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RESEARCH ARTICLES

Philosophical Reflections

The Reason for the Guilt

Ermanno Bencivenga

Abstract: I may feel guilty for situations and events in which I seemed to play no causal role, which (it would seem) would have been exactly the same had I never existed. What is the reason for this guilt? The paper argues that it is to be found in a sense of universal connectedness: I take myself to always make a difference, no matter how distant I appear to be from anything that happens.

Keywords: guilt, causality, connectedness

I am driving down a deserted highway, late at night. Suddenly, I am at the site of an accident – a hit and run, to be precise. Someone, a pedestrian, is bleeding by the side of the road, and no one else is there. I could help, but a look at my watch and brief consideration of the time left before what I expect to be a pleasant meeting persuade me otherwise. I speed up; a few seconds later, I have disappeared in the darkness. The next morning, I read that the victim died after an agony of a few hours. And I feel guilty: I feel that I have killed the man, at least as much as whoever hit him in the first place.

Is my feeling of guilt reasonable? There are two elements to being guilty of X: having caused X and X being something evil. Without a doubt, there is something evil about an innocent pedestrian dying in agony by the side of the road; but the question is, Was I a causal factor in that death? A commonplace understanding of causality would seem to force a negative answer. For an element of this understanding would seem to be the following:

(*) A is a causal factor for X only if, were A never to have existed, X would not have taken place.

According to (*), the hit-and-run driver is clearly a causal factor in the death. If he had never existed, he would not have been driving and could not have hit the unfortunate pedestrian, which resulted in his death. But me? If I had never existed, there would have been no one driving my car, so the highway would have been *totally* deserted and the guy would have died in agony anyway. Stopping and helping would certainly have been a good thing to do (perhaps an act of supererogation); but *not* stopping did not cause anything. And, if I did not cause anything, how can I be guilty?

Still, I feel guilty, and probably most others would feel the same. So the question arises of how this guilt can be justified. For it to be reasonable, in the presence of (*), it must be the case that my presence in the world (not necessarily at that spot, at that time) did make a relevant difference, and, again, how could that be?

When I exonerated myself above, I did do so based on an implicit premise. I assumed that the event of my presence at that spot, at that time – even more, the very fact of my existence – could be erased from the history of the world while leaving everything else exactly the same. The accident, specifically, would have happened in the same way whether or not I ever came into the world. Once you grant this premise, the rest follows easily. So, clearly, my sense of guilt indicates that I (and most everyone else) reject the premise, however unconsciously. How we flesh out the rejection, or even that we do it at all, is an open question. For example, I could tell a story in which my use of precious world resources deprived that particular individual of the means of proper transportation, so he found it necessary to walk at night by the side of a dangerous highway and was hit by someone who hardly even saw him; and, just as the hit-and-run driver would have had to stop to repair the bad consequences of his action, I would have had to do the same. Or I might tell some other story, or no story at all; but if I reject the premise it must be because, in addition perhaps to (*), I am also committed to

(**) My presence and action in the world has consequences for all other humans (or all other beings?); so that, were I never to have existed, their fate would have been different.

I am not interested here in proving that I am *right* to feel guilty. What I am interested in is getting to the ideology implied by the guilt, and that, now, I can formulate as follows: The world in which I am exonerated from guilt is one in which every human (or every being?) is an island, that can be neatly detached from every other human (or being?). The world in which my sense of guilt is reasonable is one in which every (human) existence and every (human) move are relevant to all others. The sense of guilt, in other words, finds its reason in a sense of universal connectedness.

Learning to Act

Jan Bransen

Abstract: In this paper I argue that to understand minded agency – the capacity we typically find instantiated in instances of human behaviour that could sensibly be questioned by asking “What did you *do*?” – one needs to understand childhood, i.e. the trajectory of *learning* to act. I discuss two different types of trajectory, both of which seem to take place during childhood and both of which might be considered crucial to learning to act: a growth of bodily control (GBC) and a growth in taking responsibility (GTR). The discussion of GTR takes up about half of the entire paper. In the final two sections I argue that GTR is the most promising trajectory in terms of which to understand a child’s process of learning to act.

Keywords: agency, childhood, normativity, responsibility, taking a stance, bodily control

1. Setting the Stage

Mary Midgley once wrote a fable about a creator who wanted to create free beings (Midgley 1984). Although the other creators thought the project was philosophically confused, the creator optimistically set down to work it out. The clue, Midgley made him argue, was to give his beings conflicting desires and the capacity to think about their desires. This is a by now familiar response to an old question about the enabling conditions for one of the most intriguing, precious and scientifically disturbing characteristics of human nature: minded agency (Frankfurt 1988, Watson 1975, Taylor 1976, Dennett 1984). I’ve always liked Midgley’s fable. It somehow echoed the megalomaniac projects I envisaged as a teenager. But if I would take up the challenge of Midgley’s creator today, I would come up with another clue: if you want to create free beings, give them *childhood*. This answer isn’t new either. It was crucial to Arnold Gehlen’s interpretation of man as a *Mängelwesen* (Gehlen 1940), and it is very much *en vogue* today in certain attempts of developmental psychologists to finally provide the right answers to questions generations of philosophers discussed in vain (Gopnik et. al. 1999, Bloom 2005, Griffiths and Stotz 2000, Furth 1987, Clark 1997).

