DIALOGUE
AND
UNIVERSALISM

2/2013

TRANSCENDENTAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Editorial

TRANSCENDENTAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The objective of this Dialogue and Universalism issue is transcendental philosophy, synonymously transcendentalism, understood roughly as the heterogeneous tradition at its founding level comprising Kantianism, Neo-Kantianisms, and Husserl's phenomenology. Transcendentalism in the meaning of "an American literary, political, and philosophical movement of the early nineteenth century, centered around Ralph Waldo Emerson",[1] is not a concern here.

In some philosophical areas it is still relatively commonly held that transcendental philosophy is an expired tradition, of historical value only. This conviction should be definitely challenged. In fact, recent philosophy has questioned it with increasing force. Even a slightly closer inspection reveals the importance of the transcendental tradition in contemporary philosophical discourses.

Nowadays transcendental philosophy mainly functions in inter-theoretical constellations—some of its threads are being composed with ideas propounded by other philosophical traditions or schools. These threads rather concern the general transcendental spirit, above all the transcendental method itself, and are mostly not direct returns to entire Kant's or Husserl's doctrines. This specific presence of transcendental philosophy is associated with the enormous multitude of analyses and interpretations devoted to it, also carried out from the perspective of 21st-century philosophical awareness and research interests.

The contemporary role of transcendentalism is characteristic of all philosophy since, roughly, the third decade of the 20th century. One may easily ascer-

---

[1] Goodman, Russell, "Transcendentalism," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/transcendentalism/>.

This meaning of the term "transcendentalism" (sometimes called "American transcendentalism") is common in American literature, whereas transcendentalism in the sense of the tradition embracing Kantianism, Neo-Kantianisms and Husserl's phenomenology is widespread in European philosophy.

tain the tendency in contemporary investigations to transcend the limits of philosophical schools and traditions, and to embed them in new theoretical configurations. Collage but nonetheless unified conceptions are formed by engaging factors originating from metaphilosophically diverse sources. The boundaries set by the various schools are blurred hence their purity and resulting distinctness are frequently ignored. Abandoning their earlier-respected status of hermetically closed and stable thought systems, philosophical schools and traditions initiate inter-theoretical dialogues characterized by the interpenetration of views. Such communication forms constitute a complex metaphilosophical problem which deserves comprehensive consideration.

This Dialogue and Universalism issue is devoted, in a very modest scale, to the forms in which transcendentalism appears in contemporary philosophical discourses. The majority of the presented papers examine various instances of composing into unity transcendental threads and elements originating from other philosophical traditions. Some papers investigate certain elements of Kant's, Cassirer's and Husserl's conceptions which are important for the currently promoted philosophical attitudes and undertakings.

Special thanks go to Przemysław Parszutowicz, who assisted in a valuable extent in organizing this D&U issue and is, in fact, its co-editor.

Małgorzata Czarnocka
Stanisław Czerniak
Józef L. Krakowiak

Rafał Michalski

TRANSCENDENTAL ELEMENTS IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF HELMUTH PLESSNER

ABSTRACT

The essay reviews references to Immanuel Kant's transcendental philosophy in the work of Helmuth Plessner. First discussed is the *Krisis der transzendentalen Wahrheit im Anfang*, in which Plessner effects a critique of the transcendental method and shows that overcoming its crisis requires philosophy to rigorously restrict the applicability of theory to the experimental sphere and put it up for judgment by the tribunal of practical reason. Next under scrutiny is Plessner's programmatic text in philosophical anthropology, in which he strives to employ Kant's deductive method for the construction of his own system of organic forms.

Keywords: transcendental method; categories; deduction; positionality; border; *a priori*; philosophical anthropology; organic forms.

In its construction Plessner's philosophical anthropology project combines the heritage of classical philosophy with the achievements of modern-day natural sciences without falling into radical naturalism or culturalism. What doubtless distinguishes Plessner's concept from other anthropological projects is his frequent reference to the philosophy of Immanuel Kant. This is not surprising when we consider that it was none other than the author of the *Critique of Pure Reason* who elevated the query about human nature to a fundamental philosophical issue by stating that questions like "what can I know?," "what should I do?" or "what can I expect?" could be brought down to the question "what is the human being."[1] The Kőnigsberg philosopher's analytical critique of human reason in a sense opened the door to studies of man's rational nature (from which, among others, comes the need for metaphysics). In a sense, he simulta-

---

[1] Kant, I. 1962. "Logik." In: Kant, I. *Gesammelte Schriften/Akademieausgabe.* Vol. 9. Berlin, 24–25.

neously gave the beginnings to transcendental philosophy, which located itself somewhat "beside" empirical sciences, hence also "beside" anthropology.

Consequently, in writing about "human nature" Kant primarily meant that part of the human sphere which was a moral subject and did not submit to scientific description. As helpful in accessing this sphere he saw "anthropology in a pragmatic approach," which, unlike anthropology as the science of human physiology, concentrated on what humans could and should make of themselves as free beings. The starting point of thus-understood anthropology was the image of the human being as an *animal rationabile*—an animal capable of rationality and possessing a dual nature: rational and sensual. As Odo Marquard noted, Kant also called anthropology "knowledge about the world" based on "plain experience," with "world" denoting the world of human life (*Lebenswelt)*, which could not be reduced either to the rational (*mundus intelligibillis*) or the sensual (*mundus sensibillis*).[2] This approach inspired him to view Kant's mentioned work as evidence that the turn towards the life world was instrumental for the emergence of philosophical anthropology. This also finds confirmation in the fact that in defining the aim of the new discipline Plessner himself refers explicitly to Kantian "anthropology":

> "Philosophical anthropology, which makes transition between the physiological and pragmatic approach possible by reaching down to the roots of being human, must obey the condition to ensure both aspects the same seriousness, the same importance for the cognition of the human being."[3]

Of course, Kant's influence on Plessner's philosophy was not limited to the above general programmatic assumptions. It was also evident in his key methodological solutions. As one essay is surely not enough for a review of all the Kantian traits in the *Conditio humana* author's works,[4] I will hereafter focus only on the two which marked breakthroughs in the German anthropologist's intellectual evolution.

1. CRISIS IN TRANSCENDENTAL PHILOSOPHY?

In 1910 Plessner began studying medicine in Freiburg im Breisgau but after two semesters moved to Heidelberg, where he became a zoology student. There he met Hans Driesch, who was then in the course of constructing his neo-vitalist philosophy. In his autobiography Plessner admits his fascination with the idea

---

[2] Marquard, O. 1965. *Zur Geschichte des philosophischen Begriffs "Anthropologie" seit dem Ende des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts.* Basel–Stuttgart, 212–213.

[3] Plessner, H. 1979. "Die Aufgabe der Philosophischen Anthropologie". In: Plessner, H. *Zwischen Philosophie und Gesellschaft. Ausgewählte Abhandlungen und Vorträge.* Frankfurt, 149.

[4] Plessner, H. 1976. "Die Frage nach der *Conditio humana.*" In: Plessner, H.. *Die Frage nach der Conditio humana.* Frankfurt, 7–81.

to combine biology and philosophy, although he showed some reserve towards Hans Driesch's vitalistic theories.[5] Driesch's work and the lectures of Wilhelm Windelband inspired twenty-one-year-old Plessner to produce his first philosophical sketch, *Die wissenschaftliche Idee. Ein Entwurf über ihre Form*.[6] In it he outlined his own view on science, which he understood as an anonymous process leading towards the world's mounting logicisation. After reading it, Windelband suggested Plessner add a fitting introduction and consider it his dissertation in philosophy. Plessner, however, did not yet feel well-grounded in the field and, wishing to broaden his philosophical knowledge, went to Gőttingen with the intention of attending Husserl's lectures. "Husserl's phenomenology— Plessner writes in *Selbstdarstellung*—appeared to me to be the only path to a philosophy which could be approached as a science in the modern sense."[7]

However, as Plessner himself admitted, he was unable to benefit much from Husserl's seminar. With the phenomenologist's consent he began a comparative analysis of Fichte's and Husserl's *"I"* category, which made him aware of his failing knowledge of Kantian philosophy. Quite soon catching up on this—indepth study of the Kőnigsberg thinker's work—became Plessner's main pursuit. In effect, in 1916 he submitted his philosophy dissertation written under Paul Hensel (a student of the then already deceased Windelband) at the university in Erlangen. After some abridgement this dissertation was published as *Krisis der transzendentalen Wahrheit im Anfang*.[8]

Plessner's disappointment with phenomenology was evident already in the introduction to this work, in which he states that the main aim of his inquiries had initially been to

> "substantiate the position of phenomenology, in which I put big hopes (even accepting its metaphysical consequences), as the only true critical method," but somewhat further concludes that, "this subject, however, … led me to conclusions that were quite different from what I had intended."[9]

As the title of the dissertation indicates, Plessner's main quest was for a method allowing the construction of a coherent transcendental philosophy system. However, he also referred to the concept of a fundament (primal principle) on which such a system would base and from which it would take its beginning. Plessner explained that the question about the beginning (source) of the transcendental construction stemmed from Kant's postulate to "investigate all knowledge in consideration of the fundament of its validity, i.e. indicate its

---

[5] Plessner, H. 1980–1985. "Selbstdarstellung." In: *Gesammelte Schriften.* Vol. X. Frankfurt am Main, 302–345 (quoted page: 305).

[6] Plessner, H. "Die wissenschaftliche Idee. Ein Entwurf über ihre Form." In: *Gesammelte Schriften.* Vol. I. Frankfurt am Main, 7–141.

[7] Plessner, H. 1980–1985, "Selbstdarstellung," op. cit., 308.

[8] Plessner, H. 1980–1985. "Krisis der transzendentalen Wahrheit im Anfang." Currently under this title in: GS. Vol. I, 143–310.

[9] Ibid., 147.

source and place in the system."[10] In Plessner's view the answer to this question required a clear distinction between the completely-formed transcendental philosophy system (Kant's) and the principles underlying its construction. Also necessary was a precise distinction between "critical-transcendental" and "subjective-analytical" proceedings (Husserl).

Plessner used the synthesis concept to exemplify the above distinctions—by reference to Kant's statement that necessary and generally valid cognition was only possible when a sensually-given object came under conditions of possibility dictated by a transcendental subject. Only the categorial ordering of chaotic and accidental sensual material by aprioric forms of judgment and evidence could lead to the constitution of an adequate object of cognition. In this context, Plessner's main question was about the origin of synthesis which was independent from the subject of substance and the form it imposed.

> "Because of the object's autonomy we can speak about its independence. However, the necessary properties discovered in it refer to its dependence on the subject. Therefore, the object of cognition, and hence truth, must meet the conditions of both moments by combining them within itself and giving unity to that which is contrary."[11]

Plessner, therefore, sought a construction principle which gave fundamental unity to heteronomous, subject-independent content and necessary (because founded upon aprioric laws) form. A cognition-fundamental primal principle which would also be a logical beginning of a transcendental system could not be found by means of an analytical method based on subjective reflection.

Plessner found the paradigmatic application of this method in Husserl's *Ideas*. The father of phenomenology made consciousness and the experiences that filled it the starting-point of his philosophy, in which—as the *Krisis der transzendentalen Wahrheit ...* author noted—he duplicated the positivistic cult of directly-rendered fact, as in starting out from directly-appearing phenomena he was unable to substantiate an underlying principle behind unity of experience. Husserl's assumed correlation between consciousness and its object (the moment of dependency and independence) was unexplainable by pure reflection as "the object of thought contains no principle or rule for reflection on the thought related to this object."[12] The self-reflexivity of reflection (a reflexive act directed at another intentional act), which was to gauge the truth of phenomenological cognition, in fact substantiated nothing as the conditions of its own possibilities needed defining. Similarly deprived of substantiating powers, according to Plessner, was the act of eidetic evidence (grasping the essence apparent in

---

[10] Ibid., 297.
[11] Ibid., 151.
[12] Ibid., 156.

the phenomenological sphere).[13] The evidence of pure overview did not legitimise judgments passed on its basis because it was non-conceptual, hence external to conceptual thought; at most, it could confirm its own authenticity, i.e. a single, non-transferable, direct insight. The substantiation of the validity of intuitively-revealed essence by reference to intuition led to a vicious circle as it assumed that which was to be substantiated, and in no way freed phenomenology from arbitrariness allegations.

Plessner raised similar objections when he reviewed Husserl's intentionality theory, which was to be the main tool of the phenomenology project's "transcendental" turn. According to Plessner, the unity of contradicting moments (essence-intending *noeses* and their content counterparts, *noema*) which took place in every intentional act was only an external bond, because the unity of the objective and subjective poles revealed itself as a predetermined moment of experience, hence something exclusively factual and accidental. Here, substantiation was purely analytical as it assumed the primate of primordially-experiencing consciousness and restricted itself to the conceptual analysis of intentional essence-generating acts. The noematic/noetic unity was synthetic, and therefore required the indication of a synthetic unity principle or, as Plessner put it, "a primordially non-conditioned construction of the subject."[14] At this point Plessner referred to the Fichtean interpretation of Kant's "Copernican revolution in philosophy." In the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant claimed that objects could be cognised only insofar as they were subordinated to specific aprioric cognition conditions based in the subject:

> "It has heretofore been assumed that our entire cognition must adjust to objects. Upon this assumption, however, all effort to employ concepts for the purpose of saying anything about objects that would expand our cognition had proven in vain. Therefore, let us for once see if we cannot achieve more success in resolving metaphysical tasks by assuming that it is objects which have to adjust to cognition."[15]

For Plessner the crucial point of the "Copernican revolution" was the recommendation to build a transcendental system upon a hypothesis to serve as a "synthetic" rule guiding deduction, whereby acceptance of this rule was not to stem from logical necessity but was to be the subject's free choice. This Kantian interpretation was an evident reference to Fichte's concept of "intellectual intuition" as the primal action (*Tathandlung*) of the pure *I*.[16] In the *Doctrine of Science* author suggested that we could be aware of the pure "I principle" as an

---

[13] Husserl, E. 2002. *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*, Tübingen.

[14] Plessner, H. 1980–1985. "Krisis der transzendentalen," op. cit., 191.

[15] Kant, I. 1960. *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. Hamburg, 19.

[16] Fichte, J. G. 1845–1846. "Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre." In: Fichte, J.G. *Sämtliche Werke*. Vol. 1, Berlin.

action taking place within consciousness, and that this awareness was a compo-
nent of all self-consciousness. Thanks to transcendental reflection, attention is
directed to the pure *I*, which is not substance but action. It cannot be objectified
as every act of objectification already pre-assumes the pure *I*, but it appears
directly in the objectification act. Thus, in reflection we see an action and do not
conclude that any I must exist beyond consciousness. According to Fichte, the
pure *I* was not something which acted but only action. "For idealism intelli-
gence is action (*ein Thun*) and absolutely nothing more; it should not even be
called anything that acts (*ein Thätiges*), as this suggests something which exists
to which action is assigned."[17]

   The spontaneous action of the pure *I* is itself not realised by the conscious-
ness it underlies. It is only in intellectual intuition, through which the philoso-
pher grasps the spontaneous action of the pure *I* in transcendental reflection,
that the pure *I* begins to exist for itself. Therefore, the pure *I* confirms and con-
stitutes itself in intellectual intuition. Its existence does not need to be proven as
a conclusion derived from premises as it lends itself directly to reflection. The
activity of the *I* is not conscious in itself but it underlies common conscious-
ness. This consciousness, however, cannot exist without reference to the non-*I*.
Whence this reference? Here Fichte took an idealistic stand and argued that the
I − non-*I* opposition took place through and within the *I*. Therefore, the pure *I*
was the condition of the possibility of this opposition and the synthesis of the
opposed moments of the subject and object. Fichte's conclusion—which for
lack of space we cannot recount here—was that the action of the pure *I*, which
is a manifestation of transcendental freedom, was the source of the entire consti-
tution and synthesis of the opposed moments.

   Plessner referred to Fichte's concept, nonetheless he pointed out his error in
"substantialising the source,"[18] i.e. arbitrarily accepting the self-undefined *I* as
the starting-point of the construction of a transcendental philosophy. In Pless-
ner's view Fichte ultimately failed to point to a principle which would, on the
one hand, underlie all synthesis and, on the other, function as a guiding thread
(*Leitfaden*) or cognition rule to discipline theoretical construction and keep it
within its proper boundaries. Plessner "found" such a principle in the Kantian
transcendental unity of apperception concept, which to him was, "a pure me-
dium between the theoretical subject and object."[19] A synthetic judgment may
be regarded as aprioric if there is a third element (a sort of *triton genos*) which
lends necessity to the synthesis of the subject and predicate. The transcendental
unity of apperception ensures not only the preservation of "the absolute inde-
pendence of matter from the subjectivity of synthesising thought", but also, "the
primal constitutive unity of both opposed and isolated moments: the moment of

---

[17] Ibid., 440.
[18] Plessner, H. 1980–1985. "Krisis der transzendentalen," op. cit., 242.
[19] Ibid., 215.

evidence (transcendence) and the formal moment (immanence)."[20] In Plessner's interpretation this primal principle of all cognition was also the condition of the possibility of the sought objective unity as well as the fundament of the validity of transcendental truth.[21]

Plessner, however, did not stop at merely indicating the primal principle of *a priori* synthesis, he also asked about the condition of possibility underlying it, and it is here that Fichte's influence makes itself evident. According to Kant, we have to accept it on the strength of logical necessity, but in Fichte's view we attain it by free choice. For Plessner, the question about the absolute beginning of the transcendental system brought to light the basic drawback of transcendental philosophy and the source of its crisis. In Fichte's footsteps, Plessner accepted that this beginning was constituted solely thanks to the "absolute construction" of the subject, which assumed transcendental freedom. The first step of this construction refers to "the principle of autonomy as the highest obligation and defining feature of philosophy."[22] Consequently, the ultimate fundament of the system's construction appears to be the externally unconditioned autonomy of the subject. This, however, means that the transcendental system cannot lay any claims on universality, as in keeping with the autonomy principle there is always the possibility of "constructing a different system." The contradiction between the intention of creating a universal system and the critical reflection which reveals the moment of arbitrariness underlying its construction is, according to Plessner, the main cause of the transcendental method's crisis.

The resolution of the above antinomy and, in effect, overcoming transcendentalism's crisis, can result in unequivocal recognition of the primate of practical over theoretical reason. This is because the moment of absolute freedom, which through free decision determines and disciplines subsequent theoretical proceedings, does not solely limit the transcendental system's validity but offers philosophical reflection the possibility of stepping beyond its boundaries to carry through a critical revision. If, therefore, the system's ultimate fundament is autonomy of reason which dictates its own laws and constructs the system by free decision, then "in this sense man is no longer a problem within the system but the system becomes a question of man's choice."[23] All theoretical constructs should in the final instance respect the practical perspective—the unfathomableness, dignity and freedom of the human being. The rigorous restriction of theory's scope to experience (in the broader, non-Kantian sense to the "everyday world") and putting it before the tribunal of practical reason is, according to Plessner, a necessary safeguard against the scientistic tendency to objectify the human being. In view of the unpredictable progress of science and technology,

---

[20] Ibid., 234.
[21] As Kant wrote, pure apperception "[...] is the absolutely first and synthetic principle of our thinking in general." In: Kant, I. 1960. *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, op. cit., 172a–173a.
[22] Plessner, H. 1980–1985. *Krisis der transzendentalen ...*, op. cit., 307.
[23] Ibid., 308.

homo sapiens stands before the risk of self-deification and self-annihilation. Hence, the aim of Kantian-derived philosophical anthropology is, as Plessner noted in a later article, to "restrict the power man received in result of the limitless deprivation of limits to his knowledge about his own unfathomableness and insecurity [...] in order to regain room for faith in man."[24]

The debate about the fundaments of the transcendental system brought Plessner closer to Kantian philosophy and, paradoxically, also inspired him to move beyond the Kőnigsberg philosopher's concept and onto quite different paths of philosophical reflection. The Kantian influence, evident in the here-discussed text, weakened somewhat in Plessner's later phase. However, it will be no exaggeration to say that it remained a clear presence throughout his work. This influence will be visible not only in frequent reference to Kantian concepts and theoretical solutions, but also in Plessner's recognition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* as the starting point of philosophical anthropology. In a 1937 article Plessner wrote:

> "The Kantian critical idea still views man as its subject (appearing under the name of diverse 'powers' as 'evidence,' rationality, power of judgment or reason) too formally and generally to be regarded *explicite* as philosophical anthropology. Nonetheless, it is its most important predecessor, as its method of 'bringing down' seemingly human-independent meanings and theses to interpersonal functions ensures it a prominent position as the basis of reduction."[25]

3. THE STAGES OF ORGANIC LIFE THEORY

Die Stufen des Organischen und der Mensch[26] is the central work in Plessner's anthropological theory. In it we find numerous references to Kant, especially in connection with the project-fundamental notions of border and positionality. Plessner started out from an analysis of Cartesian dualism, which for him was the question about the difference between the animate and inanimate. These initial reflections are phenomenological in character and constitute a prelude for his subsequent reasoning, which is transcendental in spirit. Plessner analysed the dual aspectuality of the thing as a phenomenon and through this managed to describe the appearance of animate matter as opposed to the appearance of inanimate matter. This way he touched the issue of the possibility of constructing a criterion by which one could obtain a tool enabling a substantiated distinction between animate and inanimate nature.

Let us take a closer look at the *Die Stufen ...* and its thesis defining animate bodies as those in which the divergent interior–exterior relation appears objec-

---

[24] Plessner, H. 1979. *Die Aufgabe der Philosophischen ...*, op. cit., 149.
[25] Ibid., 24.
[26] Plessner, H. 1965. *Die Stufen des Organischen und der Mensch*. Berlin.

tively as assigned to their existence. How is it possible that the interior-exterior reference is given in apperception?

First, we must specify the formal conditions of the dual aspectuality phenomenon. What is it that enables the distinction of two opposed moments in a structure? Plessner resolved the issue by defining a "border" category as a neutral "intersphere." The transition from one sphere (exterior) to the other (interior) took place across a border and in passing through the neutral sphere the essence of the moment became the essence of the other. The border concept first appeared in Plessner's writings already in his 1920 work *Untersuchungen zu einer Kritik der philosophischen Urteilskraft*, where he stood before the task of defining the conditions of the possibility of the synthetic unity of two different values. In this case Plessner perceived the border as a reference moment between two values, a moment from which or up to which a given value was valid as this and no other value.[27] Here, the border was the logical assumption of the possibility of defining a pure end or pure beginning, whose existence is not confirmable by direct evidence. The border concept, though introduced in the *Die Stufen...* as a strictly theoretical solution of the dual aspectuality problem, nonetheless played a deciding role in Plessner's animate nature philosophy.

In effect of his strivings to define the conditions of the possibility of the dual aspectuality phenomenon Plessner gave his initial thesis—"in the phenomenal sense animate bodies demonstrate a basically divergent interior–exterior reference as their objective definition"—a totally new form: "animate bodies possess an evident border," whereby his earlier assumptions determined the specific features of the border category.[28] On the one hand, it had to be spatial to give a certain relative heterogeneity to the interior–exterior directions and be evident as the "contour" of the thing, on the other, the border also had to determine the absolute divergence of the interior–exterior directions and constitute the condition of the dual aspectuality of interior-exterior—and as such had to be the property of the animate body. Both conditions—the presence of the border as a moment uniting in itself the functions of the body's spatial limitations and the functions of "distinction" between its two aspects—were met when the body, besides possessing a border as one of its properties, also had the possibility of "crossing" it.[29]

Fundamental for Plessner's entire animate nature philosophy was his conclusion (in the context of the above-described thesis) that there were two possible types of relations between the body and the border moment. This, in effect, served as the basis for the distinction into organic and inorganic nature and, subsequently, the definition of the three "stages" of organic life. Relations of the first type occur when the border is only a virtual "in-between" in which a given

---

[27] Plessner, H. 1980–1985. "Untersuchungen zu einer Kritik der philosophischen Urteilskraft." In: *GS*, op. cit., vol. II, 37.

[28] Plessner, H. 1965. *Die Stufen ....*, op. cit., 100.

[29] Ibid., 103.

body in a sense "encounters" its surrounding medium. Here the border is a moment in which the body ends (or begins), provided something other than the body begins (or ends) in the same moment. Thus, the border belongs neither to the body nor the medium, but—so long as the end of one is the beginning of the other—to both. Here the border is something fundamentally different from the contour of the body understood as its borderline, because—as Plessner put it—

> "though it is not something that runs 'beside' this line, it is nonetheless something more external to it because the transition to that which is different, while guaranteed by this limitation, itself does not belong to the essence of the limitation as its realisation, which means that it is not necessary to the body's existence."[30]

Plessner expressed this by the formula K ← Z → M, where K is the body (*Körper*), M the adjacent medium, and Z the border as an "empty in-between."

Relations of the second type occur when the border actually does belong to the body. In this case the border is the contour of the body which means that the body itself is the moment of transition to the medium which surrounds it. Here the border is really present as it is no longer an "up to" of alternating definitions (body–medium), not an empty passage, but something which fundamentally separates a limited structure (the body) from that which is different (the medium). This relation is expressed by the formula K ← K → M. The direction of the vectors is the same as in the first case but the "empty in-between" has been "filled out" by the body which now possesses its own borders. The body does not begin where the surrounding medium ends, its beginning (and end) is independent from that which exists beyond it. Here the separation of the body from the medium is "absolute," although the form, as the contour (shape), naturally incorporates the formed structure into the uniform evident space, thereby subjecting it to the rule of alternating definition typical for the mutual demarcation of body and medium in the first case.

The border's adherence to the body makes the border a boundary of the body itself and of that which is different. The effect is the appearance of a "being in relation" to one's own borders and the different, as the border not only encloses the body within itself, but also opens it to the surrounding medium. This "opening", generated by the earlier-mentioned "transition" moment, Plessner called the body's existence mode beyond itself. While the essence of the border (as has been said earlier) is its constitution of the possibility of the appearance of a relation between two opposing directions, or two values, we can assume that the border expresses itself in the body as an existence mode *in relation* to it.[31]

Thus, the border marks out the duality of a body's direction of reference and is at once "above" (itself) and "in relation to" (itself). It is precisely this condi-

---

[30] Ibid., 103.
[31] Ibid., 127.

tion which should be perceived as the essence of the dual aspectuality typical for animate bodies, where the border which generates it manifests itself as the contour framing a physical system, hence as this system's property.

> "As a body (*Körperding*) the living being stands 'in' a dual aspect of mutually unconnectable, opposed directions leading towards the inside (the substantial nucleus) and the outside (the shell of property). As a living being the body appears 'with' this dual aspect as a property, and it (as a property) guarantees it (the body) dually-directed transcendence, on one hand placing the body above it—or, more precisely, beyond it—and, on the other, in it."[32]

The living body finds fulfilment in this alternating perspective, confirming one and simultaneously annulling it for the benefit of the other. Because as a "moment of transition" the border belongs to the existence of the living body, the body becomes a "transient" which fluctuates in two different directions: as that "which is" (*das Seiende*) it transgresses "beyond" or "over and above" its existence in a way that is specific for living bodies, and once situated—or "elevated"—there returns to settle "within itself" ("in relation" to itself). Plessner believes that this aspectual duality, this ambiguity in the direction of transcendence, revealed the positional character of organic bodies to be a basic feature of their essence.[33]

The question that immediately comes to mind concerns the "technical" possibility of the body's dual reference to its own borders. Plessner does not take this matter up before the middle sections of the *Die Stufen ...* but for clarity's sake we have decided to discuss it at this point, still before we leave those of his reflections that are strictly related to the border category. Plessner's answer was that the living body may relate to its borders in a twofold way because as such it does not end "at" them but in a sense "before" them. In other words, before that which it still is, hence earlier than actually prescribed by its existence.[34] This (as Plessner himself agreed) appears nonsensical at first as it suggests that the body is separated from its borders although they are its part. The situation, however, finds resolution in the fact that it cannot be interpreted spatially and must be perceived in the context of the earlier-described "internal laxity of the body's existence" which pre-conditions the body's "settlement within itself"—or "in relation to" its borders.

In Plessner's approach the body's settlement "in itself" is equivalent to its constant reference to a central point within it, which is not spatial in character but the centre of the body's limited area and thereby makes the body a whole. The presence of this centre makes the living body into a structure which, somewhat clumsily, may be called a "self" (*Selbst*). A living entity is not only the

---

[32] Ibid., 128.
[33] Ibid. 129.
[34] Ibid., 157.

unity of all its parts but an existence located in a point which constitutes this unity, and as such is in a sense detached from it. Thus, the body's positioning in its centre (Plessner appropriately calls it the "centre of positionality") allows it to refer "from" the centre to its borders as a sphere remaining "beyond" the centre.

Plessner's above-reconstructed deductions can be summed up as follows: he begins with the claim that living bodies given in evidence are characterised by a specific moment of dual aspectuality. Basing on this he formulates a law of possessing borders as a constituting principle for the existence and experiencing of the phenomenon of life. The next step is the introduction of the "positionality" category as a principle describing the specifics of the body's relation to its borders.

However, Plessner stressed, these speculations were merely hypothetical and would be proven only if it were possible to define ("in consideration of," not "out of" the positionality law) living-body-specific functions which determined the living body's special position in the world. If such functions were found, they would provide ground for a criterion enabling a strict distinction between animate and inanimate matter. Success in this sphere would also give a foundation for the constitution of the properties of organic matter as it would validate the above-described law of possessing a border as the basis (and not the cause) and condition of the possibility of the existence of the phenomenon of life.

Plessner saw the basic value of his theory in that it postulated "insight into the necessity of diverse life-crucial features" and into the "necessity of the diversity of organic models"[35] instead of the inductive enumeration of biological phenomena or a search for an element common to all life forms as the basis for a definition of life. In this context Plessner once more pointed to the similarity between his line of thought and Kant's reflections on the categories of intelligence. One of the tasks Kant posed before himself was the deduction of the aprioric principles which made cognition possible. The focal point of these deductions was the unity of the transcendental system of apperception, which was the condition of data synthesis by the categories of intelligence—the condition of the possibility of cognising objects of experience—that preceded all experience. Similarly, the positionality principle stood in the foreground of Plessner's organic features theory as the fundament enabling the definition of specific vital categories, which in turn conditioned the possibility of experiencing the phenomenon of life.[36] Hence, this theory could not abide with a mere specification of the phenomena that were necessary for the animate, but had to show these

---

[35] Ibid., 112 and following pages.

[36] Here it must be stressed that Plessner sought the conditions of the possibility of experiencing the *content* of experience, which in this case was the property of life, in the belief that the conditions of the possibility of experience did not always have to be the conditions of cognition—because, as he wrote, one could also seek the conditions which determined that a given thing appeared to us in a certain way and not in another. Cf. 1965. *Die Stufen ...,* op. cit., 75.

phenomena as a necessary manifestation of a certain regularity. This, Plessner wrote, was why his theory was aprioric—however not on the strength of its starting-point but its regressive method. In other words, it did not attempt to develop a deductive system from concepts alone but strove to define the conditions of the possibility of biological facts.[37]

In effect, the quest for a theory of organic models means seeking the conditions of the possibility of a certain specific feature of the organism in the light of a basic law describing the relation of the living body to its borders. If such conditions were found, in other words, if the appearance of such a feature were to prove necessary under this law (or, if this feature actually proved to be a form of reference of the body to its borders), then it would be categorial in character, i.e. one of the conditions which must be met for a given physical body to possess the property of life, because the initial assumption was that life is a specific form of existence which finds fulfilment in the border law. Thus defined, the task would therefore force the investigator to distance himself considerably from the sphere of concrete sensual evidence to which life's essential properties belong, and move towards a sphere where the only resting point could be the intuitively-defined positionality of living bodies.

Let us take another look at this law. According to it living organisms feature two basic kinds of reference: one realised through the organic body's "dynamic" existence mode "over and above" its own borders, its transgression "beyond" itself, the other realised "statically" as the moment of the body's reference to its borders, to itself. In Plessner's approach these two directions respectively form the foundation for two kinds of constitutive features of the living body—dynamic and static. The deduction of these features, however, does not yet exhaust the whole stock of those of the living body's features which can be described by means of the positionality principle. The function of the border is, on the one hand to "separate" the organism from the medium around it and, on the other, to "open" the organism to its surroundings. Hence, a full description of the organism's essential features must embrace both those which are realised in the sphere of the organism itself and those which express the living body's relation to its environment. Thus carried out the distinction is, of course, purely methodical as in fact all the here-described features are closely inter-related and condition themselves mutually by way of their common fundament, which makes the living being a dynamic structure which realises itself through the unity of two kinds of relations to its own borders.

The reconstruction of the main moments of Plessner's organic model theory poses some difficulty because of its reference to an enormous multitude of issues and the complex and problematic character of its substantiations of different phenomena according to a pre-assumed principle. Within the framework of this theory Plessner continuously offered new and more precise clarifications

---

[37] Ibid., XX.

regarding the body's relations to its borders, which, instead of throwing light on the matter, made it even more complicated. For the purposes of this essay let us only list the features he ultimately defined as characteristic for the phenomenon of life: development (growth, ageing, death), organisation (as the mediated immediacy of the body's unity), as well as references to time and space, reproduction, inheritance and selection, assimilation and dissimilation, environmental adjustment and active environmental adjustment.

The deduction of the two last pairs of essential features which determine the types of relations between the organism and its surrounding medium is evidence of an additional meaning that Plessner assigned to his "models." A meaning which again refers back directly to that assigned to non-organic models in the *Die Einheit der Sinne*. Let us recall: these models function as "liaisons" enabling the direct comprehension of the essence of the cognitive act of turning towards physical matter. Essence is expressed by the union of body and spirit. Organic models play a similar role in the *Die Stufen ...* but only here Plessner specified his own understanding of category. Distancing from the Kantian approach, Plessner gave category the meaning of form

> "which attaches itself to experience but does not derive from experience; a form, whose (validity) sphere does not cease at the sphere of the subject's activity but also embraces the sphere of the object, whereby it controls not only the experiencing of objects but the objects themselves. Consequently, categories are forms which belong neither exclusively to the subject nor the object and thanks to their neutrality enable both to unite. They are the conditions of the possibility of concordance [...] [between] two essentially different and mutually independent values, hence they are neither separated by an insurmountable hiatus nor exert direct influence on each other."[38]

Plessner thus freed "his" categories from the relation with the cognising subject imposed upon them by Kant with the purpose of extending their applicability by indicating their affiliation to other, as he put it, "more primitive and fundamental" existence levels. Therefore, as Stefan Pietrowicz summed up in his work, Plessner reformulated Kant's categories of reason into categories of life, simultaneously retaining their function of "conditions of possibility."[39]

Thanks to this approach Plessner also acquired a tool by whose means he would attempt to cope with his initial task of "overcoming," or rather "weakening" the Cartesian strict separation of the subjective and objective spheres, in this case the sphere of the living individual and that of the world around it.

The approach to the subject of life-environment relation in the *Die Stufen ...* is similar to that of Jacob von Uexküll, which, as Plessner himself repeatedly

---

[38] Ibid., 65.
[39] Pietrowicz, S. 1992. *Helmuth Plessner. Genese und System seines philosophisch-anthropologischen Denkens*, Freiburg–München, 321.

stressed later, was the starting-point for his attempt at a philosophical substantiation of the thesis about the unity of the subject and the surrounding world by searching for aprioric rules to determine this unity. The fundament of Uexküll's theory was a "plan" concept.[40] Uexküll understood the plan as the aprioric organising moment of living beings, an "autonomous rule which organised material, its form," which answered for the character of all the activity forms of living organisms. The plan concept embraced both a "construction plan" which determined the spatial organisation of beings and an "efficiency plan" which set the rules for the course of their life processes over time. As Aldona Pobojewska showed, Uexküll identified the living being's plan with its being a "subject." The "planned" character of the subject is visible in its sovereign and individual perception and activity, the effect of which is its own world of phenomena.[41] Thus, the plan category led Uexküll to formulate a thesis that the living being and its world (the surrounding world consisting of objects created by the living being—their content and form are subjective and are constructed by receptors and effectors which function according to the living being's plan) were a precisely-organised, strictly defined and non-accidental *whole*. The mutual affiliation of the parts and the whole was expressed by the relations taking place between them—the *behaviour* of living beings.[42] In keeping with the wholeness principle the subject and object do not exist independently. Hence, for example, by investigating behaviour, i.e. the "subject-object relations in their reference to the outside world [we can conclude about] objects which are specific for a given subject. When we discover the form of the objective world (we also see) the construction plan of the subject, because [the form of the surrounding world and the subject] are identical in keeping with the principle that the subject lends form to the object."[43]

Plessner transferred Uexküll's concept to his organic features theory and, in line with his method, situated it in the context of the positionality principle. His reasoning moved towards the issue or organisation—a property of the living body which determines its existence mode as "mediated immediacy" (the self-mediation of the body's unity through its parts). Thanks to this form of inner organisation the living being realises the positionality law as a mode of existence simultaneously "within" and "beyond" itself. The physical realisation of this dual reference of the being to its own borders takes place by means of organs. It is through them that the living body leaves and returns to itself, provided the organs are open and form a s c o p e o f f u n c t i o n a l r e f e r e n c e s between themselves and that which they open to (e.g. food, shelter, an enemy, a

---

[40] Pobojewska, A. 1996. Biologiczne "a priori" człowieka a realizm teoriopoznawczy [*Man's Biological "A Priori" versus Theoretical-Cognitive Realism*]. Łódź, 68.

[41] Ibid., 58.

[42] Ibid., 62.

[43] Ibid., 66.

sexual partner).[44] This opening perforce involves the field in which the body is "situated" (*Positionsfeld*) and—being open—incorporated, through which it becomes a part of a certain embracing whole and, together with its situation field, creates the co-called "circle of life" (*Kreis des Lebens*).[45]

At a first glance the phenomenon of the living body's openness to the surrounding medium appears to question the property of "enclosure" or "seclusion" accepted as its fundamental feature. All doubts will disappear, however, when we realise that the body's "openness" and "enclosure" essentially concern its two different aspects: the aspect of its physicality and the aspect in which it is "alive." As a physical object in spatial boundaries the body is always closed and as such secluded from the exterior, but it is simultaneously open on the strength of its organisation, which is a property it is entitled to owing to its supreme property of life. Both properties stem from the law of the realisation of the border and as such are two sides of a constant inner conflict typical for living organisms.

RESUME

Looking back at the beginnings of philosophical anthropology as an independent discipline from an already considerable distance in time, we can clearly see methodological and programmatic similarities and differences between its main representatives. Plessner's theory doubtless stands out by its strong anchoring in the Kantian tradition. The reconstruction of the leading assumptions, theses and postulates contained in the two works which were fundamental for the German anthropologist's philosophical evolution revealed numerous direct or indirect references to the Kantian thought. In the first, early text *Krisis der transzendentalen Wahrheit im Anfang* Plessner severely criticised the phenomenological method, arguing that a coherent, aprioric transcendental philosophy system could not be built along "reflective-analytical" lines. He found a more adequate method in Kant's deduction of synthetic *a priori* concepts based on the primal principle of the apperception of the transcendental I, which is simultaneously the synthetic rule which governs deduction. According to Kant, it had to be accepted as a logical necessity, while for Plessner it was subject to the free choice of an autonomous subject. This, however, means that the transcendental system could no longer lay claims on universality as the autonomy principle opened the door to the construction of an alternative system based on a different primal principle. The contradiction between the intention to create a universal system and the critical reflection which discovers the moment of arbitrariness underlying the system's construction was to Plessner the main cause of the transcendental method's crisis. Overcoming the crisis demanded philosophy's ac-

---

[44] Plessner, H. 1965. *Die Stufen ...*, op. cit., 191.
[45] Ibid., 191, 193.

ceptance of the primate of practical over theoretical reason as the moment of absolute freedom which by free decision defined and disciplined further theoretical reflection not only limited the validity of the transcendental system but offered philosophical reflection the possibility to transgress its boundaries and carry out critical corrections. In Plessner's view the rigorous limitation of theory's validity to experience and subjecting it to the tribunal of practical reason was a necessary safeguard in light of the currently mounting tendency towards the scientific objectification of man.

In his third programmatic work *Die Stufen des Organischen und der Mensch* Plessner attempted to employ Kant's deductive method for the construction of his own system of organic forms. In the main question—about a criterion that would yield a tool enabling a justifiable distinction between animate and inanimate nature—he referred to the analyses contained in Kant's *Critique of Judgment*. Plessner's deductions passed through three stages. In the first, he posed the assumption that living bodies given in evidence are characterised by a specific moment of dual aspectuality. From this he went on to formulate a law of possessing a border as a constituting principle for the appearance and experiencing of the phenomenon of life. The next step entailed the introduction of the "positionality" category as a principle which defined the body's relation to its boundaries. According to Plessner, his theory of "organic stages" was aprioric, however not on the strength of its starting-point but its regressive method. In other words, unlike Kant he did not want to develop a deductive system from concepts alone but to supply biological facts with their conditions of possibility in light of a basic law defining the living body's relation to its borders. This led Plessner to the definition of "organic models" which functioned as "liaisons" enabling the direct comprehension of essence through a cognitive focus on physical matter—essence which revealed itself in the unity of body and spirit. Plessner specified the organic model by means of the "category" concept (in reference to the *Critique of Pure Reason*). Finally, however, he departed from the Kantian approach to align categories with forms, which belong neither alone to the subject nor alone to the object but are the conditions of the possibility of harmony between the two. This way Plessner freed "his" categories from their Kantian relation with the cognising subject with the purpose of extending their application to more fundamental levels of existence.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR — assistant professor at the Contemporary Anthropology Faculty of the Philosophy Institute at Nicolaus Copernicus University; research fields**:** contemporary German philosophy, philosophical anthropology. Major publications (books): 2008. *Antropologia mimesis. Studium myśli Waltera Benjamina i Theodora W. Adorna* [The Anthropology of Mimesis. A Study of the Thought of Walter Benjamin and Theodore W. Adorno]. Nowa Wieś; 2008. (with Stanisław Czerniak) *Cielesność,*

kompensacja, mimesis. Wokół pojęciowego instrumentarium współczesnej antropologii filozoficznej [*Physicality, Compensation, Mimesis. The Conceptual Instruments of Contemporary Philosophical Anthropology*]. Warszawa; 2013. *Homo defectus w kulturze późnej nowoczesności. Geneza i ewolucja antropobiologii i teorii instytucji Arnolda Gehlena* [Homo Defectus in Late Modern Culture. The Genesis and Evolution of Arnold Gehlen's Anthropobiology and Institution Theory]. Toruń.

E-mail: metasis@umk.pl

Wojciech Włoch

EPISTEMOLOGICAL–NORMATIVE FUNCTION OF THE BASIC NORM IN HANS KELSEN'S PURE THEORY OF LAW

ABSTRACT

The objective of the article is to present Hans Kelsen's basic norm concept that allows the combination of the two relevant dimensions in relation to juridical science, namely the positivity and validity of law. The role of the concept of basic norm is presented by the author of the *Reine Rechtslehre* with reference to Kant (read through the works by H. Cohen) as a concept enabling formulation of an answer to the question "To what extent is it possible to interpret certain facts as objectively valid legal norms?" The epistemological problem of the object of cognition of juridical science is connected with the issue of normativity. According to Kelsen, only the assumption of a certain non-positive hypothetical norm regulating the legislation of norms of a given system enables normative interpretation of certain facts. The basic norm authorizes the way of issuing norms, yet not their content. The structure of the legal order creates a hierarchical system in which the higher category norms delegate the law-making power to create the lower category norms. The legal system creates a dynamic system of norms.

Keywords: Kelsen's Pure Theory of Law; Kant; science of law; normativity; positive law.

0. INTRODUCTION

According to Hans Kelsen the Pure Theory of Law is a "theory of positive law in general."[1] As H. L. A. Hart aptly indicates, the theory postulated by Kelsen "is a general theory which in effect tells the jurist concerned with some particular legal system how to 'represent' or describe that system; what sorts of 'concepts' he should use and what he should not use."[2] The task of the Pure Theory of Law is to provide such a definition of the object of the science of law

---

[1] Kelsen, H. 2005. *Pure Theory of Law*. Trans. Knight, M. New Jersey, 1. (hereafter: PTL).

[2] Hart, H. L. A. 1998. *Kelsen Visited* in *Normativity and Norms. Critical Perspectives on Kelsenian Themes*. Ed. Paulson, S.L. and B. Litschewski-Paulson. Oxford, 72.

that would allow to state that it constitutes a separate field of knowledge with a determined method. Kelsen formulates his research programme with reference to Kant:

> "Kant asks: 'How is it possible to interpret without a metaphysical hypothesis, the facts perceived by our senses, in the laws of nature formulated by natural science?' In the same way, the Pure Theory of Law asks: 'How is it possible to interpret without recourse to meta-legal authorities, like God or nature, the subjective meaning of certain facts as a system of objectively valid legal norms describable in rules of law?' "[3]

From this point of view, the epistemological problem concerned with becoming acquainted with the science of law is linked to the issue of normativity. The concept of basic norm is to allow the combination of the two dimensions, namely, the positivity and validity of law.

1. NEO-KANTIAN DIMENSION OF THE PURE THEORY OF LAW

Kelsen formulates the theory of basic norm with reference to Kant's philosophy, whose influence is, however, actually limited to a certain characteristic reception of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. As Kelsen states:

> "Just as the transcendental logical principles of cognition (in the sense of Kant) are not empirical laws, but merely the conditions of all experience, the basic norm itself is no positive legal rule, no positive statue, because it has not been made, but is simply presupposed as the condition of all positive legal norms."[4]

Kelsen does not associate the issue of normativity of law with the question of its moral rightness but rather with a certain form of interpretation of empirical data. It should be noted that Kelsen's reference to Kant's philosophy does not refer directly to its historical form as he read Kant through Hermann Cohen's works,[5] and Cohen himself had a say in the formulation of the theory of basic norm.

---

[3] *Pure Theory of Law* (PTL), 2005. op. cit., 202.

[4] Kelsen, H. 1949. "Natural Law Doctrine and Legal Positivism" (hereafter: NLD). Trans. Wedberg, A. In: Kelsen, H. 1949. *General Theory of Law and State.* Cambridge (hereafter: GTL), 436.

[5] "A point of special significance is that just as Cohen understood Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* as theory of experience, so likewise I seek to apply the transcendental method to a theory of positive law. If one understands the 'positive' law as 'empirical' law, law in experience, or 'legal experience' (...), then the Pure Theory of Law is indeed empiricistic—but empiricism in the same sense as Kant's transcendental philosophy"; Kelsen, H. 1998. "The Pure Theory of Law, 'Labandism', and Neo-Kantianism. A Letter to Renato Treves" (Letter). In: *Normativity and Norms. Critical Perspectives on Kelsenian Themes.* Ed. Paulson S.L. and B. Litschewski-Paulson. Oxford, 171–172. See Ernst Cassirer: "Dinge' sind uns nicht anders denn als Inhalte möglicher Erfahrung geben; diese letztere selbst aber erschöpft sich niemals in der Materie der besonderen

"What is essential is that the theory of the basic norm arises completely from the *Method of Hypothesis* developed by Cohen. The basic norm is the answer to the question: What is the presupposition underlying the very possibility of interpreting material facts that are qualified as legal acts, that is, those acts by means of which norms are issued or applied? This is a question posed in the truest spirit of transcendental logic."[6]

With such an interpretation the basic norm becomes "the transcendental-logical condition" for the objective validity of legal norms.[7]

Kelsen's Neo-Kantianism is connected with his particular "general attitude" towards his studies. Just as the characteristic feature of Neo-Kantianism was its opposition to naturalism, Kelsen opposed empirical reduction of norms to facts. As Neo-Kantianism, following Kant, distinguished "reality" from "duty," "is" (*Sein*) from "ought" (*Sollen*), for Kelsen this difference constituted the basis allowing to define the object of legal knowledge (here a particular reference to Badenian Neo-Kantianism). As Neo-Kantianism focused on the formal conditions for the validity of science, similarly Kelsen studied the formal conditions for the normative data interpretation (here a particular reference to Marburg School). When we define Kelsen's theory as "Neo-Kantian" the term is understood in its general sense, i.e., as a theory inspired both by Kant's philosophy and Neo-Kantianism in the strict sense. If, generally speaking, the question of validity of scientific knowledge constituted the main interest of Neo-Kantianism, Kelsen's Pure Theory of Law could be interpreted as a theory answering to the question of validity of legal sciences. Thus, it would constitute rather a theory that was inspired by and did not strictly elaborate on the ideas of the followers of Neo-Kantianism, however, the objection to naturalistic reductionism, the emphasis on the formal aspect as well as strict observance of the differentiation between factual (*Sein*) and normative (*Sollen*) statements causes Kelsen's Pure Theory of Law to distinguish itself through the characteristic "Neo-Kantian dimension."[8] The basic norm theory, on the other hand, would

---

Wahrnehmungen, sondern schliesst die Beziehung auf bestimmte formale Grundsätze der Verknüpfung notwendig ein;" Cassirer, E. 1912. "Herman Cohen und die Erneuerung der Kantischen Philosophie." *Kant-Studien*, 17, 259.

[6] Kelsen, H. 1998. "The Pure Theory of Law …," op. cit., 174.

[7] PTL, 202; see also Verdross, A. 2010. "Die gesellschaftswissenschaftlichen Grundlagen der Völkerrechtstheorie." In *Die Wiener rechtstheoretische Schule*, vol. 2. Ed. Klecatsky, H. R., R. Marcic, H. Schambeck/ Wien: "Der Grundgedanke der modernen Rechtstheorie ist das Prinzip der hierarchischen Ordnung der Rechtssätze in einem einheitlichen System auf der Grundlage einer einheitlichen Grundnorm oder Grundreihe. Da nun für die staatlichen Rechtsordnungen die Staatsverfassung (im materiellen, aristotelischen Sinne) diese oberste Rechtsgrundlage abgibt, von der erst die übrigen Rechtssätze ihre Rechtskraft herleiten, wird die Grundnorm auch als Verfassung oder in neukantianischer Terminologie als Ursprungsnorm oder Ursprungshypothese bezeichnet," 1715.

