theories on ethical matters should be handled—a question of ethical significance insofar as theories, as we think, belong among the factors that pre-structure experience. We do not have a good prospect for a resolution of the conflict between the view that ethics requires a religious foundation and the view that ethics should be independent from religion with a secular foundation; between the view that a supreme moral principle should and could be discerned a priori and the view that such a principle should be based on accumulated experiential knowledge of human nature and history, thus defying dogmatic fixity; or between the altruistic view that humans are capable of acting out of concern for others overriding self-interests and its egoistic denial. And metaphysical views such as materialism, idealism, monism, fatalism, determinism and libertarianism have shaping influence on ethics.

Representative ethical thinkers from Plato down through Kant have thought that human beings should be brought to the greatest possible proximity to a model of their own construction. The model expectedly is one they think they themselves exemplify. But building such a model does not contribute to the birth of an ethics of harmony of the diverse whose principle should be that the identities that people's historical experience has shaped and the moralities they express as well as people's autonomy in constructing them. There is no need of a person or a human collective deeper than the need for authenticity, namely, the need to affirmatively and resolutely be what he/she/it already is or is to become what he/she/it, out of reflection on his/her/its given identity, wills to become. Even a person's will to become other than what he/she now is involves an understanding of and a reaction to his/her present identity. Aristotle's view that a person's realization of his/her essential potency is his/her subjective as well as objective telos is a metaphysical expression of the human urge to be authentic.

But individuals, societies and cultures, authentic as all may become, are bound to be diverse. And struggles among authentic beings are the fiercest conceivable.¹ The construction of a framework for peaceful coexistence and

¹ The primordial other is needed for an ego becoming self-conscious and resented by it at once. It is needed so that the ego may be reassured of its own independent being by being recognized by the other to be such. But the ego simultaneously resents the other precisely because its recognition by the other entails its objectification by and for the other, which further entails its loss of complete self-determination. By achieving recognition by the other the ego defeats its purpose of seeking recognition as a completely independent self-determinative being. The otherness of the other, for Hegel's dialectical purposes, need not have a subjectivity structurally different from the ego's. But if the other is thought by the ego to differ in subjectivity, both the ego's interest in being recognized by the other and its resentment of the other must be

interaction of diverse individuals, societies and cultures in conflict or disposed toward conflict emerges as a prior goal for those who envision a global harmony even as a distant ideal. In achieving peaceful coexistence through reflective interaction people may come to discover, articulate and accept principles that do not inhere in their given historical identities and associated moralities. And in some cases their adoption of novel principles through experience of conflict resolution may indicate needed changes in them. To illustrate, moral subjects whose native system includes the principle that those who do not share their worldview, especially their religious faith, be deemed depraved with no worth and should accordingly be denied respect that they the faithful merit could learn to abandon or at least bracket it out of an empathetic consideration that they may come to trade places with their victims. The religiously orthodox who condemn pagans, infidels, heretics and philistines must be capable of realizing that they could be similarly viewed by those they condemn. The effective motive for changing or bracketing the principle of the superiority of one race would be a pragmatic calculation that adherence to and application of the principle will inevitably incur vengeful enmity of other races that might overpower them. It is taking so much historical time for the races of the world to realize that the ideology of racial superiority is both an instrument for gaining dominion and a narcissistic indulgence of the dominant in the power they happen to have or think they have. Ernest Renan's statement shows his racism serving a political and economic ideology:

The conquests between equal races must as much be blamed as the regeneration of the inferior or degenerate races by the superior is in the providential order for humanity...Nature has made a race of workers, the Chinese, with marvelous manual dexterity but almost no sense of honor; govern them with justice, levying from them, as payment for the benefit of such government, an ample dower to the conquering race's profit, and they will be satisfied;...a race of masters and soldiers, it is the European race....¹

The Golden Rule, especially in its negative version, "Do not do to others what you would not have them do to you," is the best candidate for being the fundamental principle of reconciliation. This principle of reciprocity is

potentiated. See G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, tr. A.V. Miller (Oxford University, 1977), 111-113.

¹ "Autant les conquêtes entre races égales doivent être blâmées, autant la régénération des races inférieures ou abâtardies par les races supérieures est dans l'ordre providentiel de l'humanité... La nature a fait une race d'ouvriers; c'est la race chinoise, d'une dextérité de main merveilleuse sans presque aucun sentiment d'honneur; gouvernez-la avec justice, en prélevant d'elle pour le bienfait d'un tel gouvernement un ample douaire au profit de la race conquérante, elle sera satisfaite;... — une race de maîtres et de soldats, c'est la race européenne." Ernest Renan, *La réforme intellectuelle et morale* (Paris: Kalman-Levy, 1029). 93-94.

acknowledged in many major world religions.¹ Though it resembles Kant's Categorical Imperative ("So act that you can will your maxim to be a universal law") in being a formal imperative prescribing reciprocity of action or forbearance without substantive prescriptions, it is better construed as a hypothetical imperative prescribing a means to reconciliation leading further to peace with others, finally to living and letting live. Kant's Categorical Imperative is claimed to have an a priori origin while The Golden Rule, under our interpretation, has an experiential one. Hegel's view of a dialectical resolution of the opposition between two conflicting subjects through a synthesis of their opposed positions is an interpretation, an over-interpretation I should say, of the well understood phenomenon of human reconciliation. But we need not endorse Hegel's Absolute Idealism to appreciate his insight that it is people's experience of conflicts and their resolution through compromise that gives birth to an ethics of reconciliation.

Some may consider forgiveness to be an enabling condition for reconciliation. Forgiveness is the forgiver's voluntary supererogatory act, out of benevolence, of cleansing the forgiven of their transgressions, not exercising or having exercised the power to punish the forgiven as unqualified justice would require, and restoring the forgiven into a normal human relationship with the forgiving community. There is no denying that forgiveness does occur and helps reconciliation. But forgiveness is infrequent and its legitimacy and efficacy as a measure to induce reconciliation is controversial in light of the requirement of justice that forgiveness presupposes. A pragmatic argument could be made that situational acts of forgiveness are desirable for the good they would produce that is superior to the good to be achieved without them. Such an argument will encounter a deontological objection to the effect that the realization of justice cannot be given a value to be quantitatively compared with goods of other sorts. And the nature and structure of the good that forgiven injustice maximizes should be clarified. Granted that a teleological justification of forgiveness is possible, it cannot gainsay the situational contingency of forgiveness or support the view that all injustices should be forgiven, surely not the more radical view that the concept of justice be removed from the conceptual framework for ethics. We are discussing human morality and ethics. Though the theological idea of God's forgiveness of all human transgressions made possible through the God-sent savior's substitutionary suffering of the wages of human sins appeals to a specific community of faith, systems of faith exist that do not share the theology of redemption through substitutionary suffering. Besides, even those whose faith embraces such theology would acknowledge the need for a system of ethics acceptable independently of and even contrary to it.

In the form of ethical reconciliation being recommended the parties to be reconciled are considered equally free and autonomous individuals or

¹ Baha'I Faith, Brahmanism, Christianity, Islam, Confucianism, Ancient Egyptian religion, Hinduism, Jainism, Judaism, Taoism, and Zoroastrianism (www.ReligiousTolerance.org. Ontario Consultants on Religious Tolerance)

collectives with identities they are disposed to preserve, voluntarily coming to terms of peaceful coexistence for reasons of their own the chief among which is a maximum chance for self-preservation with integrity. Before a confrontation and agreement on commonly binding rules of justice among the adherents of competing ethical systems, in an ethical “state of nature,” so to speak, the concept of justice or injustice has no clear application, hence no transgression or transgressor to forgive. A reflection on the hearing of testimonies from victims of human rights abuse under the apartheid regime of South Africa and from the perpetrators of such abuse who have applied for forgiveness and the granting of amnesty to some in the proceedings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission the post-apartheid government established shows that such a ritual was possible because of the acceptance by the participants of relevant ethical and procedural principles backed by the political authority. A natural morality or an eternal divine morality may be invoked but such morality would be an element of one of the conflicting frameworks needing reconciliation.

Closing Word

We may still optimistically affirm that all humans are moral, in a parlance to which our essentialist legacy habituates us. But this statement should not be allowed to lure us into thinking that we already share the same identity and the same correlated morality. Humans have diverse moralities even if they may be thought universally valid and binding by their advocates. A correct general description of the human condition is that humans are *diversely moral* but in such a way that they still are open to changes in their subjective identities and ethics through a process of adjusting to emerging conditions of their worldly existence. But the shape and content of an ethics of harmony cannot be foretold with certainty, let alone knowable a priori. The emergence of a uniform global ethics is not only highly unlikely but even undesirable because it might impoverish the spiritual and cultural life of people with a will to express their creativity. The building of an ethics of maximum harmony of the diverse allowing enriching cultural diversity is the reasonable goal of ethical globalization. Imagination, empathy and pragmatic thinking in the context of inter-systemic interaction rather than intra-systemic reflection and revision will more likely motivate acceptance of such harmony. Such interaction must be a holistic process comprehending but not reducible to intellectual endeavors, affective responses, acts of will as well as surd contingencies. A humane globe is under construction without a completed blueprint as the humaneness of its dwellers, as hoped, is on continuous growth.

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CHAPTER FOUR

Freud and Aristotle Read Sophocles' Oedipus: The Dramatic and Philosophical Roots of Psychoanalysis

Barbara Lekatsas

Catharsis: Constructing the Pleasure of Pain

The point which I desire to note is that in all of us, even in good men, there is a lawless and wild beast nature, which peers out in sleep. —Plato, Republic

We take delight in viewing the most accurate possible images of objects which in themselves cause distress when we see them (e.g. the shapes of the lowest species of animals and corpses). The reason for this is that understanding is extremely pleasant, not just for philosophers but for others too in the same way, despite their limited capacity for it. This is the reason why people take delight in seeing images; what happens is that as they view them they come to understand and work out what each thing is. —Aristotle, Poetics

Freud contrasted Plato's view of dreams to the Roman Emperor who put a subject to death for dreaming he assassinated his Emperor. "Plato, on the contrary," he writes approvingly in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, "thought the best men are those who only *dream* what other men *do* in their waking life."¹ Dreams reveal and partially release pent-up often unmet desires. Thus while the goal of sleep is to forget, the whole thrust of dreaming is to remember.² The same repression or *enkrateia* (restraint, self-control), so crucial a goal in the work of Plato and Aristotle and indeed a cornerstone of the classical canon, finds a novel elaboration in Freud's work as the pressure cooker out of which not only dreams emerge but art itself. Plato ditches poetry in the end for philosophy (*sophrosyne*), yet it is Aristotle who recovers the cathartic function of poetry in his *Poetics*, seeing in tragedy in general and in Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* in particular, a highly paradigmatic genre in which emotions are purged and turned to insight. This process of reversal, so necessary to dramatic

¹ Freud 2010, 95

² For some of the latest findings concerning the function of sleep, see Carl Zimmer's article, "The Purpose of Sleep? To Forget," *New York Times*, February 2, 2017.³ Plato 1973, 47

art, would become the basis of the structure of psychoanalysis. Oedipus in fact would become the narrative upon which Freud would build his compelling narrative of human destiny.