Given the generality of the claim, and the vastness of the phenomena it covers, I shall not be able in this paper to argue that childhood gives us the clue to understand minded agency. I shall merely explore some of the issues involved in developing such an argument, and provide some support for the kind of take on these issues I consider to be crucial. The main idea of the paper is that childhood is intrinsically a status concept, paired to adulthood, and that as a consequence the dynamics that is so conspicuous of childhood is substantially

normative. If this is plausible, it seems to me to support the idea that learning to act is an achievement that involves a growth in the capacity to take responsibility, rather than a growth in the capacity to control bodily movements.

The structure of the paper is as follows. First I discuss the notion of a trajectory-dependent property, suggesting that a good way to understand the relevance of childhood to minded agency is to argue that minded agency is a property that depends for its application on childhood's being a trajectory. I then discuss two different types of trajectory, both of which seem to take place during childhood: a growth of bodily control (GBC) and a growth in taking responsibility (GTR). The discussion of GTR takes up about half of the entire paper. In the final two sections I argue that GTR is the most promising trajectory in terms of which to understand a child's process of learning to act.

2. Minded Agency as a 'Trajectory-Dependent Property'

If the clue to creating free beings is to give them childhood, this means, for a start, that the property that enables an entity to be free is a "trajectory-dependent property." The phrase is Karen Jones's, and it is designed to identify concepts that apply to something in virtue of its being an "ordered, temporally extended sequence of states or events" (Jones 2008, 271). I should like to use the phrase here to be able to specify in more detail what I aim to be referring to in talking about a person's childhood.

If something is a trajectory, for example a visit to London, its properties, say its being exciting or exhausting, are trajectory-dependent properties if the visit instantiates these properties in virtue of it being an ordered, temporally extended sequence of events. Trajectory-dependent properties are not only instantiated by whole trajectories, though; concepts denoting such properties can also apply to parts of trajectories, parts that may almost seem to be temporally non-extended. Something can be a return flight, for instance, but only because it is part of a trip that also contains, at least, an outward flight, and a stay as other parts. 'Being a return flight' is a trajectory-dependent property, but it is not a property of the entire trajectory, but only of a part of it. When a trajectory-dependent property is instantiated by a relatively temporally non-extended event or state, as is the case for example with 'being a first impression,' it applies in virtue of the location of that event within a broader, structured, temporally extended whole. This is where the 'dependent' part of the concept becomes relevant and interesting. The property of "being a return flight" for instance is instantiated by a particular event, but only on the condition that there is a trajectory – a broader, structured, temporally extended sequence of events – one of which is this particular event, and two other (preceding) parts are the outward flight and the stay. This means that whether or not a trajectory-dependent property is instantiated by a state or event at time t , depends "on what happens *elsewhen*," at earlier times $t-n$ and/or at later times $t+n$ (Jones 2008, 272).

The concept of a trajectory-dependent property helps to explain historical facts, the historicity of which is often just taken for granted. I have for example a scar on my leg, and its being a scar applies only under the assumption that something happened at an earlier time, in my case that I stumbled over a fence in my youth. And an article can be your first publication, but this only is the case, in the proper sense of the word, under the condition that you have published a second paper at a later time. This makes trajectory-dependent properties vulnerable to future contingency (Jones 2008, 271). Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time*, for instance, is part 1 of a larger project that never materialized.

In suggesting that human beings are capable of acting in virtue of their childhood, I am suggesting that minded agency is a trajectory-dependent property, a property human beings have *at a time* (e.g. when they are adults) because they are a proper part of an ordered, temporally extended sequence of states or events (of which their childhood is an earlier part). The idea is popular in many different quarters of the human, social, behavioural and life sciences. Fascinatingly, the idea is compatible with there being a variety of trajectories with different time-scales involved in spelling out the genesis of human agency. Evolutionary biologists study a trajectory of millions of years, whereas historians of philosophy study trajectories of thousands of years. Developmental psychologists will tend to limit their attention to trajectories that do not extend the life-span of individual agents. In what follows I shall be restricting myself too to the trajectory we ordinarily understand as a person's childhood, the trajectory that usually takes up the first twelve years or so of individual human beings. Although nature might have to, the creator of Midgley's fable need not rely on the time-scales of evolution to give a human being its crucial phase of childhood. So I'm just assuming, in order to tell the story about childhood being the clue to minded agency, that evolution succeeded as it did in producing a species whose nature is characterised by "a new stage of development: childhood" (Griffiths and Stotz 2000).

Childhood is a very broad term we use to refer to a range of years that make up the first phase of a human being's life. Obviously, not everything that happens during these years plays a role in allowing the person to acquire the property of minded agency. Although it takes a childhood to learn to act, not every event that is part of your childhood belongs to the specific trajectory (the ordered, temporally extended sequence of events) that constitutes the acquisition of minded agency. This observation invites me to specify in more detail which particular kind of trajectory I have in mind in thinking that childhood is the clue to minded agency. I shall – in tune with some dominant trends in the literature – distinguish between two kinds of trajectories. I label them 'growth of bodily control' (GBC) and 'growth in taking responsibility' (GTR).