[8] More in: 1998. *Normativity and Norms. Critical Perspectives on Kelsenian Themes*. Ed. Paulson, S.L. and B. Litschewski-Paulson. Part 3.A . Oxford,; see Paulson, S. L.. 2000. "On the Puzzle Surrounding Hans Kelsen's Basic Norm." *Ratio Juris*, Vol. 13, No. 3.

constitute an attempt to answer the question of objective validity of legal norms which at the same time is a question of peculiarity of the object of cognition of juridical sciences in "the spirit of transcendental philosophy": "the hypothetical basic norm answers the question: how is positive law possible as an object of cognition, as an object of juridical science; and, consequently, how is juridical science possible?"[9]

2. NORM AS A SCHEME OF INTERPRETATION

The starting point to Kelsenian analysis of a "legal act of cognition" is the assumption that there "exists" certain, purely legal, cognition, whereas the objective of the theory of law is to explain the course it takes.[10] The object of such cognition is the law in its specific (proper) sense.

Generally speaking, we may state that the law is a system of norms regulating human behaviour. In this sense the law is understood as a sort of a social order distinguishable from other types of social norms (e.g. moral obligations) by the fact that its norms are burdened with sanctions (an organised compulsion). Nevertheless, may seeing the compliance of behaviour with an order imposed by compulsion be sufficient as a criterion for the recognition of law? How would we distinguish execution of a punishment adjudicated by a final and binding sentence of a court from the fact that John incapacitated George? What are causes of attributing certain facts a legal meaning?

According to Kelsen, legal meaning does not result directly from empirically observable incidents (data) but rather from their specific interpretation. For the sake of simplification, we may begin with a description of a particular human behaviour as a certain incident: "People assemble in a large room, make speeches, some raise their hands, others not."[11] From a purely empirical depiction we see nothing beyond the stated facts, namely that certain people behaved "such and such." From the point of view of a lawyer, the above description means more than that: it is a description of a legislative process. The legal interpretation refers to particular data (facts); however, it provides them with a characteristic sense, which is not their immanent feature. Thus, facts depicted in a purely empirical and direct manner do not constitute an object of legal cognition. If the object of cognition is not constituted by the facts then probably it is a factor which allows their specific interpretation, i.e., provides the legal meaning. Hence, there is a question on the conditioning of such an interpretation. In the above example people belonging to a certain assembly the legal meaning of which consists in passing acts may interpret their participation in it as well as

---

[9] NLD, 437.
[10] Paulson, S.L. 1992. "Introduction." In: Keslen, H. *Introduction to The Problems of Legal Theory.* Trans. Litschewski-Paulson, B. and S. L. Paulson, Oxford, XXXI.
[11] PTL, 2.

the activities undertaken by them as establishing the law. However, it is also possible that they interpret it differently, e.g., as an arena for the realisation of particular (economic or political) interests or reducing the above legal meaning in any other way. Thus, if we are able to differentiate certain subjective, currently shared convictions of social actors concerning the meaning of a particular activity and its specific legal meaning it would mean that the legal interpretation of a specified fact does not refer to the subjective meaning, i.e., the one currently shared by social actors, but rather to the meaning that we may present as objective: valid for all. Hence, the legal meaning is independent in two ways: firstly, it does not result directly from fact descriptions (although it refers to them), and so it does not have a cause-and-effect nature; secondly, it does not result from subjective interpretation supplied by social actors. The legal meaning of a certain event (human behaviour) is not contained in its empirical (cause-and-effect) description but "the specifically legal meaning of this act is derived from a "norm" whose content refers to the act; this norm confers legal meaning to the act, so that it may be interpreted according to this norm. The norm functions as a scheme of interpretation" (*Deutungsschema*).[12] So, the main object of legal cognition is found in norms, whereas the facts serve such a function only to the extent to which they may be attributed normative meaning, i.e. be interpreted with reference to norms.[13]

An empirical incident may be defined as a certain fact the expression of which rests in statements that something *is* (the so-called is-statements), whereas by a norm "we mean that something *ought* to be or *ought* to happen, especially that a human being ought to behave in a specific way,"[14] where "the verbal expression of it is an ought-statement."[15] Norms are specific statements expressing a command, permission or authorisation (*gebieten, erlauben, ermächtigen*) concerning particular behaviour, addressed to specified addressees (a person or a group of people) and established by a certain subject (a person or a group of people). In other words: the sense expressed by norms is "ought" to behave in a determined manner. Thus, for Kelsen "ought" constitutes "a kind of deontic variable ranging over what he terms prescriptions (or commands), per-

---

[12] PTL, 4; see Kelsen, H. 1967. *Reine Rechtslehre* (zweite Auflage) (hereafter as: RRL), with Introduction: *Das Problem der Gerechtigkeit*, Wien, 3 (RRL).

[13] "Ja, es bedeutet nicht einmal, daß ein Kausalzusammenhang von der Rechtswissenschaft überhaupt zu ignorieren sei. Denn das Recht selbst kann sich auf einem solchen Kausalzusammenhang in den von ihm als Bedingung oder Folge statuieren Tatbeständen beziehen (...) Dann hat auch die normative Rechtswissenschaft diesen Kausalzusammenhang in Betracht zu ziehen; aber nur sekundär;" H. Kelsen, H. "Was ist die Reine Rechtslehre?" In: *Die Wiener rechtstheoretische Schule*. Vol. 1. Ed. H. R. Klecatsky, R. Marcic, H. Schambeck, 503.

[14] PTL, 4.

[15] H. Kelsen, H. 1973. "On the Concept of Norm." In: *Essays in Legal and Moral Philosophy*, selected by O. Weinberger. Trans. Heath, Dordrecht–Boston, 217. It is a fragment of: Kelsen, H. 1979. *Allgemeine Theorie der Normen*, Wien, 2 (ATN).

missions, and authorizations."[16] With reference to a statement of a given fact we may say that such a statement is true or false, whereas a norm may only be referred to as valid or not valid (*gültig oder nicht gültig*).[17] The science of law, i.e. the norm-oriented science depicts its object with the use of statements, which are neither affirmative (purely descriptive) nor imperative (ought-statements). The science of law describes norms with the use of "descriptive ought statements,"[18] i.e. "in the form of statements to the effect that 'if such and such conditions are fulfilled, then such and such a sanction shall follow'."[19] Hence, it is necessary to distinguish the object of the science of law, i.e. the ought-statements from sentences formulated by it itself, i.e. "the descriptive ought statements." The science of law itself does not command but rather describes certain ought statements, or in other words: informs of the norms.[20] The statements of the science of law as a certain type of descriptive sentences may be defined as true or false. To summarize: a certain behaviour "B" of a certain "X" is interpreted as having legal meaning based on a certain norm "N" (scheme of interpretation); the norm "N" expresses the prescription to follow a particular behaviour "B" (imperative expression); the science of law states that within a particular legal system "by force of the norm 'N' each 'X' should behave in a specified manner 'B', which imposes certain consequences" (a descriptive ought statement). The evaluation of a certain behaviour as compliant or non-compliant with the law made on the basis of a specified effective norm constitutes a "juristic value judgement."[21]

3. SEMANTIC ANTI-REDUCTIONISM

The statement that the object of getting to know the science of law consists in norms is not exhausting as such a perception concerns a particular kind of norms characterised, on the one hand, by "positivity" and, on the other, by objective validity. Let us now deal with the first issue.

As stated above, a norm expresses a certain "ought." The limitation of the scope of research on the science of law to the law understood as a certain normative order implies the obligation to disregard all the presumed transcendent sources of norms (e.g. Nature, God). The "positivity of law" means that the law is established with the use of a certain act which might be understood as an act

---

[16] Hart, H. L. A. 1998. *Kelsen's Doctrine of the Unity of Law in Normativity and Norms. Critical Perspectives on Kelsenian Themes*. Ed. Paulson, S.L. and B. Litschewski-Paulson. Oxford 1998, 570.

[17] PTL, 19; RRL, 19.

[18] Hart, H. L. A..1998, *Kelsen's Doctrine of the Unity of Law in Normativity and Norms …*, op. cit., 569.

[19] GTL, 45.

[20] Alexy, R. 2002. *The Argument from Injustice. A Reply to Legal Positivism*. Trans. Litschewski-Paulson, B. and S. L. Paulson. Oxford, 112.

[21] GTL, 47.

of will which determines a certain norm. Thus, what is it that causes the act of will of a specified individual or a group of individuals to constitute a norm? If a certain behaviour B has a normative (legal) interpretation pursuant to norm N1, the relation between the norm N1 and the act that establishes it may be understood either (1) as a relation that is normatively defined, i.e. the act of establishment of the norm N1 is regulated by a superior norm N2, or (2) a relation conditioned factually, i.e. depending on certain empirical (actual) properties on the subject establishing N1. The second element of the above alternative would be linked to the statement that the constitution of law itself does not have a legal character, e.g. it is a pure act of political intent. In such a case we may assume[22] that the relationship between the subject creating the norm N1 and its validity would depend either on (a) the fear of the power (force) of legislator directed towards those who do not observe the law, or (b) the common custom (current behaviour) of addressees to behave according to the will of legislator. In such a case normative interpretation would be redundant, whereas social relations regulated in such a manner could be described in purely factual categories as a specified pattern of forces or a manner of behaviour. In short: from a fact it is possible to derive only another fact. The existence of the science of law as a norm-oriented science would depend on the justification of the possibility of legal interpretation of a legislative act in which the act of establishment of norm N1 would be regulated by norm N2.

The difference in inference based on sentences expressing facts and sentences expressing norms may be observed through the analysis of semantic features of the theoretical and normative syllogism.[23] The theoretical syllogism in general represents a certain type of inference in which a conclusion, whose content is included in the content of the major premise, is drawn from a sentence being the major premise and the sentence being the minor one:

1) All humans are mortal
2) Socrates is human
3) Socrates is mortal

Let us consider the following example:
1) All commands of a ruler are the law
2) X is the ruler
3) The commands of X are the law

The term "commands of a ruler" may be variously interpreted. In this example we shall assume that it means possessing sufficient means of compulsion to ensure the fulfilment of commands. In such a situation, each of those who possess the means of the kind is the legislator; while referring to the frequently

---

[22] Only two interpretations are adopted here for the sake of simplicity.
[23] Kelsen, H. *Das Problem der Gerechtigkeit* (hereafter: PG). In: RRL, 363–364.

examined case of a road robber:[24] a road bandit's command "hand over your money to me," accompanied by adequate means of compulsion is the law in the area controlled by this robber and his gang. If we make the fact of "domineering commanding ability" a starting point for the inference, then the conclusions will be in form of sentences affirming that "a given X possesses it (or not)," yet what stems out of it is not that the commands of X o u g h t to be obeyed but merely that certain individuals obey or do not obey the X's commands.

We shall try to slightly transform our syllogism:

    1) One should act according to the ruler's commands
    2) X is the ruler
    3) One should act according to the X's commands

In the above inference the major premise and the conclusion are ought sentences, while the minor premise is a sentence expressing a certain fact. In such a presentation the situation of our ruler changes in such a way that by virtue of a general norm (the major premise) when a certain fact occurs (the minor premise) the valid norm is the one which obliges to subordination to his commands. The ruler's commands gain a normative interpretation through the reference to the norm authorizing his actions: by virtue of a general norm (the major premise) the ruler's act of will (the minor premise) is the binding law (conclusion). According to Kelsen, duty cannot be reduced to sentences on reality, since (as in the stated above normative syllogism) the validity of a certain norm N1 may be deduced only through reference to a higher category norm N2 which regulates the act of issuing N1.

The "positivity" of law is connected with the fact that the law "is made by human will."[25] The result of human will constitutes a norm as long as this act is an implementation of a certain higher category norm. The thesis stating that the validity of norm N1 may depend on the validity of norm N2, defining the creation of norm N1 is a consequence of a general thesis on the semantic non-reductiveness of sentences expressing norms to the sentences stating facts.[26] As Kelsen puts it:

> "Der Geltungsgrund einer positiven, das ist einer durch einen Willensakt gesetzen Norm ist nicht der diese oder höhere Norm setzende Akt, das ist der Akt, dessen objektiver Sinn die niedere oder die höhere Norm ist, sondern die höhere Norm, die als objektiv gültig vorausgesetz wird und die die Begründung der Geltung der niederen Norm eben dadurch leistet, daß sie den subjektiven Sinn des diese Norm setzenden Aktes als dessen objektiven Sinn, das heißt: als objektiv gültige Norm legitimiert."[27]

---

[24] PTL, 44f.

[25] NLD, 392.

[26] See: Raz, J. 1998. "Purity of the Pure Theory." In: *Normativity and Norms. Critical Perspectives on Kelsenian Themes.* Ed. Paulson, S. L. and B. Litschewski Paulson. Oxford, 238–239.

[27] PG, 364.

In brief: the determination of a norms' validity refers us to another norm. The act of legislation as an act of will (the subjective dimension) gains the meaning of a law-making and binding act (the objective dimension) only when it is an implementation of a norm itself. The principal question for the Pure Theory of Law is then the justification of transforming the meaning of certain facts into a normative meaning (the "is" category into "ought to be" one),[28] without leading to an infinite regression.

4. THE BASIC NORM AND THE LEGITIMIZATION PRINCIPLE

The general conclusion which results from the analysis of the normative syllogism is the following assertion "the norm whose validity is stated in the major premise is the reason for the validity of the norm whose validity is stated in the conclusion."[29] With such a presentation of the basis for the validity of the norms two issues arise: the question of the limit of the norms' validation dependency and the question of the relations between the norms. Can the validity of a norm involving the validity of a higher category norm be examined *ad infinitum*? Do the norms create a certain order (system)?[30]

An attempt at solving the aforementioned problems is the concept of the basic norm (*die Grundnorm*) which would also constitute the final basis for the validity of norms as well as the criterion for belonging to a particular system. Let us assume that the norm N1 is valid by virtue of a higher category norm N2, whereas the validity of N2 is similarly subject to a higher category norm N3, etc. The validity of norms of the positive law lies in authorizing the higher category norms to establish the lower ones: N1 $\rightarrow$ law-making act $\rightarrow$ N2 $\rightarrow$ law-making act$\rightarrow$ N3, etc. Thus, one may ask if it is possible at all to speak sensibly of such a kind of authorization remaining on the grounds of the science of law, i.e. not accepting any non-legal criterion (e.g. moral rule of justice). According to Kelsen, this problem is solved by assuming a certain basic norm providing an authorization for establishing "the first law-making act" which in a way "launches" the sequence of creating norms on different levels. The assumption of such a norm allows also for ascribing a particular norm to a given system through the possibility of reducing a sequence of normatively authorized legislation to a given basic norm. Therefore a certain first positive law-making act, considered as a certain fact, gains a normative interpretation by an assumption that its establishment took place by virtue of a basic norm and since such an act would be "the first act of positive law," the authorizing norm cannot be positive in its character. In other words: a particular

---

[28] See Alexy, R. 2002, *The Argument from Injustice. A Reply to Legal Positivism*, op. cit., 105.

[29] PTL, 194.

[30] In this study the detailed discussion of the issue of system unity and the conflict of norms is omitted. Criticism on the subject, see Raz, J. 1998. "Kelsen's Theory of the Basic Norm" and Hart, H. L. A. 1998. "Kelsen's Doctrine of the Unity of Law." In: *Normativity and Norms. Critical Perspectives on Kelsenian Themes.* Ed. Paulson, S. L. and B. Litschewski-Paulson, Oxford.

norm is valid as long as it belongs to a certain system, while the system of norms results from an assumed basic norm. The basic norm is thus a specific limit to a positivistic examination of law, being its necessary assumption at the same time, since it enables a normative interpretation of law-making acts. The basic norm itself is not subject to examination but it is assumed (as a hypothesis) for the purpose of normative interpretation of law-making acts.

An example illustrating the necessity of assuming a basic norm is the case of the "first constitution," often referred to by Kelsen.[31] Examining a certain particular individual norm, e.g. a decision, we ask for the reason for its validity, which refers us to a decree (ordinance), a decree—to a statute (act) and the statute to a constitution. Thus we ask for the validity of the constitution which refers us to the previous constitution, etc., up to the "historically first constitution." Why should we be bound by this first act establishing a certain legal order? The first constitution has validity by virtue of the basic norm, not positive, but assumed, which commands: "One ought to behave as the constitution prescribes."[32] Only the assumption of the basic norm of such a kind allows us to interpret a certain "first law-making act" in a normative and not purely factual way; thus, it allows for perceiving the fact of establishing the "first constitution" in the ought-category. From the perspective of the science of law, which refers only to the positive law and does not reduce the material of its research to the description of facts but interprets its subject as the valid norms, the assumption of a basic norm is a necessary hypothesis:[33]

> "The ultimate hypothesis of positivism is the norm authorizing the historically first legislator. The whole function of this basic norm is to confer law-creating power on the act of the first legislator and on all the other acts based on the first act."[34]

The norms established by virtue of the basic norm belong to a certain legal system and as its component parts they have a normative validity:

> "The principle that a norm of a legal order is valid until its validity is terminated in a way determined by this legal order or replaced by the validity of another norm of this order, is called the principle of legitimacy."[35]

_____

[31] PTL, 8, 45–46, 200–201.

[32] PTL, 201.

[33] In ATN Kelsen presents a weaker version of his theory, interpreting the basic norm as fiction: "Eine Fiktion ist nach Vaihinger, (...) ein Denkbehelf, dessen man sich bedient, wenn man den Denkzweck mit dem gegebenen Material nicht erreichen kann (...). Der Denkzweck der Grundnorm ist: die Begründung der Geltung der eine positive Moral- oder Rechtsordnung bildenden Normen;" ATN, 206–207; see Kelsen, H. 2010. *Die Funktion der Verfassung in Die Wiener rechtstheoretische Schule.* Vol. 2. Ed. Klecatsky, H. R., R. Marcic and H. Schambeck. Wien, 1620.

[34] GTL, 116.

[35] PTL, 209.

The subject of the science of law is constituted by the norms considered as belonging to a certain system. However, there is some doubt: let us assume that we examine a certain norm N and we ask about its binding effect; is it not so that the choice of this norm itself is made by virtue of a certain criterion allowing, even prior to the reconstructive backing to the basic norm, to state that a certain norm is a legal norm (and therefore it belongs to a certain system) and not a norm of a different kind (e.g. a moral one)? If the basic norm is to serve as a criterion for belonging to a certain legal system, is it not necessary then, examining the belonging of a given norm to a particular system, to have at least an initial independent criterion for identification?[36] Is it not necessary to have also a certain rule, limiting the use of the basic norm hypothesis, i.e. narrowing down the scope of using such a hypothesis?

5. THE PRINCIPLE OF EFFECTIVENESS AND THE "BASIC NORM SYLLOGISM"

The subject of pure science of law is to be the positive law, i.e. one which is established by virtue of the legislator's act of will. Perhaps is it not necessary at all to assume any basic norm in order to explain the norm's belonging to a certain system? Perhaps instead of accepting a hypothesis would it be sufficient to state the fact that the practice of individuals and social institutions allows for the statement that "this and that" constitutes a legal system?[37]

With reference to the normative syllogism examined above one ought to observe that its minor premise is a fact. After all, what are to be interpreted are not the norms themselves but certain kinds of behaviour which they define. Even a glance at the structure of such syllogism allows us to notice a certain structural connection between the norms and the facts. In order to demonstrate this connection we shall discuss the revolution case examined by Kelsen:[38] a state regulated by a constitution C1 undergoes a political takeover and a constitution C2 is established (in a different course than the one designed in the C1). Considering this event, let us examine two cases (1) an outside observer notices that the addressees of the legal norms behave in accordance with C1; (2) an outside observer notices that the addressees of the legal norms behave in accordance with C2. In the case (1) we may imply that the takeover was not successful and the C1 with its basic norm is still in force, whereas in (2) it is the other way round: a new constitution C2 was established with an assumed new basic norm. If we shall define the effectiveness of legal norms as a certain degree[39] of the law's power to influence the addressees' behaviour, then the example stated

---

[36] See Hart, H. L. A. 1998. *Kelsen's Doctrine of the Unity of Law in Normativity and Norms …*, op. cit., 579–581.

[37] Hart, H. L. A. 1994. *The Concept of Law.* Oxford, 108–110.

[38] PTL, 209.

[39] What is meant is not the full compliance but identifying a certain minimum of compliance; see GTL, 120.

above demonstrates that the condition which makes us examine a certain set of norms as a system which binds its addressees is the fact of its effectiveness. In the case (1) we do not think that C2 is binding, while in the case (2) that it is C1. Nevertheless the condition of effectiveness is not to be confused with the reason for binding, since the latter may be defined solely by norms. The effectiveness of the legal system does not constitute its normative legitimization. The examination of validity of a particular constitution C in the aforementioned cases takes place on condition that a certain constitution C is effective. If we are to consider a particular system of norms as a system of legal norms (inevitably connected with coercion) then it has to be a system (considered in its entirety) which is effective, i.e. one which demonstrates the connection between the positive law-making acts with the social practice. Such a system derives its normative reason for binding from the basic norm.

> "The norms of a positive legal order are valid because the fundamental rule regulating their creation, that is, the basic norm, is presupposed to be valid, not because they are effective; but they are valid only as long as this legal order is effective. As soon as the constitution loses its effectiveness, that is, as soon as the legal order as a whole based on the constitution loses its effectiveness, the legal order and every single norm lose their validity."[40]

The effectiveness of the system may be considered as a condition, yet not as a reason for the norm's binding. The principle of effectiveness is a limitation on the principle of legitimization, excluding fictional assumptions of a fictional system's validity from the considerations.

From the standpoint of the theory describing the law as a system of valid norms, the assumption of a solely empirical criterion (e.g. Hart's rule of recognition[41]) would involve some difficulty: the impossibility of moving from the "is" category to the "ought to be" one.[42] The legal system as a whole may gain a normative dimension as long as the underlying basic norm which regulates passing the law within the framework of this system is assumed.

> "The function of the basic norm is to make possible the normative interpretation of certain facts, and that means, the interpretation of facts as the creation and application of valid norms."[43]

The connection between the principle of legitimization based on the concept of the basic norm and the principle of effectiveness is aptly defined by R. Alexy in his formulation of the "basic norm syllogism":[44]

---

[40] PTL, 212

[41]. Hart, H. L. A. 1998. *Kelsen's Doctrine of the Unity of Law in Normativity and Norms…*, op. cit., 100f.

[42] Alexy, R. 2002. *The Argument from Injustice. A Reply to Legal Positivism …*, op. cit., 123.

[43] GTL, 120.

[44] Alexy, R. 2002. *The Argument from Injustice. A Reply to Legal Positivism …*, op. cit., 98.

1) If a constitution has in fact been issued and is socially efficacious, then it is legally prescribed that one behave in accordance whit this constitution.

2) Constitution C has in fact been issued and is socially efficacious.

3) It is legally prescribed that one behave in accordance whit constitution C.

Assuming a certain basic norm the science of law may examine a particular fact as a law-making act which regulates the way of creating legal norms.[45] The normative function of the basic norm (i.e. the normative interpretation of a certain fact) enables the proper perception of the science of law, i.e. examining the law as valid norms. The normative function is connected with the epistemological function.

6. WHAT DOES THE "LEGAL MAN" ACTUALLY DO?

In order to capture the idea of the epistemological function of the basic norm we shall assume the perspective of a researcher of a certain system. This researcher has some factual knowledge about provisions and their effectiveness at his disposal; he also has a collection of decrees and acts considered in a given society to be the law and a text of constitution regulating the legislation process. However, our researcher does not want to describe the legal history of this system, nor its social functionality, but only the norms as the ones which are valid in a given legal system. According to Kelsen's guidelines he may carry out an "apagogic reasoning." It is based on the thesis: "each norm is valid by virtue of another higher category norm" and certain data: "a certain system of norms is considered binding," which we want to justify. The researcher considers two alternative theories:

Alternative 1: the validity of the positive law norm involved merely the reference to another positive, higher-category law.

Alternative 2: the validity of the positive law results from the assumed basic norm authorizing the "first legislator" to issue a normative act.

Alternative 1 leads to a regression *ad infinitum* and thus speaking about the normative validity of the law makes no sense,[46] while by accepting alternative 2 the researcher may regard the constitution of an investigated country as binding, i.e. he treats it as one established by virtue of authorization established by the "first legislator." Thus he may describe, with the use of "descriptive ought-sentences," the system of binding legal norms which he is interested in.

---

[45] The basic norm does not have to be connected with a particular type of establishing norms: it may limit the general legislation to acts only but it can also accept a custom, define the priority of the national or international legislation; GTL, 114f.; PTL, 214f.

[46] A. Ross, by reducing positivism to solely empirical and descriptive dimension, excludes at the same time the relevance of the issue of the law validity: Ross, A. 1998. "Validity and the Conflict between Legal Positivism and Natural Law." In: *Normativity and Norms. Critical Perspectives on Kelsenian Themes.* Ed. Paulson, S. L. and B. Litschewski-Paulson. Oxford, 149.

In the Pure Theory of Law the researcher of law in his approach to the inves-
tigated subject accepts a certain perspective which J. Raz defined as "the point
of view of the l e g a l m a n."[47] It involves an approach to the subject of the
study which is particular for the researchers of law: regardless of personal pref-
erences and the values which the researcher professes, when he starts describing
a particular legal system he assumes its validity. The statements of the science
of law may acquire the form of conditional statements and in this case the
norms practically (subjectively) do not need to be regarded as valuable. "If the
legal man is right, they say, then this is what you ought to do." As regards the
basic norm, in turn: "if the basic norm is valid one ought to ...". The use of con-
ditional statements allows to claim: "what the law is if it is valid."[48] However,
the "legal man" (not only a researcher but also a practitioner) does not describe
a hypothetical system but a binding one, and its description ought to be verifi-
able. Making definite statements about law is possible as long as the researcher
(theorist and practitioner) really assumes the basic norm's binding (what, ac-
cording to Kelsen, takes place).[49]

> "By offering this theory of the basic norm, the Pure Theory of Law does not
> inaugurate a new method of legal cognition. It merely makes conscious what
> most legal scientists do, at least unconsciously, when they understand the
> mentioned facts not as causally determined, but instead interpret their sub-
> jective meaning as objectively valid norms, that is, as a normative legal or-
> der, without basing the validity of this order upon a higher, meta-legal norm,
> that is, upon a norm enacted by an authority superior to the legal authority;
> in other words, when they consider as law exclusively positive law."[50]

Regardless of who the researcher of law is and what beliefs he has, as a "le-
gal man" he truly acknowledges the basic norm of a given system, which is the
subject of his study. However, such acknowledgement is of a peculiar nature:
professional[51] and methodological.

7. INDEFINITENESS AND THE THESIS ON THE OPTIONAL CONTENT OF THE LAW

The basic norm as a certain hypothesis enabling the normative interpretation
of law-making acts is a formal rule: it authorizes the way of issuing norms, yet
not their content. "The basic norm of a positive legal order is nothing but the

---

[47] Raz, J. 1998. "Kelsen's Theory of the Basic Norm in Normativity and Norms." In: *Critical Perspectives on Kelsenian Themes.* Ed. Paulson, S. L. and B. Litschewski-Paulson. Oxford, 63.

[48] Raz, J. 1998. "Purity of the Pure Theory." In: *Critical Perspectives on Kelsenian Themes.* Ed. Paulson, S. L. and B. Litschewski-Paulson *Normativity and Norms.* Oxford, 246.

[49] Ibid. 247.

[50] PTL, 204–205.

[51] Raz, J. 1998. "Kelsen's Theory of Basic Norm." In: *Normativity and Norms. Critical Per-spectives on Kelsenian Themes.* Ed. Paulson, S. L. and B. Litschewski-Paulson. Oxford, 65.

fundamental rule according to which the various norms of the order are to be created."[52] It does not constitute a criterion for the assessment of the law as far as the content is concerned, but it defines the legally binding way of its creation. Particular norms do not belong to a certain system in view of their content but because of the way in which they were established. The structure of the legal order creates a hierarchical system (*der Stufenbau*) in which the higher category norms delegate the law-making power to create the lower category norms; in other words: the law itself defines the way in which it is made.[53] In such representation the legal system creates a dynamic system of norms:

> "The dynamic type is characterized by this: the presupposed basic norm contains nothing but the determination of a norm-creating fact, the authorization of a norm-creating authority or (which amounts to the same) a rule that stipulates how the general and individual norms of the order based on the basic norm ought to be created."[54]

A static system, by contrast, involves the content connection between norms, i.e. the possibility of reducing the content of particular norms of the system to the content of the basic norm. If we define the basic norm according to the static system principle then we ought to be able to deduce the possible content of the other norms from the content of the basic norm. Norms of such a system would have validity by virtue of the content connection itself and thus a positive legislative act specifying the content of the general norms would not add anything in relations to the content of the higher category norms. In brief: in the static system the content of particular lower category norms can be deduced by using logical inferential rules from the content of higher category norms, e.g. the norm commanding not to trouble a neighbour can be deduced from the general rule "love thy neighbour." Specifying the general norms in a dynamic system takes place only "by the agency" of the law-making act (act of will) authorized by a proper norm. The dynamic system creates a hierarchical structure in which the connections between the norms are formal and involve delegating the law-making competence, e.g. we cannot deduce the specific position of a prime minister in the government agencies in a given legal order from the general constitutional principle of the separation of powers. "The basic norm supplies only the reason for the validity, but not at the same time the content of the norms constituting the system."[55] The formal character of the basic norm is closely connected to the positive character of the law, since the basic norm of

---

[52] GTL, 114.

[53] PTL, 221. The idea of a hierarchical structure of the law was adopted by Kelsen from his student, A. Merkl; see Merkl, A. 2010. "Prolegomena einer Theorie des rechtlichen Stufenbaues." In: *Die Wiener rechtstheoretische Schule.* Ed. Klecatsky, H. R., R. Marcic, H. Schambeck. Vol. 2. Wien.

[54] PTL, 196.

[55] PTL, 197.

a certain system whose norms are created through the acts of will has to be (if not solely, then primarily) a norm which authorizes these acts as the law-making acts. In a dynamic legal system a law-making act is a specifically creative act: the act of creating the law and not deducing.

Such should be the context for the understanding of the Kelsenian thesis, that "any kind of content might be law."[56] Putting aside the principle of effectiveness and the moral assessment we cannot *a priori* exclude any human behaviour as a possible content of the norms. The Kelsenian thesis does not mean that any law is to be accepted, yet from the perspective of a researcher of the law (the concept of a "legal man") the validity of the law does not depend upon its content, which does not mean that a researcher has to accept it for any other than cognitive reasons. The thesis on the optionality of the content does not lead to a thesis on the uncompromising acceptance of the law ("*Gesetz ist Gesetz*") as a kind of an absolute point of reference (which is what Radbruch accuses positivism of[57]). The Pure Theory of Law somehow "brackets" everything which is not the positive law and from such a perspective it d e s c r i b e s its subject. The content which it presents in this way can be a s s e s s e d, depending on the beliefs and preferences, in a different way but such an assessment no longer lies within the boundaries of the pure science of the law. According to Kelsen, the cognitive perspective is not to be mixed with the assessing one. The Pure Theory of the Law will not provide a lawyer with any guidelines on how to behave within the frameworks of a totalitarian political system. Neither does it pretend to be the all-theory of law including the moral, political, social and psychological dimensions. From this point of view nothing prevents the theorist of law from being a human rights spokesman at the same time or from being an officer of a totalitarian state. Thus, on the one hand, the possible moral justification of one's own actions with the use of epistemological thesis will be merely an ideological rationalization; on the other hand, if we wish to assess a legal system then we must get ourselves acquainted with it first, which means presenting it and describing as the binding law.[58]

With reference to the purely formal presentation of the law, there may be objections that the law frequently defines also the scope of the content of the norms which grant competences for issuing lower category norms and even obliges to issue an act of a particular content. This objection can be answered in two ways. Firstly, a norm does not constitute an inferential connection, but a competency, since even if the authorizing act defines a certain scope of content, it does not logically follow that the authorized agency will issue a particular act.

---

[56] PTL, 198.
[57] Radbruch, G. 2003. "Gesetzliches Unrecht und übergesetzliches Rechts." In: Radbruch, G. *Rechtsphilosophie*, Heidelberg, 211, 215–217.
[58] Ross, A. 1998. "Validity and the Conflict between Legal Positivism and Natural Law"…, op. cit., 154.

Apart from the authorization the establishment of a normative act also requires an act of will, which cannot be foreseen, i.e. the agency ordering the issue of a particular act cannot be 100% sure of the actions of the agency to which the competence has been delegated. Secondly, an authorization to issue a particular norm of a particular content usually defines in a general way (at least as far as the lower category act is concerned) the content of the delegated lawmaking act, because otherwise such an authorization would be superfluous: an executive act would be merely a repetition of the higher category norm.

> "This determination can never be complete. The higher norm cannot bind in every direction the act by which it is applied. There must always be more or less room for discretion, so that the higher norm in relation to the lower one can only have the character of a frame to be filled by this act."[59]

The higher category norms are always in a way underdetermined (e.g. because of the use of terms which do not have a clearly defined scope) and thus they require interpretation. The content of the executive act will inevitably be conditioned by the result of the interpretation process, whose outcome cannot be predicted *a priori*.

This paper aims at presenting H. Kelsen's concept of the basic norm in a general and favourably disposed towards it way. Undoubtedly, this theory generates many problems and controversies: from the general problems of the connection between the law and morality, through the emphasis on the formal side and methodological monism, to the inner problems connected with the issue of the conflict of norms. However, the concept of a basic norm itself, as a certain hypothesis enabling a normative interpretation of facts appears to be crucial and important, as it is an attempt to establish a positivistic "programme" of researching the law which does not reduce the norms to facts and furthermore allows to explain the normative validity of the norms without referring to the extra-legal rules. The basic norm is a non-positive norm assumed as the one which regulates the establishment of norms in the whole system. One may say that it is the only possible non-positive (hypothetical) legal norm. "Just as the transcendental logical principles of cognition (in the sense of Kant) are not empirical laws, but merely the conditions of all experience, the basic norm itself is no positive legal rule, no positive statue, because it has not been made, but simply presupposed as the condition of all positive legal norms. And as one cannot know the empirical world from the transcendental logical principles, but merely by means of them, so positive law cannot be derived from basic norm, but can merely be understood by means of it."[60] The basic norm constitutes the bounda-

---

[59] PTL, 349.
[60] NLD, 436.

ries of positivism, since the basic norm itself is not a positive law, yet without assuming it, one cannot understand the positive law as a system of valid norms.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR — Ph.D. (philosophy of law); The Faculty of Law and Administration, Nicolaus Copernicus University (Toruń, Poland); main scientific interests: Kant's philosophy of law, Kelsen's Pure Theory of Law, the concepts of social contract, the theory of subjective rights.

Marcin Poręba

TWO CONCEPTS OF APRIORITY

ABSTRACT

The paper considers two—in author's belief fundamental—approaches to apriority, which he proposes to call "absolute" and "relative." The first was most fully expressed by Immanuel Kant, the second by Ludwig Wittgenstein. In author's opinion, both derive from empiricist philosophy in its modern form. The concept of experience which is characteristic of modern empiricism forces acceptance of certain experience-independent (*a priori*) assumptions, thanks to which only experience can provide information about objects. Depending on whether we regard these assumptions as independent of all experience or only from a specific context and reference frame and empirical in other contexts, we receive respectively absolute and relative apriority. The author attempts to prove that relative apriority is the continuation, generalisation and radicalisation of the absolute variant.

Keywords: a posteriori; *a priori*; contingency; empiricism; epistemology; epistemological reference frame; Kant; Kripke; necessity; Wittgenstein.

1

My reflections will focus on two ways of understanding apriority, two interpretations of what it means "to be *a priori*", "to apply *a priori*", "to possess *a priori* significance". Of course the apriority concept can be understood in many more ways and has had many—and quite divergent—interpretations over history. The ones I have selected here appear to me to be the most interesting and significant in the context of the contemporary pursuits in epistemology and philosophy of science. Hereinafter I will call them the "absolute" and "relative" apriority concepts, sometimes also—in tribute to their most eminent representatives—the "Kantian" and "Wittgensteinian" understanding of apriority, respectively.

Indeed, on a very general level all apriority variants have one common feature: independence from experience. This, however, is to a large extent illusory

as experience, independence from it and the ends this independence (apriority) is to serve can be understood in so very many different ways that we end up with a multitude of "apriorities" with not much more in common than the name. It is not my intention here to present a typology of all the apriority variants and their components as I assume that my readers hold an interest in epistemology and will be able to draw one up with ease. Instead, I will limit myself to defining the approximate position in this broader landscape of the two apriority concepts mentioned above.

First, both relate to independence from experience understood as *causally conditioned* cognitive communication with the physical and mental world.[1] Without going into certain questions which immediately arise here (e.g. how this cognitive communication relates to perception or introspection) I will only underscore the causal fundament of thus-understood experience, which I consider important for my further reflections. Secondly, both apriority concepts under discussion treat independence as logical independence and not e.g. priority in time or complete causal independence (isolation). In this sense "*a priori*" is that which is insensitive to experience, which experience can neither negate nor confirm. And thirdly, in discussing *a priori* content I will concentrate only on those approaches in which such content is propositional, in other words, which assign apriority primarily to judgments, in a lesser degree to convictions and statements, and only in a very derivative sense to perceptual concepts and structures (like Kant's forms of intuition), certain linguistic properties, etc. These non-judgmental apriority carriers can function as such only insofar as they refer directly to *a priori* judgments (convictions, statements) or contribute essentially to them ("essential" here means closely tied to the apriority of these judgments). *A priori* in this sense are primarily certain concepts, e.g. logical constants, as there is a category of *a priori* judgments and statements which are true o n l y because they contain certain logical constants in certain configurations. For instance, the statement "it is raining or it is not raining," where, of course, the *a priori* components are "or" and "not."

<div align="center">

2

</div>

Let me begin with a remark which will be more a declaration than a thesis as it would be impossible to substantiate it adequately here. It can, however, facilitate the understanding of what I want to say about the apriority concept and apriority itself: I believe that most (if not all) philosophical problems related to the concept of apriority appear within the boundaries of empiricist and not, as

---

[1] Thus-understood experience does not embrace, e.g. Gödel's mathematical intuition because it is not a p p o i n t e d by its objects (objectively existing concepts) in the causal sense of the term. However, in a different understanding of experience—e.g. as that which cannot be exhausted by any consistent system of assumptions—this intuition fully deserves to be considered a kind of experience.

one may at first be led to think, rationalistic epistemology (which is sometimes called "aprioristic"). For rationalistic philosophy the apriority of cognition is unarguable and hence inspires no deeper queries. The problem here is rather the *a posteriori*, the possibility of empirical cognition, from sense perception to the theories deriving from it.

Indeed from a certain point (for me it was Hume's philosophy) apriority and aposteriority became equally problematic—i.e. for the one coherent conceptual system which replaced the previous differing and incompatible conceptual systems of rationalism and empiricism. However, contrary to what is still sometimes claimed (especially in connection with Kant), this new and more advanced conceptual system did not evolve from a synthesis of rationalism and empiricism, but was rather the effect of the mounting radicalisation of empiricism's assumptions, its greater distancing from apriority than was the case with the earlier empiricism of, say Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas or Bacon and the first modern empiricists. This radicalisation became evident in Hume's works and continued in Kant's. Historically speaking, therefore, the *a priori* is never a problem for rationalism, while in the 18th century the *a posteriori* became as big a problem for the day's new empiricism as the *a priori*.

I will allow myself a working definition of empiricism by suggesting that all valuable cognitive representations of the world depend—both in content and validity—on the causal influence of certain objects and properties on the cognising organisms. This definition stands somewhat apart from the standard approaches to empiricism and certainly fails to cover all its aspects, but it does provide insight into a certain dimension which is essential for understanding the above-mentioned radicalisation of empiricism, and in effect the here-discussed issue of apriority.

This definition explains how the new type of empiricism—the empiricism which in modern philosophy appeared with Locke and was continued in an increasingly radical form by Berkeley, Hume and Kant—ties up with changes in understanding causality, i.e. the retreat from viewing causality as the transfer of form from cause to effect in favour of understanding it as the correlation of objects and events. A correlation by no means signifying their harmony or similarity in form or structure. Also, it shows that and why apriority is so important for this new empiricism.

When causality—the mechanical causality postulated by corpuscular philosophy, or its advanced modern forms, and even the causality which underlies cognition (e.g. in perception)—ceases to be a transmitter of however understood shapes or forms of objects, there appears room for a concept which postulates that although all information about the world is ultimately empirical, i.e. comes from perception causally conditioned by the states of affairs in the world and from nowhere else, the acquisition of this information from any experience requires prior knowledge (or a pre-assumption) about the possibilities this experience has to "choose" the information from. In more contemporary terms, we

need to know beforehand (or pre-assume) what the structure of the information space is like. And because we need to know (or pre-assume) this before the experience is able to provide us with the information it contains, we have to know (or pre-assume) it in a sense *a priori*.

To put it differently, according to the new causality concept, the form of the cause (its shape, properties, structure and essence) irrevocably fades and becomes unrecognizable in the effect, contrary to the traditional belief whose echoes still resound in Axiom IV of the first part of Spinoza's *Ethics*, which says that "the knowledge of an effect depends on, and involves, the knowledge of its cause."[2] In fact, one could say that the new causality is permeated by entropy: on its way from its source to its target, information becomes irrevocably diffused. Good examples of this new approach to causality's role in cognition are thermodynamic processes: perception as a whole is reminiscent of experiencing warmth in effect of something which is happening outside. Warmth tells us that something is going on, but, because it is the most amorphous and least informative form of energy, says very little about what it is. Therefore, if the effects of the influence of objects on us are to be also their representations, the entropy process must be in a way "compensated" by an outlay of energy on our part, primarily in the form of efforts to interpret these effects as evidence of something real behind them. However, that which *can* stand behind them must be in a sense pre-assumed in the interpretation process, hence given *a priori*.

This is why a philosophically-interesting apriority problem can only appear on the ground of empiricist epistemology. For apriorists, or rationalists, like Descartes or Spinoza the *a priori* as such is not in the least perplexing as for them vast expanses of our knowledge, in fact, (at least in the case of scientific cognition) its most important areas—are *a priori*. It is quite differently for the empiricist, for whom all our knowledge, at least about the physical world, ultimately stems from experience. And this is precisely why empiricists find it hard to accept that, from the moment we definitely abandon the Aristotelian vision of perception as the rendering to us of the form of an object, we must concede that in order to know something from experience—*a posteriori*—we must first know something *a priori*. This is a problem for empiricists, but one which can also be seen as a challenge: to show that the *a priori* in cognition is ultimately *a posteriori*.

3

The two concepts of apriority which gave this essay its title are in fact two more ways of approaching the apriority issue as empiricist philosophers see it. To keep my readers' interest alive more than for any immediate scholarly purpose I will call the first "Kantian" and the second "Wittgensteinian."

_____

[2] Spinoza, B. 1994. *A Spinoza Reader—The Ethics and Other Work*. Trans. Curley, Edwin. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 86.

The Kantian approach may be described by means of its two dominating features: (1) the independence of the *a priori* from the changing cognitive situation, including our changing knowledge about the world; we may call this the a b s o l u t e n e s s of the *a priori;*[3] (2) the formal character of the *a priori*—here it is always only a form of cognition, never its content. It is easy to see that both features are closely bound, e.g. the absoluteness of the *a priori* entails its formal character as from the standpoint of the empiricism under discussion here all cognitive content is sensitive to changes in context and the cognitive situation.

Before I recount some of the difficulties encountered by the Kantian absolutistic apriority concept, let me express my belief that it is precisely what underlies Kant's characteristic equation of the scope of necessary truths with that of truths cognisable *a priori*. This equation, indeed rather surprising at a first glance, has been frequently criticised. Its probably best-known critic was Kripke, who first pointed out that apriority and necessity were two very different concepts, hence it was improbable that they would have to overlap in scope,[4] and then listed whole groups of examples of contingent *a priori* and necessary *a posteriori* truths.[5] However, even if accurate, Kripke's critique was to a degree anachronistic as it based on a later, post-Kantian approach to apriority. Whereas Kant with his absolutistic understanding of the apriority concept reasoned as follows: we have two categories of truths which are equally invariant with regard to the cognitive situation, the epistemological frame of reference—*a priori* truths and necessary truths. How else can we explain their equal measure on invariance if not by the fact that they are essentially the same truths?

Kripke's critique becomes more transparent when we take two things into consideration: first, that he implicitly shared the view that at least one category of necessary truths—so-called *de re* metaphysically necessary truths—were invariant with respect to the cognitive situation, and secondly, that he decidedly rejected claims about the invariance of the *a priori* (for Kripke all apriority was essentially rooted in convention, and convention was—at least in the long run—sensitive to changes in the cognitive situation). Consequently, Kripke topples an important argument for the scope identity of both types of truth, which is replaced by a highly-probable argument against their identity: namely that one type (*de re* necessary truths) is really invariant with respect to the cognitive reference frame while the other (*a priori* truths) most probably are not.

The Kantian absolutistic and formalistic understanding of apriority has many weak points, most of which are explainable by the fact that it was empirical

---

[3] In order to avoid Hegelian connotations—which would be all the more confusing as Hegel himself was a typical relativist when it came to apriority—we could, instead of "absoluteness," speak about invariance with respect to the cognitive situation, the epistemological reference system, whereby this would cover not only historically real situations but also all situations that are possible within reasonable boundaries.

[4] Kripke, S. 2001. *Naming and Necessity.* Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press, 34–39.

[5] Ibid*.,* 54–57, 97–105.

epistemology's first, hence still quite raw, approach to the problem. Here are what I consider to be the two most evident drawbacks in Kant's approach:

For one, it is by no means clear why the formal in cognition should be independent of the changing empirical cognitive situation. Even if we identified all information supplied by experience with its content and form with a certain pre-assumed order, it still does not necessarily follow that a far-going change in content could not generate a change in form (e.g. a deep conceptual change). For instance a radical change in our knowledge about the relations between physical phenomena could force us to revise our understanding of causality, which, according to Kant, is *a priori*. Something like this actually did happen in quantum mechanics in connection with the so-called Einstein-Podolsky-Rosen paradox and its development by John Stuart Bell in the 1960s. The argument was to prove that the quantum-mechanical description of physical reality was incomplete as in the case of so-called entangled objects there had to exist hidden parameters responsible for their correlation over any distance. In other words, if correlation applies, e. g. to the spin of a particle, there can be no truth in the claim of quantum mechanics that particles "decide" about their spin at the moment of measurement, as then the particles correlated with them would have to be immediately informed about the "decision," which in turn would violate the restrictions on information relay speed imposed by the relativity theory. Therefore, particles must possess properties which are invisible to quantum mechanics and determine their observable behaviour from the moment of their entanglement. Bell showed that the assumption that such hidden parameters existed disagreed with the empirical predictions of quantum mechanics.[6] Here we have a clear example of a choice between a principle traditionally considered as valid *a priori* (in this case the causal closure of the physical domain) and an empirically well-grounded theory (quantum mechanics). The formulation of this dilemma does not suggest its resolution, nonetheless the suspension of the *a priori* validity of the causality principle seems to be rationally sustainable. Above all, however, and regardless of any final solutions regarding the Einstein-Podolsky-Rosen paradox, the causality principle which Kant and many others held for the *a priori* fundament of the possibility of experience, appears here to be itself an object of empirical examination (as the assumption about hidden parameters) and if it were ultimately to remain valid, then only as something we recognise on empirical and not *a priori* grounds.

The second weakness in the Kantian apriority concept is even more evident: it appears that the content and formal aspects of knowledge cannot be convincingly separated, either in theory or practice, especially if we assume that the

---

[6] E.g. Bell, J. S. 2004. "On the Einstein-Podolsky-Rosen Paradox" (1964). In: Bell, John S. *Speakable and Unspeakable in Quantum Mechanics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 14–21 (especially 17–20); "Introduction to the hidden-variable question" (1971). In: ibid., 29–39 (especially 36–38); "Bertlmann's socks and the nature of reality" (1981). In: ibid., 139–158 (especially 147–156).

latter are also expressible and describable—and Kant certainly assumes so when he states that *a priori* synthetic judgments express the aprioristic, formal conditions of the possibility of experience. But if something can be expressed in a judgment—even one that is "*a priori* synthetic"—then it must be rather content than form. Kant tried to cope with this problem in his "pure intuition" concept, which was a rather sophisticated attempt to show how to access the *a priori* form of a sensorily given content. As long as we confine ourselves to pure observation the problem seems negligible because apparently we can *see* both form and content. However, as soon as Kant employs pure evidence to substantiate the *a priori* validity of judgments—like the well-known mathematical truth that *5 + 7 = 12* — the difficulty returns because the judgment's own logical form is one thing and the formal property it is supposed to express (the arithmetical operation of addition) is another. Of course it is the second, intuitively given property which is to decide about the apriority of the judgement, however, it is not its form but its content.

<div align="center">

4

</div>

Before I pass to the second, relative (or Wittgensteinian) apriority concept I must remark that Wittgenstein was by no means the first philosopher to see the need of replacing Kant's absolutistic view of apriority with a more realistic approach. Indeed the first major thinker who postulated it was the earlier-mentioned Hegel, who in the *Introduction* to his *Phenomenology of Spirit* gave a very explicit outline of epistemology based on a relative approach to apriority.[7] In fact, however, we can go further and risk the claim that the whole of 19th-century philosophy—insofar as it continued the threads of Kantian epistemology—was filled by the desire to move away from Kant's absolutistic understanding of apriority. Wittgenstein, who represented the same trend in 20th-century thought, was therefore heir to a whole century of effort aimed at making the Kantian *a priori* more flexible and compatible with the requirements of the empiricist epistemology it actually derived from.

It is, therefore, somewhat surprising that Wittgenstein, who was well-aware of the above-mentioned weaknesses of the Kantian approach, was not immediately ready to abandon it altogether. Instead, he tried to sustain them at least in part in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (*Logical-Philosophical Treatise*), although he did resign from Kant's assumption about the expressibility of the formal *a priori*. The result was the famous concept of logical form, which is *a priori* in the sense that it does not relate to the cognitive situation, and at the same time completely inexpressible and impossible to describe.[8] One of this

---

[7] Hegel, G. W. F. 1977. *Phenomenology of Spirit.* Transl. Miller, A. V. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 52–56.

