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Tetsugaku
International Journal of
the Philosophical Association of Japan
Volume 7, 2023

Special Theme: Philosophical Practice

Preface

BABA Tomokazu
The University of Nagano
Editor in charge of vol.7 of *Tetsugaku*

On the special theme: Philosophical Practice

Here we have the 7th volume of our journal. It features three invited papers and seven refereed papers. Due to the specific meaning and background of the expression "Philosophical Practice", as well as the variety of articles included in this issue, some explanation may be in order at the beginning.

We chose the theme "Philosophical Practice" some years ago, in light of the expansion of philosophical practice throughout Japanese society in the past ten years with increasing philosophical dialogue in the classroom and the establishment of philosophical cafés in urban areas.

We made decision without considering how it connects to other themes, but while editing the issue, it came to our attention that the theme has an internal link with the past two themes of our journal. Two years ago (2021), in the midst of the pandemic, our journal featured the theme of "Care". Last year (2022), when the pandemic was ending, the special theme was "Catastrophe". The linkage between these themes leads to the variety of the articles of this issue.

Let's focus on this connection. Covid-19 was a medical catastrophe on a global scale, whereas the catastrophe that occurred in Japan 12 years ago on March 11, 2011, was a combined disaster of a tsunami, an earthquake, and a nuclear accident. After this unprecedented disaster, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology set "proactive, interactive, and deep learning" as the slogan for school education in 2020, in order to cultivate the ability to survive in the age of what is in social and economic discourse called VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity), where the future is becoming increasingly uncertain.

Consistent with this current climate (disaster and school reform), for the past 10 years or so in Japan, citizens' philosophy cafés have been increasing in number, and philosophical dialogue in school have been introduced in various forms. Although the places where they take place are different, both are a kind of philosophy that take

place outside the circle of academic philosophers, even though they may be involved as facilitators.

It should also be noted that after the catastrophe, we require care through dialogues. Without anticipating this when it was selected, the theme “Philosophical Practice” has an internal link with “Care” and “Catastrophe”. The comprehension of three topics would be enhanced by reading through the volumes together.

Now, to elaborate on the special Japanese connotation of this expression and on the above-mentioned background, let us recall below the call for paper in this vol. 7.[1]

In Japan, the term “Philosophical Practice” is used as an umbrella term based on Matthew Lipman’s Philosophy for/with Children (1970s) in conjunction with Gerd Achenbach’s Philosophical Counseling (1980s) and Marc Sautet’s Socrates Cafe (1990s). They are activities that have different historical roots, theoretical background and aims, but what they share in common is that all of them are focusing on non-experts’ engagement in philosophical activity.

Since the beginning of this century, we have been witnessing a growth of philosophical practice across Japan especially in the field of education and civil society, conducted in various forms including philosophical inquiry in school and philosophy cafés, etc. Echoed by such growing public recognition of philosophical practice, the Japanese Society for Philosophical Practice was established in 2018 to further the movement of philosophical practice in Japan.

Broadly construed, philosophical practice is a philosophical and communicative practice going beyond the boundary between experts/non-experts in philosophy, where people (including philosophers, academics, non-academics, children etc.) jointly engage in dialogical activity for inquiring into their common question. In philosophical practice, people are treated as equals before the question they are investigating. These practices are philosophical “practice” often conducted by people with no academic philosophy background. Viewed in this light, however, what is the meaning of “philosophy” in the context of the “philosophical” practice? Thinking about philosophical practice inevitably requires us to engage in a self-reflective inquiry on what philosophy is and ought to be, thereby enabling us to delineate the contour of philosophy.

In the incoming special issue on “philosophy of philosophical practice”, we

[1] We formulated this call for papers with our guest editors for this Vol. 7, Yohsuke Tsuchiya and Kei Nishiyama. Together with them we started to prepare this special theme in December 2020. We are deeply grateful for their long-term collaboration.

welcome a wide range of contributions to the field of philosophical practice. The foci of the special issue include, but are not limited to:

What is philosophical practice and what is not?
Who is the philosophical practice for?
Can non-academic philosophers or children do philosophy?
In what sense can philosophical practice produce a caring and therapeutic effect?
What is the meaning of the professionality of philosopher and/or philosophical practitioner?
What is the ethics of philosophical practice?
What are the roles of academic philosophers in a philosophical inquiry?
What is the relationship between dialogue and philosophy?
How can philosophy of dialogue relate to philosophical dialogue?
(Buber, Levinas) How can/should philosophy relate to civil society?
How can/should philosophy contribute to education?
How can philosophical practice contribute to consensus/dissensus making in the public sphere?
How inclusive can philosophical practice be?
Can philosophical practice take up the voices of the minorities?
Is philosophical practice possible in an unusual and/or deeply divided situation?
What is the mission of philosophical practice in global society?
What is the role of philosophical practice amid catastrophes, pandemic, and Anthropocene?

In one way or another, the following articles answer one or more of these questions. Readers will explore the universe of philosophical practice and its actuality.

Invited articles

In this issue, we are pleased to welcome three leading scholars of philosophical practice: Susan T. Gardner, Peter Raabe, and Takahiro Nishimura.

Susan T. Gardner teaches philosophy and critical thinking at Capilano University in Vancouver, Canada, and is known for her work in philosophy for children. She founded the Vancouver Institute of Philosophy for Children in 1988,

and in 2013 The Thinking Playground, a Philosophy for Children (P4C) summer camp for children ages 6-13, held each July at the University of the Fraser Valley. Her article, "Inquiry is Not Just Conversation: It is Hard Work" is one of the major references in the field.[2] She is past vice-president of the International Council of Philosophical Inquiry with Children and director of the North American Association of the Community of Inquiry (NAACI).

Peter Raabe was Professor of Philosophy at Fraser Valley University, also in Vancouver, Canada. He is a member of the American Philosophical Practitioners Association. He is an internationally recognized specialist in philosophical counseling, author of numerous peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters, as well as five books on philosophical counseling, including *Philosophical Counseling Theory and Practice*, which has been translated into several languages, including Japanese.[3] The Korean translation was selected by the Korean National Academy of Sciences (NAS) as one of the outstanding books of 2011.[4]

From the Japanese context, we are pleased to welcome the contribution of Professor Takahiro Nishimura, who practices philosophical dialogue in medical settings, especially in the disaster area of the great earthquake of 2011. He majored in "Clinical Philosophy" at Osaka University. Clinical philosophy was a new philosophical discipline created by Professor Kiyokazu Washida and Narifumi Nakaoka after the great Hanshin-Awaji (region around Osaka) earthquake of 1995. The recent boom of philosophical cafes can be seen as encouraged by various activities of practitioners of clinical philosophy.

The three invited papers highlight the actuality of philosophical practice in their respective contexts. We would like to thank the three authors for their valuable contributions.

Susan T. Gardner (*Education after Auschwitz: Take Two*) takes up the question posed by Adorno in the last century, after the catastrophe of the Jewish genocide: What should education be like after Auschwitz? As a practitioner of philosophical dialogue that fosters philosophical and critical thinking, she answers this question directly. Using the concrete case of philosophical counseling, Peter Raabe (*On Self-Defeating 'Mental Viruses'*) shows how counselees can recover from mental viruses without medication. In doing so, he brings back into our time ancient philosophy as caring for

[2] Gardner, Susan (1995). Inquiry Is No Mere Conversation Facilitation Of Inquiry Is Hard Work! *Analytic Teaching and Philosophical Praxis* 16 (2):102-111.
[3] https://www.ufv.ca/philosophy/faculty-and-staff/raabe-peter.htm
[4] *Tetsugaku Kaunselingu Riron to Jissen* [*哲学カウンセリング　理論と実践*], Hosei University Press, 2006

the soul (such as described by Pierre Hadot). Takahiro Nishimura (*Words as "Fibers of the Mind"*) argues that philosophy can provide care in a form of philosophy café. A concrete example of this is that attended by victims of a complex disaster.

Thus, the three papers clearly show that philosophical practice, the theme of the current issue, is closely related to the previous themes of care and catastrophe. This fact also speaks eloquently of the imminence of these themes for our time.

Refereed articles

In addition to the invited papers, we have seven reviewed papers in this issue. We would like to thank the authors who contributed their works from all over the world. We have divided the seven papers into three sections, according to their content and this, in order to give a general overview.

First, *Philosophical Practice in context*.

Tomoyuki Murase (*What makes us P4C Teachers?*) addresses the fundamental question of how teachers can be P4C teachers in the field of P4C in schools. He finds "questioning know-how" at the core of being a P4C teacher. Nimet KÜÇÜK (*The Role of Experience for the Participants in Socratic Dialogue*) sheds light on the role of experience in Socratic Dialogue, emphasizing that concrete experience is necessary for the deepening of seemingly abstract philosophical reflections searching for universality. Flavia Baldari (*Does Philosophical Practice Help?*) focuses on a philosophy café for cancer patients run by Nakaoka[5], as a material for a detailed examination of how collective philosophical dialogue can help patients.

The second section is *Philosophy as Practice and Worldview*.

Pablo Muruzabal Lambert and Tetuya Kōno show how Martial Arts in ancient Greece and Japan are not a technique for defeating one's enemies, but an adjunct in the search for *sophia*, through the analysis of concrete, historical and contemporary examples. Felipe Cuervo Restrepo, through his discussion of possible worlds in modern modal logic, finds in the myths of the Kogi people of Colombia which permeate their daily life, a philosophy of possible worlds in which not only the human other but also animals and nature can be considered as others. In doing so, he could be said to be practicing what Ran Lahav would call "worldview interpretation" in

[5] He is also one of the authors of invited articles for our journal dedicated to philosophy of care. Cf. NAKAOKA Narifumi, "How to Care with Words: Perspectives from Clinical Philosophy and Philosophical Dialogue", *Tetsugaku,* vol.5, 2021, pp. 7–22.

Philosophical Counseling. Interestingly, these papers seem to imply some connection between Philosophical Practice and World Philosophy. The latter will be the special theme of the next issue of *Tetsugaku* (See the Call for Papers for *Tetsugaku* Vol. 8 in the last section of this issue.)

The third section is *Philosophers on Dialogue*.

Through the young Gadamer's Platonism, especially his interpretation of *the Philebus*, Leonardo Marques Kussler takes the core of the theory of dialogue, which leads to Gadamer's masterpiece *Methode und Warheit*. In many ways it echoes the features of Philosophical Practice discussed so far. Starting from the difference between monologue and dialogue in Rosenzweig, Naomi Tanaka draws from the philosopher's interpretation of the Bible, seemingly unrelated to P4C, the inseparable relationship between truth and unknowability that makes dialogue in P4C possible. The two papers are good examples of the contribution that the study of the history of philosophy can make to Philosophical Practice.

Readers will find that all these articles respond to many questions in the call for papers. Nonetheless, there are still many unanswered questions. We hope this issue will open new inquiry of readers on the philosophical practice.

I. Invited Articles for the Special Theme

Education After Auschwitz: Take Two

Susan T. Gardner
Professor, Capilano University

Abstract: *The aim of this paper is to trumpet the plea made by Theodor Adorno, in his 1966 paper "Education After Auschwitz", that, since the forces of barbarity are within us all, a strong initiative that enhances autonomy is "the premier demand upon all education".*

The attempt here is to articulate precisely in what these barbarizing tendencies consist, as well as the sort of education that has any hope of neutralizing them. Ultimately, it will be argued that these tendencies can potentially be neutralized through strong educational initiatives that attempt to increase the capacity for reasoned perspective-taking, and hence autonomy, by immersing young people in vigorous "respectful", "open" dialogical relations with others, that requires that they use "truth-seeking" as opposed to "adversarial" dialogue, and employ their critical thinking skills to enhance rather diminish a reasoned opposition on the assumption that the path toward autonomy is nothing other than the path toward truth.

If such an educational strategy seems "atypical" or not worth the effort, this should alert us to the truth of Adorno's claim: that the fundamental conditions that favor the proliferation of cruel, brutal, callous and inhuman human interaction remains unchecked.

This should disturb educators of all stripes since it is they who have the knowledge and the opportunity to immunize those in their charge against the plague of barbarity. Given that this is the case, it would seem to follow that, if educators, nonetheless, refuse to pick up the gauntlet, if they continue to be blind and immobile in the face of this threat, they should be considered culpable, as were their educational forebearers before them, when the unspeakable revisits.

Keywords: *autonomy, education for autonomy, truth, truth-seeking, teaching ethics, dialogical education, philosophy for children, debarbarization.*

INTRODUCTION

It has been more than ¾ of a century since the world witnessed the horror of the holocaust: a situation in which citizens of a civilized, highly cultured society rose up to taunt, torture and kill anyone deemed unworthy by the powerful. Surely, such wholesale "inhumanity" was an aberration! How should we view ourselves, and other humans, if it was not?

We get a glimpse at how we in fact view ourselves by examining the notion of "inhuman." It means cruel, brutal, callous.[1] The fact that we refer to these traits as "inhuman" suggests that we assume that being cruel, brutal, and callous is *essentially* not human—or at least essentially not human for those who live in a "civilized", i.e., law-structured, society (note that "inhuman" also refers to being barbarous, or savage).[2]

Facts on the ground, however, bely this assumption. A brief search of the internet vomits up at least two dozen accounts of genocides that have taken place since WWII, to say nothing of the common-garden inhumanity displayed endlessly toward those with different colour skin, language, religion, gender, country of origin, sexual orientation, and those with a different ideology. What are the forces that prompt such cruelty? Might education mitigate such inhumanity? And if so, to what degree are educators responsible for ensuring that such a "debarbarizing" (Adorno, 1966, p. 4) education is actually delivered, and not merely talked about? In a 1966 radio lecture, which later become an article (1966) entitled "Education After Auschwitz", Theodor Adorno makes the claim that "The premier demand upon all education is that Auschwitz not happen again" (p.1).

> Every debate about the ideals of education is trivial and inconsequential compared to this single ideal: never again Auschwitz. It was the barbarism all education strives against. One speaks of the threat of a relapse into barbarism. But it is not a threat—Auschwitz was this relapse, and barbarism continues as long as the fundamental conditions that favored that relapse continue largely unchanged. That is the whole horror. The societal pressure still bears down, although the danger remains invisible nowadays. It drives

[1] https://www.google.com/search?q=inhumanity+meaning&rlz=1C1GGRV_enCA751CA751&oq=inhumanity&aqs=chrome.1.69i57j0l7.6661j0j8&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8
[2] https://www.google.com/search?q=inhumanity+meaning&rlz=1C1GGRV_enCA751CA751&oq=inhumanity&aqs=chrome.1.69i57j0l7.6661j0j8&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

> people toward the unspeakable, which culminated on a world-historical scale in Auschwitz. (p. 1)

With these words, Adorno challenges us to make visible the fundamental conditions that threaten continuing relapses into barbarism. As well, given Adorno's claim that "The premier demand upon all education is that Auschwitz not happen again", the challenge is also that educators clearly articulate what a "debarbarizing" education might look like. These two challenges will be taken up in this paper.

Specifically, it will be argued that all human beings are biologically programmed to favor their own group over others and that, hence, *all of us*, given the right circumstances, are prone to the sort of barbarism that is let loose through tribalism, conformity, groupthink, and mob rule. However, these tendencies can potentially be neutralized through strong educational initiatives that attempt to increase the capacity for reasoned perspective-taking, and hence *autonomy*, by immersing young people in vigorous "respectful", "open" dialogical relations with others, that requires that they use "truth-seeking" as opposed to "adversarial" dialogue, and employ their critical thinking skills to enhance rather diminish a *reasoned* opposition on the assumption that the *path toward autonomy is nothing other than the path toward truth.*

It will also be argued, however, that such an educational strategy requires guardrails. In particular, it will be noted that it is crucial to keep in mind that the goal of autonomy, in this context, has a very precise meaning, i.e., that one's thinking has been subjected to the force of objective or impartial reasoning, and hence, that it does not in any way imply "atomization" in the sense of valorizing "doing your own thing" or being a non-conformist just for the sake of it. In addition, it will be noted that, if debarbarization is indeed the goal, then hierarchical educative practices, as well as programs that attempt to directly enhance empathy may be doing more harm than good.

If the educational strategy suggested herein seems "atypical" or not worth the effort, this should alert us to the truth of Adorno's claim: that the fundamental conditions that favor the proliferation of cruel, brutal, callous and inhuman human interaction remains unchecked.

This should disturb educators of all stripes since it is they who have the knowledge and the opportunity to immunize those in their charge against the plague of barbarity.

Given that this is the case, it would seem to follow that, if educators,

nonetheless, refuse to pick up the gauntlet, if they continue to be blind and immobile in the face of this threat, they should be considered culpable, as were their educational forebearers before them, when the unspeakable revisits.

THE PROPENSITY TOWARD BARBARITY

The human propensity toward barbarity tends to percolate up from certain kinds of answers that we give ourselves to the following questions: (1) Are you "us" or "them"? (2) What shall I do? (3) Who am I?
Let us deal with these in turn.

Are you "us" or "them"?

Building primarily on his own research in the field of moral cognition, Joshua Greene, in his book *Moral Tribes: Emotion, Reason, and the Gap between Us and Them* (2014), presents an abundance of evidence to show that humans, literally from birth, are naturally inclined to separate others into groups of "us" versus "them", and to significantly favour their "own" over others.

According to Greene, evolution explains this tendency. Greene notes that because individuals can sometimes accomplish things together that they can't accomplish alone, humans acquired "a set of psychological adaptations that allow otherwise selfish individuals to reap the benefits of cooperation" (p. 23). Green notes that "Biologically speaking, humans were designed for cooperation, *but only with some people*" (p. 23). This is so because evolution is inherently a competitive process: if there is no competition, there is no evolution by natural selection (p. 24), i.e., "cooperation evolves, not because its 'nice', but because it confers a survival advantage" (p. 24). "And thus, insofar as morality is a biological adaptation, it evolved not only as a device for putting Us ahead of Me, but as a device for putting Us ahead of Them" (p. 24).

Greene goes on to note that once cooperative groupings are formed, they must figure out ways protect themselves from exploitation. This requires the ability to distinguish Us from Them, and the tendency to favor Us over Them (p. 49). This suggestion is consistent with anthropologist Donald Brown's (1991) surveys of human cultures that found that in-group bias and ethnocentrism is universal. Greene

referred to this as "tribalism" or "parochial altruism" (p. 50).

What is particularly troublesome about the human tendency toward tribal allegiance is that it can be so strong that, when push comes to shove, tribal members use reason *not* to be reasonable, but to actually filter out information that is inconsistent with the tribe's world view—something that neuroscientist Robert Burton writes of in his book *On Being Certain* (2008), as does Jonah Lehrer in his book *How Do We Decide* (2010). Thus, Lehrer notes when commenting on a study done on voting behaviour by Princeton political scientist Larry Bartels that:

> Voters think that they are thinking, but what they're really doing is inventing facts or ignoring facts so that they can rationalize decisions they've already made. Once you identify with a political party, the world is edited to fit with your ideology (p. 206).

> At such moments, rationality actually becomes a liability, since it allows us to justify practically any belief. The prefrontal cortex is turned into an information filter, a way to block out disagreeable points of view (p. 206).

Paul Bloom, in his book *Just Babies: The Origins of Good and Evil* (2013), also presents a host of empirical studies to support the view that we are born with this "irrational" tendency to sort others into groups of Us and Them—a tendency that can be produced in the lab simply by having people dress in red versus blue, or sorting people as a function of stated preference for one artist over another. Bloom notes that the natural reaction when meeting a stranger is not compassion, but fear and hatred. In this regard, we are like other primates, as Jane Goodall noted when describing gangs of chimpanzees who happened upon another tribe: if there was a baby, they'd kill and eat it; if there were females, they would mate; if a male, they would mob him, rip his flesh from his body, bite off his toes and testicles, and leave him for dead (Bloom, p. 103).

Tribalism that gives rise to the sort of barbarism that Goodall describes is thus a natural human proclivity. And unless one is a Lamarckian[3] who holds the view that centuries of cultured civilization has somehow transformed biology, we must assume that, aside from the hope of new creative possibilities that each birth

[3] In contrast to Darwin's explanation of evolution, i.e., that it was powered by natural selection as a function of environmental fit, Lamarck believed that one could inherit traits that one's parents had acquired during their lifetimes.

brings (Arendt, 1958), each child also brings with her a tribal tendency that has the propensity to revitalize the fundamental conditions that threaten continuing relapses into barbarism.

And for those of you who hope that such tribalistic tendencies are routinely culturally smothered by the kindly "goo" of democracy, you would do well to read Kelly Hayes' (2022) recent interview with Talia Lavin, author of *Culture Warlords: My Journey into the Dark Web of White Supremacy* (2020). Although Lavin writes primarily of right-wing radicalization, her description fits any group across the political spectrum when she says that these folks live in social media echo chambers in which they are subject to non-stop propaganda where people continually radicalize one another into tightly conforming groups through the corralling pressure of the hatred and disgust expressed for the outgroup. Hence the title of Hayes' piece: "Fascism Gone Mainstream".

What shall I do?

Non-human animals don't ask themselves the question "What shall I do?"; their actions are entirely determined by the environment in which they move. Human beings, on the other hand, because they have the capacity for self-conscious language-use and have the capacity to imagine themselves in the future, can ask themselves "What shall I do?" Still, though, their actions will not be qualitatively different from their non-self-conscious cousins if the answer to this question is provided by the environment in which they move, if the answers they seek are those prompted by such questions as "What is everybody else doing? What are those 'in the know', or those in power, telling us to do?"

This is the implicit message of the research carried out by Adorno et al. (1950/1993) when they argued that at least part of the vulnerability of those subjected to Nazi propaganda was due to a not-uncommon personality construct that they referred to as "an authoritarian personality": "a personality syndrome which evidenced a kind of predisposition toward an unquestioning respect for authority" (Kreml, 1977, p. 2).[4] The bottom-line conclusion of this research is that we miss the point if we over-focus on the message; if we assume that the source-problem in Nazi Germany was that, somehow, evil had suddenly bubbled up in that part of Europe, and that the way to prevent future eruptions is to manage the

[4] A finding that was later empirically supported by Milgram (1962).

message. Our focus, rather, should be, as far as possible, to deconstruct those influences that promote authoritarian personality constructs. We need to, in other words, educate our charges not to ingest messages that *we* deem worthy. We need, rather, to educate our charges so that *they* can manage messages in the sense that they can evaluate their worth. We need to be acutely aware that when human beings ask themselves "What shall I do?", if they look to others for guidance, rather than shouldering the responsibility of seeking guidance from their own powers of reasoning, whether or not barbarity is the result is merely a matter of moral luck (Nagel, 1979).

Who am I?

The question "Who am I?" is very much related to the question "What shall I do?" in the sense that the answer to the latter question will depend on how big the "I" is that asks the former question. This is so because "I's" vary in size! No one is born with an "I"; the "I" of self-consciousness, i.e., the capacity to imagine oneself from the perspective of another or what Cooley (1964) refers to as "the looking glass self" (p. 184), is a post-birth phenomenon that emerges as a function of interpersonal interaction (Mead, 1934; Gallup, 1977) and grows by degree as the result of being able to take ever greater number of perspectives into account, that then must be integrated by ever more abstract reasoning (Piaget, in Ginsberg and Opper, 1969); a phenomenon that can be captured by the notion of "quantitative expansion and qualitative upgrading" (Gardner, 1981).

The goal of strengthening the "I" so that it is strong enough to seek the responsibility for answering the question "What shall I do?" and in so doing, expand even further by gathering up the predicates that are accurate descriptions of one's actions (e.g., courageous or cowardly, etc.) (Gardner and Anderson, 2015) and hence becoming ever more "reasonably autonomous" in the Kantian sense (1967) is not obviously attractive, as John McDowell notes in his article "Autonomy and Its Burdens" (2010).

There are many reasons why this might be the case. For one, reason is a stern task master. The paradox of self-determination, aka self-construction, is that it requires self-subjection to the normative force of reason (McDowell, 2010, p. 9); i.e., we must do as we are told by reason. As well, it is exceedingly difficult to identify whether or not one's reasoning might be defective, i.e., to determine if it is

a “genuine reason” (McDowell, p. 11) or whether the reasoning reflects “a mere prejudice that informs the thinking of (one’s) community” (McDowell, p. 10). Given that this difference makes *all* the difference, “it is natural to hanker after a criterion” (McDowell, p. 11) supplied by another to help one determine the answer. But, says McDowell (p. 12), there is no such criterion: “One has to resolve for oneself the question whether the way one finds oneself inclined to think is the right way to think”. Autonomy is a responsibility that sits on individuals.

Taking these questions together

If we combine the insights gleaned from our analysis of these three questions (1) Are you “us” or “them”? (2) What shall I do? (3) Who am I?, we come to the conclusion that the human propensity toward barbarity is anchored in our evolutionarily acquired propensity toward tribalism, that will *not* be tempered if individuals do not acquire a sufficiently strong self to prevent the natural tendency to duck responsibility when faced with potentially unpopular answers to the question “what shall I do?”

Thus, the answer to the challenge of how to articulate what a “debarbarizing” education might look like seems to be an *education that strengthens the self*—a conclusion that echoes Martin Shuster’s in his book intriguingly titled *Autonomy after Auschwitz* (2014). This also accords with Adorno’s recommendation when he says that “The single genuine power standing against the principle of Auschwitz is autonomy, if I might use the Kantian expression: the power of reflection, of self-determination, of not cooperating” (p. 4). “What is necessary is what I once in this respect called the turn to the subject” (p. 2).

A “DEBARBARIZING” EDUCATION STRENGTHENS THE SELF

A strong self is one that seeks autonomy through reason.

In his book *Becoming: Basic Considerations for a Psychology of Personality* (1955), psychologist Gordon Allport describes a child as having two pathways of growth: “All his long life, this being will be attempting to reconcile these two modes of becoming, the tribal and the personal: the one that makes him into a mirror, the other that lights the lamp of individuality within” (p. 35). Referring to Maslow,

Allport refers to these two kinds of motives respectively as a deficit motive and a growth motive. He says that "Deficit motives do, in fact, call for the reduction of tension and restoration of equilibrium. Growth motives, on the other hand, (are) in the interest of distant and often unobtainable goals. As such they distinguish human from animal becoming and adult from infant becoming" (p. 68).

The deficit motivation generates a feeling of "must"; the need to maintain self-consistency for one's self-image, on the other hand, generates a feeling of "ought" (p. 72). The must-consciousness precedes the ought-consciousness, and the shift signals a move away from tribalism toward individuality (p. 74). Allport describes the drive towards individuation as a function of "propriate" striving towards what Karen Horney described as "an idealized self-image" (p. 46). The central characteristic of propriate striving is that "its goals are, strictly speaking, unattainable" (p. 67). It is this ever-receding characteristic of propriate striving that confers unity upon the personality (p. 67), or personal integration (p. 82). And Allport goes on to say that the measure of one's intellectual maturity is one's capacity to feel less and less satisfied with answers to better and better problems (p. 67).

Thus, instead of thinking "I am me and not you because my body is separate from you", Allport suggests that you ought to be able to think "I am me and not you because my self is separate from you". The difficulty with this suggestion, of course, is that one first needs to create a self in order that it can have such an individuating influence. This, indeed, was Paul Tillich's message in his influential book *The Courage to be* (1955) in which he argues that recognizing one's potential and standing on guard for it, requires courage—hence the title of his book. He argues that "The affirmation of one's essential being in spite of desires and anxieties creates joy" (p. 14) and, quoting Seneca, that this joy is not the joy of fulfilled desires; rather it is something that needs to be learned (p. 14). This is the joy that "accompanies the self-affirmation of our essential being…the courageous Yes to one's own true being" (p. 14). He goes on to say that knowledge of one's essential nature is mediated through reason—the power to have adequate ideas (p. 21)—something captured by Nietzsche's notion of the will to power (p. 26). According to Tillich, the courage to be as oneself is the courage *to follow reason and to defy irrational authority.* This is not the individual self as such which affirms itself but the individual self as the bearer of reason (p. 116). Man can affirm himself only if he affirms not an empty shell, a mere possibility, but the structure of being in which he finds himself before action and nonaction. One must participate in life! (p. 152).

A strong self, aka an autonomous self, is one that does not submit to authority of the tribe, but nonetheless, submits to a different authority, namely the authority of reason (Kant, 1967). What is interesting about this kind of submission is that, since the adequacy of one's reasoning can only be estimated by testing it against its strongest opposition (Popper, 1963; Habermas, 1992; Gardner, 2009), an autonomous self, rather than being *self-sufficient* as the name implies, is anything *but*.

Autonomy requires (1) a distinct kind of relationship with others; (2) a distinct way of engaging in dialogue; (3) a distinct kind of critical thinking; and a (4) commitment to, and deep understanding of, truth.

We will deal with these in turn.

1. Autonomy requires a distinct kind of relationship with others.

Unhappily, the very word "autonomy" tends to give rise to the counterproductive assumption that the opposite of tribal self is an independent solitary self that takes directions in isolation from others; that such a self listens only to her own voice, albeit perhaps a reasonable one.

Nothing could be farther from the truth.

While an autonomous self does indeed differ from a tribal self, s/he does not differ because s/he isolates from others; s/he differs because of the *kind* of relationship s/he establishes with others. Rather than one of mimicry, an autonomous individual engages in vigorous, albeit welcoming, dialogical reasoning relationships with others, a kind of relationship that Stephan Darwall refers to as "second-personal" (2006). This is so because s/he knows that s/he can only estimate the adequacy of her own reasoning by subjecting her viewpoints and assumptions to a vigorous falsification process; what Habermas (1996) refers to as "communicative rationality". Or, in Habermas' terms "assertions and goal-oriented actions are more rational the better the claim that is connected with them can be defended against criticism" (p. 9). And he goes on to say (p. 18), that:

> Anyone participating in argumentation shows his rationality or lack of it by the manner in which he handles and responds to the offering of reasons for or against claims. If he is "open to argument", he will either acknowledge the force of those reasons or seek to reply to them, either way he will deal

> with them in a "rational" manner. If he is "deaf to argument", by contrast, he may either ignore contrary reasons or reply to them with dogmatic assertions, and either way he fails to deal with the issues rationally.

Thus, in contrast to "deaf" interactions with those not toeing the party line, genuine interpersonal reasoning, or second-personal interaction, requires, as Darwall (2006, p. 56) notes, the assumption on the part of all participants that the win is a function of the relative strength of reason-offerings and not a function of the desired outcome on the part of any one participant (p. 21). It is only by adopting a "second personal" stance—what he also refers to as a form of "reciprocal respect"—that one can presume that one's claims have any legitimacy outside of one's own idiosyncratic view of the world.

In his book, *Human Agency and Language* (1983), Charles Taylor similarly argues that engaging with others is absolutely crucial for the emergence of human agency, what we are here referring to as autonomy. Thus, he argues that "the community is also constitutive of the individual, in the sense that the self-interpretations which define him are drawn from the interchange which the community carries on" (p. 3). And elsewhere (1994) he argues that "We define our identity always in dialogue with, sometime in struggle against, the things our significant others want to see in us", (p. 33); "My own identity crucially depends on my dialogical relations with others," (p. 34).

2. Autonomy requires a distinct way of engaging in dialogue.

Having established that a *different kind of relationship* with others (i.e., open as opposed to closed) is necessary to move toward autonomy, it is also important to emphasize that *a different kind of dialogue* is also critical.

People simply exchanging viewpoints is not sufficient to nudge participants toward autonomy. This is so because participants generally begin a dialogue with the assumption that theirs is the correct position and their goal is to convince others of the error of their ways. This results in "adversarial" interchange (Gardner, 2022) in which participants *listen only to refute.* By contrast, in "truth-seeking" dialogue, participants genuinely reflect on the merits of another's viewpoint from that other's position which hopefully results in what Gadamer called the fusing of horizons (Gadamer, 2004). Autonomy-promoting dialogue, in other words, is distinct in that

it requires *active listening*, as opposed to being merely politely silent when someone else is speaking.

Quoting Fichte, Darwall (2006) highlights the difference between "truth-seeking" and "adversarial" dialogue by arguing that we need to make a clear distinction between legitimate and illegitimate forms of address with the former being characterized "summoning" the other's will, as opposed to "impermissible ways of simply causing wanted behaviour" (p. 21), i.e., that second-personal address is reason-giving in its nature. It differs fundamentally from coercion in that it seeks to direct a person through her own free choice and in a way that recognizes her status as a free and rational agent. It is, as it were, an attempt to guide rather than goad (p. 49).

3. Autonomy requires a distinct kind of critical thinking.

As noted above (Lehrer, 2010), the better one's reasoning power, the better one's ability to filter out disagreeable input and hence protect one's preconceived ideas from being undermined! Thus, "excellence" in education, such as requiring that all or most students take critical thinking courses has the potential to enhance tribalism and all its fascist proclivities. It is of note that Germany won 68 Nobel Prizes in the 38 years from the time the Nobel Prizes began in 1901 until the beginning of the Holocaust.[5] There was nothing obviously wrong with German education.

Like knives, critical thinking skills are Janus weapons; they can be used for good or evil. It is for that reason, that the onus lies with educators who equip their students with these weapons that, *at the same time*, they educate their students about the importance of restricting their use to move *toward,* not *away* from, truth; that they educate their students to use their critical thinking skills to *strengthen,* not *weaken,* their opponent's position (Gardner, 2009a; Battersby and Bailin, 2018)—at least insofar as that opposition is offered in the spirit of Darwall's (2006) "second personal" exchange. And, importantly, that they educate their students that changing their minds in light of stronger reasons is win for who they are becoming, and the antithesis of "loss of face".

[5] https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/lists/all-nobel-prizes/

4. Autonomy requires a commitment to, and deep understanding of, truth.

A debarbarizing education can take many forms. However, one essential ingredient in any educational enterprise that lays claim to being debarbarizing is the educator's commitment to, and understanding of, truth.

If an educator is a relativist (i.e., there is no truth) or a "soft relativist" (i.e., truth's only place is in science), students who ingest either of these messages will, when faced with real-life challenges, simply move in unison with the strongest force. Or, as Erich Fromm, a Jewish psychoanalyst/sociologist who fled the Nazi regime in 1934, puts it (1947/1968), if we do not have confidence in our capacity to "reasonably" answer the fundamental questions of how we ought to live (p.14), the result will be the acceptance of a relativistic position which proposes that value judgments and ethical norms are exclusively matters of taste and arbitrary preference (p. 15). After all, if there is no truth, why not enthusiastically engage in genocidal activity if it benefits oneself or one's tribe? Why not lie, cheat, and steal if tangible rewards are the result? Why refrain from any barbaric act if there is little chance of retribution?

If, by contrast, an educator infects all those with whom s/he has contact with a passion for pursuing the best, or least worst, answer (aka, "truthier" or "truth with a small 't'" (Gardner, 2009a, p. 29), and if s/he also adamantly insists that, since the truth-seeking process is one of eliminating the weakest of all potential contenders,[6] the only way to pursue the best answer is to be open to reasoned opposing viewpoints, then, on the assumption that selves grow as a function of taking into account ever-greater numbers of viewpoints (Gardner, 1981), these two commitments combined will serve as a catalyst for self-growth and so move selves toward ever higher levels of autonomy.

It is important to reiterate that it is critical that an educator's commitment to truth not be confined to the empirical realm. If we are serious about preventing Auschwitz 2.0, it is essential that students are zealous about pursuing truth in the realm of ethics as well as in science (Gardner, 1999), and that they have the opportunity to communicatively reflect not only on big questions such as whether, and if so why, it is wrong for one group of humans to harm another group, but also on everyday seemingly mundane questions such as whether, and if so why, for example, one should confront a friend that has committed an act that, on the surface, appears unethical. It is critical that students be given the opportunity to tackle

[6] Like getting rid of dirt to have cleaner clothes.

real-life ethical issues in community with others so that they have the experience of realizing that it really is *true* that some answers do not survive falsification, and so come to the realization *themselves* that it is not the case that everyone's opinion is as good as everyone else's, and that the worth of any opinion is always and only a function of the strength of the reasons that back it.

Philosophy for Children is such a program.[7] By engaging in facilitated *Communities of Philosophical Inquiry* (Kennedy, 2012) students experience the difference between, on the one hand, just giving reasons for what they believe and, on the other, attempting to offer *will-directed* reasons (Darwall, p. 21), i.e., engaging in a form of dialogue in which there is a recognized common goal of seeking "objectively valid norms" (Fromm, 1947/1968, p. 25) rather than multiple individual over-lapping and contradictory goals of attempting to score a "win" for one's own preconceived view of the world.

Philosophy for Children has the added benefit that it is designed to be implemented from elementary grades through to adulthood. This is critical because, as Adorno (1966) notes

> One must labor against this lack of reflection, must dissuade people from striking outward without reflecting upon themselves. The only education that has any sense at all is an education toward critical self-reflection. But since according to the findings of depth psychology, all personalities, even those who commit atrocities in later life, are formed in early childhood, education seeking to prevent the repetition must concentrate upon early childhood. (p. 2)

Summary

Thus far, it has been argued that in order for educators to take up Adorno's challenge of "never again Auschwitz", they need to educate so as to promote reasonable, strong, autonomous selves which will require educating for (1) a distinct kind of relationship with others (reciprocal respect); (2) a distinct way of engaging in dialogue (active listening); (3) a distinct kind of critical thinking (to strengthen opposing views); and (4) a commitment to, and deep understanding of, truth.

Such an education, however, also requires that educators put up guardrails

[7] https://www.icpic.org/

as they embark on this journey. Those guardrails consist of (1) having a clear understanding that autonomy is not the same as non-conformity; (2) that hierarchical education may be doing more harm than good; and (3) that empathy-promotion may be doing more harm than good.

We will deal with these in turn.

Guardrails

1. Autonomy is not the same as non-conformity.

It is important to emphasize at the juncture that, while autonomous selves rarely bend to the demands of conformity *simply in order to conform*, this is not to say that the actions of an autonomous self will never or even rarely conform to the actions of her neighbours, friends, and colleagues. It is important to emphasize that the mark of autonomy is the degree to which one's actions have been subject to the normative force of objective or impartial reasoning, and *not* the degree to which it conforms to some external standard.

It is important to emphasize this point in order to short circuit the potential tendency of students, after having ingested the message that conformity is dangerous, to subsequently take pride in engaging in non-conforming behaviour for the sake of non-conformity *per se*—a way of thinking that seemed prevalent in many of the justificatory comments made by Antivaxxers during the recent pandemic.

Non-conformity just for the sake of non-conformity is potentially just as dangerous as conformity, particularly when it morphs into the contradictory form of non-conformists conforming to one another's non-conforming ideology.

Conforming to any non-rational force, be it the call of narcissistic desire, the seduction of being viewed as a rebel, or the safety of crowd cover, is not autonomy.

Autonomy indeed requires conformity, but conformity to the demanding force of objective or impartial reasoning.

2. Hierarchical education may be doing more harm than good.

Adorno argued that the premier challenge of all education must be that Auschwitz never happen again; that somehow, we must educate young humans to override their natural tendency to follow the sort of tribal dictates that might lead them down the path to barbarism.

Since the form of contemporary education is typically hierarchical, the question that we must now reflect on is whether this model helps or hinders the goal of "debarbarization". The question that we must look at is: Is there something actually wrong with "the sage on the stage"? If a teacher has a deeper understanding than the students on any given subject, what is wrong with just trying to pass it on? And, if a teacher has an inspirational take on the issue, why not try to instill that inspiration in others? And, since *reading a text*, at least in principle, embodies the same relation and assumptions as *listening to a lecture*, i.e., that the reader/listener is an open vessel, and the text and/or lecture fills it up, would not arguing against monologic teaching likewise suggest that there is something problematic in assigning students heavy reading loads? Besides, the sage on the stage is extremely efficient: there can be one sage for literally millions of recipients—hence the efficacy of on-line courses, though, of course, of propaganda as well.

Ah, but that is the rub. Most who are dedicated to the education of our youth would be outraged at the suggestion that their work is anything like the sort of efforts undertaken by Goebbels. Still, squirm though we may, it will take more than moral outrage to get out from under the charge. For all of us in the business of education, for all of us who are parents, for all of us who try to persuade friends, relatives, or, indeed, anyone convinced of the superiority of our point of view, the question is this: if we could be as successful as Goebbels in instilling or implanting the message that we are trying to convey, would we not be elated by such success? If the answer is "yes", or even "sort-of", then Goebbels is our implicit idol; and to the degree that we are successful, the recipients of our efforts could be described as young Nazis dressed up in more contemporary garb. Thus, it would seem that whether victims of persuasive tactics adopt evil, benign, or laudatory points of view is largely a function, yet again, of moral luck (Nagel, 1979).

As previously mentioned, we need to educate our charges not just to ingest messages that *we* deem worthy; we need rather to educate our charges so that *they* can *manage messages* in the sense that they can evaluate their worth. Evaluating the worth of messages, in turn, requires the ability to seek out the reasons and

evidence *both* for and against any given position and to test the strength of those reasons through counterexamples (Gardner 2009). It requires that each individual recognize that it is his/her *responsibility* (not the responsibility of figures in authority) to figure out the truth, and it is education's responsibility not only to nurture that belief, but to ensure that truth-processing as a method is understood.

Engaging students so that they reflect upon and have the opportunity to evaluate reasons both for and against any viewpoint can't be done from the stage. Of course, the sage can, from the stage, list reasons for and against any viewpoint, s/he can model reflection, but this is not equivalent of inviting students to get down and dirty and throw reasons at one another that they need to evaluate, and, most importantly, to have the opportunity to change their minds even when they have something at stake.

As McDowell (2010) has argued, autonomy is a burden, it requires extraordinary strength of reasoning power. If students haven't had the opportunity to carry heavier and heavier "reasoning weights" in all their long schooling history, we cannot be surprised when they fail when faced with the seduction of their peers who are following a treacherous pied piper.

3. Empathy-promotion may be doing more harm than good.

Many believe, not surprisingly, that "debarbarization" can be cultivated through nurturing empathy. If we just get more people to love one another, to treat their neighbors as they would have themselves treated, surely, we can build a kinder gentler world. This is the goal of such programs as *Roots of Empathy*,[8] to say nothing of the fact that it is a founding message of Christianity that nonetheless led its followers to "follow the leader" into the Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition, the Irish Troubles, and other barbaric enterprises.

Still, many may believe that even if such attempts do not always transform young minds so that they "contribute to making the world a better place for all of its inhabitants" (Singer, 1981), at worst, surely, they are ineffectively benign. This assumption is erroneous. For one thing, promulgating such sweet-sounding attributes as "caring thinking" (Sharp, 2014), or expanding the circle of care (Singer 1981) may paralyze an agent at precisely the moment when the courage to "stand against" might be the only viable ethical option (Gardner, 2009b, pp. 421–422). For

[8] https://rootsofempathy.org/

another, if we tell students what sentiments are or are not appropriate, we are implicitly sending the message that the dictates of a perceived authority ought to determine how they feel. Such a strategy, if it works, will be a source of immediate gratification for those in authority, but it will render their charges utterly defenceless when faced with not so benign authoritative messages.

Adorno makes a similar case when he says: "Understand me correctly. I do not want to preach love. I consider it futile to preach it; no one has the right to preach it" (Adorno, 1966, p. 9). "I consider it an illusion to think that the appeal to bonds—let alone the demand that everyone should again embrace social ties so that things will look up for the world and for people—would help in any serious way" (p. 3). But worse, these "so-called bonds easily become either a ready badge of shared convictions—one enters into them to prove oneself a good citizen—or they produce spiteful resentment, psychologically the opposite of the purpose for which they were drummed up" (p. 3). It is for this reason that the advocacy of bonds is so fatal. People who adopt them more or less voluntarily are placed under a kind of permanent compulsion to obey orders (p. 4).

All of which is echoed by Darwall (2006) who argues that sympathy is condescending. A more dignified alternative is engaging in the sort of reasonable exchange that presupposes mutual respect (p. 47), to say nothing of Kant having said long ago that we cannot have a duty to experience a feeling (1967).

Paul Bloom argues at length more specifically *against empathy* (in a book by that title, 2016) by saying that moral decisions that are shaped by the force of empathy often make the world worse because empathy leaves us insensitive to the long-term consequences of our acts and blind to the suffering of those we do not and cannot empathize with (p. 9). As Bloom notes "empathy is like a spotlight directing attention to where it is needed. But spotlights have a narrow focus" (p. 31). Since you cannot empathize with more than one or two people at any one time (p. 33), empathy can sway us toward one over the many (p. 34) —like a doctor trying to push her patient to the top of a transplant waitlist while ignoring the harm done to others who might have been on the waitlist much longer (p. 86).

Ultimately Bloom argues in line with the message presented here that it is much better to use reason and cost-benefit analysis, drawing on more distanced compassion and kindness, than to rely on empathy (p. 39); *that we do our best when we do what there are the best reasons for doing* (p. 52); that a reasoned, even counter-empathetic analysis of moral obligations and likely consequences is a better guide to planning for the future than the gut wrench of empathy (p. 127).

CONCLUSION

Our biases are here to stay. Because of our coalitional nature, we are programmed to forever favor our Us over Them (Bloom, 2013, p. 127). Thus, human barbarity is percolating near the surface always and everywhere, and unless there is a concerted, forceful, and widespread effort to curtail this natural tendency, "inhumanity has a great future" (Adorno, 1966, quoting French Philosophy Paul Valery, p.7).

Yet despite our understanding of this human predisposition, and despite witnessing the horror of its flourishing in an otherwise highly cultured extremely educated populace, we nonetheless sleepwalk into the future, utterly ignoring the demands of Auschwitz. Of this nonchalance, Adorno says:

> I cannot understand why it has been given so little concern until now. To justify it would be monstrous in the face of the monstrosity that took place. Yet the fact that one is so barely conscious of this demand and the questions it raises shows that the monstrosity has not penetrated people's minds deeply, itself a symptom of the continuing potential for its recurrence as far as peoples' conscious and unconscious is concerned. (Adorno, 1966, p. 1)

Though Adorno made a plea to the world to "wake up" more than ½ a century ago, we have not heeded his call and, despite barbarity erupting all around, we continue to dreamily assume, that, on the back of "education as usual", we are marching toward a future of peace, prosperity, and good governance.