3. Growth of Bodily Control

Growth of Bodily Control (GBC) is under the heading of ‘motor development’ a major theme in the scientific study of human development (Thelen 2000). Newborn babies have very little control over their bodies, but most of them can sit and stand, reach and gesture, and feed themselves within a year. Toddlers of two years old can run and climb, clap their hands, scribble and talk simple sentences. Dramatic changes in motor skills continue to take place for a few more years, and it all happens out in the open, continuously observable. It is no surprise, then, that from the ordinary point of view of parents, or people in general, the development of human agency is closely related to, or can even be thought to consist in this growth of bodily control. Having learned how to sit or how to clap your hands might seem all you need for the production of a voluntary instance of such behaviour. This would explain why having control over your body has played a major role in the history of thinking about free agency (e.g. Chisholm 1964, Greenspan 1978, Fisher 1982, Dennett 1984).

Scientific research into the development of the mechanisms underlying bodily control is nowadays keen on avoiding the homunculus problem that looms large if you naïvely identify free agency with bodily control (Dennett 1991). The old Cartesian image of the mind controlling the body has long lost its plausibility and attraction. What is more, the very scheme of the image seems wrong. Replacing the mind as “controller” by a part of the body, e.g. the central nervous system, might turn out to be explanatorily empty, as you might need an homunculus in the brain if you want it to be an organ in possession of the kind of “controlling powers” we once attributed to the Cartesian mind. A new paradigm seems to be emerging: connectionism, dynamic systems theory and the idea of embodied cognition seem to support a picture of minded agency as an emergent feature of self-organising systems. In such a system bodily control is a macroscopic, distributed property produced over time by the development of perception-action couplings realised on a microscopic level due to multiple, dynamical, reciprocal interactions between a neural system, a sensory-motor system, and the environment (Keijzer 2001, 146).

The promises and problems of these new attempts to explain and understand minded agency in terms of GBC are high on the agenda of almost anyone sensitive to the impact of scientific approaches to themes that used to be preserved to the philosophy of mind and action (Clark 1997, 2001; Hurley 1998; Van Gelder 1994; Hendriks-Jansen 1996). On the side of the promises there are definitely the prospects of a unified, naturalistic account of human cognition and agency, and the prospects of empirical and theoretical support from the cognitive, behavioural and life sciences. On the side of the problems there is at least the need to close in an informative way the gap between on the one hand a convincing story about the sensorimotor organisation that allows simple animals to solve basic problems of interacting with their environment and on the other hand a convincing story about human agency involving so-called higher

cognitive capacities (Keijzer 2006, Hurley 2003). Connected to this, but differing in important ways, is the concern that a dynamic systems account of human behaviour will lack the resources to acknowledge the difference between causal and reason explanations of actions (Clark 2001).

Despite these problems, looking for a story about GBC is definitely a sensible strategy to try to cash out the idea that childhood is the clue to understanding minded agency. It is, to be sure, a strategy that on the face of it seems rather insensitive to the suggestion that the phase of childhood marks a principled distinction between the growth that is enabled by childhood and the learning processes that take place in other developmental trajectories. Fans of GBC, however, might in all likelihood want to resist the suggestion of such a principled distinction, and might precisely want to stress that the clue to understanding minded agency is a matter of the presence of significant developmental trajectories that enable organisms to become self-organising systems.

Before allowing myself to take an evaluative stance to GBC and its prospects in contributing to our understanding of minded agency, I shall first introduce an alternative interpretation of the trajectory constituted by childhood, a trajectory labeled Growth in Taking Responsibility (GTR).

4. Growth in Taking Responsibility

There is an extensive body of literature on the relationship between agency and responsibility (Strawson 1962, Frankfurt 1988, Taylor 1976, Watson 1975, Wallace 1996, Fisher and Ravizza 1998, Wolf 1990, Kennett 2001). Most of this literature builds on the early work of Harry Frankfurt, who argued forcefully that the difference between what we do and what happens to us should be understood in terms of agential guidance, which itself should be understood in terms of a harmony between the ways in which we are moved and our reflexive attitudes to being so moved, the latter of which amounts basically to a story about our being responsible for what we do (Frankfurt 1988). Within this tradition there is a growing interest in the way in which the development of these reflexive attitudes takes place in the personal histories of agents, the worry being that certain trajectories (those implying manipulation) would yield attitudes that enable a kind of agential control that would fail to provide the agent with moral responsibility (Fischer and Ravizza 1994, Christman 1991, Zimmerman 2003, Haji and Cuypers 2004). Unfortunately, this literature is primarily concerned with the preconditions of moral responsibility, and not with real-life scenarios of childhood and its role in enabling minded agency. There is a lot of literature, though, on the relations of responsibility between adults and children (Schapiro 1999, 2003, Noggle 2002, Archard and Macleod 2002), and I'm going to make an effort here to connect some research traditions in an attempt to improve our understanding of the concept of minded agency.

My starting-point is simple, and obvious once you start to combine the idea of childhood with the idea of responsibility; children don't have responsibility, yet, but adults have it both for themselves and as representatives in their children's guard. Stated differently: with respect to matters of responsibility, childhood is intrinsically a *status* concept, inconceivable without its counterpart, adulthood, and the challenge is to find a way to articulate the child's status as a temporary phase. The challenge, that is, is to integrate the idea of dynamics with the idea of status. I think this can be done by adapting, and appropriating, insights of Robert Brandom (Brandom 1994, 2000, Bransen 2002).