[8] Wittgenstein, L. 1922. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus.* London: Kegan Paul, propositions 6.1–6.31.

solution's most striking consequences (well visible in the *Tractatus*) was Wittgenstein's recognition of two *a priori* disciplines—logic and mathematics—as devoid of content and their theorems as pseudo-propositions (*Scheinsätze*) which, although not nonsensical (*unsinnig*) like philosophical theorems, were nonetheless meaningless (*sinnlos*), i.e. they did not possess truth conditions and were not true about anything.

However, it is visible both in the *Tractatus* and Wittgenstein's subsequent writings that this semi-magical logical form doctrine was merely a fleeting product of the philosopher's longing for absolute apriority independent of and preceding all experience. Already in the *Tractatus* it coexists (though it is not clear along what lines) with a totally different apriority concept, which will remain as the only one in his later work.

According to this approach, the *a priori* is essentially always a fragment or aspect of empirical knowledge which, in a given context and for certain cognitive ends, has been given a special status—that, to use Wittgenstein's term, of a descriptive "network" (in contrast to that which it describes). Insofar as a given fact or property belongs to the descriptive net it cannot be invalidated by the description, and is in this sense *a priori*. Here apriority is not an essential property—no information or truth is essentially *a priori* as all come from experience. It is a functional property consisting in the role a certain part of empirical knowledge plays in a certain cognitive context.[9]

This approach to apriority was doubtless greatly enhanced by the deep theoretical transformations in science, especially mathematics and physics, which took place in the 19th and 20th centuries. In their effect a number of fundamental issues (e.g. the structure of time and space and causality), which in the 17th and 18th centuries were considered experience-independent, acquired the status of empirical issues (at least in principle). Of course, whenever these issues were addressed directly it was clear that the "demotion" of an *a priori* to a revisable empirical truth required that something else be given *a priori* status. It is pointless to check empirically if the International Prototype Metre is a metre long. If we do so regardless, this means we are using a different metre prototype and our procedure aims at answering the following empirical question: is the previous prototype a metre long according to our new metre concept? It is similarly pointless to check if physical space is Euclidean as long as we consider space as described by Euclid's axioms as the *a priori* condition of the possibility of experience—as then we are obliged to treat all deviations from the Euclidean as effects of erroneous or imprecise measurement. Thus, if we decide to check this it can be because we accept a different, more general concept of space as empirically non-revisable (*a priori*).

According to this approach, therefore, empirical cognition always needs an *a priori*—e.g. to measure something I need a unit and a prototype of measure-

_____

[9] Ibid., 6.32–6.36.

ment— but the content of the *a priori* is always empirical. One may say that here all apriority involves a fragment of empirical knowledge which behaves as if it were *a priori*.

It is now clear why thus-understood apriority does not have to be identical with necessity—at least the *de re* metaphysical necessity mentioned by Kripke. The point is not that in the end also the *a priori* stems from experience—most necessary truths are also experience-derived—but rather that here apriority loses its only pretext for relation with necessity: its invariance with respect to the conditions of knowledge and the cognitive situation. Different cognitive contexts may have different *a prioris* but the necessary (in the sense of *de re* metaphysical necessity) must be independent from the way in which we learn about it, i.e. from its given cognitive context.

5

The differences between the two outlined approaches to the status of the *a priori* were frequently noticed by philosophy over the past two centuries, however, in my opinion mostly misinterpreted. Both concepts were usually juxtaposed and considered irreconcilable within any broader, non-trivial project. This was also often accompanied by the belief that the second of the here-discussed apriority concepts—Wittgensteinian relativistic apriority—did not really deserve the status as it had lost that which was considered fundamental for apriority: independence from experience. Let us note however, that this second kind of apriority, although relativized down to the cognitive context, excellently performs the function for which absolute apriority was created—that of a reference system actually enabling the empirical to supply us with any information about the world. Hence by abandoning absolute apriority we are in fact only abandoning a myth, and one which is quite unnecessary for the tasks apriority serves in our cognition.

Misconceptions about the mutual relations between both apriority concepts are additionally enhanced by the fact that there is insufficient clarity about the distinctness of modern empiricism, in which the apriority issue actually appears, from pre-modern empiricism, in which the objects of cognition provide us with complete theories about their nature and mutual relations through experience. Whereas in modern empiricism—mainly because of the radically different causality concept—objects provide us only with highly ambiguous, fragmented signals, which have to be interpreted by means of constructed theories which in turn are by no means contained in the signals nor their logical result. That in a given cognitive context which always functions as its a *priori* structure usually derives from the theoretical level of accumulated experience and in this sense is not reducible to individual perception. Apriority lies in the fact that we consider certain fragments of these theories as sufficiently established and immovable to take data which contradict them rather for the effect of error, illusion, defective

equipment etc., than hard facts against the theory. That apriority is not absolute boils down to this immovability not being irrevocable. In any case, usually judgments of a highly theoretical nature—i.e. judgments which cannot be in any simple way derived from individual perception—acquire the rank of *a priori* structures. Therefore, contrary to what some critics of relativistic apriority claim, there can be no question about its reduction to experience in the sense of individual perceptions or observations.

6

Historically speaking, the 19th-century transition from an absolutistic to a relativistic understanding of apriority may be compared to the transition—approximately at the same time—from the classical, absolutistic approach to time and space to a relativistic one in physics.[10] Both transitions were rather a continuation of certain basic research trends than a break, discontinuity or act of resistance. The abandonment of the absolute concept of time and space in physics may be seen as an effect of the same cognitive striving from which it once took its beginning: the quest for the absolute, universally important and invariant with respect to all reference systems, circumstances and cognitive situations. The essence of the transition to the new spatiotemporal physics was that in light of the experiences, observations and new theories which appeared in the 19th century (especially Maxwell's electrodynamics), absolute space and time could no longer function as such invariants and hence had to make way for something deeper and more complex. This something—to restrict ourselves to the special theory of relativity—primarily concerned spatiotemporal relations. These relations are neither spatial nor temporal and viewed through the prism of the latter appear as a specific and rather strange combination of both—although in fact spatiotemporal relations are more fundamental, while both temporal and spatial relations are only the ways in which they manifest themselves on a less basic level.

If we were to look in the same way at the evolution of the apriority concept over the past two centuries, we could risk the claim that the Kantian absolutistic approach was a very important proposal with regard to what could be considered absolute and invariant with respect to the epistemological reference frame. Kant suggested to assign this invariance to forms of intuition—space and time—and the pure concepts of the understanding—categories—on grounds of their apriority, or independence from experience. The evolution of philosophy at least since Hegel shows that all *a priori* structures can be independent only

---

[10] In both cases mature theories presenting the relativistic approach—the special theory of relativity in physics or Poincaré's conventionalism and Wittgenstein's here-discussed concepts in philosophy—should be viewed as a creative summary of decades of earlier research, whose protagonists surely saw ahead of them the outlines of more advanced approaches to the structures of cognition and physical reality.

within a certain cognitive context, and that all apriority is ultimately relative. From the epistemological point of view this is, perhaps, the final stop of the journey. However, not necessarily for the metaphysician, who searches for the most fundamental properties of both physical reality and our cognition of it.

This leads us to the following question, one that is insofar adequate in conclusion of our present reflections as it constitutes a natural extension of epistemology's thoughts on apriority into the sphere of metaphysics: what, if not *a priori* cognitive structures, could serve as a universal, invariant component of every cognitive situation and every epistemological reference frame?

To my knowledge the only candidate for the role to undergo any deeper study were the metaphysically necessary properties mentioned in connection with Kripke. However, unlike in the case of the classical apriority concept, it proved impossible to reach even the most elementary consensus on metaphysical necessity, which in my opinion was primarily because reference to the necessity concept in a search for the invariant was an *ad hoc* solution. Selected from the repertoire of concepts left to us by earlier, in this case rather premodern philosophy was that which appeared best-suited to answer the needs which arose when apriority failed as an invariant. Ironically though, the choice fell on metaphysical necessity, with respect to which apriority was a methodologically more advanced successor. Comparing this to physics, it was like employing the Aristotelian concept of space and motion to cope with the problems encountered by Newtonian physics. This, however, is where analogies with physics cease, as physicists had more luck than philosophers in that they conceived more complex concepts and theories which allowed them to proceed along the path to a comprehensive description of the physical world. The experiments undertaken with the rather archaic metaphysical necessity concept by 20th-century philosophers like Kripke, Lewis, Plantinga and others brought no major results, nor even provided any guidelines (besides purely negative ones) as to the direction in which to seek for a replacement of apriority as an invariant property with respect to epistemological frames of reference.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR — associate professor, History of Modern Philosophy Department, Institute of Philosophy, Warsaw University. Main fields of research: the history of modern philosophy, epistemology, metaphysics and philosophy of mind. Main works: 1999. *Transcendentalna teoria świadomości. Próba rekonstrukcji semantycznej* [*Transcendental Theory of Consciousness. An Attempt at a Semantical Reconstruction*]. Warszawa: Aletheia; 2008. *Możliwość rozumu. Ćwiczenia z metafizyki* [*The Possibility of Reason. Exercises in Metaphysics*]. Warszawa: Aletheia.

Andrzej Leder

STRANGENESS AND UNITY. FREUD AND THE KANTIAN CONDITION OF SYNTHETIC UNITY OF APPERCEPTION

ABSTRACT

The text considers the possibility of studying the Freudian psychoanalysis as a certain form of transcendentalism. In particular, it analyses the relation of Freud's proposition concerning the strangeness within the subject—a strangeness called unconsciousness—to Kant's claim about the necessity of the synthetic unity of apperception. The study commences with Ricoeur's reading of Freud's teachings in order to demonstrate how, by introducing the language of transcendental philosophy into the reading of Freud's works, Ricoeur omits the issue of the subjective conditions for the constitution of any possible meaning. Next, searching for the possibility to formulate these conditions on the grounds of Freudian psychoanalysis, the text investigates relevant Heidegger's reading of Kant. It finds in it the model justification for such understanding of the unity of "I think" which makes it, already at its core, conditioned by diversity identified with temporality. By attempting to grasp the contradiction between such a temporal condition for subjectivity and Freud's postulate on the timeless nature of unconsciousness, the text applies Derrida's criticism of the metaphysical conception of time, which is directed exactly at Heidegger's metaphysics of *Dasein*. In consequence, it turns out that a profound justification seems to exist for the seemingly paradoxical Freudian statement about unconsciousness as linked with, on the one hand, the most primal intuitions still grounded in animism, and on the other, with a continuation of Kant's teachings.

Keywords: philosophy; transcendentalism; psychoanalysis; Kant; Freud; Heidegger; Derrida.

> *We ought perhaps to read Freud*
> *the way Heidegger read Kant* [...]
>
> Jacques Derrida

Why exactly one should read Freud this way? What are conditions for such reading? In order to follow the quoted advice, one should find a deep

relationship between the works of the founder of psychoanalysis and the loner from Kőnigsberg, some common plane, but not such which would consist in a naïve identification of Kantian threads in Freudian works. A certain similarity in the points of view should be rather revealed, a similarity which, at the same time, may point a way to a contemporary reflection. Freud found such a common plane and, in reference to the Kantian change of our understanding of external experience, he claimed: "Like that which is physical, the psychical needs not really be such as that what appears to us." ("Wie das Physische so braucht aus die Psychische nicht in Wirklichkeit so zu sein, wie es uns erscheint.")[1] Thus, a reflection is needed on the conditions of acquiring awareness of one's own inwardness, of the necessary corrections which internal perception needs to be subjected to. However, this shift of attention—from external to internal experience—is connected with the significant difficulties of philosophical nature. If one wants to treat the Kantian *a priori* seriously, one should deal with the question how the "fissured," divided Freudian subject is related to the condition of the numerical unity of "I think." Therefore Derrida claims that this reflection should learn from Heidegger's readings of Kant.

Let us try to go further the way indicated here. We attempt to study the relation of Freud's postulate of the strangeness in the self, a strangeness called unconsciousness, to Kant's postulate of the necessary synthetic unity of apperception. We start with Ricoeur's reading of Freudian teachings in order to demonstrate how at the same moment when he introduces the language of transcendental philosophy to the reading of Freud's works, he abandons the problem of the subjective conditions of constituting all meanings. Next, in search for the possibilities of formulating such conditions in the Freudian thinking, we will take up the Heideggerian reading of Kant. There we will find the model justification of such an understanding which identifies the unity of "I think," conditioned already at its core by the diversity identified with temporality. In attempting to grasp the contradiction between the identified temporal condition of subjectivity and the postulate—clearly formulated by Freud—on the timeless nature of unconsciousness, we will apply Derrida's critique of the metaphysical understanding of time, directed precisely at Heideggerian metaphysics of *Dasein*. Then, it will turn out that the following, seemingly paradoxical Freud's statement is, in fact, deeply justified:

"Die psychoanalytische Annahme der unbewußten Seelentätigkeiterscheint uns einerseits als eine weitere Fortbildung des primitiven Animismus, […] und anderseits als die Fortsetzung der Korrektur, die Kant an unserer Auffassung der äußeren Wahrnehmung vorgenommen hat."
("The psychoanalytical hypothesis of the unconscious psychic activity seems to us, on the one hand, a continuation of a primal animism, […] on the other,

---

[1] Freud, S. 1999. "Das Unbewußte." In: *Gesamelte Werke X*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 270.

a continuation of the correction which Kant applied to our views on external perception.")[2]

I

Paul Ricoeur writes about the transcendental logic which he searches for in the Freudian analyses: "The task of such a logic is to extricate by a regressive method the notions presupposed in the constitution of a type of experience and a corresponding type of reality."[3] Thus he establishes the mode of dealing which treats particular types of experience—first of all the Freudian privileged elements: dream, slip, and madness—as types of reality. Next, he calls for the transcendental explanation of the possibility of their constitution. He describes it as "a logic of ambiguity," rigorous in its rigour of transcendental logic, and at the same time different from formal logic which is always linear in its unambiguity. He finds it in Freud's meta-psychological writings.[4] As it is already mentioned, Freud himself foresees a relationship between his and the Kantian designs. He writes:

> "Similarly to Kant, who warned us about the overlooking the subjective conditioning of our witnessing […], psychoanalysis also warns us about placing the consciousness' witnessing in the place of the unconscious psychical process which is its object." (Wie Kant uns gewarnt hat, die subjective Bedingtheit unserer Wahrnehmung nicht zu übersehen […] so mahnt di Psychoanalyse, die Bewußtseinswahrnemung nicht an die stelle des unbewußten psychischen Vorganges zu setzen, welcher ihr Objekt ist.)[5]

However, Ricoeur notices that the Freudian transcendentalism investigates not so much "conditions of the objectivity of nature" but the conditions "of the appropriation of our desire to be."[6] Moreover, Freud himself determines his task in the cited essay on consciousness as the continuation of Kant's work, linking it to the surprising in this context intuition of primal animism.

What is this key function which allows for discovering in Freudian thinking the original "transcendental logic," and at the same time a continuation of animism? I presume that the crucial here is Freud's sensitivity for the creative potential of conflict, conditioned by the multiplicity hidden in the subject. If the Freudian transcendental logic proposed by Ricoeur studies conditions of revealing our desire of existence, then its primary discovery is that this desire

---

[2] Freud, S. 1999. "Das Unbewußte," op. cit., 270.

[3] Ricoeur, P. 1965. *De l'interpretation. Essai sur Freud.* Paris: Seuil; English translation: 1970. *Freud and Philosophy. An Essay on Interpretation.* Trans. Savage, D. New Haven – London: Yale University Press, 52.

[4] Ricoeur, P. 1965. *Freud and Philosophy,* op. cit., 69, 61.

[5] Freud, S. 1999. "Das Unbewußte," op. cit., 270.

[6] Ricoeur, P. 1965. *Freud and Philosophy*, op. cit., 48.

appears in actions stemming from various subjective instances which lead to various contradictory directions. This contradiction is not an artifact which can be refuted in order to retain coherence, but it constitutes an essential condition for anything to appear in consciousness. This conviction, however, immediately contrasts the Kantian thesis on the numerical unity of "I think."

Not being able to reconcile the postulated reading of Freud's views as the transcendental logic of ambiguity with its Kantian interpretation, Ricoeur writes: "Transcendental logic is not exhausted in the Kantian *a priori*."[7] He rejects the Kantian *a priori* in the aspect which refers to the constitution of subjectivity. He understands it, according to in widespread accepted interpretations, as purely formal and logical. In this interpretation, subjectivity is a condition without qualities, in fact, a point one, so not being able in any way to encompass the "animistic" diversity which Freud put into it. Ricoeur's critique is directed against regarding such a concept of the Self as an authentic cognition. In the chapter entitled *Méthode herméneutique et philosophie réflexive* he states first:

> "I assume here that the positing of the self is the first truth for the philosopher placed within the broad tradition of modern philosophy that begins with Descartes and is developed in Kant, Fichte and the reflective stream of European philosophy."[8]

However, he claims later:

> "As Malebranche well understood, in opposition to Descartes, this immediate grasp is only a feeling, not an idea […] In Kantian language, an apperception of the Ego may accompany all my representations, but this apperception is not knowledge of oneself […]."[9]

Reflection, self-knowledge, is devoid of any intuition.[10]

In consequence, Ricoeur's abandons in a next step the question of the transcendental analysis of subjectivity, and takes up the hermeneutics of symbols. If "I am lost, 'led astray' among objects and separated from the center of my existence […]"[11] then no immediate, sensual examination of one's Self is possible. "Reflection must become interpretation because I cannot grasp the act of existing except in signs scattered in the Word."[12]

By leaving the reflexive analysis of the Self and focusing on the hermeneutics of symbols Ricoeur neglects the key question of the philosophical

---

7 Ibid., 52.
8 Ibid., 43.
9 Ibid., 44.
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid., 45.
12 Ibid., 46.

understanding of psychoanalysis—the question of the mode of existence of the thinking subject. The significance of this question in contemporary philosophy was revealed by Martin Heidegger. Therefore Jacques Derrida suggests to read Freud in the way Heidegger read Kant. Only such reading allows for asking about the strictly philosophical interpretation of the constitution of subjectivity which is present in Freud's works. When the research is limited only to the interpretation of signs dispersed in the world and it centres on their being, then it omits the considerations concerning the exceptional ontological status of what Ricoeur called the core of my existence, that which gets to know beings and experiences them. The impossibility to form, on the basis of positive introspection, i.e. the ontic study of soul[13]—an impossibility which Ricoeur accepts after Kant—does not absolve one from considering the ontological status of the thinking being. If this step is neglected, then on the return to the question of the Self (after all, this is the task of the Ricoeur's analysis of symbols) the acceptance of the ontic conceptualisation of that-which-is, formed in the modern tradition, is inevitable.

These are the subsequent stages of Ricoeur's reflections. Finally, he returns from the hermeneutical plane to the Freudian discourse, constituted by modern natural sciences. He treats non-critically this system of notions as that which describes a pre-given area of being. In consequence, despite his initial calling upon the refusal of psychoanalysis' aspiration to the empirical scientificity, he continues to treat literally the biological character of Freud's formulations, as if they were really referring to the objects of biological sciences. This, however, results in the revealing of the complete incompatibility of two areas, i.e. hermeneutical one and the Freudian metapsychology.

Ricoeur comprehends this incompatibility in the following aporetic question: How can this which is energetic be transformed into that which is hermeneutic? How can energy be transformed into a meaning?[14] Of all the Freudian continuators, only Lacan was able to remove this aporia. By forming the notion of the real, opposed both to the phenomenal reality (called the imaginary) and to the symbolic domain, he becomes independent from the Cartesian duality of substance.

---

[13] Kant in the second volume of *The Critique* writes as follows: "Empirical psychology must therefore be banished from the sphere of metaphysics," A 848, B 876 (from the English translation: *The Critique of Pure Reason by Immanuel Kant.* 2010. Trans. Meiklejohn, J. M. D. Open electronic classics series publication. The Pennsylvania State University, 472. (This translation is based on the second edition (B) of *The Critique*, so whenever necessary we will refer to the original first edition (A)).

[14] Ricoeur, P., 1965. *Freud and Philosophy*, op. cit.; especially the chapter: *Reading of Freud.*

III

How can one then bypass the road trodden by Ricoeur, staying in the field of transcendental philosophy? Or, to put it differently: How can the claim of the "strangeness" within the subject, a subject fissured and torn—which, in an obvious way, is connected with the key Freudian notion of unconsciousness— be reconciled with the Kantian model of transcendental analysis? Do not Kant's most complete and most rigorous formulations of the conditions of the transcendental subject cancel the Freud's thesis? Does not such a contradiction delegitimise Ricoeur's efforts to find "transcendental aesthetic" in psychoanalysis? Or even, does it not transform the quoted Freud's intuition into a pretentious simplification, where the same philosophical intention shall be found as that founding Kant's system? Is Freud not desperately locked in the domain of the primal "animism"?

The situation is very problematic. One can suspect that omitting by Ricoeur the question of the transcendental synthesis of the subject allows for avoiding the following aporia. That is: either, by assuming the "strangeness" in subjectivity we fall under the criticism that our studies concern the empirical subject grasped by Kant as the awareness of the changeability of our state;[15] or, while remaining within the boundaries delineated by the Kantian concept of the transcendental unity of apperception, the essence of which is exactly the fact that it is numerically single,[16] we have to refute the claim about the "strangeness," or any "diversity" in the transcendental subject.

In the above indicated move, Ricoeur points us to the first possibility of moving away from this aporia. In fact, he invalidates Kant's claim about the formal unity of the subject through narrowing it down to "a feeling." In this case, the road to self-knowledge leads through an exegesis of the meaning of a stream of phenomena which the subject apprehends. The choice of this route has grave philosophical consequences which we already mentioned before. Such a move is, actually, frequently repeated in the contemporary polemics with transcendentalism. Apperception is a non-discursive feeling of oneself which accompanies any representation. Can it really be non-discursive? An excellent example is provided here by the critique of the Husserlian self-consciousness, carried out by Jacques Derrida in his *Voice and Phenomenon*.[17] If all possibility

---

[15] "For the empirical consciousness which accompanies different representations is in itself fragmentary and disunited, and without relation to the identity of the subject." Kant, I. 2010. *The Critique of Pure Reason*, op. cit., 96 [B 133].

[16] "Die numerische Einheit dieser Apperzeption liegt also a priori allen Begriffen ebensowohl zum Grunde, als die Mannigfaltigkeit des Raumes und der Zeit den Anschauungen der Sinnlichkeit." (Kant, Immanuel. *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* A, 107]. The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (1st Edition). This text is hfrom HTML files at "Projekt Gutenberg – DE" (http://www.gutenberg2000.de/kant/krva/krva.htm), prepared by G. Bouillon. Hereafter as: A.

[17] Derrida, J. 1967. *La Voix et le phénomène,* Paris: PUF.

of self-knowledge is at its foundation mediated by language then one can accept in a natural way that it is also a linguistic construct. And this is exactly what Derrida does. Consequently, one can ascertain that also Kant's conceptual structure, e.g. "the transcendental unity of apperception," does refer only to objects in the linguistic universe. However, this reasoning glosses over the difference between the claim that self-consciousness is necessarily mediated by language and the claim that it is constructed by language. The order of interpretation provides conclusions concerning the order of constitution. What more, in a way, like in Ricoeur's view, hermeneutics makes here transcendentalism redundant.

What if we want to accept seriously the Kant's thesis on numerical unity as a formal condition of consciousness as well as his thesis on the *a priori* nature of this condition? If we do not accept that such notions as "unity" or "*a priori*" are arbitrary linguistic constructs, which can simply be deconstructed to get rid of the problem, then we need either to remain within the boundaries of the above mentioned aporia or to search for a different way out.

It seems that we can stay in the framework of Kant's intuitions concerning understanding of consciousness, and also reformulate the demonstrated aporia which excludes the strangeness from the numerical unity of the subject. A suggestion is provided by Kant's remark, found in the chapter concerning the relation of intellect to objects in general, published only in the first edition (A) of *The Critique of Pure Reason*. The chapter concerns the subjective conditions of all cognition—sensation, imagination, and apperception—and the conditions for these conditions. "Pure apperception, the stable identity of oneself, with all possible representations" ("Die reine Apperzeption, „die durchgängige Identität seiner selbst bei allen möglichen Vorstellungen")[18]—this seems to be this irreducible *"I"*, the unity which poses so many problems for Ricoeur in his exegesis of Freud. However, Kant states in a next paragraph that "this synthetic unity, supposes, in fact, a synthesis or contains one in itself, and if this unity is to be an necessary *a priori*, then this synthesis also must be an *a priori* synthesis" ("Diese synthetische Einheit setzt aber eine Synthesis voraus, oder schließt sie ein, und soll jede a priori notwendig sein, so muß letztere auch eine Synthesis a priori sein").[19] This is striking because if the unity is to be the most primal unity, then it should not contain or assume any synthesis. If it supposes one, then there must be something that is subjected to this *a priori* synthesis. Kant speaks here about the productive synthesis of imagination, combining that what is diverse in imagination.[20] It is *a priori* necessary in relation to the primal unity of apperception which Kant formulates as follows:

---

[18] Kant, I. 2000. *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* A, 116.
[19] Ibid., 118.
[20] Ibid.

"So the dominating principle of the necessary unity of the pure (productive) synthesis of imagination, which takes place p r i o r   t o   a p p e r - c e p t i o n [AL.], constitutes the foundation for the possibilities of any cognition, especially for experience."
("Also ist das Prinzipium der notwendigen Einheit der Reiner (produktiven) Synthesis der Einbildungskraft v o r   d e r   A p p e r z e p t i o n [AL.] der Grund der Möglichkeit aller Erkenntnis, besonders der Erfahrung.")[21]

IV

The manner in which Kant's statement quoted above is interpreted is decisive for the validity of the search for diversity in the subject, so, for the attempt to disclose a strictly philosophical dimension of psychoanalysis in regard to subjectivity. One reading uses "*vor*" to mean "opposite," thus arguing for diversity in the sensual material. This is the Neo-Kantian way. The second reading emphasises the logical conditioning—"prior to" the synthetic unity the synthesis of the subjective conditions is necessary. This way Kant's works are read by Heidegger.

Following Derrida's hint, we read Kant's texts in Heidegger's way. Derrida means here the exegesis of the Kantian transcendentalism presented in the *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*. It is often treated as the first part of the *Sein und Zeit*, as it is devoted to the study of the conditions of the synthetic unity of apperception through that which is diverse. This intellectual path leads Heidegger through the category of transcendental imagination to the revolutionary conception of the temporality of *Dasein*. We use the intellectual construct proposed there as a key which allows for understanding the peculiar sentence in which Freud combines animism and transcendentalism. The passage through this path is absolutely necessary if we want to avoid Ricoeur's intellectual trap of abandoning the mode of existence of the Freudian subject.

"An elevation to the intellect"[22]—this phrase Ricoeur uses to describe the Kantian effort of founding cognition. This Kant's intellectualism and formalism is both widely accepted and widely criticised. Emanuel Levinas, for example, finds here a particular trait which establishes the West: "Philosophy itself is identified with the substitution of ideas for persons, the theme for the interlocutor, the interiority of the logical relation for the exteriority of interpellation."[23] However, Kant happens to be treated as one of the few thinkers who emphasises the meaning of imagination in cognition. This is, for

---

[21] Ibid., 118.
[22] Ricoeur, P. 1954/1955. "Kant et Husserl." *Kant-Studien*, 46, 61.
[23] Levinas, E. 1969. *Totality and Infinity, an Essay on Exteriority*. Trans. Lingis, A. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 88.

instance, Cornelius Castoriadis' interpretation in his dissertation on imagination.[24]

Heidegger demonstrates that the tension between these two interpretations lies in the very Kant's work. He retraces the intellectual path leading from the primacy of transcendental imagination, postulated in the A edition of *The Critique*, to the primacy of the intellect in the edition B.[25] The position of the transcendental imagination in relation to the intellect becomes then the measure of formalism and logicism of the Kantian system. As Heidegger claims:

> "Nevertheless, in the second edition the transcendental imagination is present only in name. […] Imagination is now only the name of the empirical synthesis, i.e., the synthesis as relative to intuition. This synthesis, as the passages cited above show clearly enough, still belongs qua synthesis to the understanding. 'Synthesis' is termed 'imagination' only insofar as it refers to intuition; fundamentally, however, it is [a product of the] understanding."[26]

The road to Heidegger's interpretation of the "prior-to apperception" in the above mentioned central statement opens here.

Heidegger considers why Kant resigns from the idea of transcendental imagination. He quotes Kant's words as an answer: "For the chief question is always simply this: what and how much can the understanding and reason know apart from all experience, not—how is the faculty of thought itself possible?"[27] For Heidegger exactly this second question remains a basic one. It also becomes a recurrent theme of the Freudian investigations. This is because the majority of his subsequent models of the psychological apparatus, metaphors and tropes attempt to answer to the question: what does the being that thinks have to be?

The problem of the possibility of the very power of thinking is called, in the Kantian terminology, "the subjective side of transcendental deduction." Kant does not devote too much attention to it. Heidegger notices:

> "The subjective side of the deduction, then, can never be lacking; however, its explicit elaboration may well be deferred. [...] Thus, Kant was aware of

---

[24] Castoriadis, C. 1997. "Psychanalyse et Philosophie, Imagination, imaginaire, reflexion." In: *Fait et a faire. Les carrefours du labyrinthe*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 149, 233.

[25] "The transcendental imagination no longer functions as an autonomous fundamental faculty, mediating between sensibility and understanding in their possible unity. This intermediate faculty disappears and only two fundamental sources of the mind are retained. The function of the transcendental imagination is transferred to the understanding." Heidegger, M. 1962. *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*. Trans. Churchill, J. S. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 170.

[26] Heidegger, M. 1962. *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, op. cit., 170.

[27] Kant, I. 200. *Kritik ...*, op. cit. A, XVII; Heidegger, M. 1962. *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, op. cit., 171.

the possibility and the necessity of a more primordial laying of the foundation, but it formed no part of his immediate purpose."[28]

In thinking about the possibilities of employing the Kantian transcendentalism to the understanding of Freud, Ricoeur takes in good part this lack of detailed discussion of the subjective side of deduction. He claims that transcendentalism can only reveal the position of the Self in the logical and formal structure of cognition, and nothing more. Thus, his almost complete lack of references to Heidegger is deliberate. He refutes the possibility of interpreting Freud's models of subjectivity exactly as analyses of the conditions of the constitution of the subject, as the analysis of the conditions of the very thinking as we know it. In contrast to Derrida, who lavishly uses Heidegger's thoughts, and who knows that the Kantian "I think" can be temporalized—not with the popular understanding of the notion of time (to which we will return below)—Ricoeur follows the path delineated by German idealists who adopt that the knowledge about the self can be only derived from the understanding of the content which this self "emanates." Hence, the emphasis on the hermeneutics of symbols appears in his thinking. As a result, however, he strays off to a dangerous road, which continually determines the situation in the investigations of subjectivity. Namely, he omits the question of its mode of existence. Because in the long run this question invariably returns, anybody who omits it—like recently cognitivists—should refer to the present state of positive sciences to explain the faculty of thinking.

Heidegger postulates that this situation had significant consequences already for the whole architecture of *The Critique*. Kant connected imagination with the empirical domain, with that which is *a posteriori*. Heidegger writes about it as follows:

> "Not having carried out the subjective deduction, Kant continued to be guided by the notions of the composition and characterization of the subjectivity of the subject provided by traditional anthropology and psychology. To these disciplines, the imagination was a lower faculty within sensibility."

Kant could not found his whole system in such an understanding of imagination since:

> "How can sensibility as a lower faculty be said to determine the essence of reason? Does not everything fall into confusion if the lower is put in place of the higher? What is to happen to the honorable tradition according to which, in the long history of metaphysics, ratio and the logos have laid claim to the central role? Can the primacy of logic disappear? Can the architectonic of the laying of the foundation of metaphysics, i.e., its division into

---

[28] Heidegger, M. 1962. *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, op. cit., 171–172.

transcendental aesthetic and logic, be preserved if the theme of the latter is basically the transcendental imagination?

Does not the *Critique of Pure Reason* deprive itself of its own theme if pure reason is transformed into transcendental imagination? Does not this laying of the foundation lead to an abyss?"[29]

This rescue of Kant's thought is interpreted by Heidegger not as an expression of anxiety but of an urge to retain the clarity and freedom of rational cognition. This was a weapon (a cane) helpful in battling the "shallow and muddy empiricism of the philosophy of morals". However, this interpretation opposes the traditional opinions claiming that the first edition of *The Critique* is of a more "psychological" nature, while the second is more "logical." Heidegger claims that both are transcendental, i.e. they are "necessarily 'objective' as well as 'subjective'."[30]

V

The adoption of the above presented interpretation of Kant's transcendentalism enables to acknowledge that the condition facing the transcendental unity of apperception is transcendental imagination. What can "productive synthesis of imagination" conditioning the "unity of apperception" mean from the Freudian perspective, from the perspective of unconsciousness? Certainly, it can be safely stated that it would be the highest level of the whole structure transforming that which is non-conscious into the consciously experienced subjectivity. This agrees with the Heideggerian interpretation of *The Critique*:

"That which is now revealed as the essential unity of pure knowledge is far removed from the empty simplicity of a first principle. On the contrary, it is revealed as a multiform action, although one which r e m a i n s o b s c u r e [AL] in its character as an action as well as in the complexity of its modes of unification."[31]

When Kant writes about imagination a particular tone appears, significantly different from the dry sound of reasoning which comprises *The Critique*... Starting with the well-known

"Synthesis is in general […] the work of imagination, a certain blind but necessary function of the soul without which there would not be any

---

[29] Ibid., 173.

[30] It should be noted, in fact, that the laying of the foundation is no more "psychological" in the first edition than it is "logical" in the second. On the contrary, both are transcendental, i.e., necessarily "objective" as well as "subjective." Heidegger, M. 1962. *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, op. cit., 175.

[31] Ibid., 68.

cognition but which we are aware of only occasionally;" ("Die Synthesis überhaupt ist, wie wir künftig sehen werden, die bloße Wirkung der Einbildungskraft, einer blinden, obgleich unentbehrlichen Funktion der Seele, ohne die wir überall gar keine Erkenntnis haben würden, der wir uns aber selten nur einmal bewußt sind."[32]

through the statement concerning the difficulties in deduction:

"… it forces us to penetrate so deeply the first possibilities of our cognition … (Die Deduktion der Kategorien ist mit so viel Schwierigkeiten verbunden, und nötigt, so tief in die ersten Gründe der Möglichkeit unserer Erkenntnis überhaupt einzudringen)"[33]

Kant gives the support to write about transcendental imagination as a "disquieting unknown", or as something which is "obscure" and is characterised by "strangeness."[34] Here the similarity of styles between Kant's and Freud's writing manifests itself. One can adopt that this affinity points to a particular place where thinking happens. We are on the border of the possibility of becoming conscious and conceptualizing. The abyss is hidden here, the one before which Kant backed away. This borderline will provoke even the most distinguished thinkers to express their humbleness.[35] In such a way Ricoeur apprehends the Freudian "flowing of concepts."[36]

From the point of view of our question concerning the merger in Freud's thought of some new intuition of the primeval "animism" with the continuation of the Kantian critical philosophy; or, to put it differently, from the point of view of the problem of the transcendental nature of unconsciousness, as "strangeness within the subject," here appears the most important transition. How can the diversity, united by imagination, be linked with the unity of apperception? Or, in other words, what does the "prior" mean?

Heidegger is aware of the difficulty which, after all, concerns also his reasoning. He remarks:

---

[32] Kant, I. 2000. *Kritik der reinen Vernunft,* A, op. cit., 78.

[33] Ibid., 98.

[34] "The transcendental imagination is the disquieting unknown which supposes the motive for the new conception of the transcendental deduction" […] "The 'strangeness' and obscurity of the transcendental imagination as it appears." Heidegger, M. 1962. *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, op. cit., 168, 175.

[35] Worth noticing here is Husserl's famous sentence: "For all of this, we are lost for words" from: Husserl, E. 1980. *Lectures on the Phenomenology of the Inner Time Consciousness.* Transl. Brough, B. J. Dordrecht–Boston–London: Kluwer.

[36] He says: "[…] This fluctuation in terminology is not surprising: in addition to the fact that these concepts all have an exploratory character, the procedure of psychoanalysis implies that they remain approximate." Ricoeur, P. 1965. *Freud and Philosophy,* op. cit., 183.

"The objections raised against the attempt to understand the selfhood of the self as intrinsically temporal, i.e., not limited in its temporal character to the way in which it is empirically apprehended, seem invincible."[37]

Certainly, the diversity conditioning the identity is of a "temporal character." However, for Heidegger, the problem of transcendental imagination is predominantly connected with the problem of the finite nature of the human subject. In his reasoning, the complete cognition is relied on receptive sensation. This means that

"Now, if transcendental imagination is to be the primordial ground of human subjectivity taken in its unity and totality, then it must also make possible a faculty on the order of pure sensible reason. But pure sensibility, […], is time."[38]

So, in a natural way, Heidegger's interpretation tends towards combining pure sensation, synthetic unity, transcendental imagination and time. Apprehending imagination as a common condition both for the unity of apperception and for pure sensation, Heidegger attempts to demonstrate that "on the contrary, the transcendental imagination as that which lets time as the now-sequence spring forth is—as the origin of the latter—primordial time."[39]

From the perspective of the question about the Freudian "strangeness within the subject" the Heideggerian reasoning presented above serves as a model illustrating the way to find, in the very Kantian intuition of the "synthetic unity of apperception" any type of diversity. However, this cannot be a target reasoning of our investigations

In order to overcome the objections which testify against the recognition of the subjective nature of the temporal diversity, Heidegger leads us to a deepened understanding of the thesis concerning the subjective character of time. Consequently, pure sensation does not consist in the reception of something which is present. "This follows only insofar as pure intuition itself forms (*bildet*) that which it is able to receive." This formation has the nature of combining that which is "immediately after" and that which is "only just," as opposed to "now." Finally, time is not some free field where imagination can intrude, but the very transcendental imagination is a "primordial time,"[40] a formation of this field.

Finally, "T h e   i n t e r n a l   s e n s e   d o e s   n o t   r e c e i v e ' f r o m   w i t h o u t '   b u t   f r o m   t h e   s e l f [AL]. In pure receptivity, internal affection must arise from the pure self, i.e., be formed in the essence of

---

[37] Heidegger, M. 1962. *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics,* op. cit., 192.
[38] Ibid., 178.
[39] Ibid., 181.
[40] Ibid., 179–180.

selfhood as such, and therefore must constitute the latter."[41] The Heideggerian interpretation demonstrates that the transcendental self is structured by pure self-awakening.

Here we are reaching the resolution of the reservations concerning the interpretation of the Kantian "vor der Apperzeption" ("prior to apperception"). Let us repeat: does the problem concern the synthesis of that which is "exterior," or that which remains on the side of the "transcendental self"? Heidegger answers: the synthesis which takes place "prior to apperception" is located on the side of the subject.

The question is what exactly is "pure self-awakening." It is an awakening which comes from the self, from the most intimate inside. Can we dismiss the similarity of this construction to the base for thinking which allowed psychoanalysis for introducing the concepts connected with unconsciousness? The source of the constant self-awakening, which is called "impulse," comes from myself. "In the case of impulse" Freud writes "an escape is futile because the Self cannot escape from itself" ("Im Falle des Triebes kann die Flucht nichts nt zen, denn das Ich kann sich nich selbst entfliehen.")[42] At this point the most important claim is the following one: that what in the reflexive consciousness appears as a unity needs to be the becoming of the unity, the combination of diversity. In result, diversity is a necessary condition of the possibility of unity.

However, a doubt—significant in regards to the possibility of applying the Heideggerian construct to the philosophical analysis of Freudian teachings— arises here. If we attempt to connect Heidegger's concept of transcendental imagination, originating in Kant's critical philosophy, with that which is not-conscious, or more directly, with the Freudian unconsciousness, the difficulty concerning the relation to time strikes us immediately. According to Heidegger, pure self-awakening is the primordial time. However, the Freudian unconsciousness is "timeless." So, how is it possible their combination?

VI

One can ask if there is any possible relation between Heidegger's transcendental imagination and Freud's timeless unconsciousness. We can say that tracing Heidegger's interpretation of Kant's conceptions, we have demonstrated how transcendental imagination as the time horizon is a necessary condition of the synthetic unity of apperception. This enables us to claim that apperception as a unity is conditioned by that which is "diverse in itself." In this way, we are closer to the Freudian "strangeness within ourselves," to his

---

[41] Ibid., 196.
[42] Freud, S.1999. "Die Verdrängung." In: *Gesamelte Werke X*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, X, 248.

postulated "animism." Closer, but not fully close. We must now demonstrate that time, understood as self-awakening, means something completely new: it rather means diversity, or alterity, or "manifold"—in other words, it refers to that which we find in Freud's understanding of various subjective instances.

We come here to Jacques Derrida's intention presented in the motto of this text. This intention proposes not only—as it literally states—to read Freud's texts in the way Heidegger reads Kant. This postulate embraces the following significant words: "like the cogito, unconsciousness is no doubt timeless only from the standpoint of a certain vulgar conception of time."[43] Thus it invites to a critical analysis of "commonsense apprehension of time." Derrida comments: "The timelessness of the unconscious is no doubt determined only in opposition to a common concept of time, a traditional concept, the metaphysical concept: time of mechanics or the time of consciousness"[44] and thus makes a reference to the post-Heideggerian critique of the identification of temporality with subjectivity. So, first, Derrida refers us to the post-Heideggerian critique of "popular understanding of time," and after the critique of Heidegger's "metaphysical" conception of time—exactly the same is presented in Derrida's own *Ousia and Gramme*.[45] So when he writes that "we should perhaps read Freud the way Heidegger reads Kant," he means: in the reading one should take into account the critique of the Heideggerian concept of temporality presented by Derrida.

Derrida commences his footnote to a footnote from the *Sein und Zeit* as follows: "In execution directed at the question of Being the 'destruction' of classical ontology first had to shake the 'vulgar concept' of time."[46] Moreover, the transgression of this popular understanding of time circles, in a key moment of Derrida's reasoning, around the problem close to the "aporia of strangeness." It circles around the problem of the unity of the apperception of "now" in which a relation with different "now" should be assumed. For Derrida this is a key question in the history of metaphysics, from Aristotle to Hegel.

Derrida points out that we naïvely talk about two essentially different kinds: space and time, "we are acting as if the difference between space and time were given as an obvious and constituted difference."[47] He demonstrates further that this naivety is grounded in the specification of the "essence of essence" of these phenomena as a presence, while in fact it is solely a comparison. Each of these notions is understood, in the hermeneutic sense, through the opposition to another notion. Moreover, it is experienced, in a phenomenological sense,

---

[43] Derrida, J. 2001. *Writing and Difference.* Transl. Bass. A. London–New York Routledge, 269.

[44] Ibid., 269–270.

[45] Derrida, J. 1982. "Ousia and Gramme." In: *Margins of Philosophy.* Transl. Bass, A. Brighton – Chicago: The Harvester Press.

[46] Ibid., 33.

[47] Ibid., 55.

through the other. The manner in which space is experienced through time was already demonstrated by Husserl and Heidegger, but Derrida shows that time can only be experienced through space: "Therefore, it cannot be question of relating space and time, each of terms b e i n g only what it is not, and consisting, first of all, only of comparison itself."[48]

The basic aspect of both manners of experiencing and understanding, which since the times of Aristotle constitutes "the pivot" (*clavis*) of metaphysics, is the word *hama* (together). "It means the complicity, the common origin of time and space, appearing together (*com-paraître*) as the condition of all appearing of Being. In a certain way it says the dyad as the minimum."[49] Thus, both forms of transcendental consciousness revealed by Kant, space and time, are secondary in relation to the fundamental variety, neither temporal nor spatial, because this variety precedes the emergence of time and space. This type of variety whose essence is the continual movement of self-awakening, is called by Derrida "differing." "Differing" means the emergence of a variety which only enables the synthesis of the temporal and spatial dimensions. That movement which, elsewhere called *drama*, should not be identified with the transposition of something in the already constituted, immobile space. The movement should rather be represented in such a way in which Freud characterizes unconsciousness as "teeming" (*Wuchern*). Only this mysterious movement conditions the permanent synthesis of the spatiotemporal opposition.

The question is, how this "together" is related to the unity of apperception. Derrida attacks the very concept of unity, however, differently than in the afore presented critique of Husserl. Namely, he shows its dependence on the paradigm of presence.

"Not to be able to coexist with an other (the same as itself) with an other now, is not a predicate of the now, but its essence as presence. […] The now *is* (in the present indicative) the impossibility of coexisting *with itself*: with itself, that is, with another self, an other now, the other same, a double."[50]

On the basis of this reasoning Derrida redefines the understanding of being in the following way: "... Being together is not a Determination of Being, but the very production of Being."[51] This production has the character of a synthesis: "The impossible—the co-existence of two nows— appears only in synthesis."[52] This synthesis enables the unity of apperception which really, according to Kant, is a condition of consciousness. The very consciousness-presence is, however, immediately conditioned by the synthesis, merging co-existence of

---

[48] Ibid., 56.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid., 55.
[51] Ibid., 56.
[52] Ibid., 55.

diversity which as long as it is different-from-itself, cannot be present, and thus cannot be a consciousness.

VII

While moving along the lines of Heidegger and Derrida we see that the consistent analysis of the basic postulate of Kant's transcendentalism can lead to the perspective corresponding with that described by Freud: unconsciousness is a den of diversity continually strange for itself. This diversity is active and "teeming," and its primal intuition in culture was animism.

The transcendental unity of apperception was for Kant given in an obvious way; in psychoanalytical thinking it becomes a task. The unity—Derrida demonstrates—is also a condition and effect of presence. It is a condition because only its emergence can constitute the subject-object relation, that is, such consciousness which presents itself to us. It is an effect because in order to enable the presence of objects the unity first must be revealed in synthesis from the absent dyad of co-existence, that is, *hama*, whose role in metaphysics Derrida exposes. So, if we talk about difference in oneself as the possibility of the unity of apperception, we think about the condition of the possibility of a condition. We enter the area of multi-layered constructions of conditioning in which every previous move enables the next, investigated by Freud.[53] These constructs permits him to move from that which is most general, to that which is particular and individual.

The transposition of the centre of importance—from the constitution of the transcendental "*I*" as a condition of cognition to the problems of the very possibility of appearance of such an "*I*"—is probably characteristic of the evolution of philosophical thinking in the 20th century. Heidegger replaces the question "How is cognition possible?" by the problem of "How is thinking possible?" Freud expresses this question dramatically what Ricoeur comments as follows: "Man is essentially a being threatened from within; (…)"[54] The drama of becoming the "*I*" can even be identified in the concise and oft-quoted sentence: *Wo Es war, muss Ich werden!* The "*I*" does not simply remain in the place where "*I*" "once" was, i.e. when people belonged to nature. "*I*" should be there, but this task is constantly exposed to failure. The constitution of oneself ceases to be an obviousness essentially given to everybody. "*I*" happens not to succeed! Even more, this failure happens in everyone's life because this

---

[53] An excellent illustration of this strategy of thinking is provided by the essay entitled *Über einige neurotische Mechanismen bei Eifersucht, Paranoia und Homosexualität* (1922). In it Freud demonstrates how through subsequent denials of particular elements of the sentence "I love him" completely various psychic formations are created. Cf. Freud, S. 1999. "Über einige neurotische Mechanismen bei Eifersucht, Paranoia und Homosexualität." In: *Gesamelte Werke X*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag.

[54] Ricoeur, P. 1965. *Freud and Philosophy,* op. cit., 182.

task is constantly present, and a threat lurks always. Ricoeur formulates it aptly: "The ego finds itself threatened, and in order to defend itself must dominate the situation."[55]

That is why the author of the *Traumdeutung* predominantly analyses dreams, slips, and, finally, psychical illnesses, in general, phenomena in which the failure of the constitution of the Self is evidently visible. These phenomena testify to the consequences of dramatic efforts which need to be made in order to have a consciousness—such one which most of us know from our subjective experiences. We need to merge the diversity hidden in us into the identity of the Self. This process can certainly fail in many ways. Therefore Castoriadas can say that we should not search for the contribution of psychoanalysis to philosophy in the fashionable problem of an enhancement of the slogan "death of the subject." "If psychoanalysis points to something, it is rather the multitude of subjects contained within a single shell, and also the fact that every time the concern is an instance having the basic attributes of the subject, in every sense of the word."[56] The core of this intuition is also the fact that the coexistence of the other in me cannot be the "presence" in the metaphysical sense. Non-presence is un-consciousness. That is why Freud knows that he must justify the notion of unconsciousness not so much in the face of scientists, but mostly in the face of the metaphysical tradition in philosophy, where the psychic is a presence in consciousness. Derrida finds a way: in order to make this possible, in order to legitimize psychoanalysis philosophically, one needs to transcend metaphysics and to follow Heidegger's path.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR — philosopher and philosophical essayist; professor at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Fields of interests: contemporary continental philosophy, especially the question of the philosophical position of psychoanalytical thought. Published books: 2001. *Nieświadomość widziana jako pustka* [Unconsciousness Seen as the Void]; 2007. *Nauka Freuda w okresie Czasu i Bycia* [The Teaching of Freud in the Time of *Sein und Zeit*] and two collections of philosophical essays, awarded a literary prize in 2004, available in 2013 in English as *The Changing Guise of Myths*. He has also published articles in English and French philosophical journals.

E-mail: aleder@ifispan.waw.pl

---

[55] Ibid., 182.
[56] Castoriadis, Cornelius. 1997. "Psychanalyse et philosophie." In: *Fait et a faire. Les carrefours du labyrinthe*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 143.

Iwona Lorenc

BETWEEN TRANSCENDENTALISM AND HERMENEUTICS: FROM HUSSERL TO HEIDEGGER

ABSTRACT

Following Ricoeur and referring to some contemporary phenomenological studies I demonstrate—perhaps differently than others do—that Husserl's phenomenological undertaking has also hermeneutic aspects. With Husserl, we are in a meaningful world which reveals its sense in intentional acts. The interpretation of senses can be treated as experiencing them. In particular, I examine the peculiar hermeneutics of affectiveness and sensation, i.e. the hermeneutics that is broadly understood as a project of demonstrating the origin of meaning. This project reaches the difference founding all the articulations of meaning rather than some aprioric basis of understanding. The difference is a source that flows in experience of sense, even in their mature culturally articulated forms, which are, however, forever permeated by sensation and the affective.