Surely, we can do better.

But how?

A suggested answer is encrypted in a comment made by French philosopher Paul Valery some time ago when he said that "The best way to make your dreams come true is to wake up".[9]

This, then, is the spirit of the argument presented here: that it serve as a gong from a gigantic alarm clock. We need to wake up to the fact that all humans come programed into the world with barbaric tendencies, and that these tendencies need to be neutralized through an education that chronically exposes individuals to facilitated *Communal Inquiries* with others, of the sort practiced in *Philosophy for*

[9] https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/141425.Paul_Val_ry

Children, that focus on topics of genuine relevance, so that they gain extended experience in creating "open" dialogical relationships by engaging in "truth-seeking" as opposed to "adversarial" dialogue, while using their critical thinking skills to enhance rather than diminish *reasoned* opposition.

The happy side effect of this reasoning, dialogical, *truth*-seeking experience is that autonomy, i.e., self-growth, will thereby be nourished. Since the self or self-consciousness emerges with the capacity to imagine oneself from the perspective of others (Mead, 1934; Gallup, 1977), and since increasing one's capacity for perspective-taking results in self-growth (Piaget, in Ginsberg and Opper, 1969; Gardner, 1981), and since truth-seeking requires that one attempt to access as many perspectives as possible in order to estimate the adequacy of one's own position, it follows that educative strategies that focus on the pursuit of truth, in the very same process, enhance autonomy.

This then should be the goal. To amplify autonomous reasoning in individuals and to multiply those with this capacity and proclivity, so that we decrease the fodder for the forces of groupthink, as well as fortify the kinds of "thinking barricades" that may help deter humanity from travelling yet again and again and again down the path to the unthinkable.

This may be a distant and seemingly unobtainable goal, however, as Allport (1955/1983) reminds us, it is only this sort of "growth motive" that ultimately distinguishes humans from animals and adults from infants (p. 68).

It is time, then, for educators to wake up and grow up.

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On Self-Defeating 'Mental Viruses'

An Interdisciplinary Study in Philosophy, Psychiatry, & Mental Healthcare

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Abstract: *Mental distress and suffering are often medically diagnosed as 'mental illnesses'. But an illness is traditionally defined as a malfunction in the biological body which does not include the non-biological mind. Problems with the mind are more accurately described by intangible symptoms such as confusion, sadness, fear, and so on. These can act like organic viruses, spreading throughout the entire system to become a threat to overall mental and physical health. Psychotropic medications may help ease some of the symptoms of a 'viral-mental' infestation but they can't eliminate existential causes and real-life concerns. Unfortunately, psychiatric drugs are also known to produce various alarming physical side-effects, and withdrawal symptoms. Clinical research data shows that the best counteractive treatment for 'mental viruses' is so-called 'talk therapy', fashioned after beneficial philosophical discussions.*

1) INTRODUCTION

Khalida[1] looked embarrassed as she told me she had been expelled from university. The only child of an immigrant father, she graduated from high school near the top of her class, and was awarded a full scholarship to the most prestigious university on the west coast of Canada. She continued on to achieve an undergraduate degree with first class honours (summa cum laude), majoring in Western philosophy. To reward herself for her accomplishment she decided to take a couple of years off to earn some money, travel, and recharge her batteries before enrolling into post-graduate studies. There her intelligence shone through her passion for the study of philosophy among a ten-student cohort. She was the only female in the room, not unusual in upper-level philosophy courses. But this soon resulted in difficulties. Her professor felt that her constant disagreements with him were too much of a disruption of the group. He saw

[1] Based on an actual client case. Not the student's real name.

her as overly critical of his specialized handouts, and as a challenge to his authority over other students.

Khalida had learned to argue passionately and loudly from the years spent at home defending her youthful liberal values against the views of her conservative father. She described her father as a hard-working, stern man with an old-school mind set. She and her grandmother let him win most arguments by sheer volume.

As an under-graduate Khalida had enjoyed having arguments with her various professors and classmates. "It's fun to argue when people stick to the topic, and don't attack each other personally", she told me. Sadly, her post-graduate philosophy professor took her arguments personally. He did not hear her salient points; he noticed only what he called her "radical feminist 'let's-fix-this-world' attitude". When word about this spread on campus, and their misaligned communications threatened to become a newsworthy public spectacle, the university's administration worried that their school's shining reputation might be tarnished. So its governing body concluded that it was in the best interest of the institution's good name to temporarily suspend her enrollment, and allow her to "cool her blazing spirit".

The circumstances surrounding Khalida and her philosophy professor—as they were explained to Khalida by the head of the philosophy department—was that the professor had complained several times to the administration that she was proving to be too much of a problem for him to deal with. He claimed he had asked her politely to leave the group on several occasions but that she had stubbornly continued to attend, and was "disrupting" it with her "hair-splitting" challenges.

In some academic cultures there's an unspoken rule that students must show respect and deference to professors by never questioning, and certainly never challenging them. But in North America, especially in philosophy classes, animated arguments between professors and their students are quite common. In fact they're often cheerfully invited. But Khalida's professor was not interested in having her share with the entire group what was on her mind.

2) THE DICHOTOMY

Mark Rowlands, Professor of philosophy at the University of Miami, agrees with the 18th century Scottish philosopher David Hume when he says he's not sure the mind exists at all. "I never encounter my mind. …To encounter your mind is to encounter your mental states and processes" (Rowlands 8–9). George Berkeley, an earlier Irish

philosopher, although unsure exactly what to call it, suggested a similar perspective of ‘mind’. He wrote,

> there is something which knows or perceives [ideas], and exercises divers operations, such as willing, imagining, and remembering about them. This perceiving, active being is what I call mind, spirit, soul, or my self (Berkeley, 1 & 1, 2).

These philosophers argued that there’s no object reference or concrete ‘thing’ to be found that lies beneath cognitive states and processes. While the brain can be compared to a hard copy novel with many pages of text, the mind is like the intangible story that transcends the physical book. The story can’t be understood by examining the paper pages, or the ink marks on those pages. Like the novel, the mind is someone’s evocative imaginings, insights, and opinions which combined reveal that author’s nature, personality, and self. It has been variously identified as the psyche, consciousness, spirit, inner essence, and the soul. In short, the mind is not physical, and is nothing like the brain at all. When neuroscientists study the brain in order to understand the mind they’re mistakenly studying the book’s paper pages and ink marks in trying to understand the story.[2] But the container and the content are not the same. Those who regard the brain and the mind as identical are guilty of fictional literalism: assuming that a metaphorical construct (the mind) is an ontological reality (the brain) (see Zachar chap. 6).

The mind is the activity of the brain. It develops itself in a non-material way by not only experiencing but then also reflecting on its experiences. While we can’t exchange our brains we can easily change our minds to alter our common beliefs and values, our social ‘programming’ and its residue that has been ‘downloaded’ from previous generations. Some type of brain is universal to all sentient creatures, but the mind is the experience of dynamic thoughts and emotions—the consciousness—that defines each of us as uniquely human. The materialist position held by most empirical scientists and some philosophers—that all mental events are reducible to biological brain processes (e.g. Bell, 66–73)—naïvely implies that the brain falls in love, that the brain hopes it’s loved in return, that the brain has plans for a romantic evening, and so on. Such talk about the brain having hopes and making plans is what British philosopher Gilbert Ryle famously dubbed a ‘category error’ (Ryle, 1949). It's

[2] Two other appropriate metaphors are a printed sheet of music (Hofstadter p. 9–10), and a USB flash drive.

nonsense. It's like saying that Beethoven's fifth symphony is green. It makes it seem as though the brain is an anthropomorphic (human-like) entity that falls in love, makes plans, and so on. But it's not the brain… it's the person who loves, hopes, and makes plans. (Damasio, passim; see also Plato's *Phaedo* sec 97–98). As 20th century French existentialist Philosopher Gabriel Marcel wrote, "The moment I treat my body [or brain] as an object of scientific knowledge I banish myself to infinity" (Marcel, 12).

The self is only a biological entity when the word 'self' is used to refer to the physical body and its fleshly brain. And it's meaningless to speak of the 'contents' of the mind since the mind is not an organic protein package like the brain. The mind is not a physical 'thing' containing other things. Yet it's a common-but-misguided assumption that, because the mind and brain are believed to be identical, the mind is also vulnerable to hundreds of organic illnesses. It's not.

3) THE DISTRACTION TRAP

The clinical definitions of most of the leading 'mental illnesses', such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and so on are so vague, ambiguous, and so all-inclusive that they can easily be applied to ordinary feelings and emotions (Maj et al, 150). In fact this has made it impossible to reach a professional consensus on the medical definitions, diagnoses, or treatments of most so-called 'mental illnesses'. Biological psychiatry or bio-psychiatry, which is currently North America's primary approach to diagnoses and treatment, is not just an inexact science, it's not a science at all. There are no 'mental illnesses' or 'mind diseases'. There's only mental damage and injuries suffered by living within harmful social environments.

Standard treatment for so-called 'mental illness' is based on a lack of empirical data, and a foundation of contiguous false conclusions: that the mind and brain are identical; that mental illnesses are brain disorders; that drugs should take precedence in treatments; and so on. Associate Professor of clinical psychiatry Colin Ross maintains that the field of psychiatry does not have a coherent, unified model of so-called 'mental illnesses. He says, "Psychiatry suffers from an identity disorder which it's currently trying to solve by forcing the adoption of a bio-reductionist paradigm" by defining 'being human' entirely in biological terms (Ross, 86). An ever-expanding list of so-called 'mental illnesses'—new disorders and syndromes diagnosed as 'chemical imbalances' in the brain—are voted into and out of existence by a panel of psychiatrists (Kendler, 115).

While the term ‘mental viruses’ is used in this essay as a metaphor for dynamic but troublesome thoughts and emotions, bio-psychiatrists use the term ‘mental illnesses’ and consider them brain diseases. The accurate understanding of so-called ‘mental illnesses’ is that they don’t exist. Brain pathology includes organic diseases like cancer and tumors, but there is no mind cancer and there are no mental tumors. To say that ‘mental illnesses’ are natural disease entities would be like claiming that beliefs and assumptions are illnesses, or that worry and sadness are diseases. Beliefs, assumptions, worry, and sadness are real, but they consist of abstractions; they’re a different kind of ‘real’ than the brain. To argue that the brain and the mind are one-and-the-same thing is a “conceptual abyss” that can’t be intelligibly explained (Wrathall, 9–11). And neither can the concept of ‘mental illnesses.

After more than fifty years of searching without success some genetic researchers are none-the-less still trying to locate the elusive genes they believe to be responsible for mental illnesses. But if so-called ‘mental illnesses’ were genetic pathologies then no one would ever recover from them. Yet many people do, even without medications or professional help. (Warme, 90). And contrary to common belief, twin studies have not established any genetic causes of mental suffering. (Faraone et al, 21, 33, 44). The problem is that most of today’s bio-psychiatrists are reluctant to take into account the environmental stressors of life as the cause of so-called ‘mental illnesses’. They prefer the hypothetical chemical imbalances assumption, or the genetic disposition hypothesis (Ross & Pam, Chaps. 4 & 5).[3] A genetic assessment will reveal nothing at all about the mental and emotional strain on a distraught teenager whose mother tells her she’s possessed by the devil (Ross & Pam, 246).

The attribution of distress to an individual’s genetic predisposition, abnormal brain chemistry, or so-called ‘mental illness’ is today being cautiously criticized by some mental healthcare clinicians as a ‘distraction trap’. They see it as a means for diverting attention away from desperate environmental conditions and appalling social inequalities that are widely known to cause mental suffering (Mills, 20). It shifts the focus of treatment to the consumption of pills. If it’s held that it’s totally wrong to classify mental distress, worry, suffering, confusion, and so on as brain

[3] Psychiatrist George Engel conceptualised the ‘Biopsychosocial’ model of health in 1977. It suggests that to understand a person’s condition three factors must be taken into consideration: the biological, the psychological, and the social. This model has only recently begun to gain attention in the psychiatric community (see Savulescu et al).

diseases, or even worse as so-called ‘mental illnesses’, then surely there must be a better explanation.

4) ‘VIRAL-MENTAL’ MANAGEMENT

Human beings are not made up primarily of uniquely human cells that are occasionally invaded by microbes. Our bodies are really superorganisms of cohabitating cells: fungi, bacteria, and, most numerous of all, viruses. And just like there are ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bacteria, viruses fall into the same dichotomous categories. The continual challenge is to figure out how to defeat the bad ones and encourage the good ones (Scientific American).

Today most people are familiar with computer viruses. A computer virus is loosely defined as a destructive program that, when executed, invades existing computer programs in which it replicates itself to spread damage throughout the system. And much like in the case of a computer, sometimes the human mind and heart require inspection, detection, and deletion of undesirable (mental) viruses, and ‘reprogramming’ to repair any poorly functioning mental ‘algorisms. At other times it requires a ‘reboot’, a paradigm shift, a fresh perspective away from previous influences and harmful habits of mind.

Mental viruses are typically transmitted from one person or group to another, and can cause serious damage to the ‘host’. Even a personal concern, worry, or sadness, if left unresolved, can proliferate virus-like to potentially overwhelm the entire system. Mental viruses don’t emerge randomly from a hypothetical ‘unconscious’. They’re psycho-socially generated, often in the form of potent criticisms that become rooted in the victim’s self-concept. They bleed into the victim’s thoughts and emotions, and can wear down that individual’s cognitive ‘immune system’ until the resulting ‘infection’ is diagnosable as a ‘mental illness’.

Mental viruses are corrosive, eating away at self-esteem like an acid. They often, but not always, originate in the experience of childhood criticisms, abuse, and/or neglect. They can germinate in an environment of poor personal support; they flourish in intimidating school environs, in overt misogyny at work, in sadistic racism, in immoral homophobia, in exhausting poverty, in condemnatory religious dogma, and so on. Mental viruses will often also infect the body with symptoms such as headaches, loss of appetite, weight gain, sadness, sexual dysfunction, heart problems, suicidal ideation, and so on.

No child is born with a mental virus; none inherit them genetically. But almost every person on earth is vulnerable to the catastrophic self-destruction that a ‘viral-mental infection’ can bring about. And while most biological viruses are transmitted to the host from external agents, a mental virus like, for example the sadness of ‘depression’, also often originates within the self (Ratcliffe, 96).

Depression is an ‘umbrella term’ for unwelcome cognitions and emotions, a cluster of symptoms such as sadness, hopelessness, regret, guilt, shame, despair, and so on. The term ‘depression’ does not refer to a disease that *causes* sadness, hopelessness, regret, etc. Simply living a human life can cause the thoughts and emotions that can cause mental viruses, classifiable under a ‘mental illness’ label. Depression often initially manifests internally as a small but burdensome self-doubt that, given enough gestation time, can grow exponentially into self-effacing self-criticism and other self-damaging mental processes. And although it’s not actually a communicable disease, when a mental virus is diagnosed as the so-called ‘mental illness’ of depression in one member of a family it can have an adverse effect on every single family member. It can create multiple self-criticism viruses in the caring individuals, as well as self-guilt for not having done enough for the suffering loved one. It can ultimately destroy the entire family unit.

Mental misery was at one time dealt with by means of compassionate person-to-person discussions. But today’s bio-psychiatrists often simply renew prescriptions for brain-dulling psychotropic agents. Psychoactive medications only impair normal brain and mind functioning, and are in fact incapable of defeating any virulent ‘mental viruses’.

5) ‘IN-VALID’ INDIVIDUALS

For more than fifty years the bio-psychiatric establishment has propagated the erroneous claim that anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, and so on are known to be brain diseases. And yet there are no scientific findings that verify this claim (Whitaker, 358). The lack of empirical data exposes conventional bio-psychiatry as a pseudo-science, leaving it as nothing more than a persistent ideology. Modern catalogue-style ‘psychodiagnosing’, and the abundance of psychiatric medications encourage doctors to stop noticing the disturbing realities of human existence. Professor of psychiatry and past president of the Canadian Psychoanalytic Society, Gordon Warme laments that, “very few modern psychiatrists attend seriously to the legitimate riches of what

[their] patients say" (Warme, 116). A 'mental illness' diagnosis victimizes and destroys an individual's self-esteem by relegating them to the realm of the non-valid or 'in-valid' individual. The mental healthcare establishment has led patients to believe that psychodiagnosing and "pharma-centric" (Mills 8) treatments for so-called 'mental illnesses' are appropriate because they supposedly follow a conventional medical model.

6) 'PSYCHOPHARMATOPIA'

The legitimate medical model involves three steps: (1) valid laboratory tests that empirically identify distinct biological disorders and suggest their origins; (2) diagnoses that classify the symptoms consistently across most cultures; and (3) treatment protocols that have been empirically proven to be effective. But in standard *mental* healthcare a diagnosis ('2') is given without validation from any laboratory tests ('1') because there simply are no medical tests that indicate 'mental illnesses'. Then ('3') a treatment protocol is followed which often differs substantially from one clinician to the next (see Campbell).

The so-called 'psychometrics' in mental healthcare used to classify suffering individuals are unsophisticated questionnaires. Clinicians must rely on patient accuracy and truthfulness, and then subjectively *interpret* the answers patients give on those forms. This can lead to a wide disparity of conflicting diagnoses. According to Professor of psychology, Peter Zachar, since there are no laboratory tests for 'mental illnesses' clinicians must literally resort to "using their intuitions" to identify and medicate a supposedly diseased mind (Zachar, 120).

Just like the so-called 'science' of diagnosing and treating 'mental illnesses' is in reality not a science at all, bio-psychiatry is not a *medical* science at all because there are no empirical tests supporting it. There's simply "no convincing evidence that psychiatric disorders or symptoms are caused by a chemical imbalance" in the brain, nor that any psychiatric potion could correct such a chemical imbalance (Mills, 19). It's just impossible to eradicate mental viruses successfully with medications because biochemical formulas are only effective within biological tissues, while 'mental illnesses' and mental viruses are non-biological metaphors.

Every psychoactive prescription medication will come with at least one, if not many adverse side-effects (see Breggin). Some of them exacerbate the very suffering they were meant to relieve, causing symptoms so serious that they are in turn

diagnosed as ‘iatrogenic’ illnesses: sicknesses caused by the initial treatment itself. Unfortunately, no pill will help a patient struggling with existential difficulties: make an ethical decision, sort out a relationship difficulty, or discover meaning in life. There may be some symptomatic relief, but the life situations that have turned into predicaments, and the medication’s brain-dulling, mind-obstructing side-effects remain. This can escalate into a chronic condition in which potentially hazardous psychiatric medications lead the trusting patient to the utopian belief in the powers of those chemical remedies: the belief in ‘psychopharmatopia’.

Furthermore, dosages must be repeatedly increased as the human body naturally adapts, developing a tolerance to the drugs consumed. Then the attempt to withdraw from an unbearable psychiatric medication can become a painful dilemma (see Carey & Gebeloff). Zachar argues that it’s dangerous to take psychiatric medications to alleviate undesirable human emotions because the capacity to tolerate sadness—a major component of depression—(and other negative emotions) is an important psychological ability which contributes to the development of compassion and empathy (Zachar, 156).

It’s a sad state of affairs that the impotent struggle for emotional tranquillity amid a fractured social reality is being catalogued by ‘experts’ under numerous newly-minted ‘mental illness’ labels. Broken hearts are called ‘chemical imbalances’, while tortured minds have been biologically diagnosed as ‘serotonin deficiencies’. Family relationship difficulties are obscured with anti-anxiety pills, while failed personal relationships are soothed with antidepressants that are no more effective than placebos (Kirsch). The past six decades has seen well-meaning mental healthcare counsellors and therapists increasingly controlled by the corporate doctrine of psychopharmacotherapy: the misguided, patented procedural protocols for the treatment of the unknown causes of so-called ‘comorbid mental illnesses’. This ironic treatment scheme clearly demands a shift to something more effective and less harmful to the patient.

A careful review of many years of clinical research data has shown that the best treatment for mental suffering is not psychiatric drugs but rather any of the many forms of ‘talk therapy’ that are fashioned after beneficial philosophical discourse: the “active employment of reason” (Collins, 25; see also Davidson; Simpson; March; Hembree; Cahill; Rothbaum). Moreover, a dose of philosophy generates no negative side-effects, and does not leave the patient to deal with agonizing withdrawal symptoms. Epicurus said, “We must not make a pretense of doing philosophy, but really do it; for what we need is not the semblance of health but real health” (Inwood

et al, 39). Genuine mental health requires the avoidance and/or defeat of mental viruses, not with chemical remedies but with remedial philosophy.

7) ANTI-VIRAL REASONING

The early philosophers were very clear about what they thought philosophy was meant to do. The early philosopher Seneca lived around the beginning of the Christian era (1 CE–65 CE). In his *Letter to Lucilius* he wrote that what philosophy holds out to humanity is counsel. Epicurus (341 BC–270 BC) stated emphatically, "Empty is the argument of the philosopher which does not relieve any human suffering" (Inwood et al, 99). The Stoic slave and philosopher, Epictetus (55 AD–135 AD) famously said, "It's not events that disturb people, it's their judgements concerning them".

But the upset people who have come to me for counselling have often been troubled by difficult or distressing life circumstances which seemed to be caused by fate or 'the gods' because they felt beyond human control. My clients often had great difficulty making rational judgements concerning their troublesome life situations because they were confused by their pain, incapable of deciding what to do next. Of course many of their difficulties also originated in their own beliefs about events in their lives, due to subtle fallacies in their reasoning. A fallacy is an informal error in logic that's often implicated in generating troublesome mental viruses (see Appendix).

The world of philosophy offers many tools other than good logic to assist in reasoning. There are ethical theories and moral cases to learn from; there are philosophical critiques of civil law, science, religion, and philosophy itself; there are perspectives on reality (metaphysics); there's inquiry into knowledge and assumptions (epistemology); there are in-depth explorations into human rights and feminism; lately there has been increased scrutiny of questionable justifications for war, and so on.

Mental viruses can make a person *self-doubting*: "I probably won't be able to understand this essay"; *lacking self-confidence*: I won't take the lead in the project if someone else wants it; *self-defeating*: "I'm not even going to try because I'll probably just mess things up anyway"; *self-censoring*: "I shouldn't speak because I'm not as smart as the others"; *self-denying*: "I don't deserve the praise; any dummy could do what I did"; *self-distrusting*: "I'll probably forget their names even if I write them all down"; *self-excluding*: "I would volunteer if I had anything good to contribute, but I

don’t”; *self-effacing*: “I don’t deserve to be loved”; *self-harming*: “I deserve my addiction to drugs”; *self-hating*: “I wish I was someone else”; *self-sabotaging*: “I don’t expect things to get better”; *self-shaming*: “I’m too fat because I have no self-control”; *self-isolating*: “no one would want to marry me”; *self-tormenting*: “all of these mental viruses are probably true of me”; and often *self-medicating*: “if I take this drink/pill I’m sure I’ll feel much better about myself”. Worst of all are the various noxious combinations.

Philosophy applied as an anti-viral agent can dispel self-damaging thoughts and feelings. Philosophical knowledge and associated reasoning strategies can reduce self-doubt by raising the self-confidence-generating knowledge that one’s own decision-making is logical, ethical, and reasonable. It encourages self-reflection and self-monitoring to ensure that one’s actions and words are self-initiated and self-willed. This leads to self-respect, self-acceptance, self-reliance, and ultimately self-care. Philosophical discussions create not only improved self-mastery and thereby self-control, they reduce the self-defeating urge to self-diagnose and self-medicate. And the only ‘side-effects’ are self-sufficiency, self-improvement, and self-acceptance.

Getting rid of a mental virus that grows into a diagnosable ‘mental illness’ such as depression is no easy task. It may require a significant alteration of the problematic personal beliefs, desires, fears, values, and so on that drive thoughts and behaviors. It demands willpower and courage to undertake a careful critique and modification of the entrenched thinking habits that generate the descending spiral of negative thinking (Kendler, 176–77).

The elements of the mental virus often diagnosed as ‘anxiety’ are stressors that can generate still more stressors in a self-perpetuating vicious circle. But far from a so-called ‘mental illness’ anxiety is a self-protecting fear response to a perceived threat that can escalate until it’s so debilitating it becomes an impairment to the humans it evolved to protect (Fábrega 81–2).

The human mind plagued by a viral infestation can be helped to develop new mental defence systems. This can include discussions with a philosophically-trained counsellor. The suffering individual can learn critical and creative thinking strategies, new perspectives on previously held troublesome assumptions and values, and an honest self-appraisal of one’s familiar impulsive responses to situations.

And just like a consultation with a medical doctor is not a social visit, a discussion with a philosophically trained counsellor isn't just a casual conversation. And neither is it simply a logical deconstruction of thoughts and feelings, a sharing of clever ancient aphorisms, or a quick cliché fix. A discussion with a philosophically trained counsellor is therapeutic in that the suffering individual is listened to, cared for, and cared about. The one in distress senses the empathy of a fellow human being who tries their best to sincerely understand the experiential origins of their sadness, their worry, or their confusion. There's a compassionate connection—a caring partnership; a comforting professional friendship—that relieves the gloomy sense of loneliness and isolation that can arise in the chilling environment of a clinical diagnosis and the bitter reality of psychiatric drug treatments. Once this has been achieved the path to solving disturbing logical conundrums or distressing existential issues becomes far less forbidding. Now the opportunity exists for the philosopher to share expert knowledge of logic for use in good decision-making, quote memorable passages from iconic ancient and modern texts, and perhaps come up with alternative points of view or helpful advice that will assist the patient or client in overcoming their mental viruses.

In her book *Pathological Anxiety* Professor of psychiatry Barbara Rothbaum reminds her readers that emotional processing requires "the presence of information that disconfirms the erroneous elements" that are causing the despair. Compassionate listening is essential; but knowledgeable advice-giving is also helpful. She cites the example of grieving mothers who had lost their babies to sudden infant death syndrome. Those who were able to share their loss with a supportive social network overcame their grief far sooner than did mothers who had no one to talk with (Rothbaum 7, 13). A compassionate conversation can do what psychiatric classifications and psychiatric medications are never able to do.

> Bio-psychiatry, despite its loud claims has never identified any physiological disorder in its patients—and never will. Depression can't be diagnosed by measuring the amount of serotonin in a synaptic cleft; it's diagnosed by talking [with] the person about his way of life and his personal sense of himself (Warme, 101).

Biological psychiatry has not made a single discovery of significant clinical relevance in the past fifty years, despite hundreds of millions of dollars spent on research (Ross, 116). Besides inventing many new 'mental illnesses', and brewing up

more harsh bio-chemical merchandise every year as part of their business model, bio-psychiatry has accomplished very little in its treatment of so-called ‘mental illnesses’, and especially in terms of preventing them.

8) ‘IMMUNO-PHILOTHERAPY’

When it comes to physical health, there’s a relatively new movement in our society toward the *prevention* of illnesses. People are learning how to eat healthier foods, participate in regular physical activity, drink less alcohol, stop smoking, get adequate amounts of sleep, and so on. This development has driven many individuals to seek information and treatment from those health care professionals who practice preventive medicine. Their focus is on education as a proactive means of avoiding health difficulties in the first place, instead of only remediating the symptoms of already existing conditions. After all, prevention is the best protection. This same preventive approach applies to caring for the mind. Upon request philosophically trained counsellors are happy to share with their clients their specialized philosophical knowledge. This informal education promotes the client’s autonomy and helps them avoid a prolonged dependence on a practitioner. Philosophical knowledge can act as a catalyst to accelerate the personal immune response against many, if not all mental viruses.

If good reasoning is learned early in life then the individual is much less likely to be led into the kind of mental despair that can be diagnosed as ‘mental illnesses’. In an essay in the *Journal of Mental Health Counseling* Professor of psychology Mark Kiselica and Counselling Psychologist Christine Look points out that

> preventive counseling has been a defining characteristic of mental health counseling throughout the history of the profession. Yet a review of the literature suggests that prevention has rarely been emphasized in the training process or in the practice of mental health counseling (Kiselica).

There have been very few deliberate attempts made to teach philosophy in the public sphere as a preventive measure against so-called ‘mental illnesses’. It’s impossible to stimulate a serological response in people, boosting their mental immune system, with medications. It requires a proven therapy that instils the ability

to think clearly and wisely about life's many demanding trials and tribulations. Developing good reasoning abilities in primary school pupils is one such preemptive endeavour that can help the young deal with contingent life stressors, avoid mental viruses, and ultimately escape a future diagnosis of 'mental illness' and its associated troublesome drug treatments.

9) CONCLUSION

When Khalida first came to see me she was visibly distressed. Her passionate participation in academic philosophical discussions had been absurdly misinterpreted by her professor as being disrespectful rebellion. She told me she had tried to talk with him after class on a number of occasions, but he dismissed her like a nuisance, or some kind of threat. The university administration had simply sided with her professor on principle, and had eventually asked security to escort her off the campus.

"You know, I've read a ton of philosophy books on my own", she explained. "Socrates said, 'Philosophy begins with wondering'. So I told the professor that I was wondering about his interpretation of *Phaedo*. He said that in *Phaedo* Plato claimed that the 'realm of the Forms' is spiritual. But I don't see it that way at all. I read Plato as speaking metaphysically or ontologically or even epistemologically… not theologically. Plato was a philosopher, not a priest".

"Yes, I know", I said teasingly.

"I was just trying to explain this to him. But he became very annoyed with me, and upset, like I'd done something wrong. I guess maybe I did, but I'm not exactly sure what. I just wanted to get his opinion about what I think Plato meant".

"That seems fair to me", I said seriously.

"I know. Right? Ok… Well, I did get a bit loud when he didn't even want to hear what I had to say. But I never attacked him or anything. I just got a bit loud, that's all".

"I'm sure you weren't a real threat to him".

"No way! I always tried to remember what you taught us the first day of class", she said, "that philosophy's not a combat sport, or a battle like Althusser said it was. A good argument is always a 'win-win' situation. If the other person's right and I'm wrong that's OK because then I'll have learned something from him; and if I'm right and the other person's wrong then that's OK too because he might have learned

something from me. But this professor doesn’t see it that way. He thinks if he admits he’s wrong and I’m right then he’s a loser”.

“Well, I hate to say this, but sometimes you have to do what’s required by the university and by the professors if you want them to give you that degree. What I mean is that sometimes you have to ‘play the game’, and do no more than what’s expected of you”.

“Sure, but… I didn’t… I wasn’t … Oh, I see what you mean”.

I told Khalida that at one time I had a very enthusiastic young male student in one of my classes. I explained to him that I appreciated his intensity and his passion for philosophy. But because he was so over-eager and outspoken I asked him to please tone it down a bit to allow other students in the class a chance to speak. I told him if he agreed to this I would make him my ‘go-to’ person: I would ask his opinion whenever none of the other students raised a hand. He was very happy with this arrangement, and it worked out really well for everyone concerned. So I suggested to Khalida that perhaps she could designate herself to be the ‘go-to’ person in her group by not always being the first to speak up.

But I reminded her that no two professors are alike. Some professors appreciate students who challenge their assumptions, while others become defensive and even vindictive when a student, especially a skeptical female student, is too eager in class. Those are the professors who insist on students ‘knowing their place’. Unfortunately, in Khalida’s case, the professor ordered her to leave his class, which was not only an embarrassment for her, but must have been a terrible blow to her self-confidence. After that she struggled with the self-defeating belief that there might be something seriously wrong with her as a student, as a woman, and as a person. And that negative self-assessment became a painful virus in her mind that led her to contacting me through my website.

Unfortunately, before Khalida had ever come to see me the school psychiatrist had already diagnosed her as suffering from clinical depression, anxiety, and paranoia. And the (understandable) frustration she presented in his office had led him to conclude that she might also be on the schizoaffective disorder spectrum. He had put her on anti-depressants and anti-anxiety medications which made her feel “loopy”, with a strange sense of disconnection, as though her very nature was being compromised. So after a few weeks she had decided to stop taking them, but continued to self-medicate with sleeping pills.

After hearing Khalida’s story I told her I totally agreed with her when she said she had been treated unfairly. I saw her self-blame as being unfounded because her

professor was simply wrong to take such a suppressive attitude toward an obviously well-read and engaged student. But I suggested that perhaps she could offer an apology to her professor and the university so that they would permit her to resume her studies. This would not be an admission of guilt; it would simply be 'playing the game' to ensure her academic survival by adapting to the reality of what seemed to be an unfair misogynistic situation.

Khalida and I came to the agreement that there's something unethical about an educational institution that reprimands a keen student's passionate involvement in classroom discussions. It's ludicrous that the university had defined her sincere inquiries as unacceptable behaviour while they tolerated her professor's condescending ego and defensive attitude. I assured Khalida that in her case it was the professor and the school system that were the problem, not her enthusiasm. She smiled with relief, grateful for what I was saying.

Khalida's self-doubt and self-recrimination had acted like a malignant mental virus that grew exponentially, gaining the strength to mutate into severe self-criticism. In effect what she had been doing was wrongly castigating herself for her love of philosophy. After only a few counselling sessions, and a number of lively discussions about our philosophical differences, we found that we had successfully eliminated most of her troubling mental viruses. She decided to send a letter of apology to her professor, and a copy of it along with her reapplication form to the university. She was subsequently allowed to continue her studies with a different professor, and without an assessment of any academic penalties.

APPENDIX

A fallacy is the informal logic term for a reasoning error that has the potential to develop into a self-defeating mental virus. These are some of the more common fallacies:

- *faulty analogy* [an invalid comparison] (“Depression is a serious medical disease just like diabetes or cancer”.)
- *false cause* [an incorrect causal claim] (“A mental illness is a genetic disorder”.)
- *slippery slope* [an unfounded prediction of terrible consequences] (“If you don’t take your schizophrenia medications every day your condition will get progressively worse”.)
- *hasty conclusion* [an assumption based on too little evidence] (“Your headache is probably a brain tumor”.)
- *bandwagon* [the belief that what others do must be right or good] (“All my friends take anti-depressant medications to feel better, so I should probably take them too”.)
- *appeal to tradition* [What was done in the past must be continued] (“Electroshock therapy was used in the past, so there’s no reason why we can’t use it today”.)
- *either/or* [only two possible options are mentioned when others may be available]
  (A mental illness is either a genetic disorder or a chemical imbalance in the brain”.)
- *begging the question* [Is it true that…?] (“Being sad is a mental illness”.)
- *improper appeal to authority* (“Google says schizophrenia is a chronic illness”.) [Google is not an authority]. Or “They say…”. [The word “they” is often given as an authority.]
- *ambiguity* [When a word can have several different meanings {stuff}] (“I’ve seen him take stuff to make himself feel better”.)
- *vagueness* [Unclear meaning] (“Sadness can be sort of like a mental illness”.)

- *two wrongs don't make a right* ("If one pill doesn't help you feel better you may want to take several".) [This can also involve an appeal to revenge.]
- *is-ought* [Just because this is the way it's done doesn't make it right] ("In bio-psychiatry the diagnosis is usually followed by taking medications. So that's what you should do".)
- *irrelevant reason* [The reason given does not support the conclusion] ("I'm not sure I should go to work today; I've been diagnosed with a mental illness".)
- *questionable definition* [Words are sometimes given strange meanings] ("A mental illness is when the brain lacks certain chemicals".)
- *hasty generalization* [from one to many] ("My friend had a mental breakdown from social media, so I know it can cause teens to have a mental breakdown".)

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Words as "Fibers of the Mind":
"Re-narrative" of the Earthquake Disaster through Philosophical Dialogue

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Abstract: *In the aftermath of the unprecedented damage caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake that struck on March 11, 2011, the Japanese author Yo Henmi wrote that the nation felt a sense of loneliness, for which words could not express the extent of the damage caused by the disaster, and an emptiness that could only be expressed in numbers. Henmi believes that this "lack of words" is the most "serious and grave" crisis Japan has faced since the earthquake.*

Similarly, philosopher Kiyokazu Washida, who has touched on the "crises and hurt" that have emerged in various forms since the Great East Japan Earthquake, argues that "severe emotional turmoil, such as the experience of loss due to an earthquake disaster, first and foremost demands a re-narration of one's life in one's own words" because "emotions are woven with words, and without words, all emotions would be indefinite and indistinguishable". Therefore, it is essential to acquire and find the words that are, as Washida put it, "the fibers of the mind". In this sense, crisis management in the aftermath of the earthquake will depend on whether or not we can acquire the words that make sense for the person in question to talk about the disaster. If we position post-disaster crisis management in this way, there may be something that philosophy, which examines the possibilities and problems of words through dialogue, can do as well. Furthermore, what can heal such crises and hurt is the attempt at "philosophical practice" that has been developed since the 1980s as a new paradigm in philosophy.

In this paper, we discuss the philosophy café events involving survivors who experienced hurt in disaster-stricken areas and the theoretical background of "philosophical care", which was expected to differ from so-called "therapy activities". In this work, we can glimpse the possibility of a kind of philosophical care that is possible only through an "ecological relationship" forged by the engagement of participants in philosophical dialogue.

1. "Words Are the Fibers That Weave Our Mind" —Possibilities for Philosophical Practice in Disaster-affected Areas

"I am in a stupor", the Japanese author Yo Henmi, who is from the disaster-struck town of Ishinomaki in Miyagi Prefecture, said on an NHK television show, as he tried to come to terms with the unprecedented damage caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11, 2011.[1] Given the enormity of the earthquake disaster, "we can do nothing but be in a stupor", he said. "Nothing else exists but the loneliness of everyone's lack of words to express the dimension of destruction and its dynamism, the loneliness and futility of having no other means than expressing it through numbers".[2]

Henmi noted "the lack of any words" to describe the earthquake disaster, regarding a "vacuum state of words" as the "gravest crisis" Japan has faced since the earthquake itself. This is because such a lack of words leaves us unable to reinterpret the earthquake as an incident that happened to us, making us unable to understand "what kind of crisis we are currently in, the depth of the crisis, and where we are in the historical continuity".[3] Moreover, we lose sight of "the state of the relationship between the incident and ourselves" or even "where we stand".[4] This is a perilous situation, and the lack of words continuously exposes us to this danger. Accordingly, Henmi believes that there is only one way to overcome this constant state of *crisis* that Japan has been in since the earthquake: by finding the right words to describe the earthquake. He continues, "What the victims are eagerly waiting for—be it water,

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[1] The 2011 Tohoku Earthquake (also called the Great East Japan Earthquake) struck at 14:46 on 11 March 2011 off the Sanriku coast had a moment magnitude of 9.0 at a depth of 24 km and registered as a 7 on the Japan Meteorological Agency seismic intensity scale in northern Miyagi Prefecture. According to a report by the Metropolitan Police Emergency Disaster Security Headquarters, as of 10 July 2013, known casualties included 15,883 deaths and 2667 missing persons, while property damage included 126,467 buildings totally destroyed, 272,244 buildings partially destroyed, 4200 cases of road damage, and 116 cases of bridge damage. Explosions and venting at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant resulted in the unprecedented scattering of radioactive material, particularly along the coastlines and rivers of the Tohoku and Kanto regions, and it continues to have profound effects on agriculture, livestock, and fisheries in these areas.

[2] Excerpts from Yo Hemmi, an author from Ishinomaki, in the documentary 「こころの時代　瓦礫の中から言葉を作家・辺見庸」[Kokoro no Jidai. Gareki no nakakara kotobawo, Yo Henmi] broadcast by NHK on April 24, 2011.

[3] *Ibid*.

[4] *Ibid*.

food, or heating—it feels as if, at the same time, they are longing for words that reach deep inside. These are by no means clichéd slogans such as *hang in there*, *reconstruction*, or *solidarity*. All we can do as people who have lost loved ones is deeply contemplate this incident, imagine, and then put it into words”.[5] Citing Gabriel Marcel, the Japanese philosopher Kiyokazu Washida says, “If we did not have words, we would not be able to understand our feelings because we would be unable to distinguish between happiness, sadness, and embarrassment”. He argues that to calm the grave emotional swings caused by experiences of loss, such as the loss of loved ones in the earthquake, we first need “to re-narrate our life stories” using “our own words”.[6] Washida continues, “Emotions are woven with words, and without words, all emotions would be amorphous and indistinguishable. We begin to recognize how we feel by learning words. For narratives to be more detailed and accurate, we need to use appropriate words in appropriate situations more delicately. We must find and obtain words because they are the fibers that weave our mind”.[7]

In that respect, we can say that crisis management after the earthquake depends on whether or not we can acquire the *words* to discuss the earthquake. More candidly, it is not too much to say that crisis management is the management of *words*. And, if that is indeed the case, then philosophy may be able to play a role here because it uses dialogues to facilitate profound discussions about the possibilities of and issues associated with *words*. The utility of the act of philosophy, namely “philosophical practice”, is presently being tested by the earthquake. [8]

This paper discusses an attempt to engage in philosophical practice through dialogue at philosophy cafés in disaster-affected Sendai. It also touches on the current trend in philosophical practice developed since the 1980s as a new paradigm in philosophy by Western philosophers such as Gerd Achenbach, Peter B. Raabe, and Ran Lahav. According to the American philosopher Martha C. Nussbaum, in the current paradigm, philosophy is being reinterpreted as something to be practiced not as a “detached intellectual technique dedicated to displaying cleverness” but as an

[5] *Ibid*.
[6] Washida 2012, pp. 85.
[7] *Ibid*., pp.86.
[8] The following paper also discusses the possibility of philosophical practice in disaster-affected areas after the earthquake. Takahiro Nishimura “Is the Earthquake Disaster Trying Philosophy? : An Attempt of ‘Philosophical practice’ in the Disaster-struck Areas”. *The Formosan Journal of Medical Humanities* 15 16, 2015, pp. 37–52.

immersed and worldly art of grappling with human misery" and "as a way of addressing the most painful problems of human life".[9]

We have experienced numerous separations and deaths since the earthquake. We have been forced to question anew various values, including our views on life and death, as well as words such as *love*, *conscience*, *kindness*, *loyalty*, and *fairness*, which we had developed comfortably in tranquility. Under such circumstances, the philosophical practice taking place at the philosophical café events where the participants' *words* (ideas) are strengthened through *dialogue* with others may be needed. Only under such circumstances may it be possible to examine whether philosophical practice can play a major role in crisis management after a disaster. In the next section, I would like to first briefly touch on the ideological background and significance of philosophical practice as well as one form of philosophical dialogue.

2. Philosophical Practice—"Philosophy as a Way of Life"

Comparing the results of practice utilizing philosophy with those of the natural sciences and humanities, some have argued that philosophy is not useful. Instead, it can be said that philosophical practice arose as a new paradigm in the 1980s to refute such a "view". The discussion of "philosophical practice" here may be the first time many readers will have heard the term, even though it has recently been examined in various areas of research. Many researchers questioned the practical effects of philosophy in the past. However, since the 1980s, the Philosophische Praxis (Philosophical Practice), which is said to have been initiated by the German philosopher Gerd B. Achenbach, has instead developed in defiance of such arguments.[10]

Philosophical practice is a movement searching for ways in which philosophy can be widely practiced in society, where experts and professionals do not monopolize its practice. The common denominator in the movement is that participants in a philosophical dialogue begin the dialogue with issues they encounter in their daily lives or society. One of the advocates of philosophical practice, is Peter Harteloh, who worked for a long time at the Erasmus Institute for Philosophical Practice and argues

[9] Nussbaum 2004, pp.485.

[10] Strictly speaking, Leonard Nelson, a philosopher and pedagogue at the Georg August University of Göttinge, proposed "das sokratische Dialogue" as a method of philosophical practice and philosophy education before Achenbach did.

that academic philosophy is philosophy in name only and that philosophical practice is the twentieth century’s movement against it for having become so remote from the issues and topics of daily life. He also considers the practice as “an attempt to redefine philosophy as a way of life”, a view also held by the French historian of philosophy Pierre Hadot.

Hadot, in his book *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, examines in detail how ancient Hellenistic philosophy and Roman philosophy originally appeared as “a therapeutic passion” intended to bring about “a profound transformation of the individual’s mode of seeing and being, a transformation of our vision of the world and a metamorphosis of our personality”.[11] As Peter B. Raabe, the author of *Philosophical Counseling*, points out, “many schools of ancient philosophy viewed philosophy as ‘the art of living’, not as the study of pure and abstract theories or interpretation of original texts”.[12] In other words, ancient philosophy had a clear aim toward practical self-improvement, as Hadot made clear in his study of the history of philosophy.

Surprisingly, many philosophers have attempted to determine what philosophical practice should be based on the features of ancient philosophy. These movements can be said to be “a return to the ancient roots of the practice of philosophy”[13] or “a new version of ancient traditions”.[14] Philosophical practice that connects philosophy and daily lives can be practiced in a variety of ways, including philosophy cafés, philosophical counseling, and Socratic dialogue. The foundation of these attempts lies in the philosophical educational method known as the “Socratic method”, adopted by the early 20th-century German philosopher Leonard Nelson (1882–1927). In a lecture at the Göttingen Education Association in 1922, Nelson explained that the Socratic method is a pedagogical method based on the art of philosophizing, rather than philosophy itself. It is a method used “not to instruct about philosophers, but to instruct learners to become philosophers”.[15] He emphasized the “regressive Abstraction” method[16] in which contingent facts used for individual judgments are abstracted and the obscure assumptions applied to concrete cases are

[11] Hadot 1995, pp. 82.
[12] Raabe 2001, pp. 4.
[13] *Ibid*., p. 3.
[14] Lahav 1995a, pp. ix.
[15] Nelson 1949, pp. 1–40.
[16] This “regressive Abstraction” method is similar to induction in the natural science in that it moves from specifics to generalities. However, it differs from induction in that it eliminates accidental things by returning to the knowledge used as assumptions for judgment. For further details of Nelson’s philosophical educational pedagogy, please refer to Terada 2001, pp. 65–66.

clarified. This method involves a regressive examination of results and premises. By incorporating this method in philosophy education, Nelson attempted to spread "philosophical practice to instruct learners to become philosophers". Incidentally, the method of philosophical dialogue practice that I have been using in the areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake and the medical treatment field was inspired by Nelson's regressive Abstraction approach. Through his efforts, philosophical practice has been improved and organized to deepen the philosophical dialogue with a greater number of participants in a shorter time (see below for details).