Let me start with an example. Suppose a child caught up in play follows a butterfly into the neighbour's garden and steps on a bed of beautiful violets. Suppose the neighbour finds his ruined plants, sees the child, gets upset and asks "What are you *doing*?" And suppose something similar happens, fifteen years later, involving the same persons. This time the neighbour finds himself aroused by a young woman who late at night loudly says goodbye to a friend under the neighbour's bedroom window, and again he asks "What are you *doing*?"

Here we have the typical kind of question a philosopher of action would want a plausible action theory to provide an answer to. And the relevant difference between the answers to the question in these two scenarios will, according to GTR, be a difference in responsibility. Let me elaborate.

The first thing to note about the situation the child finds itself in is that it includes an adult. For the child this is obvious: from its very first appearance on earth there were always adults around. This is so obvious, that it is only natural to overlook the tremendous significance of this fact for what the child's experience of her world will be like. There are just always adults around, and their authority in defining the situation is absolutely beyond any doubt, and this is so long before the child becomes aware of the fact that situations are defined, that they are defined by perspectives, and that different people have different perspectives.

The second thing to note is that the adult makes a move in a deontic game: he requires the child to define the situation, but it is clear from the outset that he is not going to accept just any definition the child will come up with. It should be a definition that has to meet standards, standards of the True and the Good as Susan Wolf has argued (Wolf 1990). The definition should be true to the facts, and it should provide the child with justifying reasons for what she did. It is clear too, I take it, that the adult's access to these standards is assumed to be much more reliable than the child's. The child's predicament is obvious (Schapiro 1999).

Let me hasten to add a third observation. Fortunately, children are not born in a world crowded with adults who care first and foremost for their beds of violets. Children are born to adults whose parental love ordinarily is beyond compare. In the normal case children grow accustomed to adults who, being

their parents, go to almost endless lengths to care for, support, and scaffold their children. Precisely because parents have their child's responsibility in their guard, their moves in the deontic game of giving and asking for reasons will differ from the moves adults in general make by displaying a specific scaffolding character. I'll return to that below.

But first I should like to note a couple of further things. It might seem as if I am bound to frame the situation in which a child can learn to take responsibility for what it does as intrinsically linguistic. The question seems to be about *defining* the situation, about providing an acceptable description, a sentence, a verbally expressed proposition that explains and justifies what happened as something done. This would bring me in good company, to be sure; many philosophers and scientists are inclined to defend the view that language is the clue to understanding human mindedness (Pinker 1994, McGeer and Pettit 2002, Tomasello and Rakoczy 2003). But in taking my suggestion that *childhood* is the clue to minded agency seriously, I should be willing to defend the claim that "childhood, not language" is the clue. The explanatory work, I should claim, is done by the status distinction between children and adults and its consequences for how the deontic game of defining the situation is played, and not by the linguistic means with which human beings typically play this game. That is, I must have something to say to those who would feel like arguing that the presence of language creates the very possibility to play the deontic game of defining the situation. One way to develop an argument against such contenders would be to follow an ethnomethodological line of reasoning, saying that people account for their understanding of the situation in the very way itself in which they behave (Harré 1979, Goffman 1959). That is, behaviour itself might display the perspective of the agent and the way in which he defines the situation by so behaving. Such a story would suggest that an agent, if challenged by an interlocutor, would just repeat what he did, so as to emphasize that his definition of the situation was already explicit in his action. Thus, I might change the example, and might make the neighbour ask his question by merely frowning, to suggest subsequently that the child's proper response would be to step once more on the neighbour's bed of violets, showing, not telling, what she did.

The example is meant to support the claim of section 2, namely that minded agency is a 'trajectory-dependent property.' The dialectic of the unfolding exchange between the child and the neighbour in response to the child's action and the neighbour's question is part of the trajectory in virtue of which the child's behaviour is the particular action it is. This does not mean that the child's action takes place much later, when finally, for example, the child comes to accept that 'ruining a bed of violets' is the right description of what she did, and that she feels very sorry for this action that she now takes responsibility for. This belated act of taking responsibility for ruining a bed of violets is another, further action of the child. The action we are talking about in my example is just the one that takes place at the time the child steps on the bed of violets in her

neighbour's garden. To be sure, the later act of taking responsibility, although another act in its own right, is part of the trajectory in virtue of which the child did what she did in her neighbour's garden, namely ruining a bed of violets, and not, for instance, following a butterfly. Remember that trajectory-dependent properties are vulnerable to future contingency. If the exchange between child and neighbour never comes to a satisfying end, but ends in a deadlock, or stops due to an intrusion from external forces, it remains unclear whether the behaviour was an action and if so which action precisely it was.¹

The idea of the example is that in childhood most of our behaviour happens just like that, mindlessly, without sufficient awareness of the ways in which definitions of the situation can be contested and inform in a constitutive way the very nature of what we do. The young woman in the second part of the example is precisely supposed to have acquired the capacity of minded agency. She is supposed to be aware, or capable of being aware, of plausible descriptions of her voice as too loud for the night and as too close under her neighbour's bedroom window. Therefore, she is supposed to be capable of resisting her inclination to make this description of her behaviour come true. She should know better, we say. She could have anticipated her neighbour's question, and the dialectic it would generate, resulting in her having to accept a description of her behaviour she doesn't like to endorse. Assuming that this capacity to take responsibility is in place, we can trust that in the ordinary way of things this second scenario would never materialize. The young woman knows what she does, and does so knowingly. She's grown up, an adult, a minded agent.