Keywords: genetic phenomenology; hermeneutics of perception; *Auslegung*; transcendental subjectivity; pre-predicative experience; transcendental aesthetics; sense; meaning; *poiesis, aisthesis, Sprachlichkeit*.

1. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

In the famous text *Phenomenology and Hermeneutics*, Ricoeur indicates the possibility of interpreting Husserl's phenomenological project as a hermeneutic one. Such an interpretation is conditioned by depriving the Husserlian phenomenology of idealistic interpretative implications, above all the ideal of scientificity (with the pursuit of "ultimate justification" contained in it) as well as the ideal of pure intuition in experiencing subjectivity. Both the quest for the complete sense of an object (ultimate justification) and the requirement of grounding unity in constitutive subjectivity are effactually countered by the hermeneutic design. This, finding its unity with phenomenology, applies the category of intentionality. It does not apply this category to deepen the subject-

object dichotomy but, on the contrary, to indicate the original character of be-
longing the subject to the world to which subject's intention is directed: the one
who asks is a part of the cause he asks about. In Heidegger's terms, being-in-
the-world comes before any reflection. Therefore, any comprehending reference
to the world is some explanation of its sense, its understanding "as." It is
Auslegung.[1]

Ricoeur—following Heidegger—extends the scope of interpretation on the
space of understanding. Understanding is directed by the structure of anticipa-
tion: "Meaning, structured by fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception, is
that upon which of the project in terms of which something becomes intelligible
as something."[2]

Interpretation understood (placing the interpreting one "*in medias res*") as an
open process takes place in the field of culture interpreted intersubjectively and
historically. The point, naturally, lies not in the sphere of historically settled
artifacts, constructed above the natural processes of world perception. It is the
sphere of an understanding explication of sense that our being-in-the-world
involves. In reading "the text of the world" we understand our involvement in
this text. *Lebenswelt* is not a set of objects subjected to manipulation but, rather,
the horizon of our life and design.

From the stage of the *Logical Investigations*, not only language but also per-
ceptions, imaginings and pictorial representations can be understanding or in-
terpretation. Ricoeur notes that for Husserl even perception is a hotbed of inter-
pretative work. Thus I attempt firstly to reveal in the hermeneutics of percep-
tion, from the area of the crosscutting phenomenological and hermeneutic fields
of interpretation, some vital issues determining the phenomenological peculiar-
ity of *Auslegung*.

2. HUSSERLIAN DESIGN OF GENETIC PHENOMENOLOGY—TOWARDS THE ORIGINS OF MEANING

The logic of meaning stems from the source logic of sense, given in the spe-
cific sensual experience as a "living presence." Generality is not a feature of the
senses only. It is eidetically experienced in the logic of meaning. The fact that
generality can be expressed in its perfect formalized form in the logic of mean-
ing is, in Husserl's opinion, no obstacle to treat it as a necessary moment of
sensual experience, as a sphere of the specific universality of the sensual and
bodily presence.

However, as Francois Dastur observes, this source sense may be directly
given in the experience of obviousness only when a genealogical work is per-

---

[1] Ricoeur, P.1986. *Du texte á l`action. Essais d`hermeneutique.* II, Edition. Paris: Du Seuil, 39–73.

[2] Heidegger, M. 1996. *Being and Time.* Transl. Stambaugh, Joan. New York: State University of New York Press, 142.

formed. For us, forever immersed in culture, it is not directly available in reflection, but mediated by experiencing cultural meanings, testimonies and the sedimentation of sense. Intersubjective idealizing structures obscure their own subjective origin.[3]

It should be emphasized here, following Dastur, that in writing about the subjective nature of the experience of source sense (whose enlivening is the objective of the Husserlian design of formal logic genealogy or the science of geometry) Husserl does not speak about subjectivity in the psychological sense, but in the transcendental one. He aims to enliven the hidden, potential rather than factual world of sense.

In the *Erfahrung und Urteil* Husserl implements his design of logic genealogy by appealing to the sphere of pre-predicative experiences. The genetic problem investigated in this work contains several moments focal for Husserl's phenomenology.

One of those moments consists in showing the way from pre-predicative experience to the sphere of statements and judgments as a path from passivity to activity. The passivity discussed here is one that typifies original obviousness of experiencing the living presence, the affective, passive reception of that which is given along with the accompanying conviction of its presence. This conviction is not yet of subjective character. Rather, it can be classified as the original stimulation of the interest in the object, preceding the attention of the subject. The passivity, considered genealogically, does not exist in the state of pure receptiveness, detached from the activity it stimulates, but only in connection with this activity. The object is perceived together with its sensory properties, which we perceive as, e.g. beautiful, appalling, attractive. Our receptiveness is here closely related to the generation of meaning. Thus one needs to introduce the category of intentionality as early as at the level of pre-predicative experience analysis.

Likewise, if Husserl attributes the subjective-individual nature to pre-predicative experience, he does not claim at all that what is idiosyncratic would precede that which is general in the sense of factual origin. Dastur strongly emphasizes Husserl's abstract nature of the procedure of situating the individual above the universal. Even in pre-predicative experience, in the passive, individual, subjective perception of the world, we grasp what is perceived by some forms of generality. An individual object always appears to us in the horizon of the typical. Actually, we always have to do with the individual intertwined with the universal.

In the *Logical Investigations*, as Ricoeur indicates, the union results from the participation of that which is general and that which is individual in the source experience of the same concrete, shared phenomenological aspect. The same

---

[3] Dastur, F. 2004. "Le probléme de antepredicative. Husserl." In: *La phénoménologie en question. Langage, alterité, temporalité, finititude.* Librairie Philosophique. Paris: Vrin.

phenomenal datum may, however, be presumed directly as this or as a vehicle for something universal.

In his genetic design Husserl tends to refer the sphere of judgment to its source intentionality. He aims to determine the subjective conditions of access to obviousness. Notably, obviousness is not to be seen in psychological sense, but, as an experience of pure consciousness, which describes itself as one constituting the object. Husserl's intention is to demonstrate the descent of logical obviousness, its being anchored in pre-predicative obviousness, treated as its own condition of possibility. The descent is such thanks to its being related to the given. It does not refer to any ethereal "truths-in-themselves" but is anchored in the phenomenal world.

While noticing in the *Erfahrung und Urteil* the necessity of associating that what is categorial with what is affective and sensual, Husserl attempts to demonstrate a genetic link between logic and its "worldly foundation." He uses the category of "world" in reference to the field of the original passive faith in presence, which characterizes pre-predicative experience. Original obviousness, which is self-evident (*Selbstgegenbenheit*), lies at the outset of the activity of the subject thanks to it referring to the grounds of the world.

One needs to be cautious about Husserl's proposition of super-structuring the axiological, practical or theoretical spheres above affective and sensual ones. Husserl does not appeal to any real genesis or chronology but describes the genetic order as attainable only by the abstract deconstruction of the existing combination of meanings. In perception the perceived and the thought are always interrelated. For instance, the body of another is perceived and thought of as the *Leib* of some *Ich*, a living body *I*, rather than *Körper* (physical body). The perception is directed first at the physical body (*Körper*). However, it is not limited to it but reaches further: to the discovery of the meaning of expressing, towards the "*I*" of the subject. Therefore the *telos* of perception is not a mere sensation, but, rather, an understanding of expressiveness (*Ausdruck*). Dastur claims that those problems are taken up by Heidegger in the *Sein und Zeit.* Also Merleau-Ponty examines them. Ricoeur indicates the link between interpretation and understanding at the level of perception.

In the *Erfahrung und Urteil,* Husserl builds a project of a new transcendental aesthetics that is a transcendental theory of the receptiveness as such. He detects the general structures of receptiveness, whose starting point is perception of individual objects. The difficulty consists in distinguishing a moment when the subject passes from the passivity to activity thanks to his becoming interested in the object. As it is seen in the texts from 1923, Husserl was fully aware of this difficulty, and he associated it with the necessity of the use of categorial tools of description. However, there are difficulties of a different sort, inter alia those examined later by Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Dufrenne.

3. SELECTED CRITICISMS OF HUSSERL'S DESIGN OF GENETIC PHENOMENOLOGY

Dastur notes that Husserl's major problem is accounting for that which eludes intention ("affection" usually eludes any intentional expression by principle). According to Dastur, it is unresolved where the affective is localized: in the object whose properties stimulate our activity or in the intentional consciousness. Receptiveness has no origin in the subject since it is earlier than the subject. It cannot be localized in the object as the encounter with the object presupposes it. Dastur concludes that it can only be found between them:

> "It was Heidegger who understood that intentional consciousness cannot become master of that which philosophical tradition described as *pathos*, affection or *Stimmung*. He understood human existence as that which is in-between, rather than an intentional subject: a 'place' where the subject can encounter the object, a place of openness to the world."[4]

Therefore, in the *Sein und Zeit* Heidegger refers his description of pre-predicative experiences to the transcendence of *Dasein*, originally open to the world, and not to the category of intentionality.

A similar criticism—carried out in the vein of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty—of the Husserlian design of genetic phenomenology can be found in the works of the contemporary German phenomenologists Bernhard Waldenfels and Manfred Sommer.

From the standpoint of consciousness crowned with predicative order, the field of the affective (including the experience of obviousness of presence) reveals its heteronomy: it is that which transcends the order. It can be said, in the spirit of Waldenfels' later writings, that it reveals its strangeness vis-à-vis this order. Under the assumption of limited orders (i.e. that which can be said of the pre-predicative), the other manifests itself in the form of that which transcends the order (*eines Ausser-ordentlichen*), that which surfaces in many ways from outside of the limits of various orders and in their gaps.[5]

Like Dastur, Waldenfels sees the main obstacle in reaching that what transcends the closed circle of reflective consciousness in the role the category of intentionality plays in Husserl's writings. In its Husserlian sense, it is not a tool used for the description of pre-predicative affective experiences eluding an understanding superimposed on it. Conversely, it is a fundamental obstacle to discover the distinctiveness of such experiences from the acts of consciousness.

---

[4] "Que la conscience intentionnelle ne puisse devenir "maître" de ce que la tradition philosophique a nommé *pathos*, affect ou *Stimmung*, c`est que Heidegger a compris, lui qui conçois l`homme non plus comme un sujet intentionnel mais comme cet "entre," de ce "lieu" où peut advenir la rencontre du sujet et de l`objet, en tant que lieu d`ouverture du monde," Dastur, Francois. 2004. "Le probléme de antepredicative. Husserl," op. cit., 63.

[5] Waldenfels, B. 2007. *The Question of the Other.* The Chinese University of Hongkong.

Waldenfels claims that intentionality, which was introduced into contemporary philosophy by Brentano, is one of the main features of phenomenology, and even animates hermeneutic and analytic philosophy. By itself, it does not leave a sufficient room (*Raum gewähren*) for the alien as the alien. Intentionality means that s o m e t h i n g i s i n t e n d e d o r u n d e r s t o o d a s s o m e t h i n g, that it is taken in a certain s e n s e. Anything that might be alien would be previously conceived in such a way that it is reduced to some part of a s e n s e - w h o l e, even if it may be true that it manifests itself only bit by bit and never completely.

One may agree with Waldenfels when he indicates the above mentioned difficulty of applying the Husserlian category of intentionality in spheres other than understanding, interpreting and self-comprehending consciousness (i.e., the spheres that the very consciousness describes as genetically "prior"). Would those, however, be arguments in favor of the uselessness of the category of intentionality in its application to the above area of genetic studies?

This question is examined by Manfred Sommer.[6] He indicates the risks carried by the idea of original direct obviousness if it were deprived of intentionality, limited to pure sensation. He states that a reduction of signs to primal sources is needed. Signs symbolize notions while notions represent phenomena. Therefore the path leads from signs back to notions they symbolize and from notions back to phenomena which are represented. Thus, it leads to the immediacy of phenomena, which is only warranted by the supreme obviousness. It is only once that Husserl undertakes an attempt of reaching this obviousness of phenomena in what I call "sensational reduction." Consciousness is reduced in it to pure sensation. The consciousness is deprived of all intentionality. Such a consciousness has to grasp pure sensational data.

If, however—as Sommer notices—intention is understood by Husserl as sense, then abandoning it means abandoning sense. The design of the consciousness which grasps pure sensational data reaches the limit of possibility. Beyond this limit there is only chaos, a multitude of meaningless sensations, where there is no *I*, there is no *You* and no physical world. This is the chaos of consciousness, its internal lack of sense. On account of this lack the very notion of consciousness can be questioned. The situation is an aporia. On the one hand, pre-sensation is an "absolute beginning." On the other, usually when you live it through, pre-impression is an experience that destroys itself. Due to its obviousness, it must be conscious; on account of self-preservation, it should not be conscious. It must be experienced while it cannot be experienced. That which is turns out to be something impossible.

Sommer indicates a chance to overcome the aporia by giving the retentive nature to experience of obviousness, by associating the pre-impression and retention. This solution is important on account of the aim of this paper. The aim

---

[6] Sommer, M. 2013. *Evidenz im Augenblick*. Berlin: Suhrkamp Verlag.

is to reveal the hermeneutic aspects of the phenomenological description of pre-predicative experiences. As Sommer notices, for Husserl primal sensation appears as the first one, which never occurs without its intentionality *qua* retention. In consequence, there is no pure sensation free from intention. There is no "pure hyletic stream," but only a harnessed stream of the consciousness, which is forever penetrated by segmenting intentions and objectivizing apperceptions.

In consequence (the claims below are legitimated not only by Sommer's investigations but also by others):

1. According to Husserl, there is no mythical source, an apophatic experience of presence unadulterated by intention. If that is to be phenomenologically affected, it will—upon being thus affected—become and remain contaminated by the difference of that which is internal and external, individual and general, passive and active.

2. The design of Husserl's genetic phenomenology, insofar as it tries to penetrate affective and sensual experiences that precede any categorial apprehension, leads to no sensational reduction. Dastur shows that the terms indicating the priority of this sphere are rather an abstraction applied by Husserl. The point is not a sensory reduction but a hermeneutics of affectiveness and sensation. Hermeneutics is here understood broadly as a project of demonstrating the origins of sense that reaches the difference founding all articulations of sense.

3. This difference is a source appearing always in the experiences of sense, even in their mature, culturally articulated forms, which are, however, always permeated by the sensory and affective. Those forms are especially important when they break the schematicity of categorial terms and elude a purely semantic interpretation, where (following Heidegger's intention) they are in a closer accordance with the nature of language than the language itself—shaped in the culture of the West and subjected to the Platonic and Aristotelian interpretations. From that the possibility of the enlivening of the spring and exhumation of a living experience of presence in experiencing culture arises. Husserl notes this possibility in the *Origin of Geometry*. More radically, it is also noticed by Heidegger, who enters a dialogue with *poiesis*.

4. THE EXPERIENCE OF LIVING PRESENCE AND THE CULTURAL OBJECTIVITY OF MEANINGS

In the *Origin of Geometry*, at a different level than in the *Erfahrung und Urteil*, Husserl returns to the questions arising from considering the relationship between the logic of sense and the logic of meaning. For the former, an original, apophantic experience of the living presence of meaning is constitutive. The latter is constituted as an ideal universal and intersubjective objectivity of mean-

ings. *Sinn* and *Bedeutung* (sense and meaning) are here clearly separated; in the *Logical Investigations* Husserl equated them.

Asking about how geometry has become an ideal, supra-individual, timeless and universal objectivity, Husserl considers a bilateral difficulty of the relation between the subjective experience of the living presence of sense and the objective manner of the existence of cultural meanings. Living obviousness passes, and is a transient experience. However, it can be reactivated. It is possible to make the obviousness that imitates the source experience real. Husserl assumes here that this would be obviousness of the same ideal object (i.e. that the sense generated in an act of communication and the sense received in the same act are the same sense.)

What endows objects with their cultural objectivity, universality and timelessness is, according to Husserl, not the experience of the reproductive activity of language but cultural records, a perpetuation of a source sense in a material sign.

Husserl distinguishes active and passive expressions. The active kind of expressions refers only to the source experience of obviousness. Passive expressions receive ready-made meanings, and operate the logic of meanings without referring to the logic of sense.

In the discussed text, Husserl is optimistic and asserts the possibility of reactivating sense in science. The method Husserl proposes concerns the creation of source idealities from elements of the world of culture and extracting true senses of sentences, irrespective of their logical senses.

He writes that culture taken historically is a living movement of intertwining and mutual penetration of the processes of the source formation and sedimentation of sense. Thence a truly hermeneutic task of revealing this historical tradition, desedimentation and stratification of senses arises. The task is to reveal the genesis and to uncover the essential general structure inherent in the historical present treated as an "ideal creation" that is always comprehensible. By the imaginational reference of this area of logic of meanings to the world of the living, one can demonstrate the historical *a priori.* This is embedded in the ideal of humanity and in the universal human knowledge.

However, I do not evaluate here the adequacy of this method as applied to sciences, but that Husserl posits it between the logic of senses and the logic of meanings. He asserts a possibility of the reanimation of the living experience of sense within the cultural circulation of meanings.

The transition from the plane of intersubjective cultural meanings to their deep senses, present in the cultural experience of obviousness is, however, possible since the subjective experiences of the direct presence of sense have their universal dimension. Husserl emphasized it already in the *Erfahrung und Urteil.* In the text *Origin of Geometry,* Husserl claims that each subjective experience of the obviousness of an ideal object, if true, refers to the ideal of *a priori* of objectivity. For instance, we know what the triangle is on the basis of a direct experience of obviousness, and we can store and communicate its idea.

We experience sense as living people embedded in culture and tradition. It means that sense is decoded from its historical sediments of concrete source experiences: scholarly works, literature, architecture, visual arts etc. The starting point for experiencing meaning is the world that surrounds us and is saturated with universal contents. Even if we experience the pure idea of the object, we experience it in some horizon.

The horizon cannot be transcended. We can, however, subject historicity itself to eidetic insight: discover the *eidos* of historicity as a universal *a priori*, thanks to which we can experience the ideal object in every historical experience of sense. We should, however, ask Husserl if in discovering the *a priori* of historicity, we have not lost the very idea of horizon. Is the essence of the horizon indescribable at all?

The problem of the horizon constitutes the broadest context of the issues considered here. According to Józef Tischner, Husserl's fundamental problem is "How is the sense of the world possible, and how is the sense of man (being a constituent part of the surrounding world) possible."[7]

The problem is not a metaphysical or axiological version of creating the world by means of the transcendental subjectivity because, as Iso Kern puts it, the world is for transcendental subjectivity radically given. It is, as Husserl says, a wonder. Transcendental subjectivity "produces" the transcendental world, not disposing the power of producing as its exclusive possibility. It receives the world. Thus, according to Husserl, subjectivity produces the world but it does not create it. Therefore, in Husserl's view, "the world is non-eliminably alien to subjectivity."[8]

If, then, in this classical version of phenomenology, the genetic constitution is a creation, it is limited to the noematic sense. On the one hand, there is no "other access to being than through the sense of being"[9] and the semantic sedimentation of this sense. On the other hand, the act of evaluative conferral of sense is not the creation of the facticity of being. "The world is factual because its experience is not explainable by use of aprioric and subjective conditions of its possibility."[10]

Thus, we enter a new field of issues, where the Husserlian oscillation between the logic of sense and the logic of meaning is moved into the area of laws of our reception of the world. These issues are raised outside the classical version of phenomenology.

———————

[7] Tischner, J. 1977. "Ingarden—Husserl: spór o istnienie świata" [Ingarden—Husserl: a Debate on the Existence of the World]." In: *Fenomenologia Romana Ingardena* [Roman Ingarden's Phenomenology]. PWN: Warszawa, 130.

[8] Ibid., 136.

[9] Ibid., 139.

[10] Ibid.

5. BETWEEN SENSE AND MEANING: *POIESIS* (HEIDEGGER)

Like some contemporary phenomenologists, also Heidegger pursues to explain the reciprocity of the formation of "*I*" and "the world." This explanation is essentially linked with the intention of removing the onto-teleological tradition.

In Heidegger's system the way the world is apprehended is not generated beforehand, nor is produced, normed and sanctioned by the subject (absolute or transcendental) situated beyond the world in an ontological or epistemological sense. Heidegger assumes here the interdependence of "*I*" and "the world," my being in the world, and my formation it by myself.

Within this interdependence, the world appears to us as endowed with sense and at the same time as an area of facticity, permanently subjected to processes of sense generation. The world is that what appears to us and that what reveals me as a subject. According to Heidegger's diagnosis, metaphysics since Plato has betrayed the pre-Socratic idea of *physis*, where being was not yet considered as separated from its appearance. The Heideggerian "phenomenon," as that which appears in itself, does not refer to an earlier or fuller presence, but is in itself completely present in its appearing. It appears through the difference, by the interplay of the same and the other, that which it is and that which it is not. The interplay creates the space of difference, a shifting event of the truth of being. This event has a difference at its genesis and is always something unique, individual. It is a repetition of the same as is in a mimetic model of presentationality.

In the *Sein und Zeit,* Heidegger emphasizes the inseparability of Dasein and its appearing by referring to the Greek category of *physis*. However, in the same text, Heidegger notes that the appearance of a phenomenon—except simple sensual perception (*aisthesis)*, which is non-concealing and always truthful—consists in a specific, dialectic interplay of concealing and revealing. According to Heidegger, the function of concealing is contained in the very *legein*. *Legein* is not only revealing, enabling seeing, but also making seeing possible in connection with something else, seeing something as something, so, in concealment.

This Heideggerian opposition of *logos* and *aisthesis* suggests, on the one hand, that the analysis of aesthetic experience concerns not the sphere of pure sensation unadulterated by representative (notional or pictorial) processing but it concerns the *logos* of the work, where that which is sensual becomes a dialectic moment of a peculiar interplay of concealing and revealing. On the other hand, this division testifies to Heidegger's nostalgia for the sensual nearness of the thing itself unadulterated by representation. The nostalgic-utopian theme of treating *aisthesis* is also present in Merleau-Ponty's and Dufrenne's works.

According to Heidegger, the idea of source explication of phenomena should be realized as a specific hermeneutic task facing the human Dasein situated in the world. This task consists in revealing that which is concealed, in connection

with its exposing. Phenomenological themes are here hermeneutic postulates. This is evident especially in Heidegger's later writings. Destined to encounter representations, placed within a *logos*, where speech is the elementary experience of being, we face the world as an obscuring representation. At the same time, however, the very speech, as the elementary experience of Dasein, opens access to its openness through the poetising art. Dasein manifests itself in *poesis*.

In the text *What Is Called Thinking?* Heidegger hopes that the time may finally come to release language from the leash of common speech and to allow it to remain attuned to the keynote of the lofty statement it makes—without, however, rating customary speech as a decline or as low. The receptive experience of sense present in poetry and the acceptance of the occurring of Truth release language from the limitations of metaphysics.

This is a *sui generis* continuation of the genealogical path of Husserl. Reaching "essentials of speech" as prior to the formed structure of the meanings of language imposes a necessity of the deconstruction of determined meanings. However, this path, which is set in the *Ideas* and the *Logical Investigations,* leads in a completely different direction than that adopted in the idealist interpretations of Husserl's views. It leads towards hermeneutics.

According to Ricoeur, what allows an interpretation of Husserl's undertaking as a hermeneutic design is the subordination of the language plan to the pre-linguistic plan. The former, a meaningful attitude to things (being the source of interpretative detachment), appears already at the level of perceptual experiences. As Heidegger shows, in those experiences speech (*Sprachlichkeit*) is formed, that is, a linguistic order crowned by a plan of the logical meanings of language is formed.

If, however, we assume, following Heidegger, that each experience is penetrated by *Sprachlichkeit*, we encounter the difficulty: hermeneutic analysis is not to begin with *Sprachlichkeit*. It should determine first what reaches the level of language.[11] This hermeneutically difficult task is realized in two ways in phenomenological research. The first way consists in determining the pre-linguistic conditions of the possibility of the perceptual experiencing of sense (as exemplified by the studies of the material *a priori*, carried out by Dufrenne and Derrida). The other way consists in deepening research on linguistic functions other than expression.

In order to realize the potentialities of phenomenology in that respect, one should—as Derrida claims—carry out a peculiar deconstruction of Husserl's views concerning language. Above all, one should discuss Husserl's idea of the living presence of sense, which can be attained in the inner life of the spirit at the expense of putting away the barrier of language as a means of communication.

---

[11] Ricoeur, P. 1986. *Du texte á l`action. Essais d`hermeneutique*, op. cit.

On the one hand, from the *Ideas* and *Logical Investigations* to the *Origin of Geometry* Husserl—guided by Nietzsche and Bergson—is directed by the aim of freeing language from metaphysical loadings. Husserl understands this task as the purification of language from the function of designating (*Anzeichen*). Only on this condition language reveals its core, constituted by the living presence of sense in the experience of obviousness. Such a revealing should be, in principle, free from empirical contamination.

On the other hand, the very intention of liberating language from the function of designating (which is, in fact, the intention of the brutal cutting of language) paradoxically entangles the Husserlian system in metaphysics. It is the metaphysics of source presence. This presence is given in the experience of a lonely life of spirit whose kernel is the intentional activity of inner perception.

How do we free language from metaphysics without falling into the trap of reducing language to pure expressing, get rid it of the functions of indicating and conveying (the communicative function)? How do we perform the task of eliciting the experience of the living presence of sense from the language shaped by the Western culture? The ambivalent task determined by the above questions posed by Heidegger was initiated by Husserl.

However, in order to indicate the peculiarity of Heidegger's understanding of this task, one should go back to the point where the intentions of the Nietzsche's and Husserl's anti-metaphysical criticism of language diverge: to the function of designating. In examining this function one should treat it as a starting point of revealing that essential role of language which Heidegger calls "preserving the truth of Dasein."

As Jean Beaufret[12] notes, already Leibniz and Hegel treat language as something more than a communication tool: language reveals the world. As such it is an expression of sense. In this respect, Husserl agrees involuntarily with Humboldt and de Saussure as he determines the essence of language by its function of expressing and meaning.

Heidegger questions the universality of the essentially metaphysical conviction that the division into signifier and signified elements assumes some essence, hidden behind this division. This way of thinking on language stems from the influence of Platonic idealism: "if—Beaufret writes—Cratylus by Plato is the first text on language as language*,* then Plato is also the philosopher of Ideas as the primal foundation of the truth of things and their names."[13] Thanks to taking into account this foundation, metaphysics can ask about the legitimacy of names.

In his rethinking of the Greek tradition, Heidegger returns to Heraclitus, and not to Plato. Regarding the reflection on the Heraclitean concept of speech he

---

[12] Beaufret, J. 1974. *Approche de Heidegger.* Vol. 3. Minuit: Paris.

[13] "Mais si le premier essai sur la langue comme langue est le *Cratyle* de Platon, Platon est d'autre part le philosophe des *Idées* comme lieux primitive de la vérité des choses et de leurs noms," Beaufret, J. 1974. *Approche de Heidegger*, op. cit., 75.

says that at the level of speech words do not things on whose behalf they speak. Words are not names that replace things but they call those to be present.[14] What kind of presence is meant here? Does the word "spring" echo the sound of a stream? Rather, thanks to the very word, the spring reveals itself fully as such. "To name the spring is to utter its sound, which can never be heard."[15] Thus—Beaufret concludes—speech does not serve as information, but, is, in fact, a poem.

One cannot determine this function of a word which consists in "calling upon presence" if it is detached from the function of indicating. The word calls upon presence exactly thanks to the inseparability of indicating and designation. In 1959, in the *Unterwegs zur Sprache,* Heidegger writes:

> "The Greeks of the Classical Age know and understand the sign in terms of showing—the sign is shaped to show. Since the Hellenistic times (the Stoa), the sign originates by a stipulation, as the instrument for a manner of designation by which man's mind is reset and directed from one object to another object. Designation is no longer indicating in the sense of bringing something to light. The transformation of the sign from something that indicates to something that designates has its roots in the change of the nature of the truth."[16]

The way of European metaphysics initiated by Plato, is in Heidegger's opinion a way leading from indicating to designation, from *logos* to language. It is a way of the separation of sense and meaning. A philosopher and poet are, in a joint effort, the most sensitive to this. They are predestined to use this separation as an element of their own language, and to reanimate its function of calling upon presence in a hermeneutic effort of understanding.

The previous question should be repeated: What presence is meant here? In order to answer it one should come back to Ricoeur. As he notes, the Husserlian ontological explication, being *Auslegung* consists in the layers of sense spreading (nature, animal and psychic quality, culture, personality) that constitute the world in layers as constituted senses. The experience of the presence of the world enabling by language, is thus not a raw experience of something given before one's understanding participation in the world. It is an experience that is as much phenomenological as it is hermeneutic.

Both the Heidegger and a number of phenomenologists are aware of the insufficiency of the formula of phenomenology developed by Husserl. At the same time they continue Husserl's way in regions neglected by him. They ex-

---

[14] Ibid, 76.

[15] "Nommer la source, c`est déja *dire* son murmure qui cependant ne s`entend nulle part." Ibid., 77.

[16] Heidegger, M. 1982. *On the Way to Language.* Trans. Hertz, Peter D.. San Francisco: Harper, 115.

amine fundamental questions arising in the genetic phenomenology with its postulate of returning to experience of the living presence of sense.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR — professor, head of the Chair of Aesthetics Department, Institute of Philosophy, University of Warsaw. Fields of interests: the contemporary philosophy of art, history of aesthetics, and contemporary, chiefly francophone philosophy (phenomenology, hermeneutics, postmodernism). Main publications: 1990. *Dlaczego sztuka? Wprowadzenie do filozofii sztuki* [Why Art? Introduction to the Philosophy of Art]. Warszawa 1993. *Logos i mit estetyczności* [Logos and the Myth of Aestheticity], Warszawa 2001. *Świadomość i obraz. Studia z filozofii przedstawienia*, Scholar, Warszawa [Consciousness and Image. Studies on the Philosophy of Representation]; 2010. *Minima aesthetica. Szkice o estetyce późnej nowoczesności* [Minima aesthetica. Essays of Late Modernity]. Warszawa; the editor of 6 books, and the author of 80 papers.

Norbert Leśniewski

ONTOLOGIZATION OF TRANSCENDENTALISM.
HISTORICAL-INTENTIONAL ASPECT OF HEIDEGGER'S
INTERPRETATION OF KANT'S *CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON*

ABSTRACT

The paper aims to reconstruct Heidegger's historical-intentional assumptions in his ontological interpretation of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. The paper presents young Heidegger's project of the "metaphysical-teleological interpretation of consciousness." The project indicates the direction of his further ontological interpretation of transcendentalism: Heidegger stands up to the traditional, well known neo-Kantian interpretation of the *Critique*, and offers a new conception of ontological knowledge and cognition. According to this conception, cognition is grounded in transcendental imagination where a threefold synthesis takes place. Heidegger's original temporal interpretation of transcendental schematism is also recalled to stress the significance of his new ontological approach to Kant's theoretical philosophy.

Keywords: Heidegger; Kant; transcendentalism; ontology; ontological knowledge; schematism of imagination.

The issue examined here concerns Heidegger's early philosophical activity. Heidegger was investigating this issue in his first series of lectures from 1919[1] and in his *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*.[2] In those lectures Heidegger attempted to define his own position towards Marburg Neo-Kantianism. This attempt is grounded in the phenomenological position he acquired already in 1916. A year after the publication of his postdoctoral thesis he expanded it by

---

[1] "Die Idee der Philosophie und das Weltanschauungsproblem" (the so called *Kriegsnotsemester*: 7 February – 11 April 1919). In: Heidegger, M. 1999. *Zur Bestimmung der Philosophie.* Frankfurt am Main.

[2] Heidegger, M. 1991. *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik.* Frankfurt am Main.

adding the *Schluß*[3] (the problem of categories) where he presented his primary philosophical task constantly considered by him since 1919. According to Heidegger's general evaluation of logic (logic of the categories) from 1916, logic must not be limited to the traditional epistemological notions of subject and object, as logic does not contain such categories which would have explained the immanent content of consciousness. And it cannot because, on the one hand, idealism ignores the transcendence of empirical material, and, on the other hand, realism ignores the immanence of subjective form. Heidegger advocates a "new sphere" of reflections called "the higher unity" of subjective and objective attitudes. The unity is to contain "the living spirit," and, above all, to include "history and its cultural-philosophical, teleological interpretation."[4] Such a formulation of Heidegger's enterprise took finally the form of the idea of fundamental ontology apprehended as the revealing of the constituted being of finite *Dasein*.[5] Below this Heidegger's concept of ontology is reconstructed. It will bring us closer to the understanding of the ontological meaning of his transcendentalism.

In the aforementioned *Schluß*, Heidegger states that the pursued way of grasping the non-sensual meaning of pure sensory data is a "metaphysical-teleological interpretation of consciousness" that provides the "ontic meaning" of sense as a logical object. The ontic meaning of sense is not available in metaphysics as a science about the extra-sensuous, so as it was understood in Heidegger's postdoctoral thesis. Taking into account that logic holds the absolute hegemony as a "theory of theories," metaphysics in its traditional meaning would have to obey its rules.[6] Furthermore, Heidegger's philosophy, with its postulates formulated in the *Schluß*, is to be considered beyond metaphysical transcendentalism[7] on which it was still dependent in Heidegger's second dissertation and where logic ruled by metaphysics led to conceptual realism. The ontic meaning of sense is also different from the meaning of "presence" applied by Heidegger in the *Sein und Zeit* because sense as a logical object acquires a trait which distinguishes the whole contemporary definition of logic. It is a trait of intentionality as "the domain category of the logical realm."[8]

---

[3] "Schluß. Das Kategorienproblem," "Die Kategorien- und Bedeutungslehre des Duns Scotus." In: Heidegger, M. 1972. *Frühe Schriften.* Frankfurt am Main. See also: Strube, C. 1993. *Zur Vorgeschichte der hermeneutischen Phänomenologie*, Würzburg.

[4] Ibid., 346–350.

[5] Heidegger, M. 1991. *Kant und das Problem ...*, op. cit., 232.

[6] See: Crowell, S.G. 1994. "Making Logic Philosophical Again (1912–1916)." In: *Reading Heidegger from the Start. Essays in His Earliest Thought.* Ed. Kisiel, T. and J. van Buren. New York, 71.

[7] The metaphysical meaning of transcendentalism is related to the scholastic doctrine of *transcendentalia* (*unum, verum, bonum*). See: Kockelmans, J. 1989. "On the Meaning of the Transcendental Dimension of Philosophy." In: *Perspektiven transzendentaler Reflexion.* Ed. Mueller, G. and T.M. Seebohm. Bonn, 29–32.

[8] Heidegger, M. 1972. *Die Kategorien-...,* op. cit., 225.

The postulated metaphysical-teleological apprehension of sense requires, then, due to its intentional characteristic, an adequate transcendental interpretation of the subject. According to Heidegger, metaphysical transcendentalism is not capable of formulating "a logically adequate concept of subject" because it "lacks methodological consciousness" or reflexivity in its modern sense. Instead, scholasticism initiated, due to its attachment to tradition and authority, a specific kind of intellectual power called by Heidegger "an absolute devotion to (*Hingabe*) and a passionate immersion in the traditionally transmitted body of knowledge."[9] "A true reality" of the subject is essentially historical. Therefore, one cannot deduce its sense from the Neo-Kantians timeless transcendental (epistemological) consciousness. As Crowell notes, the transcendental interpretation of the subject occurs in Heidegger's "phenomenological sphere of immanence" where the Neo-Kantian epistemological immanence is related to the "translogical context of historic living spirit,"[10] i.e. to the pre-theoretical and pre-predicative context of "original knowledge" (*Urwissenschaft*). In Heidegger's first series of lectures, this knowledge was identified with philosophy along with its ontological method of accessing the "original sphere of life experience."

Thus, the "metaphysical-teleological interpretation of consciousness" should be understood as an ontological interpretation of historically changeable intentional relations. In fact, historicity and intentionality primarily describe the object of ontological interpretation which opens a "new sphere," i.e. the *a priori* dimension of sense of human activity—complex, diverse, and at the same time formally uniform, and continuous. This dimension includes the relational meaning of "I Situation" which means "unity of natural life experience," and "does not include any static moments but events (*Ereignisße*)," i.e. life experiences (typical of the pre-theoretical context of pre-predicative knowledge) as opposed to experience understood as mental process (*Vorgang*) (typical of the theoretical context of predication).[11] Henceforth, "the new sphere" finally takes the shape of fundamental ontology. Ontological interpretation answers the question about being, and being itself is described as historical (further temporal) and intentional (until 1924[12]).

In 1922 Heidegger (in his *Natorp Bericht*) states that philosophy as ontology of facticity is also a categorial interpretation of ways of speaking and understanding. This statement enables him to capture both ontology and logic in "the

---

[9] Ibid., 140.

[10] Crowell, S.G. 1994. "Making Logic …," op. cit., 72.

[11] Heidegger, M. 1994. *Die Idee der Philosophie ...,* op. cit., 205, 206.

[12] In 1924 Heidegger replaced term intentionality by "being-in-the-world," in 1925 by "Dasein," and in 1926 by "existence." See: Kisiel, T. 2002. "Heidegger (1907–1927): The Transformation of the Categorial." In: *Heidegger's Way of Thought*. New York – London.

original unity"[13] which is later called the phenomenological hermeneutics of facticity. However, facticity understood as *Dasein* in its everydayness (*Jeweiligkeit*) requires an interpretation which—in line with the supposition presented in Heidegger's postdoctoral thesis—includes "history of spirit or history of existence."[14] For this very reason, in 1927 Heidegger argues that ontology is a temporal knowledge; he identifies it with transcendental knowledge. The central question of ontology is the temporality of *Dasein* which implies the logically and temporarily apprehended being's apriority.[15] Heidegger states finally in the *Sein und Zeit* that the task of ontology consists in bringing out the Being of being and in explicating being itself.[16]

Kant's definition of transcendental cognition in the first version of the *Critique of Pure Reason* refers to our *a priori* concepts of objects in general, while in the corrected second version it is about our way of knowing objects as long as this way is *a priori* possible.[17] Yet, ontological interpretation investigates the possibility of prior understanding of being, and, at the same time, it tends to grasp the Being of being. Transcendental cognition concerns the exceeding (transcending) of pure reason towards being in such a way that experience can be only adapted to the latter as to a possible object. Transcendental cognition in ontological interpretation is based upon the premise of hermeneutical experience of something previously known. This cognition investigates the direction of intentions (transcendence). The ontological version of transcendental cognition interprets *a priori* concepts of the "object of cognition" and *a priori* possibility of "cognition of an object" in order to create a system of possible primary concepts. The system of such concepts was called by Kant "transcendental philosophy," and by Heidegger "fundamental ontology."

Heidegger's argumentation of the ontological interpretation of Kant's transcendentalism invokes two main arguments: firstly, ontology is knowledge which reveals a system of all concepts of intellect if these refer to the objects of experience,[18] and, secondly, in Kant's conviction, being and reality equates to that what is previously perceived and known. Therefore, ontology in Kant's sense must be "knowledge about the previous cognition of objects and their possibilities."[19] Finally, we may redefine the primary task of ontology presented in the *Sein und Zeit* as follows. Ontology:

1. concerns the cognition of the prior context of objectification prior called the constitution of an object; the transcendental and phenomenological tradi-

––––––––––––––––––

[13] Heidegger, M. 2005. *Phänomenologische Interpretationen Ausgewälter Abhandlungen des Aristoteles zur Ontologie und Logik*, Frankfurt am Main, 364.

[14] Ibid., 398.

[15] Heidegger, M.1975. *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie.* Frankfurt am Main, 463.

[16] Heidegger, M. 1993. *Sein und Zeit.* Tübingen, 27.

[17] Kant, I. 1968. *Kritik der reinen Vernunft.* Ed. Weischedel, W. Frankfurt am Main, 63.

[18] Heidegger, M. 1977. *Phänomenologische Interpretation von Kants Kritik der reinen Vernunft.* Frankfurt am Main, 58.

[19] Heidegger, M. 1975. *Die Grundprobleme ...,* op. cit., 181.

tions considered it to be outside the pre-theoretical and pre-predicative initial context of being;

2. studies conditions of the traditional cognitive relation (subject-object). Hence, the ontological cognition of the previously cognitively theorised constitution of an object reveals the recognised and applied subjective and objective conditions. In the ontological interpretation the analysis of subjective conditions corresponds to existential analytics, and its primary concepts correspond to existentials. Concepts that pertain to objects—in the ontological interpretation: beings of a different kind of being to *Dasein*—are categories.[20] The former 2.1. Heidegger calls existential explicators and the latter 2.2 we may call, by analogy, categorial explicators. The relation between the two is a system of concepts considered by Heidegger in the initial context of the intentional "question of being";

3. is a criterion defining a relation between categorical and existential explicators contained in the final moment of ontological cognition, i.e. in experience.

In consequence, the ontological interpretation of Kant's transcendentalism leads to the thesis that ontology embraces such a kind of knowledge which:

1. formally indicates an initial historical-intentional context,

2. this context is a methodical condition of the possibility of existential-categorical interpretation,

3. the sense of this interpretation is a phenomenological-hermeneutical experience, i.e. life experience.

Ontological cognition always refers to a somehow known reality (1.). This reality is only accessible through an arrangement of concepts (2.) mirroring the most essential structural moments of the reality and its significant factors. The conceptual arrangement is a system of relations, and its importance is dependent on two Kantian meanings of objectivity: authenticable and referential. In the authenticable meaning objectivity refers to the cognition being already "objectified," which means that the *a priori* (i.e. necessary and universally valid, subjective) conditions have been already accounted for. In this meaning cognition is intersubjective. In the referential meaning cognition is objectively valid only if it is referred or applied to non-imagined but real objects of experience. This cognition is called (empirically) real by Kant.

The arrangement of expressive primary concepts (2) which permits categorial and existential explication (physical and mental descriptions) along with the adequate kinds of knowledge are, according to Heidegger, subjected to ontological interpretation searching for a possible relation between them. In the ontologically corrected meaning, categorial and existential explications become a

---

[20] Heidegger, M. 1993. *Sein und Zeit,* op. cit., 44; Heidegger, M. 1975. *Die Grundprobleme …,* op. cit., 204.

form of interpretation of: physical interpretation of "nature" and of mental in-
terpretation of "history," respectively.[21] Since 1916 Heidegger pursued the rela-
tion between experience and logic. We shall recognize it, firstly, as the condi-
tion of objectively valid ontological cognition, i.e. a criterion of its sense, and,
secondly, as a methodical directive claiming that in the interpretation of objec-
tively valid knowledge one needs to consider the historical-intentional context
of understanding from which this very knowledge is derived.

Below I present the interpretation of the ontological-methodical criterion of
cognition which unifies both the Kantian meanings of objectification and two
kinds of Heidegger's explicators and explications, i.e. his categorial (physical)
and existential (mental) interpretation. The aim of such an approach is to grasp
the relation which Heidegger was searching for—the relation between the tradi-
tionally opposite factors: subject–object, subjective–objective, ideal–real, men-
tal–physical. In Heidegger's works, this relation finally takes the shape of his-
torical-intentional relation operating as an ontological–methodical criterion of
cognition.

(2.1.) If we consider the validity of concepts in terms of subjectivity then we,
in such an existential explication, refer to the Kantian condition of objectively
valid knowledge in the authenticable meaning of objectification. Since every
subject "exists" and is subjected to existential explication then the related expli-
cators determine the validity of "prior knowledge" not for a particular subject,
but intersubjectively. The ontological interpretation of the condition of intersub-
jectively valid cognition, hence the ontologization of the subjective condition
indicates the "featured form of being" of a subject, i.e. "being-there" (*Dasein*)
which captures "the possibility and necessity of the most radical *Individua-
tion.*"[22] Existential explication reveals the typical and dominant in the "prior
knowledge" concept of subject. This concept determines formally the authentic-
ity—intersubjective validity—of its relation to contents. Therefore, it reveals
the formal condition of the constitution of a subject. The system of relations
mirrors the intersubjective forms of contextual individuation. These relations
are called "existential structures;" among them "openness" is the most primary.
Heidegger considers "openness" as a "care" which is the formal structure of
intentionality of the historically individuated human situation (*Dasein*).[23] The
universality of "concern" determines an intersubjective agreement regarding the
possible object of cognition.

Truth appears to be *veritas transcendentalis*. Truth is of a transcendental
character because it relates to "being" that is an explicit *transcendens*.[24] In other

---

[21] Heidegger, M. 1993. *Sein und Zeit,* op. cit., 399.

[22] Ibid., 38.

[23] Kisiel, T. 1996. "Care." In: *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Supplement.* Ed. Borchert,
D.M. New York, 69.

[24] Heidegger, M. 1993. *Sein und Zeit.*, op. cit., 38.

words, in the historical-intentional initial context, interpretation (the sense of being) exceeds contents and directs itself (projects) towards the intersubjective conditions of its comprehension (forms of individuation). These conditions are universal and necessary as long as they provide the subjects of cognition with intersubjective understanding of the meaning of the cognized contents. The objectivity in terms of authenticity, being a formal condition, is necessary and universal but insufficient.

(2.2) If we consider the validity of concepts in terms of objectivity, then such a research (i.e. categorial explication) concerns the Kantian condition of objectively valid knowledge in the referential meaning of objectivity. Since everyone understands what he experienced through concepts, then the validity of conceptual cognition is determined due to categorial explicators by experiencing states of affairs or by experienced contents. Ontological interpretation of the condition of empirically valid cognition, i.e. the ontologization of the objective condition, indicates "the character of being of an object" which is not a being in itself but a "counter-stance" (Gegen-stand) formed by "prior perception and cognition." Categorial explication shows the typical and dominant in "prior cognition" concept of an object. Such a concept determines semantically "reality," i.e. experiential validity of the conceptual cognition of the object. Therefore, it reveals the semantic condition of constitution of the object. The system of relations which is a "real" content of experience is a categorial structure determined by what is "already perceived." Hence, categorial explicators are the meanings which are already there. Their structural relation, according to Heidegger, is "meaningfulness" (*Bedeutsamkeit*). As he later describes: "this what means is primary, it gives itself to me (*gibt sich mir*) directly, without any indirect thought to grasp things."[25] The ontological interpretation of semantic constitution conditions never relates to things in itself since the objects of possible experience can only be their "flawed form" (*defizienter Modus*). The existence (*Dasein*) of things outside us, contrary to Kant's arguments, is not the semantic condition of reality either. The question of existence of the external world is seen as secondary in ontological interpretation as Kant's concept of existence (*Dasein*) in the sense of presence is secondary to "handiness." Finally, the semantic condition of reality of an object is the meaning which results from previous ways of perceiving it and hence is prior to our cognition. Therefore, the condition of reality is a meaning because it is the content of our experience or hermeneutical experience.

"The scandal of philosophy," as recognized by Heidegger, lies not in the fact that there is no proof of the external world existence but (what is an ontological correction of transcendentalism) "rather that such proofs are still expected and

---

[25] Heidegger, M. 1999. *Zur Bestimmung ...,* op. cit., 73.

attempted again and again."[26] Therefore, if the real existence (i.e. meaningful-ness) is what is handy and not what is present, and it is accessible by categorial-existential explicators instead of objects, then we must not be surprised by Hei-degger's following statement: "in the sequence of ontological relations of founding and possible categorial and existential manifestation, *reality is again related to the phenomenon of care.*"[27] The concept of reality (being a result of physical interpretation) can become, according to Heidegger (*Being and Time*, § 43), "a problem of ontology" (*Being and Time*, § 43b) not in its traditional meaning (understood as "the presence of being" in its existence independent from cognition) but in the meaning of such cognition (*Being and Time*, § 43c) which considers the context due to its prior "handiness" that semantically de-termines possibilities of understanding the meaning of objects. Hence, "a real object" can be discussed only in the context of "concern," i.e. in the initial his-torical-intentional context, where the object relates to with the intended subject. The sense of "the real object" is the meaning of "serving something."

The analysis of the relation between subjective and objective condition of objectivity, the relation between intersubjectivity and reality is the very same analysis that Heidegger calls the structure of care (intentionality). It is the ground of the relation between existential and categorial explicators, of the search for the ontological-methodical criterion of sense which refers to *a priori* subject–object dependence. The latter as well as the relation between ontologi-cal concepts are *a priori* as they come from "the prior perception and cognition" and as such they are disclosed only if existence is understood as "handiness" as opposed to "presence." The definitional trait of "presence" is its absolute inde-pendence of any intentions and its meaning of apriority: logical precedence to beliefs and desires. The concept of handiness, on the contrary, as a result of ontological interpretation assumed in a "previous cognition" of the intentional relation, has a modified ontological meaning: the historical continuity of sense of activities and the intentional relation towards the object. "Handiness" implies the intentional reciprocal relation between motives and tendencies as well as the historical relation of interdependence between intersubjectivity and reality. The interpretation of these relations aims to apply them (performance) and exceed (transcendence) in the actual context of understanding of possible objectivity. Heidegger calls this interpretation ontological cognition.

To summarize, ontological cognition is an interpretation of transcendence that changes the concepts of application and exceeding (performance and tran-scendence) into ontological or practical-transcendental counterparts of *a priori* conditions of objectively valid cognition where apriority is understood in a his-torical way.

---

[26] Heidegger, M. 1993. *Sein und Zeit,* op. cit., 205.
[27] Ibid., 211.

Thus, in opposition to the logical apriority of "presence," "handiness" is historically *a priori* or, generally speaking, temporarily *a priori* in the sense of what is prior, and, simultaneously, what still does characterize "the kind of being of *Dasein* itself"[28] and stands for a formal condition of objectively valid cognition. This explains why Heidegger defines the apriority of "handiness" in grammatical instead of in logical way by use of the Present Perfect (*apriorisches Perfekt*). The English Present Perfect tense describes best the objective validity of "handiness" at present; this validity is also a semantic condition of objectively valid knowledge. We deal with the continuity of sense of "handiness" as long as beliefs (motives, thrownness) constitutive for it allow to fulfil the desires (tendencies, projection), or until previous cognitive motives influence the present tendencies of cognition and vice versa—as long as the present existential-categorial explication or present interpretation allow to understand its own, attainable in itself, initial context ("originality"). Thus, "handiness" is the context where "care" (intentionality) turns out to be the ontological interpretation of the general formula of transcendentalism as stated by Marek Siemek: there is no subject without an object and vice versa,[29] whereas fundamental ontology is to deliver knowledge about primary (factual and everyday) ways of its application.