Plato's tyrannical man in Book IX of *The Republic* is a slave of his passions. He suffers the worst fears, trusts no one, gives in to paranoid delusions and excessive exercise of power to conceal his weakness. Excessiveness like over-reaching leads to a collapse both moral and physical. Freud seems to admire how emotions are sublimated by the meticulous Plato, who nonetheless shows us the seductive young men that test one's resolve like Phaedrus. Poetry's arousal of the emotions is dangerous for individuals and for the State, unlike philosophy which switches the mind's attention to forms as opposed to flesh and feeling. The forms dehumanize and idealize the bodies, setting up new ways to experience sexuality within aesthetic limits and formal rituals. Nonetheless, even in Plato, a theory like *catharsis* gets some support in *Phaedrus* and its defense of mania, "Madness comes from God," says Socrates," whereas "sober sense is merely human."¹ Not only are divine manias, "given to man for his greatest happiness," but pathological mania is seen as curative: "When ancient sins have given rise to severe maladies and troubles which have afflicted the members of certain families, madness has appeared among them and by breaking forth into prophecy has brought relief...by recourse to prayer and worship. It has discovered in rites of purification and initiation a way to make the sufferer well."² Yet this defense of mania is only the prelude. The remainder of the dialogue argues for the morphing of such a power, akin to the transformation of the Furies into the Eumenides, through what Freud would term a cathexis or displacement of the worship of beauty to the love of knowledge, manifested through a rhetoric that is sufficiently sturdy to reveal universal truths.

In *The Republic*, he even admits to the pleasure of imitation, the main feature of the art of poetry, but Plato deems it dangerous, particularly in tragedy with its ability to escalate the emotions and possibly encourage wrong actions for dramatic affect. In Book III, he attacks the "unscrupulous" character "ready to imitate anything...the roll of thunder, the noise of wind and hail, the creaking of wheels and pulleys ...he will bark like a dog, bleat like a sheep, or crow like a cock..."³ He returns to the topic in Book X, dismissing the tragic poets and imitation as something "thrice removed from the truth."⁴ It is hypothesized that Aristotle wrote the *Poetics* as a response to Plato's view of poetry in *The Republic*. "Tragedy" he argues effects "through pity and fear the purification of such emotions."⁵ As Maria Grazia Turri writes in a paper entitled, "Transference and katharsis, Freud to Aristotle," "the Platonic overarching condemnation of *mimesis* creates a precedent he cannot ignore. He

¹ Plato 1973, 47

² Plato 1973, 48

³ Plato 1991, 98

⁴ Plato 1991, 371

⁵ Aristotle 1996, 10

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hence counter-argues that the link between pleasure and *mimesis* constitutes one of the pillars on which the much celebrated art of the poet stands, which in no way alienates us from truth.”¹ Turri makes a connection between *mimesis* and psychoanalytic transference, where the patient reenacts for the analyst who is his audience, a scene from the past in order to purge it.² Poetry however is a source of pleasure, using meter, pattern, stark analogies that regulate the flow of feeling expressed, even when the feeling is painful, the singing of it converts it to pleasure and there is a desire to repeat the feeling by reenactment (the way one might repeat recitation of a favorite poem or sing a favorite song). Art can regulate or exacerbate the passions.

Plato and Aristotle can both be proven right in their views. Not all imitations are equal. There are real criminals that enact crimes inspired by fictional characters. In his essay, “The Creative Writer and Day Dreaming,” Freud observes, “the true *ars poetica* lies in the technique by which he [the writer] overcomes our repulsion...bribes us with the purely formal—that is aesthetic bonus of pleasure...and the real enjoyment of a literary work derives from the relaxation of tensions in our minds.”³ This tension or “too-muchness,” as Jonathan Lear patiently and brilliantly outlines in *Happiness, Death, and the Remainder of Life*, is at the epicenter of Aristotle’s and Freud’s thought:

...there are two distinct senses in which *life is too much*...life is lived in conditions of tension. For the mind to discharge all its tension, to achieve a complete unpressured state, is precisely what it is for it to die. This was Freud’s structural insight in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*...we are always living under pressure...⁴

This *too-muchness*, a consequence of the way we receive stimuli, breaks through the protective shield that regulates the flow of stimuli through neural networks, jamming the discharge, creating a mental activity that is frenzied but also static (repetition-compulsion), making Freud override his attachment to the pleasure principle by noting how painful scenes are reenacted more powerfully than pleasurable ones, resulting in his formulation of a death drive.⁵ Happiness is elusive at best. Lear notes that even Aristotle views the virtuous life in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, as “secondary at best,” as conducive to happiness; and the contemplative life, even though superior, as ultimately unattainable (available only to the gods). Both *happiness* and the *death instinct*, Lear suggests, are “enigmatic signifiers” or “beyonds” that create unsatisfactory teleologies, glossing over the “breaks” or disruptions in the psychic system. The goal of happiness, he points out, creates its own inevitable stresses overloading the mind’s neural network. These “complicated” neural

¹ Turri 2015, 381

² Turri 2015, 382

³ Freud 2003, 33

⁴ Lear 2001, 109

⁵ Freud 1989, 24

connections, “from an economic point of view, tend to diffuse energy across the system. The energy becomes ‘bound’ in the system...the mind is to a significant extent an apparatus for diffusing or discharging energy. The pleasure principle equates an increase in tension within the system with pain, a decrease with pleasure....Energy is diffused throughout the neural network... even though the overall tendency of the system is toward discharge...the mind is always and everywhere working under tension.¹The dramatic model created by Freud for psychoanalysis is evident in its Aristotelian connection from the start, when Freud and Breuer announce their first psychoanalytic treatment as “the cathartic method.” Freud had read his uncle Jacob Bernays’ book, *On Catharsis: From fundamentals of Aristotle’s lost essay on the “Effect of Tragedy”* (1857), which argued that Aristotle based his view of catharsis on a medical model and emphasized catharsis as cleansing or purgation or drawing off of excess. Freud’s essay, *Psychopathic Characters on the Stage* (1905), begins by citing Aristotle but also highlights the pleasure of catharsis:

If the function of the drama, as has been assumed since Aristotle, is to excite pity and fear, and thus bring about a 'catharsis of the emotions,' we may describe this same purpose a little more fully if we say that the question is one of opening up sources of pleasure and enjoyment from within the sphere of life... the enjoyment resulting there corresponds on the one hand to the relief produced by their free discharge, and on the other, very likely, to the concomitant sexual stimulation which, one may suppose, occurs as a byproduct of every emotional excitation and supplies the subject with that feeling of a heightening of his psychic level.²

Art like child’s play enables one to turn loss and suffering into pleasure, yet the roadway to catharsis is not certain, repression often fails to arrest the flood of emotional energy “that overwhelms the mind’s defenses.” Lear suggests we view Aristotle and Freud without teleology and view the “break” that arrests the flow of psychic energy as a “self-disruption,” indicating that “the mind lives in a condition of excess.”³ The break, whether a psychotic break or alternately a lucky break (a moment of unbidden joy), creates a rip in the “determinate structure.” Lear as a psychoanalyst sees the possibility for happiness in chance, in the eruption of an indeterminate structure (much like the surrealists, who saw in chance, to quote André Breton, “a life of presence, nothing but presence”: the propitious side of fate, rather than the snare of the past).⁴

In his essay, “Freud without Oedipus: The Cognitive Unconscious,” Alfred Tauber takes stock of recent findings regarding cognition and notes that the “neuronal sequence follows two tributaries.” Consciousness, as he notes “is a

¹ Lear 2001, 70

² Freud 1960, 144

³ Lear 2001, 112

⁴ Breton 1948, 44-46

fragment, a quality of the mind whose ontological basis resides in the unconscious substratum” and “mental functioning occurs on parallel tracks.”¹

Consciousness is simply the tip of the iceberg. As he adds, “putting aside Freudian stratagems and mechanisms, contemporary studies have provided a window into the prominence of unconscious thinking, and from the perspective of the cognitivist paradigm, the Doppelgänger, unburdened by Freudian theory, has emerged in its complex array.”² In *The Uncanny*, where Freud examines the double as the most prominent manifestation of uncanniness, he observes in a manner similar to Aristotle that human beings desire to experience not only beauty but terror in their artistic enjoyment. “Aesthetics is “not restricted to the theory of beauty but qualities of our feeling.”³ Yet the sensation of terror or eeriness usually evoking an estrangement or disorientation inside the self is triggered by something that was once “familiar.”⁴ The *Heimlich* (familiar, homey) linked etymologically to the *Unheimlich* (Uncanny) “applies to everything that was intended to remain secret, hidden away, and has come into the open.”⁵ This is another way of framing Aristotle’s Reversal and Recognition double-punch. Dramatic structure then externalizes the mind’s own bifurcated tributaries and their dialogical structure.

Sophocles’ Oedipus: Between Aristotle and Freud

But I came, Oedipus, who knew nothing and I stopped her [the Sphynx]. I solved the riddle by my wit alone. Mine was no knowledge got from birds.
—Sophocles, *Oedipus the King*

All human beings by nature desire knowledge— Aristotle, *Metaphysics*

The action of the play [Oedipus the King] consists in nothing other than the process of revealing, with cunning delays and ever-mounting excitement—a process that can be likened to the work of psychoanalysis...His destiny moves us only because it might have been ours—because the oracle laid the same curse upon us before our birth as upon him. —Freud, *Interpretation of Dreams*

In the section of the *Poetics* dealing with the species of the plot, Aristotle first introduces Sophocles’ *Oedipus the King*, as a fine example of two elements of the plot, *Reversal* and *Recognition*: “Recognition is best when it occurs simultaneously with a reversal, like the one in *Oedipus*.”⁶ The third

¹ Tauber 2013, 235

² Tauber 2013, 235

³ Freud 2003, 123

⁴ Freud 2003, 133

⁵ Freud 2003, 132

⁶ Aristotle 1996, 18-19

element of the plot, suffering is “an action that involves destruction or pain (e.g. deaths in full view, extreme agony, woundings and so on).”¹ The goal of tragedy is the evocation of pity and fear primarily through the plot, “anyone who hears the events which occur shudders and feels pity at what happens; this is how someone would react on hearing the plot of the Oedipus.”² Aristotle points out that the events of tragedy “are concerned with interactions between people who are closely connected,” “a limited number of families,” “those house-holds in which this kind of suffering has come about.”³ The family, in fact, royal or not, is the ideal unit for the development of tragedy and psychoanalysis: In both so much of the plot is based on buried disappointments or crimes and the manner of their disclosure. The double self is formed of a surplus of memories. Repressed family secrets which accrue ghosts from the archives of the mind, create images of longing or rage, which even masked in dreams have the capacity to stir emotion, ready to pounce when least expected. In the case of Oedipus, while the ancestral scars reach back to Europa’s abduction by Zeus (in the form of a bull) and her Phoenician family’s search for her, it is the curse of Pelops on Laius that determines his destiny. This curse was the result of Laius raping the son of Pelops, in whose court, he received refuge. Pelops lays a curse on Laius that he be murdered by his own son. Laius’ crime ends his stay with Pelops, brings him back to Thebes to assume the crown of his father, Labdacus, who died young, and also to replace his uncle and guardian, the regent, Lycus, who has been murdered in a revenge-related crime. These are the immediately preceding crimes, extending back to his father and grandfather, yet crimes extend even further back to the violations of the gods themselves. Oedipus’ divine lineage is rarely mentioned in the interpretation of the play. The finale of the *Oedipus* trilogy, *Oedipus at Colonus* restores his divine origins, as he gains the protection of the god (Apollo) who has hunted him down but also purified him of his sin. The whole of the trilogy moves toward Oedipus’ punishment and expiation, thus setting up the structure, as well, for an echoing catharsis of the audience.