In discussing the above example I have been using a number of technical notions taken from Robert Brandom's work in the philosophy of language. I have elsewhere tried to reconstruct Brandom's inferentialism so as to make his account of the game of giving and asking for reasons applicable to childhood as a phase in which human beings become minded agents (Bransen 2002). I should like to make these ideas a bit more precise here by distinguishing four different modes of taking responsibility. These modes are available to those engaged in the trajectory of learning to act, but they have to be acquired in succession. Each more advanced mode of taking responsibility builds upon the one(s) acquired before. Together they describe the trajectory of growth in taking responsibility (GTR). I shall describe the successive modes by referring to the above example, assuming for the sake of argument the availability of the linguistic resources used by the agents in this example.

Acknowledge the attribution of a description

The neighbour's question invites the child to make a move in the deontic game of giving and asking for reasons. She's asked to define the situation. She's asked to

¹ For Karen Jones this is a way in which trajectory-dependent properties allow us to understand a way in which we might be said to be able to change the past. (Jones 2008).

acknowledge that a certain description is attributed to her behaviour. She might have no idea, but if she's capable of making a first move on the trajectory of taking responsibility, if she can take responsibility in the first mode, she will have to be aware of at least one attributed description. The emotional state of the neighbour, and the tone of his voice, provide obvious clues that whatever the description, she did something wrong, something she wasn't entitled to. The neighbour's move that draws both in the game expresses the neighbour's reactive attitude, and in this case it urges the child to look for descriptions that would make explicit that the action was a mistake. On the assumption that the child wasn't deliberately making a misdemeanor, the neighbour's question will produce a motivational embarrassment in the child that will evoke an array of possibly explanatory, excusing, justifying or blaming descriptions. Acknowledging the fact that these descriptions possibly are attributed to her behaviour is, on my account, the first phase in the trajectory I've labeled GTR. To take responsibility in this initial, minimal sense is to acknowledge that the situation one is in is described in a way that portrays oneself as somehow involved in a piece of behaviour that invites reactive attitudes.

Let me add two comments. Firstly, the fact that in the example the neighbour is moved by his disapproval is of course merely a contingent feature of how I chose to set up the case. Lots of other responses are available to the neighbour that would make sense to us as audience as well as to the child as addressee. Note, by the way, that some constraints of intelligibility apply in order for the exchange to be a meeting of minds. The neighbour's response should make sense. To make it a scenario for taking responsibility a further constraint applies. For such a scenario the neighbour should express a reactive attitude, to use Strawson's notion (Strawson 1962). Approval would do as well as disapproval, but noncommittal responses such as "Oh, what a nice butterfly!" would not invite the child to take a stance towards her behaviour. And that seems to be required for entering the game of taking responsibility.

Secondly, we should resist a strong reading of "her behavior." I am discussing here what I take to be the first step in a trajectory I suggest an agent should have traversed in order to be a responsible and therefore minded agent. Acknowledging that a description might be attributed to *her* behaviour should therefore not be interpreted as implying a relation of responsible ownership between the agent and the behaviour. The young woman who is speaking too loud late at night might have such a relation, because we assume her to have acquired the capacity of minded agency. She can take full responsibility, we presume. She will own her behaviour, in the relevant sense, and she might be capable of resisting the attribution of a description she considers her neighbour not to be entitled to. But I don't want to ascribe all this to the child that's following a butterfly into her neighbour's garden. To be sure, some form of self-awareness should be available to this child. She must be an addressee; she must be able to enter the deontic game, she must be aware of the fact that she figures

in social scenarios. But “her behaviour” should be read in a rather weak sense as referring to a series of events that involve her in certain ways. Compare this with what happens to you when, for instance, you stumble and fall off a platform. That’s a series of events involving you, a series some might wish to describe in ways that made you *do* it, even if you don’t and just watch it happen.²

This first mode of taking responsibility does not require sophisticated capacities. It entails merely that the agent should be inclined to respond as an addressee. She is to take it that an interlocutor’s move is meant to be an invitation to enter a deontic game. She’s assumed to be aware of the fact that her behaviour is described in a certain way. Being addressed by her interlocutor, she’s assumed to have a stance towards the sequence of events her behaviour is part of. Whether or not she will live up to this expectation depends on whether or not she will move to the second mode of taking responsibility, by making explicit her stance towards the events that involve her. Being an addressee, she’s unlikely not to make this second step. The situation requires a definition, and she’s invited to provide it.