Ontological cognition—which Heidegger formulates basing on the Kantian transcendentalism—meets a condition of objectively valid knowledge by interpreting in the initial context (handiness) the general formula of transcendentalism (i.e. intentionality), and at the same time by combining ontologically, not logically, the subjective and objective conditions. The ontological interpretation of the traditional subject-object relation leads to the thesis claiming that cognition determines actual (present) intersubjectivity and reality of "prior cognition" by means of the possible individuation in the context of experiencing of the state of affairs being also premises for the prior concepts of intersubjectivity and reality. In other words, the relation between intersubjectivity and reality, or the agreement concerning meanings, is ontological in the historical sense because it allows to recognise the factual existence of what is (and could be) still understood in previous meanings. This relation is ontological also in the intentional sense as it allows for perceiving (interpreting) facticity in line with the previous modes of talking about it.

The ontological interpretation of Kant's transcendentalism is best shown in its most popular paragraph related to the concept of Kant's *a priori* synthesis and schematism. *A priori* synthesis gives the foundation for the apophantic structure which at the same time makes judgements possible. In Heidegger's opinion, "ontological cognition, i.e. *a priori* synthesis is the purpose that 'the

---

[28] Ibid., 85.
[29] Siemek, M. 1994. "Husserl i dziedzictwo filozofii transcendentalnej" [Husserl and the Heritage of Transcendental Philosophy]. In: *Filozofia transcendentalna a dialektyka* [Transcendental Philosophy and Dialectics]. Ed. Siemek, M. Warszawa, 284.

whole critique actually serves'."[30] And since the Kantian transcendental critique referred to logic in general, then *a priori* synthesis—identified with ontological cognition in the above mentioned Heidegger's statement—transcendentally determines judgments and logic as well. The main reason why Kant criticised general logic was the fact that it was abstracted from "all contents of cognition" and thus from the way in which a subject was related to its object. In his post-doctoral thesis, Heidegger identified the relation between knowing the object and object of knowledge with transcendental truth[31] which he did not differentiate from sense. The ontology and logic pursued by Heidegger, along with logic's main question of sense of the judgment, are transcendental in the Kantian meaning as a research of "the origins of our knowledge of objects as long as they are not attributed to objects."[32] True transcendental knowledge is identified with the sense of judgement. It is accessible by transcendental logic. Therefore, it must contain the genesis of its contents and, accordingly, the way it relates to its object. The relation of knowledge to its object and judgements to their contents, "as long as this relation is *a priori* possible," assumes and includes *a priori* made syntheses such as: apprehension in intuition, reproduction in imagination and recognition in a concept.

According to Kant, every cognitive act consists of three acts of synthesis. The first synthesis is achieving in the intuitive apprehension of diversity, and consists in collecting all diversity in one representation. If we perform this synthesis in relation to non-empirical representations then we deal with pure and *a priori* synthesis of apprehension. The second synthesis is closely related to the first one. It combines the current representation with a previous one, and consists in reproducing representations according to the laws of association or in passing from one representation to another "even without the presence of an object." Further, as Kant concludes, since phenomena are not things in themselves but a play of representations, then the pure transcendental synthesis of imagination must stand as the foundation of the possibility of empirical synthesis of reproduction. The second synthesis in its pure version determines also "the possibility of any experience" because that possibility grasps the reproduction of phenomena as a necessary assumption. Therefore, through apprehension and reproduction we may perceive the diversity which we aim to know. Knowledge of anything requires diversity to be already in some order, and that is why the power of cognition arranges it *a priori* according to the law of apprehension and reproduction. This law is a concept, and the unity it gives to the diversity is Kant's third synthesis—synthesis of recognition in a concept. Furthermore, the synthetic unity required by cognition assumes, on the one hand, the unity of time that allows the apprehension and reproduction of the diversity, and, on the

---

[30] Heidegger, M. 1991. *Kant und das Problem ...,* op. cit., 174–175.
[31] Heidegger, M. 1978. *Frühe Schriften,* op. cit., 344.
[32] Kant, I. 1968. *Kritik ...,* op. cit., 101.

other hand, the unity of consciousness or transcendental unity of apperception through which representations can be arranged and the object can be experienced. An object without it would be only "the accumulation of phenomena."[33]

In the Heidegger's ontological interpretation, all three *modi* of synthesis are strictly related to time: synthesis of apprehension in intuition is related to the present tense, synthesis of reproduction in imagination to the past tense, and finally the synthesis of recognition in a concept to the future tense. The apprehension of the diversity represents the present. Reproduction separates the past moment ("at that time") from the present one and creates a representation of the future "not now." Recognition regulates the apprehension and reproduction, and, according to Heidegger, leads to the representation of unity given in a concept, i.e. it refers to the background or horizon "possessed in advance" (*Vorweghaben*)[34] where this synthesis is done. This is the reason why Heidegger suggests that the feature of anticipation, which enables us to understand the already apprehended and reproduced phenomena and at the same time to understand the possibilities that these phenomena lead to, can be found in Kant's synthesis of recognition. "Re-cognition" on its own as "the repeated cognition" without anticipation would grant the existence of some complete knowledge given *a priori*. This contradicts Kant's assumption that all cognition is rather a result and not a part of synthesis. Therefore, Heidegger suggests that the third kind of synthesis should be called "pre-cognition (*Prae-cognition*) which due to its relation to the future must be understood as initial forming, "pre-forming" (*Vorbildung*) as in terms of envisaging (anticipation) faculties (*facultas praevidendi*).[35] What is most important, both the temporal directions in the synthesis of recognition are also contained in the synthesis of imagination. The functions of the latter are distinguished by Kant between reproductive, i.e. dependent on empirical laws, and productive, i.e. dependent on intellectual laws.[36]

Apart from the relation of the triple synthesis with time, Heidegger emphasizes also its other relation with schematism. In reference to the non-empirical concepts, i.e. categories that arrange diversity in accordance with the unity of time and the unity of self-consciousness (they both have the same meaning on the transcendental level), he claims that "it is only in transcendental schematism that categories form themselves as categories. If they are indeed 'primary concepts' then transcendental schematism is in general the primary and adequate formation of concepts."[37] Thus, transcendental schematism explains the origins of categories and how they determine the possibility of synthesis.

The above Heideggerian reasoning can be presented in short as follows: Firstly, pure concepts (categories) as opposed to empirical concepts (their con-

_____

[33] Ibid., 170.
[34] Heidegger, M. 1977. *Phänomenologische Interpretationen von Kants ...*, op. cit., 364.
[35] Heidegger, M. 1993. *Kant und das Problem ...*, op. cit., 174–175.
[36] Kant, I. 1968. *Kritik ...*, op. cit., 149.
[37] Heidegger, M. 1993. *Kant und das Problem ...*, op. cit., 110.

tent is the same as the defined object itself) are not abstracted from the objects
of experience but they are *a priori* applied to them. Secondly, all cognition syn-
thesizes diversity on the grounds of the unity of time and the unity of self-
consciousness (transcendental unity of apperception). Thirdly, Heidegger, fol-
lowing Kant, differentiates typical of general logic presentations that are "sub-
ject" to a concept from the presentations that "lead" to a concept. These presen-
tations already "contain some transcendental content," i.e. pure synthesis which,
in Kant's opinion, cannot be processed by general logic. In conclusion, Heideg-
ger claims that "bringing of the pure synthesis to the (shape) of concepts is done
in the transcendental schematism where the latter needs to be understood us
'bridge' between the two syntheses of apprehending in intuition and recognition
in a concept. Transcendental scheme is thus a link which is the unity of time and
consciousness (called 'this-here-now' (*haecceitas*) in his postdoctoral thesis and
later 'here-now' (*Da*) provides a transcendental temporal term. Such a term,
according to Kant, is uniform with a category meaning; it is general and *a priori*
founded on it as well as uniform with a phenomenon as long as the empirical
presentation includes time. Every scheme produces a structurised and specified
temporal sequence which makes cognition possible. A scheme itself is a pro-
duce of imagination which enables Heidegger to claim that 'transcendental'
imagination is a source of time as succession of 'now' and being such a source
it is the primary time."[38]

   Finally, as a result of ontological interpretation, i.e. the introduction of tem-
poral characteristic of transcendental schematism, Heidegger emphasizes the
meaning of "are also" in the Kantian formulation of the synthetic principle: "the
condition of the possibility of experience in general are also the conditions of
the possibility of the objects of experience."[39] According to him, the principle
contains the necessity of satisfying two conditions to make *a priori* synthesis
and derivative *a priori* synthetic judgments possible. Firstly, the "condition of
the possibility of experience" is "a prior association with ...," "a prior relation
to ..."[40] or the reproduced by imagination past relation to the object, previously
assimilated objectivity, objective validity, reality, i.e. re-cognition (throwness).
Secondly, "the condition of the possibility of objects of experience is 'an open
in advance,' a possessed in advance" (*Vorweghaben*) horizon which is a back-
ground of anticipated objectivity, objective validity, reality, i.e. recognition
(projection) created simultaneously by imagination in accordance with laws.
The above example of applying the ontological interpretation, taken from the
Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics, clearly confirms that the task of the on-
tologization of transcendentalism is to indicate the historical and intentional

---

[38] Ibid., 175–176.
[39] Kant, I. 1968. *Kritik ...,* op. cit., 201.
[40] Heidegger, M. 1993. *Kant und das Problem ...,* op. cit., 118.

context from which the possibilities of cognition derive and which are called by Heidegger the sense of Being of being.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR — Ph.D. associate professor, Institute of Philosophy, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań. Research fields: German philosophy, contemporary philosophy, hermeneutics, rhetoric. Main works: 2010. *Hermeneutyczny kontekst "wiedzy źródłowej." Studium wczesnej filozofii Martina Heideggera* [Hermeneutic Context of "Original Knowledge." Study on Martin Heidegger's Early Philosophy]. Poznań 2007. *Kant a metafizyka* [Kant and Metaphysics]. Ed. with J. Rolewski. Toruń 2007. *Heidegger w kontekstach* [Heidegger in Contexts]. Bydgoszcz 2002. *Die Zeit Heideggers*. Ed. with E. Nowak-Juchacz. Frankfurt am Main 1998. *O hermeneutyce radykalnej* [On Radical Hermeneutics]. Poznań 1995. *Studies in Hermeneutics*. Ed. with A. Przyłębski. Warszawa – Poznań.

Andrzej Lisak

NEONEO-KANTIANISM—TRANSCENDENTAL PHILOSOPHY AS A REFLECTION ON VALIDITY (*GELTUNG*)

ABSTRACT

The article presents the philosophical thought of Rudolf Zocher, Wolfgang Cramer and Hans Wagner, whose theoretical stance can be dubbed Neoneo-Kantianism. The article investigates their philosophical output and argues that they developed a transcendental reflection of a different kind than that of Baden Neo-Kantianism. The transcendental reflection of Neoneo-Kantianism, especially in the work of Hans Wagner, takes on the topic of phenomenological inquiry and treats consciousness as a source of subject-object distinction, unlike Rickert and Windelband, who were developing transcendental reflection focused on aprioristic forms of cognition, much in the post-Fichtean vein, thus giving primacy to the subjective conditions of possible experience.

Keywords: Neoneo-Kantianism; Neo-Kantianism; transcendental philosophy; phenomenology; *Geltungsreflexion*.

It would be impossible to understand the theoretical stance of contemporary German philosophy, marked by such achievements as the universal pragmatics of Jürgen Habermas, the transcendental pragmatics of Karl-Otto Apel, or even Wolfgang Welsch's conception of transversal reason, if we did not take into account a "silent" theoretical opponent of the aforementioned authors. This "silent" opponent is the transcendental philosophy of *Geltung*. The influence of Neo-Kantianism on the understanding of transcendental philosophy consists in its comprehension as a reflection whose aim is to provide validity to the sphere of cognition and action. Such an understanding of transcendental reflection is doubtlessly a posthumous triumph of the so-called Baden School of Neo-Kantianism. In order to analyze the evolution of the contemporary theoretical positions from a better perspective, it is indispensable to discuss the hidden mediator between the old and new positions in philosophy—the position of so called Neoneo-Kantianism.

The concept of Neoneo-Kantianism (*der Neoneokantianismus*) was coined by Hans Ludwig Ollig in his short book (167 pages), which strove to provide both a wide temporal spectrum of neo-Kantian philosophy and, at the same time, to serve as a versatile overview and monograph of issues investigated by Neo-Kantian philosophy within the confines of theoretical and practical philosophy.[1] It is a question open for discussion if such a name is appropriate and correct—even the author himself writes that Neoneo-Kantianism belongs to the *Nachgeschichte* of classical Neo-Kantianism, hence a more rightful name would be post-Neo-Kantianism or even post-criticism.[2] The description refers to the specific type of philosophy which took up the Neo-Kantian heritage after World War Two and confronted it with contemporary philosophy of being and facticity. It has to be said, however, that Neoneo-Kantianism paid much more attention to ontological issues and the problem of subjectivity. The classical Neo-Kantian range of problems was being continued (in the vein of the Baden School) with emphasis placed on the topic of validity of knowledge. Many people nowadays are not familiar with the philosophy which is the subject of this article, therefore it is worth recalling its thinkers for a more complete picture of the idea of transcendentalism within the limits of Kant-oriented philosophy. The problem of transcendental philosophy is much more important for Neoneo-Kantianism than it was for classical Neo-Kantianism. Ollig does not mention the thinkers who took up the Kantian heritage in the second half of the 20th century, like Robert Reiniger, Teodor Litt or Erich Heintel. Instead, he focuses only on three philosophers to whom we will also confine ourselves. These three thinkers are Rudolf Zocher, Wolfgang Cramer and Hans Wagner. They believed that the Kantian legacy should be equated with carrying on transcendental reflection, and this is what distinguishes them from Neo-Kantians for whom this was not always the case. As stated earlier, together they constitute a kind of intermediary between the young Neo-Kantians (who are represented by such philosophers as Ernst Cassirer, Bruno Bauch and Richard Hönigswald) and late 20th-century German philosophical thought.

In order to fully grasp the significance of Kant as a medium of re-thinking the idea of transcendental philosophy, we should shift our attention to the period after World War Two, which followed the period of so-called classical Neo-Kantianism. It seems that for those thinkers who continue writing along the lines laid down by transcendental reflection the label "Kantianism" is definitely

---

[1] Ollig, H.-L. 1979. *Der Neukantianismus.* Stuttgart (Sammlung Metzler 187).

[2] See the chapter "Der Neoneokantianismus," In: *Der Neukantianismus*, op. cit., 94–110. See also page 4, where one can find some general remarks regarding Neo-Kantianism. The term post-Neo-Kantianism is used by K. W. Zeidler, but he uses it as well when referring to earlier Neo-Kantianism; see Zeidler, K. W. 1995. "Kritische Dialektik und Transzendentalontologie." In: *Der Ausgang des Neukantianismus und die postneukantianische Systematik.* Ed.: Hönigswalds, W., W. Cramer, B. Bauchs, H. Wagner, R. Reinigers and E. Heintels, Bonn.

incorrect due to fact that they do not refer to the project of Kantian philosophy but rather to the abstract project of transcendental philosophy in general.[3]

Let us now turn to R u d o l f   Z o c h e r (1887–1976) whose main theoretical work is *Kants Grundlehre*, in which he strove to extract from Kant's three *Critiques* the titular basic (or fundamental) science (*Grundlehre*). The basic science is transcendental philosophy interpreted fundamentally, i.e. as science that investigates the foundations which are provided by the system of critical philosophy that seeks the self-justification of any philosophical reflection and reflection-based claims for validity (*Geltungsansprüche*). To educe the fundamental science means to draw out its topicality; it implies the immanent critique of the Kantian system. Zocher marks out especially the third *Critique*, because in the first two the act of establishing transcendental philosophy has its correlate in metaphysics: metaphysics of nature and metaphysics of morals. It is only in the *Critique of Judgment* that we can find a transcendental philosophy which grounds itself in a fully autonomous way. In order to understand Kantian *Grundlehre* as a whole, it is vital to move away from the theoretical foundations presented to us in each of the *Critiques*. This particular problem has not been thought over thoroughly by Kant. He did not decide either if theoretical reason, practical reason or faculty of judgment should be given priority, or if we should think of them as equiponderant. Even if the Kantian *Grundlehre* represents anything but a uniform and complete product, it can be shown that the possibility of such synthesis exists. In order to achieve it we should reconsider several problems, e.g. the problem of constitution. According to Zocher, Kant distinguishes a fourfold order of constitution. What is being constituted?

1. Transcendental philosophy as transcendental *Grundlehre*.

2. General metaphysics as a central and basic science of objectiveness (*Sachgrundlehre*)

---

[3] It is all about saving the project in the given theoretical situation. It takes the shape of Hans Lenk's transcendental interpretationism (the search for transcendental conditions of comprehending the world) or the aforementioned transcendental pragmatics of Karl-Otto Apel (where the *a priori* condition of possibility and validity is language, a condition which is met after we make the assumption that discourse is intersubjective). The list of thinkers can be obviously much longer. It is a matter of discussion, however, if we are still dealing with the transcendental philosophy model, because it is more the transformation of the traditional transcendental problem into a different one, and the question remains if that problem is still a transcendental problem. Valuable illustration is provided by the case of Herbert Schnädelbach, who attempted to rehabilitate the transcendental way of asking (*Rehabilitierung der transcendentalen Fragestellung*). Schnädelbach does not understand the transcendental question regarding the conditions of possibility as a question about the condition of validity, but as one which reaches into the conditions of understanding (*Verstehensbedingungen*). Thus, he integrates the hermeneutical dimension into the transcendental discourse ("Integration des Hermeneutischen in den transzendentalen Diskurs"). See Schnädelbach, H. 1993. "Unser neuer Neukantianismus." In: *Philosophische Denken – Politische Wirken. H. Cohen-Kolloqium Marburg 1992*. Ed. Brandt, E. and F. Orlik, Marburg, 204–221.

3. *Metaphysica specialis* as grounded in *metaphysica generalis*, that is meta-physics of nature and metaphysics of morals as peripheral fundamental sciences of objects of a non-transcendental character;

4. The sphere of particular sciences, which are grounded either in the meta-physics of nature   (the natural sciences) or in the metaphysics of morals (an-thropology).

The relation between transcendental philosophy and general metaphysics is unclear. Are they identical or is maybe one grounded in the other? Also unclear is the relation between general metaphysics and practically-oriented metaphys-ics. The very concept of transcendental is problematic. Transcendental means that there exists a founding law not only for something else, but also for the reflection itself—Zocher speaks about external and internal founding (*Extra-fundierung* and *Intrafundierung*).

Thus, the relation between the two types of transcendental needs to be de-scribed more precisely. In Kant's writings they are not separated, although is it easy to distinguish the motif of objective constitution and the motif of transcen-dental-subjective constitution that makes the Kantian analytics of the subject and its faculties—as Hans Wagner sums up—"a specific kind of self-constituting ontic of subject."[4] The object of the absolute *Grundlehre* can be the concept of transcendental as self-founding validity (*Gültigkeit*). The moment of internal founding is conceived as a moment of pure subjectivity, where "pure" (*rein*) means it does not fuse or merge with the realm of the ontic—the place of this specific range of problems can be found in Kant's science of transcendental apperception. As far as external founding is concerned, Zocher points to a series of problems related to the Kantian conception of constitution. The narrow sense of constitution derived from the first *Critique* has to be broadened because it cannot become the basis of the constitution of, for example, living organisms or history as a whole. The wider conception of constitution can be derived only from the science that deals with ideas of reason. Finally, the Kantian positive enlargement of constitution for objects of taste can be detrimental if "we switch by analogy the point of view that was reached through analysis of knowledge."[5] Regarding the conditions of transcendental philosophy, which is supposed to be a critique of the conditions of metaphysics, which in turn should be systematic philosophy, Zocher makes an effort to reconsider different contributions scat-tered in Kant's work in order to find a metaphysics (as a non-transcendental *Sachgrundlehre*, the general science of objectiveness) which could be entirely grounded in transcendental philosophy, and subsequently figure out a way of grounding the "peripheral" metaphysics (of nature and morality) and finally anchoring the specific sciences. In the context of the current situation in phi-

---

[4] Wagner, H. 1961. "Review of *Kants Grundlehre.*" *Kant-Studien* 52, 327.
[5] Zocher, R. 1959. *Kants Grundlehre*, Erlangen, 116.

losophy this is an ontological problem which should be classified between transcendental philosophy and realm-specific sciences founded on the absolute. To recapitulate, Zocher insists that we should reconsider the argumentative potential of Kantian philosophy in the process of formulating and shaping the idea of transcendental philosophy in the spirit of the Baden School of Neo-Kantianism. Kant's thought is still actual; its topicality lies in the fact that we can trace in it the hidden possibility of discovering *Grundlehre* in the shape of transcendental philosophy which contains moments of internal and external foundation as well as moments of degrees of its foundation.

The next example of a post-Neo-Kantian thinker is W o l f g a n g   C r a m e r (1901–1974), a disciple of Hönigswald, who received his *venia legendi* in Wrocław, worked there as a *Privatdozent* and became a professor at Frankfurt University shortly after World War Two. Cramer did not retreat to pre-critical philosophy. He did not ignore the Kantian critique of reason applied to the transcendental realm, but at the same time, wishing to create a general doctrine of the transcendental, wanted to move away from transcendental philosophy toward the well-known subjects of old metaphysics, the metaphysics of transcendental objects and their relations. This is the recurrent motif of his publications[6] and articles. The goal of his philosophy is, as H. Wagner puts it, "reconciliation of metaphysical and critical reason," i.e. to formulate the answer for questions which Kant considered unanswerable due to the nature of reason itself.

Cramer transforms the transcendental constitution of the objects of consciousness into the transcendental-ontological theory of constitution of the subject that reaches the same level of determination as the objective realm. Cartesian *ego cogito* implies thinking of something that is already transcendent to thinking. We find that the very thought of subject is already contained in the statement "I think" —*Ich-Gedanke* legitimates and validates *Ist-Gedanke*. This is the reason why his philosophy tries to "connect the transcendental advancement of thought […] with ontological understanding,"[7] tries to take the shape of ontology of subject because "I think" becomes the source of the subjective determination of what "*I*" gets to know. We can notice in this particular moment the proximity, and at the same time the philosophical distance, between Cramer's and Kant's (or neo-Kantian) conceptions.

Let us compare both philosophers' conceptions of time. For Kant time is just a subjective condition of every intuition, for Cramer thinking itself represents temporal reality (*zeitliche Realität*). The biggest weakness of the Kantian concept of thinking lies in its inability to grasp thinking as a form of temporal dura-

---

[6] List of main publications: 1954. *Die Monade*, Stuttgart; 1957. *Grundlegung einer Theorie des Geistes*, Frankfurt am Main; 1959. *Das Absolute und das Kontingente.* Frankfurt am Main; 1966. *Spinozas Philosophie des Absoluten.* Frankfurt am Main; 1967. *Kants Kritik der Gottesbeweise.* Frankfurt am Main.

[7] Hartmann, K. 1977. "Analytische und kategoriale Transcendentalphilosophie." In: *Die Aktualität der Transcendentalphilosophie.* Bonn, 51.

tion. Time for Cramer is not an ideal pure form of intuition but something transcendentally real. In "I think" thinking itself knows that it is not simply a thought but an act of possessing a thought, therefore it implies the existence of temporal reality. This conception of time is distinct from the Kantian conception of time and demonstrates its affinity to Husserl's (who is here a clear source of inspiration). This example makes it also clear why the ontology of *"I"* realizes itself as a science of categories that determines what *"I"* is. That which determines consciousness tells us what consciousness really is.[8]

Cramer's philosophy becomes speculative and poses the speculative question about the basis of all determination—beyond the framework of philosophy which strives for the validation of reflection (*Geltungsreflexion*), which is identical with the theory of creating categorical thinking and moving beyond the boundaries of ontological subjectivity, i.e. the science of subjective categories/categories of the subject. Philosophy thus becomes the metaphysics of the transcendental principles of being and every possible determination. It becomes a theory of the absolute understood as an absolute basis of all categories and, what follows, of every determining category of subject-being.

We will not discuss Cramer's theory of absolute because our main focus is the conception of transcendental philosophy and not the relations between what is contingent and what is absolute. We should merely emphasize the relation of the absolute to the categories. Science of categories is for Cramer a science of the ways in which the absolute can be dispensed. Categories can be derived from the absolute in order to self-mediate that which is absolute in the entirety of its single or wholesome manifestations. The course of our thinking can begin with transcendental reflection and move away from it to reach the absolute. But another way around is possible:

> "The course of thinking that begins with what is finite at the end realizes that is has to take a different path. It starts from the absolute, that is from being [...] In the unfolding differentiation of the being of thought we can trace the relation of infinity and finitude, the relation between being and time, possibility and reality, being and being-in-itself or between being and being-for-itself."[9]

Cramer's thought has been characterized in the most condense manner by Hans Wagner:

> "Natural *Ich-Gedanke* is doubtlessly *Ist-Gedanke*. Using that device enables us to solve the transcendental problem and legitimate the claim of being for

---

[8] "Als was das Bewusstsein sich bestimmt und was es sonst sich bestimmt, das hat es aus sich [...] gesetzt. Aber Sichbestimmen zu sein, das hat es nicht gesetzt. Das ist es." In: Wolandt, G. 1966. "Gestaltwelt." In: *Subjektivität und Metaphysik.* Ed. Henrich, D. and H. Cramer, 336.

[9] Cramer, W. 1961. "Absolute." In: *Handbuch der philosophischer Grundbegriffe.* Vol. I, 19 and next.

our thoughts (*Ist-Anspruch unserer Gedanke*). It is being accomplished in the ontology of '*I*'. It fulfils itself as a science of '*I*' categories. It becomes the general science of essence and ultimate basis for all other categories. It transmogrifies into the theory of the absolute. The theory of the absolute contains the theory of relation between the absolute and everything else; shows this, which simply is, as a categorically determined that, which is single; it is therefore necessary to explain the relation: absolute—categories—singleness. The theory of the absolute becomes the theory of divesting what is absolute. Divesting what is absolute is at the same time a source of categories in the case of singleness and in the case of the whole system of what is single."[10]

Cramer's disciples (W. Becker, H. Radermacher) did not carry on the topic of the absolute and focused primarily on elaborating the theory of consciousness.

The third thinker from the Neoneo-Kantian circle is H a n s   W a g n e r (1917–2000), a catholic philosopher of religion and philologist. Wagner received his habilitation in Würzburg, served there as a professor from 1953 to 1961 and then left to Bonn, where he was active till 1982. It appears most suitable to call him a post-Neo-Kantianist, because more than Kant's thesis, his point of departure is Neo-Kantian transcendental idealism. He wanted to go further and extend Neo-Kantian (but mostly Rickertian) *Geltungsreflexion*, sought for the self-validation and systematical foundation of philosophy as a kind of reflection endowed with epistemological-cognitive value. His main field of interest is philosophy itself as far as it is understood as reflection or—to be more precise—as *Geltungsreflexion* or *Prüfung in Geltungsreflexion* (*die Gedanke prüfende Reflexion*). Hence the title of his main theoretical work, *Philosophie und Reflexion* (1959, second release 1967). Our reflection addresses our surmises, suppositions, judgments, beliefs, theories, etc. The most important thing in our reflection is the question whether our thoughts are true, justified, rightful, correct, valid (*gültig*) or the other way around: false, unjustified, wrong, incorrect or invalid. It is not the fact that we have certain thoughts that matters: those thoughts are to be investigated in the first place. Wagner writes:

> "The reflection that investigates thoughts is not any kind of academic fancy: it is rather a necessary task that makes oneness with thinking itself. It is a reflection regarding validation (*Geltuntgsreflexion*), investigation concentrated upon the reflection concerning validity (*Prüfüng in Geltugsreflexion*)."[11]

Reflection requires some measurement to "gauge" the value of our thoughts, and which may be understood in two ways: first, as a criterion of distinguishing

---

[10] Wagner, H. *Ist Metaphysik des Transzendenten möglich?*, op. cit., 307 and next.

[11] Wagner, H. 1961. The entry "Reflection." In: *Handbuch philosophischer Grundbegriffe*, vol. III, 1206. This entry can serve as a short and concise (and obviously incomplete) introduction to Wagner's thought.

what has the power to rightfully validate and oblige and what does not have that power; secondly, as a criterion of making our thoughts valid—a rule of determining the veracity or validity of our thoughts.

The task of philosophy is to find a set of criteria and principles of validation, obligation and veracity—without this we cannot be certain of our own thoughts. This task found its first classical formulation in Kant's philosophy. For Kant it is primarily the problem of reconstructing the conditions of possibility of knowledge and, secondly, proving that validity (*Gültigkeit*). All the criteria and principles of validity are tantamount to the *a priori* domain. Thus, the main task of philosophy understood as reflection focusing on validity is investigating that *a priori* realm. Humanity has made a great leap forward since Kant, therefore it is impossible to carry out the Kantian project of *a priori* reconstruction as Kant imagined it. According to Wagner we have to distinguish four domains of *a priori* validity. The fundamental stratum of *a priori* is of course that which is logical and what reveals the formal structure of thinking. Empiricists contend that it is the only *a priori* domain. Wagner maintains that we can easily prove the truth of the main Kantian idea: the validity of our cognition cannot be grasped if we do not discover the *a priori* sphere in the object-oriented reference of our thoughts to reality.

> "For example: we would not find causal relations anywhere if we were not able to think about the notion of causality and we will never know if our quest for the reconstruction of casual relations is really the triumph of truth and validated cognition and knowledge (of nature etc.) or not, if we will never be sure about the notion of our concepts of causality."[12]

There are many concepts for which this is the case. They belong to the second strata of the fundamental *a priori* concepts. Just like logical concepts, they are not only formal thoughts but give our thoughts objective validity and ontological reference. Both these strata are of a constitutive-aprioristic character, whereas the third stratum can be described as a regulative *a priori*. Hypotheses, models, postulates, definitions, axioms and other concepts known from philosophy of science and theory of science constitute the third stratum. This is the apriority that often cloaks itself as empiricism but at the same time guides science and, so to say, somehow "manages" its work. What is the fourth stratum singled out by Wagner? According to vulgar empiricism thought is true if another thought is the basis of its truthfulness. Knowledge makes a whole system of conclusions and lemmas—thus is created the idea of the infinite edifice of science, where knowledge is not just an aggregate of single truths conceived as something negatively infinite (i.e., not closed, not finished), but creates a positive principle of unity and universal relatedness of all truths. The idea of a uni-

---

[12] Ibid., 1207.

versal system of all truth statements is an indispensable aprioristic moment in building knowledge.

To describe the structure of reflection Wagner employs the language elaborated by the contemporary philosophical tradition, distinguishing in the act of consciousness a fourfold framework, namely: a) the subject of the act, b) its object, c) the act itself (*noesis*) and d) the substance of the act, its contents (*noema*). Reflection could traditionally take two forms: either the one focused on the world or the one that concentrates on the life of consciousness itself. Transcendental reflection in the proper sense of the world is *die geltungstheoretische Reflexion*, which is the only possible foundation of every science of reflection. Only within the limits of *geltungstheoretische Reflexion* can thinking be aware of the validity of what thinking in itself creates as its principle. It is relevant both to theoretical and non-theoretical noemas (ethical, aesthetic, etc.) as well as the noemas of reflection itself. Kant's significance is obviously crucial in this respect and it is Kant who is credited by Wagner for discovering and launching a new type of reflection: "What is missing in those two traditional types of reflection, though, is the ability to answer the question about validity and value in regard to different kinds of 'ideas' or concepts; [in order to answer it] it is necessary that another, new and wider type of reflection is employed: 'transcendental reflection'."[13] Setting out to explain the fundamental structure of theoretical noemas, Wagner starts with the structure of judgment. The object of the statement is thought in the notion of the predicate. The predicate is an attributive notion in the judgment. The notion of the predicate can nevertheless fulfill an attributive function only if it is in itself a determined concept. The capacity to determine has to be originally produced in the thinking itself. Transcendental reflection is hence classified as a logical-transcendental *Geltungsrückgang*. Our thinking either determines the objects or produces determining concepts. The deciding role in our thinking is played by the principle of limitation. Every predicative determination is at variance with every other determinations of the same type—i.e. it is given by the virtue of limitation. To overcome this contradiction Wagner postulates passing to concepts of a higher order, which ultimately leads to the notion of the whole, treated by Wagner as a definitively justified principle (*ein letztbegründendes Prinzip*): there exists nothing

---

[13] Ibid., 1205. Let us quote this fragment once again: "(a) Mag die Reflexion nach ihrem empirisch-empiristischen Begriff so viel wie nur immer leisten, das eine Wichtige leistet sie nicht, nämlich eine Antwort auf die Frage, was denn nun die von ihr endeckten Vorgänge und Inhalte des Bewusstseins w e r t sind, wert in Hinblick auf ihren Anspruch, wahre und gültige Ideen zu sein, wahre und gültige sei es in erkenntnismässiger, sei es in moralischer usw. Hinsicht. (b) Mag die Reflexion nach ihrem logischen Begriffe (jene erstgenannte Reflexion auf die nichtinhaltlichen Verhältnisse zwischen Gegenständen oder Begriffen) so viel wie nur immer leisten, über zwei Dinge gibt sie gleichwohl keine Auskunft, über das jeweils spezifische Verhältnis dieser verschiedenen Arten von Begriffen zu den verschiedenen Erkenntnisvermögen des Subjekts (Sinnlichkeit, Verstand, Vernunft) und über das jeweils spezifische Verhältnis dieser verschiedenartigen Begriffe zu der Welt der Gegenstände, von welchen sie gelten wollen und sollen," ibid.

outside or opposite the whole. This wholeness is something positively infinite (*das positiv-Unendliche*); it is not grounded in anything that is not contained in the whole, and since there exists nothing that could be the cause of the whole, then the whole has to be interpreted as something unconditioned, as an Absolute. On the other hand, the absolute, as something that is infinite, needs something that lies beyond it and is opposite to it, a counter-element (*Gegenglied*) to be determined as absolute. Wagner imagines and understands infinity as a series of binomial relations, where one item constitutes the grounding (*Grund*) for its counterpart but the second item remains only a condition for the first one:

> "[...] while it is true that the positively infinite posits itself against the other, and the other posits itself against the infinite, nevertheless the positively infinite is the basis of what its other is and of its condition, whereas the other is only a condition, but not the basis."[14]

The infinite, being posited by its other, has a certain determinacy—this is the "self-determination in the manner of self-reference of what has been posited and is at the same time different from the other."[15] The sought predicate for the absolute is the absolute predicate. The absolute predicate is possible only as a multitude of mutually exclusive and determining moments (such as: object—subject, reason—its consequence, content—form) which create a homogenous structure. All these moments of thinking are defined by thinking as an absolute basis of what is being thought.

We are aware that we are presenting here a sample of Wagner's metaphysics. We can notice how Wagner's reflection switches from the sphere of transcendental reflection to speculative reflection—in short, how he tries to merge Kant with Hegel. There is no clear boundary between those two types of reflection, they mutually determine, surpass and permeate each other.

Except for the theoretical and critical reflection which is fundamental for its reflections on validity, philosophy should engage in investigating other areas related to the problems of the *praxis* sphere (volition and action, creativity, labour, etc.), thus creating a departure point and a solid basis for other philosophical disciplines (ethics, aesthetics, philosophy of law and state, social philosophy, economical, philosophy of technique, etc.). We would be always dealing with the fundamental question regarding validity being obligatory: how valuable is what we are actually doing and striving for, how we behave, what we are doing etc. The more uncertain our answer, the more urgent and necessary is the need for such reflection.

Geltungsreflexion is not the only form in which philosophical reflection is contained and which can rightfully be named transcendental reflection. The

---

[14] Cramer's review (1963) of Hans Wagner's: "Philosophie und Reflexion." In: *Philosophische Rundschau* 11, 74.

[15] Ibid.

other form of reflection takes us back to Husserl who focuses on acts of consciousness. This reflection has the nature of noema reflection: its objects are noemas, that is products of our consciousness, and more precisely its object is to find out how acts of consciousness correspond to different noemas. This means going back to the noema as a product, going back and concentrating on the acts that constituted it. All noemas are products, therefore reflection which focuses primarily on their constitution can be called noematic constitutive reflection. This sort of reflection reaches not only the whole richness of the products of the constitutive consciousness but also the subject as the ultimate source of—directly—acts and—indirectly—noemas, thus creating the phenomenological science of subject. Wagner thinks of it more along the lines of Heidegger's or Sartre's science of concrete subject, not science of pure subjectivity. According to Wagner, Husserl discovered that the question of *noesis* had transcendental sense as well and was not just an object of empirical psychology.

Wagner's thought was articulated in the language of contemporary philosophical reflection, in the language developed by phenomenology. His philosophy represents a fruitful synthesis of the whole post-Kantian philosophical experience. Wagner's main theoretical work, *Philosophie und Reflexion,* has to be recognized, as Werner Flach said, "as a summa of long-lasting intellectual development within the limits of the latest philosophy."[16] The most important sources of inspiration were for him, *inter alia*, neo-Kantianism (Rickert's *Geltungsreflexion*, Emil Lask's philosophy of philosophy, the dialectical criticism of Bruno Bauch), phenomenology, the ontologically oriented philosophy of Nicolai Hartman and, what has maybe not been recognized due to the short and cursory nature of this presentation, Karl Jasper's philosophy of existence and young Jesuit philosophy (Emerich Coreth, Karl Rahner).

Thus, Wagner's thought aims to reconcile the many totally distinct threads to be found in post-Kantian thought. He strives for synthesis between Neo-Kantianism and phenomenology, for the reconciliation of being founded on principles *Prinzipialität*) and being immersed in facticity (*Faktizität*), of critical and speculative philosophy, of Kant with Hegel. The critical motif means investigating subjectivity in its all areas and reckoning with its finitude. The speculative motif is impossible without awareness of what is infinite. Wagner strives to bring together the epistemological nature of transcendental philosophy with ontology, a gesture clearly visible already in the title of his doctoral dissertation: *Apriorität und Idealität. Vom ontologischen Moment in der apriorischen Erkenntnis.*[17] Still, while looping for and striving for the synthesis of different motives, he remains undoubtedly within the limits of transcendental reflection and Kantian philosophy.

---

[16] Flach, W. 1962. *Zur Prinzipienlehre der Anschauung*, Hamburg, VIII.

[17] Wagner, H. 1946. *Apriorität und* Idealität. Dissertation. Würzburg. Later reprinted in: *Philosophisches Jahrbuch* 57 (1947), 292 and next ...; vol. I, 431 and next.

If the measure of importance of someone's thought is the influence it exerted and the recognition it gained, then we can talk about a Wagnerian school. The thinkers who can be rightfully ranked as his disciples continued to expand the crucial motives of transcendentally-oriented philosophy and distinctive Neo-Kantian threads—*inter alia* Gerd Wolandt (aesthetics), Werner Flach (intuition), Harald Holz (who confronts Wagner's efforts with so called transcendental tomism) and especially the prematurely deceased Martin Brelage, who was inspired by Wagner's thought to conduct studies of the history of contemporary philosophy.

Let us once more repeat with emphasis that Wagner's reflection can be treated as a privileged point of departure or vantage point for analyzing the heritage of transcendental philosophy due to its language, which incorporates and assimilates concepts and ideas from the most important fields of contemporary philosophy. Much more clearly and more consciously than Neo-Kantianism, Neoneo-Kantianism grasps the philosophy of Kant as a project of ontologically-oriented transcendental philosophy. It uses the whole richness of the post-Kantian philosophical tradition without discarding the need for metaphysics.

Neoneo-Kantian thought reveals the major difficulties in understanding what the essence of transcendental philosophy is. Habermas, for example, treats transcendental philosophy only as a type of *Geltung*-reflection or *Leztbegründung*. Transcendental philosophy is a philosophy of subject that searches for infrangible conditions of knowledge and possible cognition beyond experience itself. Habermas, on the other hand, tries to escape subject-based rationality (the so called "paradigm of the philosophy of consciousness") and move towards the "paradigm of consensus." So called "communicative reason confirms itself in a binding strength of intersubjective understanding and mutual recognition."[18] His project of de-transcendentalization of reason "on the one hand, aims at placing the socialized subjects within their life-world contexts, on the other hand, the epistemological ability intertwines with language and action."[19]

Such a critique is misplaced and is in itself clear evidence of the misunderstanding of the development process of post-Kantian philosophy. For Edmund Husserl, in the most advanced stage of his thought (genetic phenomenology), it was clear that the absolute discovers itself as an intersubjective relation between the subjects.[20] All meaning, all categories (such as objectivity, subjectivity) are for Husserl intersubjectively constituted, so it is Husserl and not Apel or Habermas who effectuates the transcendental reformulation of transcendental philosophy. Habermas treats phenomenology as a kind of epistemological founda-

---

[18] Habermas, J. 1985. *Der philosophische Diskurs der Moderne: Zwölf Vorlesungen*. Frankfurt am Main, 366.

[19] Habermas, J. 2001. *Kommunikatives Handeln und detranszendentalisierte Vernunft*, Stuttgart, 15.

[20] Husserl E. 1973. *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität. Texte aus Nachlass. Erster Teil 1905–1920*. Ed. Kern, von I (Husserliana 13), 480.

tionalism,[21] likewise Richard Rorty.[22] Again, this is clearly false. Phenomenology attempts to discover the fundamental structures of our understanding and perception of the world, strives for discovering the deeper strata in living consciousness but, as Husserl himself writes in his *Formale and transcendentale Logik*, „the very attempt to ground certain science so that it would rely solely on irrefutable truths is a futile attempt that is accompanied by a common misunderstanding of the very idea of science—that truth is a regulative idea".[23] Phenomenology could not provide the fundament for any science because it is purely descriptive; it is not a deduction system that would eventually lead to the derivation of absolute truth.

Different kinds of transcendental reflection cannot be lumped together—the post-Kantian period saw the evolution of two conceptions of transcendental philosophy: the conception of philosophy as a reflection regarding the conditions of validity (*Geltung*), and the conception of philosophy as a philosophy of (transcendental) consciousness. The first is subject-centered: the strength of the subject increases, and the status of the object diminishes. This conception of philosophy is based on the idea of the subject which is the source of *a priori* conditions of knowledge and harks back to Fichte and post-Fichtean idealism. Knowledge and cognition are equated with the *a priori* subjective conditions. In the second type of reflection transcendental consciousness is an *analogon* of the world and cannot be identified and equated with the subject. It is for transcendental consciousness to establish its poles, subject and object, respectively. This division in philosophy can be traced to the very origins of neo-Kantianism and can be directly linked to the Adolf Trendelenburg—Kuno Fischer debate in the mid-19th century.

The controversy between Trendelenburg and Fischer was resolved by Hermann Cohen, who, like Trendelenburg, wanted to save the sphere of objectivity. Cohen's thought is not focused on the thinking subject: forms of cognition are not inherent in the subject. The world Hermann Cohen was investigating is a world of objectified reason, objectified mainly by science. It is a world of objectified culture. The transcendental is not subjective, it is consciousness itself which cannot be identified with the thinking subject. Consciousness is the ground on which objectivity and subjectivity are constituted in the first place. The crux of the aforementioned controversy lies in the confrontation between egological subjectivity and the world of objectified (that is intersubjectively constituted) things. The richness of the world of things cannot be explained away merely by reference to the aprioristic forms of cognition of *"I"*. That was the aim of Cohens's, Natorp's, Riehl's and Husserl's philosophies. In the case

---

[21] Habermas, J. 1985. *Der philosophische Diskurs der Moderne: Zwölf Vorlesungen*. Frankfurt am Main, 366, 130.

[22] Rorty, R. 1979. *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*. Princeton, 166–168.

[23] Husserl, E. 1974. *Formale und transzendentale Logik. Versuch einer Kritik der logischen Vernunft*. Ed.: Janssen, P. (Husserliana 17), 169.

of Husserl we should not be misled by his Cartesian terminology. Wagner pointed out correctly that Husserl's phenomenology is a different kind of transcendental reflection which investigates the constitution of the noematic structures of reality.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR — Ph.D. habil., assistant professor of philosophy, Gdansk University of Technology. Current research interests: history and theory of transcendental philosophy and phenomenology. Author of *inter alia*: 2011. *O pojęciu Europy* [On the Concept of Europe]; 2012. *Filozofia transcendentalna między Heglem i Heideggerem. Od teorii poznania do ontologii* [Transcendental Philosophy Between Hegel and Heidegger. From Epistemology to Ontology].

Bolesław Andrzejewski

TRANSCENDENTAL PHILOSOPHY AND COMMUNICATION[1]

ABSTRACT

The paper discusses the philosophy of language and communication based on Immanuel Kant's transcendental method. Firstly, the basic assumptions of methodical rationalism are presented. Subsequent sections analyse Kant's intellectual successors: Wilhelm von Humboldt and Ernst Cassirer. Both the intellectuals adopted Kant's point of views and both treated language as an active, cultural factor participating in the creation of reality. The article ends with a suggestion that the transcendental approach will be present in the 21th-century researches on language and communication.

Keywords: transcendentalism; language; communication; Immanuel Kant; Wilhelm von Humboldt; Ernst Cassirer.

1. INTRODUCTION

The investigations presented below concern the links between Kantian thinking and the philosophical reflection on language and social communication. It is commonly known that Kant did not voice any comments on these subjects. This has long been the subject of numerous accusations and criticism directed at the philosopher. We will, however, demonstrate that Kant's philosophy and his idea of transcendental method, which focuses not on the world but on the conditions of the subject contacting this world can easily be used in the discussion of the above mentioned issues.

---

[1] This paper is a modified version of the text *Problem języka i komunikacji w świetle filozofii transcendentalnej* [The Problem of Language and Communication from the Perspective of Transcendental Philosophy] published in Polish, in: 2011. *Idea transcendentalimu. Od Kanta do Wittgensteina* [The Idea of Transcendentalism. From Kant to Wittgenstein]. Ed. Parszutowicz, P. and M. Soin. Warszawa.

The present article deals with some problems of communicational transcendentalism. It aims at a wider audience: not solely philosophers, but, as far as possible, also philologists and everybody interested in the methodology of the humanities. Hence, we present some main ideas of Kantian philosophy, and next we derive from them conclusions influencing on the views of the selected investigators dealing with language and social communication.

2. "THE COPERNICAN TURN"

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) introduced a new intellectual paradigm. His work resulted in an essential turn in the manner of philosophizing, even dividing the history of the human thought into the "pre-" and "post-Kantian" periods, or, more precisely, into the "pre-critical" and "post-critical" periods. The latter pair of terms is more exact, since Kant itself underwent a clear intellectual evolution—from fascination with science and cosmology to transcendental philosophy.

The methodological turn took place in 1770 when Kant, while applying for his professorship, wrote his Inaugural Dissertation, entitled "*De mundis sensibilis atque intelligibilis forma et principiis"* [On the Form and Principles of the Sensible and the Intelligible World]. This work initiates the second period of his work, the so called critical period. This period found its culmination in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), as well as in the two next *Critiques* (1788 and 1790).

The manner of thinking has been changed—the theoretical and epistemological issues, together with the questions on the way and the method of knowing the world, as well as questions concerning the possibilities and the competences of our cognitive faculties are now in the foreground. Kant's philosophy is transformed from a metaphysical (that attempts to study the essence of the objective reality), to a transcendental one, studying the factors conditioning the experience and the cognition of this reality. In a way, the Kantian meditations provide an answer to the methodology of the radical English empiricism, and they turn against any dogmatic points of view, including the sceptical ones.

The essence of the Kantian criticism is the so called "Copernican Turn," according to which—contrary to the empiricist view—the objects are to adjust themselves to our cognitive faculties. This method, in Kant's view, offers higher chances of obtaining a fuller and more adequate knowledge of the world. Kant writes

"Let us try——and see if we are not better off with solving metaphysical problems when we accept that it is the objects that should adjust to our cognition... The case is similar to the initial thought of Copernicus who noticed that the explanation of the celestial bodies' movements was not tenable on the assumption of the whole army of stars revolving around the spectator and

tried to see if it was not better to make the spectator turn, leaving the stars to their rest."[2]

Like Copernicus in astronomy, Kant set the human being "in motion," activating him in relation to the surrounding world. The small difference lies in the fact that Kant's approach emphasized much more the internal aspect of the subject, whereas Copernicus' proposition led to the objectivisation of the cognitive processes. Whilst de-subjectifying the view on the world, he contributed to the strengthening of the classical conception of truth. The Kantian "Copernican turn" is based on the belief in the *a priori* elements of knowledge independent of experience. Experience is meant by Kant as experience "in general," even in the philogenetic aspect.

For Kant, reason constitutes an autonomous cognitive faculty, freed from sensual limitations. Moreover, it is the decisive force in the process of cognition, leaving its mark on sensual data, arranging, and systematising the empirical domain. This is made possible mainly because the intellect is equipped with the *a priori*, i.e. independent forms of examination and numerous categories. All these factors (space and time, for example) play the role of instruments with the help of which the subject studies and gets to know the reality, and which allow him to arrange the "chaotic" sensual information into a harmonious whole. Assuming the existence of the *a priori* forms of view and categories of the reason, Kant apprehends the nature in a specific way. It is not a given thing, a point of departure for our meditations, but it constitutes "a task," the final effect of the subject's cognitive efforts. Hence, the intellect is not only the ability to create principles for comparing phenomena; for nature, it is even the lawmaker, that is, without any intellect, the nature (i.e. a synthetic unity of the diversity of phenomena) would not exist.[3]

The above mentioned standpoint implies further epistemological consequences for Kant's theoretical system. Since nature presents itself to us only through the *a priori* equipment of human cognitive faculties, the world assumes a dualistic form. On the one hand, there is the world of "appearances" (phenomena), which are synonymous with our knowledge, and on the other hand, there is the domain of "the things-in-themselves" (*noumena*), essentially inaccessible to human cognition. By acknowledging the impossibility of knowing things-in-themselves, and by treating them as a mysterious "x," Kant occupies an agnostic position.