From the first line of Sophocles’ play, Oedipus refers to his plague-ridden Theban citizens as “the young sons and daughters of old Cadmus”⁴ unaware at the outset of the play of his own blood-relation to his Phoenician ancestor. Cadmus, his great-great-great grandfather, led by Apollo to found Thebes by first killing the dragon that protects the spring of Ares. At Athena’s prompting, he sows the dragon’s teeth in the earth. Warriors spring up, the *Spartoi* (“sown men”) who begin to fight each other, five surviving (Elchion, Oudaeus, Chthonius, Hyperenor, Pelorus). Cadmus admits them into Thebes as founding

¹ Aristotle 1996, 19

² Aristotle 1996, 22

³ Aristotle 1996, 23

⁴ Sophocles 1991, 111

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families, creates the Cadmeia to atone for killing the sacred dragon by serving eight years as the slave of Ares.¹

Laius marries Jocasta mindful of the curse that he will be murdered by his son and has no sex with her, except in a moment of inattention. Laius and Jocasta leave a surrogate to get rid of the unwanted infant but he saves him instead, triggering the eventual “return of the repressed” and fulfillment of the prophecy. Oedipus barely remembers his infancy but it is inscribed in his name, “swollen-footed,” in his feet, once pierced through with a stake. When the herdsman finally discloses the full deed in a terse interrogation by Oedipus, Oedipus asks, “She was so hard—its mother?” “Aye, through fear,” he responds.”²

He stumbles upon Thebes, the riddling Sphynx, who gives him a riddle about feet and legs that condenses the fate of human beings to a day’s crawl, walk, limp: a narrative of human dependence. The Sphynx dies, Jocasta, the repository of secrets, becomes his wife. Oedipus evolves into the exemplary king his father Laius wasn’t and yet the curse of Pelops on Laius for raping his son, Chrisippus, has cast its long shadow. The past history has left its indelible mark. Fate emerges as the hidden past bleeding into the present.

According to Freud, the double is manifested in the compulsion to repeat, an unconscious drive that “would otherwise seem quite harmless,” which turns unintended repetition into “the idea of the fateful and inescapable, when we should normally speak of chance.”³ The uncanny derives from repressed complexes.”⁴ In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, he notes that the instincts are determined by heredity and tend “toward the restoration of an earlier state of things.”⁵ He writes, “In the last resort, what has left its mark on the development of organisms must be the history of the earth we live in.... Every imprint is “stored for further repetition” and despite the appearance of ‘progress’, the instincts are “merely seeking to reach an ancient goal by paths alike old and new.”⁶ The original audience of *Oedipus* knew “the earlier state of things,” concerning his story. The family tree digs down to the roots: “Oedipus, son of Laius, son of Labdacus, son of Polydoros, son of Cadmus.”⁷ The lineage is given directly in *Oedipus the King*, at the beginning of the play, establishing in fact, a family history in shorthand. At the conclusion of the play, he nostalgically recalls his foster-father, Polybus, as the full weight of his unintended crimes come crashing down on him, momentarily recalling a destiny that might have been: “O Polybus and Corinth and the house that I

¹ The story duplicates the seizure of the shrine at Delphi by Apollo and his servitude for a year to King Admetus for killing Pytho, the sacred snake guarding the shrine of Gaia. Upon his return, Apollo set up the Pythian games.

² Sophocles 1991, 163.

³ Freud 2003, 144-145

⁴ Freud 2003, 158

⁵ Freud 1989, 44

⁶ Freud 1989, 44-45

⁷ Sophocles 1991, 119-121

used to call my father's—what fairness you were nurse to, and what foulness festered beneath.”¹

What can we make of this family narrative that so strangely mirrors the antics of the gods themselves—Abusive parents, absent fathers, rapists—and these are the heroes, the founders of cities. Oedipus' inheritance is steeped in violation and power struggle: It is handed down from the gods themselves who dramatize the “Oedipal complex”: Cronos castrating Uranus, attempting to devour his own children, being usurped by Zeus, in turn. The power struggle, reflected also in Babylonian and Egyptian creation myths, relates a universal tale of rivalry between generations and clans and siblings, between humans and the earth itself. Oedipus is guilty before even being born.

From the outset of Oedipus' encounter with Tiresias, then with Creon, the Chorus consistently advises him to maintain his cool, to be more rational. Tiresias, too, reminds him of the hidden connection between him and Laius in his uncontrollable temper. Jocasta attempts to curtail his efforts to pursue his investigation, even when he admiringly agrees that she “speaks so well,” when she tells him that in this life “chance is all and it is best to live lightly.”² There are no witnesses to his crime, only his own knowledge of it. As Hegel observes, admission of guilt for Oedipus “is a point of honor.” He has “no desire to avoid the blame for deeds done unintentionally.”³

One speaks of fate as “blind,” yet the the brain with its many folds alternately conceals and reveals patterns of intention. Apollo gives Oedipus blinding oracular insight about the possibilities and limits of knowledge and happiness: “What man, what man on earth wins more of happiness than a seeming then after that turning away?...Inasmuch as he shot his bolt beyond the others and won a happiness complete...But now whose tale is more miserable?”⁴ Sophocles' play was performed around 427 BCE. The Peloponnesian War, which was to last 27 years, broke out in 431 BCE, followed by the plague which decimated Athens and other parts of Greece in 430 BCE. Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* won second place. Robin Mitchell-Boyask suggests in “Plague and Theater in Ancient Athens,” that the play's reference to plague-ridden Thebes might have been too close for comfort for the Athenians (who would install a sanctuary to the healing god, Asclepius by 420 BCE).⁵

Aristotle and Freud who “shot [their] bolt beyond the others,” share some of the fate of those that rid humanity of the “riddling Sphynx.” Aristotle fled Athens repeatedly because of anti-Macedonian sentiment, fleeing one final time before he died to Chalcis (one year after Alexander's death in 322 BCE), as charges of impiety were being brought against him, not wishing as he famously said to give the Athenians another opportunity “to sin against

¹ Sophocles 1991, 170.

² Sophocles 1991, 152

³ Paolucci 1963, xxvii

⁴ Sophocles 1991, 164

⁵ Mitchell-Boyask 2009, 374

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philosophy” (the fate of Socrates undeniably on his mind). Freud’s family was shaped geographically by anti-Semitism: he traced their persecution and flight as far back as the fourteenth or fifteenth century, when his father’s family settled in Cologne, then fled in the course of the nineteenth century, migrated back from Lithuania to Galicia into German Austria.¹ In the last year of his life, similarly to Aristotle, he was forced to flee to England as the Nazis closed in on his family. Four of his five sisters died in concentration camps in 1942. Political and religious persecution was compounded by the danger Aristotle’s and Freud’s ideas presented to various establishments.

Conclusion

In the dramatic dialogue Freud devised for psychoanalysis, there is what Aristotle terms “a determinate structure,”² where parts submit to unity. In psychoanalysis as well, an inner pattern is revealed. The initial problem Plato posed on the bad moral effect of the art of tragedy in its ability to arouse lawless passions and imitation of the worst kind, is corrected by Aristotle who recognizes the civic necessity of drama as it is associated with Dionysus, god of the vine,³ yet also Apollo, the god of light and prophecy. Revelry and the celebration of fertility (comedy) is counterbalanced by tragedy and its sacred austerity, where the hero serves as “scapegoat.” The plot of *Oedipus the King* presents the audience with a series of interrogations to discover a crime committed long ago. The sexual and violent subtext of *Oedipus* cannot be ignored yet it is not dramatized. There are no scenes of Oedipus in bed with Jocasta or the self-defense murder of his father at the crossroads, yet the plague on the land has destroyed procreation. Fertility and generation have come to a halt for all living things in Thebes. The desire to uncover the past, to *know*, is what links the play of Sophocles to Aristotle’s *Poetics* and to Freud’s *Interpretations of Dreams* and other works. The solving of the riddle of identity and the defeat of the riddling Sphinx is what characterizes Oedipus’ first heroic act. The second more heroic act is to face his hidden but out there in the broad daylight double. In this inversion, Oedipus the seeker of knowledge reclaims himself, as Oedipus the murderer, the sinner chosen to suffer for being godlike in his incest is purified through suffering, blinding and finally death. Freud returned to Aristotle and Sophocles in his search for universals, placing emotions squarely within the domain of intellectual activity, much like poetry and art, that can be interpreted using analytic tools. He emphasized the importance of making sense of the haunting resonance of one’s personal dramas by seeing their pattern and cause. In his patients, in himself,

¹ Freud 1989, 6

² Aristotle 1996, 31

³ Dionysus is the son of Semele, daughter of Cadmus and the great-great grand-aunt of Oedipus, making Zeus as well, his great-great grand uncle. Apollo, as the son of Zeus, is also related to Oedipus on his father’s side.

he noticed concealed parallels to Sophocles' "tragedy of destiny." As such, Oedipus' tragedy became paradigmatic not only of the fate of royal families, but of all families and their dramas, so vividly experienced in dreams with heightened emotional charge, but in art, as well, where one is allowed to give vent to all the paradoxes of the human experience. But tragedy reveals, as well, the ravages of actions based on desire for power and revenge and condemns over-confidence. It is cathartic because we can identify and rehearse what we might have done and satisfying in its conversion of dumb dread into revelation. As for Sophocles, nothing eclipses his contribution in the shaping of tragedy and the sober universal subjects brought into crisis in his plays. His heroes, whether Oedipus or Antigone, above all wish to be true to themselves and face their destiny with steely courage. To transform pain into knowledge and blind fate into purposeful action makes the examined life worth living. Aristotle was clever not to condemn passion, seeing it as an intrinsic form of knowledge, but the rider he adds in his *Poetics* demands analysis of the action and its form. It is this synthesis of approach that turns passion into reflection and action into insight, whether in tragedy, philosophy or psychoanalysis.

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CHAPTER FIVE

Chrysippus' Logic and Wason's Selection Task

Miguel López-Astorga

Introduction

In the last half century, Wason's selection task (Wason, 1966, 1968) has been an actual problem for cognitive science. In fact, it is still a real problem, since today several opposite psychological theories arguing against each other claim that their explanation is the approach most consistent with the habitual experimental results of that task. The main difficulty of the task is that, while it is a simple logical exercise of conditional reasoning, individuals tend to give incorrect answers when they try to solve it. But the key point is that this is not always so. Only some versions often provide bad results. Other versions, however, are usually executed in an optimal way. In particular, the abstract versions more or less akin to those used by Wason (1966, 1968) are the ones in which people tend to make more mistakes. In the versions with thematic content, on the contrary, the results are many times better.

Nevertheless, the greatest unclear aspect is that the use of thematic content does not guarantee that the task will be well executed. The literature of cognitive science reveals that only certain thematic contents improve the results. Because of this, as indicated, several theories have arisen with the goal of accounting for these phenomena. But, as also said, the discussion continues and it cannot be stated that we have a solution for these problems at present.

In this paper, I will try to show that it is not necessary to resort to any of those theories to explain the problems linked to Wason's selection task (from now on, WST). The bases to solve them were already in the fragments on Stoic logic in general and the logical system proposed by Chrysippus of Soli in particular that are kept. In this way, my hypothesis is that the logical tools that can be attributed to Chrysippus' philosophy offer the keys necessary to understand the habitual results of the different versions of WST.