The developmental story I try to tell here combines causal and conceptual connections, and suggests that the understanding of conceptual implications fuels the growth in taking responsibility (Taylor 1979). That is, it is a matter of conceptual connections that a less advanced mode of responsibility is presupposed by a more advanced mode, and that one cannot acquire the more advanced capacity unless one first acquires the less advanced capacity. Yet, it is a matter of causal connections whether or not a particular agent actually develops the full capacity to take responsibility. This requires such an agent to understand the mode she is in as a less advanced mode, a mode that elicits her to move to the next stage of development.

Endorse a description

Suppose the child in our example responds to her neighbour by saying: “Oh, I’m sorry, I was merely following that butterfly”. This response shows she has made it through the first phase; it displays her capacity to take responsibility in the first minimal sense of acknowledging the attribution of a description to her behaviour. The first part of her response expresses the fact that she acknowledges that her neighbour attributes a certain, unfavourable description to her behaviour, a description she’s inclined to distance herself from. Again, nothing strong should be meant to be implied by using the possessive pronoun “her.” There is a description of the events involving her and she acknowledges that this description is attributed to these events. In the second part of the response the child goes beyond the first mode of taking responsibility. She comes up with a description she attributes herself to the behaviour, thus taking

² Cf. Frankfurt’s example of the man whose trembling hand makes his glass spill (Frankfurt 1988, 70).

responsibility in a more advanced way. Her response makes explicit that she endorses now in what she says what she already endorsed, presumably if implicitly, in what she did (Brandom 2000, 153).

The assumption behind this observation is that the child satisfies the sincerity condition. We should be careful here, however. In the adult case it seems ordinarily appropriate to understand the sincerity condition as referring to the requirement that someone should say what he thinks. But in the case of a child that is learning to take responsibility it need not be clear whether there is something determinate enough in her mind that, satisfying the sincerity condition, she might be taken to express in what she says. The idea, however, is clear enough. Attributing herself a description to her behaviour amounts to making explicit her reasons for what she did. In saying that she was merely following a butterfly she gives her neighbour a consideration she takes to be counting in favour of her behaviour (Scanlon 1998). In making explicit this consideration she need not be expressing what she was already thinking, but she *is* expressing what she was doing. The idea here is, after all, that she wasn't been *doing* anything until she came up with a description of her behaviour she endorsed. Remember that on my account minded agency is a trajectory-dependent property, and that part of the trajectory might, and in the case of a child who is learning to take responsibility *does* take place at a time after the behaviour did take place. Something was driving the child in her performing the behaviour that happened. She was onto something, as we say; and by arriving at the description she feels like endorsing, she makes explicit to herself, by making explicit to her interlocutor, what it was she was endorsing in what she did. Someone who is capable of this kind of identification is on my account capable of taking responsibility in two different ways: firstly by merely acknowledging that certain descriptions are attributed to her behaviour, and secondly by self-attributing descriptions to her behaviour.

I should like to emphasise two concerns. First, in the example the child's interlocutor is a non-relative adult who disapproves of her behaviour. That's a very anxious situation, unlikely to allow for descriptions that wouldn't satisfy the neighbour but that would nevertheless be endorsed by the child. Power relations easily interfere with making explicit one's endorsements. The young woman in the other example would make sense as an adolescent who freed herself from being vulnerable to power relations. She knows what she does – at least we might sympathetically but also a little bit patronizingly assume – and according to her the neighbour has no entitlement at all to doubt her entitlement to speaking as loud as she does, for she just spoke as loud as was appropriate on the occasion. Young children will ordinarily learn to take this second step of

endorsement primarily in supportive, scaffolding situations involving a parent who approves of the child's behaviour.³

Second, the more descriptions of her behaviour available to the child, the higher the chance that she will come up with a description she feels like endorsing. Particularly in endorsing a description an agent will profit from her capacities to discern differences in propositional content. Here, the acquisition of linguistic competence will of course provide a tremendous support to take the second step in GTR.

To summarize: this second mode of taking responsibility consists in the agent's articulating the tenor of her behaviour in response to an interlocutor's request to do so. The agent accounts for her behaviour, because she's asked; she makes explicit in some kind of vocabulary the semantic content she takes her behaviour to have.

Commit oneself to a description

The child's response that she was merely following the butterfly – or whatever other response we image her to give in endorsing a description – is likely to elicit a further response by the neighbour. The deontic game of giving and asking for reasons is well on its way. Suppose the neighbour responds with a frown, expressing doubt about the appropriateness of the child's description. Such a response is effectively a request to provide a reason for the description. If the child is capable of moving to a third, again more advanced, mode of taking responsibility, she will at this stage be able to accept this request, which means to accept that endorsing a description entails a commitment to defend the description. Here, I take it, the standards of the True and the Good appear on the scene. To commit oneself to a description means to take up the responsibility to show the description to be true to the facts and to be right in the circumstances. I am not assuming, of course, that there are always single, determinate and definitive answers to questions about the True and the Good. But taking up the commitment to defend a description means taking pains to get possible interlocutors to take over the description, and that is just a matter of informing these interlocutors about the standards one takes the formation of beliefs ("Be sure to form true beliefs!") and desires ("Be sure to form right desires!") to meet (Pettit and Smith 1996). The commitment in question is a commitment to a description of a series of events involving the child. Taking up the commitment implies triangulation (Davidson 1982). Three relata are in play: the child, the neighbour, and the events. The child will try to find the neighbour's recognition for her description as adequately being about this series of events. If the child in our example is capable of taking responsibility in this third mode, she will not

³ I have touched upon these issues before (Bransen 2002, 2004). However, besides such a normative account of what Schapiro (1999, 734) calls 'an obligation to raise,' it would be worthwhile to survey empirical research on this type of parent-child interaction.

merely have to be able to understand her description as making explicit what she were after in what she did, but she should also be able to understand that the situation might seem to be different from the neighbour's perspective, and that she should try to make explicit what she did in a shared language.