While analysing Kantian philosophy, one should bear in mind that his system is not an extreme rationalism, nor, as it was presented above, a nativism. According to methodological rationalism, the elements of intellect alone are not sufficient for the creation of knowledge which appears as a result of the mutual

---

[2] Kant, I. 1979. *Kritik der reinen Vernuft* (*Critique of Pure Reason*). Leipzig: Philipp Reclam jun., 22–23.
[3] Ibid., 218.

integration (synthesis) of the two "cognitive stems": the rational and the empirical. Though for the final "shape" of knowledge (nature) the *a priori* is decisive, one cannot doubt that any human cognition begins with experience.[4] The very forms of apprehension are, as Kant writes, empty without sensation, and apprehension is blind without the *a priori* support.

3. BETWEEN THE CRITIQUE AND AFFIRMATION OF KANTIAN PHILOSOPHY IN THE THEORY OF LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

It is evident that Kant's philosophy played crucial part in the development of modern philosophy and methodology of science. Despite (or maybe on account) of its revolutionary character and enormous influence, it was not always accepted. We omit here the long-standing discussion concerning the "thing-in-itself," in which numerous successors of Kant rejected the real nature of *noumenon*, repeatedly accusing the Kőnigsberg philosopher of the realism in this respect. This topic will be continued in the part devoted to symbolism.

Let us briefly examine the critique concerning a different plane, i.e. the one which is more closely related to language studies. The Kantian system, while being the Enlightenment's "progeny," refers itself predominantly to the mathematical and natural sciences and employs the methodology stemming from these disciplines. However, it neglects a whole range of problems related to the humanities—inter alia it ignores, or mentions only occasionally the problems related to the phenomenon of language.

Kant's system—as Ernst Cassirer writes—"creates a new form of religious studies and law-making, a new philosophy of history and the state, but the problem and the theme of the philosophy of language is rarely even remarked upon ... a certain default which did not go unnoticed even by the very first critics of Kant can be seen here."[5]

This default was pointed out as early as in the work of Johann Georg Hamann (1730–1788), for whom "the critique of reason" was always linked with the critical analysis of language. In a letter to Jacobie, he writes, among others: "To my mind, one cannot speak about physics or theology, but about language which is the mother of reason and revelation, their *alpha* and *omega* —reason equals language, logos."[6]

The Kantian critiques were discussed in a similar vein by Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803), finding their final form in the widely-known *Metacritique of the Critique of Pure Reason* [Eine Metakritik der Kritik der reinen Vernunft] of 1799. The aim of the work, as the author indicates in the *Introduc-*

_____

[4] Ibid., 45.
[5] Cassirer, E. 1923. "Die kantischen Elemente in Wilhelm von Humboldts Sprachphilosophie." In: *Festschrift für Paul Hensel.* Göttingen, 107.
[6] Ibid., 107–108.

tion, was only an analysis of some selected ideas contained in the *Critique of Pure Reason.* This is also announced by the very title in its "anti-" and "met-acritique" aspects. Herder argues mainly for the fact that the spiritual sphere of human beings cannot be divided—pure reason cannot be set against the other faculties of the subject. Anticipating the incoming movement of Romanticism, he states that

> "it is the same spirit that understands and feels, the same spirit that exercises the reason and urges ... We should do not divide it, but rather determine its interactions, the application of its powers. The sensitive spirit, which produces images, which thinks, and which creates rules, is the one living power ..."[7]

For Herder, Kantianism, in this respect, is a form of an empty idealism, a fantasy subordinated to the idea of an empty, objectless reason. Reason does not construct any empty ideals, but rather searches for the concepts that are necessary and useful for communication. Consequently, Herder thinks that Kantianism cannot be considered as a universal system, and that the methodology which stems from it cannot be employed to all the areas of the subject's activity—even to language processes.

There is a general agreement about the fact that the phenomenon of language is not a special subject of inquiry in Kant's system, as well as about that his system does not include a consistent reflection on language. Nevertheless, as J. Simon, a German scholar, an expert of Kant's philosophy and of philosophy of language, writes:

> "… no other modern philosopher exerted a stronger influence on the philosophy of language than Kant. This is closely related to the turn towards the transcendental philosophy, not immediately directed at the objects, but at the conditions and the possibilities of the objects."[8]

The importance of Kantianism—from the point of view which is of interest to us—lies not in treating language as a separate object of study, subject to investigation within, e.g. language studies, but in apprehending language as an intellectual activity which participates in the construction of the world of objects. In the (Neo)Kantian philosophy of language, language as a substantial source and a material for language studies is of secondary importance. This is the method which takes into account "language only in its every subjective use" which plays the basic role.[9]

---

[7] Herder, J.G. 1881. "Eine Metakritik zur Kritik der reiner Vernunft." In: *Sämtliche Werke.* Vol. 21. Berlin, 18–19.

[8] Simon, J. 1996. "Immanuel Kant (1724–1804)." In: *Klassiker der Sprachphilosophie.* Ed. Borsche, T. München: Beck Verlag, 233.

[9] Ibid., 234.

The transcendental method will constitute the main thread of the following parts of the text concerning the communicative transcendentalism.

4. WILHELM VON HUMBOLDT
AND THE TRANSCENDENTAL *ENERGEIA*

The Kantian method of interpreting language communication, stemming from transcendental philosophy, will be frequently referred to in the forthcoming sections. Because of the enormous contributions of its continuator, a Kant's contemporary we can even call it (in relation to the subject area of interest here) the Kant–Humboldt theory (in cosmology, one can speak about the analogous Kant–Laplace theory).

The humanistic version of methodological rationalism was especially extended by Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835) who was the main exponent and the real creator of the theory of communicative apriorism.

Humboldt quickly noticed that the acceptance and employment of Kantian critical methodology could be of significant importance for the explanation and understanding many aspects of human culture. The "Copernican turn" does not necessarily concern only the mathematical and natural sciences, but it can, and should, also be used in the area of the humanities, among others in examining questions of language. This is—as Cassirer will later claim while sharing the view on the necessity of extending the "critique of reason" beyond mathematics and natural studies—"one of the main Humboldt's merits for the critical philosophy."[10]

The links between Humboldt's considerations of language and Kant's philosophy were clearly commented on by R. Haym:

> "Nothing else, apart from the Hellenic spiritual form, did have such a strong influence on his manner of thinking and views as the philosophy of the old man from Kőnigsberg ... The form and the spirit of Kant clearly speak to us from his linguistic works."[11]

Humboldt considered the problem of language mostly in the last several years of his life. Many articles and drafts concerning this topic were written at that time. However, the most significant linguistic and philosophical investigations were included in his final work, written in the years 1830–1835. Its full title is "*Über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues und ihren Einfluss auf die geistige Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts*" [On the Diversity of Human Language Construction and Its Influence on the Mental Development of the Human Species]. The work was originally planned only as "An Introduction to the Language of Kavi on the Island of Java." However, the final

---

[10] Cassirer, E. 1923. "Die kantischen Elemente …", op. cit., 108.
[11] Haym, R. 1856. *Wilhelm von Humboldt – Lebensbild und Charakteristik.* Berlin, 446.

size of the work and the depth of analyses employed made it a source and a reference point for many later theories of language.

In his activistic theory of language, Humboldt assumes that language constitutes the product of the spiritual *a priori*, i.e. the internal sphere of the subject. According to his theory, language is not a reaction to the stimuli from the external world, but consists in the "emanation of the spirit." This spiritual power of man manifests itself in every aspect of culture. However, it is difficult to determine explicitly its essence and its primal cause. This power should be simply identified, as Humboldt suggests, with "the principle of life" (*Lebensprinzip*), as it appears in every aspect of human existence. It also permeates language, which thus becomes a phenomenon based on the *a priori* principles.

> "The creation of language—as Humboldt puts it—is an internal human need, and not only an external one, stemming from the need to maintain communication, but one that belongs to the very nature of humanity, indispensable for developing its spiritual powers and for acquiring a particular world view ..."[12]

So, genetically, language can be specified as a spiritual work, directed "outside from within," i.e. exactly striving to shape stable terms in the consciousness of the subject; those terms are independent from the subjective and fleeting feelings, and from the empirical sensations. This unceasing work, with the passing of time, can be slightly suppressed by the construction of relatively stable rules and language structures (e.g. sounds, lexis, grammar, etc.). In order to retain the view on the proper essence of language, that is, on its spiritual genesis and function, one should omit the ready material and stop at the "internal character" of language and the language-formation process. Language is not a finished product which is presently a fossilised tool, but it should be understood as a permanent creativity. Additionally, its function of naming should not be emphasised, as more important are its connections with the *a priori* activity. Language continuously passes away and creates itself anew.

Language

> "is not a product (*Ergon*), but an activity (*Energeia*) ... Hence, its true define notion can only be genetic. It is, in fact, an ever repetitious w o r k of the spirit which tends to make the a r t i c u l a t e d   s o u n d capable of expressing t h o u g h t ."[13]

The quoted statement implies that in order to define language one should not consider its final shape, included, e.g. in its grammatical rules, but one should take into account, predominantly, particular speech acts (de Saussure will later

---

[12] Humboldt, W. v. 1880. *Über die Verschiedenhit des menschlichen Sprachbaues und ihren Einfluss auf die geistige Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts*. Berlin, 25.

[13] Ibid., 56.

term this as "*parole*"). The definition of language, according to Humboldt, should be based on single utterances, as in them language is truly manifested, thanks to them it lives and develops itself.

The essence of language is, thus, not seen in its final form, nor in its ability to point to something external. Words do not describe anything transcendent, but are simply a transcendental tool for contacting sensations and stimuli to produce particular notions in our spirit.

The problem of understanding and communication arises here. Certainly, people are different in respect of their "internal endowments" and of their spiritual predispositions. They are also differently "attuned," and this results in that a sound (word) of the sender does not bring about the same reaction (i.e., adequate understanding) of the receiver. Humboldt, while maintaining the *a priori* and activist conception of language, represents a moderate "communicative pessimism."

> "People understand each other—as he claims—not because they communicate the signs of things, nor because they encourage each other to produce exactly the same notion, but because they mutually touch upon the same link of a chain of sensual representations ..., because they strike the same key on their spiritual instrument, and as a result, they form not the same but analogous notions."[14]

Consequently, understanding always occurs in such a way that each of the conversation partners assign his or her own content to a given term. The "key" which a conversation partner "strikes" is incorporated into the whole human being and is linked both to his/her intellectual sphere as well as to his/her emotional and volitional semantics. Disparate associations appear in reaction to a word stimulus, various qualities and relations to the *designatum* are differentiated, due to spiritual freedom.

The human spirit evolves, gradually passing from the stage of feelings to cognitive desires. The appearance of science has influenced the direction of language development. Language, as Humboldt rightly asserts, specifies thought notions and, thus, its forms become more and more stable. Consequently, language becomes a tool of a more and more dispassionate understanding and representation of phenomena. This tendency, as one may assume, is, in fact, consistent with Humboldt's mentality. Despite certain symptoms of the anticipation of Romanticism, he was an Enlightenment's thinker. In such an (Enlightenment) spirit he also accepted the mentioned direction of language evolution:

> "Language achieves only in its scientific stage its final sharpness in delineating and fixing notions ... It should limit its self-reliance and should subordi-

---

[14] Ibid., 209.

nate itself as precisely as possible to thoughts—it should accompany and representing them."[15]

In science, language disposes of the emotional and anthropomorphic elements, and its main task is the pursuit of knowledge and truth. This language is different from that of poetry, or even in prose. Nevertheless, one should bear in mind that in science as well as in other types of human activity language emanates from the inside. More precisely, according to Humboldt, language is the most perfect expression of thoughts (*Vollendung*). Hence, language is closely related to the intellectual predispositions (*intellektuelle Anlagen*), typical only for human beings. In accordance with the Enlightenment tendency, and simultaneously against the contemporaneous Romantic philosophy, Humboldt expresses the belief that language, despite its spiritual, immanent genesis, is not grounded on instincts or on any other irrational domain of the subject. It is a carrier (a "vehicle") of thoughts.

The above statements demonstrate that Humboldt is aware of the strict connection between language and thinking. According to him, both these domains mutually condition their respective existence and influence their evolution. The thought continuously participates in the process of acquiring and processing empirical sense impressions—exactly owing to the thought claiming that the subjectively-loaded sensual activity of the subject tends toward the production of an o b j e c t . Notions become generated from the flowing stream of sensual impressions; language plays an important role in this process. In this respect, it plays an indispensable and specific function in the process: it objectivizes impressions and, by use of sounds, transfers them into the external domain, still not leaving the range of subjectivity. On account of this, language becomes a perfect means mediating between that which is objective, and that which is subjective. It creates "a third world" existing between subjectivity and objectivity.

> "This can only be achieved by language—Humboldt says—and without this transfer (occurring with the use of language) of objectivity returning to subjectivity it is impossible to create notions, or any true thinking."[16]

In Humboldt's views the conviction dominates that language does not attempt to determine transcendental objects but rather determines notions. So, words are for Humboldt an important link connecting thoughts with the reality—according to the manner of their formation and interaction, they even constitute a specific, separate quality or, as was already pointed out,

> "... a certain world which lies in the middle between the external world and that acting inside us ... Language is nothing else than a complement (*Kom-*

---

[15] Ibid., 244.
[16] Ibid., 67.

plement) of thinking, a striving for the upgrading of the external impressions and disparate internal sensations, towards clear notions."[17]

Without language our thoughts would be unclear, imprecise, and notions would not have a specific shape, and they would not be unambiguously separated one from another. Language is thus a very complex phenomenon—in order to accomplish its task it needs to include in itself both the nature of human beings and the world of objects, it must connect them, at the same time it need to transcend the reality of the subject and the object towards a higher, ideal form. The word, consequently, is not only a "*nomen,*" an empty sound in which particular contents are vested in, but "... is a sensual form which, through its remarkable simplicity, points directly to the fact that the expressed object can only be represented only in accordance with the criteria of thought."[18]

The clear links of Humboldt's philosophy with Kantian methodological rationalism (earlier in the text referred to as the Kant–Humboldt theory) are also seen in the manner of grasping the relation between the objective "x" and its linguistic correlate (phenomenon). Humboldt adopts the existence of some linguistic "form of apprehension" which he comprehends, however, in a very general and abstract way. It is, as he claims, neither a grammatical structure, nor a word formation principle; in contrast, it is constituted by "the rule of forming basic words" (*Grundwörter*), so, by the main tendency for expressing thoughts, that is, the method of forming language in general.

> "While presenting the form, one should taking into account the specific route that language takes, and the nation with it, in order to express thoughts. One should be able to assess its relation to other languages, as regards goals determined for it, and as regards the feedback influence on the spiritual activity of nation."[19]

It is exactly the form, understood in the Kantian way that decides about the belonging of language to one or another family. Also due to the form, language does not lose its identity despite influences from other languages.

Opposite the *a priori* understood form there stands a linguistic "material" (*Stoff*), that is, a certain "thing-in-itself". The whole of sensual impressions or a physical sound may be such a material. Within language itself, however, there is nothing like an objective "thing-in-itself."

> "A the end of the day, no non-formed material can appear in language, because everything in it is directed at the goal which is the expression of

---

[17] Humboldt, W. v. 1973. "Über die Natur der Sprache im allgemeinen." In: *Schriften zur Sprache*. Stuttgart: Recklam, 8.

[18] Ibid., 10–11.

[19] Humboldt, W. v. 1976. "Über die Verschiedenheit …, op. cit., 61.

thoughts, and this work commences already with the first element, an articulated sound which becomes articulated due to formation."[20]

When we speak, we do not transfer the "material in itself," as a word always contains a particular load of sense. The understanding of words does not consist only in the reception of purely physical, inarticulate sounds, because articulation is connected with the internal spiritual power and the unceasing creation of linguistic contents.

Only human beings use language. Animals are not able to use it, although most of the living organisms produce sounds. The difference consists in the fact that people "force" sounds from their bodily organs by pressing their spirit (*Drang seiner Seele*), while animals have no such predisposition. Language is, thus, always grounded in the spiritual (intellectual) nature of human beings, and only its influence can bring about a change of a natural animal sound into an articulated one. Thus, this predisposition to express thoughts and to form sense constitutes the difference between ordinary cries (*Geschrei*) of animals and the human "musical tone." The linguistic sound cannot be characterised on the basis of its physical properties, but according to its sense, because "... it is nothing else than an intended mode of acting of the soul, in order to form it, and, consequently, it contains as much body as is needed for its external perception."[21]

Humboldt admits that inarticulate sounds are also sometimes the carriers of meaning—animals use them to warn of a danger, to attract attention, to call for help, etc. Despite the multitude of such sounds, this is still not a language. "The sense of speech" (*Sprachsinn*) must contain something more, i.e. "... the premonition of a whole system which a particular language in its individual form will need."[22] The existence or the non-existence of language is not the result of particular sounds, but language is a system, grounded on mutual relations between elements of speech. This problem will be examined more comprehensively in the symbolic philosophy which is of transcendental character.

5. TRANSCENDENTALISM IN COMMUNICATIVE SYMBOLISM

In order to better understand the symbolic strand in the philosophy of language one needs to analyse briefly the post-Kantian interpretations of certain theses of Kant. In particular, the question concerns the above mentioned problem of "the-thing-in-itself," especially, its ontological status of which Kant, as it seems, did not have a complete clarity. Already during Kant's lifetime

---

[20] Ibid., 60.
[21] Ibid., 80.
[22] Ibid., 85.

an intense, and still ongoing, debate was initiated. Omitting the characteristics of particular standpoints, one should ascertain that the majority of methodical rationalists were in favour of the idealistic interpretation of "the-thing-in--itself."

Such a characteristic trend of the Neo-Kantian philosophy can be illustrated by the example of metaphysics, and in consequence by Ernst Cassirer's (1874–1945) philosophy of language and communication. Like the majority of his Neo-Kantian predecessors, Cassirer ignored in his epistemology the existence of any external being, independent from our *a priori*. Both the substantial completeness of the world and its parts depend, according to him, on the subjective, spiritual endowment. "The matter of cognition, as I understand it—writes Cassirer—is not a real being which can be isolated and which, in this isolation, can be presented as something purely given and as a psychological fact. It is rather a limit concept to which the epistemological reflection and epistemological analysis, is reduced."[23]

In his epistemological immanentism, Cassirer differs from the Kantian apriorism, which—what can be seen in some statements from *The Critique of Pure Reason* and in the *Prolegomena*—accepts the reality (although the cognitive inaccessibility) of "the things-in-themselves." Cassirer, and this is another modification of Kantianism, extends the spectrum of the influence of apriorism, and employs it for the whole human activity. In his three-volume work, he writes:

> "The mathematical-natural being does not exhaust, in its apprehension and idealistic explanation, the whole of reality because it does not contain the whole activity of spirit with its spontaneity ... The critique of reason thus becomes the critique of culture (B.A. underlining)."[24]

The "later" Cassirer—in contrast to the "earlier" one, who remains rather faithful to the original "Marburg" Neo-Kantianism—claims that the *a priori* activity is typical for all areas of our activity. We use symbols everywhere and always, which are independent products of the subjective *a priori* and which do not have any substantial references to the manifestations of the world of objects. Within the framework of his "pan-symbolism," Cassirer also postulates his original conception of human being comprehended as **"*homo symbolicus*."** Human beings contact the world through *a priori* symbolic forms, within which one should distinguish myths, religion, history, art, and even technology. The symbolic forms also include language.

Cassirer devotes a special attention to language in his philosophy of the symbolic forms. His achievements in the field are enormous; in his works he

---

[23] Cassirer, E. 1983. *Wesen und Wirkung des Symbolbegriffs*. Wissensch. Buchgesellschaft. Darmstadt, 212–213.

[24] Cassirer, E. 1923. *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*. Vol. I. *Die Sprache*. Berlin, 10–11.

synthesized a vast literature concerning the examined problems. Furthermore, he postulated his own proposals and solutions. Language was the second (after science) domain of culture in which Cassirer applied the method of Kantian transcendentalism. As it has been already mentioned, the methodology of mathematics and natural sciences practised in Marburg turned out too narrow for him, as it could not encompass the whole knowledge about the world. The transposition of the theory concerning subject's activity in process of cognition to the domain of the humanities was tantamount to refuting Herder's view, negating (in the *Metacritique*) the usefulness of Kantian methodology for culture widely understood. In this respect, Cassirer shared Humboldt's view for which Kantian philosophy was fruitful also in the area of the philosophy of language. Referring to Humboldt's views, he constructed a similarly activist conception of language, called "linguistic symbolism." According to that conception, language has a transcendental dimension and takes an active part in the process of the objectivization of subject's impressions, thus participates in reifying and shaping the reality. It is not only the verbalising of the states of the world, but their active constructing. As Cassirer says:

> "Language does not step into the world of a ready-made object's apprehension, only in order to equip given and clearly separated things with 'names' treated as purely external and arbitrary signs, but it is a means of constructing objects; in a sense, it is the most important and perfect instrument of acquiring and formatting the pure object world."[25]

The above statement is foremost a challenge to the materialist and positivist theory of copying. According to Cassirer, language does not passively register facts but participates in their creation.

I take a closer look at the essence of the Cassirerian symbolism. The notion and the term "symbol" are old; they originated in antiquity. At that time the verb *symballein* meant the action of putting together two parts of an object previously broken on purpose. This action is a preparation of a password for the people who dispose the parts. In such a dichotomous direction the later and contemporary interpretations and definitions of "symbol" have been developed; such associations as "consonance" and "pointing to" (e.g. two of the components) dominate in them. In Neo-Kantianism, as already noted, there is no object of reference, which makes the cultural product mid-air "hanging." The Cassirerian symbols, contrary to the earlier tradition in this respect, have not a "substantial" support—instead, they become limited to the human domain of *a priori* and to its external manifestations. Or, what is probably even closer to the intentions of Neo-Kantianism, symbols manifest the liberation from the limits

---

[25] Cassirer, E. 1985. "Symbol, Technik, Sprache." Ed. E. W. Orth, J. M. Krois, J. M. Werle, Felix Meiner. Hamburg, 126.

stemming from the substantial determination, unacceptable in the immanent philosophy.

The internalised symbolic activity, also expressed in language, is this aspect which differentiates people from other living creatures, including animals located highest in the hierarchy of evolution. The animals have their own, subjective, poky world, inhabiting it, in a way, as a prison, and not being able to overcome the borders delineated by the senses.

> "When an animal lives in this space, it cannot objectively stand up against it, that is, it cannot comprehend it as a unified whole with a particular structure. The animal space stops in the space of actions and efficiency; it does not reach the space of imaginations and representations."[26]

The animals cannot go beyond the action-reaction system. Their vocal behaviours are instinctive, and refer only to the animal current states. This sensual and subjective borderline can only be transcended by the human being, and it is mainly due to language. Verbalisation, which is the expression of thoughts, allows for a separation from particular impressions and emotions, thus mediating between the human being and the world of the senses. More precisely, words of language replace things, however, they are not only sensual copies (as it happens with animals), but, in contrast, they creatively symbolize things in a novel, anti-naturalist and purely "functional" understanding of this process.

The transcendental approach to linguistic phenomena can clearly be seen in Cassirer's discussions concerning the language genesis and the essence and the way of forming the first words. The discussions concern among others the nature of the first words: whether they were verbs or nouns. Various answers were proposed. According to some linguists (e.g. Panini), humans registered actions earlier than things. An opposing viewpoint is represented by Wilhelm Wundt, who claims that nouns appeared in language first because only nouns can be ascribed to properties or processes. For Cassirer, both these proposition are wrong. He rejects the metaphysical "either-or" thesis which implies the fossilised nature of linguistic forms and the lack of any dynamics in their development. The aforementioned approaches were, according to him, unduly focused on the substantial content instead of emphasising the creative side of the linguistic processes. "In fact—writes Cassirer—such posing of the problem harbours the old error of reifying the fundamental spiritual and linguistic categories."[27]

In the quoted statement Cassirer betrays again his concern for the tendency to emphasise the theory of copying in language. In accordance with his critical and symbolic philosophy, neither objects, states of things, neither properties,

---

[26] Ibid., 127.
[27] Cassirer, E. 1923. *Philosophie der symbolischen …*, op. cit., 231.

nor actions can be treated as g i v e n contents of consciousness, but only as
w a y s   a n d   d i r e c t i o n s of their formation. In this case, it turns out that no form
of linguistic expression can be treated as the primal one—there is no straight-
forward qualitative difference between words, nor a genetic implication. The
fact that a particular bundle of sensual impressions becomes an "object," or an
"action" does not stem from the simple naming of a given thing or a process,
but is an effect of a spiritual activity of the subject. The categories of a noun, a
verb, an adjective, etc. were thus being created gradually and parallel with in-
tensifying the *a priori* language formation activity. These terms, as Cassirer
claims, "do not develop on a ready object, but they are a progress of the sign
and a continual sharpening of the distinguished content of consciousness,
through which we gain a more and more clear picture of the world as a collec-
tion of 'objects' and 'properties,' 'changes,' and 'actions,' 'persons' and
'things,' of spatial and temporal relationships."[28]

The active, symbolic, and not imitative character of language can be seen,
according to Cassirer, the more we move to the analysis of general and abstract
notions. Abstraction, as he claims, does not refer immediately to things, but, as
Aristotle postulated, but it is based on a material which has been, in a way,
"prepared" in thought-linguistic operations. Already at the very beginning of
language, it did not encompass the immediate sensual qualities, but it was the
outcome of intentional operations, conducted by reason on a sensual material. In
a further process, the reason introduces to these differentiations successive spec-
ifications which lead to a clearer separation of phenomena. In language "passive
observation and a comparison of contents never" decides; but, "the ordinary
'reflection' form is permeated here with specific d y n a m i c themes."[29]

Cassirer admits that language was passing through the "lower" stages of de-
velopment which were to a large extent dependent on the environment. He even
enumerates two "pre-symbolic" stages, and calls them "the mimic" and "the
analogous," respectively. In the first stage, language is still rather tightly con-
nected with the specified state of things and expresses it very roughly, without
any aspirations for representing more general relationships. In the second stage,
language acquires a certain degree of freedom, with a higher flexibility of using
sounds which are only analogical to natural patterns. Both these stages are only
transitory periods in the process of constructing of the proper language of sym-
bols which is the last and the most perfect stage of the verbal development. In
this stage, liberation and a separation from the material original take place, and
thus there is also a departure from imitating external sounds. The essence of
language does not consist in w h a t it copies, but it consists in the t r a n s c e n -
d e n t a l   w a y and l a w s of the very expression.

---

[28] Ibid., 233.
[29] Ibid., 352.

"In these principles of formation, and not in the proximity of that which is given directly, but in the gradual moving away from it, there lies the value and the specificity of the language formation ... Language, thus, begins where the immediate relationship to the sensual impression and the sensory facts end."[30]

Following Humboldt's conception, and accepting his understanding of language as "*energeia*," Cassirer is convinced that the linguistic approach to the world is always active; the world is formed in accordance with the *a priori* conditions. Consciousness does not confront the complexity of sensual impressions, but permeates them with its own life. Therefore, words are not copies of states of things (*Bestimmtheiten)*, but they themselves determine the way of their formation.

The above considerations demonstrate clearly enough Cassirer's anti-naturalistic attitude which manifests itself in his ascribing to language significant liberties and abilities in creating its own forms of expression and in constructing reality. The conviction dominates here that language never follows sensual perceptions, but always confronts them with its spontaneity. Such a belief expresses the critique of the epistemological theory of copying, linguistic behaviourism and positivism, and, at the same time, it presents the symbolic (in a novel sense) relation of words to external stimuli.

6. CONCLUSION

The observations presented above lead to a dismissal of the initial doubts concerning the scanty usefulness of transcendental philosophy in analysing linguistic and communicative behaviours. The preliminary thesis—that Kantian methodology is widely applicable in examining of the above mentioned issues—seems justified. The philosophers referred to in the course of the discussion do not exhaust the list of Kantian and Neo-Kantian researchers of language and communication.

The whole area of linguistic relativism has been omitted here. It draws, especially in its American version, from the ethnological-cultural conceptions of Franz Boas and his school, but by referring to the layers of the spiritual activity of the subject it clearly uses tools elaborated by methodical rationalism. The aim posed in the article appears to have been realized. The examination of views of two distinguished philosophers has allowed for demonstrating that transcendental philosophy is a rich source of inspirations in the studies of language and communication. This examination also shows that Kant can be considered an important representative of modern and contemporary philosophy of language and communication.

_____

[30] Ibid., 135.

One may easily imagine that researches on language and communication will be intensified in the 21st-century. They will surely use the transcendental method. This will make us increasingly aware of the activist, persuasive, "phenomenal" and constructivist dimension of the communicative processes, applied to some "reality-in-itself."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR — professor, philologist, philosopher, a communication theoretician; Institute of Philosophy, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Head of the Department of Theory and Philosophy of Communications, Institute of Modern Languages and Social Communication, Koszalin University of Technology; author of 25 books and 150 articles in various languages including Polish, German, English, Spanish, Croatian, Russian; lectures in Europe, Asia, and both Americas.

Przemysław Parszutowicz

ERNST CASSIRER'S IDEA OF THE CRITIQUE
OF KNOWLEDGE

ABSTRACT

The article analyses systematically and historically the specific idea of transcendentalism developed in the Marburg School of Neo-Kantianism. The unique line of the Marburg's School interpretation of Kant's critical philosophy consists in contrasting critical (relational) and dogmatic (substantial) understandings of basic philosophical concepts. This line is characteristic of the Marburg School idealism, and it perfectly grasps Ernst Cassirer's peculiar understanding of philosophy—as "the critique of knowledge." The main thesis of this paper is the following one: the critical method understood as the method of searching for fundamental principles and conditions of possibility of objectiveness is a basic tool of analysis and investigations carried out by Cassirer.

Keywords: Ernst Cassirer; transcendentalism; critique of knowledge; Marburg School.

The specific form of the transcendental method developed in Marburg at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries took on the most complete and systematic expression in Ernst Cassirer's *Substance and Function* (1910). The interpretation of the critical philosophy presented there—consisting in the opposition between the critical (relational) and dogmatic (substantial) understandings of the fundamental philosophical notions—characterises, on the one hand, the specificity of the Marburg idealism; on the other, it describes the particularly Cassirerian understanding of philosophy. According to the subtitle of Cassirer's work's (*Studies in the Fundamental Problems of the Critique of Knowledge*), the writings are precisely a c r i t i q u e   o f   k n o w l e d g e . The critical-cognitive method, as a way of looking for the primary rules and conditions of objectivity, is a basic tool for analyses and studies carried out by Cassirer. Almost all his works are typified by it—starting with the initial historical-philosophical works, and ending with his last text, *The Myth of the State*.

The concept of critique of knowledge (*Erkenntniskritik*) was used for the first time by Herman Cohen, in his work entitled *Das Princip der Infinitesimal-Methode und seine Geschichte. Ein Kapitel zur Grundlegung der Erkenntniskritik*. The person considered to be the father of this concept—in his reference to Kant's critical philosophy—is Otto Liebmann, exerting a profound influence on the subsequent development and the shape of the Neo-Kantian movement in Germany. In his *Analysis der Wirklichkeit* (1876) he proposed to employ the term in relation to the cognitive faculties, and to equate its meaning with the notion of transcendental philosophy.[1] For Cohen, as well as for other Marburg Neo-Kantians, the concept of critique of knowledge was determined by a particular understanding of transcendentalism and the critical method which was developed in that school. The critique of knowledge is, on the one hand, differentiated there from the Kantian c r i t i q u e   o f   r e a s o n, and, on the other, from the t h e o r y   o f   k n o w l e d g e.

In the aforementioned work on the infinitesimal method, Cohen differentiates the c r i t i q u e   o f   k n o w l e d g e from the c r i t i q u e   o f   r e a s o n. The use of such a term is justified by claiming that this may allow for a reminiscence of the "proper sense" of the Kantian teachings.[2] Firstly, however, as we know today, this sense is considerably limiting. Secondly, it points out the shortcomings of the understanding of philosophy's primal task, traditionally ascribed to Kant.[3] The transformation of the critique of reason into the critique of knowledge constitutes one of the basic indicators of transcendentalism in its Marburg form, and specifies the shape of the research conducted in the whole Cohen's school.

According to Cohen, for Kant, the critique of reason means the opposition of science to reason. As Kant states, the critique of reason is not the critique of "books and systems, but of the faculty of reason, in general, in respect of all knowledge after which it may strive independently of all experience."[4] Meanwhile, as Cohen argues, true idealism does not make the faculties of r e a s o n into its object a s   c o n s c i o u s n e s s,   b u t   a s   a   f o r m   o f   t h e   p o s s i-b l e   u n d e r s t a n d i n g   o f   r e a s o n   a s   c o n s c i o u s n e s s. "The objects of the critical-cognitive idealism"—as Marburg school's leader puts it—"are not objects and processes, or even objects and processes of consciousness, but scientific facts."[5] Because knowledge finds its realisation in science, which

---

[1] "The study of cognitive faculties […], especially from the times of the Kantian turn, should better be named c r i t i q u e   o f   k n o w l e d g e or transcendental philosophy." Liebmann, O. 1876. *Analysis der Wirklichkeit.* Strasburg, 13.

[2] Cohen, H. 1883. *Das Princip der Infinitesimalmethode und seine Geschichte.* Berlin, 6.

[3] "T h e   c r i t i q u e   o f   r e a s o n   i s   t h e   c r i t i q u e   o f   k n o w l e d g e, or a critique of science. Critique discovers that what is pure within the reason, as long as it discovers the c o n d i t i o n s   o f   c e r t a i n t y which are the basis for k n o w l e d g e   a s   s c i e n c e." Cohen, H.1883. *Das Princip ...,* op. cit., 7.

[4] Kant, I. 1965 (1929). *Critique of Pure Reason*, AXII. Trans. Kemp-Smith, N.

[5] Cohen, H. 1883. *Das Princip ...*, op. cit., 6.

Cohen always treated as exact mathematical natural studies (much later, especially in the works of Ernst Cassirer, its understanding was expanded onto other types of knowledge), its fundamental object of study is "the scientific fact." As he argues, "it is only in science that objects are given (*Dinge)*, and only in science they become accessible for the philosophical inquiry." For Cohen, the primary rules of knowledge are, therefore, the principal rules of scientific inquiry, and their structure is not the structure of reason, but of thinking, or—in other words—it is a structure of the possible objects of experience, as the products of intellectual synthesis.[6] From such a perspective there is no chance to assume any pre-given object of knowledge, nor any pre-given subject of knowledge which could also be complete and absolute. As important for the critique of knowledge as the justification of the conditions of possibility of the objects of knowledge is the decision about the capabilities of the subject of knowledge—as a certain, always relative, position from which its objects are specified. As a result, the aim of such a critique is not to analyse consciousness in the process of knowledge, but the synthetic principles on the basis of which consciousness may become the object of knowledge. The critique does not study the relation of the cognitive subject to its object, but the manner in which—during the cognitive process—some of its elements become taken as subjective (relating to the subject), and others as objective (relating to the objects). In other words, the main problem here is the question of the conditions of the objective legitimacy of knowledge, which, however, with all certainty cannovt be confirmed and enclosed in some s u b s t a n t i a l reality, but need to be supported on the necessary f u n c t i o n s , and because of this they are open to its continuous progress.[7] "T h e c r i t i q u e o f k n o w l e d g e "—writes Cohen—"is therefore tantamount to t r a n s c e n d e n t a l l o g i c ."[8]

Therefore, a "scientific fact," (or, actually, "scientific facts") serves as a means with the use of which one can reach the synthetic principles organising a given domain of knowledge. Every possible area of knowledge in order to come into being as a "scientific fact" needs to constitute a systematised whole—a

---

[6] On reviewing Hönigswald's book, the following: "what is important […] is to dismantle a certain systematic whole into its partial conditions, and not to assemble its heterogeneous, much later fitted components and parts". (Cassirer, E. 1909. "Rezension von Richard Hönigswald, "Beiträge zur Erkenntnistheorie und Methodenlehre," *Kantstudien*, 14, 98.)

[7] A "scientific fact," in Natorp's terminology, is not anything finished and already "done" (*ein Getanes*), but an action or deed (*ein Tun*). "Wissenschaft ist Wissenschaffen, niemals hat sie etwas zu Ende geschafft"—writes Natorp in a vivid but difficult to translate excerpt (Natorp, P. 1918. *Hermann Cohen als Mensch, Lehrer und Forscher.* Marburg, 21). In a verbatim translation one may understand it as the following: "Science is the production of knowledge, it has never produced anything finally." The term "die Wissenschaft" is usually translated as science, in accordance with its etymology, denoting "the effect of the process of producing knowledge." Natorp emphasises the dynamic nature of science as the production of knowledge, thus, reinforcing the Marburg conception of knowledge as an unceasing process of defining, to which science is the tool.

[8] Cohen, H. 1883. *Das Princip ...*, op. cit., 7.

system of terms subject to one principle. In turn, each of these systems remains in a mutual relation with other systems, thus conditioning and defining them, simultaneously being conditioned and defined by them in return. Natorp offers the following characteristic of the particularly Marburgian understanding of the problem of knowledge:

> "The transcendental condition of understanding the problem of knowledge is the fact that it can only be understood by the medium of various other perceptions, through pointing out one principle which allows a link and which conditions the coming to existence of the heterogeneity of the theory of knowledge; and, what follows from that, allows to construe them as a certain unity—therefore, through one, rule-based understanding of a specified relationship between "this particular" *(der)* science or knowledge."[9]

The critique of knowledge should therefore be distinguished not only from the c r i t i q u e   o f   r e a s o n, but also from the t h e o r y   o f   k n o w l e d g e. There can be an endless number of the theories of knowledge—depending on the theoretical standpoint from which they view objects as "given." The critique is to be occupied with the conditions of the heterogeneity of the cognitive standpoints' possibilities of coming into being—and, as a result, to be occupied with the conditions of the possibilities of the heterogeneity of the theories of knowledge, thus, resulting in the specification of their mutual relationship and the extraction of the source question, the fundamental soul need, lying at the foundations of the aforementioned heterogeneity.[10] One can reach such a source—which should not be understood in the substantial sense as a "metaphysical arche-principle"—only through the analyses of the points of synthesis, which are to be the analytics of the primary principles of knowledge.

That is why Cassirer, on commencing his greatest work concerning knowledge,[11] put forward a different goal than a mere chronological presentation of disparate theoretical and cognitive standpoints. As one can learn from Cassirer's letter to Natorp, of 31st July 1903, his aim was not

---

[9] Natorp, P. 1887. "Über objektive und subjektive Begründung der Erkenntnis." *Philosophische Monatshefte* 23, 265.

[10] Interestingly, Cassirer frequently uses both terms interchangeably (see e.g. 1923. *Einstein's Theory of Relativity*. Trans. Swabey, W. C. and M. C. Swabey. Chicago). Only when he wants to distinguish the critical and the dogmatic approaches to the problem of knowledge he uses the terms critique and theory of knowledge, respectively. This is most probably caused by the conviction that the only proper way to practice the theory of knowledge is its critique—this, reinforced by the enclosed character of the Marburg school, allows him to use the "theory of knowledge" while meaning "critique."

[11] Cassirer, E. 2011. *Das Erkenntnisproblem in der Philosophie und Wissenschaft der neueren Zeit*. Vols. 1–4. Hamburg.

"to introduce particular 'theories of knowledge' (*Erkenntnistheorien*) in their historical development but, rather, to demonstrate a certain logical ideal and a particularly methodological problem-centred approach (*Fragestellung*) which typified various epochs in their carrying out of scholarly work."[12]

The task of this four-volumes work is to demonstrate the directions of the development of knowledge, in general, all this on the basis of historical analyses of instances of approaching the problem.

Simultaneously, the critique of knowledge constitutes the method encompassing and enabling the multiplicity of disparate theoretical and cognitive standpoints. There can be only one such a method, like there is only one logic (i.e. the transcendental logic—concerning the possibilities of object knowledge—as the only universally applicable and communicable means of cognition). In contrast, there is an indefinite number of the theories of knowledge because there is an endless number of possible cognitive standpoints and object forms. More importantly, the critique of knowledge's task is not a plain simplification of particular theories of knowledge and squeezing them into a "metaphysical unity," or linking them together on the basis of aggregation by the rule of some "cognitive meta-theory." Its task is to provide a s y s t e m a t i c s — the designation of each of them to a particular place in a whole, specified by a logical function.[13] Cassirer addresses this issue in the following way:

> "It appears as the task of a truly universal criticism of knowledge not to level this manifold, this wealth and variety of forms of knowledge and understanding of the world and compress them into a purely abstract unity, but to leave them standing as such. Only when we resist the temptation to compress the totality of forms, which here result, into an ultimate metaphysical unity, into the unity and simplicity of an absolute 'world ground' and to deduce it from the latter, do we grasp its true concrete import and fullness."[14]

Consequently, the manner of conducting the philosophical meditation discussed here transcends the arguments concerning the supremacy of one "logic" over another, or the foundations of their rightness. It turns to the bases of their possibilities, namely, to the principles on which they rest (*quid juris*), and not to the facts (*quid facti*). It constructs the theory of relativity of various forms of knowledge, thus attempting to extract the fundamental principle of their f u n c - t i o n a l, and not s u b s t a n t i a l unity—the principle of the possibility of the

---

[12] *Nachlass Natorp*, Universitätsbibliothek Marburg, Handschrift 831: 618.

[13] With reference to Marek Siemek's proposal of differentiation, one can say that the critique of knowledge has an epistemological character, and not an epistemic one. See: Siemek, M. 1976. "Transcendentalizm jako stanowisko epistemologiczne" [Transcendentalism as an Epistemological Standpoint]. In: *Dziedzictwo Kanta* [Kant's Heritage]. Ed. Garewicz, J. Warszawa.

[14] Cassirer, E. 1923. *Einstein's Theory of Relativity*, op. cit., 446.

mutual reference one to another and their mutual interpretation.[15] This common principle would encompass the possibility of specification of all, endlessly possible, but numerous and disparate, past and future forms of knowledge, with their typical object forms—all forming a mutually permeating problems and their solutions.[16]

"Depending on the manner and the direction of an ongoing synthesis"—Cassirer states—"the same perception material can be formed in various and disparate terms."[17] Any type of synthesis ties reality in a form of organisation which is typical only of itself; it is paralleled by a specific sphere of knowledge and a specific mode of its understanding—a special theory of knowledge. The critique of knowledge, on the other hand, determines precisely the conditions which each form of organisation is subject to, relating this form to the others, as if placing it on the map of the system of knowledge. The critique, however, has only a relative criterion at its disposal to determine the specificity of the aforementioned particular forms of organisation—through their mutual definition, based on an interrelation. Their value and character are not being specified according to some absolute position (according to some substance), but are always relative—with regard to the adopted theoretical point of reference, i.e. with reference to some form of ordering and hierarchy, and through it, with respect to the whole system of possible forms. This point of reference is privileged in the sense of its correspondence with the desired goal of knowledge. Its cognitive value corresponds to the number of links which it can produce. Consequently, the forms do not constitute—in Cassirer's understanding of critique—the elements of the complete structure of knowledge, but its moments—ones that do not constitute its parts, but are aspects of the discussion of the problem, and have a specifically set task to perform. They do not reflect reality, but symbolise it.[18] Cassirer summarises the task of the critique as follows:

> "It must follow the special sciences and survey them as a whole. It must ask whether the intellectual symbols by means of which the specialized disciplines reflect on and describe reality exist merely side by side or whether they are not diverse manifestations of the same basic human function. And if the latter hypothesis should be confirmed, a philosophical critique must formulate the universal conditions of this function and define the principle underlying it."[19]

---

[15] The ultimate goal of knowledge is, as Paul Natorp states, "a representation ordering, encompassing all the elements in accordance with the law." (Natorp, P. 1904. *Logik, Grundlegung und logischer Aufbau der Mathematik und mathematischen Naturwissenschaft*, Marburg, 3.)

[16] Cassirer, E. 1902. *Leibniz System in seinen wissenschaftlichen Grundlagen*. Marburg, V.

[17] Cassirer, E. 1953 (1923) *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*. Vol. 1. Transl. Manheim, R. New Haven, 84.

[18] Cassirer, E. 1923. *Einstein's Theory of Relativity*, op. cit., 455.

[19] Cassirer, E. 1953. *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*. Vol. 1, op. cit, 77.

Cassirer transformed the critique of knowledge into the philosophy of symbolic forms. Each area of knowledge is no longer understood as corresponding to some reality in itself, but is understood as a s y m b o l containing its own, specific, area-dependant form. What is only possible is the logical gradation of the forms—their hierarchic ordering, and not evaluation. The hierarchy consists in determining the logical scope of application, and only this aspect constitutes its criterion. Any external evaluation is a procedure characteristic of the "dogmatic" metaphysics (in the Marburg understanding) which attempts to find an external, absolute point of reference from which a given value can be measured.

What is important for the philosophy of symbolic forms are not only the primary logical conditions of objects, in general, but the determination of the formal structure of each possible area of grasping reality, and thus the specification of the mutual relations between these areas. It wants to find "the position which lies beyond all these forms; however, simultaneously, a position which does not lie outside them,"

> "it wants to undertake the effort of understanding the mutual overlapping of the particular processes of objectivisation, and to ascribe each with a suitable place in the whole of knowledge. The contentious points between various theoretical and cognitive schools of contemporary thinking could not be explained and decided upon, if it were not for the expansion of such theoretical-cognitive horizon. The bulk of these arguments was caused by the fact that each particular orientation of a given form of knowledge which precedes some 'scientific facts' sets a fixed, absolute norm which is then used to measure the value of a l l knowledge. In this way, within the theory of knowledge, there appeared logicism and psychologism, biologism, physicalism, and historicism, which struggle for domination with one another. […] the 'critical' philosophy needs to search for some general point of view thanks to which it will be liberated from the necessity of acknowledging a given particular form of knowledge for a universally legitimate one, and one that is the only one possible; this would, consequently, make it free from the establishing of any further '-*ism*'. This liberation has to be aimed at the totality (*Totalität*) of the possible forms of knowledge and at the relation taking place between the particular members of this whole: the relation which can be specified only at the point of determining the specific nature of each of these elements."[20]

According to the abovementioned, the critique of knowledge constitutes an idea of the systematic philosophy, the main task of which, as Cassirer puts it, is "to free the idea of the world from the one-sidedness,"[21] caused by a substantialisation of the particular standpoints and favouring certain "-isms." This liberation

---

[20] Cassirer, E. 1939. *Axel Hägerström.* Göteborg, 119.
[21] Cassirer, E. 1923. *Einstein's Theory of Relativity*, op. cit., 447.

can only be accomplished from the perspective of the whole, understood as a network of possible standpoints which are connected only by logical interrelationships. If it was able to carry out a thorough critique of knowledge, encompassing all its areas—not only the mathematical studies on nature, but also all other "forms of spirit."

> "Then we could have a systematic philosophy of human culture in which each particular form would take its meaning solely from the place in which it stands, as system in which consent and significance of each form would be characterized by the richness and specific quality of the relations and *concat nons* in which it stands with other spiritual energies and ultimately with totality."[22]

Such a systematics is, however, an endless task for the critique of knowledge, and it is an idea of the world's unity. The task, the solution of which we can only near due to the very nature of the functional approach, can never be finally realized. The critique of knowledge, on the one hand, faces the vast heterogeneity of phenomena, and, on the other, it has at its disposal an infinite number of possibilities to approach this heterogeneity. This stems from Marburg's specification of philosophy as a method—a method understood in its Greek etymological sense, as "heading towards"[23]—a road from substance to function, a road on which "everything 'what is given' (*des 'Gegebenen'*) needs to be deconstructed to the pure functions of knowledge."[24] "We describe philosophy as a 'method': every constant 'being' ('*Sein*') needs to dissolve itself in a certain 'run' ('*Gang*'), in a progress of thought"[25]—Natorp writes. Philosophy as a method, as a critique of knowledge which leads to a general systematics of the possible forms of knowledge, is realised and fulfilled only in this process of incessant "determination of the undetermined," in its "heading towards." Its goal is the act of heading towards something—"the road is everything, the goal—nothing."[26]

The critique of knowledge may therefore be a science of the possibility and variety of ways of comprehending things. Each branch of science contains its own method of encompassing the variety of things in the conceptual unity, and each uses a different set of terms. The description of this specificity—the gen-

---

[22] Cassirer, E. 1953 (1923). *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms.* Vol. 1, op. cit., 82.

[23] According to Paul Natorp's claims from the essay *Kant und die Marburger Schule,* "in the very word 'method,' in *μετιέναι,* one can find not only planning, intention to act ('*Gehen*'), or a movement forward; […] but also the meaning of a movement towards a goal, or in any case, a movement in *a* direction: 'a heading' ('*Nachgehen*')." See: Natorp, P. 1912. "Kant und die Marburger Schule." *Kantstudien,* XVII, 199–200).

[24] Cassirer, E. 1999. *Das Erkenntnisproblem in der Philosophie und Wissenschaft der neuren Zeit,* part 1. In: Cassirer, E., *Gesammelte Werke. Hamburger Ausgabe.* Vol. 2, Hamburg, 762.

[25] Natorp, P. 1923. *Die logischen Grundlagen der exakten Wissenschaften.* Leipzig, 199.

[26] Natorp, P. 1911. *Philosophie. Ihr Problem und ihre Probleme. Einführung in den kritischen Idealismus.* Göttingen, 16.

eral logic of constructing terms—constitutes the chief tasks for the critique of knowledge. A different way of encompassing the plurality into unity is characteristic of the natural sciences, in contradiction to the humanities. Each discipline uses a separate, characteristic, *sui generis* logic of terms.

> "Since Plato we have possessed a logic of mathematics; and since Aristotle a logic of biology. With them the mathematical concepts of relation and the biological concepts of genus and species were given their secure places. The logic of the mathematical science of nature is constructed by Descartes, Leibniz, and Kant, and in the nineteenth century the first attempts at a 'logic of history' finally appear."[27]

For the final "systematics of forms of knowledge" it seems very important to specify the difference between the terms of the natural sciences and the terms of the widely understood humanities, together with their respective kinds of "logic."