At present, philosophical practice has developed in various ways to suit different situations and needs, including Philosophy for Children and neo-Socratic dialogue (NSD), in addition to philosophical counseling, Group Philosophical Counseling with multiple participants, and philosophy cafés, and the approach has recently begun to be actively adopted in education and medical settings as well as corporate employee training. However, even among researchers and practitioners of philosophical practice, the direction and goals of the practice are not as straightforward as they would like. Furthermore, this obscurity invites a certain ambiguity, as in philosophical dialogue practices in the respective domains. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the goals of philosophical practice again, not only for the disaster-affected areas discussed in this paper but also for the future systematic injection of philosophical dialogue into areas such as the medical field. How the goals are set will undoubtedly affect the outcomes of introducing philosophical dialogue practice in areas affected by the earthquake and tsunami.

3. The Goals of "Philosophical Practice"? —Reweaving a Disturbed "Worldview"

As already mentioned, Peter Harteloh proposes several characteristics of philosophical practice, specifically, that it involves engaging in philosophical dialogue with people without philosophical training, connecting philosophy with daily life, and pushing the practice beyond the confines of college campuses.[17] However, what should the purpose of philosophical practice be in the first place? Where does this necessity come from? Moreover, what are the results expected in this practice?

[17] This is how Harteloh described the philosophical practice in his lecture "Philosophical Practice as a New Paradigm in Philosophy", given at Rikkyo University in March 2012.

Gerd Achenbach, the German founder of the modern philosophical counseling movement, disagrees with following goal-oriented procedures, calling it “the first mistake in the practice of philosophy”, and instead argues for “an open-ended procedure consisting of continuous reinterpretations of oneself and the world”. Citing the German-Swiss psychiatrist Karl Jaspers, he emphasizes that “invention of a finite goal is technical and does not constitute philosophical practice”.[18] He concludes that even if philosophical practice has some goal, it can only “maintain a philosophical skepticism concerning everything that considers itself ‘true’”.[19] In other words, there are no expected results or effects.

Similarly, Ran Lahav, a philosopher who has long been engaged in research and practice, including philosophical counseling, at Haifa University in Israel and elsewhere, interprets philosophical practice as nothing less than what assigns a “value to the process of pursuit itself”, not what pursues “a finished product, such as a philosophical theory”, concluding that philosophical practice is a movement that “encourages the unique expression of individuals’ concrete ways of being in this world (in their own words), rather than constructing general and abstract theories”.[20]

However, philosophical practice is not to be interpreted from only an open-ended perspective. Although researchers (practitioners) of philosophical practice hold various opinions, there is a reluctant yet somewhat shared acceptance of it having some goals and effects. A careful reading of related articles by various researchers and practitioners reveals that what underlies their diverse opinions is the Austrian-British philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein’s notion that “philosophy unties the knots in our thinking”.[21] For example, Karl Pfeifer, Professor Emeritus at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada, points out that Wittgenstein saw tight knots in thinking as “pathological symptoms of intellectual disease” and that the various necessary philosophical methods were a “therapy” to untie them.[22]

Following Wittgenstein, Steven Segal, known for his hermeneutic approach to management and business ethics, also emphasizes the “reflexive therapeutic activity” of philosophy in his article “Philosophy As a Therapeutic Activity”, arguing that “it is in fact a reflexive therapeutic activity in that it allows the individual to change the way he or she experiences the world by reflexively deconstructing the

[18] Achenbach 1996, pp.13.
[19] Achenbach 1995, pp. 73.
[20] Lahav 1996, pp. 260.
[21] Wittgenstein 1967, #452.
[22] Pfeifer 1994, pp. 66.

texts or stories that shape the way he or she relates to the world".[23] Professor James Tuedio of California State University, who attempted to find ways in which philosophy should be practiced in Gadamer hermeneutics, points out in his article "Postmodern Perspectives in Philosophical Practice" that "effective philosophical facilitation" is connected to whether the participants of philosophical dialogues can learn the practices of "critical examination and reconstruction of dysfunctional conceptual elements underlying their narrative construction of problematized relations and events in their life".[24]

As just described, many researchers and practitioners of philosophical practice see its application in Wittgenstein's idea of *unraveling the knot*. Of course, the "effects" of philosophical practice are not limited to that. Lahav believes that philosophical practice, including philosophical counseling, assumes a central role such as "worldview interpretation". According to Lahav, "a worldview is one out of several ways of organizing, analyzing, categorizing, noting patterns, drawing implications, making sense, and more generally assigning meanings to one's life events". The philosophical practitioner as "an expert in worldview interpretation"[25] is said to offer the participants in philosophy dialogue sessions "a system of coordinates by helping them to uncover various meaning that are expressed in their way of life, and critically examine those problematic aspects that express their predicaments—such as meaning crisis, feeling of boredom and emptiness, difficulties in interpersonal relationships, anxiety, etc". They do so in order to reweave their worldview that has been torn apart, for example, by a disaster such the Great East Japan Earthquake. It can be restated using Dutch philosophical practitioner Bauke Zijlstra's words that this attempt at philosophical practice is the "disturbed equilibrium" of those in suffering—that is, to recover both the equilibrium in disturbed life and the equilibrium in disturbed thoughts on their lives".[26]

Many things are tested in the affected areas following the earthquake, including views on life and death. Therefore, it is necessary to connect philosophy to daily life in order to restore, as Zijlstra says, "the equilibrium in disturbed lives". In particular, according to the South African philosophical practitioner Barbara Norman, it is necessary to offer a place where the participants in philosophical dialogue can "vocalize" their interpretations of the difficult conditions they are experiencing and

[23] Segal 1998, pp. 36–47. The following texts were consulted for this discussion. Raabe, Peter B., *Philosophical Counseling. Theory and Practice*, Praeger Publishers, 2001, 30.
[24] Tuedio 1996, pp. 183.
[25] Lahav 1995b, pp. 9–15.
[26] Zijlstra 1996, pp. 35.

to support the acquisition of new words through the participants’ mutual critical evaluations. Such words can be established when the participants listen to others with empathy and ask questions with a simple understanding of the immediate suffering at hand. Norman, incidentally, refers to the relationship among philosophical dialogue participants as “the art of ecological relationship and interpretation”. By this, she means “open-minded questioning and a constant reinterpretation of the (social and other) environment”.[27]

As described above, it can be seen that a loose goal exists for philosophical practice. This inevitably leads to the philosophical examination of words as “fibers of the mind”. The survivors of the Great East Japan Earthquake, who have witnessed unprecedented damage and are experiencing a breakdown in their sense of values, are the ones who might benefit most from engaging in philosophical practice to reweave this broken equilibrium, in particular, a place to engage in philosophical dialogue (e.g., at a philosophy café) where they can thoroughly re-examine the state of their own individual words as the fibers of their mind through dialogue with others.

4. Re-narrative of the Earthquake—Constructing a Venue for Philosophical Dialogue

Philosophy café is a practice that aims to facilitate frank and philosophical dialogue between participants by removing hierarchical relationships such as those between teacher and student or boss and subordinate. A theme is given at each meeting (e.g., whether or not our bodies are really ours), and primordial questions are asked about it. Although the purpose is to facilitate philosophical dialogue, participants do not need to be well-versed in philosophy, however, to avoid mindless chitchat, a facilitator encourages participants to speak as well as to listen to each other. This is what makes the activity meaningful. The dialogue does not presuppose dichotomous or factious positions such as agreement and disagreement. Instead, the aim is to strengthen each participant’s ideas through dialogue with others. In this sense, a philosophy café is a “neutral arena for the development of open thinking”.[28]

The philosophy café is thought to have been created by Marc Sautet, then a philosophy professor at the Institut d’Etudes Politiques de Paris, at Café des Phares in the Place de la Bastille in the 1990s. Similar to philosophical counseling,

[27] Norman 1995, pp. 56.
[28] Gerbers 1995, pp. 158.

philosophy café can be said to be a form of philosophical practice. For example, the Gerd Achenbach opened a "philosophical clinic" near Cologne in 1981, which is said to be the forerunner of Sautet's philosophy café. Since then, Achenbach's approach has gradually been adopted by others, and in 1982, Gesellschaft für Philosophische Praxis was established. After 1997, the organization was reorganized as Internationale Gesellschaft für Philosophische Praxis,[29] and its activities have since spread to other parts of the world, including the Netherlands, France, Israel, the United States, Norway, and South Africa.

Philosophy café facilitates dialogue by removing the hierarchical relationships among participants. However, it does not necessarily dissolve the participant's social attributes. This is because "dialogues, in the first place, are nothing but narrations by individuals based on their own actual feelings, experiences, beliefs, and values. They are not objective discussions in the search for solutions without personal opinions".[30] In other words, according to the Japanese philosopher Yoshimichi Nakajima, "dialogues are different from arguments, which are based on a language usage apart from our own reality".[31] He continues by saying that those who engage in dialogues do not do so with an objective attitude that is independent of their own situation; at the same time, they do not necessarily engage in dialogues with a subjective attitude completely bounded by their own situations. "Rather", he notes, "dialogues occur in between. Dialogue participants begin to talk in search of the objective truth that maintains their own situations, experiences, and feelings".[32]

Based on the above ideas, in June 2011, three months after the Great East Japan Earthquake, we began a philosophical practice to reweave the worldview of the disaster victims through careful dialogue with others in the disaster-stricken areas. Through philosophical dialogue with others, we have observed many survivors gradually reweave the "fibers of their mind" by retracing and recounting in their own words the event of the disaster that unfolded before their eyes.

The leading members of the philosophy café events in Sendai[33] included Sendai City officials, nurses who have been volunteering in Ishinomaki since just

[29] See the Internationale Gesellschaft für Philosophische Praxis (IGPP) website: http://www.igpp.org/
[30] Nakajima 1997, pp. 102.
[31] *Ibid*.
[32] *Ibid*., pp. 135.
[33] Since the earthquake, it has been run as the "Thinking Table, The Philosophy Café" by the Sendai City Board of Education with the cooperation of Sendai Mediatheque (https://www.smt.jp/).

after the earthquake, high school teachers in Fukushima whose schools became designated emergency shelters, and college students who had stayed in shelters after their houses were swept away by the tsunami. Instead of lingering on their status as “earthquake victims” living in an inconvenient situation without a purpose, the participants seemed to engage in dialogues with others in attempts to “recapture the incident of the earthquake” and “express it in their own words”.[34] Many earthquake survivors who participated in the philosophy café events may have felt the same way. In other words, they might have intuitively believed that they would have to “distance” themselves from the incident (the earthquake) in order to see things that cannot be or are difficult to see from the perspective of those involved (the survivors).

Now, the patience of philosophical thought to search for the roots of the incident is needed, rather than skillfully interpreting the incident using precise philosophical terminology and concepts. According to Kiyokazu Washida, “many people in the earthquake-affected areas are now confronted by the need for re-narratives. They need to reconsider who they are and accept unreasonable and unfathomable realities as undeniable facts; they must *re-narrate* the stories they have weaved in a different form, something we frequently need to do in life. This requires memories to be retold. In this sense, transitioning from the present self to the new one is an undeniably risky task”. Washida sees this as those who have lost their parents, children, houses, or jobs being pushed back, without a choice, to the starting point of their dialogue.[35]

The survivors, who have experienced the deaths and partings of many people since the Great East Japan Earthquake and have been forced to reexamine many of their own values, including their views of life and death, needed a place to engage in philosophical dialogue where they could strengthen their ideas through dialogue with others, carefully guided by a facilitator. To this end, philosophy café events were organized by the Sendai City Board of Education in cooperation with Sendai Mediatheque. The events are officially known as Thinking Table, The Philosophy Café. Through dialogue with the participants about complex earthquake-related tasks, themes were set for each session, and the participants engaged in philosophical dialogue with one another. This form of philosophical dialogue has become a long-

[34] Excerpts from Yo Henmi, an author from Ishinomaki, in the documentary 「こころの時代　瓦礫の中から言葉を作家・辺見庸」[Kokoro no Jidai. Gareki no nakakara kotobawo, Yo Henmi] broadcast by NHK on April 24, 2011.

[35] Washida 2011.

lasting activity in the affected areas, with more than 70 events taking place since the first one was held in 2011. What has been discussed most is the feeling of *guilt* that the people of Tohoku have been carrying, regardless of whether they are victims of the earthquake. Through these philosophy café events, it was revealed that many of the survivors have a profound feeling of *guilt* that they could not save their family, that they survived, and that others suffered a lot worse than they did. This could be due to the fact that most of the damage was caused by the tsunami.

There is a clear difference between those who suffered significant damage and those who did not, and the survivors feel *guilty* about this. Some even hold the extreme belief that everybody should have suffered equally. Where does this feeling of *guilt* come from? Is it something that survivors really have to feel? Not surprisingly, there are no clear answers to these questions. There is no other way to think about it oneself but to restate stories (*re-narrate*) through dialogue with others. We should not rephrase this guilt using technical terms such as "survivor's guilt" and pretend to comprehend it. There are no clear answers to the various problems in the affected areas, including but not limited to these issues of *guilt* or *moral debt*. That is why the philosophy café has served a meaningful function in providing a venue where people can engage in dialogue with others through their own words as well as question and reexamine (strengthen) the state of their frayed mind after the disaster.

5. The Possibilities of Philosophical Care—Mending Frayed "Fibers of the Mind" Differently than Therapy

When the first philosophy café event was held with the earthquake as the theme, some of the survivors protested, arguing that philosophy is useless considering the unprecedented level of damage caused by the earthquake. They pointed out that philosophy could not bring back the victims swept away by the tsunami nor could it help those who had lost their homes. Therefore, they saw such activity as meaningless. However, once the events began, many survivors participated. Each session involved 80 participants, and numerous dialogues were conducted. Indeed, philosophy may not be able to provide direct assistance in the aftermath of a disaster, and in that sense, philosophy may not be applicable in dealing with people's ongoing misfortunes. However, I feel that philosophy provides its own form of assistance and support. Only after such points are considered will the significance of philosophical practice become evident in the earthquake-affected areas. At any rate, even though it may not provide

direct and immediate support, why have so many participants (survivors) gathered to practice philosophy in the affected areas, and why do they continue to do so even now?

What did they expect from this form of philosophical practice (philosophical dialogue)? This is my own impression based on my experiences there since the Great East Japan Earthquake, but their expectations seem to be based on the possibility of philosophical care,[36] which differs from the psychotherapy that many philosophy practitioners have been discussing since the 1990s. In other words, the possibility of a non-therapeutic approach to mending the frayed minds of the survivors (participants) was anticipated through dialogue with others, carefully excavating their own words as “fibers of the mind” and philosophically examining the meaning of those words.

This non-therapeutic approach through philosophical practice opens up the possibility of philosophical care, in which each person’s thinking, which the disaster had broken down, is strengthened together. Shlomit C. Schuster, a philosophy practitioner in Israel, mentions the possibility of this non-therapeutic philosophical care in several papers on philosophical practice and attempts to extract its specificity by positioning philosophical dialogue, include philosophical counseling, as “the antipode of therapy”.[37] She calls her non-therapeutic approach to psychiatry “trance therapy” and emphasizes its uniqueness as something that is “not therapy yet can nevertheless induce health and well-being”.[38] In other words, although this is discussed mainly in dialogue sessions such as philosophy counseling and multi-person philosophical dialogues in the mental health field, she actively acknowledges that there can be some “effect” in the practice of philosophical dialogue.[39] Of course, it is necessary to carefully discuss the differences among philosophical counseling conducted by a philosophical counselor for an individual, group philosophical counseling conducted for a small group of people, and Socratic dialogue or philosophy café events, where a philosophy practitioner serves as a facilitator for larger groups of people. However, because this paper is intended to roughly ascertain the possible effects (philosophical care) of philosophical dialogue that might be obtained on a dimension other than that expected from therapy as conducted in the

[36] Shuster 1993, pp. 587.
[37] Shuster 1995, pp. 102. Raabe 2001, pp. 29.
[38] Shuster 1996a, pp. 248.
[39] *Ibid*.

psychiatric and psychotherapy fields, we will leave the in-depth research for another time.

Needless to say, it is the participants (survivors) who have come together in anticipation of some philosophical practice (philosophical dialogue) in the disaster area, not "patients" seeking "therapy" or "a cure" for their so-called mental problems. Indeed, many of the participants in the philosophy cafés we have held in the disaster-affected areas have experienced hardship as a result of the disaster, and their own worldview has been torn apart, leaving them in a state of disturbed equilibrium, that is, a disequilibrium between their disordered lives and disordered thinking about life. However, whether it is a philosophical counseling session between individuals or a group session such as a philosophy café involving multiple participants, we should not forget that philosophical dialogue is premised on the participation of "an equally philosophizing person"[40] or collaboration among people who have the will and potential to become "a partner to dialogue"[41] with the intention of somehow "recovering the disturbed state of equilibrium" through tenacious dialogue with others. In this sense, it is impossible from the outset to argue that the effects of philosophical dialogue can be viewed only in the context of therapy.

In general, the word "therapy" is used in the psychological field to mean a specialized intervention aimed at dealing with what might be classified as an illness or disease or a psychological disorder diagnosed based on the specialized knowledge and skills of the therapist. Nevertheless, given that both psychotherapy and philosophical dialogue are concerned with issues of the mind, comparisons between the two in the context of recovery, treatment, and therapy are, in a sense, unavoidable. In fact, since the 1990s, researchers and practitioners of philosophical practice have discussed the differences between psychotherapy and philosophical dialogue practice (philosophical counseling) in the context of non-therapeutic approaches. Some have attempted to answer questions about the significance of the existence and the need for philosophical dialogic practices in the field of psychiatry by identifying a more "philosophical basis" in psychotherapeutic approaches.[42] In contrast, others have attempted to differentiate between philosophical dialogic practices such as philosophical counseling and clinical psychology/psychiatry, from a

[40] Ruchmann 1998, pp. 25.
[41] Lahav 1995a, pp. xv.
[42] The German philosopher Peter Kestenbaum, who actively tried to introduce a new approach called "clinical philosophy" into psychiatry, is one example. He pointed out the importance of philosophical dialogue in psychiatry in his book *The New Image of the Person: The Theory and Practice of Clinical Philosophy* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 1978).

psychotherapeutic perspective. In particular, the latter group views psychoanalytic therapy as taking a reductionist stance (reductive interpretation) in which the therapist deciphers the ‘real’ (unconscious), which is hidden from the patient underneath the (conscious) phenomenon of what the patient tells the therapist, and then diagnoses and treats the client based on the results of this process. The psychoanalytic (psychotherapeutic) understanding of people acknowledges a philosophical worldview, but it always has a psychological substratum (unconscious and unintentional) at its foundation, and it is in this psychological substratum that people are identified and grasped.[43] Accordingly, this psychotherapeutic perspective tends to “thoroughly strip [the individual’s] problems of their ‘social, political, economic, historical, and philosophical context and roots’”.[44] That is why the theorists and practitioners of the philosophical practice, to determine the possibility of some effect or philosophical care in the context of philosophical dialogue sessions, must first distance themselves from the psychoanalytic perspective that presupposes the above “therapy”, or to use their own expression, they must “de-analyze” and “de-diagnose” (to move away from psychoanalytic problem analysis).[45] Incidentally, the idea that “life has significant philosophical aspects that cannot be reduced to psychological mechanisms and processes”[46] became the core thesis of the philosophical dialogue session at that time.

The psychotherapeutic perspective places the patient’s problems in a therapeutic context and thus induces the patient to become dependent on the therapist’s professional intervention and persuasion. In this dependency on the specialized interventions of a therapist, the person concerned is inevitably reduced to a passive existence and “loses considerable autonomy with respect to the reconstruction of their life narrative”.[47] In contrast, the dialogue sessions in philosophy practice are designed to break free from this dependence on the therapist and to proactively view the participants as autonomous entities, that is, as the “dialogue partners” and “equally philosophizing persons” mentioned earlier. In addition to this, the aim of philosophical practice is to avoid the temptation to forcefully re-colorize the concerns of those involved based on specialized terminology and to remain faithful to the process of carefully pursuing and examining the words as “fibers of the mind” in those who have problems (questions) in their

[43] Raabe 2001, pp. 104.
[44] *Ibid*., pp. 82.
[45] Schuster 1996b, pp. 24.
[46] Lahav 1995a, pp. xv.
[47] Tuedio 1996, pp. 183.

daily lives. Therefore, the relationship in philosophy counseling and other forms of philosophy dialogue sessions differs from the rigid hierarchical relationship between the medical provider (counselor) and patient (client) and is a very receptive and open interactional relationship supported by the so-called *manner of equality*. In the words of Barbara Norman, introduced in Section 4 of this paper, this relationship can be viewed as an "ecological relationship" formed by the participants in the dialogue sessions, including the person concerned with the problems (questions). This is because the ecological relationship between the client and the philosophy counselor (or between the participants, including the facilitator in a group philosophical dialogue session) is "caring rather than confrontational and consists of persons who are interdependent participants defined by open-minded questioning, with empathy functioning between them".[48] In this light, the possibility of philosophical care in the practice of philosophical dialogue is deeply related to the ecological relationship supported by this mutual "empathic attitude", in which one feels that others accept one's ideas through philosophical dialogue.

The goal of philosophical dialogue practice is to carefully rethink the meaning and usage of words that come to mind during philosophical dialogue with others and to critically examine the latent values and ideas (assumptions) behind such words that one may not have been aware of. Another goal is exploring the philosophical meanings of various everyday attitudes and thinking about the self and reality, as well as *assisting* and *caring for* each other in repairing the gaps in the "worldview interpretation" of those who have been placed in difficult situations due to disasters, and gradually recovering from the disturbed equilibrium through the maintenance of their own words and thoughts. This approach to the possibility of philosophical care that differs from therapy can be described as "an alternative to psychotherapy, different from alternative psychotherapy", as the Italian philosophical practitioner Augusto Cavadi put it.[49] The philosophical dialogue that has been practiced since the Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011 must have been expected to touch upon the philosophical care that derives from the ecological relationship among the participants.

6. The Flow and Manners of Philosophical Dialogue—The Ecological Relationship of Dialogue Enabling Philosophical Care

[48] Norman 1995, pp. 52–53.
[49] Cavadi 2010, pp. 166–167.

It remains unclear how the “ecological relationship” in philosophical dialogue is prepared and through what process it enables philosophical care. Barbara Norman, who stressed the importance of the ecological relationship in philosophy counseling and other forms of dialogue sessions, stated that philosophical dialogue “aims to take the participants from a comparatively naïve understanding of the current predicament under discussion, through a form of empathic listening, questioning, and critical self and group appraisal, to the constitution of new vocabulary” and that “this interaction provides the opportunity for talking about feeling, beliefs, attitudes and desires in a way that is both reflective and constructive”.[50]

Finally, I would like to close this paper with a brief description of how my colleagues and I have constructed a venue for philosophical dialogue sessions based on Norman’s idea of ecological relations, especially the flow and manner of such sessions. Perhaps in the course of participating in such sessions, by carefully examining the condition of one’s own words as the “fibers of the mind” through dialogue with others, one might be able to read some of the mechanisms that make possible philosophical care for those experiencing disturbed equilibrium.

⑴ Set up a venue for dialogue

Philosophical dialogue aims to examine philosophical issues and one’s own values through dialogue with others, something that the participants may not have been aware of. For this reason, it is necessary to develop and deepen one’s thinking correctly in a shorter time together with the other participants, which is why we deliberately appoint facilitators from the field of philosophy and ethics. Of course, in doing so, the facilitator does not impart any philosophical knowledge to the participant, nor do they construct the discussion on their own behalf. However, the facilitator always helps the participants to follow the thinking process and to deepen their thinking without getting unnecessarily bogged down. Even if the same words and expressions are used, they may mean different things to different participants. Therefore, the facilitators, who moderate the dialogue, need to be patient and willing to carefully adjust the meaning of the words used each time to ensure that the participants continue to engage in the dialogue with each other.

⑵ Set themes for dialogue that are rooted in life

[50] Norman 1995, pp. 56.

Philosophical dialogue requires a process of setting (sharing) personal concerns, perplexities, or vague problems about values felt in daily life as clear themes that other participants and parties can access and think about together so that they can immediately focus their thinking on issues related to personal worldviews and values. Themes can either be decided during the actual philosophical dialogue or prepared in advance. However, the theme should be based on the actual problems and concerns of the participants in their daily lives.

⑶ Ensure an equal and safe venue for dialogue

In the introductory part of the philosophical dialogue, participants are given plenty of time to speak freely and share their thoughts and experiences related to the theme. Unfortunately, much of the communication in our daily lives is based on power relations. Therefore, it is necessary to create a space where all participants can engage in dialogue by removing hierarchical relationships and creating flat interpersonal relationships (where everyone gathered there can think and talk on an equal footing) and where dialogue can proceed in an atmosphere of equality. In addition, each participant must feel comfortable expressing his or her ideas and values and that their ideas, whatever they may be, have been heard (intellectual safety). This feeling is also essential in preparing for the possibility of philosophical care.

⑷ Speak—Listen—Critique (krinein)

Once the participants have a shared awareness of the need to create an equal and safe space under the facilitator's guidance, a dialogue based on the set theme is initiated. Each participant is instructed to listen to and sense to the extent possible the thoughts and language of the other participants as well as their hesitations, and at the same time to address their own thoughts carefully to a specific destination. The participants are encouraged to put together (reflectively reconsider) their own self-centered thoughts and ideas, which have been formed only within their own minds, into a single considered opinion, and then to carefully voice (verbalize) it to a specific destination (i.e., to other participants) in a way that is easy to understand while showing the logical paths and bases of their opinions.

In so doing, it is imperative to listen to the words (voices) of the other participants with good-natured interest and perseverance. It is no exaggeration to say that this listening attitude is essential to dialogue. In talking and listening, participants

should not uncritically agree with the opinions and ideas of others but rather try to identify the subtle differences in ideas and values that emerge between themselves and others through dialogue. It is essential to listen to the voices (words) of others with persistence, and in some cases, while questioning the logical contradictions and reasoning, to carefully identify and sort out the similarities and differences between one’s own ideas and those of other participants and further examine these differences critically. Above all, the fact that the word “critique” comes from the Greek word “krinein”, which means to divide, seems to be something that should be well shared in the conduct of dialogue.

⑸ Share keywords of thinking

When the free dialogue reaches a certain degree of maturity, we move on to the work of deepening philosophical thought by gradually raising the level of abstraction. It is impossible to deepen the dialogue by talking endlessly about each person’s specific concerns and problem consciousness. The more critical the issue is to the individual, the more difficult it is for them to go back to the root of the issue and reexamine it. What we most want to avoid is getting stuck in a problematic situation like an endless loop, agonizing alone, unable to determine where to start asking questions about our problems and awareness of the issues. Therefore, as the next step in the philosophical dialogue, it is necessary to dissociate one’s problems and concerns from oneself and develop an objective perspective from which to shift dialogue into a new phase in which one can follow a solid thought process.

In the philosophy café events my colleagues and I have held in the affected areas, they have found this vital phase in the “sharing keywords” process. This keyword-sharing stage is when the dialogue deepens dramatically. Among the words that at first glance seem to have been spoken freely and casually on the theme, there are keywords and ways of thinking that are indispensable for deepening philosophical thought regarding the essential issues to be addressed. The participants carefully reexamine the words and thoughts they expressed in the first half of the dialogue and share them as a solid starting point for further deepening their thinking in the future. They then delve further into their thinking, based on the keywords (clues), which were touched upon during the dialogue.

⑹ Examine (savor) keywords

In the next step, the shared keywords are thoroughly examined one by one through dialogue between the participants, who pay close attention to the previously mentioned manner of speaking, listening and critiquing in order to clarify the meaning, content, and usage of words as well as to organize and categorize them. Here, in particular, it is necessary to shelve all assumptions, question everything from a fundamental blind spot, and make the most of the original characteristics of philosophy, which seeks to examine and savor. In philosophy, intensity and depth of thinking are measured by how one can distance oneself from the events in front of one's eyes as well as one's worldview and values in order to *savor* them anew.

⑺ Establish a reference axis of thought

In the final stage of the philosophical dialogue, the participants formulate a tentative definition of the theme based on the wording (keywords) and thoughts examined in the dialogue thus far. For example, if the theme of the philosophical dialogue is "the peculiar guilt felt by disaster survivors", the participants will work out a definition (or, in some cases, a new question) on the whiteboard regarding this guilt. Of course, the participants never reach a final consensus. Instead, they arrive at what can be called a "reference axis" of thought that enables each participant, even after leaving the space of philosophical dialogue in which they think together with other participants, to confirm the state of transition of the thought processes and values that they have developed in dialogue with others and to continue to examine them firmly, although this time alone, with that definition as a firm point of reference. Of course, there are times when there is a significant gap between the final definition and one's thinking. It is also possible that they will differ substantially from the values the participant initially held. However, this range of values is a measure that can reveal how one's values have been deconstructed through philosophical dialogue with others, and from this, a new opportunity for questions is created, allowing for a further examination of one's values. Only through such careful cultivation of an ecological relationship will it be possible to provide philosophical care for the minds of survivors so greatly affected by the disaster.

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II. Refereed Articles for the Special Theme

1. Philosophical Practice in Context

—From Classroom to Medical Settings via Socratic Dialogue—

What makes us P4C teachers?[1]

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Abstract: *What makes us P4C teachers? P4C teachers, endeavoring to build a Community of Inquiry (CoI), are different from normal teachers. P4C teachers should have a special 'something' which makes a classroom transform into a CoI, and especially a Community of Philosophical Inquiry. This paper focuses on the special 'something' P4C teachers should have. Our inquiry begins with two questions regarding this 'something': a 'Category Question' and a 'Core Question'. Our answer to the Category Question is that this 'something' belongs to the category of knowing-how or intelligent skills, not the propositional knowledge of academic philosophy and not simple skills. Next, we point out the close relationship between philosophy and questions. A question is necessary for doing philosophy. Therefore, this special 'something' can be understood as QKH (questioning know-how). QKH has many interesting characteristics, and we briefly discuss some of these, including its paradoxical nature: it can be characterized as simultaneously intelligent and ignorant. The intelligent aspect of QKH concerns asking the right questions, as well as clarifying questions; the ignorant aspect of QKH involves a certain attitude toward the unknown, much like Socrates'. This ambivalence is what makes QKH such an interesting and unique intelligent skill. Focusing on the QKH allows us to become more aware of the flow of questions within the CoI and the significance of each child's unique questions.*

Ch.1 Purpose and methods

What should a teacher have in order to be a better practitioner of Philosophy for Children (hereafter referred to as P4C)? Teachers engaged in P4C do many different things in their classes. Some of them may be done in non-P4C classes, and some may be done only in P4C classes. In this article, we will be focusing on 'P4C teachers' and a special 'something' they have. Through focusing on these, we will discuss what is important in a P4C class and what is most important to a teacher engaged in P4C.

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1.1 Who are 'P4C teachers'?

P4C is an educational program initiated by M. Lipman that has been adapted and refined to suit different regions, schools, and children. Basic structures of P4C include children asking their own questions about a given topic, and children engaging in inquiry on a question chosen together with teachers. Lipman describes these activities as building a "Community of Inquiry (hereafter referred to as CoI)". The idea of a CoI is explained by the five-stage process that Lipman outlines: "the offering of the text", "the construction of the agenda", "solidifying the community", "using exercises and discussion plans", and "encouraging further responses" (Lipman 2003:100–3). For many practitioners, the creation of a CoI is both the means and the goal of all P4C practice. As Gregory says, "the central practice of Philosophy for Children is the community of inquiry" (Gregory 2013:73).
Teachers engaging in P4C can be understood as "converting the classroom into a community of inquiry" (Lipman 2003:21). They try to explore the question motivating the inquiry together with the children.

> Remember, the commitment you are encouraging on the child's part is commitment to *the process of inquiry itself*, whether this be logical, aesthetic, scientific, or moral inquiry. The child should eventually be able to distinguish between your idiosyncratic values and the process that you try to embody. While there will be times when you will stray, it is that process to which you will most repeatedly return. (Lipman et al. 1980:84–5 emphasis in original)

The center of the CoI is the children's philosophical inquiry, which is based on one or more questions. So in this article, we will use the term 'P4C teachers' for teachers who engage in any practices involving a CoI, including: Philosophy in Schools, p4c, philosophical dialogue, and Philosophy with Children.[2] And similarly, "P4C" will be used as an umbrella term to include all of these practices, especially classroom dialogue based on the idea of a CoI.

While discussing P4C teachers' relation to their students, Lipman argues that the P4C teacher's main goal is to facilitate the discussion. He illustrates the skills required to facilitate during a P4C session by comparing it to an art:

[2] The term 'Philosophy in Schools' is "often used to capture these divergent approaches, to include P4C, also referred to as 'philosophy with children', 'philosophy with children and adolescents', and 'philosophy for young people'" (Burgh and Thornton 2019:2). In the same book, the acronym 'p4c' is not used as a proper noun, thereby distinguishing it from "P4C", which specifically refers to the program created by Lipman (Splitter and Glaser 2019:10). Jackson, on the other hand, uses the term "p4c" in another sense (Jackson 2013). In Japan, this kind of class is often referred to by terms such as "philosophy dialogue" or "children's philosophy".

> Getting students to engage in philosophical dialogue is an art. As with any art, some knowledge is a prerequisite, in this case, the teacher should possess an understanding of when it is appropriate to intervene in the discussion and when not to. There are times when the best thing one can do to guide a discussion is to say nothing and let things happen. The goal towards which a philosophical discussion should move is one in which there is maximum student-student interchange, as opposed to the start of such a discussion, in which teacher-student interchange is at a maximum. (Lipman et al. 1980:113)

P4C teachers need to be able to facilitate the CoI, and therefore should have facilitation skills. These facilitation skills, however, are not only applicable to philosophical inquiries, but are necessary for establishing any kind of CoI: as Lipman points out, the idea of a CoI "was originally restricted to the practitioners of scientific inquiry" (Lipman 2003: 20). In this sense, facilitation skills that can be used to convert the classroom into a CoI are not only the concern of P4C teachers. Facilitation skills can benefit a variety of learning goals, and do not necessarily make an inquiry more philosophical. But what P4C teachers need is a special 'something' that makes a community of inquiry "philosophical". Therefore, our initial question has to be changed to the question "what is the special 'something' which P4C teachers should have, and which makes their inquiry philosophical?" (we will discuss what "philosophical" means in Ch. 3).

1.2 The difference between the Category and Core Questions

Presumably, to improve our practice, we as P4C teachers should strive to acquire this 'something'. But what is this special 'something'? We will take two approaches to this problem, in the form of two clarifying questions: a question about the *Category* of this something and the *Core* of this something. The first approach, which we will call the "Category Question" asks: what category of knowledge does this 'something' belong to? Is it a form of propositional knowledge? A technique? Or something else? We know that P4C teachers have to study a lot of things. Therefore, answers to Category Question need not be mutually exclusive. The Category Question has not often been raised concerning P4C teachers. But exploring these possible categories will help us to understand the features of this 'something'.

The second approach, which we will call the "Core Question", asks: what is the core of this 'something' that P4C teachers should have? In other words, this question asks "what is the center of this special something"? Teachers generally try to facilitate students' learning. In this regard, P4C teachers are no different from ordinary (i.e., not P4C) teachers. But they try to create a community of *philosophical* inquiry. This is more than what ordinary teachers try to do. So the 'something' P4C teachers should have is different from what ordinary teachers are expected to have. This 'something' would need to be an addition to whatever skills, knowledge and

other abilities ordinary teachers are expected to possess. Such an additional 'something' is what makes us P4C teachers. Because a P4C teacher might have many additional skills or abilities that an ordinary teacher does not have, it could be possible to list many things as candidates for this additional 'something'. But whatever abilities, knowledge, and skills a P4C teacher might have, it can be assumed that they all share a common core because each of P4C teachers engage in the same activities and have the same aim, which is to build a community of philosophical inquiry. What is this common core? This is the *Core Question* regarding our 'something'.

Lipman has said that "a good teacher of philosophy never reaches a point where there seems no further need for wondering. . . . It is this wondering behavior that is so difficult to explain or convey by means of techniques, strategies, or recipes. Wondering cannot be feigned; it has to grow out of one's own experience", (Lipman 1980:126). In this quote, Lipman illustrates the ideal image of the P4C teacher, who has an attitude of fascination towards philosophy and philosophical questions. How does such an attitude relate to the 'something' P4C teachers should have? This last question is such that it crosses over the division between the Category Question and the Core Question.

We have defined our terms and clarified our research questions. As is evident from the literature in this chapter, answering the Category Question and the Core Question are not independent tasks. Nevertheless, it is my contention that our inquiry into the nature of this special 'something' will benefit by clearly differentiating these two questions and pursuing answers to each in turn. In the following section, we will discuss one potential answer to the Category Question

Ch.2 The role and limitations of propositional knowledge

Academic philosophy might seem to guarantee the philosophical qualifications of P4C teachers (as per the quote from Lipman et al. in 1.1). The first candidate for that 'something', therefore, might be knowledge of academic philosophy. Knowledge of academic philosophy has always been an important component of P4C practice. Lipman said that "Throughout the writing of Harry, I tried to see to it that virtually every event in the story reverberated with ideas or fragments of ideas from the history of philosophy" (Lipman 2009:25). The reason why the practice based on Lipman's novel is a community of philosophical inquiry is clear: its novels include ideas traditionally thought to be the 'property' of academic philosophy. The materials used in P4C sessions (i.e., Lipman's novels) include ideas from academic philosophy, and these ideas in turn generate the philosophical inquiry. Children's inquiries are able to inherit some of this philosophical 'property' from these novels. Gregory sees P4C as not only a "process approach", in which argumentation and the exercise of critical thinking are emphasized, but also a "content approach", in which the acquisition of traditional philosophical ideas is important.

> In that regard, P4C is also a content approach, though it eschews the traditional content approach to a teaching philosophy that emphasizes canonical philosophical problems, concepts, arguments, and key figures within established subdisciplines. Instead, P4C draws students' attention to philosophical concepts like justice, person, mind, beauty, cause, time, number, truth, citizen, good, and right. (Gregory 2013:76)

The meaning of the phrase 'content approach' in this context, therefore, differs from its sense in traditional philosophical education. However, P4C emphasizes the same concepts that academic philosophy does, and in that sense it does share the same contents. The "content" of P4C, to the extent that we see it as a content approach, includes the concepts legitimated by academic philosophy, the standard knowledge of how arguments are structured, and some of the standard positions and conflicts surrounding well-known philosophical problems.

Academic philosophy, therefore, can strongly support the special 'something' of P4C teachers which makes their practice philosophical. Knowledge of academic philosophy is a useful resource for P4C teachers, as it helps bestow the name of philosophy on their inquiries. Haynes recognizes ". . . the value of knowledge, experience, insight and training offered by 'educated' or 'academic' philosophers" (Haynes 2017:139).

Academic philosophy is one of the possible candidates for the 'something' that makes us P4C teachers. We can therefore ask our two clarifying questions regarding the status of academic philosophy. What category is it in? Basically, it belongs to the category of propositional knowledge, or "knowing-that". Propositional knowledge is one possible answer to the Category Question.

What about the Core Question? Is it possible to think of the propositional knowledge of academic philosophy as an answer to the Core Question? We propose to answer "No" to this question. No one (presumably including Lipman) would think that propositional knowledge of academic philosophy alone can capture every aspect of P4C teachers' 'something' that guarantees the philosophical nature of the CoI. One of the reasons to reject knowledge of academic philosophy as a candidate for this 'something' is that we know many knowledgeable academic philosophers can't be effective P4C teachers in schools. Academic philosophical knowledge alone is not enough to become a P4C teacher. A second reason is that P4C teachers should promote a community of philosophical inquiry by facilitating students' discussion, and propositional knowledge has little power to help guide this kind of facilitation. Propositional knowledge describes a true state of affairs. Thus, propositional knowledge can help us understand what is occurring, but it cannot tell us how to change the situation. If it appears to have such a power, it is because it implicitly draws on the power of another kind of knowledge.

Propositional knowledge only provides a tiny amount of help in transforming the classroom inquiry into a community of philosophical inquiry. Since propositional knowledge cannot complete this task on its own, an additional 'something' (which

has some efficacy to change the current situation for the better) is needed to make the classroom inquiry a community of philosophical inquiry.

Ch. 3 Interventions, Skills, and Knowing-how

If the arguments thus far are valid and the propositional knowledge (knowing-that) of academic philosophy is not an appropriate answer to both the Category Question and the Core Question, what is the next possibility to consider? Facilitation of student discussion is one of the key elements of the CoI and can be seen as an 'intervention' by the P4C teachers; P4C teachers need to be able to intervene in discussions to foster participants' thinking, and they need to use their skills well. This chapter focuses on the intervention skills of P4C teachers. What interventions do P4C teachers make in philosophical discussions?

3.1 Arguments of Murris and Gardner

Murris describes several instances of P4C teachers encouraging discussions to become more philosophical by trying to connect children's thinking to philosophical concepts. According to Murris, this encouragement is evidence of a "hidden agenda" on the part of the teacher: ". . . it is worth bearing in mind that this is the philosopher's 'hidden agenda', i.e., to focus on classical philosophical topics. Knowledge and awareness of the history of philosophical ideas and the attitude and skills to ask the relevant questions is crucial here" (Murris 2000:42). According to Murris, it is important that the interventions of P4C teachers, which include setting an agenda, determining the direction of the philosophical inquiry, and formulating the question, are decisive factors in making sure that a P4C inquiry becomes *philosophy*: "I conclude that the facilitator's interventions have been crucial in determining the direction of the inquiry—a direction very much informed by traditional philosophical distinctions (e.g. appearance/ reality), problems (e.g. personal identity), and questions (e.g. Is a robot a person?) —important when one is claiming to teach *philosophy*" (Murris 2000:43 emphasis in original). Murris thinks that P4C teachers' intervention is an essential part of making children's discussion philosophical. In other words, sufficient facilitation skills, meaning skills that can guide an inquiry towards the direction of philosophically relevant topics, are necessary for P4C teachers.

Gardner thinks that truth-seeking is one of the most important roles of P4C teachers. According to Gardner, a philosophically directed inquiry is an inquiry directed towards the truth. P4C teachers acting as facilitators are necessary to promote a truth-seeking attitude in the CoI. Truth is the center of a CoI and produces the form of inquiry. Based on these assumptions, Gardner proposes the idea that a CoI is best understood as a "truth-centered" approach.

> A Community of Inquiry is neither teacher-centered and controlled nor student-centered and controlled, but centered on and controlled by the demands of truth. Truth is absolutely essential to this method; it is only because of progress toward truth that participants are ultimately convinced of the fruitfulness of the process. Truth, however, is a hard taskmaster; it places severe restrictions on participants and puts exacting demands on the facilitator (Gardner 1995:38).

Truth-seeking is demanding work, which requires teachers to train professionality. Truth-seeking facilitation is different from mere facilitation, which lacks a direction and a goal. Mere facilitation can't reach the same level of progress as truth-seeking philosophical facilitation.

> Facilitation alone, when the participants are all or mostly seasoned philosophers, may be sufficient to ensure progress toward truth. Philosophers, after all, have been professionally trained to track the truth. Non-philosophers, however, have no such training and there is little reason to believe that the mere kiss of facilitation will bring them up to scratch (Gardner 1995:41).

For Gardner, the truth-seeking abilities that it grants its students guarantee that philosophy is the P4C teacher's special 'something'. For P4C teachers, mere facilitation abilities are not enough. This also puts the onus on the P4C teacher to do "the hard work" that Garner refers to in the title of her article, because philosophical tendencies, intuitions, and insights are precious and hard to find.

> Facilitation alone is not sufficient. Simply letting a discussion follow 'its course' will not create a Community of Inquiry for the very reason that without explicit intervention by the facilitator, the discussion will rarely follow 'a course'. And without 'philosophical direction', the discussion will almost certainly not follow 'a philosophical course' (Gardner 1995:42).

Both arguments show that there must be some quality held by P4C teachers (a 'something') that makes an inquiry philosophical. (They are not focusing on simply encouraging discussion, but rather creating a Community of *Philosophical* Inquiry). And Murris and Gardner recognize the important role of intervention by P4C teachers in the CoI. The emphasis of both thinkers is on how philosophy emerges in the CoI. And by following the course of both thinkers' arguments, it has become clear that the special 'something' that P4C teachers have was identified in relation to the philosophical component of the inquiry of the CoI. Furthermore, both pieces have proposed their own answers to the Core Question about this 'something': they have variously identified it as being agenda setting, directing the discussion towards philosophically relevant topics, questioning, or the seeking of truth. Agenda setting, the philosophical direction of a discussion, questioning, and the pursuit of truth

(whatever that means) are emphasized because they transform the CoI into a community of *philosophical* inquiry. These are all possible candidates for answers to the Core Question.

3.2 The category of knowing-how

What category does the 'something' that was the focus of 3.1 belong to? Murris thinks that all her proposed answers fall into the categories of skills and attitude. "I argue that the philosophical dimension of an inquiry depends to a large extent on the facilitating skills and attitude of the teacher (Murris 2000:40)". Evidently, these skills and attitudes are the kind of dispositions that P4C teachers possess, abilities that enable them to successfully intervene in children's discussions.

These abilities are not simple and single-minded skills. They must be flexible, sophisticated and intelligent skills (or dispositions). Such skills are acquired only after having been trained for many years, and maintaining them requires constant practice. While the concept of a 'skill' has many meanings, we can divide skills into two types: simple skills, which are inflexible, and intelligent skills, which are flexible. The 'something' we are searching for is flexible, meaning that it can be exercised in a variety of different ways. Therefore, we cannot regard this 'something' as a kind of simple skill, because the exercise of this 'something' must be adaptable to various occasions.