One might wonder how much is implied by this need for a shared language. I think we would need more than a language that's merely shared by these particular two people on this particular occasion, but we will need less than the objective language of science. Of course, these are two radical extremes, but they serve to explain what is involved in the third mode of taking responsibility. Triangulation involves another perspective on the same object. The fact that it is a perspective makes the neighbour in our example in principle replaceable by any other person capable of having a perspective on the series of events in question. The child's mother might come by, or the neighbour's wife, or an accidental bystander, or an impartial policeman, etc. If the child has taken up the commitment to defend her description of what she did, she should accept the task of finding the recognition for her view from any of these and all other possible interlocutors. She need not anticipate, though, on the availability of the absolute, perspectiveless language of science. Triangulation does rule out such a language as inconceivable.

One more thing about the need for a language. What the child does need to be able to take responsibility in this third mode is a shared definition of the situation, shared in the sense that all the interlocutors involved understand the inferences that would follow. Such a piece of meaning might be available, though, without substantial linguistic resources. Ethnomethodological examples show this. One of my favourite examples is about two pedestrians approaching one another on too small a footway to pass without making some accommodations. You will have noticed this all too often yourself: just about the same moment you're ready to make room by going left, the other person does the same... by going right. Frustratingly enough, both of you recognize the other's gesture, try to adapt, just to note once more that the obstruction continues. Here the description one should commit oneself to is given in the accounting attitude that shows itself as an integral part of the behaviour.

By way of summary I should like to note that the third step in GTR entails that the agent has acquired the capacity to understand the inferences interlocutors are allowed to make on the basis of the agent's description of her behaviour, and has accepted to take on the task of providing the reasons needed to justify these inferences.

Being entitled to a description

Suppose the dialogue between the child and the neighbour went on for a few rounds to end up with the neighbour recognizing that agreement would be reached if the child would commit herself to saying something like "I'm sorry I stepped on your bed of violets. I wasn't even aware of the fact that I entered your

garden. All I did was following that nice butterfly.” The neighbour’s recognition that agreement is within reach is itself a commitment to this description. It is this commitment of the child’s interlocutor that gives the child an entitlement to a description. The child can now take full responsibility for her behaviour as an action under the description she is entitled to. Her entitlement makes her responsibility bearable. That is, the agreed upon description of her behaviour provides her with the normative reasons she needs to carry (or one might even say: to “discharge”) her responsibility. A couple of things follow.

Something strikingly significant shows up here first. All along the game the child was entitled to descriptions. She could have taken on responsibility for her action in the full sense of the word right from the beginning. She could have, because she could have accepted her neighbour’s very first description of her behaviour head on. Of course, that would have implied that she would accept having done something wrong – a moral burden we are unlikely to accept just like that. The child’s initial inclination not to accept this burden, on whatever grounds (her innocence, her self-esteem, her delight in moving around, the economy of her psyche), started off the deontic game. We might take this as suggesting that somehow the child considered herself to be entitled to a more satisfying description of her behaviour, as if she would have been willing to take responsibility for something more comfortable, her life and its promise of well-being.

A second consequence to note is that entitlements are the reverse side on your score of your interlocutor’s commitments. Reasons are articulated in an exchange between people who make explicit their commitments to specific descriptions of sequences of events. The third step of the child, her taking responsibility in the third mode by committing herself to a description, provided the neighbour with his first entitlement, at least within the confines of their specific game of giving and asking for reasons. Of course, in endorsing his description of what he considered to be the child’s misdemeanor he may have been assuming that he was entitled to this description. That assumed entitlement was not authorized by the child, to be sure, but allegedly by the neighbour’s confidence that his exchanges with his neighbours (a.o. the child’s parents), as well as with numerous generalized others (Mead 1934), have given him reason to believe that he is entitled to such a description of people trespassing the bounds of his garden and stepping on his flowers. The neighbour’s familiarity with the rules governing such behaviour, as well as the neighbour’s understanding of the many reciprocal normative expectations in play, will have given him many entitlements on his score. He is an adult; he is well-informed, and well-equipped to cite reasons to support his attitudes towards his own and others’ behaviour. He has acquired the full capacity to take responsibility, which means that on my account he is a minded agent: he knows what he does, and does so knowingly (Frankfurt 1988, Velleman 1989, Mele 1995, Wolf 1990).

A third consequence is that the distinction in authoritative status between child and neighbour is a function of the number of entitlements persons have on their score. People acquire entitlements in a variety of ways from their exchanges with others.⁴ Entitlements enable persons to take the appropriateness of their behaviour for granted. That is, entitlements enable persons to act, to behave responsibly. This is the basis for the claim that GTR is the trajectory in virtue of which agents can be said to be *minded*. To be a minded agent, one should be able to take full responsibility for one's behaviour, and one can do so if one has played the deontic game of giving and asking for reasons well enough, and has acquired the appropriate entitlements.