Cassirer's impressive philosophical oeuvre, despite the amazing variety of the undertaken topics, is characterised by the unity of the above-mentioned understanding of method. The critique of knowledge, as a general logic of the object knowledge, can be applied to any given object, and to any possible level of abstraction. Cassirer works on the completed products of the human spirit, on the "products of a higher-level synthesis"—be this Cohen's "scientific fact," or "a cultural fact." He analyses the frequently contradictory conceptions and tries to find the basis and the conditions of this variety. He analyses, particular scientific theories, particular terms, particular social moments, as well as transient impressions and emotions. The latter ones, in Cassirer's views, also contain their own level of object-like objectivity. This is so because they all contain the same primary structure of reason which permits to synthesise a certain plurality and put it into the forms. It is unimportant whether these forms have a scientific character (as in mathematics or natural sciences), or are unspecified (as in artistic production). It does not matter if they can use the concept of thing and law, or form and style. Each of these branches has its fundamental form being a complete production of the human spirit.

Cassirer's theoretical and cognitive claims demonstrate and give an additional grounding to one of Kant's main philosophical thoughts: "reason penetrates only what it produces according to its own concepts." This claim—the legitimacy of which was demonstrated by Kant by use of the example of the natural sciences—is applied by Cassirer to the domain of culture. Since culture

---

[27] Cassirer, E. 2000. *The Logic of the Cultural Sciences.* Trans. Lofts, S. G. New York, 58. The systematics of these modes of comprehension is the task of Cassirer's theory of symbolic forms. These also include the following: "If [...] we consider the fundamental concepts of the sciences of language, art, and religion, we are struck by the fact that they are, as it were, still homeless: they have not yet found their "natural place" within the system of logic" (ibid.). The finding of this place constitutes one of the main goals of *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms.*

as a whole is the product of reason ("the human spirit") there have to be reasonable principles governing it. The Kantian concept of reason does not fully represent reality's heterogeneity in all its aspects. This concept needs a considerable extension—each discipline is, in its own right, "reasonable." Consequently, knowledge is no longer tantamount to the scientific, mathematical natural studies, but one can also speak about knowledge in art, religion, or history. Each of these disciplines constructs an object which is typical only of them, and which "exists" in a special way, however, is always separated from the existential meaning of existence that is characteristic of dogmatic metaphysics. In relation to Kant's philosophy, as well as in relation to the whole of natural sciences as one of the symbolic forms, not only the thing which can be "measured and counted exists." There also exists something which can be communicated—done in such a way that other people are able to understand—consequently, it is done exactly through the medium of reasonable principles. Such a philosophy becomes the philosophy of the principles of building the community of meanings.[28]

In the ongoing process of the "creation of the human spirit," the particular branches of the spirit's activity permeate each other, and their "dogmatic" separation is impossible. A rigid classification of sciences in the Aristotelian way is out of the question. This does not, however, mean that particular areas, different in their "logical rank," cannot be delineated—even only for the sake of avoiding the application of unsuitable principles in their respective fields.

> "The theoretical, and in particular the philosophical, thought cannot ever forsaken such an act of delineation: it needs to, however, be aware that the boundaries which it establishes on purpose cannot be frozen into fixed barriers—these need to remain movable boundaries, so that they can encompass within themselves the fullness and the motion of phenomena."[29]

The specificity of each of these disciplines does not rest on the specificity of the content that is included within a given area, but on the particular character of the forms which form any content. That is why

> "despite the differences in the contents [...] we might assert the ideal r e l a - t i o n between the individual provinces—between the basic functions of language and cognition, of art and religion—without losing the incomparable p a r t i c u l a r i t y of any one of them."[30]

As a result, every expression of the spirit takes its rightful place according to a suitable logical hierarchy, or the specific function which it performs in this sys-

_____

[28] This theme in Cassirer's philosophy is undertaken by Bolesław Andrzejewski. See: e.g. his paper *Transcendental Philosophy and Communication* in the present D&U issue.

[29] Cassirer, E. 2009. "Mythischer, ästhetischer und theoretischer Raum." In: Cassirer, E. 2009. *Gesammelte Werke. Hamburger Ausgabe.* Vol. 17. Hamburg, 427.

[30] Cassirer, E. 1953 (1923). *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms.* Vol. 1, op. cit., 84.

tem, and not according to the external value judgements. Determining such a place is only possible—what should be emphasised once again—with the acceptance of the primary principle of the critique of knowledge: the principle of supremacy of function over substance. This supremacy opens before us a complete spectrum of problems and demonstrates its most important moments. Therefore, Cassirer's idea of the critique of knowledge comprises the supremacy of s y n t h e s i s over a n a l y s i s, of i n t e r n a l s y s t e m a t i s a t i o n over the e x t e r n a l d e t e r m i n a t i o n, of m e a n i n g over "e x i s t e n c e," of o b j e c t over a t h i n g, and the supremacy of a limitless "b e c o m i n g" over the once-and-for-all fixed "b e i n g."

For the critique of knowledge, one dogmatic outline, capable of encompassing the vast and multi-dimensional heterogeneity of knowledge forms of the world, does not exist. However, this does not mean that the world cannot be studied; the aforementioned relativity—in relation to history, culture, religion, language, worldview, the degree and type of education, or life's experience, *etc.*—constitutes the necessary condition of the possibility of knowledge. The interrelationships of these forms and their mutual set-ups constitute the unified structure of reality. What we want to get to know is

> "the totality of the forms in which human life takes place. These forms are infinitely differentiated and yet they are not deprived of unified structure. For it is ultimately the 'same' human being that meets us again and again in a thousand manifestations and in thousand masks in the development of culture."[31]

The critique of knowledge, consequently, becomes an "a n t h r o p o l o g y o f c u l t u r e"—the study of *animal symbolicum.*[32]

ABOUT THE AUTHOR — Ph.D., assistant professor, Chair of Social and Philosophical Sciences, Gdansk University of Technology; Department of History of Modern and Contemporary Philosophy, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences. Current research interests: history and theory of transcendental philosophy.

---

[31] Cassirer, E. 2000. *The Logic of the Cultural Sciences*, op. cit., 76.
[32] Cassierer E. 2009. "An Essay on Man. An Introduction to a Philosophy of Human Culture." In: Cassirer, E. 2009. *Gesammelte Werke. Hamburger Ausgabe.* Vol. 23. Hamburg.

Jarosław Rolewski

HUSSERL'S PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE[1]

ABSTRACT

The paper presents Husserl's conception of the relation between science and the living world (*Lebenswelt*), i.e. the world of everyday experience and communication. In Husserl view, science, or, more precisely, its basic aprioric structure is founded on the primal, essential core of the living world (*a priori*) from which it obtains its sense. Science (scientific *a priori*) modifies, idealizes, and mathematizes the primal aprioric *Lebenswelt*. Due to those operations scientific theories can represent empirical reality.

Keywords: Husserl; phenomenology; science; *Lebenswelt*.

As an introduction, I would like to explain the title of my article. In what sense is the term "philosophy of science" used here? Is it in the sense employed by the major modern philosophical discipline known precisely as the philosophy of science—in the style of Popper, Lakatos, Russell or Kuhn? Certainly it is not in this logical and methodological sense. Husserl's phenomenology surely is not and does not want to be a scientific meta-theory, striving to discover by scientific methods the regularities and principles governing the development of scientific theories. Nonetheless, the term "philosophy of science"—although not actually used by Husserl himself—probably fits his thought to the highest degree in all of the 20th-century philosophy.

What is it that particularly drew the attention of the philosophy of science experts? Above all, Husserl's idea of "Life-world" (*die Lebenswelt*), as it functions in relation to science, the concept of idealization (through mathematization) of reality which is the object of scientific theory, the idea of deep structure, a certain "core" of the life-word in the form of an "*a priori Lebenswelt*," and the

---

[1] This text is a modified version of the paper published in Polish in: Rolewski, J. 2008. *Kant, Hegel, Husserl. Problemy transcendentalizmu*. Nowa Wieś.

scientific *a priori* correlated with it. Husserl's other ideas regarding science are seen as either outdated or unoriginal.

Therefore, in this article I focus on these three particular threads of Husserl's concept of science, mentioning others only when this is necessary to maintain the coherence and clarity of the exposition.

To begin, while specifying the title issue of my article, I wish to limit my deliberations to the last period of the development of Husserl's phenomenology, dominated by his work *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, which was published in 1936 in Belgrade, in the journal *Philosophia* (being of Jewish descent, Husserl was subject to the so-called Nuremberg Laws in Nazi Germany, which prohibited Jews from publishing in the Reich).

The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology is also the so-called (in phenomenological jargon) "Large Crisis", that is, the VI volume of *Husserliana* published by Husserl's assistant Walter Biemel—a series of Husserl's texts published successively by the Husserl Archives of the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium, where the manuscripts of author of the *Ideas* safely survived World War II. This "Large Crisis" was published in 1954, and—apart from the "Small Crisis"—contains all sorts of supplements and drafts (their subject matter also related to problems in the philosophy of science), on which Husserl had been working continuously since the 1920s, including the famous text *The Origin of Geometry*.

Famous mostly thanks to Jacques Derrida, who published *The Origin of Geometry* in French as a separate, self-contained work (unlike Biemel, who treated *The Origin of Geometry* on par with other supplements to the *Crisis* proper), which Derrida prefaced with a comprehensive philosophical commentary, proving extremely crucial to the reception of Husserl's phenomenology.

My deliberations will therefore be based mainly on these two source texts as well as, of course, a number of smaller works published in the further *Husserliana* volumes, which shed a new light on the problem of science in Husserl's thought. After outlining the source basis of my research I would like to move on to the subject proper in the further parts of the article.

Science, scientific theory, always occupied an important place in Husserl's philosophical reflection. This is true both of the "pre-phenomenological" period, when the author of the *Formal and Transcendental Logic* was still fascinated with psychologism and published the *Philosophy of Arithmetic* (as a matter of fact, a work in the field of the philosophy of mathematics), as well as of the time when he had already become an ardent anti-psychologist in the *Logical Investigations*, which to a large extent can be regarded as a work devoted to the philosophy of logic, mathematics and psychology.

By contrast, having already formulated the program of a new philosophical school, i.e. phenomenology, "*als strenge Wissenschaft,*" science and scientific theory become the most important reference point in relation to which the field

of research of this new philosophical reflection, new philosophical science, is defined. It is Husserl's intention to make the latter the foundation not only of the remaining philosophical disciplines, but also of all sciences, as the new, fundamental "science of essence."

The last phase of Husserl's philosophy, which already exceeds the "hard paradigm" of phenomenology[2] in its earlier stages of development, e.g. the stage of the *Ideas I*, or the *Cartesian Meditations*, even more strongly emphasizes the relationship between philosophy and science, and the dependence of scientific theories on philosophical solutions. However, in contrast to the earlier works, the theoretical solutions pertaining to science presented in the *Crisis* do not necessarily implicate the entire sphere of "egological" deliberations, i.e. leading to the sphere of the transcendental ego ("pure consciousness," "transcendental consciousness") as the final arrival point of any mature philosophical reflection and the source of all sense (also scientific) and all being (including the scientific).

Husserl's ideas regarding science, scientific theories, the history of science and its relation to philosophy easily manage to do without bringing into being a new theoretical attitude, i.e. the phenomenological attitude, postulated by Husserl himself as the opposite of the "naive" natural attitude. "Naive," since it assumes the objective (i.e. independent of the cognizing subject) existence of a world. By contrast, Husserl considers the right, i.e. the philosophical attitude to be the phenomenological attitude, namely an attitude whose aim is not so much to accept the objective existence of reality, as to formulate into a problem and investigate the belief in its objectivity as well as objectivity as such.

It seems to me, and I am not alone in holding this belief, that this typically Husserlian phenomenological attitude in the investigation of science can be rejected—it contributes no directly relevant threads in the reflection on science, while implying very far-reaching metaphysical postulates. Therefore, all the deliberations undertaken in this article consciously and intentionally remain within the natural, "pre-phenomenological" and—as the author of the *Crisis* would put it—naive investigative attitude, which does not turn the objective existence of reality (i.e. for Husserl, the reality of the life-world) into a problem.

In order to embark on a philosophical investigation of the subject of European science, one has first to separate it from the wider context in which science is immersed as its integral part, i.e. from the entirety of the life-world (*Lebenswelt*).

To achieve this, Husserl applies a philosophical method which is one of the pillars of his phenomenology: the *epoché* method with respect to European science. This method, briefly, consists in a certain "suspension" of judgment re-

---

[2] I wrote about the overcoming of this hard paradigm of phenomenology in: Rolewski, J. 1999. *Rozum, nauka, świat przeżywany. Studium filozofii "późnego" Husserla* [Reason, Science, Life-world. Studies on "Late" Husserl's Philosophy]. Toruń: Wyd. UMK.

garding the object to which the *epoché* is applied. It is a type of "bracketing off" the domain, with the assumption that one knows in advance what is and what is not a part of it. However, Husserl's *epoché* differs from the methodical doubt of Descartes (although of course in the historical and philosophical context Descartes is the "inventor" of a similar method), above all because it neither questions nor prejudges the ontic, logical or veritative status of the suspended judgments. Subjecting them to an *epoché* only means that in the following methodical steps one should refrain from referring to or using the suspended judgments and the theses contained therein.

> "Because of the peculiar nature of the task which has arisen for us, the method of access to the new science's field of work (...) is articulated into a multiplicity of steps, each of which has, in a new way, the character of an *epoché*, a withholding of natural, naive validities and in general of validities already in effect. (...) Clearly required before everything else is the *epoché* in respect to all objective sciences. This means not merely an abstraction from them, such as an imaginary transformation, in thought, of present human existence, such that no science appeared in the picture. What is meant is rather an *epoché* of all participation in the cognitions of the objective sciences, an *epoché* of any critical position-taking which is interested in their truth or falsity, even any position on their guiding idea of an objective knowledge of the world. In short, we carry out an *epoché* in regard to all objective theoretical interests, all aims and activities belonging to us as objective scientists or even simply as people desirous of knowledge. Within this *epoché*, however, neither the sciences nor the scientists have disappeared for us who practice the *epoché*. They continue to be what they were before, in any case: facts in the unified context of the pre-given life-world; except that, because of the *epoché*, we do not function as sharing these interests, as co-workers, etc." (Husserl, 1970, 135)

The aim of an *epoché* with respect to science is not only to separate it from the life-world, within which science—as any field of human activity, any practice, also theoretical—functions, but also a certain "purification" of the *Lebenswelt* (life-world) from an element unnatural in a sense, not belonging to it, "artificial"—that is, from science. But an *epoché* carried out properly is supposed to give us something much more in effect: it is to reveal the foundations and *a priori* premises on which science is founded; to reveal its internal, deep *a priori* and general structure, which makes science objective and determines that science actually gets to know reality, and is not merely a collection of arbitrary formal or symbolic constructs.

The "life-world" (*die Lebenswelt*) is of interest for us here, e.g., as a certain "environment" for science, in general. However, in Husserl's phenomenology from the *Crisis* period this notion plays a much more important and varied function. The category of *Lebenswelt* as such appears, naturally, much earlier than in

Husserl's works, more precisely, in the tradition of the German "philosophy of life," on which Husserl had a rather poor opinion before writing the *Crisis*, viewing it as typical "humanist" prattle which has little to do with real science. This changed when the author of the *Ideas* began to ponder the historicity of science and historicity in general. A dimension Husserl had neither noticed, known, grasped or appreciated earlier became extremely important to him, especially in the context of his theory of science, while the philosophy devoting the bulk of its attention to historicity (the philosophy of life) inspired the author of the *Cartesian Meditations* to take up and develop the notion of the life-world—one of the central categories of the philosophy of life.

What exactly is the *Lebenswelt*—the "life-world"? To put it as briefly as possible, it is the world given naturally, and in the natural—as Husserl calls it—attitude whose most important characteristic is the belief that the world exists objectively, independently of any particular subject. Furthermore, it is the world of all things, material objects, human beings, animals, plants; the world of everyday human life and practice, intersubjective, culturally, historically, linguistically, socially variable to the point that sometimes Husserl talks not about one *Lebenswelt*, but a multiplicity of life-worlds, relative to a given community, culture, tradition, language etc.

> "If our interest is exclusively in the 'life-world,' we must ask: Has the life-world, through the *epoché* in respect to objective science, already been laid open as a universal scientific subject matter? Do we already have thereby, the subject matter for statements that are generally valid scientifically (...) How do we have the life-world as a universal field, fixed in advance, of such establishable facts? It is the spatiotemporal world of things as we experience them in our pre- and extra-scientific life and as we know them to be experienceable beyond what is [actually] experienced. We have a world-horizon as a horizon of possible thing-experience [*Dingerfahrung*]. Things: that is, stones, animals, plants, even human beings and human products; but everything here is subjective and relative (...) But if we set up the goal of a truth about the objects which is unconditionally valid for all subjects, beginning with that on which normal Europeans, normal Hindus, Chinese, etc., agree in spite of all relativity—beginning, that is, with what makes objects of the life-world, common to all, identifiable for them and for us, such as spatial shape, motion, sense-quality, and the like—then we are on the way to objective science." (Husserl, 1970, 137–138)

Of course, the notion of the life-world as such underwent significant modifications in phenomenology compared to the philosophical tradition in which it originated. From the very beginning, Husserl's research was aimed (unlike the philosophy of life paradigm) at finding—under the layer of variable, fluctuating, intersubjective and cultural facts of the life-world—a deep layer: non-relative, permanent, invariable and universal. Therefore, his understanding of the *Leben-*

swelt differs significantly from the way this category was understood and used in the philosophy of life.

As Husserl claims, after carrying out a successful *epoché* with respect to science, a separation of science from the life-world takes place. How is science understood here? Husserl's understanding of the term generally overlaps with the semantic field of the English-language concept of science: it mainly denotes the exact, mathematical and natural sciences, which have always been and will always be exact sciences.

> "Physics, whether represented by a Newton or a Planck or an Einstein, or whomever else in the future, was always and remains exact science. It remains such even if, as some think, an absolutely final form of total theory-construction is never to be expected or striven for." (Husserl, 1970, 4)

The category of science does not generally pertain to what is commonly called the humanities; nor does it really include the historical sciences, or for example sociology. And it is this understanding of science that Husserl has in mind: science, understood in this sense, is precisely what the *epoché* reveals. And here already certain doubts arise. If an *epoché* is to be applied to all judgments included in science (in the abovementioned sense), we immediately run into what the philosophy of science terms the demarcation problem. In simple terms, this problem is about the impossibility (not just technical, but also eidetic) of the precise and exact separation of science, i.e. the propositions of scientific theories, from the "surroundings" of science, i.e. the judgments which are in various ways linked with strictly scientific judgments (theoretical judgments). Such a strict, clear boundary simply does not exist, and this is the view currently seen as obvious and shared by almost all philosophers of science.

However, the consequences of such an attitude are devastating to Husserl's theory—if scientific judgments cannot be separated from non-scientific ones, and as a result scientific propositions cannot be suspended, "bracketed off," then it is impossible to perform an *epoché* with respect to European science. The author of the *Formale und transzendentale Logik* did not realize himself these difficulties. He considered science fully separable from its extra-scientific environment.

Having separated science from the life-world, one can start investigating it from the philosophical or phenomenological perspective. Modern European science—as seen by Husserl—is completely mathematical, formalized, and constitutes a set of linguistic and symbolic structures, which, according to scientists themselves, provide a perfect description of objectively existing, transcendent reality. This conviction, this self-knowledge of science, is fiercely criticized by the author of the *Investigations*. As a result, he arrives at the conclusion that all scientific theories and ideas *de facto* do not so much describe reality as create and construct it using their own methods.

Husserl describes this process using examples of physics (mainly Galilean and Newtonian), but he believes his findings to be universal, i.e. applicable to all sciences.

Physicists believe that their concepts, theories and ideas apply directly to nature (objective and transcendent) and depict it in increasing detail. They could not be more wrong, Husserl claims. In the real world (which for him is tantamount to the life-world) we find no equivalent of what is posited by physical theories. So what do physicists really do?

Physicists construct their own world of physical, ideal, mathematized objects, and relate to real reality through them. They already operate only by means of certain mathematical, symbolic constructs, and their work becomes a type of "game," in which they "dress up" real processes and natural entities in the "garb of ideas."

> "In geometrical and natural-scientific mathematization, in the open infinity of possible experiences, we measure the life-world—the world constantly given to us as actual in our concrete world-life—for a well-fitting garb of ideas, that of the so-called objectively scientific truths. That is, through a method which (as we hope) can be really carried out in every particular and constantly verified, we first construct numerical indices for the actual and possible sensible plena of the concretely intuited shapes of the life-world, and in this way we obtain possibilities of predicting concrete occurrences in the intuitively given life-world, occurrences which are not yet or no longer actually given. And this kind of prediction infinitely surpasses the accomplishment of everyday prediction. Mathematics and mathematical science, as a garb of ideas, or the garb of symbols of the symbolic mathematical theories, encompasses everything which, for scientists and the educated generally, represents the life-world, dresses it up as "objectively actual and true" nature. It is through the garb of ideas that we take for true being what is actually a method." (Husserl, 1970, 51–52)

Then, in fact, physicists do not know what they are doing, they have false self-knowledge of their own theoretical work. They claim and believe that they through their theories, concepts and structures get to know and describe the objective, independent (of themselves) and transcendent (with respect to any subject) world of nature "in itself." Husserl wrote about this self-interpretation of physicists in the *Crisis*:

> "In connection with this we arrive at a further consequence of the new formation of meaning, a self-interpretation of the physicists which grows out of this new formation of meaning as 'obvious' and which was dominant until recently: Nature is, in its 'true being-in-itself,' mathematical. The pure mathematics of space-time procures knowledge, with apodictic self-evidence, of a set of laws of this 'in-itself' which are unconditionally, uni-

versally valid. This knowledge is immediate in the case of the axiomatic elementary laws of the *a priori* constructions and comes to be through infinite mediations in the case of the other laws. In respect to the space-time form of nature we possess the 'innate' faculty (as it is later called) of knowing with definiteness true being-in-itself as mathematically ideal being (before all actual experience). Thus implicitly the space-time form is itself innate in us." (Husserl, 1970, 54)

However, physicists do something completely different from what they say they do: by means of sophisticated mathematical techniques they construct an ideal world of physicalistic objects, i.e. they model and transform the only real reality—the life-world—into something ideal and mathematical. Real objects in the *Lebenswelt*, real properties and relations obtaining in the life-world are translated into the language of spatiotemporal objects, properties and relationships, completely, utterly and without exception mathematizable, and capable of being captured within physical theoretical constructs by applying mathematics.

For Husserl Galileo is the founder of modern natural science and science in general, the one who founded all of modern European science by proposing the "mathematization" of nature. What exactly does mathematization mean? To put it very briefly, it means that all natural reality becomes a "universe of mathematical objects." This for Galileo himself means that all reality (without exception) can be defined and described by using terms and structures of Euclidean geometry. Therefore, modern science is founded on a certain assumption, a certain axiom concerning the mathematizability of all aspects of objective reality.

Mathematical theory (Euclidean geometry in the case considered by Galileo) turns out to be the beginning of modern science, and it is only on its foundations, within its theoretical reality, that one constructs (it should be stressed that one deals with construction here) a reality correspondent to it.

> "Mathematics as a realm of genuine objective knowledge (and technology under its direction)—that was, for Galileo and even before him, the focal point of 'modern' man's guiding interest in a philosophical knowledge of the world and a rational praxis. There must be measuring methods for everything encompassed by geometry, the mathematics of shapes with its *a priori* ideality. And the whole concrete world must turn out to be a mathematizable and objective world if we pursue those individual experiences and actually measure everything about them which, according to the presuppositions, comes under applied geometry—that is, if we work out the appropriate method of measuring. If we do that, the sphere of the specifically qualitative occurrences must also be mathematized indirectly." (Husserl, 1970, 38)

As far as the quantitative aspect of the world is concerned, i.e. shapes, measurable spatiotemporal magnitudes etc., their mathematization poses no signifi-

cant problems and has been practiced since antiquity. One of the practical aspects of this type of mathematization in relation to spatiotemporal magnitudes is the ancient art of measurement, known and used already at a time when mathematics had not yet been born. That is the reason why Galileo's entire cognitive effort focuses not on this—as Husserl calls it—direct mathematization of the world, but on a sphere which at first glance is completely unmathematizable, namely the sphere of qualities, all other (non-spatiotemporal) properties and aspects of reality. Galileo's genius lies precisely in the fact that thanks to his innovative method he can also mathematize these infinitely diverse, infinitely rich aspects of the culturally, linguistically, historically, socially etc. variable life-world; that he can translate them into a uniform, constant, culturally, historically, linguistically and socially etc. unchanging spatiotemporal form, which he can, in turn, fully mathematize, i.e. objectify and idealize.

> "The question now is what an indirect mathematization would mean. Let us first consider the more profound reason why a direct mathematization (or an analogue of approximative construction), in respect to the specifically sensible qualities of bodies, is impossible in principle. These qualities, too, appear in gradations, and in a certain way measurement applies to them as to all gradations—we 'assess' the 'magnitude' of coldness and warmth, of roughness and smoothness, of brightness and darkness, etc. But there is no exact measurement here, no growth of exactness or of the methods of measurement. Today, when we speak of measuring, of units of measure, methods of measure, or simply of magnitudes, we mean as a rule those that are already related to idealities and are 'exact' (...) What constitutes 'exactness'? Obviously, nothing other than what we exposed above: empirical measuring with increasing precision, but under the guidance of a world of idealities, or rather a world of certain particular ideal structures that can be correlated with given scales of measurement—such a world having been objectified in advance through idealization and construction. And now we can make the contrast clear in a word. We have not two but only one universal form of the world: not two but only one geometry, i.e., one of shapes, without having a second for plena. (...) To be sure, it is also part of the world-structure that all bodies have their specific sense-qualities. But the qualitative configurations based purely on these are not analogues of spatiotemporal shapes, are not incorporated into a world-form peculiar to them. The limit-shapes of these qualities are not idealizable in an analogous sense; the measurement ('assessing') of them cannot be related to corresponding idealities in a constructible world already objectivized into idealities. Accordingly, the concept of 'approximation' has no meaning here analogous to that within the mathematizable sphere of shapes—the meaning of an objectifying achievement. Now with regard to the 'indirect' mathematization of that aspect of the world which in itself has no mathematizable world-form: such mathematization is thinkable only in the sense that the specifically sensible qualities ('plena') that can be

experienced in the intuited bodies are closely related in a quite peculiar and regulated way with the shapes that belong essentially to them." (Husserl, 1970, 34–35)

Of course, there are other ways of idealizing (or objectifying) the constantly changing and diverse life-world, but its objectification through mathematization was the easiest and most effective solution.

Why? The entire tradition of European philosophy and ancient science paved the way for this operation, by developing the concept of ready, finished and closed mathematical theory, which for Galileo is Euclidean geometry. This geometry is already "finished" and ready, enclosed within a coherent and closed deductive system. Mathematics plays a role of a teacher and provider of a method for all science. Since mathematics has already developed a method for getting to know the entire spatiotemporal sphere, it sufficed to do as little (or as much) as to invent a specific method of including, of capturing by means of geometrical structures all that cannot be directly mathematized. However, certain qualitative aspects of the life-world had already been mathematized in the past (e.g., the Pythagoreans determined the functional dependence of pitch on the length of an instrument's string, and expressed this dependence numerically). Galileo's brilliant intuition (according to Husserl, Galileo is a man of genius) consists mainly in the fact that for him not this or that quality or sensible content is subject to objectification and idealization through mathematization, but all natural reality, the entire life-world and all its possible objects, aspects and properties which can be adequately translated into one (and only one), universal, constant spatiotemporal form bound by a network of causes and effects.

This brilliant project of Galileo founded all modern science, facilitating its cognitive expansion on an unprecedented and still—especially in the XX and XXI centuries—growing scale. This, however, does not change the fact that this fundamental and still valid project of Galileo (the world as a mathematical universe) is a hypothesis, and will never cease to be one:

> "... the Galilean idea is a hypothesis, and a very remarkable one at that; and the actual natural science throughout the centuries of its verification is a correspondingly remarkable sort of verification. It is remarkable because the hypothesis, in spite of the verification, continues to be and is always a hypothesis; its verification (the only kind conceivable for it) is an endless course of verifications. It is the peculiar essence of natural science, it is *a priori* its way of being, to be unendingly hypothetical and unendingly verified." (Husserl, 1970, 41–42)

The question now arises: if physics (and science in general) creates its own, artificial, unauthentic, ideal and mathematical world, can it be claimed that science is true knowledge of reality? According to Husserl, there can be

no doubt about this—science is a reliable, true, since rational, knowledge of natural reality, but its relation to that reality—a true one, after all—appears as something very enigmatic. The author of the *Crisis* calls this "reason-being" relation an "enigma of enigmas" and strives to unravel it. How is it that a scientific theory—ideal, mathematized, formalized and symbolic—still gets to know reality: variable, qualitatively rich, infinitely diverse, dynamic, and fluctuating?

Science itself cannot answer this question: it is not able to investigate and get to know the reason-being, theory-reality relation by means of scientific concepts, methods and constructs. Philosophy has such cognitive competence, and it is philosophy that should answer the above question. But then, unless this relation, fundamental to science itself, is explained in a correct and true manner, science cannot operate at all, the whole large scientific edifice is then without foundations and lacks an extra-scientific (i.e. philosophical) basis.

Nevertheless, before Husserl's time this problem had not been solved (according to Husserl), hence modern science has been subjected to an increasingly severe and broadening crisis, which, however, does not at all pertain to its "nucleus," its rules, concepts, principles, methods and cognitive results, but to the "truth-meaning." It is philosophy, however, that bears full responsibility or even blame for this state of affairs, failing to investigate and truthfully describe the relation of science (theory) to its object. Of course, various attempts to unravel this "enigma of enigmas" appeared throughout the history of philosophy, but they were all either merely unsuccessful or completely obscured the essence of this relation. This can be said of "objectivism" and "naturalism"—epistemological approaches which reassured science in its false self-knowledge, and proclaimed that science directly, truthfully and immediately describes transcendent and objective reality; that by way of induction and arduous selection of facts it finally achieves a good description of reality. This is why philosophy—the perpetrator of the crisis of science—has the obligation to overcome this crisis and once and for all determine, unravel the true nature of the relation "reason-being." It is Husserl's phenomenology that undertakes this task, made all the more important by the fact that overcoming the crisis of science, the crisis of its foundations is crucial to overcome the crisis of all the European civilization, which carries the legacy of rationality, an "entelechy of reason" on whose development the fate not only of Europe (spiritual Europe), but of all the mankind depends—mankind which without the victory of rationality is in peril of falling into barbarity and a state of renewed animality.

In order to overcome this crisis of science, the crisis of its foundations, rationality and purpose, one has to conduct a thorough investigation of science and try to determine its relation to the reality it describes. Apart from the already mentioned *epoché* method with respect to science, Husserl applies yet another method for determining the status of European science: the genetic (or historical) method.

Historical-genetic research is a complete novelty to Husserl in his work—until now he had neither appreciated nor even taken note of the historical dimension of science (and philosophy).

In order to unravel the relation of theory to objective reality Husserl postulates looking back to the very beginnings, the very origins of science. He describes this process by the example of the oldest, and in his opinion most developed, scientific discipline—geometry (his famous text *The Origin of Geometry* from 1936, first published in 1939, is devoted to this subject).

Modern geometry is actually just the tip of the "pyramid of geometric meaning," and is the last stratum, the last layer of meaning laid on an earlier stratum and including that earlier stratum within itself. This stratum, in turn, is founded on an even earlier one and so on, until the beginnings of geometry, its first "theoretical yield."

The "archaeology of meaning"—a new philosophical field postulated by Husserl—is supposed to investigate these layers of meaning, breaking through all the "deposits", until it reaches the first, original sense, essential to all geometry. However, this history of meaning has nothing in common with historical investigation in the ordinary sense. "The inner history of meaning" (as Husserl also calls it) does not investigate historical facts, factual circumstances, people, social and ethnic context etc., but logical connections, the order in which meanings follow from one another, their mutual logical influence.

> "In principle, then, a history of philosophy, a history of the particular sciences in the style of the usual factual history, can actually render nothing of their subject matter comprehensible. For a genuine history of philosophy, a genuine history of the particular sciences is nothing other than the tracing of the historical meaning-structures given in the present, or their self-evidences, along the documented chain of historical back-references into the hidden dimension of the primal self-evidences which underlie them. Even the very problem here can be made understandable only through recourse to the historical *a priori* as the universal source of all conceivable problems of understanding. The problem of genuine historical explanation comes together, in the case of the sciences, with 'epistemological' grounding or clarification." (Husserl, 1970, 372–373)

In fact, this historicity of meaning signifies a certain hierarchy, a deductive logical structure, in which the beginning—the first layer of meaning—in a sense determines all the consequences, the whole large edifice of geometry. It can roughly be compared to Popper's "context of justification."

Whereas, according to Husserl, all factual circumstances have no effect on the shape and essence of geometry, hence it is not important whether geometry was invented by Thales of Miletus (as tradition would have it) or some other philosopher: this aspect is completely accidental, of no importance of the theory of geometry as such.

When the task of reaching the first yield of the geometric meaning is finally accomplished, another problem emerges—the problem of the genesis of this first meaning, founding the whole subsequent shape of geometry. Husserl, using methods characteristic of phenomenology (i.e. *epoché*, life-worlds variation etc.) discovers that geometry (just like any other science) is founded on a certain primary basis, i.e. on a primary "objective *a priori*": general, universal, eidetic, necessary, and in a certain sense absolute. "The objective *a priori*" (or scientific *a priori*) is established when a given science is founded, and includes, in idealized, formalized and symbolic form: time, space (or space-time), various categorical structures and a universal, general causality. (Unfortunately Husserl never specifically defined the exact nature of this objective *a priori*, and any information on the subject is scant and very general.) Further reflection leads to a conclusion that the scientific *a priori* was not arbitrarily made up, or constructed by the first geometrician (or any other founder of science), but derived from the world surrounding every cognitive subject: the natural, subjective-relative world, including all things, human beings, animals etc. belonging to the life-world.

A serious problem arises here: if the scientific (objective) *a priori* had been taken directly from the life-world, it would not have been objective (in the *Lebenswelt*, everything is subjective-relative), universal (in the life-world everything is limited to the particular, actual form of the given *Lebenswelt*); supra-historical—in the life-world everything is subjected to the conditions of actual historicity; independent of the cultural, social, and linguistic context—in the life-world everything is immersed in culture, language, tradition, customs etc. In short, it would not have been *a priori* and it could not have been a foundation for all objective, infinitely extending science. That is why Husserl, in the course of further determination, discovers that the objective *a priori* is, in fact, a formalized, idealized and objectified version of the primary "*a priori* of the life-world."

This "*Lebenswelt a priori*" has, in turn, exactly the same, but not identical content as the scientific *a priori*, i.e. space-time, categorical structures, causality. The difference between these two *a priori* types is that the eidetic *Lebenswelt a priori* is transformed into an objective *a priori* when a new science is founded, i.e. idealized (which leads to objectification), mathematized, formalized and symbolized. The *a priori* of the life-world is also the most important residuum of rationality or even ratio in its pure state. This is precisely the general typical, eidetic, constant, invariable and, to simplify, absolute factor which enables both agreement between different generations of scholars, and passage from one scientific discipline to another, e.g. from mathematics to natural science.

This intermediation becomes possible precisely through a reference to and in a relation to this eidetic, constant, general *a priori* structure, which constitutes the basis of the meaning of mathematics as well as physics (or any other branch

of natural science). It can be transformed in various theoretical ways, depending on the type of scientific thought, but always—despite these modifications—it remains the same, unchanging *a priori*. The *Lebenswelt a priori* can be discovered, for instance, by means of the so-called "*Lebenswelt* variation." In short, this method consists in juxtaposing and comparing life-worlds which differ in terms of time, space, culture, language, traditions etc., but also possible worlds, and extracting from these the entire spectrum of what is common to all those *Lebenswelt*s: a certain "nucleus" or "hard core"—the very *a priori* of the life-world, the same for all types and kinds of worlds, which, apart from this, differ in nearly any other respect: historical period, geographical location, tradition, language, spirituality.

Husserl's theory of the life-world *a priori*, in his view, is also supposed to provide an answer to the Kantian-style question: "by what law"? (*quid juris*?) is scientific knowledge possible: the objective, universal and rational theory of the only reality given to us, i.e. the reality of the life-world; the theory of the fluctuating, dynamic, relative reality, placed within a cultural, social, historical and linguistic context. For Husserl, this question can be reduced to the question concerning the relation between scientific theory and the world, while the answer boils down to the fact that this relation is essentially the one between the objective scientific *a priori* and the primary *a priori* of the life-world, the source and basic form of rationality concealed in the *doxa* of the *Lebenswelt*.

The scientific *a priori* (the necessary basis for any discipline) is created through the idealization, formalization and mathematization of the *a priori* of the life-world. Therefore all subsequent scientific constructs built on this *a priori* foundation refer to the reality of the life-world indirectly and through that *a priori*. As long as it does not stray from its *a priori* premises (the objective *a priori*), theory guarantees a real, i.e. true reference to the reality of the life-world. The rationality of its operations is guaranteed (Husserl often repeats that the statement that science is rational is a tautology) because its own inner rationality has a source and is a transformation of the primary *ratio* hidden in the life-world. Finally, it is guaranteed objectivity—the structures, concepts and scientific constructs describe an objectified, since mathematized, version of the life-world's "hard core." It is thanks to this that science has a distinctive "relation" to practice and technique, and can be successfully re-applied in the relative, historical and dynamic life-world. Founding science on the *Lebenswelt a priori* enables it to be fully justified and defended against the charges of constructivity, arbitrariness or manipulation of reality.

According to Husserl's conception, science is no arbitrary figment of scholarly imagination (as, e.g. some postmodernists claim). It is also not subjected (as far as the rational eidetic core is concerned) to any influences on the part of culture, historicity, society, fashion, tradition etc.—in spite of what skeptical critics of science claim. As Husserl believes, this makes it possible to overcome skepticism—the main and the most dangerous threat to the spiritual develop-

ment of Europe; skepticism as to the possibilities, values and veracity of science. If, as Husserl claims, science is really rooted in the life-world, if it really reconstructs (although in an idealized and mathematized, i.e. deformed form) and represents its most hidden, deep, eidetic rational structure, then it does not have to fear for its objectivity, rationality, cognitive value and truth.

In this way Husserl—even though he is widely believed to be a destroyer of science—becomes one of the most prominent and ardent defenders of science, its validity, value and importance for the whole formation of European civilization, and through it—for the entirety of humankind. His philosophy of science, next to the task of investigating and explaining science—this extraordinary cultural formation—also undertakes to give it an ultimate grounding, justification and protection against the threat of skepticism and the weariness of European spirituality. As Husserl wrote in the ending of the *Philosophy and the Crisis of European Man*:

> "The 'crisis of European existence,' which manifests itself in countless symptoms of a corrupted life, is no obscure fate, no impenetrable destiny. Instead, it becomes manifestly understandable against the background of the philosophically discoverable 'teleology of European history.' (...) To get the concept of what is contra-essential in the present 'crisis,' the concept 'Europe' would have to be developed as the historical teleology of infinite goals of reason; it would have to be shown how the European 'world' was born from ideas of reason, i.e., from the spirit of philosophy. The 'crisis' could then become clear as the 'seeming collapse of rationalism.' Still, as we said, the reason for the downfall of a rational culture does not lie in the essence of rationalism itself, but only in its exteriorization, its absorption in 'naturalism' and 'objectivism.' The crisis of European existence can end in only one of two ways: in the ruin of a Europe alienated from its rational sense of life, fallen into a barbarian hatred of spirit; or in the rebirth of Europe from the spirit of philosophy, through a heroism of reason that will definitively overcome naturalism. Europe's greatest danger is weariness. Let us as 'good Europeans' do battle with this danger of dangers with the sort of courage that does not shirk even the endless battle. If we do, then from the annihilating conflagration of disbelief, from the fiery torrent of despair regarding the West's mission to humanity, from the ashes of the great weariness, the phoenix of a new inner life of the spirit will arise as the underpinning of a great and distant human future, for the spirit alone is immortal." (Husserl, 1965, 191–192)

REFERENCES

Husserl, Edmund. 1970. *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Philosophy.* Trans. Carr, D. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

_____. 1970. "The Origin of Geometry." In: *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Philosophy.* Trans. Carr, D. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

_____. 1965. *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy: Philosophy as Rigorous Science, and Philosophy and the Crisis of European Man.* Trans. Lauer, Q. Harper: Torchbooks.

_____. 1960. *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology,* trans. D. Cairns. The Hague: Nijhoff.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR — professor, Institute of Philosophy, Nicolaus Copernicus University (Toruń). Fields of interests: German philosophy (especially Kant), phenomenology. Main works: 1991. *Kant a metafizyka* [Kant and Metaphysics]; 1999. *Rozum, nauka, świat przeżywany. Studium filozofii "późnego" Husserla* [Reason, Science, Lifeworld. Study on "Late" Husserl's Philosophy]; 2008. *Kant, Hegel, Husserl. Problemy transcendentalizmu* [Kant, Hegel, Husserl. Problems of Transcendentalism].

Marek Maciejczak

IDEAS AND PRINCIPLES IN IMMANUEL KANT'S
CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON

ABSTRACT

In his response to the question about the conditions of the possibility of dependable cognition Kant first points to the faculties of the cognitive powers and subsequently lists the criteria and normative foundations of knowledge—a system of forms, concepts and principles. Kant primarily seeks the possibilities of experience-independent cognition, the logical criteria governing the possibility of cognition as such. The paper outlines the creation of the systemic union of the primal concepts and principles of pure reason, which is necessary for the creation of knowledge. In other words, it follows the constitution phases of the cognition system: apperception, experience, self-consciousness and the principles of reason. The principles of reason ultimately give systemic unity to human cognitive powers—and, in effect, the human world of experience and cognition. It is this systemic unity which makes cognition science—or, in other words, pure reason—as it constitutes a specific system and is able to create science understood as the systemic unity of specific fields.

Keywords: Kant; regulative principles; system; knowledge; science.

0. INTRODUCTION

According to Kant, mathematics, geometry and nature study do not record and reproduce the Great Book of Nature, but co-create it. The world we experience assumes the existence of circumstances which explain its actual condition. This belief motivated Kant to proceed regressively, seeking the cause behind a given effect or, in his own words, the conditions of possible experience which also condition the possibilities possessed by the objects of experience. The mind is not led on the string of natural coincidence but, by imposing its own laws on experience, enables knowledge understood as the awareness of the necessary relations between phenomena; rather than extracting the rules which explain

complex natural phenomena from experience, it creates models which allow predictions of observable empirical regularities. The laws of nature do not originate from circumstantially accumulated apperceptions but deliberate experience. Laws are not taken from nature but assigned to it; they are embedded in the laws which govern cognizance. The conviction that the object cannot be given outside the cognitive relation, that it is the cognizing subject that plays the deciding role, led to the close intertwining of ontology and epistemology—the objects of knowledge and the acts of cognition.[1]

The question about the conditions and possibilities, or criteria and normative foundations, of knowledge concerned the subject's cognitive ability to create dependable knowledge about the world—a system of forms, concepts and rules determining the method by which we cognise objects, "provided this method should be possible *a priori*." [B 25, 80–81][2] In other words, apriority means independence from experience.[3] The critique of reason, the scope of its competencies and its limitations mainly concerns the possibility of experience-independent cognition—the logical criteria of the possibility of cognition in general. Transcendental cognition refers to the concepts/representations of objects which *a priori* precede and simultaneously enable experience.[4] The correlate of the systematic unity of the subject's cognitive faculties—sensuality, imagination and intellect—is the consistent world of experience, and ordered vision of the world. Cognition begins with experience but does not come completely from experience. Each of the cognitive faculties contains an experience-

---

[1] I base on my: 2011. "Jedność systemowa w Krytyce czystego rozumu Immanuela Kanta" [Systematic Unity in Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*]. In: *Idea transcendentalizmu. Od Kanta do Wittgensteina* [Idea of Transcendentalism. From Kant to Wittgenstein]. Ed. Parszutowicz, P. and M. Soin. Warsaw: IFiS PAN Publishers, 31–49. Here I concentrate on threads relating to science and the principles of the mind.

[2] Kant, I. 1929. *Critique of Pure Reason*. (English title: *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*). Trans. Smith, Kemp N. London.

[3] Poręba, M. 2011. "Dwa pojęcia aprioryczności" [Two Concepts of Apriority]. In: *Idea transcendentalizmu. Od Kanta do Wittgensteina* [Idea of Transcendentalism. From Kant to Wittgenstein]. Ed. Parszutowicz, P. and M. Soin. Warszawa: IFiS PAN Publishers, 130–143. Poręba notes that the concept of independence from reason and reason itself, as well as the question about what this independence is to be vested in, can be apperceived in different ways. Kant understands apriority to be unchanging and independent from experience, which is a formalistic and at once absolutistic approach with two flaws: Why should the formal in cognition be independent of the changing, empirical cognitive situation? It seems that a far-going change in content can change a pre-assumed conceptual order (quantum physics revised Newton's causality concept, which for Kant was *a priori*). It also seems that the contentual and formal aspects of knowledge cannot be convincingly separated. Which, Poręba says, Kant, in fact, pre-assumes when he states that the formal conditions of experience can be expressed and described as *a priori* synthetic judgments (Ibid. 137). For Kant *a priori* and necessary truths overlap. Kripke, on the other hand, claims the apriority and necessity concepts do not. Kripke, Saul. 1972 (1980). "Naming and Necessity." In: *Semantics of Natural Language.* Ed. Davidson, Donald and George Harman. Dordrecht–Boston: Reidel, 37–41.

[4] Kant, I. 1783. *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*. Trans. Carus, P. 1977. Revised and with an Introduction by James Ellington, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishers.

independent element: sensuality—pure forms of evidence: space and time, imagination—transcendental schemas and intellect though forms: pure concepts (categories). In systematic cooperation the cognitive faculties form cognition, which should be characterised by generality, necessity and objective importance.

How is a systematic relationship, a system of primal notions and principles of pure reason necessary for the generation of knowledge, created? In order to answer this I will outline the construction phases of this unity of cognition/cognitive system. In part one I shall deal with the unity characteristic for apperception; in part two I will undertake to explain how unity of experience (unity of apperception) is created; in part three I will refer to the unity of self-knowledge as a pre-condition for the ability to understand connection; and in part four I will discuss the principles of reason which provide systematic unity to human cognitive faculties and the human world of experience and cognition. In the final phase of the systematic creation of knowledge reason reflects upon itself as an entity consisting of multiple functions and recognises itself as a multiple structure (system) of diverse faculties and principles.[5] In other words—as one organism. Sensuality and its aprioric structure were explored by transcendental aesthetics, intellect and its concepts (categories) by transcendental analytics, and ideas and their meaning for the entirety of cognition by transcendental dialectics.

1. UNITY OF APPERCEPTION

Kant distinguishes two core components of cognition: sensuality and reason, and evidence and concepts.[6] Sensuality entails the ability to see, hear, taste, smell and feel—it is the source of evident data and the effect of the stimulation of the senses by objects. Sensuality provides cognitive material for intellect, intellect in turn shapes the content of experience, gathers (synthesises) it into a whole and orders it with the help of concepts. Due to their different sources both faculties are independent of each other but crucial for all cognition: "Without sensuality we would be given no object, without intellect none would be thought. Thoughts without evident content are empty, without concepts—blind."[7] The (human) mind cannot see anything, its activity is to create concepts; the senses cannot think anything, their activity is to supply sensual data.

Kant singles out three cognitive faculties: sensuality, imagination and intellect. Consequently, the constitution of apperception objects takes place on three levels: of sensual data, schemas and categories. Each level possesses synthesis

---

[5] Cf. Baumgartner, H-M. 1985. *Kants Kritik der reinen Vernunft. Einleitung zur Lektüre*, Freiburg-München.

[6] These two cores of human cognition perhaps "grow from a common, but to us unknown root …" [A 15].

[7] Ibid., [B 75].

procedures appropriate to it, which differ by the material they synthetize but not
by the principles according to which the synthesis takes place. Synthesis gathers
the components of cognition into a whole (content):

> "Synthesis in general is a mere effect of the imagination—something that the
> soul does blindly, usually without our being conscious of it—though it is in-
> dispensable because without it we would not know anything. But it is the
> role of the understanding to bring this synthesis to concepts, and in this way
> to provide our first knowledge properly so called." [A 78]

Operating on each of the levels are three basic syntheses: of apprehension (in
intuition), synthesis of reproduction (in imagination) and synthesis of recogni-
tion (in a concept). Their sources are respectively empirical imagination, tran-
scendental imagination and intellect. Apperceptive synthesis creates an apper-
ceptive image of the object, imaginative synthesis creates a transcendental
schema which enables a concept to be applied, and intellectual synthesis deter-
mines the categorial form of the object, i.e., its type and properties.

The senses alone do not bind apperceptions into a picture of the object,
therefore we need synthesis of apprehension.[8] Kant called it empirical because it
operates on apperceived material:

> "Through synthesis of apprehension (*Synthesis der Apprehension*) I under-
> stand the compilation (*Zusammensetzung*) of the manifold in an empirical in-
> tuition, whereby perception, that is, empirical consciousness of the intuition
> (as appearance) is possible." [B 160]

Synthesis of apprehension takes the following course: the outer sense (sen-
suality) is stimulated by "things in themselves" and filled by sensual diversity.
Stimulation is responded to by *synopsis* (gathering into one), which specifies
the scope of the material to be synthesised. In its reviewing function *synopsis* is
supported by space—the form of the outer sense—and therefore presents the
given diversity in a spatial horizon, and is subsequently subjected to another
condition of the outer sense—time. The effect is space-time filled with sensual
content, or material for the image and representation of the object.