In Ryle's famous arguments concerning the idea of 'knowing-how', he distinguishes between two kinds of disposition: single-track dispositions and non single-track dispositions (Ryle 1949:31). If the 'something' we are searching for is a non single-track disposition, that is to say, if the 'something' has flexibility, then this 'something' must belong to the "knowing-how" category, as any knowing-how must have a certain degree of flexibility when it is exercised, and can only be acquired through much practice. Knowing-how or intelligent skills are prime candidates for answers to the Category Question. In what follows, I would like to further clarify the meaning of 'flexible' and 'intelligent' by discussing two dimensions of the concept of 'knowing-how': a practical dimension and an epistemic dimension.

What is "knowing-how"? According to Cath, researchers have long struggled to reconcile two features of knowing-how: a practical dimension and an epistemic dimension (Cath 2019). The practical dimension means that knowing-how ascriptions entail ability ascriptions. When focusing on the practical dimension of knowing-how, the close relationship between ability and knowing-how is emphasized. For example, if S knows how to ride a bicycle, then S is able to ride a bicycle. If S is not able to ride a bicycle, then even if S is able to explain how to ride a bicycle in mechanical terms, S doesn't know how to ride a bicycle. This kind of claim is the core idea of a position called "Anti-Intellectualism". Anti-Intellectualism stems from Rylean arguments and is a standard view of knowing-how (Snowdon 2004). The anti-

intellectualist thinks that knowing-how ascriptions entail the possession of ability. Thus, focusing on the practical dimension leads to anti-intellectualist views.

Elizinga regards knowing-how as a successful performance resulting from self-regulated abilities: "To regulate one's ability is to be disposed to (a) vary performances in a wide variety of circumstances, (b) differentially respond to feedback on performances, and (c) consolidate what's learned through practice or rehearsal" (Elizinga 2021:1743). The core idea of self-regulation is encapsulated in point (b): the ability to differentially respond to feedback on any given performance, which means that one of the conditions of knowing-how requires adequate responses and an ability to control the form of the knower's performance. It entails that one precondition of knowing-how ascription is that the knower has second-order abilities that can regulate the exercise of the first-order abilities. Thus, the one who knows how to *F* requires two kinds of abilities: first order and second order abilities (c.f. Murase 2021). For the first order ability to *F*, the knower should have an additional (i.e., second order) ability to formulate and alter the exercise of the ability to *F*. This means that we have various abilities that can be understood as forming a cluster. This cluster consists of many single-track dispositions (or first-order abilities) that manifest in any given event or circumstance, as well as second-order abilities which choose to exercise, as well as intelligently adjust, one or more of those first-order abilities in response to a present situation. These many abilities are integrated into a knowing-how. If someone only has the former ability, this person is not a knower, not skillful, and can only be said to have a simple skill.

These characteristics of know-how are consistent with the characteristics of the special 'something' described in the previous section: the interventions of the P4C teachers involve subtle adjustments to the flow of discussions in the CoI. And their actions, far from being manual-based and awkward, are clever actions. It is the 'something' that bestows such abilities on P4C teachers.

Intellectualism, as contrasted with Anti-Intellectualism, emphasizes the cognitive or epistemic aspect of knowing-how, in which knowing-how is grasped as a kind of knowledge first and foremost, and not simply an ability or skill.[3]

The epistemic requirement for proving the possession of a knowing-how is what we will call the condition of cognitive alteration. That is to say, every piece of knowledge allows the possessor to perceive the world differently from before the knowledge was obtained. Once we know how to *F*, our cognitive state will be changed and the world as we perceive it will change. In other words, if the possessor's perceptual states cannot be changed, then even if they can be said to have acquired some ability, it does not deserve the name of knowledge. Noë describes this change through the example of a pianist.

[3] For example, according to Stanley et al., who proposes one of the most influential arguments for intellectualism, knowing-how is one kind of knowing-that under the "practical mode of presentation" (Stanley et al. 2001).

> A piano tickles the fancy of a pianist, soliciting him or her to play. And the piano player can see in the piano, in the arrangement of its keys, possibilities that are not available to the non-player. . . . Possession of abilities enables us to detect significance where there would otherwise be none. In this way, the body, the world and our practical knowledge open up a meaningful realm of experience to us. (Noë 2005:285).

The perception of someone changes in conjunction with the possession of knowing-how. The possessor of knowing-how is embedded in a particular situation and can perceive properties in this situation that are imperceptible to those who do not possess the knowing-how.

Can the special 'something' satisfy such a condition? If the 'something' satisfies this epistemic condition, that is to say, if the 'something' is a kind of knowing-how, then P4C teachers as possessors of knowing-how could perceive features or possibilities in the CoI that are imperceptible to normal (non-P4C) teachers. Do P4C teachers experience this kind of perceptual alteration?

Gregory mentions the term "philosophical ear" in his discussion of P4C teacher training. "Teachers new to philosophy may also take some time to develop a 'philosophical ear', during which time they may miss the philosophical meaning of their students' talk" (Gregory 2013:76). By cultivating a philosophical ear, the P4C teachers will be able to hear new philosophical voices that were previously unheard. This is precisely the epistemic change that P4C teachers experience by acquiring and fostering this 'something'.

The two characteristics regarding know-how (a practical dimension and an epistemic dimension) indicate that the 'something' P4C teachers should have is a type of knowing-how rather than just a set of skills.

We have proposed two conditions regarding knowing-how. It should be clear that the P4C teacher satisfies the first condition and possesses second-order abilities, because the P4C teacher intervenes flexibly in children's discussions and decides what she should do with complex feedback, including feedback regarding her own actions. The second condition, i.e., perceptual change, also occurs in P4C teachers. This is because the P4C teacher "perceives" the flow of philosophical discussion within the CoI. They find philosophical elements that are invisible to the normal teacher. P4C teachers are constantly receiving and giving feedback on their own interventions and questions, they are controlling their actions and abilities in a philosophical direction, and they can find the flow of philosophical arguments and concepts embedded in the children's discussions and reflect them in their performances.

The special 'something', therefore, is a kind of knowing-how. This is our proposed answer to the Category Question. If one would prefer, however, we could think of this 'something' as a kind of "intelligent skill" which can satisfy both the practical and epistemic conditions outlined above. The term 'intelligent skill' might appeal to some who find the concept of 'knowing-how' untenable (With regard to

knowing-how, we take a mixed position here between the Intellectualism and the Anti-Intellectualism). But regardless of which term is preferred, we should be focusing on matters of fact, and not simply matters of terminology.

3.3 Questioning know-how as the core

We have already seen many forms of knowing-how being proposed (especially in 3.1) as the 'something' which makes P4C practice philosophical. Of course, all of these forms of knowing-how have the potential to be useful, and it would no doubt be beneficial for P4C teachers to acquire as many of them as possible. But which is the core idea of this special 'something'? Which is the most important form of knowing-how? We will begin to answer this by focusing on the notion of a question and its relationship with philosophy.

Questions are undoubtedly a very important feature of philosophy. Several philosophers have pointed out the close relationship between philosophy and questions.

One such philosopher is Bertrand Russell. In his famous book, he wrote, "Philosophy, if it cannot *answer* so many questions as we could wish, has at least the power of *asking* questions which increase the interest of the world. . . " (Russell 1921/2019:13) (emphasis in original). Russell claims that the question is a more important component of philosophy than any single proposed answer to that question. "Thus, to sum up, our discussion of the value of philosophy; Philosophy is to be studied, not for the sake of any definite answers to its questions, since no definite answers can, as a rule, be known to be true, but rather for the sake of the questions themselves. . . " (Russell 1921/2019:110).

Furthermore, a philosopher is one who questions the question itself. That is to say, the philosopher tries to more accurately clarify and express the mystery that the question is asking. In the process, the question is refined and reveals its essence. This is an important aspect of the relationship between philosophy and the question. Ryle praises Hume for precisely this ability to clarify and alter questions, referring to the idea that "a philosopher's genius lies not in his giving one new answer to one old question, but in his transforming all the questions" (Ryle 2009:167).

The answer to a philosophical question is a kind of knowledge. Therefore, in a view of philosophy that emphasizes questions over answers, questions can also be contrasted with knowledge. According to Singer, "Philosophy is often thought of as a body of knowledge; but this idea makes little sense, . . . It is better to consider philosophy as a method of enquiring into very fundamental questions that do not yield to the methods of science. In the Western tradition, since the time of Plato, this method can be characterized by a form of relentless questioning, in which the answer to one question only leads to a further question, and so on, and on and on" (Singer, 1995:1).

Enough quotations from great philosophers showing how important questions are in philosophy. What all these references show is that many philosophers have regarded questions as essential to the enterprise of philosophy.[4]

What about P4C researchers and practitioners? Of course, they also emphasize the fundamental importance of the question. Lipman, echoing Ryle, argues that "Children, unlike adults, do not look insistently for answers or conclusions. They look rather for the kind of transformation that philosophy provides—not giving a new answer to an old question, but transforming all the questions" (Lipman, 2003:86–7).

In the context of P4C, children's questions are also emphasized; Lipman describes children's own questioning as "pivotal" and stresses its importance: "In any event, this recognition of the elevated status of the question (and the reduced status of the answer) will help the students remember that questioning is the leading edge of inquiry: it opens the door to dialogue, to self-criticism, and to self-correction" (Lipman 2003:99).

We should recall here that Murris stressed the importance of questions when she described the role of P4C teachers. "If the facilitator aims to bring about *philosophy*, then she needs to gently move the inquiry forward by asking the 'right' kind of questions, informed by (but not determined by) the discipline of philosophy, with an attitude that is the result of practice with philosophizing in communities of inquiry" (Murris 2000:46, emphasis in original). Murris argues for the P4C teacher's superiority when it comes to asking questions. This, Murris thinks, is also related to their knowledge of academic philosophy as discussed in Ch.2, where the P4C teacher builds on such knowledge to determine how to intervene in the CoI.

There is, however, a possible objection to this idea. Someone might argue that even if questions are important to philosophy, the aim of the philosophical enterprise is knowledge, and questions are *merely a tool* to reach that aim.

At first glance, such a claim appears to be a valid argument. However, this objection rests on a mistaken assumption about knowledge. Specifically, it assumes that the meaning of knowledge in this context must be restricted to 'propositional knowledge'.

Hetherington argues that philosophical knowledge is knowledge of the questioning kind. According to Hetherington, any propositional knowledge of proposition *p* requires the various abilities regarding its proposition *p*. These abilities include the ability to ask questions regarding proposition *p* and using proposition *p* to ask questions about other propositions. He refers to these abilities as an 'epistemic diaspora'. Hetherington argues that based on this theory of knowledge, philosophical knowledge is best described as a kind of knowing-how. He states that ". . . philosophical knowledge would be a *questioning* kind of knowing". "And an essential

[4] Of course, the view presented here is just one view of philosophy. As we have seen, however, this view is widely popular among philosophers. It is sufficient here to show that, in one view, philosophy is essentially linked to questions.

part of such know-how is one's knowing how to ask the right questions" (Hetherington 2008:319, emphasis in original).

If philosophical knowledge is a kind of knowing-how, and if it is a questioning knowing-how, is it possible to arrive at a final, completed body of philosophical knowledge? Hetherington states that philosophical knowledge essentially consists of ". . . questions, more questions, all bearing upon a particular *p*. Without them, there is no philosophy of *p* (so to speak) at that moment in that place. Wherever they disappear, so does any philosophy of *p*" (Hetherington 2008:318, emphasis in original). In other words, if questions are the essence of philosophical knowledge, then one cannot do philosophy when all questions have been answered.

Hetherington's argument further solidifies the possibility that one of the aims of philosophy is to question. In other words, philosophical knowledge may be a kind of knowing-how, and not only a kind of knowing-that. Of course, the aims of philosophy might be plural. It could be argued that one aim of philosophy is to discover truth in the form of propositional knowledge, and that this knowing-how-to-question is another, separate aim. In any case, if the argument so far is correct, the view that questioning-know-how is merely a tool for philosophy would be false. It could be an aim. At the very least, it is reasonable to think that many philosophers consider questioning to be one of the essences of philosophy and that questioning know-how is one of the core features of philosophical knowledge.

We have already suggested several possible answers to the Core Question, including the ideas of agenda-setting and truth-seeking; focusing on the role of the question can help clarify some implications of these ideas. What Murris refers to as 'agenda setting' is the clarification and formulation of questions by the facilitator-teacher in the CoI. This is evident from a passage in her paper describing a situation wherein the teacher fails to interpret the students' questions. It is the questions, rather than any sort of propositional content, that are being misinterpreted in that scene (Murris 2000:43). The same can be said about directing the inquiry towards philosophy.[5] Furthermore, it would be justifiable to assert that questioning know-how is necessary and essential to truth-seeking, no matter what "truth" means in this context. Moreover, philosophical truth-seeking includes the clarification of questions. Questioning and truth-seeking are distinct objectives, but they are reciprocal and work hand in hand (this point is discussed in more detail in Ch. 4.2). Therefore, by focusing on the role of the question, all possible answers to the Core Question previously discussed can be interpreted as a kind of knowing-how to question. We are now able to answer the Core Question: the 'something' that P4C teachers should have is a "questioning know-how".

[5] Murris emphasizes the very important point that academic knowledge of philosophy can actually *prevents* right agenda-setting and guiding the inquiry towards the direction of philosophical inquiry (Murris 2000:43).

4. Questioning know-how and its implications.

4.1 What is a "questioning know-how"?

What is a "questioning know-how (hereafter referred to as QKH)"? According to Anti-Intellectualism, QKH possession must entail the ability to ask a question, or more broadly to engage in questioning, in appropriate conditions. QKH is not a single-track disposition, and therefore manifestations of QKH are multiple and varied. This is no different from the fact that manifestations of a person's exercising their knowing-how to ride a bicycle include both going slowly on a rough road without falling down and stably riding at high speed. Typical manifestations of QHK are asking the right question (Murris 2000), and questioning the question itself, which is to say clarification of the question (Murase and Tsuchiya 2019) in the CoI. This represents the intelligent aspect of QKH.[6]

On the other hand, QKH has what might be called an ignorant aspect. P4C teachers have a connection to ignorance, insofar as ignorance is a necessary condition for questioning.[7] The person who can continue to question is an ignorant person. In the same way that Socrates thought of himself as knowing nothing, questioning people should think of themselves as ignorant, because if they were knowledgeable and not ignorant of the answer, there would be no reason to question. Teachers often ask questions they already know the answers to in order to evaluate their students' knowledge of a subject. Such "teacher questions" are not true questions. Or, at the very least, we can claim that the teacher's expertise in asking these kinds of questions does not qualify as QKH. It is certainly a kind of know-how, but it is very different from QKH.

Therefore, QKH has two aspects: an intelligent aspect and an ignorant one. There is a reciprocity between these two aspects: someone who continues to question is in possession of the ignorant aspect of QKH because they are compelled by their ignorance, and yet to the extent that this person continues to reformulate and clarify their questions, they are in possession of the intelligent aspect of QKH. And,

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[6] The latter, "questioning the question itself", is particularly important, because this is one criterion that separates philosophical questions from scientific and other questions. One image of philosophy is "philosophy as the starting point of thinking" (Murase and Tsuchiya 2019 :96). This represents philosophy as thinking from a starting point, without assuming anything. A question for which the answer is already known, or for which one knows how to arrive at the correct answer, is a scientific question and not a philosophical question. A question that needs to be clarified from the meaning of the question itself, or a question that requires questioning the question itself, is a philosophical question. This is why philosophy and questions are inseparably linked. Everything is subject to questioning, including the question itself. This kind of thinking is philosophical thinking.

[7] Kohan et al. discuss the relationship between the P4C teacher and ignorance (Kohan et al. 2016)

conversely, questioning the question itself (viz. the intelligent aspect of QKH) is a result of the continued recognition of one's own ignorance regarding the matter at hand. This allows us to claim that those who possess QKH (that is, P4C teachers) are the "intelligent ignorant". The paradoxical nature of QKH is interesting in itself, but it will also help us understand what it is to be a philosopher in general.

4.2 Implications

What does possession of QKH entail for the teacher?

Earlier, we pointed out that the possession of knowing-how entails a change in perception. QKH must, therefore, also change the perceptions of its possessor. Specifically, the ascription of QKH to a person entails that the possessor's perceptions of questions have been altered. This can be related to Gregory's idea concerning the development of a "philosophical ear". By cultivating a philosophical ear, which I claim is equivalent to acquiring QKH, P4C teachers will understand the flow of philosophical questions in ways that were previously unrecognizable. QKH makes this 'current' of questions in CoI salient for P4C teachers, allowing them to intervene in it so as to encourage better thinking in the CoI.

This means that there are two currents of thinking present in the CoI. Firstly, there is the flow of arguments, reasonings, or inferences, which are rooted in propositions. This includes initial claims, examples given to substantiate or object to those claims, and final conclusions made regarding them. This kind of flow is constituted entirely of propositions. Secondly, there is the flow of questions, wondering, or problems, which are rooted in mysteries (or questions). This includes initial questions that began the inquiry, subsequent questions that were formed in response to the initial questions, and those things that remain unknown after the inquiry has concluded. This kind of flow consists entirely of questions. The CoI begins with asking a question, which provides impetus to our inquiry, and because of this, the role of questioning may appear to be restricted to the first step of inquiry. However, the role of questioning cannot be limited to the first step.[8] The CoI has a constant flow of questions as well as a flow of reasonings and arguments. Therefore, the question itself could be one of the aims of philosophical inquiry. These two currents are in a reciprocal relationship with each other. CoI is a truth-centered approach (c.f. Gardner 1995), but also a question-centered approach. P4C teachers are those who find the flow of ignorance intelligible.

QKH entails changing one's perception of the participants' questions. The QKH makes P4C teachers sensitive to the participants' questions. Children often have authentic questions of their own. But some children can express these questions only in an awkward way. P4C teachers, as possessors of QKH, try to find these questions, and facilitate expressing them in a better way. This is one of the manifestations of

[8] This point was pointed out by Y. Koga.

QKH: listening to the voices of the children, P4C teachers try to clarify them. When P4C teachers create a safe space for the community, it makes it easier for children to express their questions. For this to be possible, teachers have to be sensitive to children's questions. QKH shapes the way in which such facilitations are conducted.[9]

QKH ascription requires a sensitivity to the participants' questions. This means that P4C teachers should care about the children, and all participants in general. This can make a world of difference for the participants, because to be sensitive to participants' questions and to treat them with respect is to care for their world. As Lipman argues, "To ask the question compels people to think differently about the world" (Lipman 2003:87). Children's questions express their unique perspective about the world. That is to say, their questions express their own world. This is especially true of questions without any underlying assumptions, or questions that can only be answered by the person who asked the question. These questions express their own unique perspective, and they are created by questioning the questions themselves. By questioning the question themselves, i.e., by asking more philosophical questions, the P4C teacher is protecting the children's own world and caring for the children themselves. I think this is one of the centers of what Lippman calls 'caring thinking'. P4C teachers can care for children by trying to find out and get close to children's questions.

5. Summary

What makes us P4C teachers? We began the article with this question. P4C teachers, endeavoring to build the CoI, should have a special 'something' which transforms a classroom into a CoI, and especially a Community of *Philosophical* Inquiry. We set out to determine the nature of this special 'something' that P4C teachers should have. Our inquiry began with two clarifying questions: a Category Question and a Core Question. Our answer to the Category Question was that this 'something' belongs to the category of knowing-how or intelligent skills, not the propositional knowledge of academic philosophy and not simple skills. Next, we pointed out the close relationship between philosophy and questions. A question is necessary for doing philosophy. This is only one view of philosophy, but it is a widely held view and depicts one aspect of the nature of philosophy. Therefore, the special 'something' can be understood as QKH (questioning know-how). QKH has many interesting characteristics, one of which is its paradoxical nature: it is both intelligent and ignorant. The intelligent aspect of QKH is a way of asking the right questions, a way of clarifying questions; the ignorant aspect of QKH is a certain attitude toward the unknown, much like

[9] In this sense, facilitation in order to better express a participant's own question does not solely come from P4C teachers, but also from the climate of the community (c.f. "Intellectual Safety" Jackson 2013). This is to say, QKH is a kind of knowing-how that a community can have.

Socrates' attitude. This ambivalence is what makes the intelligent skill of QKH so interesting. Focusing on the QKH allows us to better understand that there is a flow of questions within the CoI, and also appreciate the significance of the questions that each child has.

Here the argument relies on one view of philosophy, namely, the view that questions are essential to philosophy. Therefore, the claim that QKH is the core of P4C teachers' practice also relies on a particular view of philosophy. There could be alternative views of what kind of enterprise philosophy is, and there is no easy way to conclude this. We can only hope to justify the views expressed above by continuing to question the nature of QKH.

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The Role of Experience for the Participants in Socratic Dialogue

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Abstract: *The Socratic Dialogue in the Nelson-Heckmann tradition is a method practiced in limited circles. This method is called Neo-Socratic Dialogue. It is a group activity in which people discuss together within certain rules and methods. It is open to anyone who aims to search for the truth. A Socratic Dialogue can last many hours or many days. It begins with a question, and all participants share their real-life experiences relevant to this question. Then, after a short discussion on these life experiences, one narrated life experience is selected. All subsequent discussion will be on the analysis of this life experience. The aim is to reach an answer to this question at the end of all discussions. In this active dialogue, the facilitator moderates all discussions. Participants speak freely, ask questions, sometimes change their minds, and eventually the discussion ends with a consensus. Most of the participants get new ideas at the end of this dialogue and leave with improved critical thinking, reasoning, and arguing skills, as well as democratic values.*

For the Socratic Dialogue, it is important to have a really suitable example that is drawn from the experiences of the participants. What is the importance of the experience of the participants? What are the benefits of this role in personal and public life for the participants in Socratic Dialogue? This paper will discuss those questions. We will firstly review the Socratic Dialogue functions, and then we will discuss the importance of the experiences of the participants.

Dedicated to the memory of Dr. Rene Saran (1921-2023)

The Role of Experience for the Participants in Socratic Dialogue

The Socratic Dialogue in the Nelson-Heckmann tradition is based on the critical philosophy developed by Leonard Nelson and Gustave Heckmann. It is practiced by

reasoning out a problem together, questioning the truth, and encouraging participants to philosophize independently and critically. The Socratic Dialogue starts with an initial question that always gets connected to the participants' personal experience to approach the truth and fosters participants taking responsibility for their own thinking by reflecting together. This paper will focus on the role of the participants' experiences in Socratic Dialogue in the Nelson-Heckmann tradition by arguing the importance of experience in light of the question, what role does the experience of the participants play in Socratic Dialogue? We will first consider how the Socratic dialogue functions, and then we will arrive at the importance of the experiences of the participants. To do so, a new task will simply arise in front of us: evaluating the benefits of this role in personal and public life for the participants in Socratic dialogue.

Introduction to Socratic Dialogue

First of all, it is important to see how the Socratic Dialogue proceeds in the Nelson-Heckmann tradition if we want to understand the role of experience among the participants. In the twentieth century, Leonard Nelson developed the Socratic Dialogue (Nelson, 1949, pp. 1–43). He criticised Socrates, but he was inspired by his philosophical and pedagogical attitudes and called his method Socratic. As a philosopher, Socrates assumed that philosophical thinking led us from darkness into its light. As a pedagogical attitude, he made his pupils do their own thinking and introduced the interchange of ideas as a safeguard against self-deception (Nelson, 1949, p.17). After Leonard Nelson's early death, his student Gustave Heckmann developed the method and added the meta-dialogue in the process. Dieter Krohn stated that even though it is not part of the content, the sole purpose of the meta-dialogue is to support the work on the content of dialogue (Krohn, 2004, p.22).

A Socratic Dialogue can last many hours or many days. It starts with a philosophical question, and then the facilitator collects different examples from the experiences of the participants. Then all participants choose one personal experience to analyze. Heckmann adds that it is a Socratic principle that insights into the general ramifications of any given problem can only be gained by understanding and analyzing concrete experiences, thus clarifying and stating separately the general knowledge that it entails (Heckmann, 1981, p.126). Participants have to accomplish their tasks even though sometimes they have difficulties. They are responsible for the progress of the dialogue. And finally, they have to strive for consensus that should be

based on their own insights and voluntary consent. Everyone has to make an honest decision. In this context, participants need to be honest and open to others' thoughts and statements. Then they examine the specific statement, the justifications, and the rules of the justifications. It is obvious that participants have the autonomy in thinking that allows them to gain philosophical insights. The dialogue comes to an end with consensus, in Heckmann's words, "reasoning it out jointly" to approach the truth takes place (Heckmann, 1981, p.2).

Experience of Socratic Dialogue

It is clear that Leonard Nelson and Gustave Heckmann developed the Socratic Dialogue that related to concrete life experiences and critical thinking (Nelson, 1949; Heckmann, 1981). The aim of the Socratic Dialogue is to philosophize individually and as a group. In this sense, participants in Socratic Dialogue should focus on their own thoughts, but at the same time they need to understand the thoughts of other participants because that is vital for mutual understanding. All participants contribute and put themselves in the shoes of the other dialogue partners. Moreover, there should be full understanding between participants in the Socratic Dialogue; they have to be clear about the meaning of what has just been said by testing it according to the concrete experience. Dieter Krohn adds that each participant's contribution should be based upon what the example-giver has experienced, not upon what the participant has read or heard (Krohn, in Brune, J.P; Krohn, K, 2005, p.9). In the Socratic dialogue, participants try to understand the thoughts of others and help each other clarify and formulate those thoughts. This is called maieutic, which is the Socratic skill of the midwife. Each participant is a midwife for the other's ideas. Participants should express themselves as briefly as possible to contribute to the common search for truth on the given problem.

The Socratic Dialogue is a philosophical investigation in a group setting to form a community of inquiry. It enables people to bring all kinds of backgrounds to the group. This situation can enrich the dialogue and give new and interesting perspectives, but sometimes it can limit the whole process. Heckmann sees this issue as one of the two constraints that limit what is possible. This concerns the intellectual interests and capacities of the participants. He gives an example of the mathematical truth in which the participants' interest in the problem is not strong enough to go ahead with the examination of the mathematical truth (Heckmann, 1981, p. 156). Another

constraint is for the empathy. The need to empathize may be a problem for some children or adults, according to their intellectual levels. With regard to these different target groups, the question can be made attractive for participants in various ways. In particular, age, pre-existing knowledge, and the social, cognitive, and emotional competence of the participants have to be taken into account. In terms to cognitive competence, for example, this means that the question should not exceed the cognitive capability of the participants, but should also be difficult enough to arouse the participants' motivations and ambitions to find an answer. To solve this problem, proceeding from a concrete everyday situation, a Socratic question that is related to the knowledge of the participants about life and the world should be developed.

In Socratic Dialogue, the example of the personal experience needs to connect to the focus of the inquiry. The example should be selected for the clarity and comprehensiveness of the situation. The example giver has a role in the example; he or she knows his or her example from personal experience; he or she is not a spectator; he or she has to tell the example fully, but when the experience of the example is past, the example giver is no longer involved in the situation (Kessels, Boers, Mostert:2009, p.39). In this context, one's experience becomes all participants' experience. On the other hand, each participant comes from a different background and brings his or her feelings, which include fears, prejudgments, passions, etc., so during the sessions there may be some modification of this experience; participants reshape and re-narrate it, so one's experience transforms their experience that refers to the group.

In the Nelson-Heckmann tradition, participants start their investigations from real-life examples of the participants rather than their theoretical reflections. All participants are asked to come up with a personal experience relating to the topic in question. Every participant has different ideas and different views that make up his or her worldview, but those differences also include some inconsistencies. Precisely at this point, about two thousand five hundred years ago, Socrates wanted to reveal these inconsistencies in his dialogues and to show the inadequacy of the person's thoughts. In his dialogue, *The Sophist*, Plato claims that one person only realizes that, after his opinion has been refuted and shamed, he is, in fact, ignorant of something that he thinks that he knows, and then begins to investigate a question that goes deeper. After that, it will not be obstructed by the so-called knowledge and the earlier superficial opinion. We can call this necessary step towards a further investigation of one's own opinions the *elenchus*, the refutation, or the shame. We can see *elenchus* in the center of Socratic Dialogue. However, this time it becomes a group process that is performed by the participants of the Socratic Dialogue in the Nelson-Heckmann tradition. Here,

too, *elenchus* shows ignorance created by so-called knowledge. Dieter Krohn states that the participant's experience is the point of departure for the philosophical insight. It is what makes the philosophical inquiry. We could understand this insight in terms of subjective conviction or the absence of any further doubts. He also assumes that all experience is incomplete and that new experiences can lead us to new insights, causing Heckmann to assert that in a Socratic Dialogue, so-called definitive answers and irrefutable results cannot be found (Krohn, in Saran and Neisser, 2004, p. 21).

In Socratic Dialogue, participants need to start with concrete experiences and remain in contact with those experiences for the initial question. To gain insight, the connection between any statement and personal experience needs to be explicit. This insight is possible by examining and analyzing a concrete experience, but on the other hand, the participants also need to search for the underlying general principle and convictions through the process of 'regressive abstraction'. Therefore, Nelson stresses the importance of having the philosophical reflection of the dialogue grounded in the domain of real-life experience (Nelson: 1949). Heckmann also emphasizes that experiences constitute the substance of this work (Heckmann, 1981, p.1). In this context, thinking Socratically means to think concretely, to work with one's experience and an example to give a deeper understanding; otherwise, it could raise a lot of meaningless speculation. Helge Svare assumes that there are two kinds of inspiration for this principle: One source of inspiration is the term content, which comes from Kant's famous dictum that "concepts without content are empty". Here, the term content refers to empirical content. Another inspiration could be Plato, who in his dialogue depicts Socrates as a person who often starts the philosophical inquiry by examining examples brought forward by his dialogue partners based on their experience and also checks the propositions brought forward by testing them against such examples.

The regressive method of abstraction is the essential concept for understanding Leonard Nelson's thought in Socratic Dialogue. Nelson uses the regressive method of abstraction (*die regressive Methode der Abstraktion*) to determine the philosophical principles. He states that the regressive method of abstraction does not provide any new knowledge about facts and laws, but it uses reflection to transform into clear concepts what reposes in our reason as an original possession and makes itself obscurely heard in every experiential judgment. (Nelson, 1949, p. 10). If we analyze the conditions of experiential judgments' possibility, we see more general propositions that constitute the basis of particular judgments. In fact, those concepts take place in our minds from the beginning, and we find them in every individual

judgment, but the regressive method of abstraction transforms them into clear concepts through reflection. Heckmann described this as the path of abstraction, from judgment in concrete cases towards the general truth on which that judgment is based, which was found in some cases and missed in others (Heckmann, 1981, p. 113).

Nelson explains that regressive abstraction reverses the usual process of reasoning, which begins with reasons and establishes consequences. In the usual process of reasoning (the progressive method), one might begin with an idea, then from this point begin to build and consider what logically flows from such a belief. However, the regressive method consists in rooting the consequence in experience by asking participants to describe an actual event in which they experienced their belief and in helping the participants discover the 'obscurely heard' principles that gave rise to that consequence or belief. Nelson calls those principles basic principles, and he assumes that they generally form the ground of our judgments and evaluations only in an obscure way, without stating and becoming clearly aware of them, and that participants must make use of an artificial regressive procedure to make them (Nelson: 1949, pp. 107–108). In this context, according to Nelson's explanation of the idea of regressive abstraction, we have to eliminate accidental facts in order to bring out fully the underlying assumptions of a judgment. It is obvious that this type of abstraction is contained in a regressive process that can be understood by thinking and arguing. The starting point is a particular experience-based judgment, so abstraction targets an abstract statement responding to a philosophical question. To gain a deeper theoretical understanding of regressive abstraction, we should work out the starting point and the regressive character of argumentation in a Socratic Dialogue. Now it is understandable that we start with the experience of the participants, which is the base of the regressive abstraction, and then the path of abstraction of the participants in the dialogue goes to general truths. Robert Farmer assumes that Nelson clearly marks out in his writing the key aspect of a Socratic Dialogue: the fact that the facilitator must not intervene in matters of content. The participants must only say what they really believe; no thought experiments or hypothetical examples should be introduced. On the other hand, the language should be used to express thoughts and be as simple, non-technical, and clear as possible. It is clear that the process requires time as well as consistent, persistent, precision thinking, and that it must occur in groups to minimize the possibility of self-deception. After Nelson, his student Gustav Heckmann provides more specific details about the workings of Socratic Dialogue and the influences how the method is used today (Farmer: 2018, p.10).

Functions and importance of the experience of the participants

After analyzing the importance of the experiences of the participants, a new task will simply arise in front of us: evaluating the benefits of this role in personal and public life for the participants in Socratic Dialogue. We call it benefits because we should dialogue about really relevant and important issues in personal and public life. Leonard Nelson developed this method and used it in the political and social democratic movements. Socratic Dialogue is related to real life and helps us to improve our lives. When the experience of the participant is discussed in Socratic Dialogue, the participants experience the fact that a very ordinary event in their own lives is so versatile and that it serves to teach them so much. The ultimate goal of the Socratic Dialogue is to improve participant's ability to make the right decisions that are well-justified in their lives. This requires the participants to develop their critical thinking abilities. A dialogue is Socratic "if it enables the participant to make the transition from concrete experience to general insight". The participant will not gain insight unless he does this work all by himself (Heckmann, 1981, p.127).

Robert James Farmer, who conducted research to find out the expected benefits for the people who participate in Socratic Dialogues, says that there are many benefits that participants are said to experience as a result of participating in Socratic Dialogue. Firstly, it enables participants to review and revise (or reject) some of their opinions, to widen their vision, and to gain insight into some of their beliefs. Secondly, it allows us to experience the advantages of constructively and cooperatively thinking together. Thirdly, it permits them to recognize the educational value of personal experience and improve their critical thinking, reasoning, and arguing skills. Later, it is encouraging to learn that a heterogeneous group of people is able to reach a genuine and meaningful consensus about challenging subjects. Finally, it expands their model(s) of what learning is and how and under what conditions it can take place (Farmer, 2018, p. 45–70).

Socratic Dialogue educates the participants in the values of democracy and civil society and the development of autonomous and critical thinking, as well as interpersonal, ethnic, and cultural tolerance. Participants learn to be safe and confident in Socratic Dialogue. Horst Gronke stresses that the characteristic of the Socratic Dialogue is the acceptance and demand for self-responsibility on the part of the dialogue partners. In this sense, the Socratic Dialogue expects self-determined individuals with a basic readiness for change. It is very often asked how far Socratic

Dialogue changes people in a good manner. Many participants said that they had been changed by Socratic Dialogue. Gronke adds that "if this is not the case, the Socratic Dialogue, which increases the conviction potentials of the dialogue partners, is useless" (Gronke, in Brune,J.P., Gronke, H., and Krohn, D.: 2010, p. 45). Every individual not only needs to learn to know herself or himself through dialogue but also learn to live with others in a society. Gisela Raupach Stray adds that Socratic Dialogue makes the participants think clearly and precisely and makes them responsible for society. She talks about some people from the Nelson circle who were engaged in the movement against the atomic bomb, in Amnesty International, and later in the peace movement. For example, Gustave Heckmann and his wife were very politically active during their lives. In this context, Socratic dialogue is not only a method; it is a concentration of democratic values and virtues. The participants get to experience these values in practice, especially when discussing issues in a non-authoritarian and non-dogmatic way. Socratic Dialogue contributes to developing the citizen model of Socrates and Kant (Strey, in Shipley, P., and Mason, H. 2004, p. 202–204).

Socratic Dialogue can also help students and teachers to develop ethical awareness. In this context, Tamsyn Imison, a prominent British educator and educational strategist, tells us about 'the ethical school' among both students and staff. Imison worked as the head teacher of a successful comprehensive secondary school in London. During six years, the school council was trained in using Socratic Dialogues to discuss ethical issues of concern to them, so Imison was able to introduce Socratic Dialogue to all students. In their evaluations, all who participated expressed the view that it was a significant learning and enlightening experience (Imison, in Saran and Neisser, 2004, p. 27). After her experience and her observation of others engaged in learning, Imison emphasized that learners often learn best collectively. In this context, Peter Senge says that when teams learn together, they have good results and members can grow rapidly. For him, the discipline of team learning starts with dialogue because this is genuine 'thinking together'. The group discovers insights not attainable individually (Senge: 2010).

Conclusion

Consequently, in the Nelson-Heckmann tradition, Socratic dialogue is a unique way to philosophize and foster mutual understanding to approach the truth in the group. The starting point is the participant's experience, but all experiences are incomplete,

so new experiences can lead to new insights. To analyze the role of the experience of the participants in Socratic dialogue, one needs to understand the tasks and behaviors of the participants from different perspectives. The way to accomplish the philosophical task is not easy, but nevertheless, the challenge is to engage in the structure of Socratic Dialogue and the experiences of the participants.

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Does Philosophical Practice *Help*?
An Inquiry through a Philosophical Dialogue in Medical Settings

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Abstract: *The question surrounding the role of philosophical practice is often whether or not it can be considered a helping profession. Practices held in medical contexts are particularly subjected to this inquiry because of their delicate situations and the expectations participants might have. This paper addresses this question through the case study of OncoloCafé, a café philosophique designed for cancer patients, survivors, patients of intractable diseases, their families, and medical professionals. The paper first explains how to approach this setting (the illness and its experience by the participants) and then clarifies how philosophy can intervene. Finally, the paper attempts to answer the extent to which philosophical practice can "help" patients by emphasizing the goals and the processes at the basis of the practice.*

1. Introduction

Questioning the purpose of philosophical practice inevitably envisions an *end* of it, an end that means, as the double meaning of the word suggests, both the actual termination of the practice and an expected result. Whether the hope for an expected result is justified or not is a topic open to debate: does philosophical practice aim to be some *help* for those who decide to try it? This issue elicits other essential aspects that concern the evaluation of the practice and the interrogative about *good* practice. Is a practice good when it reaches some outcome? Is it good in the way it tries to reach them? Is it in its process? Is it in the person who facilitates the practice? How do we understand the results?

This paper gives a perspective on the role of philosophical practice using the healthcare context as an example. This setting is particularly interesting because it raises the question of whether this practice can be helpful, in some ways therapeutic, or at least as *beneficial* as other helping professions. By anticipating the conclusion, because of its transformative character, philosophical practice can be beneficial in the

sense that it can produce beneficial *effects* for those who undergo a philosophical path. However, it cannot be therapeutic if we understand its meaning as "relating to the treatment of disease or disorders by remedial agents or methods" or, generally, to feeling "healthier", in the short period of time. The goal[1] of a philosophical practice – even considering the differences among the numerous types (for instance philosophical counseling, philosophical café, P4C, Socratic dialogue) – is, rather, to think together, to clarify our thoughts and narrations, or in other words, to try to *understand* and make sense of our lives and experiences. In this sense its aim cannot be that of addressing and resolving immediate problems, particularly if related to one's health, but addressing the way of staying in the problem, the way of seeing the problem. This paper discusses these issues, presenting them through a case study: the dialogues at OncoloCafé. Because of its specific target, OncoloCafé is a particular kind of *café philosophique* designed for cancer patients, survivors, their families, persons with intractable diseases (ALS in particular), and medical professionals. Its target and the fact that it creates a closed group of people raise the question of "support" or "help" in a more decisive way than in other contexts. This paper offers a definition of philosophical practice that accepts the helpful effects of the practice without *expecting* or *looking for* these immediate results, as in the case of a helping profession.

2. Philosophical Practice in Healthcare Setting: Approaching the Illness

In this paper, we inquire the extent to which philosophical practice can help those who try this path. The case study of OncoloCafé will guide the discussion. It is a thought-provoking case because of the group members' situation, the urgency they may feel to share it, and the need to understand themselves in facing their illness and its related concerns. Before touching on the dialogues at the café, it is first necessary to linger on how to approach philosophical dialogues in healthcare settings.

When we think about how to design activities in a context that deals with illness, intractable conditions, and healthcare in general, the first thing to reflect upon is how to approach the disease the participants are experiencing. The most important thing is to acknowledge the *subjective* and personal experience of the disease. Cancer and ALS, to list two, are part of the life experience of a person (as well as of the family members, physicians, nurses, and all those who are close to someone experiencing the

[1] Because claiming that the practice has no expected end does not mean to claim that is has no goal.

disease), and the meaning they give to their experience cannot be generalized or taken for granted. Particularly, when the dialogue participants are physicians, patients, and family, the gap in their definition of the illness can be substantial. In this sense, phenomenology is a good framework we can use to approach the dialogue.

The illness of the body cannot be considered as something exclusively organic and isolated from the rest of the person who is suffering. Our body is the medium through which we experience the world, meet other people, feel, live. It is the door to our experiences and our possibilities. Far from Cartesian mind-body dualism, our body, our feelings and thoughts, and the "outer" world exist in an inseparable dynamic that creates our existence. "The lived body needs to be thought from the movement of the existence" (Costa, Cesana 2019, 35) without being separated or evicted as a separate entity. *Lived Body* is an expression created by Husserl, according to him:

> The Body is, in the first place, the medium of all perception; it is the organ of perception and is necessarily involved in all perception . . . the bearer of the zero point of orientation, the bearer of the here and the now, out of which the pure Ego intuits space and the whole world of the senses. Thus each thing that appears has *eo ipso* an orienting relation to the Body, and this refers not only to what actually appears but to each thing that is supposed to be able to appear. . .
>
> Now the processes of perception, in virtue of which one and the same external world is present to me, do not always exhibit the same style; instead, there are distinctions which make themselves noticeable. At first, the same unchanged Objects appear, according to the changing circumstances, now this way, now in another way. The same unchanged form has a changing appearance, according to its position in relation to my Body (Husserl 2000, 61–64)

And again

> The appearing external world shows itself as relative not only to the Body but also to the psychophysical subject as a whole. Hence a distinction is made here between the identical thing itself and its subjectively conditioned modes of appearance, i.e., its subjectively conditioned features which persist in relation to me, my Body, and my soul (ibid., 80).

Therefore, the meaning of an illness also varies according to how it is experienced, and often "there is a decisive gap between the patient's experience of illness and how physicians think about it in terms of disease", writes Toombs (Toombs 1987, 220) and continues "the patient [. . .] focuses on a different 'reality'. He does not 'see' his illness primarily as a disease process. Rather, he experiences it essentially in terms of its effects upon his everyday life" (ibid., 222). We can add the obvious remark that this gap also exists among patients who describe their encounters and life with the disease in numerous ways. It is Husserl again who writes that through our body, we access the intersubjective world, a world that he calls *lifeworld* (*Lebenswelt*) in which we act, confer meanings, and are *motivated* by our experience (an experience that affects not only the causes of our actions but also our judgments). According to Husserl, while being intersubjective and a place where embodied subjectivities are related to each other, the world is *for me*, in a way that its perception is different according to the perceiver, and so are the ways of experiencing this world. In this sense, every event or significant change (and illness is a dramatic change in the life of someone) produces a transformation in the attribution of meanings and the interpretation of one's reality.

We cannot separate from this reality in which we are born; we are *always* within the world. Now, Heidegger can help us describe how the discovery of the illness dramatically changes the established perception of one's reality. If we borrow the lexicon of Heidegger, the subject who is in the world is called Da-sein (Being there), and it understands itself "with regard to its being-in-the-world" (Heidegger 1996, 81). The focus of the understanding is the existence of the Da-sein and the possibilities it has while it is being-in-the-world. Heidegger writes, "As an existential, possibility does not refer to a free-floating potentiality of being [. . .], Da-sein has always already got itself into definite possibilities" (Heidegger 1996, 135). Therefore, understanding one's existence is necessarily related to the possibilities they have. Heidegger calls the existential structure of the understanding "projection". Projection does not mean creating a project for oneself practically. It is the understanding of the Da-sein itself, an understanding that is reached in relation to its possibilities. These possibilities are limited, for the Da-sein exists in the world for a limited time.

Approaching the illness and its experience according to this framework means understanding it from an existential point of view. It means to consider the disease as "the encounter with a possibility of the existence" (Costa, Cesana 2019, 88), an encounter that – if we follow Heidegger's reasoning – affects the understanding of the Da-sein, so the person as a whole. When a person discovers themselves to be ill, have

some condition or disease, the understanding of themselves undergoes a radical change. They need to reframe themselves according to their new possibilities, which can mean rearranging their relationships, duties, and free time. A patient's relationship with the world is altered, and their projection, that is, the understanding of themselves according to their possibilities, is "destructured by the illness" (Costa, Cesana 2019, 89).

Therefore, the illness affects not only the organic body but the person's whole existence. In a sense, it is their identity until that moment and the meaning they gave to their life that comes into crisis. Philosophical practice acts in this kind of situation, considering all the aspects of one's life that can be affected by the occurrence of an illness. It digs into understanding the person's situation and, using Heidegger's words, their possibilities. The first definition of philosophical practice given by Gerd Achenbach describes the practice precisely as *a process of understanding*. He writes:

> In Philosophical Practice, people [who] show up [. . .] don't just want to live or to get through but rather want to give account of their lives and who want clarity about their lives shape, the from-where, in-what, where-to. Their demand quite often is to reflect upon the special circumstances, the peculiar entanglements and the somehow ambivalent course of their lives. In short: they visit a Philosophical Practice in order *to understand* and *to be understood*. [. . . Philosophical practice] gives weight to our life, importance to our being and meaning to our presence. (Achenbach 1999)

For Achenbach, philosophical practice (*Philosophische Praxis*) is a dialogue between two people: the guest and the philosopher. However, we think that the above definition can be extended to the wider umbrella of practices that have been already mentioned at the beginning, so that the process of understanding seems to be the focus of philosophical practice, but how does this happen?