To prove that, firstly, I will explain what exactly WST is and why it can be considered to be a cognitive problem. Secondly, I will refer to the essential elements of Chrysippus' logic that must be taken into account to face the difficulties linked to that task. Thus, finally, I will show how Chrysippus' system is able to explain the usual results of both the abstract and the thematic versions of the task. So, I begin by describing the general characteristics of WST and its logical problems.

The Initial Abstract Versions of WST

Many descriptions of the abstract versions of the task are to be found in the literature of cognitive science. Nonetheless, following texts such as those of Wason (1966, 1968) and other more recent papers such as, for example, those of López-Astorga (2008, 2014a), it can be said that its basic structure and its main difficulties are in general those that I will describe in this section.

Roughly, the initial versions consist of four cards with a letter on one of their sides and a number on their other face. Usually, the first card shows a vowel, the second one a consonant, the third one an even number, and the last one an uneven number. Thus, participants know that, on the hidden side of the first card, there is a number, on the other face of the second card, there is also a number, on the hidden face of the third one, there is a letter, and on the other side of the fourth one, there is a letter too. However, they cannot see the hidden faces.

In addition, a conditional sentence that is taken as a rule appears under the cards. It provides something similar to this one:

If a card has a vowel on one of its faces, then there is an even number on its other face.

In this way, participants are asked for their opinion on which card(s) need(s) to be turned if it is wished to check whether or not the rule is correct.

According to standard logic, the appropriate response is obvious. Given that the rule is a conditional, its logical form is as follows:

$p \rightarrow q$

Where ‘ \rightarrow ’ is the conditional symbol, ‘p’ stands for ‘vowel’ and ‘q’ represents ‘even number.’

But, if this is so, it can also be assumed that $\neg p$ (where ‘ \neg ’ refers to the logical denial) corresponds to ‘consonant’ and $\neg q$ to ‘uneven number.’ Therefore, to select the vowel (p) means to use *Modus Ponendo Ponens* ($p \rightarrow q, p / \text{ergo } q$), a rule attributed to Chrysippus of Soli by Diogenes Laërtius (*Vitae Philosophorum* 7, 80) and that is also absolutely correct in standard logic. On the contrary, to choose the consonant ($\neg p$) is only to make the denying the antecedent fallacy ($p \rightarrow q, \neg p / \text{ergo } \neg q$). On the other hand, if the even number (q) is elected, that is to make another fallacy, the affirming the consequent fallacy ($p \rightarrow q, q / \text{ergo } p$). Nonetheless, to select the uneven number ($\neg q$) is to use another rule correct in standard logic and assigned to Chrysippus by Diogenes (*Vitae Philosophorum* 7, 80): *Modus Tollendo Tollens* ($p \rightarrow q, \neg q / \text{ergo } \neg p$). So, the correct answer is clear: it is necessary to choose the vowel (p) and the uneven number ($\neg q$), since they correspond to schemata sound in standard logic. However, it is wrong to select the consonant ($\neg p$) or the even number (q), because to do that is to make a fallacy.

But this is not what happens when a group of participants executes selection task. Habitually, individuals select the vowel and the even number, or, albeit at a lower rate, just the vowel. Of course, this circumstance causes a problem, since it can be thought that human beings do not reason (or do not always reason) logically (in the sense that they do not appear to resort to the formal schemata of standard logic or natural deduction calculi such as that of Gentzen, 1935). Indeed, if people reasoned in accordance with standard logic, they would use *Modus Ponendo Ponens* (from now on, MPP) and *Modus Tollendo Tollens* (from now on, MTT), they would not make any fallacy, and they hence would give the correct answer to WST. There is no doubt that this requires an explanation, but it is not the only problem. As said, there are versions of the task that individuals do execute adequately.

The Thematic Versions of WST

As also mentioned, true, there are versions of WST that provide optimal results. In general, they are versions with thematic content and in which there is a context enabling to better understand the sense of the conditional. Sometimes even a story is told before explaining what must be done. However, in spite of these differences, the logical structure of these versions continue to be the same: the rule is a conditional, both MPP and MTT need to be applied, and both the denying the antecedent fallacy and the affirming the consequent fallacy need to be avoided.

An example is to be found in Fiddick, Cosmides, and Tooby (2000). In their paper, these authors include an experimental condition describing a scenario in which a farmer has many potatoes and decides to go to a neighboring village to sell some of them. When he comes to the village, four people say to him:

“If you give me some potatoes, then I will give you some corn” (Fiddick et al., 2000, p. 28).

Thus, one face the cards indicates whether or not the farmer gave a particular individual some potatoes, and the other side of them shows whether or not the same particular individual gave the farmer some corn. In this way, what can be read on the visible sides of the cards is as follows:

- “You gave this person potatoes” (Fiddick et al., 2000, p. 28).
- “You gave this person nothing” (Fiddick et al., 2000, p. 28).
- “This person gave you corn” (Fiddick et al., 2000, p. 28).
- “This person gave you nothing” (Fiddick et al., 2000, p. 28).

As it can be noted, despite the story told in the beginning, the logical structure of this version of the task is essentially the same as that of the initial abstract versions. Nonetheless, participants obtained very good results when

executed it (a critical analysis of versions of WST similar to this one can be found, e.g., in López-Astorga, 2015a).

A similar example is that of Cosmides (1989) referring to the Kaluames and their tattoos. In this case, the task is also presented by means of a story. In particular, it is told that, when a Kaluame man gets married, he gets a tattoo on his face too. The reason is that cassava root (an aphrodisiac) is forbidden for single men, and married men need to be easily identified. Thus, the rule is now the following:

“If a man eats cassava root, then he must have a tattoo on his face”
(Cosmides, 1989, p. 264).

Obviously, in this version the cards refer to individuals eating cassava root or another food and individuals with or without facial tattoos. But what is interesting is that, in this version, most participants tended to select the correct cards as well (a critical analysis of versions of WST similar to this one can be found, e.g., in López-Astorga, 2014b).

However, as said, the thematic content does not ensure that the task can be carried out without errors. An example of thematic task that is not usually solved correctly is a version called ‘the weather task’ and that includes a rule such as this one:

“If it’s a weekday, then the sun is shining” (Fiddick and Erlich, 2010, p. 135).

And, evidently, the cards of this version refer to days, one of their faces indicates whether or not that day is a weekday, and the other side informs whether or not the sun is shining that same day.

The problem is that, as mentioned, in versions such as this one, the results are often bad. Therefore, an explanation about what a version actually needs to have to be correctly executed is required, and several theories have tried to give that explanation. For example, according to the account of the social contracts theory (e.g., Cosmides, 1989; Fiddick et al., 2000; Fiddick and Erlich, 2010), the human mind has adaptive mechanisms corresponding to evolved rules that regulate the exchange relationships (or social contracts) between human beings. People do not necessarily reason following standard logic and the versions of WST that are often correctly solved are those that refer to situations in which a social exchange is described, which triggers the action of the mentioned evolved rules. Thus, the idea is that there are specific domains in which certain mental mechanisms can be used. Nevertheless, such mechanisms cannot be used in other mental domains.

Another framework is the one that holds the idea that there is a deontic logic of general domain leading human reasoning (e.g., Cheng and Holyoak, 1985, 1989). Following this approach, the versions of WST that cause good results are not simply those related to exchange situations. Any situation in which a general deontic scenario is presented should also lead one to the

selection of the adequate cards.

A different account is that proposed by the mental models theory (e.g., Byrne and Johnson-Laird, 2009; Johnson-Laird, 2006, 2015; Oakhill and Garnham, 1996). This theory provides that reasoning is fundamentally semantic and that the human inferential activity consists of, basically, comparing the different semantic possibilities (or models) corresponding to propositions. What happens is that individuals are not always able to identify all of the possibilities to which a particular proposition refer, and this is the cause why people sometimes make certain mistakes when they are reasoning. In this way, according to the mental models theory, the versions of WST that are usually executed in a correct way by individuals are those whose rule has a thematic content such that all of the semantic possibilities corresponding to it can be easily detected.

Obviously, these three theories could be explained in more details here, and, in addition, other theoretical frameworks addressing WST could be mentioned as well. Nonetheless, the main aim of this paper is not a systematic exposition of the theories trying to account for WST. My only goal is to show that a logic as ancient as that of Chrysippus of Soli can also solve its problems. For this reason, I merely indicate that studies about the mentioned three theories and the way in which they deal, or can deal, with WST are to be found, for example, in papers such as those of López-Astorga (2014a, 2014b, 2015a). And, thus, I continue to expose the aspects of Chrysippus' logic that it is necessary to take into account to understand what occurs in the different versions of the task.

Chrysippus' Account on the Conditional

It is well known that Chrysippus of Soli does not interpret the conditional as modern logic does. There is information on this issue in different texts, some of them corresponding to primary sources (e.g., Cicero, *De Fato* 12; Diogenes Laërtius, *Vitae Philosophorum* 7, 73; Sextus Empiricus, *Pyrrhoniae Hypotyposes* 2, 111) and other coming from secondary literature (e.g., Barnes, Bobzien, and Mignucci, 2008, p. 107; Gould, 1970, p. 76; López-Astorga, 2015b, p. 9; Mueller, 1978, p. 20; O'Toole and Jennings, 2004, p. 479). Based on texts such as those ones, it can be said that, as highlighted by O'Toole and Jennings (2004, p. 492), according to Chrysippus of Soli, a *συνάρτησις* (connection) between the *ἡγούμενον* (antecedent) and the *λῆγον* (consequent) was necessary. Without that link or connection, it was not possible to say that a particular proposition was a real *συνημιμένον* (conditional).

It is true that the ancient sources raise certain problems. For example, Sextus Empiricus' passages seem to mean that the words *ὕγιές* (sound) and *ἀληθές* (true) had the same meaning for the Stoics (see, for a discussion, e.g., Mates, 1953, p. 132, or O'Toole and Jennings, 2004, p. 477). But what is important for this paper is that Chrysippus' criterion of the conditional was very different from that held by Philo of Megara, i.e., that assumed by

Gentzen's (1935) calculus and current standard logic. In this way, one of the key words in Chrysippus' account appears to be *μάχεται* (it fights), which refers to the fact that a real (sound-true) conditional can only be so if the contrary of its consequent fights against the antecedent (López-Astorga, 2015b, p. 9; O'Toole and Jennings, 2004, p. 492).

So, without such a relationship between its antecedent and its consequent, any particular conditional is not actually a conditional. And this point is really relevant for the aim of this paper, since, as indicated by López-Astorga, 2015b, pp. 9-10), when this relationship does not exist, MTT cannot be applied.