Empirical synthesis of apprehension is usually passive and independent of
our will. However, it becomes active—draws our attention—in the case of con-
stituted representations. Passive synthesis obeys laws, active synthesis is partly
unrestricted. Active synthesis carried out on representations and reminders as-
sumes passive synthesis of sensual material. Kant offers an example of this type
of synthesis. A house may be apperceived from any chosen direction, e.g., from
above, from the right, etc. [A 192] Nonetheless, the possible succession of

---

[8] In describing syntheses I refer to my article: 1993. "Spostrzeżenie i jego przedmiot w *Krytyce
czystego rozumu* I. Kanta" [Apperception and Its Object in I. Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*].
Przegląd Filozoficzny, vol. 2, 89–113.

apperceptions and the direction taken by synthesis of apprehension are already pre-determined by the object. [A 191] Also, each separate apperception must in some degree reflect the unity of the object.[9] Apperception takes place in time, hence it must assume the reproduction of phenomena–synthesis of reproduction. Otherwise phenomena would slip by irretrievably. Alone the possibility of experience assumes the reproduction of phenomena. [A 102] The role of synthesis is the reproduction of past elements in the course of transition to newer ones:

> "If I were always to drop out of thought the proceeding representations (the first part of the line, the antecedent parts of the time period, or the units in the order represented), and did not reproduce them while advancing to those, that follow, a complete representation would never be obtained: none of the above-mentioned thoughts, not even the purest and most elementary representations of space and time, could arise." [A 102]

Kant's reasoning is as follows: *synopsis* reviews sensual material, synthesis of apprehension runs through them and compiles them into a whole (unity)— however, in doing so it cannot lose touch with earlier components. These must be reproduced, and this is where synthesis of reproduction comes in. [A 102] Thanks to synthesis of reproduction we do not lose the earlier fragments of the currently apperceived object during the apperception process. The reproduced and reviewed is governed by the concept: "All knowledge demands a concept, though that concept may, indeed, be quite imperfect or obscure." [A 106] The role of synthesis of recognition in a concept is to identify that which has been reproduced as that which was given first. Synthesis of recognition in a concept binds into one the representation of that which is diversified, successively apperceived and subsequently reproduced: "If we were not conscious that what we think is the same what we thought a moment before, all reproduction in the series of representations would be useless."[A 103]

The term *Begriff* (concept) means something that unites represented multiplicity into one representation, one objective picture.[10] The concept rules synthesis of apprehension and reproduction: "Empirical synthesis of apprehension is the equivalent of strictly conceptual syntheses, which are the abstract rule of its procedure."[11] Empirical synthesis binds impressions randomly and for this reason it must be accompanied by synthesis of intellect. Without concepts, Kant says, the cognition produced by imagination's empirical synthesis would be foggy and questionable: "a rhapsody of perceptions that would not fit to any

---

[9] Cf. Krausser, P. 1981. *Kants Theorie der Erfahrung und Erfahrungswissenschaft* [Kant's Theory of Experience and Experiential Science]. Frankfurt am Main, 70–71.

[10] Wajs, A. 1977. *Koncepcja syntez w filozofii transcendentalnej Kanta* [The Synthesis Concept in Kant's Transcendental Philosophy]. A doctoral dissertation. Warszawa, 186.

[11] Ibid., 187.

context." [A 156] Kant explains the fact that the apperceived object presents itself as the same one and marked by properties (as accessible to intellect) by the empirical awareness's necessary orientation towards categorical awareness. In apperception intellect apprehends sensual material with the help of empirical imagination. Imagination plays a productive role by creating relations within the content of the phenomenon, and a reproductive one in repeating this content. Awareness constantly binds, reviews, reflects on and reproduces the diversity contained in apperceptions, and in reproducing gathers it together, thereby lending structure to the objects of apperception. The laws governing the above-described empirical syntheses are determined by pure syntheses—the syntheses of transcendental imagination and intellect.

In the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant sets pure (productive) imagination against empirical (reproductive) imagination. Synthesis in general is an activity of the imagination. [A 78] Imagination creates the universal relationship of phenomena which enables the activity of reproductive imagination (obedience to the laws of association). This in turn enables empirical cognition as the assignment of categories to phenomena ordered by the laws of association. [A 100/102] According to Kant, sensibility and intellect are heterogeneous and therefore need to be bound together:

> "Obviously there must be some third thing, which is homogenous on the one hand with the category, and on the other with the appearance, and which thus makes the application of the former to the latter possible. This mediating representation must be pure, that is void of all empirical content, and yet at the same time, while it must in one respect be intellectual, it must in another be sensible. Such representation is the transcendental schema." [B 177]

Kant believes that the "this" object of experience—e. g., "this" triangle or "this" dog—does not relate to pure concepts (mathematics and geometry).

> "The concept 'dog' signifies a rule according to which my imagination can delineate the figure of a four-footed animal in a general manner, without limitation to any single determinate figure such as experience, or any possible image that I can represent *in concreto*, actually presents." [A 141]

Concepts relate directly to the schema of pure imagination. Schemas are rules which govern synthesis and thanks to which "the imagination provides the image of a certain concept" [A 140] A product of creative imagination, the schema mediates between the concept and a concrete object, thereby enabling the application of concepts to objects. More precisely, a schema is a rule whereby categories are applied to describe that which is temporal:

> "It is a transcendental product of imagination, a product which concerns the determination of inner sense in general according to conditions of its form (time), in respect of all representations, so far as these representations are to

be connected *a priori* in one concept in conformity with the unity of apperception." [A 142]

The schema, on one hand, refers to representations (which belong to the temporal form of the inner sense), on the other, to the concept which enables reference to these temporally formed representations.

Kant says that the schematism of our minds in relation to phenomena and their forms "is an art concealed in the depth in the human soul, whose real modes of activity nature is hardly likely ever to allow us to discover, and to have open to our gaze". [B 181]

Schemas govern the processes of synthesis, in which sensual diversity is developed in such a way that in our experience we encounter things and processes which remain wholly in valid unions—i.e., we experience a world that is consistent and imbued by regularity. The functioning of the schema bases on passive given unions, which, processed by categories, are reproduced in accordance with how they were given. It is precisely this reproduction in which schemas mediate. Schemas take note of passively-experienced unions (indications) and subsequently, together with categories, supplement, gather and selectively reduce them. Thanks to this, these unions acquire generality and necessity.

For instance, the indications in the case of the cause-and-effect schema are the experienced relations of activity and inactivity, succession, change or movement within the scope of the sensual. These indications enable judgements about what precedes (event, phase, circumstances) and the succession of that which according to the law of causality is subsequent. The schema of the cause/effect category orders events and decides about which of them are precedent and which subsequent. The role of the schema is clearly evident in the application of the substance and accident category.[12] First, the categorical rule (which follows the content of the substance concept meaning something unchangeable, constant, which underlies definition) constructs a fragmentation into substrates and accidents in such a way that the fragments (elements groups) which are accidents are contained in the fragments which are substrates. Next, the schema, the application rule in this category, distinguishes that which is relatively unchanging from the relatively changeable. It identifies the constant fragments as substrates and the changeable ones as accidents, thus enabling the fragmentation into substrates and accidents and their mutual subordination to acquire a conflict-free spatiotemporal form. The final phase takes place according to the principle that all thus-constituted phenomena contain the unchangeable (*das Beharrliche*), i.e. substance, as the subject and the changeable (*das Wandelbare*) merely as an attribute.

Krausser underscores the role of the subject's physical motion, the fact that schemas must take account of our activity and that, which in its changeability

_____

[12] Krausser, P. 1981. *Kants Theorie der Erfahrung und Erfahrungswissenschaft*, op. cit., 110–111.

depends on and is independent of it. Schemas condition the selection and reduction of sensual diversity to a figure, they ensure a general orientation in the apperceived surroundings—that we experience a world of objects ordered by type and processes which remain in unions with each other. In contemporary language, the job of schemes is to recognise figures (*Gestalterkennen*, pattern recognition). The problem is to explain our ability to recognise objects appearing in diverse forms, variants and circumstances, i.e., in diverse illumination, at various distances, in a variety of perspectives and locations.[13] "This point to three subjective sources of knowledge which makes possible the understanding itself—and consequently all experience as its empirical product." [A97/98] The first gathers into one the diversity contained in sensuality, the second binds representations together in a way which allows transition from representation to representation without the presence of a subject. Thanks to the third, recognition in a concept, we know that what we are thinking now is exactly what we were thinking a moment ago. Syntheses of intelligence (categorial syntheses) enables the attribution of laws to phenomena, they determine *a priori* the connections between the diverse and lend the entire constitution process necessity and conformity with general laws. Syntheses of intelligence is what determines that an apperceived object is under certain terms the substance, effect or cause in a causal link. Categorial synthesis defines the object as an individual under the ontological category and constitutes its quantitative, qualitative, relational and modality aspects. It is through categorial synthesis that the object appears at all as a specimen of a certain sphere, the sensual material determines which sphere it is, e.g. that the apperceived has certain shape and colour. The sensual data decide what shape and colour it is.

2. UNITY OF EXPERIENCE

"There can be no doubt that all our knowledge begins with experience. For how should our faculty of knowledge be awakened into action did not objects affecting our senses partly of themselves produce representations, partly arouse the activity of our understanding to compare these representations, and, by combining or separating them, work up the raw material of the sen-

---

[13] Experience's focus on figures has been proven in studies on sensual perception and memory. Cognitive linguistics has the related prototype concept which serves to explain the origin of natural categories, i.e., the meaning and scope of names of individuals, in natural language expressed by words like dog, cat, tree, teacup, etc. Accentuated here is the arresting and class-forming character of prototypes. Therefore, prototype-structured experience may find expression in linguistic categories. Prototypes create intentional space within which interpretation takes place, they give measure to all we perceive, see, create, etc. The surprising arresting force of prototypes can be explained by the fact that the process of perception and thought is instable and tense until it finds adequate expression in a prototype. The dynamism of the prototype focus gives ground for the presumption that the prototype's realisation is merely relative and asymptotic and that prototype-based linguistic categories (the conceptual structure of our minds) are also relative.

sible impressions into what knowledge of objects which is entitled experience?" [B 1]
"Experience is only possible through of necessary connection of perceptions." [B 219]

What is at stake are rules of changing judgments of perception into experiential judgments:

> "Thus to say 'The body is heavy' is not merely to state that the two representations have always been conjoined in my perception, however often that perception be repeated; what we are asserting is that they are combined *in the object*, no matter what the state of the subject may be." [B 142]

The former are created according to empirical association laws, they are accidental and relative. The latter are created according to necessary categories and are necessary and universal as they express objective knowledge. For instance, the fact that substances fall (empirical regularity) can be explained by postulating certain unobservable empirical properties of substances (mass, gravity, inertia) and the theoretical mechanisms relating to the behaviour of substances—the law of gravity which says that any two substances affect each other gravitationally with a force which depends on their mass and the distance between them.[14] This way reason locates the premises for empirically-stated facts and regularities and defines the conditions of their possibilities. Or, in contemporary language—reason creates models on whose basis observable empirical regularities may be predicted.

Experience is the synthesis of apperceptions. The fundaments of the necessary union of apperceptions are categories which provide the rules by which apperceptions are created and bound. Kant called judgements, which put apperceptions into necessary temporal unions and in this sense enable experience, analogies of experience. Without this *a priori* unity neither unity of experience nor any definition of objects given in it would be possible. Because there are three possibilities of temporal unions: duration, succession and simultaneous existence, there are also three analogies—the principle of the durability of substances, the principle of temporal succession according to the law of causality and the principle of simultaneous existence according to the law of interaction or community.

The first analogy states that the fundament of all exchange of phenomena is something constant—substance. Phenomena must be examined in terms of the relation of constancy and exchange otherwise change, which involves the change of something that is constant, will be unexplainable. In other words, it is postulated to seek substance/property relations in experience. The framework of these relations is one time which is implicitly constant. It is for this reason that

---

[14] Poręba, M. 2004. "Kantowskie pojęcie metafizyki" [The Kantian Metaphysics Concept]. *Przegląd Filozoficzny*, vol. 13, no. 4 (52), 90.

phenomena do not exist in different times but succeed themselves in one time. It is also in this time that changes of the manner of existence of substances and all exchange of their properties take place.

The second analogy says that phenomena appear in one world because they exist in one time and not just when we apperceive them or according to the order in which succession places them. It postulates the treatment of the succession of phenomena understood as objective and subject-independent as succession in time whose order is irreversible. The later condition stems from the earlier one in keeping with the law of causality.

> "The earlier condition is not only a certain 'before' (lightning appears before thunder) but also a certain 'because' (thunder struck because lightning struck). The change takes place according to the cause-and-effect principle: lightning is the cause of thunder, thunder is an effect in relation to the cause, which is lightning."[15]

That which succeeds something or takes place must, according to a certain law (the law of causality) succeeds that which was contained in the preceding condition. This creates a lasting union between phenomena, their order and place in time. The second analogy demands objects, events and phenomena to be perceived in temporal succession:

> "that the preceding time necessarily determines the succeeding (since I cannot advance to the succeeding time save through the preceding), it is also indispensable law of empirical representation of the time series that the appearances of the past determine all existences in the succeeding time, and that these latter as events can take place only insofar as the appearances of the past time determine their existence in time, that is, determine them according to the rule." [A 199]

The third analogy, the principle of simultaneous existence according to the law of interaction or community, states that "All substances, so far as they coexist, stand in thoroughgoing community, that is, in mutual interaction." [A 211] As in the second analogy, the question here is not about empirical regularity—that I may first apperceive the Earth and then the Moon (or vice versa), and, because apperceptions can succeed each other, conclude that they exist simultaneously. The question is for it to be necessary that objects exist simultaneously, i.e., for apperceptions to be able to succeed each other only when one and the other exist. Kant says that things exist simultaneously, so far as they exist in one and the same time. We cognize them as such as they mutually interact. Reciprocal influence guarantees their simultaneous existence in perception. Without it the empirical relation of coexistence could not be met with in experience. [A 215]

---

[15] Höffe, O. 1992. *Immanuel Kant*. München, 129–130.

As we can see, analogies play a regulative role in that they suggest certain proceedings to enable the emergence of unity of experience from a multitude of apperceptions. The first has us regard apperceptions as continuous (existing in one time), the second as succeeding each other in a set order (causatively bound), while the third commands us to treat apperceptions as an interacting whole. Analogies assign to the empirically given world the attributes of the time that envelops it: unity, uniqueness, wholeness and continuity. The thus-defined order and the regularities of phenomena form nature as an aprioric unity of connected phenomena. We find order and regularity in phenomena because we put them there. The *a priori* subjective foundations of such unity also possess objective import. Not in that pure intellect is the creator of empirical laws, "But all empirical laws are only special determinations of the pure laws of understanding, under which, and according to the norm of which, they first become possible." [A 128] Similarly, as pure sensual evidence of time and space cannot be derived from the diversity of phenomena. Transcendental principles determine assumptions relating to empirical knowledge, and hence also to experience and nature. "In simple terms, transcendental principles appear here as certain assumptions about the world which are crucial for our ability to make comprehensive judgments about the distribution of logical values onto appropriate sets of empirical statements."[16]

In experience it is thanks to empirical concepts as rules of unity (of binding representations and relating them to the object) that objects present themselves as unities although they are given through sensual multitudes. Empirical concepts unite sensual data and their application is warranted for no more than this purpose. Whereas the earlier-mentioned regulative application of reason entails the creation by reason of concepts which are not derived from nature but which govern its cognition. [A645] Intellectual concepts (ideas) serve to link concepts; by means of ideas they unite the diverse in concepts, which is important in scholarly practice and in the formulation of theories. [A 644] Without theoretical concepts plain empirical knowledge would be more "concrete" and less general.

3. UNITY OF SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

In his reflections on the fundaments (source) of intelligence Kant referred to the concept of transcendental apperception, to the act of binding as such, in which he saw the origin of all synthesis, both empirical and categorial:

---

[16] Poręba, M. 1999. *Transcendentalna teoria świadomości* [The Transcendental Theory of Consciousness], Warszawa, 42. This problem is differently approached in edition A (1881) and edition B (1887) of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, where transcendental principles are no longer the most universal laws of nature as the latter are always empirical regardless of their universality, but rather express certain conditions necessary for the appearance of these relations (hence concern more the structure of our consciousness than the presumed structure of the world). Ibid*,* 41.

"It is the assumption which enables all empirical and categorical integration. […] In the first binding phase material experiences the evidence of unity of concept, e.g. (the concept of) substance, (the concept of) weight. In the second phase concepts are bound by categories to produce unity of judgment ('the substance is heavy'). In the third, unity constituted by categories also possesses a certain underlying community and unity, the transcendental unity of apperception or, (putting it) more simply, self-consciousness."[17]

"But all perceptions are grounded *a priori* in pure intuition (in time, the form of their inner intuition as representations), association in pure synthesis of imagination, and empirical consciousness in pure apperception, that is in the thoroughgoing identity of the self in all possible representations." [A 116]

"Objectiveness/objectivity is the effect of the superimposition of the unity of the *I* onto the chaotic diversity of what we are supplied with by the senses. This superimposition takes place by means of categories which, according to apriorically understandable rules, allow me to pass from one representation to another in such a way that everything which can be represented comes together to create the unity of an uninterrupted overview of the world."[18]

Kant calls representations which embrace all representations—in which consciousness becomes a unity, a whole for itself (or, in other words, visualises experience as belonging to one consciousness)—"I think" representations. Their task is to maintain relations with the multitude of representations and their entirety. This means that through them the multitude of representations is bound in one consciousness and consciousness regards itself as identical in all—diverse representations combine with each other into a series of representations belonging to the subject. "This synthetic power of intelligence is the first and foremost condition of cognition."[19] "I think" is empty in terms of content and definition, similarly as time and space, which are pure forms of evidence (the possibility of simultaneity and succession). The "I think" representation—or self-consciousness—contains concept in its pure form, i.e., the possibility of universal application. My consciousness of a given representation makes it a part of my identity and puts it in relations with the possible data of empirical consciousness. Every representation can be potentially applied to the diversity sup-

---

[17] Höffe, O. 1992, 1992. *Immanuel Kant*, op. cit., 100.

[18] Frank, M. 2004. "Kant i problem świadomości siebie" [Kant and the Self-Consciousness Problem], *Przegląd Filozoficzny.* 13, no. 4 (52), 266.

[19] Asmuth, Ch. 2006. "Przełom transcendentalny w filozofii Kanta" [The Transcendental Breakthrough in Kant's Philosophy]. In: *200 lat z filozofią Kanta* [200 Years with Kantian Philosophy]. Ed. Potępa, M. and Z. Zwoliński. Warszawa, 93.

plied by experience (empirical consciousness) solely because it is my represen-
tation ("I think" must accompany every representation).[20]

"I think" is not a substance—Descartes' *res cogitans* is the condition under
which representations are my representations not because of their content but
because I can be conscious of them.[21] On the one hand, consciousness refers to
the object, and, on the other, to itself.

> "The possibility of self-consciousness in turn assumes the possibility of the
> self-consciousness of non-intellectual objects. This is so because the self-
> attribution of experience is possible only thanks to the interconnection of the
> temporal sequence of consciousness and the unity of this interconnection en-
> ables the sequence of experiences to constitute the objective world."[22]

This way the supreme rule of all human cognition—the unity of conscious-
ness—becomes a pre-condition for thought, i.e. the connection of one representa-
tion with another, individual-general relationships, the perception of regularity
symptoms in individual examples, experience, etc., principle, rule, law and so on.

This state of affairs confirms Kant's belief that the unity of consciousness is
not attained by associating representations as this type of unity concerns con-
crete phenomena and is "quite accidental," the fundament is "pure" unity
achieved "simply through the necessary relation of the manifold of the intuition
to the one 'I think', and so through the pure synthesis of understanding which is
the *a priori* underlying ground of the empirical synthesis" [B 140]. The *"I"*
unites representations by means of categories, in other words, the unity of the
"I" differentiates itself within the categorial structure.

Kant explains the relationship of "I think" with categories—or the objectiv-
ity of self-consciousness—by reference to the logical form of judgments, or,
more precisely, to the copula "is" which binds the subject with the predicate and
which denotes every form of conceptual relationship regardless of whether the
concepts are empirical or pure. Categories are regulators of the transition from
one representation to another and their interconnection condition objectivity. It
is in categories—pure intellectual concepts and pure forms of binding—that
pure thought originating from "I think" is realised.[23] The unity of self-

---

[20] "It must be possible for the 'I think' to accompany to all may representations; for otherwise
something would be presented in me which could not be and that is equivalent to saying, that the
representation would not be possible, or at least would be nothing for me, thought at all." [B 132]

[21] Höffe, O. 1992. *Immanuel Kant*, op. cit., 102.

[22] Kenny, A. 1998. A *Brief History of Western Philosophy*. Oxford, 281.

[23] "Thereby they inherit the ability of their source (*Urheber*), the I, to preserve its identity in
this transition between representations. If the I is a principle of the intellect and intellect the abil-
ity to judge, then it is provable that the unity of the I plays a binding role in the connectively-
understood 'is.' This is a certain Leibnizian emanation (*Ausstrahlung, Fulguration*) of the *"I"* on
judgment. […] the veritatively-understood 'is' of judgment is merely a reflection of Cartesian
self-assurance. Only thus can the *I* become a mainstay of the judgment-mediated truthfulness of
its objectively important representations." Frank, M. 2004. *Główna myśl Kanta* [Kant's Main
Concept], *Przegląd Filozoficzny*, no. 4 (52), 71.

consciousness conditions the unity of representations with the help of categories in such a way that they become the consciousness of the object. In other words, the unity of self-consciousness is not only the pre-condition of cognition but also conditions the objectivity of cognition.

Knowledge is expressed in judgments and judgments are created by connecting concepts. Concepts which originate from experience assume concepts which do not originate from experience and in a sense determine the course of the phenomenon before it takes place:

> "Reason holding in one hand its principles, according to which alone concordant appearances can be admitted as equivalent to laws, and in the other hand the experiment that it has devised in conformity with these principles, must approach nature in order to be taught by it. It must not, however, who listens to everything that the teacher chooses to say, do so in the character of a pupil, but of an appointed judge who compels a witness to answer questions which he has himself formulated." [B XIII]

> "Categories are not only the conditions of possibility of cognition of objects given in experience but also the laws of their combination, and of prescribing laws to nature and even of making nature possible." [B 159/160]

Ultimately, the fundament of the objective natural order is unity of self-consciousness.

> "In this way Kant strives to derive the objective character of the world from transcendental unity of apperception and attempts to show that there is a difference between reality and phenomenon. Transcendental unity of apperception is only possible when our experience is the experience of a world describable by means of categories."[24]

As all consciousness in Kant's understanding, unity of apperception or empirical consciousness is founded in transcendental apperception. The *I* is, on one hand, the ability to connect representations—to think—and, on the other, the ability to experience these representations, awareness of the self, or the changeable condition of the subject. Self-consciousness is awareness that I am not what I am; this requires evident data and categories. Experience is crucial even for one's recognition of oneself as an object, self-consciousness supplies only a concept of oneself. Knowledge about oneself needs empirical evidence. Without reference of empirical evidence to transcendental no unity of cognition would be possible. The subject possesses two aspects—transcendental and empirial. The factor that binds them, or mediates between the transcendental and the empirical, is time. Time consists of the influence exerted by the transcendental *I* on the empirical *I* (by means of transcendental imagination). In effect the subject of

---

[24] Kenny, A. 1998. A *Brief History of Western Philosophy*, op. cit., 281.

experience acquires the characteristics of the time that envelops it: unity, uniqueness, wholeness and continuity.

In other words, time is the self-manifestation of the transcendental subject. Without the mediation of time and its "work" in fusing both aspects there would be no full subject. And without a full subject there would be no objective synthesis, or connection of sensual representations by categories into one coherent world of experience. Unity of the object and objectivity as such are also conditioned by the subject. The world is the only one there is and whole, or we experience it as such because it is founded upon one, whole and continuously functioning synthesizing unity of apperception. In fact, the unity of the empirical object turns out to be the unity of the *I* of transcendental apperception and the identity of the world of experience the identity of the "I think" representation.[25]

The objective aspect, the second pole of constitution, x, is the equivalent of unity of apperception, "can serve only for the unity of the manifold in sensible intuition." [A 250/251] It is between these two poles that experience and its aspects—unity, uniqueness, wholeness and continuity—are constituted. Consequently, also the assumed compatibility of the subjective and objective unity (aspect) of consciousness conditions the possibility of and underlies empirical truth, or the concordance of cognition with its object given in experience.

4. UNITY OF REASON

Essential in the constitution of the unity of the cognitive system besides sensuality and intelligence—or time, space, schemas and pure concepts (categories)—is reason:

> "All our knowledge starts with the senses, proceeds from thence to understanding, and ends with reason, beyond which there is no higher faculty to be found in us for elaborating the matter of intuition and bringing it under the highest unity of thought." [B 355]

Kant understood intelligence as the spontaneous ability to synthesise a multitude of evident data, apperceptions, concepts, etc. into a whole. Therefore, every dependable cognition must contain theoretical components but reason alone is unable to achieve binding effects without cooperating with the senses, without reference to the data of experience. Examples of judgements which do not engage the senses include the ontological evidence for God's existence and metaphysical theorems. In this context we see the need for the *Critique of Pure Reason*, i.e., an examination of the genesis boundaries and range of the cogni-

---

[25] Cf. Maciejczak, M. 2007, "Czasowość i jedność świadomości. Kant, Husserl, Merleau-Ponty" [Temporality and Unity of Consciousness. Kant, Husserl, Merleau-Ponty]. *Principia*, XLVII–XLVIII, 123–142.

tion we owe to experience.[26] Although Kant distinguished three cognitive faculties—sensuality, imagination and intelligence—he divided intelligence into the faculty of cognizance through concepts and the faculty of primal principles (reason).[27] Kant calls the entirety of pure reason principles the *organon*. The role of reason is to provide concepts with a maximum on systemic unity and scope—to lay the ground for maximum unity of experience. [A 677/678, B 705/706]

Reason, therefore, does not relate directly to the object but to intelligence — it introduces unity in the concept sphere by means of ideas. "However, the ultimately highest unity is achieved only with a condition which is itself no longer conditioned; this exactly is that which is unconditioned."[28] Reason employs the systemic unity idea as a regulating principle: "the idea is posited only as being a point of view from which alone that unity, which is so essential to reason and so beneficial to the understanding, can be further extended." [B 709][29] The systemic unity idea ensures the unity of empirical cognition, which experience alone never provides—it commands all relations in the sensual world to be treated as if concepts were rooted in this unity.

The treatment of experiential cognition as cognition defined by the entirety of conditions provides new openings for the empirical use of reason in that it ensures the systemic unity of all possible empirical-intellectual activities without violating the laws of empirical usage. [A 664/ B 692, A 680/B 708]

> "Reason concerns itself exclusively with absolute totality in the employment of the concepts of the understanding, and endeavours to carry the synthetic unity, which is thought in the category, up to the completely unconditioned.

---

[26] Manfred Frank states that Kant does not call all *a priori* cognition pure. E.g. causality-related cognition is not pure because change implies existence, which can only be cognised in apperception (empirically). Hence relations taking place in the world of existence-related phenomena, e.g., in the question whether *a* or *b* are the cause of c cannot be derived from pure reason alone. This is why there are no pure synthetic judgments which are also *a priori* judgments. Frank, Manfred. 2004. "Główna myśl Kanta" [Kant's Main Concept], *Przegląd Filozoficzny*, vol. 13, no. 4, 63.

[27] Kant also distinguishes intelligence as the faculty of laws set against the faculty of subordinating to laws, i.e. the power of judgment. Cf. Kant, I. 1929. *Critique of Pure* Reason, op. cit. [A 298], [A 68/B 93], [A 299/B 356]. Tomasz Dreinert writes about the problems with clear definitions of intelligence, sensuality and imagination in: 2002. "Źródła jedności poznania w koncepcji Kanta" [Sources of Cognition Unity in the Kantian Conception]. In: *Między kantyzmem a neokantyzmem* [Between Kantianism and Neokantianism]. Ed. Noras, A. Katowice, 34–58. Pure reason can be applied adequately or inadequately, its usage can be immanent (empirical) or transcendental (beyond-experiential). In empirical usage it is the ability to synthesis data by means of imagination, which is connected with experience but independent of its content—in other words intelligence the source of primal principles, concepts and judgements. In transcendental usage is a speculative power, the source of transcendental semblance.

[28] Höffe, Otfried. 1992. *Immanuel Kant*, op. cit., 135.

[29] Unlike the concepts of intelligence, which in combination with evidence enable cognition as they do not refer to evidence, the ideas of reason do not provide cognition. They refer to the unconditioned entirety of conditions, which is why Kant calls them regulative.

We may call this unity of appearances the unity of reason, and that expressed by the category of the unity of understanding." [B 383]

"The concept of the absolute wholeness of conditions does not relate directly to experience—which is always conditioned—but in a sense guides towards a certain unity, of which it has itself no concept, and in such manner as to unite all the acts of the understanding, into an absolute whole." [B 383]

The fundament of the synthesis of the conditioned is the unconditioned. Seeking the unconditioned is a natural tendency of reason, a tendency which is subjective and not objective because it is not necessary for the activity and tasks of intelligence.

Reason bases the wholeness and regularity—or cohesion—of cognition on one primal principle, the idea of the form of entire cognition. The whole precedes its parts and contains conditions which *a priori* determine their place in the whole and relations to the remaining parts. [A 645] Thanks to the whole, intellectual cognition is not an accidental accumulation but „a consistent system according to necessary rules." [A 645] The concept of the unity of cognitive concepts serves as a rule for intelligence: "we interrogate nature with accordance with these ideas and consider our knowledge as defective so long as it is not adequate to them." [A 645] The concepts: pure earth, pure water, pure air, etc., in so far as their complete purity is concerned, they have their origin in reason. [B 674] Therefore reason is the faculty of deriving the specific from the general. Kant distinguishes the apodictic and hypothetical use of reason. The first involves subsumption—the concept is certain and given and must be applied to the case at hand. In the latter the general is problematic, a mere idea, while the specific is certain. Verification shows if specific cases which are certain derive from rule and if they do, one may conclude about the generality of the rule—and from it in turn about all non-given cases.

Kant attributes reason with concepts of a special type called pure rational concepts or transcendental ideas. The concepts of reason, or ideas, "question nature" and consider cognition imperfect as long as it fails to comply with them. [A646][30] Transcendental ideas ascend, in a chain of conditions, towards the unconditioned, i.e. primal principles [B 394]. Reason identifies the unconditioned as the unity of the reasoning subject, the entirety of things and conditions in time and space, and the unity of the conditions of all objects of reasoning—God. Viewed through the principles—the ideas of the subject, the world and God—cognition attains an ever-greater possible unity—systemic unity. The idea of the supreme being closes and crowns all human cognition. [A 641/B 669] Cognition achieves the greatest unity, systemic unity when things in the world are perceived as if they had received their existence from a supreme intel-

_____

[30] Ideas are important in scientific praxis, notably in the sphere of theory, where they cannot be substantiated by experience.

ligence. [A 670–671/B 698–699] Ideas of reason allow intelligence to function in systemic harmony and cohesion. "Human reason is by nature architectonic. That is to say is regards all our knowledge as belonging to a possible system, and therefore allows only such principles as do not at any rate make it impossible to any knowledge that we may attain to combine into a system with other knowledge." [A 474] At the base of the striving towards systemic unity lies the interest of reason, the subjective tendency to bring one's concepts down to the smallest number by comparison. [B 362]

The ideas of the subject, the world and God express reason's natural interest but have no objective foundations. Reason is able to think about the unconditioned and seek out transcendental ideas, but cannot cognise it as in the case of the unconditioned there are no premises for objective cognition—no sensual insight nor concept of intelligence. Such claims, however, are natural for reason—reason wants to cognise the unconditioned and reach beyond the limits of possible experience, hence it induces us to take the effects of its speculations—paralogisms serving to substantiate the absolute subject concept, antinomies substantiating the wholeness of things and conditions concept, and alleged evidence of the existence of God—for thorough cognition. These ideas neither expand nor enable cognition but play a regulative role by becoming postulates of pure practical reason.

The regulative use of reason entails three principles—of genera, specification and affinity. Kant devotes most attention to the principle of genera. These principles may be used logically and transcendentally, in the latter case reason creates aprioric metaphysical knowledge. Together, these principles form the idea of a complete and adequate system of scientific knowledge, which is the aim of scientific praxis, while individual scientific theories attempt to describe chosen aspects of the system. The principle of genera says that specification does not exclude the identity of a species, i.e., diverse species may be considered to define only a few genera, which, in turn, may be considered to define still higher kinds. The principle recommends seeking the systemic unity of all empirical concepts.

The logical principle of genera pre-assumes a transcendental principle, i.e. homogeneity in that which is diverse. Although its degree cannot be specified *a priori*, without it empirial concepts, and in effect experience, would not be possible. [A 653] The logical principle of genera says there must be sufficient unity among species concepts to enable their unification into a genus. To exemplify this Kant uses the idea of a fundamental power of the human mind. This idea plays an important role in empirical psychology although it is not experience-derived, and is necessary for the integration of existing knowledge about the human mind. The logical principle of genera allows the assumption that phenomena which at a first glance appear diverse and the effects of diverse powers are in fact homogeneous and caused by one power: "For instance, in the human mind we have sensation, consciousness, imagination, memory, wit, power of

discrimination, pleasure, desire, etc." [A 649] The fundamental power idea does not reveal the existence of something like this, it enables the systemic representation of this multitude of powers, demands unity to be sought and suggests that these powers are manifestations of one fundamental power.

This unity is hypothetical.

"We do not assert that such a power must necessarily be met with, but that we must seek it in the interest of reason, that is, of establishing certain principles for the manifold rules that experience can supply to us. We must endeavour, wherever possible, to bring in this way a systematic unity into our knowledge." [B 677]

The theoretical idea reduces the multitude of empirical concepts and theories, so that they appear as specifications of concepts and laws. This way reason, by means of the theoretical idea, reduces the multitude of empirical laws to unity, assumes this unity among empirical concepts. The unity is only hypothetical, it is the law of reason to seek for the systematic unity of empirical concepts, so far as they can be deduced from higher and more general concepts. [A 651]

Kant does not halt at this logical use of "reason's merely economic trick" but postulates a transcendental usage, according to which this assumption, i.e. the idea of a fundamental power, actually applies to the world of phenomena. The transcendental principle of genera is an example of transcendental cognition, creation of reason independent of experience. The genera principle, whereby unity of reason is in agreement with nature itself and reason does not beg but commands—although it is unable to determine the boundaries of this unity— guides research efforts in such a way as to allow the effects of experience to confirm the idea about the existence of a fundamental power of the human mind. [A 653] Another example used by Kant to show the application of this principle is chemistry's successful reduction of salts to two basic genera —acids and alkalis—and the subsequent efforts of chemists to have both regarded as different manifestations of one and the same base material. [A 653] Science requires the assumption that nature is in general agreement with the interest of reason, the reason-required idea of systemic unity. However, the nature of this accord cannot be determined *a priori*. The regulative use of reason substantiates the use of theoretical concepts in developing scientific theory.

In his reference to the regulative principles which determine the usage of reason—the principles of genera, specification and affinity—Kant underscored the close ties between theoretical and practical reason. As categories are natural for intelligence, so are ideas for reason. Categories lead to truth, or agreement between concepts and object, while ideas generate "irresistible semblance." [B 670] Nonetheless, their immanent use is positive if it remains within the realm of possible experience, i.e., if ideas are not taken for concepts of real things. Therefore, although the postulates of pure practical reason—the exis-

tence of God and Divine providence, the immortality of the soul freedom—cannot be empirically substantiated because this is not possible, they are nevertheless not discrepant with the entirety of theoretical knowledge and do find substantiation in the natural tendency of practical reason. They are the aim of the natural dialectic of the human mind.

5. RECAPITULATION

The systemic unity of cognition is a major theme in the *Critique of Pure Reason* as it throws light on the comprehensive character of the cognitive process, the collaboration of the cognitive powers and, in effect, the possibility of creating knowledge. Systemic unity indicates the idea which determines the cognitive aim *a priori* by referring the components of cognition to themselves and the aim. Systemic unity is what makes cognition a science, or, in other words, pure reason, because it is a specific system able to create science understood as the systemic unity of specific fields. In dealing with the regulative use of reason Kant explains the application of theoretical concepts for the development of scientific theories. He understands science pragmatically and underscores the hypothetical character of scientific theory, i.e. its empirical rather than apriorical aspect.[31] Non-empirical concepts—ideas—are of key importance for the evolution of science. Just as categories are natural for intelligence, so ideas are for reason. Categories lead to truth, or the agreement of concepts with the object while ideas generate "irresistible semblance." [B670] Nonetheless their immanent usage can be positive if it remains within possible experience, in others words if ideas are not taken for concepts of real things. The role of ideas is to unite the diverse in concepts and order them. Kant upholds his earlier belief that reason does not refer directly to experience but only to intelligence, and that only then it can apply to experience. With their regulative application, ideas give intellectual concepts the highest unity and broadest reach. [A 644] Unity enables a close bond between theoretical and practical reason, throws light on the nature and limits of reason, explains why reason inevitably reaches beyond the boundaries of possible experience and why we eagerly take speculations which strive to substantiate the existence of God, the soul, immortality and freedom for *bona fide* cognition.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR — professor, Ph.D., Warsaw University of Technology; research fields: epistemology, philosophy of language, philosophy of science. Major publications: 1) 1995. *Świat według ciała* w "Fenomenologii percepcji" *M. Merleau-Ponty'ego* [The World According to the Body in M. Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology*

---

[31] Wartenberg, T. E. 1992. "Reason and the practice of science." In: Ed. Guyer, P. *The Cambridge Companion to Kant.* Cambridge, 228–248.

of Perception], Toruń (1st edition), second edition 2001 (abridged), Warszawa; 2) *2001. Brentano i Husserl. Pytanie epistemologiczne* [Brentano and Husserl]*,* Warszawa; 3) 2007. *Świadomość i sens. Kant, Brentano, Merleau-Ponty, Husserl* [Consciousness and Essence. Kant, Brentano, Merleau-Ponty Husserl], Warszawa; 4) 2010. *Intencjonalność i znaczenie językowe* [Intentionality and Linguistic Meaning], Warszawa; 5) *2010. Zwrot językowy w filozofii. Od Fregego do Searle'a* [The Linguistic Turn in Philosophy. From Frege to Searle]*,* Warszawa.

CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT

Exceptionally we publish the program of the conference (in an abridged version) which was already held. The conference was projected as a specific pre-element of the XXII World Congress of Philosophy (Greece, July 2013). So its role is not passed.

D&U Editors

International Conference:
TOWARDS THE XXIII WORLD CONGRESS OF PHILOSOPHY:
PHILOSOPHY AS INQUIRY AND WAY OF LIFE

April 26–27, 2013

Russian Philosophical Society, Tatarstan Branch, Tatarstan Academy of Science, Kazan State University of Power Engineering, Department of Philosophy, Kazan, Tatarstan, Russia

April 26

KEY-NOTE SPEECHES:

1. *Marc Lucht* (Center for Peace Studies and Violence Prevention, College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, USA) — **Philosophy as a Way of Living**

2. *Panos Eliopoulos* (Vice-President of International Society for Universal Dialogue; University of Peloponnese, Greece) — **The Stoic Cosmopolitanism as a Way of Life**

3. *I. Przhilenskiy* (Moscow State Academy of Law, Department of Philosophy) — **Realism, Anti-realism, Constructivism: Ontological Premises and Methodological Consequences**

4. *A.S. Guryanov* (Kazan State University of Power Engineering, Department of Philosophy) — **Philosophy as Inquiry and the Quest of Absolute Knowledge**

Section I. ONTOLOGY, THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE, EPISTEMOLOGY

1. *E.V. Zolotukhina-Abolina* (Rostov-on-Don) — Philosopher as a Creator of the World Images

2. *A.N. Fatenkov* (Nizhny Novgorod) — Dialectics: Classical, Non-Classical, Negative

3. *M.I. Bilalov* (Makhachkala, Dagestan) — Truth Criterion in Radical Constructivism

4. *A.A. Belostotsky* (Moscow) — A Thesis on Being and Cognition

5. *A.D. Korolev* (Moscow) — Can the Past-Living Matter Be Measured?

6. *O.S. Sirotkin* (Kazan) — The World System as a Modern Materialistic Basis of Natural Science and Universal Classification of Scientific Knowledge

7. *B.A. Medvedev* (Saratov) — Quantum Paradigm of Macro- and Micro-World Images in the Structure of Consciousness

8. *G.P. Menchikov* (Kazan) — Fractal Determinism—the Third Type of Determinism

9. *N.K. Mustafin* (Kazan) — On the Sequence of Cognition Theory and Ontology in Philosophical Analysis

10. *A.F. Kudryashev, O.I. Yelkhova* (Ufa) — An Anthropological Component Necessary in Ontology

Section II. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

1. *A.G. Sabirov* (Yelabuga) — Humanitarian Possibilities of Modern Social Philosophy

2. *A.V. Maslichin* (Yoshkar-Ola) — The Essence of Human Life

3. *N.A. Tereschenko* (Kazan) — Social Philosophy: Contemporary Considerations

4. *V.E. Zolotukhin (*Rostov-on-Don) — Labour as a Value

5. *M.D. Schelkunov* (Kazan) — State and University

6. *R.A. Nurullin* (Kazan) — The Education System Synthesizing Culture and Civilization

7. *G.V. Paramonov* (Yaroslavl) — Language and Philosophy of Education

8. *Kh.S. Mingazov* (Kazan) — Philosophy within the Structure of Political Power

9. *G.V. Allahverdiyev* (Nachchevan, Azerbaydjan) — The Role of Moral Duty within the Unity of Freedom and Morals

10. *D.M. Kolomyts* (Kazan) — Mythology in the Contemporary World

Section III. ETHICS, AESTHETICS, AXIOLOGY

1. *O.A. Loseva* (Saratov) — Axiological Patterns of Person's Life Strategy
2. *T.M. Schatunova* (Kazan) — Aesthetics as a Passion and Metaphysics
3. *Athena Salappa* (Athens, Greece) — Music Education and *Kalokagathia* in the Greek Antiquity
4. *K.Kh. Khairullin* (Kazan) — Theme of Immortality in Nikolai Zabolotsky's Poetry
5. *E.N. Bolotnikova* (Saratov) — Two Perspectives
6. *R.R. Fazleyeva* (Kazan) — Dialogue as Asymmetrical Intersubjectivity
7. *J.O. Azarova* (Kharkov, Ukraine) — J. Derrida's Deconstruction in Philosophy of Culture
8. *O.S. Kyrillova* (Rostov-on-Don) — Aesthetics of Collecting: a Postmodern Version
9. *M.A. Zaichenko, E.L. Yakovleva* (Kazan) — The Problem of the Recursive Principle
10. *E.L. Yakovleva* (Kazan) — *Epatage* as Media Performance of Today

Section IV. DIALOGUE OF PHILOSOPHY, SCIENCE, AND RELIGION

1. *M.N. Zakamullina* (Kazan) — Language, Philosophy, Logic
2. *N.V. Bredikhina* (Barnaul) — Economic Accounts of Detective and Psychoanalysis Popularity
3. *I.G. Gasparov* (Voronezh) — "Spiritual Training" as an Immanent Part of Philosophical Way of Life
4. *I.V. Gordeyeva* (Yekaterinburg) — The Philosophical View Spiritual Culture
5. *A.A. Isayev* (Ufa) — Nikolai Berdyayev on the Reality of the Spirit
6. *N.V. Sviridova* (Moscow) — Science and Religion in B. Lonergan's Theology
7. *G.B. Svyatokhina* (Ufa) — Key Principles of Total Knowledge in the System of Cosmic Thinking
8. *S.F. Tuktamysheva* (Naberezhnye Chelny) — Everything Relates to Everything
9. *O.M. Farhitdinova* (Yekaterinburg) — Religiosity Scenarios in Information Space
10. *U.S. Strugovschikova* (Novosibirsk) — Influence of Northern European Universities on Reformation

Section I. ONTOLOGY, THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE, EPISTEMOLOGY

1. *T.G. Leshkevich* (Rostov-on-Don) — Main Trends in Epistemological Arsenal Analysis
2. *A.R. Karimov* (Kazan) — On the Role of Analytical Propositions in Philosophy
3. *E.B. Minnullina* (Kazan) — Ways of the Foundations of Cognition in the Context of Philosophy Transformation
4. *A.A. Kostikova* (Moscow) — Philosophy of Cypher Communication
5. *I.A. Chursanova* (Voronezh) — The Problem of Conceptualization of Objectivity Types in Historical Knowledge
6. *E.I Horov* (Nizhny Novgorod) — Unity of Being and History as a Principle for Philosophical Ontology, Theory of Knowledge, and Epistemology
7. *A.N. Samokhvalova* (Novosibirsk) — A Non-body Teaching and Human Actions Procedures in Early Stoa Philosophy
8. *A.I. Ivanenko* (St. Petersburg) — From Prophetic Ontology to Ontology of Vision
9. *G.V. Avdoshin* (Kazan) — Thing as Eidos Sign

Section II. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

1. *S.A. Romanova* (Yoshkar-Ola) — National Mentality and Globalization
2. *E.V. Kuznetsova* (Naberezhnye Chelny) — Cultures Dialogue in the Globalization Era
3. *A.N. Minnullin* (Kazan) — Small Groups as the Main Socio-genesis Moving Power
4. *D.N. Stetsenko* (Kazan) — Personalization and Social Philosophy
5. *A.M. Rumyantseva* (Tver) — Human Socialization in Virtual Reality
6. *O.A. Naumenko* (Tashkent, Uzbekistan) — Environmentalism as an Ideology of Globalization
7. *E.R. Kartashova* (Moscow) — Some Social-Philosophical Aspects of Ecological Strategy from the Point of View of Biopolitics
8. *I.G. Malkin* (Moscow) — The Evolution of Humankind. The Necessity of a New Conception
9. *V.V. Schekochikhin* (Moscow) — Philosophical Foundations of Cosmism – Ideology of the Totality of Civilization

Section III. ETHICS, AESTHETICS, AXIOLOGY

1. *G.V. Melikhov* (Kazan) — On Unreserved Beliefs
2. *M.I. Mikhailov* (Nizhny Novgorod) — Aesthetical Meaning of Catholicism and Orthodoxy
3. *A.M. Ponovarev* (Izhevsk) — Axiological Problems in Contemporary Philosophy of Law
4. *A.G. Pudov* (Yakutsk) — Aesthetics of Symbolical and Ethno-Cultural Modernization
5. *K. A. Alekseyev* (Cheboksary) — Ethics of Treating the Other in Multiculturalism
6. *D. A. Gusev* (St. Petersburg) — Normativity in Moral Discourse
7. *I. V. Satina* (Voronezh) — Ethical Perspective in Nursery
8. *G. R. Sarimova* (Yelabuga) — Ethical Norms in Science

Section IV. DIALOGUE OF PHILOSOPHY, SCIENCE, AND RELIGION

1. *V.I. Kurashov* (Kazan) — Methodological Errors in Treating Religious Teaching
2. *A.Kh. Khaziyev* (Kazan) — Inter-ethnical Space in Post-Soviet Tatarstan in Commonsense Language
3. *A.F. Valeyeva* (Kazan) — Ethno-religious Traditions in Language Paradigm
4. *L.A. Kariyeva* (Kazan) — Philosophical- Religious Ideas in Turkic-Tatar Folklore
5. *E.A. Sitnitskaya, N.E. Penner* (Kazan) — Archbishop Nikanor Treats Kant's Epistemology
6. *V.G. Nanayenko* (Kazan) — Social Groups and Religion Interests
7. *V.M. Lebskaya* (Kazan) — Theory of Religion Sources in Russia
8. *U.P. Sinitsyna* (Kazan) — Lev Tolstoy: Science and Religion — The Unified Human Pursuit
9. *K.V. Arshinova* (Kazan) — Travel as a Spiritual Phenomenon

April 27

Section I. ONTOLOGY, THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE, EPISTEMOLOGY

1. *N.M. Solodukho* (Kazan) — Situationality of Being
2. *V.D. Evstratov* (Kazan) — On the Concept of Status of Matter

3. *J.J. Raznogorskyi* (Kazan) — "Finity" and "Infinity" Ontology in Classical Mechanics and Relativistic Physics

4. *E.M. Khakimov, F.Z.Rafikova* (Kazan) — Relationship of Abstract Levels in a Hierarchy Model

5. *S.F. Nagumanova* (Kazan) — Types of Phenomenological Consciousness

6. *I.A. Druzhinina* (Kazan) — Phenomenological and Emotional Feeling of Being

7. *A.P. Kosarev* (Kazan) — Techno-Philosophical Theoretical Approaches and Trends

8. *L.A. Chemercheva* (Kazan) — Hermeneutic Understanding as the Process of Personal Existential Action

9. *E.A. Taysina* (Kazan) — Premises of a New Theory of Cognition

10. *T.N. Khalitov* (Kazan) — Sophistics — Contemporary View

Section II. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

1. *O.A. Lipatova* (Kazan) — Discourse of the Social in Culture-Social Situation Analysis

2. *E.V. Klyushina* (Kazan) — Communication as a Form of Social Interaction

3. *Zh.V. Fyodorova* (Kazan) — Socio-Philosophical Analysis of Censure

4. *O.V. Busygina* (Kazan) — Imitative Function of Social Information

5. *H.A. von Essen* (Kazan) — A Classification of Modern Political Communication Strategies and Tactics

6. *K.N. Gedz* (Kazan) — Imagination and Speech in the Aspect of Consumerism in Mass-Consciousness

7. *A.M. Safina* (Kazan) — Impossible Is Possible — New Forms of Sociality in the Internet Reality

8. *D.K. Fattakhov* (Kazan) — Philosophy of Information War

9. *E.A. Churashova* (Kazan) — The Price of Sovereignty

Section III. ETHICS, AESTHETICS, AXIOLOGY

1. *F.M. Nuriakhmetova* (Kazan) — Philosophical Aspects of Volga Tatars' Spiritual Life Modernization: Tradition and Modernity

2. *R.R. Taktamysheva* (Kazan) — Ways of Tatar National Culture Development on the Turn of 19 and 20th Centuries

3. *R.K. Smirnov* (Kazan) —The Axiological Basis of Ethics of Social Responsibility

4. *T.T. Siraziyeva* (Kazan) — A Conception of "Holism"

5. *D.I. Dergunova, L.M. Sedova* (Kazan) — "Enlightened Patriotism": New Forms of Influence on Students

6. *L.V. Yefimova, E.L. Yakovleva* (Kazan) — Negative Aspects of the Quest of Success in Contemporary Societies

7. *G.F. Zakirova* (Kazan) — Mass Culture as a Socio-Cultural Phenomenon

KEY-NOTE SPEECH:

Ivan Kaltchev (President de l`Association des philosophes bulgares, de l`Association des philosophes des pays de l`Europe Sud-Est, Membre du Comitee des directeurs de la FISP) — **Pour la necessite d'un moral universel**