3. How does Philosophical Practice Intervene?

Philosophical practice is essentially dialogue. It can be between two people if it is a one-on-one activity or among more than two people if it is a group dialogue. As the Italian practitioner Neri Pollastri points out, "Not all dialogues, however, are the same: that of philosophical practice is a philosophical one. It means in the first place that in

it, the two (or more) dialoguers have *equal rational dignity*, therefore also [equal] human and ethical [dignity]" (Pollastri 2020, 43). In a group dialogue, which is the case of this paper's case study OncoloCafé, where patients and physicians join the discussion, there is no hierarchy, and "it does not matter whether one of them is more educated or more experienced in conceptual processing and whether the other is in even quite serious personal difficulties or expects the former to have answers" (ibidem)—in the dialogue they are equal. In that sense, the main goal of OncoloCafé is to deepen everyone's introspection and to reflect on everyone's thoughts and opinions through dialogue. It is a *group* dialogue, so exchanging ideas with other participants is essential to the practice. Through listening to one another, participants can also discover something about themselves. It is not supposed to be a support group in the strict sense, nor a place to ask for advice or answers. It is a place where participants *think together*.

The content of the dialogue in a philosophical practice can vary according to the needs of those who want to undergo a philosophical path, and it can vary according to the context. It can be mainly theoretical, or it can be heavily grounded in the life experiences of the participants. In general, we think that philosophical practice, differently from academic philosophy, tries to constantly shift from a practical to a theoretical level, to correlate the living experience with the theoretical analysis of the concepts at stake. However, some contexts or needs require plunging deeper into the narration of the life experiences of the participants, and one of these contexts is precisely the healthcare setting, which is the focus of OncoloCafé.

It is an essential first step because it gives voice to the participants' individuality; it values their subjective definition of their illness and its context, which means how it affects their relationships with their families, acquaintances, workplace, etc. Narration, mainly biographical narration, is not something unique to philosophical practice; indeed, it finds use in psychiatry, psychology, narrative medicine, and so forth. The way narration is approached by philosophical practice does not necessarily differ from these other disciplines. It is not something new, but nonetheless it is an essential part of this practice because it is the most direct way to approach the participants' experiences. The importance of narration lies in the nuances given to the message the speakers want to convey; it is not the simple "fact" that they express it, but how they explain it, the universe of concepts and values that inform the narration and lead to the interpretation of the facts themselves that is of interest. Narration encompasses all these aspects, but they are destined to remain primarily implicit if the narration is considered a simple transmission of an event. Within philosophical

practice, narration is only a starting point; it is a necessary step to introduce what is important for the person who is narrating, but it is not the end of the practice. The practice aims to *reflect* on one's narration. The shift between narrating and reflecting on what one has said can occur multiple times. Depending on how the dialogue develops, the dialogue can return to a narrative level and then shift once again to a more theoretical one. The crucial aspect is "how the dialogue developed, producing a series of small variations in understanding and meaning until the generation of a new macro-establishment of the overall worldview" (ibid., 98).

When someone recalls an episode and tells it to the counselor and, in case of group dialogue, to the other participants, the logic of the thoughts can be blurry, the episode and the thinking about it can be full of meanings between the lines, and the narrators themselves at times may be unsure about where they are going with their narration. Moreover, something that is not emphasized enough is that it is not always easy to narrate. Thinking about something and choosing the words to say is a process that can be easy for someone but extremely difficult for others. "What do I say?" and "How do I say it?" can be common concerns because being able to narrate something about oneself is an activity that takes time to learn. However, once the narrating flow starts, it is clear that it is something incredibly *generative*. Even if still at an implicit level, the concepts and the values that constitute the narrator's worldview are already there. In that sense, the narration is a first step, a propaedeutic for a second one, that of *reflection*.

> Reflecting does not produce a mere increase in knowledge [...]. To reflect means to set our eyes on what we already know, but precisely because it directly affects us, is not as clear as we can sometimes imagine. [...]
> To reflect is to see ourselves in a broader perspective, to make our own a more general point of view, to incorporate the gaze of the other. Thanks to this, we can evaluate, value and, if necessary, transform what we do and say and the way in which we do it. (Contesini, 2016).

Here is the shift from a practical and narrative level to a more theoretical and conceptual one. Here is the beginning of the dialogue. The counselor, the facilitator of the group dialogue, does not interpret the narration alone because the dialogical process implies the participation of the narrator and the other members (in the case of a group practice). It is crucial *to stay* in the narration, stay in the problematic situation exemplified in the episode, and reflect upon it. One important step is clarifying what

was implicit or blurry in the narration or checking the meaning of the words used to convey the episode. Particularly in group practice, everyone needs to be on the same page regarding the meaning of the words the group uses. Understanding what everyone means through their remarks is important to avoid misunderstandings. This process can sometimes be tiring, or it can, for a moment, result in the group taking a detour from the discussed topic. However, clarifying the misunderstandings about concepts, words, or others' standpoints is crucial for the discussion. Exchanging opinions about the use of words, the concepts that they subsume, is, in fact, closely bonded to how the participants relate the words to their experience. Misunderstandings are also valuable for confronting problematic issues and contribute to creating a common ground of understanding without which the dialogue could not be unfruitful.

The shift from plain narration to dialogue makes the practice philosophical. As Buber writes about dialogues, "Two men bound together in dialogue must be turned to one another, they must therefore—no matter with what measure of activity or indeed of consciousness of activity—have turned to one another" (Buber 2004, 9). This is "easier" in a one-on-one experience, where the counselor is actively engaged in the dialogue with the consultant, but it is indispensable also in a group activity. Every participant should be turned toward and actively listen to others' remarks. A philosophical dialogue is not a collection of unrelated monologues; the goal is to think together, which means to engage and be engaged by others and give one's insights concerning the subject matter in a word *contributing* to the dialogue. As mentioned, if the dialogue starts from a narration of someone around a topic and the episode becomes the focus of the dialogue, everyone should contribute to a more profound understanding of it. That can lead to connecting it to others' narrations which can be complex, but at the same time, can broaden the group's horizon and suggest something new. The role of the facilitator is to help the participants connect their remarks and experiences by playing catch, referring to one another, and making the group think *together*.

OncoloCafé is a philosophical activity designed for a medical setting. Despite the target and the setting, it is not a support group intended as a place for participants to gather practical information or give advice to one another about what worked for them in a particular circumstance related to therapy or their condition in general. It is a safe place (something in common with support groups) where those who join think together about a topic that is not directly related to their medical condition. It is a practice that aims to lead to a more conscious awareness of one's situation. Dialogues

can touch on many different topics related to different aspects of the participants' lives. By putting their thoughts into words and reflecting upon them, the understanding of themselves can become deeper and clearer and highlight different perspectives that have not previously been considered. Let us consider the activity in a more detailed way to try to give some answers to the questions posed in the introduction.

4. A Case Study: Dialogues at OncoloCafé

As introduced at the beginning of this article, OncoloCafé[2] is one example of philosophical practice in healthcare. It was created by Nakaoka Narifumi and Sano Keiko and "opened" for the first time in 2016 at the Osaka University Hospital. It is a philosophical café even if the topic of the day is mainly decided by the facilitator, a practice that differs from the cafés designed by Marc Sautet (Sautet 1995).
A typical session is organized as follows.

1) Simple Self-introduction: the participants can use their names, but they should also feel free to use a nickname they would like to be called by the others.
2) The Facilitator introduces the "topic of the day", but if the participants want to propose a different topic they would like to discuss, it is also perfectly acceptable.
3) Participants try to describe what comes to mind when they hear the theme. The goal of the dialogue is to proceed by playing catch, referring to one another while participating.
4) Participants are free to enter and leave the room during the session without asking permission.
5) Everyone should listen carefully to others' observations and remarks and try to find words that come from within themselves. No one has to speak if they cannot find their words immediately. They may find them after the dialogue is over, or even a week later when a word may come to them.
6) Silence is also important in dialogue. There is no need to rush to speak.
7) The content of the dialogue is to be kept for the occasion only and is to be kept confidential.

[2] In the number 5 volume of *Tetsugaku*, Nakaoka Narifumi already mentioned the activity of OncoloCafé.

8) Participants are encouraged to find their answers, but the goal is not to draw any conclusions about the topics discussed, and there is no need to reach a shared conclusion during the dialogue. The process of dialogue itself is fundamental.

One aspect that is important to underline is the choice of topics. Topics at OncoloCafé are not directly related to the participants' medical conditions. To give some examples: "What is happiness?" "Relationship", "Reliability", "At the critical moment", "What does it mean to do your best?" and so on. The choice of topics unrelated to illness wants to emphasize that it is crucial to embrace the participant as a person, not as a *patient*. The narration of the illness, its discovery, how it affected their life, and similar aspects take a big part of the dialogue, *ça va sans dire*. However, illness is not the focus. The focus is always on the person and their experience; illness is *only* a part of their life experience. In this sense, dialogues at OncoloCafé aim to break down the healthy-ill dualism which tends to be created in this kind of setting.

Since 2020, all activities have been held online because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We discussed above the role of dialogue in philosophical practice, the phenomenological approach towards the experience of the illness, and the understanding of a person according to their "being-in-the-world" and their possibilities. How do these translate into practice at OncoloCafé?

The primary aspect that became evident during the numerous dialogues with patients is how the illness affected their understanding of themselves. Previously, we briefly touched on Heidegger's definition of projection and the suggestion of Costa and Cesana that the illness destructures the understanding that the person had of themselves *before*. A huge divide between the before and the after of the illness is undoubtedly common among those who experienced some kind of disease, curable or not. Some participants noticed a sense of loss after the shock following its discovery; one participant T., said once, "I felt a void inside", a void which indicated not only the sense of fear for what to expect but also the impossibility of recognizing the person that existed before. On a different occasion, T. also remarked, "All footholds I used before make no sense now", expressing the different meaning that reality gained. The same feeling was expressed by another participant, Y., who once said, "I am reborn, but in a negative way". In this last case, the participant not only expressed that it was hard to get the sense of this new reality but added another crucial aspect: the impossibility of using words to express it. It was something that could be understood by those who had the same experience because they did not need words to explain

something that was a shared experience. However, the challenge was to let those who did not have the same experience understand this new feeling and sense of discomfort. Because of the participation of medical professionals and family—who have different experiences of the illness—this was a difficult challenge.

As pointed out above, every experience is singular and subjective, so not everyone feels the same way in every circumstance. The job-related conversation is another delicate topic for most of the participants at OncoloCafé. Disease and treatment can cause fatigue and result in the impossibility of working at the same pace as before. Some people need to take time off, which can abruptly interrupt one's career and the future they have imagined for themselves. Furthermore, the disclosure of one's condition at the workplace sometimes negatively affects the relationships one has with coworkers. In such a case, it can make them feel the *stigma* of being ill. The experience of loss can manifest, therefore, as the loss of one's place in the world, where they do not feel recognized as the same as before and are not given the same confidence and trust.

The illness affects not only the organic body, but the person as a whole since every single experience, public or private, is re-signified under the shadow of the disease. In this sense, illness destructures the person and their understanding of themselves and their reality. The possibilities they have are not the same since a dramatic change occurred, and with it, one can no longer read and understand their reality with themselves in it. "Who am I?" The person's identity, their relationship with the illness, and the process of coming to terms with their new situation are important and profound questions that can be discussed in philosophical dialogue.

The questions to answer on this occasion are how philosophical dialogue proceeds and, by understanding the process, clarifying whether or not it *helps* in the recovery. From a philosophical standpoint, staying in the conversation concerning the loss of meaning is essential. This practice aims to create a more profound awareness concerning that specific topic and the participants' worldviews, as we already mentioned. Worldview is also the conceptual framework that Ran Lahav uses to identify philosophical counseling. He writes:

> A worldview is [. . .] an abstract framework that interprets the structure and philosophical implications of one's conception of oneself and reality; a system of coordinates, so to speak, that organizes, makes distinctions, draws implications, compares, confers meanings, and thus makes sense of one's various attitudes towards oneself and one's world (Lahav 1995, 7).

In order to succeed in being aware of one's worldview, philosophical dialogue encourages one to clarify one's statements and remarks through examples of everyday life. When the topic is highly abstract and finding an example is not simple, the inquiry can require quite a bit of effort. However, once the example is found, it helps in clarifying one's position or thinking patterns. The case mentioned earlier about being "reborn but in a negative way" was obscure for both the participants and the person who said it. It took time to find a fitting example that could explain, even if partially, what they wanted to convey. In the beginning, as mentioned above, the example was difficult *to explain with words* rather than difficult to be found. It was as if there were no words to give voice to a new situation to the extent that the language they used could not explain this radically new experience. However, when grasped, the example can also help clarify the meaning of the words used. It makes the implicit suggestions of the narration explicit for everyone in the group. Furthermore, the passage from a still blurry and abstract thought to a practical example at the level of everyday life often sheds light on the thought that was obscure until that moment. As Lahav states:

> The subject matter of philosophical counseling is not the processes which presumably occur inside the counselee, but rather the construction of a world through philosophical (logical, conceptual, existential, ethical, aesthetic, etc.) considerations. Thus, the counselees' conception of reality as expressed in their way of life and developed through philosophical reflection is what counseling conversations are about (ibid., 12).

At OncoloCafé, it is often the passage to a new "conception of reality" and a new "way of life" that constitutes the subject matter of the dialogue.

If, according to the approach proposed in this paper, a medical condition is an encounter with the different possibilities of one's experience, the goal of the dialogue is to discuss how the participants' "conceptions of reality" changed, how this change is "expressed in their way of life", and how to make some sense of it by giving some meaning to what seems to be unthinkable—such as the example given just before. Re-signifying the new reality confers meaning also to oneself, allowing oneself to make sense of one's identity, which is in the making.

Dialogue, it bears repeating, is a process of understanding. In a group dialogue, as OncoloCafé is, every member interacts with each other adding a piece to a dialogue they are building together. When we do philosophy in a group, it is not only the

consultant and the counselee, but also other people who are listening and challenging the remarks one decides to share. Everyone in the dialogue needs to be open: those who narrate something about themselves must be willing to discuss it with everyone, accept others' respectfully[3] challenging comments, questions, or interpretations, and be open to the fact that everyone is contributing to discussing something that can be very personal; those who listen need to listen to the other participants carefully and refer to one another while narrating or remarking on something in return. This is the only way to avoid a collection of monologues and create a dialogue in which we can think together. As Hannah Arendt remarked, something new can emerge through speech—an activity that can exist only among people because plurality is its *conditio sine qua non* (Arendt 1958). By challenging one another and going deep into the analysis of words and expressions, a more profound awareness can be reached, new meanings can come to the surface, and a "macro worldview" can be generated.

5. Is Transformative Practice comparable to a *Helping Profession*?

In this particular setting, the dramatic change and the difficulties in coping and dealing with it are a considerable part of the practice. Participants have to face numerous challenges concerning how they see themselves and their reality. As has become clear, these concerns regard their identity and their need to reframe it, to understand it in light of the new condition that life has created for them. The process of understanding activated by dialogue can bring to the surface the ways they conceptualize their situation and the universe of values at the base of their thoughts, which can lead to re-signifying their reality and giving new meanings to something which seemed to make no sense at all. This elaboration of the new reality and the process of its realization are indispensable to (re-)learning to navigate it, finding new footholds to orient oneself, and, finally, repositioning oneself into this new reality.

This process is what makes philosophical practice a *transformative* activity. By "transformative", we mean to become aware of one's process of thoughts, of one's scale of values—not necessarily rearrange them. In this sense, philosophical practice can be beneficial for those who decide to undergo this path, for they can understand something different or something more about themselves. Ran Lahav uses the

[3] Dialogue is not a debate we aim to win. Everyone should respect others' standpoints and views, and everyone can express a different opinion and challenge others' opinions while always motivating their reasons respectfully.

expression "transformational philosophers" to introduce thinkers who "envisioned a personal transformation through philosophical reflection", and he writes:

> Included in this list are thinkers such as Plato, the Stoics, Plotinus, Spinoza, Rousseau, Nietzsche, Emerson, Bergson, Marcel, Buber, and many others. Interestingly, these thinkers belong to very different schools of philosophy, have different theories about life and use radically different concepts. And yet, common to all of them is the vision of self-transformation: They all note that normal life is limited and superficial, controlled by constricting mechanisms and influences, but that we are nevertheless capable of overcoming these limitations and of transforming our lives towards a deeper, fuller, truer, more meaningful way of being (Lahav 2013, 86).

In the sense suggested by Lahav, philosophical practice helps the counselee reach some understanding that can improve their condition. It helps them to face their distress and to feel better about it. The first example he mentions right after the above quote is, in fact, Plato's allegory of the cave: only the slaves who decide to leave the cave "can learn, through a long and difficult process, to see the true reality outside" (ibidem). Their understanding is transformed, it becomes deeper and fuller.

We explained before that at OncoloCafé, participants examine the reality they are facing through philosophical dialogue, and sometimes their identity is at stake. However, reaching a better understanding of oneself and one's position within one's current reality does not necessarily mean *feeling* better; actually, digging for a sense of self in the mud of our beliefs and feelings can be an unpleasant journey. Notwithstanding, because of the practice's primary concern of looking for and hopefully making sense of our reality, it is undeniable that philosophical practice can have beneficial effects even if we do not consider "feeling better" its main purpose and, furthermore, we do not necessarily *expect* a change in the short period.

At this point, it is important to clarify a central aspect of this discussion. Most of the arguments concerning the practice being therapeutic generally refer to philosophical counseling intended as a counselor-counselee relationship,[4] not group practices. Does this mean that the group dialogue and the so-called philosophical counseling differ in their goals and intent? This is a question that concerns the identity

[4] These discussions also consider the complex relationship with psychotherapies, their shared aspects, and their differences. See, for instance, Lahav 1995, Lahav 2013, Mills 2013, and Pollastri 2020.

of philosophical practice itself. Despite the noticeable differences, namely the progression of the dialogue, the dynamic between two persons vs. that of a group, the possibility to focus on one person's needs, a more ludic atmosphere, and so on, we argue that the central core of a philosophical practice does not change among the various forms of the practice itself. Of course, in the counselor-counselee practice, the focus of the discussion is centered on what only one person wants to discuss, on *one person*'s problem. However, the *élan* towards the thinking process (and—in a sense—towards a kind of research), the desire for a more profound understanding, and the desire to do it together are shared in every type of philosophical dialogue. The goal of the practice is the process of *understanding* the problem—and the understanding of the person in relation to the problem—and *not* how to directly solve it. Therefore, if the new understanding that emerges has a therapeutic effect on the person and philosophical practice begins to look similar to a helping profession, it is mostly in an indirect fashion.

In a recent panel discussion titled "Philosophical Practice in Healthcare Settings" held on September 1, 2022, Professor Nishimura Takahiro (University of Fukui) questioned the "necessity" of philosophical practice in this particular context. He thought particularly about patients with terminal diseases or other delicate circumstances and stated that philosophical dialogue, which encourages one to re-think one's values, can be "violent" towards the people involved and force the reality of death in front of their eyes. This remark questions the necessity (or not) of philosophical practice in medical settings and the harm the practice can inflict. This is why we said above that knowing something more about oneself and understanding one's thoughts and values more profoundly does not necessarily lead to feeling better. Thinking and saying the thoughts aloud and listening to others' challenging comments can be painful. Staying on the problem and analyzing it can be painful. However, the dialogue in most cases starts from the narration of the participants, it starts from where the person wants to start, from what they want or are ready to share, and what they want to think. It can be painful, but it is not violent in the sense that it is not imposing a process that one does not want to undergo or challenging the thoughts to the point that it becomes harmful. Philosophical practice aims to offer a different approach for those who have questions that philosophy can help analyze. However, even if thinking can be painful in every context, it is important to keep this point in mind in a setting where suffering is more visible than elsewhere.

Philosophical practice can be a valuable tool in medical contexts. It can be useful for those who have tried other paths that did not work out or for those who do

not want to try the canonic helping professions. Philosophy encourages questioning; some people want to think about the existential questions they face more deeply[5] without necessarily thinking about solving them. As Jeanette Bresson Ladegaard Knox writes, "understanding the existential implications of surviving cancer and of having a palpable sense of temporality and mortality awakened in oneself can inform the cancer care programs that intend to target long-term survivors' well-being" (Knox 2020, 704). In philosophical group practice, as stated above, the group dialogue cannot consent to really focusing in on the immediate problem of every participant. In order to interest and engage everyone, the starting point of the discussion is always quite theoretical, and the effort to try making sense of a new reality, usually takes a long time, as they address their beliefs and values, rather than focus on the immediate problem that the participants face. However, as a way of understanding, it is precious for the person and their well-being. The participants at OncoloCafé have expressed multiple times the helpful effects that dialogue and thinking together have had on them. Knowing different perspectives and worldviews allows them to discover their biases and question their assumptions, and whether this affects their well-being is for them to judge. A practice reaches its goal when its participants can uncover their biases and clarify their thoughts and values. That is, undoubtedly, a helpful tool for the person's well-being. In this sense, the relationship between philosophy in its practical use and help remains complicated, and, at times, it is difficult to separate the two. The line separating the indirect effect from the practice can be blurry. However, the helping process is something we believe the practice can activate even if solving the immediate problem is not its primary goal. It is only after carrying out the practice that participants can tell what to do with their new understanding, with their discoveries, the clarifications of assumptions, and whether these are instruments that can help in any way with the immediate problems they are facing.

[5] See the opinion A., one participant at OncoloCafé who first participated in the practice precisely because "The first thing that made me happy when I joined the OncoloCafé was that here I could think as much as I wanted [. . .] I was allowed to think about it until I was satisfied, and it became easier as if a weight had been lifted". https://oncolocafe.com/私にとっておんころカフェ/

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2. Philosophy as Practice and Worldview

—Martial Arts and Indigenous Worldview—

Fighting for Sophia. The Intimate Relationship between Martial Arts and Philosophy as a Way of Life

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Abstract: *This article investigates two related questions. Firstly, we take an intercultural approach and investigate how martial arts and philosophy as a way of life are connected in classical Greece and feudal Japan. Secondly, we develop insights about the role of martial arts in these contexts and investigate how they can contribute to a more active and "spiritual" approach to philosophy. Using examples from ancient and contemporary martial arts practices, we suggest that martial arts can and perhaps should be seen as a supplementary activity that aids philosophers in their quest to find wisdom. Although martial arts and philosophy have been discussed in an academic context before (e.g., Priest and Young 2014), a search of the literature revealed few studies that thematise martial arts and ancient, intercultural philosophical-pedagogical practices. This paper sets out to better understand these relationships, and potentially inspire philosophers, teachers, and academics alike to look for possibilities for including the practice of martial arts in a contemporary pedagogical approach to philosophy.*

The article proceeds as follows. First, we introduce the concept of philosophy as a way of life, and spiritual exercises as the practical manifestation of a life lived philosophically based on the work of Pierre Hadot. Next, we discuss the category of active exercises and relate these to the Greek concept of agon (strife). We then connect these insights to Plato's educational ideals in relation to athletics and martial arts. Our focus in this section is on the link between wrestling and philosophy in the classical world, which is found in a desire for virtue and wisdom. We continue with a discussion of Japanese swordsmanship through the work of Yagyū Munenori, and the relation it bears to philosophy as a physical, spiritual, and educational practice aiming at virtue. Finally, we discuss an educational example from the Netherlands where philosophy and martial arts are meaningfully integrated in school curricula, before closing with some suggestions for future research.

Introduction

Through the ages, philosophy has become a profession that primarily consists in raising and addressing questions within highly specialised contexts. In classical Greece, however, philosophy was not a job, much less a hobby. It was an existential practice and pedagogical effort of self-(trans)formation.

What is often forgotten is that philosophy can be traced back to this educational spirit. Almost all philosophical texts from the pre-Socratics to the Neo-Platonists can be interpreted in light of the living context in which they were written, namely as guides to the *practice* of philosophy.

The ancient Greek pedagogical effort is often referred to as *paideia.* Although the term is derived from the Greek word *pais*, which means "child", it is not limited to childhood education only. Regardless of one's age or social position in life, philosophy endeavoured to form one's character with the aim of becoming virtuous (Hadot 2020, 46, 50). Therefore, philosophy in the ancient sense cannot and should not be seen as something separate from pedagogy, which is also why we will consider these two aspects—philosophy and pedagogy in all its branches—conjointly moving forward.

In our attempt to understand and interpret philosophical ideas in both classical Greece and feudal Japan, and the ways they are related to martial arts, we rely on the work of philosopher and historian Pierre Hadot and his theory of existential practices. Using a combination of historiographic-hermeneutic scholarship and philosophical-philological argumentation, Hadot not only offers a model for reading and interpreting ancient texts, but also a model for practising philosophy itself, despite the fundamental differences between us moderns and the ancients.

Spiritual exercises

Let us start by noting that Classical Greek (and Roman) philosophy as a way of life was often inspired by warrior virtues such as courage (ἀνδρεία or *fortitudo*), temperance (σωφροσύνη or *temperantia*) and toughness or perseverance (καρτερία or *perseverantia*, M. Lamberti, 2021). According to Hadot, philosophical virtues such as these were trained through so-called "spiritual exercises".

The adjective "spiritual" refers to the idea that philosophy was considered by the ancients as a choice that commits a person's entire life and soul (Hadot 2020, 34, 59; Hadot 1995, 82). Spiritual exercises can be defined as voluntary, personal practices meant to bring about a transformation of the self.[1] As such, they form part

[1] Hadot 2011, 87. More recently, Sharpe and Ure have defined it as follows: "What is at issue is a cognitive, mnemonic, imaginative, rhetorical or physical exercise consciously chosen and undertaken by an agent with a view to the transformative effects the undertaking of this

of a paideutic quest for self-realization and entail a complete transformation of one's point of view, attitudes, convictions, and consequently, one's actions. The idea was to first change the way one *looks* at the world, before changing one's *being* in the world (Chase 2013, 297).

Spiritual exercises are not complementary to, but constitutive for the practice of philosophy (Hadot 2011, 22). They formed part of daily life and were practical in so far that they required exertion and routine; they needed to be done to have an effect, which is what makes them form part of a *lived philosophy*. Although we have only limited knowledge about how spiritual exercises were carried out in antiquity, Hadot mentions several examples. These include inner detachment regarding anything external, inner preparation for future unfavourable scenarios, the examination of consciousness, and the disciplining of judgment, desires, and inclinations.[2]

At the heart of these exercises is a choice to live philosophically, which means to live according to a certain principle, often associated with a certain school of thought such as Platonism, Aristotelianism, Epicureanism, or Stoicism. Regardless of the different philosophical schools, however, all spiritual exercises are, one way or another, a means towards an ethical end: virtue (ἀρετή). One category of exercises that deserves special attention here is the category of the active exercises (γυμναστική), which are directly connected to the practice of martial arts.

The Greek art of transformation

Active spiritual exercises were meant to instil habits in the soul that followed from certain fundamental maxims, such as indifference to indifferent things, self-mastery, fulfilling the duties of social life and other forms of practical behaviour. They were often related to abstinence and physical hardship and served to test and strengthen an individual's independence from external matters (Hadot 1995, 84–86). These exercises often consisted in athletic activities, especially in classical Greece, where athletics were practiced more vigorously than in any other civilisation at the time (Poliakoff 1987, 2). Although Hadot—regrettably—does not seem to take much interest in the nature of physical spiritual exercises, there are credible avenues to speculate as to what these exercises might have entailed.

Sports were usually practiced in the gymnasia by well-off men aspiring to become virtuous. The gymnasium, derived from the Greek *gumnazesthai*—which refers to both physical and mental exercise—was a large complex that included a running track and various athletic areas (Kennell 2021, 498). Footraces, long jumping,

exercise will have upon the practitioner's way of experiencing, desiring, eating, or thinking" (Sharpe and Ure 2021, 5).

[2] See for an outline of the different categories of spiritual exercises Hadot 1995, 84–87. See also Sharpe and Ure (2021, 5–7) for a list of twelve 'species' of exercises.

discus and javelin throwing were all common activities, but the Greeks were particularly fond of martial arts such as wrestling,[3] boxing, and *pankration*.[4]

Martial arts were practiced at the *palaestra.* The Greek word *palaestra* derives from the verb *palaio* or *palaiein,* which means "to wrestle". Palaestra was also the name of the daughter of Hermes, who along with her father is credited as the mythological inventor of wrestling (Corcoran 2016, 219 n62). But it was Hermes who was seen as the general patron of the sport, which is why his statue was commonly found in the *palaestra*.[5]

Since Greek athletics from the 8th century on were done in the nude, the athlete first entered the *apodutērion* (lit. "undressing room"). Apart from undressing, many other activities took place here, including physical preparations—such as oiling and use of the strigil,[6] relaxing activities, and even intellectual activities, for which the wide benches provided ample opportunity. When Socrates met with the youth of Athens in the palaestra, it was probably in the *apodutērion* that they conversed.[7] What is more, it is likely that Socrates and Plato first met at the *apodutērion* (Poliakoff 1987, 12–13).

Apart from athletic ability, eloquence, and academic excellence—what Hadot refers to as "spiritual gymnastics" (1995, 102)—were also seen as signs of virtue. Accordingly, teachers of rhetoric and scholars of liberal arts frequented the gymnasium by invitation of the *gymnasiarchoi*,[8] along with other *paidonomoi*[9] such as martial arts "coaches", weapons instructors, and music teachers (Kennell 2021, 505; Tuncel 2007, 202).

Greek Gods and mythological heroes were the first to serve as the embodiments of virtue, particularly in the form of might and magnificence (Reid 2020, 16). Their struggles (αγώνες) with other gods, heroes and mythical creatures, and their physical strength and agility inspired athletes to mimic them. As Heather Read points

[3] The first martial art to become part of the Olympic games in 708 BCE (Tuncel 2007, 71).

[4] *Pankration* literally means "all (πᾶν) strength (κράτος)" sometimes also translated "complete victory". In pankration everything was allowed except for eye gouging, biting, and attacking the testicles. Just like in boxing, a bout ended when one of two athletes gave up or could not continue. Wrestling had different rules, see Poliakoff 1987, 23 ff.; Poliakoff 2021, 222–223.

[5] Hermes was also the God of trade, wealth, and luck. Other than Hermes, one would typically find Eros and Heracles as the main divinities present at the gymnasium (Tuncel 2007, 204).

[6] Cleaning instrument used to scrape oil, sweat and dirt from the skin after bathing or exercise.

[7] This is true for *Euthyphro* 2a (we use the Stephanus pagination in referencing Plato); *Charmides* 153a–b, 155d; *Euthydemus* (a pankratist) 271c–272b, 277d; *Lysis* 203–204a; *Theaetetus* 144c, and possibly *Sophist* and *Politicus*. The tradition of going to the gymnasium to win young men over to philosophy was already implemented by Pythagoras a century earlier (Reid 2012, 43–44).

[8] Elected official in charge of the buildings and education.

[9] Appointed assistants.

out, however, the difference between the Gods and heroes on the one hand, and mortals striving to become God-like on the other, is that the former were born strong and beautiful, whereas the latter had to train to become virtuous (Reid 2020, 16). The key concept that relates virtue to athletic training is that of *agōn* which translates to "strife" or "competition" *inter pares*.

Agon

The first instances of agon in spoken and written form are found in mythical, poetic, and sacred contexts through the works of poets like Homer, Hesiod, Simonides, and Pindar.[10] In the *Works and Days* of the Greek poet Hesiod (8th century BCE) we are introduced to two versions of the goddess Eris. In one version she is responsible for inciting hatred and encouraging pernicious wars. This version is hated by all. A different version of the goddess is responsible for encouraging those experiencing jealousy and envy to use these feelings to bring out the best in themselves. This goddess, says Hesiod, is a gift from heaven.

This is also the view Nietzsche defends in *Homer's Contest,* a foreword to one of his unpublished books (Nietzsche 1996). We can find this second Eris—whom Nietzsche calls Neid ("envy")—everywhere in ancient Greek culture in the form of agon. The divine power motivating participants to compete in and win in Pan-Hellenic events such as the Olympic Games—the *Olympiakoi agones*—is unmistakably Neid.

What made the Homeric Greeks so different, claimed Nietzsche, was their ability to transfigure innate impulses of aggression and antagonism—i.e. *anti-agon*—into a value-creating culture (see Tuncel 2007, 80, 82). For the Homeric Greeks, agon was not merely about actual fighting.[11] Rather, it was about how conflict was approached: where Eris encourages destructive conflict at the cost of others, Neid calls forth the greatest deeds in the form of friendly competition. These deeds may be motivated by jealousy and envy, but the Greeks saw this not as punishment but as the workings of a benevolent goddess. It is thanks to this form of jealousy that honour, civilisation, and greatness were brought forth.

According to Nietzsche, the works of Plato offer a telling example of this. Although Nietzsche criticized Socratic rationality for its opposition to his Dionysian worldview, he also recognizes in *Twilight of the Idols* that Socrates and Plato invented a new kind of agon (see Tuncel 2007, 240; see also Corcoran 2016, 125, 220 n80).[12]

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[10] The first philosophers to associate with the term were Heraclitus (see Fragment 42) and Empedocles who considered love and strife to be of equal cosmological importance (Tuncel 2007, p. 116).

[11] Cf. Thrasymachus' anti-philosophical motive in the *Republic*. Socrates likens his attitude to the attitude of a pankratist who, contrary to the spirit of agon, wants to win at all costs (*Republic* 338c–d).

[12] As Tuncel shows, Nietzsche developed his own agonistic philosophy through which he tries to think past different 'forces of culture' that seem to oppose and cancel each other out.

The artistic qualities of his dialogues, result from the educational rivalry between the rhetoricians, the Sophists and the dramatists of his time.[13] This rivalry leads Plato to assert something like: 'Look, I can also do what my great rivals can, and I can do it even better'. It seems safe to assert that Plato's agon with his rivals resulted in a new understanding of virtue, one that still relies on (athletic) skill, but also transcends it to a higher moral pane: the desire for wisdom.

Richard Patterson agrees with Nietzsche that the philosophical life envisioned by Plato is 'life's greatest agon',[14] (*Gorgias* 526d–e) but he rightly offers an additional motivation based on his reading of the *Republic*. It is not only the competition between philosophy and poetry, or philosophy and sophistry, tragedians and rhetors that makes Plato's philosophy agonistic; agon furnishes the inherent nature of the philosopher's life itself (Patterson 1997, 329–330).

With the above in mind, it was probably no coincidence that Socrates' philosophical endeavours often took place in the palaestra. After all, gymnasia and *palaestrae* were seen as institutes for training virtue. It is also no coincidence that Plato frequently alludes to wrestling in his dialogues. Although Socrates almost certainly engaged in some actual wrestling as well, he is best known for his dialectical agon—the struggle for true knowledge—of which the goal was not to become a better speaker or debater, but a wiser person (Reid 2020, 24–25).

Indeed, Plato's main agonistic approach was dialectic, but it was arguably not the only approach to living a philosophical life. Some even argue Plato's views and writings were shaped by his earlier years as a wrestler, inciting him to acknowledge a relationship between the body and the soul, and ultimately, extrapolating the idea of strife to other dimensions of life in the polis (Reid *et al.* 2020, 12). Let us therefore look closer at some of Plato's dialogues to see how a philosophical way of life, at least in part, might take shape through the practice of wrestling.

Think of spirituality and rationality, joy and suffering, destruction and creation, victory and defeat—or in Nietzschean terms: the Apollonian which, simply put, stands for order, and the Dionysian which represents chaos and intoxication. To Nietzsche, these opposing forces presuppose each other in a continuous and revitalising battle. They do not perish in destruction, dissolve in Socratic rationality or Hegelian dialectics, much less in a prescriptive ethics that promises happiness for all, but constantly reaffirm and supplement each other in a culture of agon, to uplift and enhance humanity so that it can respond to the needs of our times (2007, 58–59 n27, 112, 258).

[13] According to Tuncel, the sophists may have been proficient in so-called argument contests, but such contests eventually contributed to the decline and displacement of agon due to the hubris of the intellect and contempt towards the body, rendering the once so great athlete a ridiculous and foolish character (2007, 241). As a likely consequence, Plato in *Euthydemus* (271c–272b) associates sophistry with pankration, which is not meant as a compliment (see Corcoran 2016, 120–121, 126, 135).

[14] All Plato translations are from PDL (2022).

Wrestling in Plato's Republic

Of the martial arts that were practiced in ancient Greece, wrestling probably appealed the most to the Greeks. This can be reasonably explained in part by the fact that although an immensely tough practice, it was less violent and injurious than boxing and *pankration*. Michael Poliakoff suggests it was even expected in Greek society that 'an accomplished and educated man' would engage in the act of wrestling as an adult. Consequently, it was a common sight to see even elderly men training in the palaestra as part of a lifelong endeavour (1987, 23, 99, 223).

Among the younger men was Plato, who was a wrestler. In fact, according to ancient biographer Diogenes Laërtius:

> [H]e learnt gymnastics under Ariston, the Argive wrestler. And from him he received the name of Plato [from *platus* meaning "broad"] on account of his robust figure. . . . Others again affirm that he wrestled in the Isthmian Games. (*Lives* 3, 4)[15]

Plato's own experience with the martial arts likely accounts for the many references to wrestling in his work. He repeatedly refers to wrestling to explain in martial terms his own educational goals.[16] Especially in portraying the figure of Socrates, as Plato does, for example, in the *Phaedrus* (236b–c) or *Theaetetus* (162b), and in drawing attention to his act of engaging in dialogue in terms of fair play and cooperative agon (Corcoran 2016, p. 126). It is important to highlight the aspect of fairness and justice in agon, as it was a quality that any athlete had to possess to compete (Tuncel 2007, 127 n9). Agon was not based on total annihilation by any means, but rather on honourable deeds and equal opportunity. In Nietzschean language: 'It is not on account of their hostile, war-making nature that the Hellenes came together to compete, but rather on account of their Dionysian sense of belonging' (Tuncel 2007, 144).

Plato does not deal very extensively with the practice of wrestling in the literal sense, but in *Laws* and the *Republic* we find some significant passages, specifically in Plato's answer to the question of how human beings are to be raised to facilitate the functioning of the ideal state. The basic education of this new warrior class (φύλακες) consists in both gymnastics and music. The most capable students will later enrol in a program for elite guardians which consists in mathematics, astronomy, and dialectics.

In Book 3 of the *Republic*, Socrates explains that the goal of music and gymnastics is to harmonize and create order in the high-spirited and knowledge-

[15] Translation from Perseus Digital Library (PDL, 2022).

[16] E.g., *Alcibiades* 106e, 107e, *Euthydemus* 277d, 278b, 288a, *Gorgias* 515e, *Laws* 795b–c, 814c–d, *Protagoras* 336c, 338b, 339e, 342b–e, and finally, see *Theaetetus* 162b, 167e and 169b where Theaetetus likens philosophical dialogue to wrestling.

loving parts of the soul (*Republic* 411e). In relation to gymnastics, he notes that 'devotees of unmitigated gymnastics' run the risk of overstraining their high-spirited part of the soul, which could result in becoming hard and harsh (410d). Although Plato uses the much broader term *gumnastikē* ("athletics"), it is not hard to see how martial arts, if not practiced with some degree of reflection about why and how to train and practice it wisely—or supplement it with music education, as Plato suggests—could potentially turn one into a violent person.

As Reid argues, this relationship between the body and soul exposes two vital doctrines behind Plato's physical philosophy. The first is that the origin of human movement is found in the soul, rather than in the body, but that the body can serve to train the soul (2020, 19–20). We return to this point in more detail shortly. The second is that virtue manifests itself as a healthy and harmonious soul. Since virtue and wisdom are not innate and do not come about without strife, they need to be continuously trained and exercised both physically and intellectually.

Music and gymnastics probably had much in common with the values of gymnasia at the time, which generally focused on military training (see Kennell 2021, 500). For Plato, training in combat sports and engaging in training bouts with weapons served to test one's courage, physical endurance, and pain tolerance, to ultimately prepare citizens to 'fight for their lives, their children, their goods, and for the whole State' (*Laws* 830d–831a; Poliakoff 2021, p. 229).

Plato did *not* intend to train guardians for the sole purpose of military activity, however, let alone for the exclusive purpose of athletic competition.[17] Instead, he wanted to raise future and just leaders of the polis. Soldiers and athletes who are only drilled to perform on the battlefield or in sports respectively, can hardly be expected to know how to carry out civic responsibilities justly and therefore, wisely; all their time is invested into highly specialised skills. Nevertheless, the view that skill (τέχνη), whether in athleticism, warfare or rhetoric was enough to acquire virtue was prevalent among popular rhetors such as Isocrates (Reid 2020, 20).

Plato clearly thought otherwise. He valued having a strong command in language, otherwise he would not have bothered writing so comprehensively, much less about the art of dialogue. But being a good speaker or writer is not enough to be considered a virtue-seeking human being, and thus, a philosopher. And vice-versa, being a strong athlete or a warrior is not enough to be considered a philosopher either. After all, Plato took inspiration from the mythical Spartan lawgiver Lycurgus (*Laws* 630d; *Phaedrus* 258c; *Republic* 599c), but nowhere does he propose imitating the

[17] Apparently, Pythagoras already told his disciples that participating in sport, not winning, is the most important thing. "This was . . . a highly atypical position in Greek thought, except for the philosophical schools, who [often] found the training and self-sacrifice of the athletes to be . . . of far greater value than sport itself". (Poliakoff 1987, 141). In relation to Pythagoras and athletics, see also Reid *et al.* 2020, 3–4.

Spartan pedagogic model (ἀγωγή). What Plato misses in such rather one-dimensional and skill-based approaches is a lack of care for the soul and thus, the Good.[18]

The reason that Plato warmly recommends wrestling for training the youth, is that it is directed towards strength and health of both body *and* the soul. In the *Republic,* one of the required characteristics of an ideal guardian is found in the endowment of perseverance (καρτερία) and general laboriousness (φιλόπονον). However, the ideal student should not just love gymnastics or other labours of the body, he should love all kinds of toil and should show perseverance in all circumstances. To Plato, "toil-lovers" are those who love both physical and spiritual challenges.

Toil and physical exercise were not meant to merely make one stronger or fitter, or a better athlete. Just like music, the focus is on the soul, which is meant to become braver and more spirited, particularly in the period where the body is developing from boyhood to manhood (see *Republic* 403e, 410b–c, 411e, 498b–c; *Laws* 896c; *Alcibiades* 130a; see also Tuncel 2007, 202–203).

In *Laws* Plato writes:

> But the exercises of stand-up wrestling, with the twisting free of neck, hands and sides, when practiced with ardor and with a firm and graceful pose, and directed towards strength and health,—these must not be omitted, since they are useful for all purposes (*Laws* 796a–b).

Noticeably, for Plato, the highest form of wrestling is upright wrestling, mainly due to its aesthetic qualities. But wrestling styles also determined a certain educational value. According to Clinton Corcoran, the different styles of wrestling described in Plato's dialogues are intended to parallel good and bad forms of philosophizing. The style of upright wrestling contributed to citizenry and virtues such as courage and endurance, and key values such as fair play and cooperation (2016, 120–122; see also Poliakoff 1987, p. 115: 'Winning mattered greatly, but so did honesty').

A virtuous and beautiful soul manifests in both bodily health but also in a certain kind of "beautiful movement". Beautiful movement of the body is the sort of movement or action which is rational and oriented toward the Good (Reid 2012, 60–61). As such, the Platonian educational ideal became that of athlete-philosopher or the *kalokagathos,* being both beautiful—*kalos,* which we can here relate to the practice of upright-wrestling—and Good—*agathos,* which is primarily—not exclusively—related to the practice of dialectics. Underlying the concept of *kalokagathia* is the metaphysical view introduced earlier that physical movement comes from the soul. The Greeks understood the body as something more akin to a corpse than a living entity. Therefore, it had no accountability over its movements; this agency was allocated to the *psyche* or the 'seat of reason' (Reid 2012, 5).

[18] See for differences between Plato and the Spartan attitude to education, Jaeger 1947, 233–234, 253–254. See also *Laches* 182e–183b.

Educating the Philosophical Warrior

We can begin to appreciate how (upright) wrestling gained a philosophical purpose, particularly in the education of the guardian. The link is found in a concern about virtue, and the concern about virtue coincides with the 'overarching concern for the cultivation of the Good' (Corcoran 2016, 121–122). The deep wish to become good can be broken down into countless different approaches. After all, to become an expert at anything, one will have to exercise different aspects of a practice. Spiritual exercises can be seen as "approximations of the Good"[19], that serve to divide a certain practice into "sub-practices" because the entire practice is too complex to exercise or learn as a whole. If one wants to become an expert martial artist, one will have to practise all sorts of qualities such as stamina, technique, modesty, strength, maintaining (breath) control and mental stability. One engages in exercises to train something as thoroughly as possible, on the road to overall mastery.

Wrestling and philosophy can both be seen as agonistic arts that share a concern for a perfection of order and form. Philosophy strives for perfection of form in the sense of what Corcoran refers to as "correct philosophic logomachy", which points to the proper spirit, rules, and actions in dialectic argument and Socratic protreptic. The Socratic endeavour presupposes free and honest exchange where participants help each other in progressing the discussion and developing ideas. This is contraposed against "quarrelsome sophistic debate" (also known as *eristic*[20]), the sole aim of which is victory and therefore, need not to be taken seriously (*Theaetetus* 167e; Corcoran 2016, 126).

Perfection of form in wrestling—and arguably, other martial arts—could refer to maintaining control and balance between conflicting forces, while adhering to the rules, certain customs, and traditions. Again, the focus is not so much on winning, as this mainly depends on variables such as strength, skill, experience, and even intelligence. However, Socrates submits that the intention of an expert who seeks to be just, will not amount to outdoing another expert, just like a musician is not trying to play more in tune than another who is already playing in tune, or a doctor who seeks to outdo another doctor in a medical procedure (*Republic* 349e–350b; Patterson 1997, 327–328).