Indeed, MTT is a problem in contemporary cognitive science. While people usually apply MPP without difficulties, MTT is not always used (e.g., Byrne and Johnson-Laird, 2009; López-Astorga, 2013, 2015b). We can find different explanations of this fact in the literature of cognitive science, but the one that is interesting here is that given by López-Astorga (2015b), since it is based on the Stoic system (or Chrysippus' criterion). According to López-Astorga (2015b, pp. 8-12), Chrysippus' interpretation of the conditional means that $p \rightarrow q$ is only a conditional if, given that the opposite of the consequent must be inconsistent with the antecedent, individuals can note quickly and clearly that $\neg q \rightarrow \neg p$. This is important because not all of conditionals show in an obvious way that, given the denial of the consequent, it is only possible the denial of the antecedent. Of course, $\neg q \rightarrow \neg p$ can be derived from $p \rightarrow q$ in calculi such as that of Gentzen (1935), but, as indicated, the conditional does not have the same characteristics in Stoic logic and in standard logic. In addition, precisely tasks such as WST show that to assume that the human mind works following systems such as Gentzen's (1935) calculus is problematic. So, we cannot expect that people know in a natural way that $\neg q \rightarrow \neg p$ can be inferred from $p \rightarrow q$. The only idea that can be accepted is that, as proposed by Chrysippus of Soli, there are sentences with the word *εἰ* (if) in which that point is clear, and sentences with the same word in which that same point is unclear. From his view, only the former ones are real conditionals, and MTT hence can only be applied appropriately to the former ones.

Note that, if $p \rightarrow q$ leads to $\neg q \rightarrow \neg p$, to draw $\neg p$ from $\neg q$ is really to apply MPP (by taking as premises $\neg q \rightarrow \neg p$ and $\neg q$), which in turn means that an ancient system such as that of Chrysippus has the necessary potential to explain a great problem in cognitive science today: why MPP is almost always easy to apply and MTT is sometimes easy and sometimes hard. The solution is that MTT is only easy when the conditional fulfills Chrysippus' criterion, i.e., when it is clearly understood that $p \rightarrow q$ implies $\neg q \rightarrow \neg p$, and, actually, it consists of an application of MPP to premises such as $\neg q \rightarrow \neg p$ and $\neg q$.

But what is important now is that, as said, according to Diogenes Laërtius, MPP and MTT were identified by Chrysippus of Soli (in fact, they are his only *ἀναπόδεικτοι*, i.e., *indemonstrables*, related to the conditional), that precisely MPP and MTT are the schemata involved in WST, that the usual mistake in that task is not to apply MTT (remember that participants usually select the card corresponding to p and do not elect the card corresponding to $\neg q$), and

that, according to Chrysippus' criterion (which, following O'Toole and Jennings, 2004, p. 484, was assumed by the Old Stoa), MTT can be used only when the conditional is an actual (true-sound) conditional. Based on all of this, it is absolutely obvious why some versions of WST provide good results and other versions are hard to execute. In fact, Chrysippus' criterion allows predicting which versions will be more difficult and which versions will be easier for individuals.

WST and Chrysippus' Logic

If we accept Chrysippus' idea, we must also accept that people can only select the correct cards in the versions of WST whose rule is a real conditional, since they can only use MTT in those versions. Thus, it is evident why the initial abstract versions are so hard for individuals. As mentioned, their rule is usually akin to 'If a card has a vowel on one of its faces, then there is an even number on its other face.' Because the opposite of the consequent is in this case 'uneven number', it is absolutely evident that it is not in conflict with the antecedent. The relationship between the two clauses in these versions is arbitrary, and, from a semantic point of view, there is no link between them. Vowels are neither consistent nor inconsistent with even numbers. Really, the concept of vowel is so different from the concept of even number that they should not be related by means of a conditional. In this way, it is not clear that, if a card has an uneven number on one of its faces, then there is a consonant on its other face ($\neg q \rightarrow \neg p$), and, therefore, MTT cannot be applied.

As far as the version used by Fiddick et al. (2000) described above is concerned, it can be stated that the situation is very different. In this case, the rule was 'If you give me some potatoes, then I will give you some corn,' and, in principle, it can be thought that the problem continues to be the same, as there is no a clear semantic relationship between potatoes and corn, and the fact that not to have corn does not imply not to give potatoes. However, a story was told before knowing the rule. That story built a context, and, in that context, not to have corn does be in conflict with to give potatoes. The farmer wanted to sell his potatoes. So, it is correct to interpret that, if he did not receive anything in return, he did not have to give potatoes, i.e., it is correct to interpret that $\neg q \rightarrow \neg p$. It hence is evident that, according to Chrysippus, this does be a case in which MTT can be applied.

Something similar can be said about the version taken from Cosmides (1989). The rule of this version was 'If a man eats cassava root, then he must have a tattoo on his face.' Again, it seems that the criterion is not fulfilled, since not to have a tattoo is related neither to eating something nor to not eating anything. Nevertheless, in this case there is a precedent story as well, and the story provides that it is not possible not to have a facial tattoo and, at the same time, to eat cassava root, that is, that it is not possible a scenario with p and $\neg q$, i.e., that $\neg q \rightarrow \neg p$. Therefore, it can also be expected that MTT will be used here.

But the last case examined is similar to the first one. True, in that case it is hard to see an inconsistency between the denial of the consequent and the antecedent. As indicated, the rule of that version used by Fiddick and Erlich (2010) was ‘If it’s a weekday, then the sun is shining.’ But the problem here is that there is no a relationship between the concept of ‘weekday’ and the action of the sun. It is absolutely possible that it is weekday and the sun is shining, but it is also so that it is weekday and the sun is not shining. Therefore, the fact that the sun is not shining does not lead one to assume that it is not weekday, and, for this reason, it is also unclear here that $\neg q \rightarrow \neg p$. Obviously, this in turn means that it cannot be expected that MTT is used in this version. Furthermore, unlike the versions coming from Fiddick et al. (2000) and Cosmides (1989) analyzed, in this case, there is no a context providing any kind of connection between the two clauses of the conditional rule.

Of course, it can be argued against my account that it only considers four versions of WST, and that many more versions are to be found in the literature. Nevertheless, I think that the examples examined are illustrative enough, and that it is not difficult to check that the results of all other versions can be explained based on Chrysippus’ criterion too.

Conclusions

An obvious conclusion that can be derived from my arguments is that it is very possible that the ancient philosophies are today more valid than we think, at least in a sense. In this way, it can be interesting to consider the possibility that the solutions to many current problems could have been already given in the past, and, in particular, in the classic antiquity. Thus, it can be thought that many of our difficulties at present are caused by the fact that we sometimes forget to pay attention to frameworks belonging to the philosophical tradition.

In this paper, I have shown a relevant example in this regard. The habitual results of the different versions of WST can be explained by the logical system provided by Chrysippus of Soli without major problems. As mentioned, I have only reviewed some of the versions offered in the literature, and it can be argued that this is a limitation of my study. Nonetheless, in my view, the accounts of the versions selected are clear enough, and the rest of the versions of the literature are, in most of the cases, similar to those analyzed here. So, as also said, it is not hard to confirm that Chrysippus’ interpretation of the conditional is useful to account for the general difficulties of WST.

In fact, the potential of Chrysippus’ logic can lead one to consider it to be a good cognitive tool, which can be used not only to address WST, but also to deal with other problems of current cognitive science. In this way, a suggestive point can be that revealed by López-Astorga (2015b). López-Astorga carries out an analysis of Chrysippus’ *ἀναπόδεικτοι* based on a current cognitive theory on reasoning, the mental logic theory (e.g., Braine and O’Brien, 1998; O’Brien, 2014). Something relevant about his analysis is that he finds

important parallels and commonalities between Stoic logic and the mental logic theory. Thus, López-Astorga (2015b) shows that there are several aspects of Stoic logic that a contemporary approach such as the mental logic theory continues to accept. This clearly means that those aspects continue to be valid, and that it can be thought even that Stoic logic (and therefore Chrysippus' system) can not only explain participants' answers in reasoning tasks, but also predict them. Undoubtedly, further research in this regard would be very interesting, since, as mentioned, the logic proposed by Chrysippus of Soli can be useful to account for, in addition to WST, other cognitive phenomena.

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CHAPTER SIX

On the Critical Dimensions of Marxian Political Economy

Divya Menon

In earlier stages of development the single individual seems to be developed more fully, because he has not yet worked out his relationships in their fullness, or erected them as independent social powers and relations opposite himself. It is as ridiculous to yearn for a return to that original fullness as it is to believe that with this complete emptiness history has come to a standstill.

—Karl Marx, *Grundrisse* (1857–58)¹

In the introductory notebook of the *Grundrisse*, Marx explains his method while analyzing the categories of money and labor—two concepts that well predate modernity, but only in forms yet to fulfill their potential. While the ancient world was familiar with money as a means and medium of exchange, this is still very far from money in its modern role as *the* universal equivalent, the necessary form of appearance of all value, including that of all human labor. Although our capacity for labor can be traced back to the neanderthals, it becomes truly universal only when society has advanced to the degree required for Adam Smith to “throw out every limiting specification of wealth-creating activity.”² The concrete developments of society make abstract categories cognizable: simple concepts like money and labor appear in the fullness of their simplicity only against the backdrop of considerable social and historical progress. For Marx, then, even the most basic philosophical ideas are “a product of historic relations, and possess their full validity only for and within these relations.”³ He begins his analysis of political economy by stressing the

¹ Karl Marx, *Grundrisse* (1857–58), trans. Martin Nicolaus (London: Penguin Books, 1993), 162; original German in *Karl Marx Friedrich Engels Gesamtausgabe (MEGA)* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag Berlin, 1976), II.1.1, 94–95: “Auf frühen Stufen der Entwicklung erscheint das einzelne Individuum voller, weil es eben die Fülle seiner Beziehungen noch nicht herausgearbeitet und als von ihm unabhängige gesellschaftliche Mächte und Verhältnisse sich gegenübergestellt hat. So lächerlich es ist, sich nach jener ursprünglichen Fülle zurückzusehen: so lächerlich ist der Glaube bei jener vollen Entleerung stehnbleiben zu müssen.”

² Marx, *Grundrisse*, 104; *MEGA*, II.1.1, 39: “[E]s war ein ungeheurer Fortschritt von Ad. Smith jede Bestimmtheit der Reichthumzeugenden Thätigkeit fortzuwerfen[.]”

³ Marx, *Grundrisse*, 105; *MEGA*, II.1.1, 40: “Dieß Beispiel der Arbeit zeigt schlagend, wie selbst die abstractesten Kategorien, trotz ihrer Gültigkeit—eben wegen ihrer Abstraction—für alle Epochen, doch in der Bestimmtheit dieser Abstraction selbst ebenso sehr das Product

object-shaping power of the subject—which is to say, society—that is always given, and yet remains ungraspable as such. Every historically generated form of social organization fills its particular manifestations with content belonging to it. But these particulars also retain vestiges of prior forms that, seen in light of the latest, appear natural and meaningful. This is the crux of Marx’s historical materialism as reflected in the statement that the “human anatomy contains a key to the anatomy of the ape.”¹

Marx often reflects on his place within the history of philosophy and, more broadly, the history of social development. His is a critique of the total system and of the various forms that reveal it when comprehended as parts of a whole. This involves approaching the defining social relation of the epoch—that between labor and capital—through the unavoidable detours posed by its manifestations, and also the misapprehensions that attend these. The object of this essay will be to unpack the critical subtext of Marx’s notes on political economy so as to see how, cloaked in the very language of economists and socialists alike, Marx contends that the true content of certain categories constitutes a political task. To this end, I will study the first notebook of the *Grundrisse*, which analyzes the concept of money, as well as the early *Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte* that address the specific implications of production under capitalism.