The point is that it does not necessarily follow from winning that one practices a certain art in an honest, that is, a good, or true way that expresses the right motives to engage with the specific art in the first place. In this sense, wrestling can be seen

[19] We are indebted to Professor Corcoran for this phrasing.
[20] See Patterson 1997, 328 for the difference between *eristic* and *elenchus*.

as something more than a martial metaphor;[21] it is rather a spiritual aid or a model to protreptic, because it shares with philosophy a deep concern for virtue and the creation of an ordered soul (Corcoran 2016, 125, 132, 134). Through the practice of spiritual exercises such as wrestling and dialectic, the guardian learns to approximate the truth which serves to distinguish between the Good and all else, which in turn, aids him/her in making the right and just decisions.

As such, wrestling and philosophy can be argued to share a similar aim, but they are exercised differently. Wrestling and other martial arts emphasise and train such virtues as courage, endurance, integrity, and self-knowledge in a way that dialectic by itself, due to the lack of a physical dimension, cannot. In martial arts, sparring, for instance, generally ends in one of two participants being submitted by the other. One cannot bluff or cheat his/her way out of a sparring session as Socrates is comically accused of doing in Aristophanes' *Clouds*. In the practice of martial arts, the truth is in the pudding, one cannot take refuge in words, which can be a humbling and insightful experience. This is even more the case in competitive bouts in which athletes test their abilities against each other.

For wrestling and dialectic to be philosophically meaningful, however, both must be exercised simultaneously competitive (agonal) and cooperative, with the concern for the Good acting like a compass (Corcoran 2016, 137). This means, among other things, that participants of wrestling and philosophical dialogue partake according to the rules of fairness and admit their defeat or ignorance when a given situation calls for it, instead of trying to greedily "cheat" one's way out. Similarly, they will also attempt to act gracefully in the case of victory, as, for example, Dutch judoka Anton Geesink did after his victory at the 1964 Summer Olympics in Japan.[22] The point is to treat the exercise itself, whether dialectic or wrestling, as part of the quest for self-realization and an opportunity to further reflect on one's points of view, attitudes, desires, and convictions, to continually bring one's actions both in and outside the exercise in tune with any newly and collaboratively acquired insights.

Let us now look at bit closer at Japanese swordsmanship to see how philosophy as a way of life and martial arts are related in the Japanese martial tradition. Despite the many cultural and historical differences between Greece and Japan, it will turn out that here too we find an active spiritual approach to philosophy.

[21] Reid argues Socrates' approach has much in common with their methods (2012, 6, 44–53). See also Corcoran 2016, 122–123, 126, 131. Finally, consider Socrates' own comparison to the athlete Heracles (*Apology* 22a).

[22] Instead of celebrating his victory with his team, he insisted on adhering to etiquette (礼に始まり礼に終わる) by first bowing to Kaminaga Akio, thereby expressing his gratitude and respect to his opponent and the tradition of the martial art.

Philosophy of the sword

Japanese martial arts such as *kyūdō*, *kendō* and *jūjutsu* can be said to have originated in contexts of war, but they all developed the act of killing into a spiritual art of (self-)education.[23] The common point between philosophy and martial arts (*budō*) is found in the inquiry for truth in life and oneself as part of it. Central to this quest is an attitude that seeks to examine oneself. Many are familiar with Socrates' call to 'know thyself' (γνῶθι σεαυτόν). But Socrates was not the sole advocate of this maxim; a similar suggestion is found in the work of Japanese swordsman and philosopher Yagyū Munenori (柳生宗矩, 1571–1646).

Munenori was appointed as a retainer by the shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu after he and his father, Yagyū Muneyoshi (柳生宗厳), performed the so-called *Mutō-dori* ("swordless sword fighting", 無刀取り) in front of the shogun. During his participation in the conquest of Aizu, the Battle of Sekigahara, and the Battle of Osaka, Munenori also demonstrated his ability in espionage and negotiations. This resulted in his appointment as a military strategist by both the second shogun, Tokugawa Hidetada and the third shogun, Tokugawa Iemitsu. As such, the school associated with Munenori, *Yagyū Shinkage Ryū,* became the official style of the Tokugawa shogunate.[24]

Today Munenori's influence in the world of martial arts is still felt through his philosophy.[25] Born towards the end of the Warring States period, Munenori lived in an era when the military pacification of Japan had ended, and the rule of law had come to be maintained by the Tokugawa government. It was during this era of relative peace that Munenori transformed swordsmanship—a killing technique that had already become largely useless and started to be neglected—into a martial art for spiritual and human development, education and good political leadership (*shūshin*, 修身). What Munenori did is redefine the *raison d'etre* of swordsmanship in the age of peace.[26]

Two existing philosophies that greatly influenced Munenori were Zeami's theory of Nō theatre and the Zen teachings of Takuan Sōhō (沢庵宗彭). In fact, Munenori was so devoted to Nō that he was bitterly criticized by the latter, who was his teacher, despite being younger than him. Regardless, Munenori found commonalities between Nō dance and sword movement, the most important of which

[23] In the 16th century, the spiritual dimension of fighting was outsourced to technology, more specifically: guns. It could be argued that fighting in the everyday sense lost its spiritual dimension this way, and merely became an act of killing. The martial, and thus philosophical aspect of the practice became obsolete in firing a gun.

[24] Munenori is regarded as the only person who rose from the rank of swordsman to that of a feudal lord.

[25] On the influence of Munenori's (and Takuan Sōhō's) philosophy on Japanese modern thought, see Kasai 2006a.

[26] In relation to the historical and cultural aspects of *kend*ō, see Bennett 2015.

was the fundamental nature of music in both.[27] While the skill of a Nō performance lies in the *coordination* of music and dance, Munenori points out that the victory or defeat with the sword lies in the contrary; in *upsetting* the rhythm of the opponent:

> For both dance and chanting, you will be unable to perform if you do not know the entire song. You should understand the Entire Song in the martial arts as well. You should especially see through your opponent and ascertain the action of his sword. Know this through to the bottom of his mind and you will have the mind that has memorized the Entire Song well. If you know the demeanor and action of your opponent well, you will gain freedom in your own devices (Yagyu 2012, 33).

Through his long association with Takuan, Munenori also incorporated Takuan's teaching of "sword and Zen unification" (*ichinyo*), thereby transforming swordsmanship into a certain pedagogy.[28]

But Munenori is arguably best known for the distinction he makes between *katsunin ken* ("a sword that gives life", 活人剣) and *setsunin tō* ("a sword that kills", 殺人刀) in his *Hyōhō Kadensho* ("Biography of the Master of the Art of War", 兵法家伝書). A sword that kills is usually regarded a tool against humanity because of the simple reason that it serves to takes lives. However, if used in a context where many people are suffering due to the evil of one person, it can also be employed to save many lives. As a result, Munenori does not consider the art of war to be a method of killing people, but rather as a way to destroy evil. This is what Munenori calls "one kill, many lives" (一殺多生), a principle that could, on the surface, be called a utilitarian ethic.

However, Munenori's *katsunin ken* has a more specific meaning—well known by swordsmiths—that has to do with the way in which one "harmonizes the distance" (*ma'ai*, 間合い) from the enemy. Munenori:

> Though a man intends to strike you and advances to do so, keep him at a certain interval, above all remain calm and allow him to advance, and then allow him to strike. Thus, even though your opponent has an intention to strike and goes through the motions of striking if you maintain a certain interval. He will not make contact. The sword that makes no contact is a dead sword. You then go over his dead sword, strike, and defeat him (Yagyu 2012, 22–23).

This approach requires one to see through the distance relative to the opponent. One lets the opponent strike first, before dodging the strike by maintaining a certain

[27] Although a one-on-one comparison would be premature, it is worth noting here the conjunction of music and martial arts also found in Plato (see above).

[28] Takuan's *Fudō chi shinmyōroku* (不動智神妙録) was written in response to Munenori's request to admonish him (Takuan 1986). Cf. Kasai 2006b.

distance. This interval between the swordsman and the opponent nullifies the strike, while cutting the opponent off at the same time. Drawing out and inviting the opponent in this fashion is possible only by making a first move within the mind. Getting the opponent to move like this is *katsunin* in action; one first gives the opponent an opportunity to move, which can be met by striking the opponent, or alternatively, motivating and inspiring the opponent to strike again.

The crucial point is that Munenori's method of "winning" by drawing out the opponent, rather than cutting down the enemy with speed and force, can be applied to more peaceful and cooperative relationships in everyday life. This is the philosophical and pedagogical meaning of *katsunin ken*. Here, *katsunin* is to exquisitely elicit the opponent's behaviour in a way that benefits the opponent. After all, in a peaceful context, an "opponent" might just as well be a student instead of an adversary. As such, it could be argued that Munenori's teaching fits with a more agonal approach to contemporary education, which approximates what Max van Manen means by "pedagogical tact". Pedagogical tact describes how teacher-student relations possess an improvisational and ethical character. Good teaching is driven by the daily activities of educators which are pedagogically conditioned by sensitive insights, active thoughtfulness, and the creative ability to act appropriately in the immediacy of the moment.[29]

Where Takuan theoretically solved the ultimate unity of purpose between Zen Buddhism and the sword, Munenori suggested that in the practice of swordsmanship, the practitioner learns pedagogical tact to educate others and improve one's own character in the process. The act of killing then becomes an act in which practitioners do not try to eliminate each other but engage in friendly and cooperative strife which ultimately serves an existential endeavour: the quest for wisdom.

Although the question of how martial arts such as Greek wrestling and Japanese swordsmanship may instil moral qualities on its practitioners is a difficult one, and may never be answered satisfactorily, we close by briefly discussing an educational initiative from the Netherlands, spearheaded by the "ecosopher" and former *kendō* champion Henk Oosterling in 2007, that we think is promising in incorporating martial and philosophical features discussed above in a present-day agonistic pedagogical model.

Rotterdam Skillcity

In contrast to the privileged men who trained in the ancient Greek gymnasiums, or the elite *bushi* in feudal Japan, Rotterdam Skillcity (RSC) is an innovative educational programme aimed at children from socially and economically challenged neighbourhoods in the city of Rotterdam. RSC connects thinking and acting, or reflection and action, abbreviated in the neologism "reflaction". Reflaction is an extra-

[29] Van Manen 2015.

curricular program, taught in addition to the regular curriculum. It is meant to help children and adolescents to navigate life sustainably, and to take care of themselves, others, their immediate environment, and the world (Oosterling 2020, 89).

The educational curriculum consists of five key transitional components: Martial arts (specifically judo and aikido), Health, Nature, Technics, and Philosophy. During classes, children *learn by doing* about a healthy, balanced, and sustainable lifestyle. Examples of educational activities that develop skills that lead to sustainable choices in life are (1) growing and preparing food for one's classmates and oneself, (2) understanding of technique and nature, (3) knowledge of how to use social media responsibly and (4) sparring physically (judo) and mentally (philosophy).

During the martial arts lessons, the emphasis is on orientation in movement. Judo and aikido are so-called relational martial arts, which means that children not only use but also respect the energy and power of the other. To be sure, they learn to fight, but like what we may refer to as a philosophical approach to Plato's wrestling and Munenori's swordsmanship, the emphasis is not on winning or defeating an opponent. The idea is that children learn to cooperate and take control of what happens in the here and now, in the present moment (cf. van Manen 2015). This also enhances their sense of belonging to a community where individuals are encouraged to sustain each other.

Taking control and cooperating within a community is further exercised in the philosophy curriculum, grounded in both the "Socratic paradigm" and the Philosophy for/with Children movement. Philosophy lessons are meant to help students articulate their way of thinking in relation to existential questions (e.g. who am I? what is health?) and subjects from daily life (e.g. why is it important to do physical exercise? Where does my food come from?). Teachers work with children through everyday dilemmas and questions—including issues that arise during the martial arts classes—and relate these to philosophical themes that are taken from different cultures over the world. Special importance is attributed to network thinking, which emphasizes the relational and helps students to enhance their "relational autonomy".[30]

The many questions that children have, especially in relation to current events and their personal experiences, are thematised during the philosophy lessons. By engaging in philosophical dialogue, children increase their communication and argumentative skills. More importantly, they learn to think, determine their position, empathise with others, and have dialogues in an ambient of mutual respect. Where the practice of martial arts helps children to navigate more physical conflicts, the philosophy lessons allow them to focus mentally and socially: to gain insight into emotions and arguments in order to relate in a more balanced way to others.

[30] The idea that we are all nodes in networks and owe our identity and autonomy to the degree in which we are connected to others. Philosophically speaking, this refers to ontological relationism, the idea that everything that is, exists in connection to something that is (exists) connected to something else, and so on.

The aim of the RSC curriculum is something Oosterling refers to as "physical spirituality", which integrates and valorises the mental, physical, and social into an interconnected awareness. Physical spirituality is exercised through the practice of martial arts and philosophy, which transform our views on life and our modern lifestyle. Like Hadot's spiritual exercises, physical spirituality implies an integral approach to care for the soul that includes often separated physical, social, and mental aspects. These exercises require a lifelong effort aimed at transforming the way we relate to ourselves, others, and the planet.[31]

Final thoughts

Both in classical Greece and feudal Japan, martial arts can be considered as spiritual exercises. Although wrestling and sword fighting can both be violent and even deadly, both practices rather served an opposite purpose: the development and promotion of virtue as part of the overall quest of wisdom. What remains to be seen is *how* the practice of arts such as wrestling, swordsmanship, judo and aikido can instil moral qualities in its practitioners' souls. One does not simply become a philosopher by practicing martial arts, after all.

More research is needed to investigate how so-called "life skills"—such as courage, humility, respect for others, perseverance, self-confidence, and sense of community—are acquired through the practice of certain martial arts, and how they positively transfer to everyday pedagogical contexts (Chinkov and Holt, 2016). In addition, theoretical-philosophical frameworks are needed that intend to explain how personal development occurs from this specific practice (Blomqvist Mickelsson 2021, 1550). A Platonic "aesthetics of motion" that further investigates the meaning of order in wrestling, for instance, might prove promising.[32]

What we hope to have revealed through the intercultural examples of ancient and contemporary martial arts, and the philosophical-educational example of RSC, is that the practice of martial arts can be something more than an easy metaphor when it comes to thinking about how to live a philosophically grounded life. The practice

[31] Recent research carried out between 2017–2019 shows judo, aikido and philosophy help the children to be more balanced and resilient during the regular subjects. The researchers expect that students enrolled in the RSC program will need less individual support both in class, and outside of class, particularly in relation to mental and physical problems. Furthermore, they expect students will repeat years less often and will be sent to special primary education less often. On the longer term, they expect students to have better perspectives for their futures by gaining access to higher education. In addition, and as a consequence of more self-confident and resilient character traits, it is expected that students will cause less nuisance, engage less often in vandalism and criminal behaviour (Veen *et al.* 2020).

[32] This was suggested by Professor Corcoran in a private email exchange on October 13, 2022.

of martial arts, we argued, should be understood as a supplementary and perhaps even integral activity that aids philosophers in their quest for wisdom. However, to become philosophically meaningful, these arts would have to be exercised in a pedagogical and agonistic spirit.

What Plato and Munenori add to the fighting skills of a soldier are the cultivation of moral virtues. The incorporation of martial arts as a philosophical way of life means to exercise them in a way that fuels the eternal search for wisdom. This was true in Classical Greece and in feudal Japan, and there is good reason to suspect that this still holds true today, regardless of one's cultural background.

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A Sketch of Kogui Metaphysics

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Abstract: *When discussing environmental ethics in Latin America, remarks on how much we should learn from the indigenous people and their openness to nature are common. Nevertheless, there has been little work trying to present those ideas in such a way that academic philosophers can engage with them, and members of the public in general can use them when formulating their own positions. This essay will be an exercise in practical philosophy as applied to this situation in at least three ways: first, by directly engaging with the conception of Nature of the Kogui people, and demonstrating that its original ideas can be interpreted so as to play a role in contemporary philosophy; second, by realizing the interpretation using contemporary academic philosophy as a tool, thus arguing performatively for the possibility of an interaction between academic philosophy and philosophical thought as it occurs outside academia (and outside Western rational paradigms, for that matter); third and lastly, it sketches an ethical approach to other living beings that can be comprehensible to professional philosophers, some indigenous people, and, other non-philosophers, with the hope that sharing a starting point, even if it is one they reject for one reason or other, will give rise to a dialogue between them. In order to do so, the essay makes use of the basic tools of modal logic, as well as of certain theses stemming from contemporary modal realism.*

Introduction[1]

Often, when discussing environmental ethics, especially in Latin America, one hears remarks on how much we should learn from the indigenous people and their openness

[1] A first version of this paper was read during a work session that included John Maraldo, Michiko Yusa (both of whom contributed detailed written comments), Agustín Jacinto Zavala, Roman Paşca, Alexandra Mustățea, Takeshi Morisato, Carlos Barbosa, Juan Camilo Cajigas, and Cory Staton, all of whom provided wonderful feedback and encouragement. I would also like to thank the anonymous reviewers for *Testugaku* for their insightful and often witty comments.

to nature. And yet, when the point is pressed, one often receives replies that limits themselves to emphasizing the already mentioned openness, and perhaps a quotation of a myth or two. Leaving aside the not insignificant problem of idealizing indigenous peoples, there is an important question in practical philosophy here: undoubtedly, there is a wealth of philosophical knowledge in indigenous myths; why, then, do we have so much trouble specifying what it is and including it within our philosophical discourse? I hope this essay will be an example of how practical philosophy must face such issues in several ways: first, by directly engaging with the conception of Nature of a Colombian indigenous community (the Kogui people, who live in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta) and demonstrating that their original ideas can be interpreted so as to play a role in contemporary philosophy; second, by realizing the interpretation using contemporary academic philosophy as a tool, thus arguing performatively, if you will, for the possibility of an interaction between academic philosophy and philosophical thought as it occurs outside academia (and outside Western rational paradigms, for that matter); third and lastly, I plan to hint at an ethical approach to other living beings that can be comprehensible to professional philosophers, some indigenous people (at least the Kogui people), and, perhaps, other non-philosophers as well, with the hope that sharing a starting point, even if it is one they reject for one reason or other, will give rise to a dialogue between them. This is, quite evidently, a lot of material to get through in one essay, and I have no pretention of doing so with as much thoroughness as each individual point requires; my hope is, instead, to offer a blueprint both of what might be a starting point for a philosophical discussion with the Kogui people, and, more generally, to how we might engage indigenous communities in academic disputes as participants, instead of as objects of investigation. In the best-case scenario, the blunders I commit along the way will be provocative enough for members actual members of one such a community to offer their own account.

To reach the above-mentioned point, this essay will begin (1) by discussing three Kogui myths concerning our relationship with nature. Section 2 will then introduce the tools we will use to explain the philosophical insights discovered in section 1; most of these tools will come from modal logic. Section 3 takes this even further and argues that the apparent strangeness of Kogui myths makes perfect sense for a contemporary philosopher if some central ideas stemming from modal realism are used as explanatory analogies. Finally, section 4 discusses the ethical implications of the metaphysical ideas discussed in the past three sections, and how they can be used to alter the way we conceive other living beings.

1. Some Kogui Myths

Kogui creation myth: [2]

> First there was the sea. Everything was dark. There was no sun, or moon, or people, or animals, or plants. Only the sea was everywhere. The sea was the Mother. She was water and water everywhere and she was river, lagoon, brook, and sea and thus she was everywhere. She was called Gaulchováng. The Mother was not people, or anything, or a thing at all. She was alúna. She was the spirit of what was to come, and she was thought and memory. Thus, the Mother existed only in alúna, in the lowest world, in the last depth, alone.
>
> Then when the Mother was thus, the earths, the worlds were created, all the way up to where our world is now. There were nine worlds and they were created thus: First were the Mother and the water and the night. Dawn had not yet come. The Mother was then called Se-ne-nuláng; there was also a Father, who was called Katakéne-ne-nuláng. They had a son called Búnkua-sé. But they were not people, or anything, or things at all. They were alúna. They were spirit and thought. That was the first world, the first position, and the first shelf.
>
> Then another world was created higher up: the second world. There was then a Father who was a tiger. But he was not a tiger as an animal, but a tiger in alúna.
>
> [. . .]

Máma Nuhúna: [3]

> When Máma Nuhúna came back from the other world, he knew much and had learned everything the Mámas know. To learn more, he went over to the animals to see how they lived. He became an animal and stayed with them.

[2] Translated by the author from (Reichel Dolmatoff 1985, II, 17).
[3] Translated by the author from (Reichel Dolmatoff 1985, II, 70–71).

> First, he went to ants. He did everything they did. He went with them to hunt in the wilderness [monte]. They said they were going to kill a tapir, but Máma Nuhúna only saw a worm. But when he too became an ant, he saw the worm as a tapir. The black ant, the one whose bite is so painful, took his arrow and kill the worm. So, they all ate.
> Then Máma Nuhúna went to the armadillos. He became an armadillo and slept during the day. At night he would search for fruits and hunt with other armadillos. They searched for worms, but the armadillos said they were avocadoes and arracacha and beans and yam.
> Then Máma Nuhúna went to the peccaries and then to the foxes. They slept during the day. The foxes, at night, went to catch small birds, but they said they were chickens.
> Then Máma Nuhúna went to the leafcutter ants [hormigas arrieras] to learn how they lived. But he never saw them eat. Then he would ask them how they ate, and they laughed and said they simply tightened the sashes round their waists, and nothing else. Then he asked an old ant what it was they ate, and she told him that, when they cut a leaf, they drank the juice, and nothing else. That was their food. They only drank the milk that came from cut leaves. Máma Nuhúna stayed very little with the leafcutter ants. He left soon because there was no food for him. Máma Nuhúna learned all this among the animals. He then taught it to the Mámas.

Duginávi:[4]

> [After falling from the heavens and overcoming a number of difficulties, his solutions to which laid the foundations for Kogui culture, Duginávi managed to build himself a home, find a wife and have a daughter, but eventually his wife grew tired of the fact that Duginávi did nothing but carve and wear masks, so she burned all his masks, murdered their daughter, and fled the house.] Then Duginávi put on the mask of Rain and called the downpour. Then it began to rain and rain and the river grew more and more. Duginávi climbed up a tall tree by the river's side and threw himself into the water to kill himself. He didn't want to live any longer. But he fell on a [reed] mat and the mat floated on the water and Duginávi didn't drown.

[4] Translated by the author from (Reichel Dolmatoff 1985, II, 40).

> Then he put on the mask of River and suddenly saw the river was a woman.
> The river didn't want to kill Duginávi.
> [. . .]

I have selected these three myths because of the clearness with which they express the following ideas, which constantly reappear in Kogui myths and culture (the ideas will be in italics, and interpretative reasons for them in regular type):

1) *Reality is perspectival. That is to say, the traits we attribute to entities are the result of the point of view from which we view them*. Consider not only that the world exists first as alúna in Gaulchováng's mind, but also that Gaulchováng herself is alúna, a description which the narrator of the myth elaborates by calling her "memory", "thought", and "spirit of what is to come", as well as by emphasizing that, what exists in no other way but in the alúna of Gaulchováng is "nothing at all". It is my impression that this description is almost a perfect fit for what the phenomenological school calls intentional acts, acts that have a content, aboutness, or a certain way of gesturing outside themselves, if you will.[5] Assuming it is, at least, a close concept, the myth can be read as affirming that the original principle of reality is a set of intentional acts with no external content (to be precise, a set of second order intentional acts, in as far as Gaulchováng is herself an intentional act, a situation which we might as well describe as Pirandello gone mythical). The first myth would seem to suggest that, with the creation of the second world, this situation was altered, and external entities corresponding to what was before but in alúna; the two following myths offer a more complex picture, though: Máma Nuhúna's adventures among the animals at no point suggest that one manner of conceiving objects, one set of intentional trappings, are any more real than the others; quite on the contrary, the knowledge he is said to have acquired seems to be nothing other than the recognition of opposing and yet equally valid manners of holding objects in intention. His incapacity to live the life of ants is no more than that, an incapacity of Máma Nuhúna's part to assimilate a certain way of viewing the world, instead of an affirmation of an absolute fact (otherwise, we could not make sense of the ants' actual thriving). The same can be said of the myth of Duginávi, which resists being read as a simple declaration that the river is nothing but a woman (or, for that matter, that the woman is nothing but a river). The lesson it would seem to impart is, instead, that understanding a fact requires that we recognize its multiple apprehensibility: it is only

[5] In my opinion, the best introduction to the concept of intentionality, as it is understood by phenomenologists, is still (Sartre 1947).

because we are faced with a river that is also a woman that we can make sense of floods that love. Nice and unconscious Kantians that we Westerners are, our first tendency would be to postulate a noumenal world, with some kind of mind-independent content, that explains the possibility of attributing certain characteristics to certain objects, but not others, and assume that the contradictory nature of different interpretative sets is the result, perhaps, of a deficiency in human conceptual capacities (we will retake the Kantian theme later on). Against this, I would claim that doing so is in no way justified by the myths, and is, instead, an inference licensed only when dealing with narrations that share our own worldview. The myths, in other words, seem to attribute nothing to objects beyond their being loci for different possible intentional acts.

2) *Reality's being perspectival does not mean it is absolutely relative; it is possible to reidentify entities while changing perspectives, despite the fact that their traits are not constant.* Witness the fact that Máma Nuhúna is described as acquiring knowledge by means of his perspectival journeys, and that this knowledge is stated in terms of discovering what new characteristics can be attributed to objects from each new point of view. And of course, the same applies to Duginávi's case, who can, by the end of the story, make better sense of the world on account of his perspectival anagnorisis.

3) *Actual perspectives are not limited to what, from within our own perspective, qualify as living beings.* Reaching this conclusion requires a little more hermeneutical heft than the previous two: consider, first, that Duginávi reaches the end of the story having made sense of a fact of the world, and that the content of this fact includes an event being caused as a result of the actions of a living being, a being endowed with the capacity to love. Love being an intentional act (even the weakest of loves, after all, at least gesture towards something that is loved), the loving agent would seem to be one possessed of the capacity for alúna and, thus, of her own perspective. And yet, from Duginávi's usual point of view, this agent is a river, an entity to which we do not normally attribute intentional acts or states. The knowledge Duginávi acquires can thus more properly be explained as the discovery that certain facts of the world are dependent on agents and their perspectives which are usually hidden from our view.

4) *Perspectivism does not lead to skepticism; on the contrary, understanding different perspectives is an essential aspect of true knowledge.* As I have by now repeated several times, the myths describe both Máma Nuhúna and Duginávi as acquiring knowledge, and seem meant to impart to their listeners the lesson not that

we must despair of understanding the world, but that knowledge is to be gained by discovering new perspectives.

5) *There is no ultimate reality beyond perspectives; the world began as alúna, as an intentional object, so to speak, and things were created only after the model of intentional thought.* This is the result of combining ideas (1) and (2).[6]

When faced with a worldview like the one I have just sketched, most academic philosophers react by accusing it of being either too vague to be philosophically productive or, despite (2), of being relativistic to the point of condoning any action and belief whatsoever. Against this, I will try to argue that "translating" these ideas into a coherent system using contemporary tools is not only possible, but also ethically relevant. But, first, I need to offer a brief characterization of modal metaphysics and, specifically, possible world semantics. Trying to offer an introduction to modal metaphysics that is friendly to non-specialists will require, though, a detour, during which little specific mention to Kogui myths will be made; I ask the reader to be patient, and not lose sight of the fact that the next couple of sections are meant to offer an independently motivated theoretical system, which will only later be compared with the five ideas discussed above.

2. Possible Worlds Semantics

Although possible worlds have a long history in philosophy, they had to wait until young Kripke's works during the 60's before mainstream philosophers ceased to regard them as a subject best left to science fiction writers; since Kripke's possible worlds semantics still seems to be the most intuitive way of motivating belief in possible worlds, the next few paragraphs will be an informal presentation of possible worlds as tools in semantics.[7]

Although offering a good definition of what a world is would be an ideal starting point, "world" seems to be a fundamental concept, similar to space and time, and so what I can offer are but heuristic devices meant to point out what I mean by a world: the logical "space" within which a maximal set of propositions is attributed a truth value, the totality of facts, the sum total of the way things are. A possible world

[6] I thank the anonymous reviewers for this journal for pointing out the need to elaborate the motivations behind my interpretation of the myths.

[7] (Priest 2008) offers a good formal introduction to modal logic and its semantics, as well as including bibliographical references that are still relatively up to date.

would then be a totality of facts that might have been. Thus, our world includes the facts that Pieter Saenredam was born in Assendelft in 1597 with perfectly functional eyesight, trained as a painter, and painted church interiors; other possible worlds include those in which Saenredam became an architect instead of a painter, was born blind and never became a painter,[8] was born in France, etc. Of course, not every possible set of facts is coherent; thus, for some reason or other, it might turn out that two propositions cannot be both true (or false, or have opposite truth values, etc.) in the same world; hence not just any set of facts is a possible world, which explains the need to explicitly state the "might have been" condition. Whether there is a way of determining which worlds are possible and which are not is beyond the scope of this, but the concept of a possible world seems cogent even without an answer, so we might as well continue.

A while ago, I said possible worlds have similarities with space and time; the first of these is being what we might call a truth relativizer, which we will characterize as being that relative to which a truth value is attributed to a proposition. For example, the proposition "the weather is mild" is, by itself, neither true nor false; to decide which one it is, we need to determine a time and space for its evaluation:[9] thus, we would say "the weather is mild" is true relative to Bogotá on the 30th of October, 2022, but it is false, for example, relative to Neiva on the same day (or any other day, for that matter). We usually omit the specification of time and place not because some propositions have truth values independently of them, but because they are either pragmatically inferable or implicitly (e.g., with tenses) stated by means of indexicals. Although cases when we need to specify it are much rarer, the same applies to worlds: all propositions are true or false relative to a specific world. In other words, in the same way it makes no sense to demand that we determine whether "it is snowing" is true independently of time, the question cannot be answered but relative to a world. Some propositions will, perhaps, turn out to be true relative to all possible worlds, and other might be true at all times, but this does not mean they are independent of worlds or times; instead, they are true relative to all of them. Before we continue, there is one more detail we will need to keep in mind for the next section: the existence of an entity, in as far as it is a proposition (a fact) that can be true or false, is also relative to worlds:

[8] I am under the impression that, had he been born with sight but deaf, Saenredam's paintings would not have been possible either, but that's a completely different subject.

[9] Some propositions seem to require that we only specify a time: to determine the truth of "García Márquez is singing vallenatos", we only need to be told the time relative to which the proposition must be evaluated. I believe this is so only because reference to individuals always functions as a sort of spatial indexical, but that requires further investigation.

in this world, the proposition stating the existence of Ossian is false, while that stating the existence of James Macpherson is true, but these truth values might be inverted in a different possible world.

Although the idea might seem extravagant to the point of verging on fantasy, possible worlds turn out to play an essential role in epistemology, since they are the ideal way of formalizing, relying merely on extensional logic, two obscure but epistemologically central concepts: possibility and necessity. Thus, what is necessary is what is true in every possible world, while something true in at least one possible world is possible.[10] Given this 1) seems to adequately capture the way possibility and necessity are handled in everyday life (I believe most of us, if asked what possibility means in an environment free from excessive philosophy, would answer something like "what does not have to be true, but might have been"), 2) provides us with an interpretation for counterfactual conditionals, which play an important role in the way we think of the world,[11] and 3) offers an elegant semantic model for modal logic, strange as they might initially seem, there are good reasons for accepting possible worlds as theoretical tools. But accepting them as tools still leaves us with a rather uncomfortable question: what exactly are they supposed to be, metaphysically speaking? In other words, are the different ways the world might be nothing but intellectual constructions, or do these constructions somehow relate to real entities? For different reasons, some philosophers, usually described as modal realists, ((D.K. Lewis 2001), (Yagisawa 2010)) have argued possible worlds are real in a strong sense, sometimes quite close to the parallel realities of science fiction, others have received these claims rather skeptically ((Stalnaker 2003), (Kripke 1981)), and still others (Plantinga 1979), often known as modal actualists, have attempted to reduce the notion to a set of really existing propositions (a Book, in Plantinga's terminology). Instead of attempting to add anything directly to this debate, I intend to argue that the metaphysical worldview behind Kogui myths can be understood as advocating for a very specific kind of modal realism, in which different possible worlds, instead of being separate realities accessible only by means of thought, actually intersect at individuals. But, before we get there, we need a few more theoretical tools.

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[10] I should add that these definitions are properly those of absolute necessity and absolute possibility; most Kripke semantic models begin with relative necessity (or possibility) defined in terms of accessibility to a set of worlds.

[11] Counterfactual conditionals (cc) are conditional propositions ("if…, then…") that deal with what would have been the case under different conditions (e.g., "if Alkan had been a painter, abstract painting would have been born more than half a century earlier"). Cc's play an important role in determining causality and responsibility, for example.

3. Individuals, rigid designation, and actuality

Let us begin by using the distinction, made famous by (Donnellan 2012), between attributive and referential uses of language. I will use a variation on one of Donnellan's examples to explain the point: let us imagine two people at a party, gossiping the while away; let us add two more characters, two men, near them, one of which has a martini glass in his hand, while the other has a regular tall glass. Unbeknownst to our gossipmongers, the martini glass is full of water, while the regular glass is brimming with cleverly disguised martini. And now let us suppose one of our main characters (A) asks the other (B) who the man drinking a martini is. Who is A talking about? A sanctimonious logician might say the utterance refers to the man with the regular glass holding the martini, but most of us would agree the sentence actually refers to the man with the water-filled martini glass, and, even if B knows what both glasses contain, she would probably answer by providing whatever information she has about the martini glass man, perhaps, if she feels it might be relevant later, by clarifying he is actually drinking water. The philosophical point here is that, despite what we might initially believe, the referential function of language, that which allows us to latch onto specific entities in the world, works even in cases where the concepts we use as guides are false. In other words, in order to latch onto a specific entity, we do not need a true description of that entity and can even latch onto it correctly by using a false description (we might even know it is false and still succeed). But let us take this a step further, once again using one of Donnellan's examples: let us suppose our two gossipers are now talking about a man and a woman who are not only together, but exchanging quite evident signs of mutual affection; let us also suppose that A knows, while B ignores, that, despite their physical difference, they are actually siblings, and that the woman is rather unfortunately married to a disagreeable gentleman. Now, what happens if B utters the proposition "that woman's husband is quite nice to her"? Is this utterance true?

Our ever so exacting logician, who believes the truth value of a proposition is functionally dependent on the meaning of the proposition's elements, would say it is false, given the entity determined by "that man's husband" is somewhat of a brute, but most of us would probably answer something along the lines of "yes, he is, though that happens to be her brother". From a philosophical perspective, this means that the truth value of the utterance is determined not by the meaning of its components, but

by the relation between the entity referred to and the predicate, regardless of whether the means we use to signal out the reference happen to be false. In other words, this proves that we not only have the capacity to latch on to entities regardless of whether the conceptual resources we used to pinpoint the entity apply or not, but also that we can meaningfully talk about and evaluate propositions concerning those entities we have already latched on to by means of an erroneous description.

We still need to take this one step further by means of the phenomenon Kripke baptized "rigid designation": the possibility of tracking an entity we have already latched on to across several possible worlds. Rigid designation is usually motivated by arguing many of the counterfactual conditionals we use and understand become meaningless unless rigid designation is possible, and I will briefly do the same. Let us suppose all we know of Giuseppe Tartini is that he dreamed the Devil played a tune for him and later composed a sonata for violin using the same tune. Now, even if we do not know the answer, I believe we can meaningfully ask ourselves the following counterfactual conditional: "had Tartini not heard the Devil's tune in a dream, would he have composed the same sonata?" Following the standard interpretation of counterfactual conditionals, this proposition's truth-value depends on whether there is a possible world where Tartini did not dream the Devil's tune and yet composed the same sonata or not. The question is, if all we know of Tartini are these two facts, how do we recognize him when at least one of them is false?

Before (Kripke 1981), the standard answer (made popular by (D.K. Lewis 2001)) was that different possible worlds included different individuals, some of which, based on their similarity, were counterparts of individuals in other possible worlds. Now, it is rather easy to prove there would be no way to make sense of counterfactual conditionals if that were all we depended on. For example, if there happens to be a possible world in which one man dreams the Devil's tune, but another composes the violin sonata which includes it, which of these would be Tartini? The question seems to be unanswerable, but only because it makes no sense: it requires that we determine some sort of hierarchy for an individual's traits and that, based on which trait is higher up (or, perhaps, more essential, assuming the expression makes sense), we determine which of them is closer to the actual Tartini. But this is not the way we understand individuals; species might have essential traits, but individuals do not. I would not have been, for example, somebody else if I were blonde, tall, good at maths and sports, etc. I would have had different characteristics but would not have

been a different individual, but a different me.[12] So, the answer to which of the two would have been Tartini is not determined by what traits he possesses, but by whether Tartini has one trait or the other in that specific possible world. In some possible worlds, Tartini might have dreamed the tune, but not composed any violin sonata, while in others, perhaps, the Devil never showed up in his dreams, and yet he still composed the same violin sonata as in our actual world. In other words, in order to make sense of counterfactual conditionals, individuals must be reidentified in other possible worlds not by means of conceptual characterization, but simply by the fact that they are the same individuals as in the world in which we have latched on to them.[13]

So far, we have argued that we can latch on to an individual without having to rely on conceptual knowledge about it, and that we can reidentify an individual throughout several possible worlds, but this conclusion brings a complicated question in its wake: what does it mean for an individual to exist in several possible worlds? If we adopt the belief that possible worlds are something like parallel realities, the question seems unanswerable (in fact, its incapacity to deal with transworld identity is perhaps the strongest and most widely accepted argument against said belief). Some (arguably Kripke among them) solve the problem by considering possible worlds thought experiments, but, as I mentioned at the end of our last section, the Kogui

[12] At this point, it might seem I am replacing one set of essential characteristics (being dark haired or blonde [or, to be honest, formerly dark haired, currently bald], tall or short, etc.) with another, the essential characteristic of being me. The answer, I am afraid, is a rather annoying "yes and no": yes, in as far as I am essentially I, and this is *a priori* true (as well as tautological, though it is a tautology that requires that we lose more than one set of metaphysical glasses before we can accept it as such), but no in as far as this is not a characteristic with content, it is not an attribute I possess because I am somehow or other. Being I is not (as most of those who shed adolescence intuit) a way of being. It is, rather, an empty characteristic: it is the possibility for certain characteristics to be attributed to me while others are not, but not in virtue of their being something else of which they are attributed. The relation, in other words, is one of mutual constitution between these referential essences and other characteristics: characteristics are what we attribute to referents, and referents are that of which we attribute characteristics. Claiming I am essentially I, thus, amounts to no more than claiming that I can be a referent, but not in virtue of their being a further, deeper, metaphysical fact. If this seems challenging, it is because it requires that we invert our usual metaphysical picture and cease to assume that the fundamental level is one of facts that are possible and accept instead a picture of possibilities that are facts. This might be a shorthand way of describing the strangeness of the Kogui picture of the world. I thank an anonymous reviewer for this journal for pointing out the need to explain this point.

[13] There is, of course, much more to this discussion than what I have summarized here; for those interested, the locus classicus is Kripke (1981).

worldview seems to demand modal realism. Then question, then, would be: can we make sense of the idea that one same individual exists in various possible worlds?

The question sounds rather extravagant, but I believe its unpalatability can be diminished by appealing to spatial and temporal analogies. Let us start with space: nobody, I think, finds the idea that individuals have spatial extension problematic. Now, spatial extension implies, on the one hand, that there are spaces at which the individual exists, and spaces at which it does not, and, on the other, that the truth value of certain propositions concerning one same individual is relative to the spaces the individual occupies. Although there might be more philosophical opposition to it, the idea that individuals also have a temporal extension is rather commonsensical, and it shares a certain number of characteristics with spatial extension: there at times at which an individual exists and times at which it does not, and the truth value of certain propositions concerning one same individual is relative to the times at which the individual exists (for example, "has a pot belly" has an annoying tendency to become truer with age). Now, we already have reasons for believing that we can latch on to individuals without needing to know true propositions about them, and that we can reidentify these individuals in other possible worlds in which the truth value of whatever we do know about them changes. We also know there are possible worlds at which an individual might exist, and other at which they might not, and that propositions regarding one same individual are relative to possible worlds. Given all this, I believe we can make sense of the fact that individuals are not only spatially and temporally, but also modally extended. In other words, I believe we can, by analogy with spatial and temporal parts, understand the idea that individuals possess modal parts, which extend into different possible worlds.[14] This, of course, would mean that individuality is independent of possible worlds and, thus, that individuality is independent of the set of propositions truly predicated of an individual, but this is already implied by the referential use of descriptions and rigid designation, both of which belong, despite their technical sounding names, to everyday life and language.

Even if the modal extension of individuals is accepted, this still leaves us with a rather uncomfortable question: what then is an individual? Perhaps the first reaction we might have would be to postulate some kind of ulterior metaphysical level, reality beyond possible worlds, but I believe this would destroy whatever advantages the idea of modal extension brings with it: it would be the same as saying that the worlds we

[14] Both (Kaplan 1979) and (Simons 1987) briefly consider the idea of modal parts, but dismiss it as philosophically problematic; (Yagisawa 2010) accepts the claim that individuals have modal extension, but, as far as I can see, makes little additional use of it.

know and think of are nothing but the result of interacting with entities the nature of which we know nothing about. Possible worlds would then be nothing but mental images of what the real world is, and we will have fallen into the most skeptical of relativisms. Instead, I believe we should take the idea that predication can occur only relative to worlds in the strictest way possible: if we can reidentify an individual in a different possible world despite the fact that what we can truly predicate of it has changed, this does not mean that individuals have a different set of characteristics that, without our being able to state them, manage to guarantee the identity of an individual throughout several possible worlds, and thus mysteriously justify our reidentification of said individuals. If we already have reasons for believing non-propositionally determined reference to individuals is possible, why would we want to reintroduce propositional determination at a different level? Instead of assuming we can refer to and latch on to individuals because of what we know about them, we should, I believe, accept that we can know something about individuals because we can refer to and latch on to them. If this is so, if identifying an individual as an individual is prior to what we know about it, the idea of individuals having different modal parts while retaining their unity becomes much less problematic.

This still leaves us with the same question asked a couple of paragraphs ago: what, then is an individual? I believe the following spatial example can help us find an answer: let us imagine two different geometrical planes intersecting at a line. Assuming each plane has a differing coordinate system, the line can be described differently relative to each plane, which means that we what we can truly predicate of the line relative to one plane is false relative to the other, and yet we can reidentify the line without assuming the line exists independently of the fact that it is the intersection of both planes. We can extend this example to include as many planes intersecting at the same line as we please, which is the same as saying we can bring in as many different propositional descriptions of the line as we please, and still recognize the line as one same individual, not because it exists as an entity "beyond" space, but simply because it is a spatial point that allows for non-propositional referential recognition, and so it can be truthfully described using differing coordinate systems. Similarly, from a modal perspective, individuals would be the set of modal "points" which can be referentially grasped, thus serving as the subjects of which traits are attributed relative to a world. Given these individuals extend through various possible worlds, this implies that there is no need to assume the existence of a uncrossable metaphysical gulf between different worlds: that is to say, even if different subjects inhabit different possible worlds, they still share the individuals at

which their worlds intersect and can identify these same individuals in each other's possible world by referentially latching on to them. Individuals, then, are not only the modal equivalent to points that serve as building blocks for the set of true propositions that characterize a world (in as far as they provide the subjects for individual propositions) but serve as well as the points of departure for a number of different possible worlds. I believe we can, without using the word metaphorically, call the set of these transworld individuals, these loci of different intersecting possible worlds, Nature.

At this point, we are faced with a problem that has, under one guise or another, continuously dogged modal realists: the infinite plurality of possible worlds. Since one differing truth-value attribution is enough to produce a different possible world, changing the position of any single atom is enough to create a new world; although this excess is not necessarily a mistake, and some philosophers have been more than willing to bite the bullet, finding a way to delimit the number of possible worlds would increase the plausibility of modal realism. Some philosophers have attempted to do so by using the notion of actuality, and, with a little guidance from the Kogui myths, this is the path I intend to follow.

Actuality is yet another fundamental concept and thus as difficult to explain without appealing to lived experience as other concepts closely related to it, such as now, here, I, etc. Perhaps the best that can be said is that, while possible worlds indicate ways the world might be, the actual world is the way the world is. It is the single most important difference between our world and the world of Anna Karenina and Levin, or that of Alveric of Erl. Most writers on possible world semantics tend to assume there is but one actual world, our own, perhaps (this seems to be Plantinga´s position) because it appears to be meaningless to affirm the actuality of a world different from the one in which the affirmation is made, given the truth of "W is an actual world" as affirmed in a possible world would be the affirmation of a possible actuality, which seems to be no different from mere possibility. Nevertheless, this is a flawed argument; the only valid conclusion is that, in order to guarantee that a proposition stating the actuality of a world W2 different from the world W1 in which the proposition is stated affirms something beyond mere possibility, the world W1 must also be an actual world. Thus, the possibility of there being more than one actual world seems cogent; the problem is, of course, how to prevent all possible worlds from being simultaneously actual (which would, of course, leave the term "actual" devoid of any real use).