The *Grundrisse* was written neither as a political pamphlet nor as a publishable tract for the purpose of educating others, but rather as an attempt by Marx to clarify for himself the workings of a new and unprecedented social system. Like the Paris manuscripts of 1844, these London notebooks show how Marx was thinking about the concepts that define bourgeois production in modernity. Even what he calls the “aesthetic semblance” of a return to nature, like what we find with utopian characters like Robinson Crusoe, needs to be understood in terms of the society of free competition. The individual capable of self-determination emerges as a promise in modernity against the backdrop of purposive social development. Neither mere appropriation nor an effect of private property, production can have no general preconditions but only historical ones.² The *Manuskripte*, written four years before the revolutions of 1848 and over a decade before the *Grundrisse*, help frame what Marx means by the term “production.” This collection of notes studies the categories of political economy in order to reveal them for what they have become in the mid-nineteenth century amid the increasing impoverishment of the worker who

historischer Verhältnisse sind und ihre Vollgültigkeit nur für und innerhalb dieser Verhältnisse besitzen.”

¹ Marx, *Grundrisse*, 105; *MEGA*, II.1.1, 40: “Die Anatomie des Menschen ist ein Schlüssel zur Anatomie des Affen.”

² Marx is critiquing definitions of production that conceive of it as either ahistorical (all production is appropriation) or narrowly bourgeois (all production stems from private property).

“sinks to the level of commodities and becomes indeed the most wretched of commodities.”¹

For Marx, both bourgeois economists and utopian socialists seem unable to grasp this new reality, in that they treat social laws as either eternal and immutable, or as external and dispensable, respectively. Rather than taking the plight of the worker as a given, or proposing a solution from beyond the bounds of capitalism, Marx sees the self-overcoming indicated by bourgeois production not as any pre-determined end, but rather as something to be brought about politically. Perhaps the political point is only implicit in this early text, which is often attributed to the “humanist” Marx, as opposed to the “political” Marx of four years later, and the “economist” Marx of the late-eighteen-fifties onward. But even though Marx may not have fully worked out the contradiction between labor and capital here, he already recognizes its duplicitous nature. He clearly identifies what this contradiction is *not*, being neither between labor and private property, nor between labor and wages. He defines estranged labor as that which “produces not only commodities [but also] itself and the worker as a commodity.”² This makes the real products of labor the far less tangible conditions of laboring under the yoke of capital. The objects they produce greet workers as strange things with power over them, in some ways like how religious idols greet devotees lined up in prayer—a notion in tune with the “mature” Marx’s formulations concerning the fetishism of commodities in Chapter One of *Das Kapital* (1867). The very symbols we endow with power exercise absolute power over us in a manner that, rather than increasing our freedom, robs us of it. Under this form of production, the commodities people produce make commodities out of them. This means that the process of producing themselves as things satisfies needs that have little to do with the workers aside from further plundering their capacities in exchange for the bare necessities required to maintain and reproduce the working class.

Not only does labor in this historical phase alienate us from the things we make, and from ourselves while making them, it also estranges us from our innermost nature, our *Gattungswesen*. Marx uses the term *Natur* in three different but related instances to denote, respectively, the external world upon which we work, the bodily needs binding us, and the inorganic body out of which humankind renews itself as a species. Reduced to feeding and clothing one’s organic body, the life of the social whole that is the unique province of conscious beings becomes something that just happens in the process of satisfying one’s narrowest needs. Even animals are capable of fighting against their fellows for food and shelter, and of seeking out the necessities of life by instinct. But freedom in the human sense has little to do with whims and appetites. By “self-determination” we cannot mean being determined by the

¹ Karl Marx, *Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte* (1844), trans. Martin Milligan, *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert Tucker (New York: Norton, 1978), 70; original German in *MEGA*, I.2, 363: “[D]er Arbeiter zur Waare und zur elendsten Waare herabsinkt[.]”

² Marx, *Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte*, 71; *MEGA*, I.2, 364: “Die Arbeit producirt nicht nur Waaren; sie producirt sich selbst und d[en] Arbeiter als eine *Waare*[.]”

drives of the self; we hardly need civilization for that. For Marx, human activity can only be called free when it proves capable of determining its own object. If neither bestowed by nature, nor imposed as in pre-modern society, the telos of life becomes either an abiding question or a ready-made answer that prevents us from asking it. Marx defines *Gattungswesen* as a process whereby man in the universal becomes the object of human activity, making this most distinguishing trait of our nature something quite unnatural.

Marx recognizes the socio-historical basis of the categories of labor and private property, a realization that helps us situate his later analyses in terms of critiques of the Left, of bourgeois economics, and of history. One passage in particular is useful here:

Through estranged, alienated labor, then, the worker produces the relationship to this labor of a man alien to labor and standing outside it. The relationship of the worker to labor engenders the relation to it of the capitalist, or whatever one chooses to call the master of labor. Private property is thus the product, the necessary consequence of alienated labor, of the external relation of the worker to nature and to himself.¹

Here Marx traces the origins of private property to the social relations of commodity production. Capitalism as a system determines both the workers' and the capitalists' relation to labor, but only the worker finds himself enchained and therefore compelled toward change.² In keeping with the method later outlined in the preface to the *Grundrisse*, private property as the consequence of a certain form of labor only becomes recognizable once the need for its transcendence reveals itself. However, rather than this manifestation, what requires overcoming is the inner contradiction between labor and capital, or "the contradiction of estranged labor with itself."³ For Marx, the possibility of an emancipated society hinges on this overcoming, which must be achieved politically. Socialism does not emerge from capitalism out of natural necessity unless one thinks of necessity as need. Otherwise we could simply say that Marx was wrong and therefore irrelevant to our present, given how we surely do not live under socialism. But capitalism leads to

¹ Marx, *Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte*, 79; *MEGA*, I.2, 372: "Also durch die entfremdete, entäusserte Arbeit erzeugt der Arbeiter das Verhältniß eines der Arbeit fremden und ausser ihr stehenden Menschen zu dieser Arbeit. Das Verhältniß des Arbeiters zur Arbeit erzeugt das Verhältniß d[es] Capitalisten zu derselben oder wie man sonst den Arbeitsherrn nennen will. Das *Privateigenthum* ist also das Produkt, das Resultat, die nothwendige Consequenz d[er] entäusserten Arbeit, des äusserlichen Verhältnisses des Arbeiters zu der Natur und zu sich selbst."

² In this aspect, our historical moment appears different from Marx's, as revealed by Georg Lukács's concept of *reification*, which refers to the phenomenon whereby the workers' movement itself becomes part of what needs to be overcome in the interests of the workers who represent the interests of society as such. See Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1971).

³ Marx, *Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte*, 79; *MEGA*, I.2, 373: "[D]er Widerspruch der entfremdeten Arbeit mit sich selbst . . ."

socialism negatively, by posing it as a dire need that it simultaneously prevents us from fulfilling. The phrase “historical determinism,” insofar as it applies to Marx, means determination by history rather than pre-determination. And in the mid-nineteenth century, history points to the need for socialism, the path to which is paved by politics.

Writing well over a decade after the 1844 *Manuskripte*, Marx does not stray from his definition of production as the social relations corresponding to a particular stage of history. In the introduction to the *Grundrisse*, he critiques the narrow conception of production provided by bourgeois economists who see the matter purely in the terms provided by their discipline. For these nineteenth-century market analysts, production refers solely to the making of commodities, and fits neatly into a sequence alongside distribution, exchange, and consumption. While these are essential moments of production, Marx holds that it is only through the latter that the whole social process reproduces itself. The other functions “all reduce themselves in the last instance to the role played by general-historical relations in production, and their relation to the movement of history generally.”¹

In the first notebook of the *Grundrisse*, Marx sketches the double-role played by money as both a particular commodity and the universal form of appearance of exchange-value. Money functions only by negating itself continually. When it becomes the bearer of exchange-value, it transcends its use-value, for its physical weight as a certain quantity of metal no longer has anything to do with its nominal value in exchange. It slips all the time between being a specific mass of metal or number of bills and *the* universal equivalent. Each of these forms reveals the other, and therefore represents a relation rather than a thing. And Marx holds that the interrelationship of these relations cannot be understood by studying them in isolation using terms borrowed from bourgeois economics. In fact, he accuses Alfred Darimon (a contemporary Proudhonist) of doing precisely this.² Darimon identifies the problems with circulation in the metallic assets of banks, a point that Marx sets out to disprove statistically by showing how erratically the reserves of the Banque de France and its portfolio correspond. He contends that Darimon misunderstands the role of banks: on a fundamental level, they are not the makers of economic laws, but their handmaidens. And this points to a common misconception that Marx sees as plaguing economists and socialists alike—the idea that the laws of political economy are somehow external to human activity. For Marx, institutions such as banks need to be seen as both necessary and in need of change, or necessary not in the sense that things have to be a certain way, but in the dialectical sense of necessity as registering the way things are *and* calling for change therefrom.

¹ Marx, *Grundrisse*, 97; *MEGA*, II.1.1, 33: “. . . lösen sich alle in letzter Instanz dahin auf, wie allgemein geschichtliche Verhältnisse in die Production hineinspielen, und ihr Verhältniß zur geschichtlichen Bewegung überhaupt.”

² Darimon was a follower of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809–1865), whose thought Marx criticized in his *Misère de la philosophie* of 1847.

Marx's critique of Darimon also takes account of the earlier definition of production we find in the *Manuskripte*. There too Marx questions schemes that focus only on one aspect of production in an effort to transform the manner in which human labor realizes and reproduces itself. To this end, he asks:

Can the existing relations of production and the relations of distribution which correspond to them be revolutionized by a change in the instrument of circulation, in the organization of circulation? [Can] such a transformation of circulation be undertaken without touching the existing relations of production and the social relations which rest on them?¹

From this stance Darimon's approach appears wrong-headed to Marx because adjustments to circulation by way of bank reforms can hardly be expected to revolutionize the basis for circulation itself. Marx's point is that Darimon poses the question as a choice between metal and paper, when the real question is whether bourgeois production does not require its own form of mediating social value, whether bills or bullion. Getting rid of gold cannot transform the conditions of exchange that give it value. Conversely, the value of gold cannot be thought of ahistorically, for in the bourgeois epoch it becomes the amount of abstract labor it represents.

Already in Adam Smith we find an analysis of labor as a slightly but vitally altered manner of expressing the value of things. Rather than exchange-value (a function of labor-time) merely representing need or use-value, Smith maintains the absolute character of labor as a unit of wealth. Marx, still formulating his critique in terms of Darimon's misinterpretation of gold as the root of the social problem, points out how gold expresses universal exchange-value while at the same time maintaining its particular character as a medium of exchange. In this second guise, gold appears unable to decrease in value, but, when considered in relation to all commodities, its value fluctuates just like the price of potatoes. Marx maintains that fluctuations in price are bound up with this system of exchange, which in turn cannot be separated from the mode of production that comes to characterize society at a certain point in history.

Another scheme devised by mid-nineteenth-century leftists in keeping with Proudhonian and utopian socialist principles was that of the time-chit, or the replacement of paper money with bills representing quantities of labor-time in an effort to replace the "nominal value" or price, with "real value" in exchange. But in Marx's view this substitution makes little sense, because money value reflects a social average rather than any particular quantity of labor. The price

¹ Marx, *Grundrisse*, 122; *MEGA*, II.1.1, 57: "Können durch Aenderung im Circulationsinstrument—in der Organisation der Circulation—die bestehenden Productionsverhältnisse und die ihnen entsprechenden Distributionsverhältnisse revolutionirt werden? Fragt sich weiter: Kann eine solche Transformation der Circulation vorgenommen werden, ohne die bestehenden Productionsverhältnisse und die auf ihnen beruhenden gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse anzutasten?"

of coffee is four dollars a cup not because any individual has put four dollars' worth of labor into it, but because on average, given the technological advancement of society and the productivity of its labor, the price of a coffee happens to be four dollars. The labor-time objectified in the price of a commodity is a social average and not an actual quantity of labor that can be represented on a piece of paper. Marx's main critique of John Weston in the 1865 speech "Value, Price and Profit" addresses how both Weston and the devisers of the time-chit misrecognize the necessity of the relationship of price to value. To claim that price and wage are causally related (an increase in one leading to an increase in the other) is to miss the point. Wage happens to be a subset of price, namely, the price of a certain strange commodity: human labor. As Marx reveals, bourgeois economists and socialists alike fail to perceive this social value crystallized in commodities—that which lends wages and prices a certain authenticity or necessity without being identical to them. In Darimon, Proudhon, and Weston, Marx finds ways of reading the laws of political economy in isolation from others: circulation in isolation from production in Darimon, value in isolation from price in the case of Proudhonist time-chit schemes, and wage in isolation from price in Weston.

Marx arrives at an analysis of money in relation to the commodity form through the telling detours presented by his critique both of leftists and of economists. Whenever he uses the term "value" without qualification in his early theory of money, he seems to imply exchange-value, the universal form of value under capitalism. Money, by expressing this value, becomes the quantitative measure and medium for fulfilling all qualitative needs. It comes into this historical role as a consequence of the social relations of exchange within which the quantitative commensurability of qualitatively different things requires a third thing—a symbol for mediating the social value of labor-time in the abstract that is also a particular commodity. Given the separation and coexistence of use and exchange, money becomes the universal medium of which every commodity represents a certain quantity.

It proves especially tricky to parse out the relationship between the particular and the universal in Marx's aphoristic musings on money in the first notebook of the *Grundrisse* when one bears in mind that the universal is not some common feature that applies to all particulars. Rather, all particular monetary quantities express their universal exchangeability, which in turn cannot be conceived except through these forms of expression. This is not to suggest that doing away with money will somehow change the way value is created, but rather to point out that money fulfills certain historically generated requirements. It is, in a sense, the perfect commodity in that it wears its duplicity on its sleeve. As the universal equivalent it stands for social value in exchange, and as a particular commodity it concretizes its symbolic value. A recognition of this idiosyncrasy of money and of other categories of political economy (such as private property) grounds Marx's analysis historically. Under bourgeois conditions of production, money becomes a *Realabstraktion*—in some ways like how private property becomes the consequence, rather than the

cause, of the production and reproduction of labor in self-undermining contradiction to capital.

Money mediates both the particular values that satisfy incommensurable human needs and also the universal value these assume within modern society (that is to say, the average socially-necessary labor-time in terms of which all commodities are commensurable and vary only by degree). Every commodity stands for a quantifiable measure of labor-time and a use-value. Money as a measure of exchange-value also facilitates the satisfaction of needs. In this vital third role money becomes the bearer of the social relation that expresses use in terms of exchange under capitalism. However, the problem lies not in the fact that this social relation is external to the individual and requires mediation. Marx says, “all production is an objectification of the individual. In money (exchange-value), however, the individual is not objectified in his natural quality, but in a social quality (relation) which is, at the same time, external to him.”¹ The smashing of the community of antiquity that Marx describes in this context, and the establishment of individuality on purely social terms, cannot be considered anything but an advance in the project of human freedom. The question becomes whether these terms, defined in our times by labor as the mediator of social value, promote or undermine this possibility. In the passage cited in the epigraph to this essay, Marx alludes to the emancipatory potential unleashed by capitalism in the form of an objective connection between individuals that presupposes and guarantees their mutual independence. This point builds on an earlier one about the relationship between private and social interest, with the fact remaining that individual interests are themselves also determined socially. In Marx’s view, the bourgeois and the utopian viewpoints falter when they conceive of this independent collectivity either as a given or as a curse, when in fact it is both historical and potentially emancipatory.

History for Marx refers not to a series of events or an academic discipline, but to the very historicity of humankind having become true to its own nature. Any allegation of determinism leveled against Marx would need to contend with history in the sense of *Geschichte*, which does not progress cyclically according to some pre-ordained plan, but vectorially and of its own accord. The only determined end of history understood in this sense is an open one, subject neither to nature nor to fancy. So, yes, socialism is the necessary outcome of capitalism. This is not a statement of fact but of intent, as that which for the first time may allow us to determine our own ends. Short of that, we are at once pre-historic and sub-capitalist.

Only from a critical perspective with regard to history, and through the forms that attend one’s place within it, can one perceive the historical task at hand. The goal becomes to see, through the possibilities that history creates,

¹ Marx, *Grundrisse*, 226; *MEGA*, II.1.1, 150: “Jede Production ist eine Vergegenständlichung des Individuums. Aber im Geld (Tauschwerth) ist die Vergegenständlichung des Individuums nicht die seiner in seiner Natürlichen Bestimmtheit, sondern seiner als in einer gesellschaftlichen Bestimmung (Verhältniß) gesetzt, die ihm zugleich äusserlich ist.”

the obscured end to which it once pointed. Or, as Nietzsche put it, to give ourselves “a second nature other than the one from which we are descended.”¹ This idea reverses the trajectory. Rather than building a future upon our moment, we seek to redeem a past that lies “screaming in the dirty diapers of the present.”² If Marx was able to see the social relations of capital as “so many mines to explode it,” then this speaks less to his naive optimism than to the deep pessimism pervading our times, when it seems highly unlikely, even impossible, to conceive of something beyond this society with nothing to give it political form.³

Along with the ability to make distinctions between historical moments, we find in Marx a refusal to think of them piecemeal. Historical materialism works both ways—simple forms derive their true content retrospectively just as surely as they anticipate the future development that grants such a perspective. Money takes on its full significance only under the condition of universal exchange, which anticipates its own undermining in the opposition of labor to capital, which takes money’s self-negating impulse as the starting point, and turns it into a self-perpetuating system. Allowing Marx to make the curious claim against the Proudhonists and Utopians alike, that

. . . the money system is in fact the system of equality and freedom, and disturbances which they [contemporary socialists] encounter in the further development of the system are disturbances inherent in it, are merely the realization of *equality and freedom*, which prove to be inequality and unfreedom.⁴

Marx recognizes the necessary misrecognition that attends bourgeois economic forms and bears on political imaginations of the beyond to which the contradiction within capitalism points. The problem lies not with paper money, gold, silver, or whatever form of mediation the value of labor assumes under capital. It lies with labor itself, which becomes an open pit for capital to mine in the process of reproducing itself. And with this later development, already

¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life*, trans. Peter Preuss (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1980), 22; original German in Friedrich Nietzsche, *Vom Nutzen und Nachtheil der Historie für das Leben* (1874) (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2009), 35: “Es ist ein Versuch, sich gleichsam a posteriori eine Vergangenheit zu geben, aus der man stammen möchte, im Gegensatz zu der, aus der man stammt”

² Walter Benjamin, “Experience and Poverty” (1933), trans. Rodney Livingstone, *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996–2003), 2:733; original German in Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977), II.1, 216: “[S]chreiend wie ein Neugeborenes in den schmutzigen Windeln dieser Epoche”

³ Marx, *Grundrisse*, 159; *MEGA*, II.1.1, 92: “Aber innerhalb der bürgerlichen, auf dem *Tauschwerth* beruhenden Gesellschaft, erzeugen sich sowohl Verkehrs- als Produktionsverhältnisse, die ebenso viel Minen sind um sie zu sprengen.”

⁴ Marx, *Grundrisse*, 249; *MEGA*, II.1.1, 172: “[D]as Geldsystem in der That das System der Gleichheit und Freiheit ist und daß was ihnen in der näheren Entwicklung des Systems störend entgegentritt, ihm immanente Störungen sind, eben die Verwirklichung der *Gleichheit und Freiheit*, die sich ausweisen als Ungleichheit und Unfreiheit.”

contained in germ in simple exchange, promises made and possibilities opened up by the bourgeois revolution remain unfulfilled insofar as the struggle for socialism proves unsuccessful, as in Marx's time, or non-existent, as in ours.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

Marx on Determinism and Freedom

William M. O'Meara

This paper will follow the definition of determinism formulated in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*: “Causal determinism is, roughly speaking, the idea that every event is necessitated by antecedent events and conditions together with the laws of nature [Hofer].” In such determinism, given the precise conditions of two human societies, nothing else could have happened, for example, a war breaking out between country X and country Y. In contrast with that determinism, the position that affirms human freedom holds that given those very same conditions of those two human societies, something else could have happened, for example, that a peace treaty could have been negotiated between country X and country Y without any war being necessitated. Both the determinist position and the libertarian position will agree that if the precise conditions between country X and country Y are changed, then, of course, something else could have happened rather than a war. So the crux of the issue between the two positions of determinism and freedom is whether or not something else could have happened in human history, given those precise conditions that originally obtained. This paper intends to show that there is some determinism in human history as analyzed by Marx, whereby human choices for the future are limited. However, those limiting conditions allow in Marx’s analysis for some significant human choices as to how human history shall develop or even stagnate.

It is well known that Marx has written what appear to be clear statements saying that human history is determined by the material conditions of human existence. For example, in 1847, three years after *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, in *The Poverty of Philosophy*, Marx writes:

Are men free to choose this or that form of society for themselves? By no means. Assume a particular state of development in the productive forces of man and you will get a particular form of commerce and consumption. Assume particular stages of development in produce, commerce and consumption and you will have a corresponding social structure, a corresponding organisation of the family, or order of classes, in a word, a corresponding civil society. Presuppose a particular civil society and you will a particular political conditions which are only the official expression of civil society.... It is superfluous to add that men are not free to choose their productive. Forces which are the basis of all their history for every productive force is an acquired force, the product of former activity (Marx, 1935, p. 152).

And similarly, in perhaps the most often quoted statement by Marx, he wrote that:

the guiding thread in my studies--can be briefly formulated as follows: In the social production of their means of existence men enter into definite, necessary relations which are independent of their will, productive relationships which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The aggregate of these productive relationships constitutes the economic structure of society, the real basis on which a juridical and political superstructure arises, and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond. The mode of production of the material means of existence conditions the whole process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, it is their social existence that determines their consciousness (Marx, 1964, pp. 217-218).

Despite such statements, some interpreters of Marx correctly argue that Marx is not an economic, causal determinist and that there is a significant role for human freedom in the creation of human history. For example, Mandel affirms that 'Marx was as far removed from any fatalistic belief in the automatic effects of economic determinism as any social thinker could be. He repeated over and over again that men made and had to make their own history, only not in an arbitrary way and independently from the material conditions in which they found themselves (Mandel, 1977, pp. 83-84).' Arthur affirms that Marx is not a mechanistic materialist who would hold that human actions are mechanically determined by the material conditions of human life. For Marx's fundamental way of thinking about humans in nature and society is dialectical: society and nature affect the development of humans and our actions affect the development of society and nature (Marx, 1970, p. 21). Also, Marx clearly affirms in his third *Thesis on Feuerbach* that materialism is inadequate since it neglects the role of human action in changing the circumstances of human existence (Marx, 1970, p. 121).