I believe the answer has to do with something that the actual world shares with here, now, I, etc.: they are all essentially first-person perspectival terms. Once again, let us approach the modal problem with an analogy, but this time beginning with the concept "I": quite evidently, every I[15] is an individual, but not just any individual is an I: only those which have a first-person perspective can qualify as an I. To put the point linguistically, only that which can refer to itself as an I is an I.[16] This sounds, I know, rather empty, but it is only because we are used to words being defined conceptually, and, in this case, we can only understand it performatively. That is to say, individuals do not qualify as an I because they comply with a set of conceptual requirements (as, for example, being a tiger requires having stripes, claws, fangs, etc.), but because they can identify themselves as an I. Saying I am an I seems to mean no more than that I can refer to myself without relying on any sort of conceptual knowledge or skill (otherwise, I might misidentify myself, and that is not possible; I might believe I possess characteristics I don't really possess, but I cannot pick out the wrong I when talking about myself). The important point here is that identifying oneself as an I is an act that cannot be performed from the outside: I cannot baptize something as an I if it has not baptized itself, so to speak. Something similar goes for here and now: although we might believe space is built out of different "heres" and time is the result of a succession of "nows", this is not quite correct. Here-ness and now-ness[17] are not traits that can be truly predicated of spatial or temporal locations; they are not, in fact, spatial or temporal traits at all: given two different temporal or spatial points, there is nothing in them that would allow us to determine whether they are a here or a now or not. For here-ness or now-ness to occur, we need an individual that determines a here and a now by reference to itself. We might say that all of space and all of time are potential heres and potential nows, but only those were the self-referential performance of certain individuals (I's, of course) occurs are actual heres and actual nows. Once again, this is not a conceptual identification of a certain time and place; the actuality of here and now can only be determined relative to the presence of a first-person perspective. And this, of course, does not require that there be only one actual here or I.[18]

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[15] I apologize for the grammatical solecism but calling it a self would have obscured the point.
[16] This is not a sufficient definition: a tape recorder recording the sound "I" is not a self. A linguistic-performative account of selfhood we require more details, probably related to contextually relevant uses of the word, but this is a matter for a different paper.
[17] Once again, I apologize for manhandling English.
[18] Evidently, now is rather problematic; to be quite honest, I am not sure how the question "is there more than one actual now?" must be understood.

Keeping in mind the cases discussed in the last paragraph, I believe we can make sense of the multiplicity of actual worlds: in the same way every spatial location might be a possible here, but only those where the first-person perspective occurs qualify as actual heres, only those worlds which have the same relation to the first-person perspective as ours has to us qualify as actual worlds. Once again, I am afraid I cannot offer a definition of what that relation is; the best I can do is, perhaps, to point out that, given truths are relative to worlds, the truths belonging to an actual world are those that have a certain immediacy for an I. In other words, actual worlds are those the facts of which are facts for somebody. If the reader will forgive me for yet another slight paraphrasis, an actual world is a way the world is for someone.

Two important points must be explained before I briefly hint at the ethical implications of this metaphysical picture. First, we tend to associate terms such as self, I, someone, etc., with a certain number of traits (such as rationality), and these traits are those that we usually attribute fully only to human beings, perhaps partially to other animals, and not at all to other natural phenomena. This means that, even if we accept the metaphysical picture I have been sketching, we might end up with a single possible world, the one we humans share (or, if we are rather extreme cultural relativists, the set of possible worlds corresponding to different cultures). This, though, would be the result of ignoring the fact that traits are relative to worlds, while individuals transcend them. We cannot argue that our world is actual because we are, for example, rational, given that the truth of the proposition that states our rationality is relative to a certain world; in other words, explaining actuality by reference to a set of supposed traits would be to put the cart before the horse. The fact that we are rational in our actual world does not imply we are necessarily rational in every possible world (or every other actual world). Hence my insistence on the performative nature of the first-person perspective: subjects for which a world is actual do not qualify as subjects because they are a certain way or have certain characteristics, but because they non-conceptually perform as first persons. In the same way I am an I because I enact my I-ness,[19] I have an actual world because I enact the actuality of its facts. The traits we usually attribute to subjects would then be the result of said enacting, not its cause, and would, of course, necessarily apply only in the world that is actual for that individual.[20]

[19] It is rather a cliché at this point, I know, but yes, I do believe that “Im Anfang war die Tat”.
[20] Since I already caved into the temptation of quoting one German poet, I might as well quote another: “Ich weiß nicht, was ich bin; / ich bin nicht, was ich weiß: / Ein Ding und nit ein Ding, / ein Stüpfchen und ein Kreis”.

The second point is, in a sense, more of a reminder: different subjects might inhabit different actual worlds, but this does not mean they cannot encounter each other, since they do not need to recognize the actuality of the same set of facts to refer to the same set of individuals. In other words, using the definition I proposed at the end of 3, subjects might inhabit different worlds, but still share one same Nature.

4. An ethical hint and a problem for the future

So far, I have argued that it is possible to construct a metaphysical system that reflects certain aspects of Kogui thought (the multiplicity of interrelated worlds, the world because of an act of alúna) without falling into skeptical relativism, but I have given no arguments concerning why we should accept this system, and I must confess I lack anything that comes even close to a fully-fledged metaphysical argument. Nevertheless, I believe this system does have an advantage when it comes to thinking about the ethical status of Nature, and this, given our current circumstances, might count as a reason for not rejecting it outright.

Let us begin by introducing a couple of terms: an ethical subject will be the individual relative to which things are said to have ethical values, which impose a set of ethical duties. An ethical object will be that to which ethical values apply and, in accordance with them, the ethical object might be granted a set of rights. This distinction is meant to reflect the common belief that values are not facts in the same sense in which we speak of scientific facts: we tend to believe that, in the absence of living beings, gravity would still be a fact, but most of us would doubt that concepts such as good and bad would still apply to a world lacking life. We tend to believe, in other words, that ethical values are not factual traits, but evaluations made by subjects. The fact that only subjects recognize facts explains why only subjects have duties, while entities that are strictly objects lack them. Of course, human beings are usually taken to be both ethical subjects and objects, and, for a long time, they were thought to be the only ethical objects in existence. Recent advances in animal rights, for example, have pioneered systems that clearly separate ethical subjects from ethical objects, and argue that the fact that animals cannot comply with ethical duties does not mean that they lack ethical rights (and, of course, there have been some legal experiments with the idea that the same applies for environments).

Important as these advances might be, they all share the same problem: as long as ethical values are believed to exist only relative to subjects, it would seem that the

following vaguely Nietzschean argument might be valid in any ethical system: given human subjectivity is the source of values, no ethical right can be granted that might displace humans from the top of the ethical hierarchy, since this would be the same as undercutting the foundations upon which the ethical right depends. Faced with this situation, there seem to be only two alternatives: either we argue that values are objective facts, or we argue that humans are not the only possible ethical subjects. Given how often they are rehearsed, I will not discuss the difficulties stemming from the first possibility. Let us, instead, look at those usually associated with the second: for an entity to qualify as an ethical subject, it must be capable of understanding and applying normativity, which requires a certain degree of rationality. Since even the most optimistic of animal lovers accept that all the empirical evidence we have indicates that at best a couple of species have something approaching a very low degree of rational thought, and certainly nothing else thinks at all, we have no justification for attributing ethical subjectivity to a non-human entity. I hope it is evident that this argument assumes that subjectivity is equivalent to (or the result of) possessing several traits (such as rationality), and that, if we accept the metaphysical picture I sketched above, this is a premise we should deny. Instead, we should argue that lacking these traits in our actual world does not imply that an individual lacks subjectivity in all possible worlds. We could, then attribute subjectivity to non-human entities while at the same time recognizing that, in our actual world, they lack the capacity to think normatively (as do the Kogui in the myths quoted in section 1). If non-human entities are recognized as possessing their own set of ethical values, rights, and duties, the vaguely Nietzschean argument mentioned at the beginning of this paragraph is no longer valid, which would place humans in a position of ethical equality with Nature.

In summary, the argument in the following paragraph goes as follows: ethical systems seem to require that there be a difference between ethical subjects and ethical objects. Ethical objects possess ethical value only as a reflection of ethical subjects: that is to say, only because ethical subjects have duties towards entities that are nor in themselves subjects do these last become ethical objects. But in that case, any situation which requires that the subject be sacrificed in favor of the object goes against the system of ethics, in as far as it destroys the conditions of possibility for the system itself. The system, then, attributes a kind of supra-ethical value to subjects, which leaves those entities we do not usually recognize as subjects (such as rivers, mountains, forests, etc.) rather at the mercy of ethical subjects' welfare. Now, as I mentioned in (3) (section 1), the Kogui worldview accepts the existence of subjects the subjecthood

of which is not immediately accessible from our normal point of view, and does so without falling into relativism; quite on the contrary, it both affirms that there are methods by which we can acquire knowledge of these different perspectives (and hence discover until now unknown subjects) and characterizes knowledge in terms of this progressive acquisition of new viewpoints (as stated in (4) and (5)). Even further, as is the case in the myth of Duginávi, without knowledge of these other perspectives, even the facts within our own possible world remain inexplicable. Thus not only is the door opened to the possibility of natural phenomena acquiring autonomous ethical status as ethical subjects, but we are also forced to recognize the need to investigate other, differing points of view before engaging in actions dealing with what we take to be mere ethical objects, less we turn out to be unwittingly harming them as ethical subjects (though see the next paragraph for questions on this point). If to this we add that the Kogui metaphysical system can receive additional argumentative support from independently motivated philosophical investigations (which is what attempted in sections 2 and 3, though with full consciousness that many of my arguments would require further elaboration, and that this is best viewed as a blueprint for future arguments), it would make sense to consider its theses ethically attractive and at least possibly valid.[21]

There is, of course, a big problem with my ethical hint: I have provided no method by means of which we can determine which individuals are subjects in this extended sense, and I have not done so because I know of none. At first, this might seem impossible given that subjectivity was characterized, in section 3, as corresponding to the first-person perspective, and, or so I argued, this cannot be reduced to conceptual knowledge, which would seem to be the only way open to third-person knowledge. Although, as I said a moment ago, I lack a definitive reply, there is a fact that makes me hope the problem is not unsolvable: we do recognize the existence of first-person perspectives different from our own, and we do so despite the fact that we have no proof of their existence from a rational point of view. Of course, I am referring to the fact that we recognize other human beings, and that, regardless of how many times we are told that there is no valid demonstration that other humans are not machines or illusions, it is impossible for us to doubt their humanity. And, although most of us seem to have forgotten how to do so, members of indigenous peoples from all over the world are constantly trying to remind us that we can establish a similar relationship with certain non-human entities.

[21] I thank the anonymous reviewers for this journal for pointing out the need to offer a more explicit explanation of how the different parts of this essay tie together.

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3. Philosophers on Dialogue

—Gadamer and Rosenzweig—

Roots of *philosophical hermeneutics* in Gadamer's reading of the *Philebus*: ethics, practical knowledge and understanding

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Abstract: *There are many studies highlighting Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics is deeply rooted in a larger and less explicit ethical project. However, few of them address the young Gadamer's interpretation of Plato's Philebus dialogue and how the dialectical ethics outlined there is essential to the way the author later defends hermeneutics as a way of being to understand and live better in the world. For this reason, my main objective in the present text is (1) to approach the context of writing Gadamer's habilitation thesis in the late 1920's, (2) to make a brief overflight on the main concepts highlighted when we read the Philebus to, later, (3) show how much of the practical philosophy usually attributed to the Aristotelian philosophy in Gadamerian hermeneutics is heir to Plato's existential dialectics*.

1. Gadamer and the context of his *Habilitationsschrift*

When we start studying about the history behind Hans-Georg Gadamer's main ideas, it is easy to find and confirm the influence Martin Heidegger had in his early formative years. But we should not underestimate the influence of Nicolai Hartmann in Gadamer's studies, especially regarding the indication for the young Gadamer to the completion of his doctoral thesis under Paul Natorp's supervision. Back then, Natorp was a well-known Neo-Kantian already aware of a young Husserl's prominent assistant in Freiburg. This young assistant was Heidegger, that Natorp eventually nominated to a professorship at the University of Marburg upon a report on his studies on Aristotle—the well-known *Natorp-Bericht* [Natorp Report], from 1921–22 (Di Cesare 2013). Around the same time, Gadamer's doctoral thesis, from 1922, is entitled *Das Wesen der Lust nach den Platonischen Dialogen* [The essence of pleasure according to Plato's dialogues], which is thematically very much alike what we can see discussed over his later work on the *Philebus*.

Regarding the Heidegger-Gadamer relationship, we usually learn Gadamer used to work as Heidegger's assistant around 1923–24, but we hardly hear of the consequences on Gadamer's end—"the Heideggerian shadow always looking over his shoulder" (Grondin 2003). At the beginning, the Heideggerian figure, new in Marburg, had friction with Hartmann's presence, and Gadamer even tried to pacify the situation, but, eventually, ended up choosing Heidegger's philosophical views over Hartmann's. But that choice came at a price: Heidegger's criticism toward Gadamer's philosophical discussions were so harsh that Gadamer gave up on philosophy, focusing his efforts in classical philology (Malpas 2018).

Only a few years later, in 1927, he started regaining some philosophical recognition when he began studying classical philology under the guidance of Paul Friedländer in order to form a solid ground in classic philosophy, especially in Plato's interpretation. After passing the state examination in philology, Gadamer wanted to keep studying under Friedländer's, but Heidegger sends him a peremptory letter of invitation, and he could not refuse it. Thus, full of Heidegger's post-Husserlian phenomenology and the encouragement of years to explore further Aristotle's philosophy, Gadamer's *Habilitationsschrift* [habilitation thesis] emerges in 1928–29. This habilitation thesis was then published, in 1931, under the title *Platos dialektische Ethik* [Plato's dialectical ethics], which is, as I want to show, one of the most important works in order to better understand Gadamer's *philosophical hermeneutics* in *Wahrheit und Methode* [Truth and Method] (Gadamer 1990).

Next, I will make a brief thematic and conceptual summary of the *Philebus* dialogue to introduce aspects that may have caught Gadamer's interest in his habilitation thesis.

2. *Philebus*' general structure and interpretation: quick overview

As we already know, *Philebus* is a late Plato dialogue, and a very atypical one in many aspects. For starters, Socrates still has a leading role in it, which is very odd, because the tendency of late Platonic dialogues is to have a reduced presence of Socrates and more of the characters participation. Another interesting point is that *Philebus* has way less humor and is more contemplative and speculative, way different from dialogues such as *Symposium* or *Alcibiades*, for instance. A third point is that it starts presupposing an earlier conversation, an earlier dialogue that is never explicitly presented to the public. Sure, we can assume discussions from the *Republic*, *Sophist*,

Statesman, *Parmenides* and *Timaeus*, for example, but the problem of the *reading order* or *the place* of the *Philebus* is still open to discussion (Altman 2016, Waterfield 1980).

Now, it is curious that, despite the subtitle indication stating περί ηδονής [*on pleasure*], this is not really the main teaching of this dialogue, but rather a means to explain something larger and more complex. Some editions also bring the word ἠθικός, which could help us think of the main dimension of this dialogue and why Gadamer was so interested in reading it, as I will present in the next section. As for the main characters, we can list: 1) Philebus, that hardly participates of the dialogue, but initially supports the hedonistic idea that the good is in the physical pleasure; 2) Protarchus, that, having learnt the argumentation with sophists, takes place in the discussion in favor of Philebus' point of view; and 3) Socrates, which defends the idea of higher kinds of pleasure and the rational aspect of human life, indicating the good human life is in a *middle path*.

If we were to summarize the main opposing concepts in this dialogue—pleasure and knowledge—, we should take Socrates' hint, right in the beginning, when he indicates that there are two sides trying to find *what the good in human life consists of*. On the one hand, there is Philebus' point of view, whose defense is delegated to Protarchus, characterized by the initial concepts of χαίρειν (be glad, be joyful), ἡδονὴν (pleasure, enjoyment) and τέρψιν (delight); on the other hand, there are the concepts advocated by Socrates' position, which are φρονεῖν (to be wise, to think), νοεῖν (to perceive, to have an insight) and μεμνῆσθαι (to remind, put something in mind) (*Phil*., 11 b–c). Nevertheless, if we look closely to the structure of the *Philebus*, there are maybe more discussions about *dialectics*—the superior art capable of division, combination and simplification of ideas and things when properly used by *true philosophers*—and *ontology*—especially when dealing with the four genera: ἄπειρον (limitless/unlimited), πέρας (limited), συμμειχθέντων / μεικτών (mixed), and αἰτίαν (cause of mixture, reason of nature, i.e., κόσμος) (*Phil*., 26b, 26e)—than regarding ethics and its relation to the dyad of *knowledge-pleasure*.

To end this section and prepare ourselves for the next one, I would like to remind that the discussion about an ascetic and a hedonistic life was a tradition among Ancient Greek philosophers, and Plato himself had dealt with this theme in other dialogues—*Gorgias*, *Republic*, *Phaedo* etc. In the *Philebus*, a very short and odd dialogue, as I have mentioned above, Socrates already anticipates the conclusion in the opening of the dialogue, which is: the good human life is not only trapped in pleasures or deprived from all of them, but rather, a *measured and rational mixture of*

the two. This is very intriguing, because, in the end, we, the readers, after all the reading course, find out the same thing, with the small difference of having more richness of details. The truly good, then, is beyond human understanding, but with *dialectics*—the gift from the gods that allows us to divide, organize, measure and rationalize things—, good reasoning and φρόνησις, we can be closer to it and be able to somehow apply it in our daily lives.

Perhaps this was reason enough for Gadamer to have pored over this text, since it really converges with the ideas later structured in *Truth and Method*. This is what I will briefly discuss in the next section: how does Gadamer's reading of the *Philebus* impact his later *philosophical hermeneutics*?

3. Gadamer's unique reading of *Philebus*: from dialectical ethics to philosophical hermeneutics

Almost 30 years separate the publication of Gadamer's *Platos dialektische Ethik* and *Wahrheit und Methode*, but the interesting part is that, in my opinion, some of the main ethical issues were already being developed back then. According to the English edition, which has a generous introduction by Robert M. Wall, the work published in the 1930s had two main chapters: 1) one dealing with the Socratic-Platonic *dialectical ethics* and the way Gadamer relates it to his own view of *shared understanding through conversation*—which will accompany Gadamer henceforth on the themes related to *language*; and 2) another one committed to a phenomenological and thorough interpretation of the *Philebus* with, but not reduced to, Aristotelian concepts especially developed in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Metaphysics* (in Gadamer 1991).[1]

As I have mentioned in the first section, Gadamer's interpretation of the *Philebus* marks some sort of rupture with Neo-Kantianism—for which the ideas were more important—, as he posed greater emphasis on Plato's *dialectical-dialogical element*, in which *truth occurs/happens* among human beings.[2] This is precisely one of the main ideas that will permeate *Wahrheit und Methode*, decades later: the idea

[1] Gadamer insists on confronting the Heideggerian view presented in works such as *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle* and *Being and Time*, which propose a different view from that operated by Gadamer (see Dostal 2021).

[2] Despite his background with Natorp and Hartmann, Gadamer's interpretation differs from the traditional reading of Neo-Kantian studies, as can be seen in texts by Grondin (2009) and Crowell (1999).

that human understanding necessarily passes through the conversational interaction of human beings—and not through the deduction of a subject by a given object—, in which the participants can recognize their own limits, historical situation, *Tradition*, ignorance and allow themselves to be wrong and guided by *the other* (Gadamer 1990).[3]

As it is a phenomenological reading, one of the first interesting points of this interpretation is that it does not stick exclusively to a traditional Platonic metaphysics. Connecting the idea of a *dialectical ethics* to the 'Aristotelian concept' of φρόνησις, Gadamer wants to expose how can we, as human beings, make the truth *happen* through a *committed dialogue*. This takes place by expanding the meaning of λόγος as something beyond *word*, but also *reason* and *giving an account of something* that is only possible by a *shared willingness to question* and build knowledge dialogically—perhaps it reminds us of the concept of *fusion of horizons* [*Horizontverschmelzung*] (?). Coming to an understanding, according to Gadamer's view, is being able to converse especially with the ones who disagree the most with us, but not in the hopes of simple refutation. In a broader view, as I have supported in other studies, Gadamer's preoccupation to the sorts of ἐπιστήμη involved in the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom in the *Philebus* could be related to the idea of someone trying to *agree with himself* and *agreeing with others* as implicitly expressed in *Wahrheit und Methode*—perhaps in the way Plato would use the Delphic maxims of γνῶθι σεαυτόν, επιμέλεια εαυτού and μηδὲν ἄγαν (?). No wonder that Gadamer himself affirmed ". . . the order of the individual's own self (the Ψυχή) is not something commanded by others, in the form of a customary ethic; rather, it produces itself through the unity of *Dasein's self-understanding*" (Gadamer 1985, 59, emphasis added).

One of the many curiosities of Gadamer's interpretation of the *Philebus* is his attempt of evading historical approaches and pursuing a more personal, immanent and phenomenological view, largely due to the close orientation of Heidegger—including the hermeneutic technique of reading the posterior to understand the anterior, i.e., reading Aristotle to understand Plato. Despite being very influenced by Heidegger's thoughts at that time, Gadamer was aware his interests were not exactly aligned, as he mentioned in his 90s, in a conversation with Dottori. In this interview, Gadamer claims that Heidegger's interpretations of Aristotle [*Natorp-Bericht*] were not really

[3] In recent decades, some authors have begun to focus on the topic of *ethics* and *otherness* in Gadamer's works, but usually without mentioning Gadamer's habilitation thesis (George, 2020; Risser, 2019; Schmidt, 2012, 2019).

concerned with practical knowledge or φρόνησις—which he claims being a Platonic concept, as we can notice through *Philebus*'s reading—, but rather *being*. Gadamer says Heidegger was not really preoccupied with Aristotle, for what matters: "I even became initially aware of phronesis, the reasonableness of practical knowing, through Heidegger. But I subsequently found a better basis for *phronesis*, which I developed, not in terms of a virtue, but rather in terms of the dialogue" (Gadamer 2006, 20).

Speaking of φρόνησις, I would like to mention a few studies considering Gadamers's interpretation of the *Philebus*, as well as the relevance of these early studies for the later conception of his *philosophical hermeneutics*. Kristin Gjesdal (2010), for instance, has a very nice book chapter trying to highlight the fact that Gadamer's inspiration is more Heideggerian than Socratic-Platonic, as argued by Davidson. Carlo DaVia (2021), by his turn, wrote a very interesting article arguing that Gadamer had a kind of a *phenomenological ethics* which is not only *practical reasoning*, but, foremost, *philosophical ethics*, a *practical philosophy*. There is also the work by Cleary (2013), who tried to show the importance of understanding the Gadamerian model of conversation as a hermeneutical tool for reading the *Philebus*, in the sense that the dialogues should not be read only as a *medium* of specific doctrines, but *exemplifications of philosophical activity* for interlocutors, but for us, who are invited to take part in the same conversation.

Now, back to the *Philebus*, it is important to notice the agonistic tension between ηδονή (pleasure) and ἐπιστήμη (science, knowledge) is only a prolegomenon to develop the discussion on the *human balanced life* and the way this *good life* participates in the *four genera*, as it is a condition of *being-good*, which is not a concept, but a materialized way of existing in real life *conditioned by existential dialectics*, which also *has the good in it only insofar as the good is concretized in the actual doing of it*, through προαίρεσις, the *proper choice* (Gadamer 1986). The main point, for Gadamer, is to show that Plato was aware of the Socratic pursuit of eternally trying to be a better human being, but also being aware that we would never be *the good* ourselves, but only *participate in goodness* through *beautiful and worthy ways of inspiring others*. Perhaps, here, we can remember the first part of *Wahrheit und Methode*, in which Gadamer elucidates the relation of the *work of art* and our experience of truth and contemplation in the process of understanding, since art is not only representation of something, but *the very truth of something playfully and symbolically expressed* by a painting, a sculpture or a poetry, which promotes a *growth in being* [*Zuwachs an Sein*] in the person experiencing it (Gadamer 1990, Davey 2016).

So, the whole point of speaking of the sorts of pleasure and the ways φρόνησις and σωφροσύνη could help the humans being better for themselves and for others is to propose us both a) an *ontology* to give people a kind of a basis to part of, and b) a *metaphor* to understand there is no perfect life for limited beings like us. What *Philebus* is trying to show us, and Gadamer had stressed it hard, is that we are not capable of being *the good* [ἀγαθὸν], because we are beings conditioned to time, not gods. That is why the *art of measurement*—μετρητικὴ τέχνη (*Prot*., 356d) or Meßkunst—is so important, for *measure/rule for measuring something* (μέτρον) (*Phil*., 57d), which help us finding the *middle* (μεσότης) [ground] of a well-balanced life. And this life is only achieved through the art of διαλέγεσθαι, which contains, in itself, at least the meanings of 1) talking to, 2) choosing between different options and 3) discussing with someone about something. And this art is only reachable, in the *Philebus*, through φιλοσοφία, which would be able to help us mixing pleasure and rationality in a proper way and allow us *contemplating the true being*, τὸ ὂν ὄντως ἐννοίαις (*Phil*., 59d).

In the *Philebus*' logic, after dealing with different types of pleasure, a) practical and b) theoretical forms of knowledge/science—a) productive ones, like architecture; b) pure forms, geometry and calculation—, assuming that the purest science is that related to the *numbers* and *measures* and the dialectical art to use it can be learned via philosophy, it is not surprising that the main goal of philosophy is to help us, as human beings, to find the good in our lives through the capacity of choosing and measuring to find the best *mixture of wisdom and pleasure* [φρονήσεώς τε καὶ ἡδονῆς … μεῖξιν] (*Phil*., 59 d–e). The main difference of this *art of measurement*, in productive and theoretical forms, is that the first one is more akin to *exactness*, and the second is drawn by *truth*. That is why the *dialectical art* is the only art capable of enabling us to get to the ἀρχαί of things, especially the *idea of the Good*.

That is why Gadamer stresses the Socratic-Platonic passage of *the power/potential of good* [τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ δύναμις] *taking refuge* [καταπέφευγεν] in *the nature of the beautiful* [τοῦ καλοῦ φύσιν], for *measure and proportion* [μετριότης καὶ συμμετρία] *identify themselves* or *coexist* [συμβαίνει] with *beauty and virtue* [κάλλος καὶ ἀρετὴ] (*Phil*., 64e). For both Plato and Gadamer, the beauty is one of the modes of *giving shape to the good in reality*, within the idea of hiding the ugly and showing what is beautiful from an existential point of view—letting the truth shine and be shown, expressing the ideal of καλοκαγαθία, i.e., the goodness/nobleness of body and soul when combining the *beauty* and the *good* expressed in a *virtuous way of being*.

So, for it to make sense in an ethical approach, the point is to explore the idea of someone who can control himself that can be related to the practice of being able to *make himself a work of art*—from which we can trace the notion of *existential aesthetics*.

The final idea is that to live in harmony, in balance with the universe and the others, is not *to be* a perfect being, an Olympian god, but *becoming* [γίγνεσθαι] a more balanced one, mixing feelings and rationality as well, given our condition of human beings, always *trying to become something [better]*—especially when we think of the never-ending task Gadamer speaks of recognizing our prejudices, preconceptions [*Vorurteile*]. In the end of the *Philebus*, after discussing about the impossibility of an *ascetic life*—the *unmixed life* [ἀμείκτῳ βίῳ]—in contrast to a *hedonistic life*, the conclusion is looking for the capacity of human beings prone to philosophy in dealing with ethical issues by means of the *dialectical art*, combining *measure and proportion* [μετριότης καὶ συμμετρία] to compose a more realistic, possible and conscious life, a *mixed life* [μεικτῷ βίῳ].[4]

It seems what Gadamer wants to stress in his arguments on the *Philebus* is that the *Platonic dialectics* in his late dialogues is somehow intertwined with the *Socratic ethics*—and we might add: the dialectics becomes ethics, for, in Gadamer's view, it is about a *conversation about shared understanding*. That is why, for Gadamer, in the end of his interpretation, is so important to bring the concepts of νοῦς and φρόνησις, for the discussion is not only concerned about the mind exercises—a refutational practice, as in ἔλεγχος—, but also the *spiritual meditation* that help us making better choices in our daily lives and being better persons. As Gadamer (1985) points out, pleasure and knowledge (practical and theoretical) have to be *compatible* with one another, which means taking care of one[self] but also *letting the other coexist*. It is not about a normative rule to be followed, but a way of learning how to *conduct* one's life, combining pleasure and reasoning, since we are not divine beings, but human finite ones—is not that one of the main aspects Gadamer highlights when writing his main book on *philosophical hermeneutics?* We have the *divine spark* brought by Prometheus, but we are mere *beings capable of language* and its limitations, which is

[4] It would be nice to check other Greek synonyms related to the idea of *[un]mixing*, such as: μίγνυμι and μειγνύμενα (mixture, mingle, mix up liquids, brought in contact to), μεῖξις and μίξις (mixing, combining), ἀμείκτους (unmixed) and μεικτών (mixed). Given the time, it would be interesting to connect these words to the idea of *participation* as in μέθεξις (participate, participation), κοινωνέω (to have in common, share, take part), κοινωνός (companion, partner in something) and κοινός (common [to all], shared in common).

the main core of Gadamer's *philosophical hermeneutics*, that deals with the notion of understanding from the condition of being human.[5]

As I have mentioned before, it turns out that by reading the *Philebus* discussion we can find important aspects of later Gadamer's *philosophical hermeneutics*, which, as we are aware, is not only related to the epistemological element, but also to the ethical one; it is a stance, an attitude, a disposition or a habit—in the modes of ἕξις or ἦθος—a way of [*Dasein*] *being-in-the-world [with others]*, not a mere technique used to better understand texts. We can think that the main characteristics of Platonic dialectics, διαίρεσις and συναγωγή, as expressed in the *Philebus*, are not only related to, respectively, the *division* and *combination* of arguments, themes discussed or elements analyzed. Rather, they also cover the need of exposing one's thoughts without a *heavy heart*, but with a *sound soul*, certain of the *openness for understanding coming from the other*. Knowing how to combine the rational and emotional aspects of one's life is, perhaps, one of the main tasks *hermeneutical ethics* can pose to us in the decision-making moment—in the sense of προαίρεσις—, and maybe that is why dealing with this thesis on *the good in human life that is in a well-mixed way of life* is still so fresh and invigorating to this day.

Final considerations

In this brief text, I tried to expose how the context of Gadamer's formation, with philological studies of Plato and Aristotle under the guidance of Hartmann, Friedländer, Natorp and Heidegger were decisive for the philosophical hermeneutics composed by Gadamer decades later.

To this end, I presented a succinct thematic analysis of some essential passages from *Philebus* so that it was possible to highlight the discussion of what is good in human life, an ethical aspect of the Platonic dialogue that suggests an *existential dialectics* that takes into account the *good mixture* of pleasure and knowledge for the good human life, which I believe profoundly influenced the roots of Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics.

[5] One very particular article about one of the main important Gadamerian sentences in *Wahrheit und Methode—Sein, das verstanden werden kann, ist Sprache*—is the one Vattimo (2000) published with the title *The story of a comma: Gadamer and the sense of being*, in which the author highlights the emphasis of a) *being that is language* and b) *being that can be understood*, depending on the position of the comma.

Subsequently, I tried to show how the phenomenological interpretation carried out by Gadamer in his habilitation thesis, which relates Platonic concepts with Aristotelian categories—highlighting, respectively, the relationship between dialectical ethics and practical philosophy—sheds light on the Gadamerian proposal of the understanding process as an *attitude towards the world and other human beings*, and not just a set of rules to better understand texts. Therefore, the effort to show the relationship between Platonic dialectical ethics and φρόνησις, as Gadamer explores the kind of *experience of understanding that lets the truth happen* via a *committed dialogue*, which unfolds in a *fusion of horizons* that complements different worldviews.

In a way, when discussing pleasure and knowledge in the Platonic perspective, Gadamer tries to point out the aspect that human life is not a divine, perfect life, but full of limitations in the way of understanding oneself and others and, consequently, in the way of *making decisions*. Hence the attempt to understand how to *measure* and *blend* the *good mix for a good life*—metaphor presented by Plato, in the *Philebus*, to explain that the good human life, the *virtuous way of being*, is composed of a mixture of pleasure and knowledge, of body and spirit—, which means a life more open to differences, capable of listening to arguments and welcoming different forms of life from the self. And isn't this precisely one of the main aspects of Gadamerian hermeneutics, namely, *understanding things better in order to have a more open attitude towards the world*?

Finally, I would like to point out that this is why the idea of *measurement* is so appealing in Gadamer's interpretation, because good measure emphasizes a *beautiful life*, a way of being in the world that is beautiful, showable, from the perspective of an *aesthetics of existence*. The *good mixed life* is one which relates conversation, dialogue and a *shared understanding*, in a way that understanding is not only related to the idea of mind exercises, but also *spiritual meditation* that helps us choose better in our everyday life, in a case that *dialectics becomes also ethics*.

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From Wonder to 'Co-Existence': Rosenzweig's Concepts of Monologue and Dialogue [1]

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Abstract: *The purpose of this paper is to explore that sharing unknowability can bring us to our 'co-existence' in a philosophical dialogue, specifically 'philosophy for children'. Elucidating the difference between a 'monologue' and a 'dialogue' of Franz Rosenzweig (1886–1929), revealed why people speak to one another about a single truth. In the German context of the time, Rosenzweig, who as a Jew sought neither assimilation nor Zionism, but a path between the two, thought of truth as a connection of the Jewish community. This truth itself belongs to God, but man can experience it as a gift from God. By overlapping such Rosenzweig's truth and questions in dialogue, it became clear that people with different backgrounds can be as equals each time they speak in a process of dialogue.*

1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to explore that sharing unknowability can bring us to our 'co-existence' in a philosophical dialogue, specifically 'philosophy for children' (P4C). That is to say that we shall also be discussing why we talk to one other about one truth by elucidating the difference between a 'monologue' and a 'dialogue' with respect to Franz Rosenzweig's (1886–1929) thought.

What is dialogue? Or what is the difference between monologues and dialogues? When talking to someone, is it a dialogue for as long as you understand what the other person is saying? Is it still a dialogue if the speakers' respective languages are not the same? What about in the case of an interaction between a baby and an adult—a baby's linguistic prowess is presumably not as advanced as an adult,

[1] This paper is a substantially revised version of a presentation at the conference in August 2022 (International Council of Philosophical Inquiry with Children: The 20th Biennial International ICPIC) in English and partially at the conference (Japanese Society for Philosophical Practice) in August 2022 in Japanese.

so with that, are they able to have a dialogue? Furthermore, is a deliberation to solve a problem among a group of citizens considered a dialogue? Is it, too, a dialogue when a Priester listens to someone's sins or their troubles? What's more, why is it that we choose to talk to others in the first place? We may also wonder what it could be that influences the driving force of a dialogue.

If we pay close attention, we may find that the content of any dialogue would largely depend on its purpose, and it could be even said that we talk to others because we have an underlying agenda or an intended purpose that enables us to pursue a dialogue. If so, then does the significance of dialogues lie in the effects that result from them, such as problem solving, consensus building, and emotional healing?

It is difficult to define dialogue in general, so, allow us to consider 'philosophy for children' as an example for a dialogue. One of the main differences between a dialogue and a chat is whether rules have been set or not, but talking about a single question is also a defining characteristic of dialogue. More concretely, whenever I facilitate a dialogue with my students at our university, we always decide together on a question that will drive the course of our dialogue. That being said, the question decided on would serve as the very prompt that we shall wonder about more profoundly; at the same time, it is the truth that we search for intently, assuming that there is an answer to such question. The participants in the dialogue cooperate in searching for the assumed common truth.

The "community of inquiry" in the process of truth-seeking has been discussed with reference to pragmatism, for example, C. Peirce's "inquiry" and Dewey's "reflective thought".[2]

It may not be possible to fully grasp the P4C dialogue simply by viewing it as grounded in pragmatism, which determines truth by the usefulness of results. For example, Lipman and Kono use Socrates to argue for breaking down truth (the system of knowledge that is considered correct) and moving toward 'unlearning'.[3] In fact, participants may often experience their knowledge and stereotypes being provoked in the dialogue.

In P4C, however, when interlocutors share truth as a question, in other words, in the moment of receiving unknown truth, that truth may not necessarily be pragmatic truth or truth as a system of knowledge. Rather, they may be exploring truth as a

[2] Cf. M. Lipman, *Thinking in Education* (2nd edition), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

[3] Cf. Tetsuya, Kono, *When People Keep Talking, They Are Not Thinking : A Philosophy of Dialogue and Thought*, Iwanami, 2019. (The title is originally Japanese and there is no English title, but considering other Japanese works, this title is translated into English.)

question, viewing truth not as a system of knowledge that people can grasp, but as something that no one can know as knowledge.

In this paper, I would like to discuss the significance and necessity of dialogue by reconsidering P4C from such a truth perspective. Philosophers who discuss dialogue from the perspective of ‘unknown truth’ include E. Levinas,[4] but this paper will focus on Franz Rosenzweig, who had an influence on the philosopher and described the dialogical thought earlier than Buber, who is known as the philosopher of dialogue.[5]

By focusing on Rosenzweig, who has not been discussed in relation to P4C, it will help to clarify dialogical theory from an ideological perspective, including not only its relationship with theories based on Levinas and Derrida, but also philosophers with different views of truth, such as Heidegger.

Therefore, in this paper, I would like to explore that sharing unknowability can bring us to our ‘co-existence’ in a philosophical dialogue, specifically ‘philosophy for children’ (P4C), by answering the following three questions:

1 What is truth?
2 Who does the ‘dialogue’ begin with?
3 Who determines that assumed common truth is the absolute truth?

1 What is the Truth?

1.1. Truth that can be thought and answered only by Myself

Franz Rosenzweig, a German-Jewish and Hermann Cohen’s successor, used dialogue as a key concept in his work on how to live with Germans while maintaining a Jewish identity, rather than the extremes of totally refusing to assimilate into German culture or totally withdrawing from the Jewish community.[6]

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[4] Cf.) Ann Margaret Sharp and Megan Jane Laverty, “Looking at Others’ Faces” in *In Community of Inquiry with Ann Margaret Sharp: Childhood, Philosophy and Education*, ed. By Maughn Gregory, Megan Jane Laverty, New York: Routledge, 2018.

[5] Bernhard Casper, *Das dialogische Denken : Franz Rosenzweig, Ferdinand Ebner und Martin Buber*, Verlag Karl Alber, 2002.

[6] About Rosenzweig’s opposition to Zionism while attempting to catabolize rather than assimilate, see, for example, Pierre Bouretz, *Témoins du future. Philosophie et messianisme*, Éditions Gallimard, 2003, 126–145. See also Rosenzweig’s letter to Hermann Cohen, in

In *the Star of Redemption* and his own writings, Rosenzweig criticizes philosophers up to Hegel as follows:

> All philosophy asked about "essence". It is by this question that it distinguishes itself from the unphilosophical thinking of healthy human understanding. For the latter does not ask about what a thing "really" [*eigentlich*] is.[7]

For example, Thales asked what all is and answered that "All is water".[8] Even though this question seems to be asking someone else, it is simply like that of a rhetoric query and just philosophers thinking alone or to themselves.[9] As Muraoka states, the thinking of these philosophers is monologic. Especially as discussed in detail in *the Understanding the Sick and the Healthy*, as Muraoka exemplifies, when we go to a cake shop to buy a cake, we may ask the price of the cake or the type of cake, but we would never ask, "What is essentially (*eigentlich*) a cake?". If people ask in such a way, the shopkeeper would think he is crazy. But a philosopher, on the other hand, would take the cake in the store as the object (*Gegenstand*) of his consideration, and consider it as an eternal and timeless truth. The philosopher, who is hostile to life and its flow of time, would ask; what is cake "essentially"?[10]

The philosopher is searching for truth without regard to the context of the cake, such as someone's birthday cake or a homemade cake. It is possible to search for truth alone and get the answer by himself, without asking anyone's opinion, without questioning its merits or demerits.

Here, however, Rosenzweig criticizes the atemporal, detached-from-individual-context truth-seeking and at the same time criticizes the hasty answer. This is because this truth is not lively, in other words, the truth is not in this our world.

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which he calls for Jewish education: "Zeit ists. . . : Gedanken über das jüdische Bildungsproblem des Augenblicks an Hermann Cohen", in Cf. *Zweistromland: Kleinere Schriften zu Glauben und Denken, in Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd.III. Martinus Nijhoff, 1984 (hereafter: *GS* III), 461–481.

[7] *GS* III, 143. "The New Thinking", in *Franz Rosenzweig: Philosophical and Theological Writings*, transl. Paul W. Franks and Micael L. Morgan, Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2000, 109–139, (hereafter NT) here, p.115.

[8] Franz Rosenzweig, *Der Stern der Erlösung*, 1921, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd.II. Martinus Nijhoff, 1976 (hereafter: *GS* II), 13, *The Star of Redemption*, transl. Barbara E. Galli, Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2005(hereafter: *Star*),18.

[9] Muraoka, *Philosophy of Dialogue. The Hidden Genealogy of German Jewry*, Tokyo: Kodansha, 2008, 92.

[10] *Ibid*, 88–91. Rosenzweig's example is cheese in *das Büchlein vom gesunden und kranken Menschenverstand*, which he wrote in 1921 as a commentary of *the Star of Redemption*.

When we talk about a cake in our daily lives, we can only talk about a cake in relation to ourselves. For example, “My sister ate the cake I prepared for my brother’s birthday before he did”, or “I ate so much cake that I gained three kilograms of weight”. I can only speak of how I perceived the cake, that is, how the cake happened in reality in relation to me. Also to the question of what cake is, it is not necessary to answer, “cake is flour” for example, because he will know what cake is through practical encounters, more specifically, by actually making it, eating it, giving it as a gift or experiencing it in some other way.

If there is a truth called ‘cake’, rather than the so-called eternal and universal truth that “all is water”, that truth is the truth for someone in this real world, and it may be experienced and spoken in a different way than the truth for me. However, while the truth is experienced and spoken individually and concretely, there are not many relative truths that are separate for each person, nor is there some absolute truth that gives rise to the truth. For example, in the case of the cake, each individual can only speak of the truth of the cake in terms of his or her own experience of the cake in front of him or her in the real world. However, without the concept of some kind of pure cake, one that makes it possible to recognize that the Christmas cake, my birthday cake, and the cake I eat for snacks are all different but still ideally the same, I would not be able to tell others that what I am talking about is a cake.

This concept of pure cake is something one level higher than our individual experience of it, something that can be shared with others because it has no individual concrete content. However, even though this concept can be shared with others, it does not mean that I and others are connected by sameness. Rather, it is something that is given to us as a gift to be experienced individually, even though we don’t know exactly what it is.

1.2. Truth as experienced by the individual

The reason why Rosenzweig sees that truth as a gift is because truth is the seal of God, and “for it is only through what one receives as a gift that one can recognize the one who gives it”,[11] and this truth was considered as the connection among Jews.

[11] *GS* II, 437/*Star*,415. Naomi Tanaka discusses ‘truth as a gift’ as a chance for a dialogue between God and man, but here we treat it as God’s call to Adam. Cf) Naomi Tanaka, “Die Bedeutung von »Erlösung« in sozialer Dimension: Zur Akzeptanz des Rosenzweig-Gedankens in nichtjüdischen Kulturbereiche”, in *Rosenzweig Jahrbuch12*, 2021, 150–152.

Rosenzweig was not trying to secure an own land for the Jewish people like Zionism nor to simply attempt to assimilate into German culture[12] but to reconstruct Jewish singularity with the connection to the only one God at its core. In particular, when the Jewish people retain their identity in the form of a diaspora, rather than strengthening it in the form of a nation-state like Zionism, and when they abandon their own land and language,[13] only one God becomes important as the bond of their people.

This God as a Jewish connection is not, for example, a Christian connection in which God appears to this world as Jesus, that is, with substance, and in which only those who believe in him can become Christians. Even though it is a Jewish connection, it is open to all mankind. Rosenzweig describes it as a gift not only because it is assumed that there is only one God, but also because it is insubstantial; it is experienced as truth by every human being in different ways.

No one can know what the only God is, but everyone can experience God in the form of truth for each individual. This is a revelation, a manifestation of God in a hidden way. This truth is not an eternal and universal truth that philosophers can grasp even though it transcends this world, but this truth, which is like a trace of that God, is something that each of us can experience within this world. In other words, the truth, that is, a hidden yet present God is omnipresent in our daily lives and it is experienced with reality.[14]

Although we cannot gain absolute knowledge, this unknowability become the knowledge that enables us to think with others, if it is shared by all human beings in general. Truth itself is the highest form of otherness in the sense that it is absolutely unknowable, and it is also the concept of God as something that can be shared with others through the telling of each truth experience, that is, as the principle that generates dialogue. If we experience truth, even though we do not know the truth itself, we will wonder what this experience is, and we will want to share this question with someone else and explore what it is. For example, when we have an experience of "something that cannot be explained from life itself and which precisely is that which is the most alive in life", such as "[g]reat suffering, great joy, great evil and great loving-kindness, the most extreme ugliness and the highest beauty".[15] It is an

[12] Cf) *GS*I–1: *Briefe und Tagebücher*, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd. 1–1. Martinus Nijhoff, 1979, 506, Letter an Helene Sommer, 1918. Jan.16.
[13] Cf) *GS* II, 332–336/Star, 317–321.
[14] Rosenzweig argues, based on the mystical Shekinah, that Jewish people are with such a hidden yet appear God everywhere in the real world.(*GS*II, 455/Star, 409).
[15] *GS*III, 632. "Science of God", translated by Barbara E. Galli, in *God, Man, and the World: Lectures and Essays*, Syracuse Univ Press, 1998, 59.

experience as if something has been given to my life as a gift, in other words, something other than ourselves is *with* our lives. "Truth must be the property of someone other than me, that is, 'you', and it must be mine at the same time".[16] When something external to us such as this is given to an individual, we wonder why. When we wonder, we are being called and questioned by others who/which we do not know of, and we are trying to respond to the question by wondering why. It is through this gift of something external to us that each of us can begin the dialogue, i.e. the process of working with others toward God or truth itself.