Furthermore, the basic concept in *The German Ideology*, which is first stated in *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* and which underlies Marx's most mature work, *Capital*, is that humans develop their own human powers and social relationships as they labor upon nature (Arthur, p. 21). As Marx affirms in *Capital*:

Labour is, in the first place, a process in which both man and Nature participate, and in which man of his own accord starts, regulates, and controls the material reactions between himself and Nature. By thus acting on the external world and changing it, he at the same time changes his own nature. He develops his slumbering powers and compels them to act in obedience to his sway (quoted by McLellan, 1974, p. 148).

Marx not only affirms in theory that human action is capable of significantly affecting social conditions and historical development; he also affirms a number of examples in his detailed studies of history. For example, although *The Communist Manifesto* appears to make Communism the inevitable outcome of history, more importantly it ‘speaks of the fact that class struggle ‘each time ended either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large or in the common ruin of the contending classes (quoted by Markus, p. 52).’ Furthermore, Marx’s studies of the Asiatic mode of production which gave rise to various Eastern empires that waxed and waned give examples of ‘a historical development continually reproducing, but incapable of solving, its basic inner contradictions, eventually passing (at least in some cases) into deep and protracted depression [Marcus, pp. 52-53].’ Markus notes that when a contradiction develops between the social relations of production and the productive forces, humans themselves are the ones who by their action create the solution (Markus, p. 52). ‘There are no historical crises from which there could be but one way out; the actual issue of the crisis is always one among many concrete historical alternatives. Which of these possibilities is actualized depends on men, on the deeds, on the revolutionary practice of classes (Markus, p. 52).’

It is clear then that Marx held a combination of partial determinism and partial freedom with an emphasis upon freedom in his concept of humanity as the agent of history. I will explain how Marx’s concept of the human as the species-being makes possible this co-presence of partial determinism and partial freedom, with the emphasis upon freedom, through two points.

Explaining the Co-Presence of Determinism and Freedom

First, Marx is deeply appreciative of Hegel’s insight into human nature as a developing reality which has undergone radical change and which needs to be understood by a dialectical method of thinking. For Marx writes, ‘The outstanding achievement of Hegel’s *Phenomenology* . . . is first, that Hegel grasps the self-creation of man as a process, objectification as loss of the object, as alienation and transcendence of this alienation, and that he therefore grasps the nature of labor, and conceives objective man (true, because real man) as the result of his own nature (quoted in Fromm, pp. 176-177).’ Human nature is not an eternally given essence for Hegel and Marx, but is in process of formation through human action itself affecting and being affected by nature and other human beings. Even human language and consciousness are not eternal essences but involve evolutionary development in the transition from hominids to humans.

Second, Marx himself did not explain how language and consciousness developed, but two Marxist commentators, Tran Duc Thao and Mihailo Marcovic, have offered explanations that are in agreement with Marx’s intuitive hunches and that are compatible with George Herbert Mead’s theory of the origin of consciousness. The isolated animal cannot develop language or

consciousness, but in a group of animals which has a common practical goal, for example, of defense, these animals will need to coordinate their action both to transmit information and to give mutual assistance. A specific warning cry might be an unconditioned reflex, genetically structured into the animals for common response, or might become a conditioned reflex evoking a shared response to a danger. What is further necessary for the development of conscious meaning is that an animal grasp the similarity between its evoked response to its own gesture or cry and the response of another animal to that gesture or cry of the first animal. It is only in the similarity of their common practical response, for example, to the cry signaling a common danger that the animals can become consciously aware of the cry as a meaningful gesture. Agreeing with Mead's theory of the origin of conscious meaning, Marcovic notes that when the verbal gesture of one animal affects its own hearing and evokes the same response in itself that it evokes in another animal who has heard the cry, then it is possible for consciousness of the meaning of the gesture to arise (Marcovic, pp. 335-338). This interpretation of Marx by Marcovic is in agreement with Marx's affirmation that 'a man first sees and recognizes himself in another man. Peter only relates to himself as a man through his relation to another man, Paul, in whom he recognizes his likeness (quoted by Thao, p. 8).' Only by interpreting one's physical and verbal gestures from the viewpoint of the others in a group can a pre-hominid become conscious of the meaning of his gestures. This ability to look upon the self from the viewpoint of the other is inherent in the very nature of self-awareness. This capacity of being simultaneously both self and others is essential to the nature of consciousness.

Consequently, since the self in order to act consciously at all must act in relation to some other, the self necessarily runs the risk of being fully or partially determined by that relationship. However, that relationship constitutes the concrete, specific point of departure for any growth into a new, partially free relationship with a new other, either a real or an imagined new other, that would enable the self to see possibilities that go beyond the present relationship. It is quite possible that complete determinism will win out in a specific historical crisis because people find it almost impossible to see and act from other than their present restricted viewpoint. But there is always the possibility for human consciousness to imagine a new, partially free viewpoint that shows the way for historical development.

Since consciousness arises within the context of human labor and social relationships and since human labor and social relationships are essential to the continuing existence of humans, the way in which we labor and socially organize our labor will have a profound influence upon all other aspects of our existence. As Marx writes:

By social we understand the co-operation of several individuals, no matter under what conditions, in what manner and to what end. It follows from this that a certain mode of production, or industrial stage, is always

combined with a certain mode of co-operation, or social stage, and this mode of co-operation is itself a 'productive force'. Further, that the multitude of productive forces accessible to men determines the nature of society, hence, that the 'history of humanity' must always be studied and treated in relation to the history of industry and exchange (Marx, 1976, p. 50).

In order to labor upon nature within a certain mode of production, the conscious agent must be controlling his or her actions with tools upon nature in terms of how the agent expects the already existing tools and already existing nature to respond to his or her actions. Furthermore, since there is a social organization of this labor, the agent also has to control his or her actions in terms of how the agent expects his or her social others to respond. Consequently, the social and laboring conditions of human existence develop in individuals a social character, that is, a set of habits that include both a way of thinking about self, others, and nature and a way of acting in relation to self, others, and nature. These habits can become a mental basis that is partially determining of other ways of thinking of and acting in the world. As McMurtry points out, Marx held that:

a 'too lavish' natural environment may keep man in hand, like a child in leading strings, 'preventing the utilization of his powers--mental and otherwise--by its anesthetizing, Lotusland-like abundance. Similarly, conventional productive tasks may contain the mind's powers within a narrow compass - by the 'barbarian egotism' of individual plot tillage, by the 'craft idiocy' of the medieval guild or by the exclusive 'detail tasks' of 'manufacturing capitalism' (quoted by McMurtry, p. 42).

In order to become free from the mental barriers that are completely or partially determining and that are involved in any old set of habits of thinking about and acting in the world, the individual or the society needs to look upon the proposed action from another viewpoint. This other viewpoint could come from improvements in the mode of production or from improvements in the way of thinking about the world. An example of the first improvement in the mode of production 'can liberate consciousness from its old barriers, "revolutionizing people's minds.' Thus the productive forces as they develop and progress from ancient to modern forms more and more allow an 'imagination freed' from, among other things, mythology (quoted by McMurtry, pp. 42-43).' An example of the second kind of improvement in the way of thinking about the world can be found in Marx's attempt to understand both the destructive and constructive tendencies inherent in the capitalist mode of production and in his attempt to project ways of overcoming the defects of capitalism (McMurtry, p. 43).

Some positive aspects to be found in capitalism are: (1) its elaboration of a universal way of thinking about the world through science; (2) its consequent elaboration of productive forces based on science; and (3) its development of a

world market and the pursuant universal intercourse between many cultures. Both the successful practice of science and of the practical control of nature through productive forces will enable:

the real [and partially free] development of individuals' to proceed through the constant abolition of each limitation once it is conceived of as a limitation and not as a sacred boundary. The universality of the individual is not thought or imagined, but is the universality of his real and *ideal* [my emphasis] relationships. Man therefore becomes able to understand his own history as a process, and to conceive of nature (involving also practical control over it) as his own real body (Marx, 1971, p. 121).

Both in our thinking about the world and in our action in the world, we will have overcome the deterministic mind-set; and we will have developed the attitude that previous limitations are not sacred boundaries but only challenges to be overcome in the continuing history of the development of human freedom. Consequently, both new modes of production and new ways of thinking can bring about the removal of mental barriers that tend to limit our social action in the world.

The human being experiences both partial determinism and partial freedom because human consciousness is simultaneously self and other. The human being only comes to consciousness, whether in the evolution of the species or in the development of the child in a social and active relationship to the world, being more determined at first by this relationship than self-determined. However, these 'social historical conditions which determine the concrete individual are not to be conceived as fetters alien to him and externally imposed upon his real, "primordial" impulses and drives, thereby stifling and repressing his authentic self. They are the real, internal conditions of his individuality (Markus, pp. 21-22).' Nature, the production process, and society are incorporated as generalized others which enable the individual to be conscious of himself or herself from the viewpoint of those others. As such, they partially determine the individual socially and historically, but they also render the individual able to be free. For the individual can imaginatively use this same process of looking upon the self and the self's action from the viewpoint of a future or ideal other to free oneself partially from the limitations of present and past viewpoints and actions.

Henry emphasizes that we should not interpret social and historical conditions in Marx's view as objective conditions external to the real, living individuals and to which they must passively submit. These conditions exist only within the ongoing conscious actions of individuals as internal factors, helping to constitute individuals as these specific social and historical individuals. These conditions only exist to the extent that these individuals internalize them and allow them to exist. For it is the self which adopts the viewpoint of the other as a condition of being conscious of oneself; the other as a social, historical condition of a living individual only exists as part of that

self's process of becoming (Henry, p. 108). Henry affirms that for Marx each individual is 'the creator of social relations to the very extent to which he suffers them, the extent to which he performs activity is his own (Henry, pp. 108-109).' As Marx states, 'it was, therefore, precisely the personal, individual behavior of individuals, their behavior to one another as individuals, that created the existing relations and reproduces them anew (Marx, 1976, p 143).'

Conclusion

In this paper we have explored the limitation on freedom by material conditions. Although Marx has written what appear to be clear statements affirming that human history is determined by the material conditions of life, he is not an economic, causal determinist but has a concept of human action which allows for significant human freedom. In accord with his dialectical concept of man, Marx sees human rationality and freedom not only as profoundly but partially affected by the actions and relationships into which man enters but also as profoundly but partially affecting those same actions and relationships. Marx has clear theoretical statements affirming the possibility of human freedom in his concept of humanity as the species-being who is not limited as the spider is, of acting only within the limits of his species, but who is unlimited, who is capable of acting and creating in accord with the standards of any species. Marx also recognizes in his interpretation of various historical movements and crises a most significant role for human freedom. As Marx points out in *The Communist Manifesto*, class struggle can end either in the revolutionary reconstitution of society or in the common ruin of the contending classes, depending upon the class consciousness and initiative which people will develop.

Since human consciousness always involves a relationship in the individual to a social other or group, the individual's action can be completely limited by the perspective of that group; or the individual can strive to overcome partially in new choices the limitations of that group's perspective. Once an individual becomes conscious of the method of scientific thinking and of the need to test one's ideas in the community of scientific investigators, then the person is capable of growing beyond the limits of that person's community. As science grows and technology expands, then the human, the potentially universal being, becomes the actually universal being. Consequently, although Marx sees humanity as more determined by economic and social conditions at first in the early stages of human evolution, he emphasizes the potential in humanity's species-being to become more fully rational and more fully free through humanity's own action in history.

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