2 Who does the Dialogue begin with?

2.1. Asked by the Other

Rosenzweig discusses this searching process for truth as a dialogue with God in his main work, *The Star of Redemption*, where Adam is asked, "Where are you?".[17]

As is well known, in this scene in Genesis 3:9, Adam attributes the sin of eating the fruit of the tree, which God commanded him not to take and eat, to the woman, who further answers that the serpent did it. What emanates from the mouth of the one who answers God's question is not "I am" or "I did it", i.e., the answer is not in the first person I but in the third person he-she-it. Rosenzweig, therefore, sees this state of Adam, who does not admit guilt and shifts the blame, as "still a rebellious and stubborn Self".[18]

"The Self (*das Selbst*) is simply closed in itself"[19] and has no relation to the "children of man" (*Menschenkinder*).[20] It relates to only one person, the 'self'. The 'self' is alone, Adam, and the man himself.[21]

God called out to Adam, 'you', but there was no first-person response from Adam. Therefore, God called him not with 'you', that is, not with the universal human concept that can hide himself behind a woman or a serpent, but now with something inescapable, a proper name. Here, the proper name is not 'Adam', but Abraham,

[16] Shinichi Muraoka. *Philosophy of Name,* Tokyo: Kodansha, 2020, 134.
[17] *GS* II, 195/*Star*, 189.
[18] *GS* II, 196/*Star*, 189.
[19] *GS* II, 74/ *Star*, 77.
[20] *GS* II, 74/ *Star*, 77.
[21] *GS* II, 74/ *Star*, 77.

according to Rosenzweig's interpretation. In fact, in Genesis 3, God calls him only with 'you', never once with 'Adam'. Rosenzweig sees the proper name that God called out to Adam, the Hebrew word for man, as being not Adam but 'Abraham', who answered the call in Genesis 22. He was "called by name twice, with the strongest fixity of purpose to which one cannot remain deaf, the man, totally open, totally unfold, totally ready, totally—soul, now answers: 'I am here'".[22]

The man called 'you' by God was a 'self' without any relationship with anyone other than himself, but by being called by his proper name, he became a soul that is "the ready, opened soul, the soul that is watchful in the uttermost of silence".[23] The first content to descend from self to soul in Abraham's attitude of "obedient listening"[24] is the command, "You shall love the Eternal your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your might".[25]

In response to this command to 'love me', the soul can only confess its love if it confesses "I have sinned" along with its weakness and responds, "I am a sinner". This first confession, "I have sinned", is not a full confession of love, because it remains in the past, and there is room for doubt that there may not be a response from oneself. God has commanded 'love me', but no explanation or any "I love you" has yet been uttered.[26] Nevertheless, God does not confess His love. For if God confesses His love before He has finished confessing it, it is already past and no longer present. The authenticity of God's love lies in its connection with this moment, and that love is groundless.[27]

Therefore, even if God does not say that He loves the soul, and even if no explanation is given for this, the soul must boldly step from the confession of the past

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[22] *GS* II, 196/ *Star*, 190. As Putnam correctly points out, in *Genesis* chapter 3, God calls Adam only once, not twice, and moreover, Adam does not respond, "I am here". Rosenzweig sees the two calls in Genesis 3 and 22:1 as two events in the life of Adam, or man, and speaks of Abraham's "I am here" as Adam's true response. This understanding is made possible by the fact that Adam in Hebrew means man. (H. Putnam, *Jewish Philosophy as a Guide to Life: Rosenzweig, Buber, Levinas, Wittgenstein*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2008, 44.) Cf) Naomi Tanaka, The dialogical thinking of Franz Rosenzweig: Overlooking his terms "Love" and "Proper Name", in Journal of the graduate school of humanities and sciences, Graduate School of Humanities and Sciences Ochanomizu University, vol.18, 2015, 137–146, note25. In this paper, Tanaka discusses the Call to Adam by God relating with naming.

[23] *GS* II, 198/*Star*, 192–193.

[24] *GS* II, 196/*Star*, 190.

[25] *GS* II, 196/*Star*, 190.

[26] *GS* II, 199–201/*Star*, 194–195.

[27] *GS* II, 199–201/*Star*, 194–195.

to the confession of the present. This second confession, "I am a sinner", is the confession of perfect love, and this confession is a complete surrender to the love of the beloved man: God.[28] Such total surrender is the belief that one's confession is acceptable to God, the certainty of God's love; the certainty that God is present in this moment in relation to oneself, but not as a substance.

2.2. Surrender Myself to the Other

God's call to Adam, "Where are you?",[29] challenges Adam to make a choice of responding or not. Adam did not respond to God because he "hesitated, not knowing whether its confession would be accepted",[30] that is, he did not know whether his sins would be forgiven and whether he, himself, would be forgiven by God for being a sinner. On the other hand, Abraham—despite the challenges of his situation—responded to God.

This dialogue with God may seem like a dialogue peculiar to the Bible, yet, in reality, this is what dialogue is about in the first place as Rosenzweig posits.

> Speaking is time-bound, time-nourished; it neither can nor will abandon this, its nourishing environment; it does not know in advance where it will arrive; it lets its cues be given by others[31].

More often than not, when I find myself speaking on something, it is probably in response to a particular stimulus; specifically, for example, when another person calls out to me with their words or with their body language. Additionally, this other person is someone whose reactions, general existence, and whole being I cannot fully grasp. This is because even if I respond to the call of another, I have no exact way of knowing everything that there is to know about such a person, including how the other will respond or whether they will respond or not at all. Relating to all of this, in the case of Abraham who responded, it can be noted that he also did not necessarily know why this 'other person' called out to him. But if we follow Rosenzweig's understanding that all dialogue begins with the infamous call to Adam, then either all

[28] *GS* II, 200/*Star*, 194.
[29] *GS II*, 195/*Star*, 189.
[30] *GS II*, 200–201/*Star,* 194–195.
[31] *GS* III, 151/NT .125–126.

human beings are called by God because they are sinners, or God's calling to people is extended through those that have already been living in this world before them. To enrich this idea, we can look at the calling of newborns by God through the mediation of predecessors who are also called by God. In any case, we arise only when we surrender ourselves to the uncertainty of our interlocutors' responses to the call of the others, which, as we have discussed, cannot be fully grasped in totality.

It is not only at the beginning of a dialogue that I shall make some kind of statement in response to another person's call, with the belief that I will receive a response from the other after. When the dialogue continues, I shall always speak in response to the other's call, then in response to the other's reaction; at the same time, I will continue to speak having the same belief that the other will also continue to respond, even though I still do not know how they will speak next. In this kind of dialogue, each time I respond to the other's call, it shall come from, in a sense, a "one-time" version of myself that cannot re-exist to react again: I would speak differently depending on the other person's reaction.

From the point of view of the calling other, the other also exists only when I respond. In other words, if I do not respond, the other also does not exist. In God's call to "love me", God does not know how I will respond to Him, but He is calling me while believing that I will respond, and only when I respond in some way—in the form of love for my neighbor, *per se*—does it prove God's existence. This is true even when we think of our confessions or professions of love for others. When I tell someone, "I love you! Please go out with me!", I do not know if the other person will say "Yes!" right away. If they refuse, then I cannot be with that person, and, thus, I am alone. Other dialogues could be observed to follow the same pattern, though having different contexts. Without the other, there is no me; the call and the response are a set.

3 Who determines that Assumed Common Truth is the Absolute Truth?

3.1. Sharing the Unknowable

In Rosenzweig's thought, it was God who initiated the dialogue, and God did not appear as a visible entity, but was experienced to each person as truth. People can share this uncertainty for no one knows what/who God is.

This unknowable God (truth itself) is the common question in the case of p4c. The question that can be discussed in one dialogue may be the question of one participant, decided by majority of votes which question we want to discuss. This question is a question that arises from something that each of us wonders about in our daily lives. Children, including adults, are being asked questions based on their daily life. This uncertainty will be the principle that allows us to have a dialogue and coexist with others.

This experience of being asked questions may be created by setting up the environment. This is the case, for example, when questions are set after reading a picture book. Many people read picture books when they are young, and stories such as Cinderella, for example, will have become part of children’s daily lives, partly as a lesson and partly as an aspiration. I read *Cinderella* with my students and we talked about what we wondered about it. As we did so, many things that we took for granted when we were children came up as questions when we thought about them more carefully. For example, “Was Cinderella really beautiful?” “Why did the prince choose Cinderella?” “Why did the witch help Cinderella?” We are actually being asked questions every day by someone or some things, though we do not know who or what they are, but we may be living our daily lives without realizing it and taking it for granted. Perhaps we need time to think about the questions that arise from what we find strange or wonder in our daily lives.

While it is certainly important to set aside time to think about these questions, what is important for dialogue to take place is that there is a truth among us that no one can grasp. And because we do not know what this truth is, we can think together, but no one can conclude it. As Rosenzweig criticized philosophers who say, “all is water”, the problem with them is that I alone have concluded the truth, not as my truth, but as the truth common to all. How can I be the only one to know it is the truth and to decide that it is the truth? Who can determine the answer? It’s the only one God, whom man cannot entirely know. The only truth is the truth for only one God.

> There, verification stands only with God Himself, the truth is one only before Him.[32]

Therefore, we human beings, who experience truth in many different ways, can and must continue to engage in dialogue because we will never know what the only truth is. Even if we stop in amazement and wonder when we have an experience

[32] *GSIII*, 159/NT, 136.

that touches the truth, we must continue to search for it, in the way that each individual experiences God as truth in his or her own way, believing that only one God, though invisible, in our midst. If, like the philosophers, we encounter this wonder and stop alone to come to a conclusion and 'own' the truth, it is only a truth for him, a closed truth that is not shared by others at all, and therefore there would not be a dialogue and it would be a denial of the others.

> In effect, the new philosophy does nothing else but make the "method" of healthy human understanding into the method of scientific thinking. Wherein, then, lies the difference between healthy human understanding and sick human understanding which, exactly like the old philosophy, the philosophy of "philosophical astonishment" —astonishment means standstill—sinks its teeth into something that it will not let go before it "has" it in its entirety? [Healthy human understanding] can wait, can keep on living, has no "*idée fixe*", advice comes when the time comes. This secret is the whole wisdom of the new philosophy. It teaches, to speak with Goethe, the "understanding at the right time" —.[33]

3.2. Truth and Others that cannot be Completely Known

The unknowable truth that exists among us is not only the question in p4c. It is also what someone speaks in a dialogue for "[i]n actual conversation, something happens".[34] No one knows not only what others will say in the process of seeking answers to the question, but also how others will respond. They may wonder about another person's speech. Even so, we interact with others on the assumption that we may learn something. We may think that we can talk with others because we share some common understanding with them, but it is precisely because we share something that we do not understand that dialogue becomes possible. We speak with others not because we recognize each other, but because we believe in their uncertainty.

If this is the case, then dialogue with others is possible even if the content of the dialogue is not a philosophical question. The very fact that a participant engages in a dialogue premised on uncertainty confirms that the other party to the dialogue is

[33] *GSIII*, 149/NT, 123.
[34] *GSIII*, 151/NT, 126.

an equivalent being to oneself. This means, even though the individual’s background and experience of truth are not equivalent, in carrying out a dialogue that assumes uncertainty, we confirm each time that we exist in equivalence with the other. In other words, they are equivalent in the sense that they share what they cannot know completely.

Summary

With Rosenzweig’s thought, we have seen that we do not know what the truth itself is or who God is, but because truth is considered as a gift from the only one God, we, humans can share that truth with others. Moreover, this truth itself, which cannot be fully known, is the reason for our dialogue. It is because this truth is not completely known that we wonder about it when we experience it in our daily lives. It is certainly possible to think about this wonder (this truth) by myself and conclude what it is. However, if someone gives an answer, the truth would become a single truth, and it would only be the truth of the person who gave the answer. Thus, while “essential” questions such as those formulated by philosophers may arise also in the P4C and everyday dialogue, it is necessary not to rush to conclusions, but take some time to talk with others about their own experiences and to actually live their lives.

As we have seen, since we can only tell our experience of the truth given by God individually, and since the truth itself belongs to God, this truth itself cannot be determined by anyone. Though, with this fully unknowable truth itself, we can exist with others as equivalent interlocutors. When we are confronted with something that we cannot grasp immediately, we may be in a hurry to solve it, but in the process of our dialogue deepening our wonder, we can be with other equal beings in carrying the dialogue, we come from different back grounds. By continuing through dialogue, the unknowability of the question of dialogue, and the unknowability generated by the experience of being called and also questioned by someone’s speech, we can share this unknowability with others to imply that truth itself (the unknowable) ‘exists’, and at the same time, we can ‘co-exist’ with others in the process of carrying out such a dialogue.

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The Unity of Nature and the Regulative Use of Ideas in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*

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Abstract: *Immanuel Kant develops his account of the regulative idea of reason in the appendix of the Transcendental Dialectic of the Critique of Pure Reason. According to the account, the ideas of reason are not used constitutively to cognize objects but used regulatively to lead our scientific investigation. This article clarifies the role and status of the regulative idea, focusing on the conception of the unity of nature. The principal question about the unity of nature is whether nature as a whole, which is the object of our scientific investigation, has an ontologically rational structure, and if it is the case, in what right we can assume so. For this problem, two extreme types of interpretation are suggested, realist and fictionalist reading. Realists claim we know that the unity of nature exists on the one hand. Fictionalists require us to admit that there is no unity of nature but to investigate empirical objects as if it exists on the other hand. The controversy between realists and fictionalists appears to reflect the dilemma in the Transcendental Dialectic. While Kant seems to claim the existence of unity of nature in the appendix, but the claim endangers the entire doctrine of the Critique of Pure Reason, which prohibits a priori inferences about non-empirical objects. In this article, interpreting Kant's explanation of the regulative idea of the unity of nature in the appendix, I will show that this dilemma is a mere illusion, and we should reject both of the two extreme positions. Alternatively, I suggest the third way, in which the regulative idea of the unity of nature should be understood as a kind of hypothesis. I further develop the third reading by considering the conception of doctrinal belief in the Canon chapter of the Critique of Pure Reason. Through the analysis of the Canon chapter, I will show that the regulative idea of the unity of nature should be understood in relation to the end-setting by reason itself, and as a kind of doctrinal belief. Finally, I will present the developed form of the hypothesist reading, which interprets the regulative assumption of the unity of nature as an a priori doctrinal belief grounded on the interest of reason.*

0. Introduction

Immanuel Kant develops his philosophy by criticising both the rationalist and empiricist traditions. His monumental work, *Critique of Pure Reason*, is the project that established his account by tracing the genesis of the requirements and fallacies of these two camps and examining them. This paper is concerned with one of the central requirements of rationalism, the unity of nature, and Kant's theory of it. The principal question about the unity of nature is whether nature as a whole, which is the object of our scientific investigation, has an ontologically rational structure, and if it is the case, in what right we can assume so. Kant's rationalist predecessors from Plato to Wolff answer this affirmatively.[1] If Kant also answers positively, this reflects the rationalist aspect of his philosophy. If he denies this claim, it signifies his departure from the rationalist tradition. In this way, the question about unity is decisive for Kant's position in the history of philosophy.

At first glance, Kant's answer is explicitly "No", since he dismisses most rationalist requirements in his famous arguments in the Transcendental Dialectic, though significant exceptions are allowed with limitations. The attempts of rationalists, rational psychology, rational cosmology and rational theology, which conceive of *a priori* metaphysics solely by reason independent of our intuition, are refuted one after another. Given that Kant writes that "all the inferences that would carry us out beyond the field of possible experience are deceptive and groundless" (A642/B670),[2] it seems that the non-empirical assumption of the unity of nature as a whole is also dismissed. However, after systematic criticism of rationalism, Kant appears to try to salvage the concepts of non-empirical objects in the appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic. He claims that the ideas of reason are not used constitutively to cognize objects but regulatively to lead our scientific investigation, and even insists that regulative ideas have some objective validity and transcendental status. These bold claims have confused readers of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Does Kant reject the whole systematic criticism and return to rationalism? Should we dismiss the descriptions in the appendix as a mere appendix? In order to resolve this confusion, we have to differentiate between the regulative and constitutive uses of reason.

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[1] More precisely, Kant understands that philosophers in the rationalist tradition claim this kind of unity. Willaschek explains how the rationalist variant of transcendental realism is committed to the unity of nature (Willaschek 2018, pp. 138-148).

[2] References to the *Critique of Pure Reason* are by means of the standard "A/B" reference to the first and the second editions respectively. Unless modifications are indicated, the English translations are from C*ambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant*.

This paper consists of three sections. After introducing the basic features of the regulative ideas, I trace where Kant seems to argue for the existence of the unity of nature. We then reach an interpretative dilemma. We seem to be required to claim the existence of the unity of nature, yet this very claim is prohibited by Kant's criticism of rationalists in the body of the Transcendental Dialectic. The task of the second section is to show that this dilemma is a mere illusion by examining two extreme readings before suggesting a third interpretation. In the study of Kant, two interpretative camps represent each horn of the dilemma: the realists and fictionalists.[3] I reject both accounts and suggest an alternative position I call the hypothesist reading. However, we will find the simple hypothesist interpretation does not explain the textual evidence used by realists, though it resolves the fictionalist concern. This leads us to the final questions of the paper: if the regulative idea of the unity of nature is a hypothesis, what kind of hypothesis is it, and which of its characteristics explains its transcendental status? I answer and develop the hypothesist reading in the third section. I focus on the similarity between doctrinal belief in the Canon chapter of *Critique of Pure Reason* and the regulative idea before differentiating between them. The *a priori*-ness of the regulative idea originated in our reason explains its transcendental status and sufficiently responds to the realist requirement.

1. The Regulative Ideas and Two Principles of Reason

Let us start our analysis of the regulative ideas with their categorisation. In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant argues that there are two interrelated but distinct types of regulative ideas. One type concerns the idea of the unity of nature, while the other type includes the ideas of the soul, the world and God. The first half of the appendix named "On the regulative use of the idea of pure reason" is devoted to the idea of the unity of nature, while the other three ideas are discussed in the second half "On the final aim of the natural dialectic of human reason". Since the focus of this paper is the unity of nature, the majority of my analysis will concentrate on the first half of the appendix.

[3] Classically, this controversy is formulated as the opposition between realists and idealists, as Banham describes (Banham 2013). However, it is not clear in what sense the non-realists deny the realistic assumption in this classical categorisation. I use Willaschek's categorisation, where the controversy is re-framed as the opposition between realists and fictionalists (Willaschek 2018), because it clarifies the sub-categorisation of the non-realistic positions.

Then, what is the problem with the idea of the unity of nature? Kant briefly poses the question: ". . . whether the constitution of objects or the nature of the understanding that cognizes them as such are in themselves determined to systematic unity" (A648/B676). As the expressions "the constitution of objects" and "in themselves determined" imply, it is an ontological question about the structure of nature. After this general question, Kant develops his concrete conception of the unity of nature; it is the assumption that the unity of "power" exists independently of our investigation, and it is what we seek in scientific activity.[4] Thus, we can understand the unity of nature as the ontologically rational structure of empirical objects as a whole. In the appendix, Kant claims that this unity is (regulatively) necessary and has some transcendental status for our cognition. How does Kant substantiate this claim, and what does assuming it regulatively mean?

To understand Kant's argument for the unity of nature, we must be aware of his basic account of reason. First, Kant divides our discursive faculty into understanding and reason. While "the understanding may be a faculty of unity of appearances by means of rules" (A302/B359) and provides first-order discursive cognition of objects, "reason is the faculty of the unity of the rules of understanding under principles" (A302/B359), and thus supplies second-order discursive cognition and the unity of all possible first-order discursive cognitions. This unity is called "the unity of reason" (A302/B359), which is brought about by the principle of reason. Kant thinks the principle of reason can be formulated in two ways, logically and transcendentally.[5] The logical principle asks us "to find the unconditioned for the conditioned cognitions of the understanding, with which its unity will be completed" (A307/B364). This is the methodological principle for our "cognitions", and it does not entail ontological claims about objects. It simply prescribes us to form a coherent and unitary set of cognitions. As Kant describes the logical principle as "the proper principle of reason in general (in its logical use)" (A307/B364), we can admit this methodological requirement is valid as the core of our theoretical rationality. In contrast, the transcendental principle says: "when the conditioned is given, then the whole series of conditions subordinated to one to the other, which is itself unconditioned, is also given" (A307–8/B364). The latter principle does not merely

[4] "For even without our having attempted to find the unanimity among the many powers, or indeed even when all such attempts to discover it have failed, we nevertheless presuppose that such a thing will be found" (A650/678).

[5] Grier calls these principles P1/P2 (Grier 2001, p. 119-122), and Willaschek labels them the logical maxim/the supreme principle of pure reason. In this paper, I choose the neutral terms the logical principle/the transcendental principle, which follow Kant's usage in the appendix.

concern our cognitions but "the conditioned" itself. This is not a solely methodological claim. The transcendental principle declares the existence of the unitary series itself. The transcendental principle is challenging since *a priori* metaphysical accounts of "transcendent" objects such as the soul, the world as a whole and God appear to be derived from it. According to Kant, all kinds of traditional metaphysics rely on the transition from the former methodological principle to the latter ontological principle. The issue is whether we, rational beings, not only possess the logical principle but also acquire the transcendental principle as a result of the logical one. *Critique of Pure Reason* examines this transition and, in this sense, is a "critique" of the requirements of reason itself.[6]

In this context, the argument about the unity of nature can be understood as a question of whether the transition from the logical principle to the transcendental one is valid. If the transition is possible, then we can say "that all possible cognitions of the understanding (including empirical ones) have the unity of reason, and stand under common principles from which they could be derived despite their variety: that would be a transcendental principle of reason, which would make systematic unity not merely something subjectively and logically necessary, as method, but objectively necessary" (A648/B676). In this case, we know *a priori* that the ontologically rational structure exists.

At first glance, Kant seems to strongly advocate this transition. He explicitly says that "[i]n fact it cannot even be seen how there could be a logical principle of rational unity among rules unless a transcendental principle is presupposed, through which such a systematic unity, as pertaining to the object itself, is assumed *a priori* as necessary" (A650–651/B678–679). This implies that since the validity of the transcendental principle is a necessary condition of the possession of the logical one, we have to assume both at the same time. He further claims that without the assumption of the transcendental principle, there is "no sufficient mark of empirical truth" (A651/B679). This may suggest the unity of nature is a necessary condition of empirical cognition in general. Finally, Kant seems to ascribe some transcendental status to the assumption of the unity of nature: "they [principles expressing the unity of nature] seem to be transcendental" (A663/B691). In summary, these bold expressions suggest that Kant claims the unity of nature exists.

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[6] Grier explicitly treats the transition between two principles as the general structure shared in all the topics of the Transcendental Dialectic, namely Paralogisms, Antinomies and the argument on the ideal (Grier 2001). Willachek critically inherits Grier's interpretative strategy (Willaschek 2018).

However, this would endanger the entire doctrine of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Firstly, Kant introduces the appendix with a summary of the Transcendental Dialectic: "The outcome of all dialectical attempts of pure reason not only confirms what we have already proved in the Transcendental Analytic, namely that all the inferences that would carry us out beyond the field of possible experience are deceptive and groundless, but it also simultaneously teaches us this particular lesson: that human reason has a natural propensity to overstep all these boundaries" (A642/B670). We cannot have *a priori* inferences about metaphysical objects beyond our experience by solely relying on reason. This lesson leads us to the distinction between the constitutive use and the regulative use of reason. According to this distinction, we do not have the constitutive use of reason that would give us *a priori* objective cognition, but merely the regulative use that leads our scientific investigation (cf. A644/B672). The Transcendental Dialectic thoroughly criticises the transition from the logical principle to the transcendental principle and prohibits the constitutive use of reason.

Taking these characteristics into consideration, there appears to be an interpretative dilemma. The text of the appendix requires us to transition from a mere methodological principle to a bold ontological claim about the unity of nature, however, this transition is prohibited by the core claim of the Transcendental Dialectic as a whole. Research of the appendix has reflected this discrepancy. In the following section, I examine and reject two extreme interpretative positions and suggest that the dilemma is a mere illusion.

2. Hypothesis and the *Bestimmung* of Reason

As we have seen in the previous section, the status of the regulative idea of the unity of nature depends on whether the transition from the logical principle to the transcendental principle is valid. There are two interpretative camps, each of which answers this differently.

Realists accept the transition and insist that the unity of nature exists. They interpret the transition as a kind of transcendental argument. According to the realist reading, the unity of nature is assumed as the "transcendental backing", which is a necessary condition of scientific activity in accordance with the logical principle of reason.[7] Wartenberg claims, "the results of the attempt to unify scientific concepts

[7] Wartenberg 2006, p. 232

are taken to be true of nature and that this shows that the demand of reason for such unity is not merely subjectively valid".[8] Thus, he argues that such unity is not a subjective assumption but objective cognition. Surely, he deems the distinction between the constitutive use and the regulative use of reason important. He interprets the constitutive use of the concept as providing the cognition of the "intrinsic characteristic that objects need to embody in order for them to be objects of our experience",[9] and insists that transcendental knowledge of this unity is merely regulative since it does not entail the cognition of the intrinsic characteristics but their unitary relation.

In contrast to this realist interpretation, fictionalists reject the transition.[10] They interpret the textual evidence of the realists as mere fiction.[11] According to fictionalism, we know that the transition from the logical principle to the transcendental principle is impossible. Fictionalists further argue that the transcendental principle itself is false, as long as it is read as an ontological claim about appearances. However, it is useful for scientific investigation that we behave as if the transcendental principle is validly applicable to nature. Accordingly, the regulative use of reason requires us to admit that the transcendental principle is false but to investigate empirical objects as if the principle were true.

This controversy is a typical expression of the dilemma in the appendix. Realists require us to explain Kant's reference to the transition, the objective validity, and some transcendental status of the regulative ideas. The tenet of fictionalism can be traced back to the prohibition of the transition, which is the central claim of the Transcendental Dialectic. What should be considered here is whether it is truly a choice between two options. I argue this is not the case. The following passage by Kant excludes both the realist and fictionalist readings:

> In der Tat ist auch nicht abzusehen, wie ein logisches Princip der Vernunfteinheit der Regeln stattfinden könne, wenn nicht ein transzendentales

[8] Wartenberg 2006, p. 232
[9] Wartenberg 2006, p. 238
[10] Grier 2001, ch. 8.
[11] Willaschek categorises Grier 2001 as providing a fictionalist interpretation, though he does not explain in what sense her interpretation is fictionalistic. Grier explains the regulative idea with the metaphors of mirror vision and optical illusion (cf. Grier 2001, pp. 286-288). As mirror vision appears but does not exist beyond the mirror itself, the object of the regulative idea does not exist as it appears. Referring to Grier 2001, Allison also explicitly characterises the regulative idea as a fiction (cf. Allison 2004, p. 426, 430).

> vorausgesetzt würde, durch welches eine solche systematische Einheit, als den Objekten selbst anhängend, a priori als nothwendig angenommen wird. Denn mit welcher Befugnis kann die Vernunft im logischen Gebrauche verlangen, die Mannigfaltigkeit der Kräfte, welche uns die Natur zu erkennen giebt, als eine bloß versteckte Einheit zu behandeln und sie aus irgend einer Grundkraft, so viel an ihr ist, abzuleiten, wenn es ihr freistände zuzugeben, daß es eben so wohl möglich sei, alle Kräfte wären ungleichartig, und die systematische Einheit ihrer Ableitung der Natur nicht gemäß? denn alsdann würde sie gerade wider ihre Bestimmung verfahren, indem sie sich eine Idee zum Ziele setzte, die der Natureinrichtung ganz widerspräche (A650–651/B678–679).

> In fact, it cannot even be seen how there could be a logical principle of rational unity among rules unless a transcendental principle is presupposed, through which such a systematic unity, as pertaining to the object itself, is assumed *a priori* as necessary. For by what warrant can reason in its logical use claim to treat the manifoldness of the powers which nature gives to our cognition as merely a concealed unity, and to derive them as far as it is able from some fundamental power, when reason is free to admit that it is just as possible that all powers are different in kind, and that its derivation of them from a systematic unity is not in conformity with nature? For then reason would proceed directly contrary to its vocation, since it would set as its goal an idea that entirely contradicts the arrangement of nature (A650–651/B678–679).

The first sentence seems to support the necessity of the transition and endorse the realist reading. However, in the following sentence, Kant then questions the validity of the transition, considering the possible situation in which reason assumes that there is no unity of nature. This possibility excludes the realist reading. Kant says our reason "is free to admit" the absence of the unity of nature. If the realist interpretation of the unity of nature was correct, reason would not have such discretion. In this respect, the plausibility of the realist reading is weakened.[12]

[12] Surely, this reference to the possible situation might not be sufficient to reject the realist position thoroughly. When we take the fact into consideration that Kant carefully chooses the expression "freistände zuzugeben" which takes the subjunctive II grammatical form implying the counterfactual character of the sentence, it might be read to deny reason's discretion to abandon the assumption of unity. However, we can interpret the counterfactual expression in the following sense: though reason is free to admit [zuzugeben] that there is no unity of nature, it never does so in the actual case. In this sense, the reference to such a possible situation is a

Let us turn to the fictionalist reading. Now we focus on the validity of the quoted text. Kant claims "then [when reason assumes there is no unity of nature] reason would proceed directly contrary to its vocation [Bestimmung], since it would set as its goal an idea that entirely contradicts the arrangement of nature [Natureinrichtung]" (A651/B679). The reason why we must assume the unity of nature is explained by our counterfactual behaviour related to the certain end-setting. If we assume there is no unity of nature, this means we behave against our own reason's vocation. Fictionalism requires this kind of behaviour. By admitting the transcendental principle is false but still investigating empirical objects as if it were true, our reason behaves self-contradictorily with its nature. Thus, we should abandon the fictionalist way too.

Now we find the dilemma is a mere illusion, as neither the realist nor fictionalist reading is acceptable. We must seek a third way that somehow meets the requirements of the two extremes. From the quoted text, we further acquire two positive characteristics of the regulative idea of the unity of nature. First, because we deny the realist interpretation, the regulative assumption is a hypothesis that can possibly be denied by reason. Second, the hypothesis is related to our end-setting, as we saw when we examined the fictionalist reading. From these two features, we find the third reading I call the hypothesist interpretation, which claims that the regulative assumption of the unity of nature is a kind of hypothesis in relation to a certain end-setting.[13]

Does the hypothesist interpretation meet the two interpretative requirements? It does not claim knowledge of the unity of nature since its regulative assumption is a mere hypothesis. In this sense, it does not admit the transition from the logical principle to the transcendental principle objectively interpreted. How about the realist requirement? The answer remains ambiguous. If the regulative idea of the unity of nature is a mere hypothesis, why would Kant give it indeterminate objective validity and some transcendental status? We put forward various hypotheses in scientific investigation, but we never ascribe such characteristics to them. We now reach the final question of this paper. If the regulative idea is a kind of hypothesis, then what

counterfactual thought experiment, and does not deny reason's discretion itself. I admit that this sentence weakens the plausibility of the realist reading at best. The chief problems for the realist kinds of interpretation are found in the textual evidence for the fictionalist reading.

[13] I agree with Willaschek's suggestion to deny both the realist and fictionalist interpretations and to deal with the regulative idea as a hypothesis (Willaschek 2018, p. 117). However, my reading differs from Willaschek's as I argue that the hypothesis is necessarily related to end-setting.

kind of hypothesis is it, and which of its characteristics explain the indeterminate objective validity and the transcendental status?[14] In the final section, I attempt to answer this by highlighting the similarity between the conception of doctrinal belief in the Canon chapter and the regulative ideas.

3. The Unity of Nature as an *a priori* Doctrinal Belief

In the previous section, we saw two features of the regulative idea of the unity of nature. It is (i) a kind of hypothesis and (ii) related to our end-setting. In the section titled "On Opinion, Knowledge, and Belief" of the Canon chapter of *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant introduces three types of assents "taking to be true" (Fürwahrhalten). According to the section, knowledge is based on both subjectively and objectively sufficient grounds or justification. In contrast, holding an opinion lacks sufficient grounds for it to be not only objectively but even subjectively true. Between these two there is belief: taking something to be true with subjectively sufficient justification, though lacking objectively sufficient justification for its truth. For our current purposes, we shall focus on belief.[15]

As Willaschek highlights, Kant's conception of belief has a surprisingly pragmatic component.[16] According to his conception, "Once an end is proposed, then the conditions for attaining it are hypothetically necessary. This necessity is subjectively but still only comparatively sufficient if I do not know of any other conditions at all under which the end could be attained; but it is sufficient absolutely and for everyone if I know with certainty that no one else can know of any other conditions that lead to the proposed end" (A823–824/B851–852). In this passage, Kant explains how the belief can be seen as subjectively necessary. This kind of belief, practical belief, is understood in relation to the end-setting and the means for it. As long as the agent sets a certain end and sees some means to achieve it as necessary, she constrains herself to believe that the way to realise her end will be satisfied. It

[14] My suggestion about the categorisation of interpretations of the regulative idea in the second footnote might be applied to the hypothesist reading. The minimum requirement of the hypothesist is to open to the truth of the transcendental principle. In addition to this, we must also specify the meaning of the hypothesis in order to find the sub-categorisation of the hypothesist.

[15] For the categorisation of *Glaube*, I follow Shigeta and claim it is necessary to admit the belief based on purely theoretical interest (Shigeta 2020a).

[16] Willaschek 2015.

should be noted that the condition of subjective sufficiency is met practical consideration of the end and the means for it.

Kant draws an analogy between this kind of practical belief and doctrinal belief, writing:

> Weil aber, ob wir gleich in Beziehung auf ein Objekt gar nichts unternehmen können, also das Fürwahrhalten bloß theoretisch ist, wir doch in vielen Fällen eine Unternehmung in Gedanken fassen und uns einbilden können, zu welcher wir hinreichende Gründe zu haben vermeinen, wenn es ein Mittel gäbe, die Gewißheit der Sache auszumachen, so giebt es in bloß theoretischen Urteilen ein Analogon von praktischen, auf deren Fürwahrhaltung das Wort Glauben paßt, und den wir den doktrinalen Glauben nennen können (A825/B853).
>
> Since, however, even though we might not be able to undertake anything in relation to an object, and taking something to be true is therefore merely theoretical, in many cases, we can still conceive and imagine an undertaking for which we would suppose ourselves to have sufficient grounds if there were a means for arriving at certainty about the matter; thus there is in merely theoretical judgments an analogue of practical judgments, where taking them to be true is aptly described by the word belief, and which we can call doctrinal beliefs (A825/B853).

This kind of theoretical belief is similar to what we call hypothesis and satisfies the two conditions of the regulative idea of the unity of nature. This is a theoretical assumption about what we do not have sufficient proof or justification for. For instance, Kant calls the hypothesis of the existence of aliens a doctrinal belief (A825/B853). Although it is insufficient on objective grounds, the assumption is taken to be subjectively true based on certain end-setting in an analogy with practical belief. As Gava argues, the conceptions of doctrinal belief and the regulative idea are similar in their argumentative structure.[17] The fact that Kant includes the ideas of God and the soul in doctrinal belief, which do not belong to the unity of nature but the other type of regulative idea, may allow us to say that the regulative idea is a kind of doctrinal belief.[18]

[17] Gava 2018.
[18] Shigeta also includes the regulative idea as a kind of the doctrinal belief (Shigeta 2020b).

However, the realist requirement is relevant here. Gava poses the question, "Solange Kant dem Glauben nur subjektive Gültigkeit zuschreibt und mit ihm keine transzendentale Erkentnis assoziiert, kann uns eine Analyse dieser Form des Fürwahlhaltens dabei nicht helfen, die Frage zu erklären, was die unbestimmte objektive Gültigkeit der regulativen Ideen und ihr transzendentaler Status eigentlich sind".[19] If the regulative assumption is a mere hypothesis, why does Kant give it some kind of objective validity and transcendental status? This is strong evidence for the realist interpretation. Kant counts both the hypothesis about aliens and the existence of God as doctrinal beliefs, but does not deem the former transcendental. What distinguishes the regulative idea from mere doctrinal belief?

In order to understand the difference, we must return to the paragraph quoted in the second section and remember why we reject the fictionalist strategy. This paragraph shows that "then [when reason assumes there is no unity of nature] reason would proceed directly contrary to its vocation [Bestimmung], since it would set as its goal an idea that entirely contradicts the arrangement of nature [Natureinrichtung]" (A651/B679). We can interpret this claim in relation to doctrinal belief. The unity of nature is the condition of the achievement of the end in the vocation of reason itself to acquire the unitary cognition of nature and is *taken to be true* in relation to the end-setting. If we set an end seriously and deny the condition of its realisation at the same time, we would no longer maintain rational coherency. In this way, the logical principle of reason leads us to the transcendental principle being a doctrinal belief.[20]

We form a plethora of hypotheses in the scientific realm, such as planetary orbit, the structure of the human genome, or the existence of aliens in Alpha Centauri. However, all scientific hypotheses are empirical and contingent, even subjectively. Only the hypothesis of the regulative idea is *a priori* and subjectively necessary because it is originated in reason. This explains why Kant gives it transcendental status.

It should be noted that in spite of this *a priori*-ness originated in our reason, the regulative idea does not have determinate objective validity, since the *a priori*

[19] "As long as Kant ascribes only subjective validity to belief and associates with it no transcendental cognition, an analysis of 'taking to be true' in this form cannot help us to explain the question of what the indeterminate objective validity of regulative ideas and their transcendental status essentially are" (Gava 2018, p. 1216, my translation).

[20] As Shigeta argues, we have to admit the kind of belief related to theoretical but pure end-setting (Shigeta 2020a, pp. 155–156). However, the object of pure theoretical interest is not the unity of nature itself or one of the transcendental ideas such as the soul or God, but the unitary cognition based on the logical principle of reason. Since the end-setting based on the logical principle indirectly leads us to the assumption of the object of the transcendental principle, the transcendental illusion and the temptation of the metaphysical fallacy arise.

hypothesis is based on the subjective nature of reason. Summarising the appendix, Kant notes:

> Ich nenne alle subjektive Grundsätze, die nicht von der Beschaffenheit des Objekts, sondern dem Interesse der Vernunft in Ansehung einer gewissen möglichen Vollkommenheit der Erkenntniß dieses Objekts hergenommen sind, Maximen der Vernunft. So giebt es Maximen der spekulativen Vernunft, die lediglich auf dem spekulativen Interesse derselben beruhen, ob es zwar scheinen mag, sie wären objektive Prinzipien (A666/B694).
>
> I call all subjective principles that are taken not from the constitution of the object but from the interest of reason in regard to a certain possible perfection of the cognition of this object, maxims of reason. Thus, there are maxims of speculative reason, which rest solely on reason's speculative interest, even though it may seem as if they were objective principles (A666/B694).

The end-setting is essentially grounded in the nature of reason itself, but the nature is the interest of reason as its subjective feature. In this sense, the regulative assumption of the unity of nature is never knowledge of it, but a doctrinal belief.[21]

I can now formulate the developed hypothesist reading. The regulative assumption of the unity of nature is neither knowledge nor fiction, but an *a priori* and subjectively necessary hypothesis grounded in the nature of reason.[22] Since this

[21] Note that this developed hypothesist reading is not applicable to the regulative ideas in general but specifically the regulative idea of the unity of nature. I suggest that for the other kind of regulative ideas, namely the soul, the world and God, this hypothesist reading is only indirectly applicable. We must examine the relation between the first and second halves of the appendix and specify the objective validity of the objects of the transcendental ideas in relation to the unity of nature, but this is a task for a future paper.

[22] Principally, the developed hypothesist reading commits to the "regressive approach" of Kant's philosophy suggested by Ameriks: "On the modest regressive interpretation, the ultimate argumentative starting point of each of the Critiques is thicker than a 'mere Cartesian' foundation but much thinner than any claim to an already natural, moral, aesthetic science; the original idea is simply that we have some valid everyday theoretical, or practical, aesthetic judgemental experience" (Ameriks 2003, p. 10). In the case of the regulative idea of the unity of reason, the starting point is the fact that we have already committed ourselves to some scientific activity and cannot deny the interest of reason working behind the activity. This does not mean the starting point is a specific scientific theory, such as Newtonian physics. As Willaschek argues, the requirement of unity of nature still works in contemporary science (Willaschek 2018, pp. 65–68).

reading does not admit the transition, it satisfies the fictionalist requirement.[23] And its *a priori*-ness originated in our reason explains its transcendental status, responding to the realists.[24]

Conclusion

In this paper, we have examined Kant's account of the regulative ideas in *Critique of Pure Reason*, and can now understand it. We can answer the principal question presented in the introduction: whether nature as an object of our scientific investigation has an ontologically rational structure, or in other words, whether the unity of nature exists, and if it is the case, in what right we can assume so. According to the developed hypothesist reading, we understand the unity of nature as an *a priori* and subjectively necessary hypothesis, more precisely, a doctrinal belief that is grounded in the nature of our reason. This third interpretation demonstrates that we cannot simply categorise Kant as a rationalist or non-rationalist. Both dogmatic and sceptical ways of understanding the unity of nature are rejected through his project of the first *Critique*. Finally, as Kant writes on the final page of *Critique of Pure Reason*, "[t]he critical path alone is still open" (A855/B833).[25]

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[23] Fictionalists may oppose the developed hypothesist reading and claim that a hypothesis such as a mere thought experiment does not imply the prohibited transition, but as a "taking to be true" the doctrinal belief already oversteps the restriction of the Transcendental Dialectic. Especially when we take the problem of the unity of nature as an antinomy of reason, we are prohibited from assuming that the unconditional whole is given to us in the phenomenal world (cf. A497–502/B525–530). For this criticism, developed hypothesists can rely on the Wartenberg's strategy (cf. Wartenberg 1992, p. 238). Namely, even if we take the unity of nature to be true, this does not entail specific properties of all the members of the unity, but the unitary relation of them. More precisely, what we take to be true in this doctrinal belief is not the existence of specific members of the unity, but the law itself among unspecific members.

[24] The necessary condition to be a hypothesist kind of reading is to open whether the regulative principle is true or false objectively. For this point, this developed hypothesist reading shares the interpretative strategy with Willaschek 2018. However, focusing on the subjective attitude, while Willaschek emphasizes that we should be neutral for the truth of hypotheses (cf. Willachek 2018, p. 117), the developed hypothesist reading requires us to take the assumption to be true based on one's own end-setting. In other words, we do not know the truth of the regulative principle but cannot be indifferent to it.

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Tetsugaku Vol.7 Editorial Notes

Tetsugaku Vol. 7 was produced by three researchers, all of whom specialize in its theme, "Philosophical Practice": BABA Tomokazu, who served as editor in charge of the theme of this volume, and Tsuchiya Yohsuke and Nishiyama Kei, guest editors. Tsuchiya and Nishiyama supported Baba in a very professional manner. These two editors are scholars of philosophy who have accumulated knowledge and experience as key players in practical initiatives which are known as philosophical cafés and philosophical dialogues. These activities started about ten years ago in Japan and, from the perspective of the modern Japanese philosophical tradition which is totally academic and from the lectern, they seem like a completely innovative attempt at philosophical dialogue and discussion.

A glance at the table of contents, makes it obvious that Philosophical Practice is not a philosophical movement which is limited to Japan. The rich variety of papers included in this special issue will open the eyes of readers to the power of philosophy and will leave you overwhelmed.

It seems as if the embryonic movement "to philosophize" has progressed along with citizens living in society over the past ten years, and grown into something visible as a full-fledged "philosophy". Baba stated in the "Preface" that there was a connection between the themes of Vol. 5 "Care", Vol.6 "Catastrophe" and the theme of Vol. 7. In my view, three main factors made this connection conceivable: the global environment, the gradual but undeniable change in the civic consciousness of Japanese society, and the philosophizing expert reflection of scholars on modern philosophy and the methods of philosophical education based on it.

It can be said that this special issue captures the current state of philosophy as it changes along with the actual society. In this sense, its achievement is significant. It may serve as one of the guidelines for the future activities of the Philosophical Association of Japan.

This journal, which is open and free access, can be read by readers who are not members of association. We would appreciate it if you could send your opinions and comments about the papers in this special issue to the secretariat of the association.

Kyoto, August 2023, Chief editor, Uehara Mayuko

Call for papers for *Tetsugaku* vol.8, 2024

Tetsugaku: The International Journa lof the Philosophical Association of Japan (e-journal), calls for papers for its special issue on "World Philosophy" (Vol. 8, 2024).

"World Philosophy" is said to be a philosophical standpoint on the basis of the pluralism. This expression came into use largely in the 21th century. We know, for example, that The Oxford Handbook of World Philosophy was published in 2011（ed. Jay Garfield and William Edelglass, New York: Oxford University Press). In recent years, philosophical research of non-Western origin is developing, so that World philosophy can be considered as a position that promotes the possibility of dialogue between these different philosophies, as they developed respectively within their own traditions, languages and cultures. We need to actively explore this kind of World Philosophy.

For the 2022 World Philosophy Day, UNESCO proposed the following: "By enabling to discover the diversity of the intellectual currents in the world, philosophy stimulates intercultural dialogue. By awakening minds to the exercise of thinking and the reasoned confrontation of opinions, philosophy helps to build a more tolerant, more respectful society".

https://www.unesco.org/en/days/philosophy

In basic agreement with UNESCO's idea this special issue of Tetsugaku would like to suggest the following four basic notions as a call for research as well as practice of World philosophy.

– World philosophy is not an established idea or field, but a platform where we will discuss and construct movements.

-We will reorganize culturally and regionally the field of philosophy which has been conceived as "Western based philosophy" by going beyond this.

-World philosophy attempts to re-read the established notions of World literature and World history which have been based on the notion that "science = Western science".

-Reconsider the established philosophy.

Thus, the special issue covers the following themes (non-exhaustive):

-What is World Philosophy?

-What contribution does World Philosophy make?

-How does one pursue a pluralistic philosophy that breaks away from a focus on Western Europe and North America (Africa, Latin America, Southeast Asia, Native American, Japan, Korea, China etc.)?

-How does World Philosophy challenge contemporary social and cultural issues (life, environment, war, crisis, epidemic, intolerance, economic disparity, gender)?

-How do we think about the traditional philosophical framework (religion, science, art)?

-How can World Philosophy be conceived in terms of translation and language?

[Deadline: 30 November 2023]

To submit your paper, please read carefully our Guidelines for Contributors.

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