Before turning to a discussion of the problems and promises of GTR in contrast to GBC with respect to their contributions to understanding minded agency, however, I should like to make two more comments about the distinction in authoritative status between children and adults. The fact that the number of entitlements is distributed among adults and children in a thoroughly unequal way makes adults and children play the game of giving and asking for reasons in very different ways. I have elsewhere described the game as open-ended and non-competitive, and as having three different purposes: to gain entitlements, to discern commitments, and to undertake endorsements (Bransen 2002). These purposes differ in importance relative to the deontic statuses on each player's score. For a child the joy of playing is mainly in the acquisition of entitlements, for an adult the joy of playing the game well is primarily a matter of discerning commitments and undertaking endorsements. These differences in how they play the game, i.e. the differences in the kind of moves they are capable of performing, are important determinants of the differences in status determinative of what it means to be a child or an adult if one take these to be status concepts (Schapiro 1999, 717).

There is, however, an obvious difference between adults who, so to say, are under the spell of the commands of parental love⁵, and those who can afford to be indifferent (or perhaps even hostile) to the predicament of children. In my example the neighbour is obviously of the second kind. But we all know parents tend to behave very differently. They tend to be supportive and affirmative to the child's behaviour, come what may. In terms of the deontic game I have been discussing this means that parents tend to start off with a serious commitment to approve of the child's behaviour, and to provide descriptions of it that present the child as a lovely, skilled, intelligible, rational and moral (in short: minded) agent. Parents tend to boost their children's self-esteem. And from the point of view of GTR this is rightly so. Acting on this commitment parents provide their

⁴ See Brandom 2000 for an overview. See below for a few words on what this means for a scaffolding type of parent-child interaction.

⁵ The phrase intentionally echoes Frankfurt's views of love as entailing volitional necessity (Frankfurt 1999). There is massive empirical evidence that love's commands cast a very wide net when it comes to babies' and infants' appeal to adults' care-giving attitudes.

children with the best resources to acquire entitlements.⁶ In virtue of their parents' loving attitude children begin with an almost infinite set of entitlements – indeterminate ones, to be sure, details to be filled in on the spot in response to whatever incoordinate gesture the child happens to make. And every description provided online by parents (i.e. adults that are naturally trustworthy and authoritative) informs the child's self-awareness as a minded agent.

This fourth step concludes my discussion of the steps involved in GTR. An agent who is entitled to a particular description of his behaviour can be said to be capable of taking full responsibility for it as an action under this description (Fischer and Ravizza 1998).

I have drawn a picture in this section of four different modes of taking responsibility children have to acquire to become minded agents. These modes differ in their level of sophistication. A child should first acquire a less advanced mode before it is capable of acquiring a more advanced mode of taking responsibility. I have focussed on the asymmetric deontic statuses of adults and children that play a crucial role both in distinguishing these four modes of taking responsibility and in driving the developmental dynamics that invites, allows and forces children to take steps in the process of GTR. In the next section I shall argue (1) that it seems unlikely that we could improve our understanding of GTR in terms of GBC, and (2) that it makes more sense to think that minded agency is a GTR-dependent property, than to think it is a GBC-dependent property.

5. Responsibility versus Control

The suggestion of the paper so far is that there seem to be at least two different types of trajectories that might play a crucial role in support of the claim that minded agency is a trajectory-dependent property. As the reader will have noticed I spent a much longer section on GTR than on GBC, and my reason is that GTR is in the philosophy of mind and action not as such recognized as a phenomenon relevant to the analysis and explanation of minded agency. Many readers might, however, feel uncomfortable by all this attention to GTR, and might claim that an important role for GTR in analyses of minded agency would be very bad news indeed for anyone interested in a naturalistic account of human agency. Given that naturalism is very much the current orthodoxy in philosophy, I should feel uncomfortable with my sympathy for such a minority view. From a naturalistic point of view there are two notable reasons against an account of action based on GTR. Firstly, such an account seems to imply a serious, principled distinction between human and animal action, a distinction that is problematic in the face of the dominant and convincing evolutionary picture of human nature. And secondly, such an account seems to require normative

⁶ Cf. My way of telling this story in Bransen 2004 does differ in a number of ways from stories that emphasize a parent's duty to raise the child, such as Noggle (2002) and Schapiro (1999, 2003).

features (deontic statuses) as preconditions rather than as products of human agency and that does not seem to fit in a naturalistic conception of agency.

I will in this section review two ways out, available to a naturalist willing to grant me my story about the importance of GTR for understanding minded agency. Both strategies build on the promise of GBC as a naturalistic account. The first option would be to reduce GTR to GBC; the second would be to show that GTR depends on GBC. Both strategies, I argue, are implausible.

Apart from the fact that reduction is a multiply ambiguous notion, it does not seem to be very clear what we could make of a reduction of GTR to GBC. One could try to decompose the process of taking responsibility in an attempt to show it is composed of parts that could successfully be described in terms of controlled bodily movements. It might, however, be far too difficult to tell a convincing and informative story about how the composition of these parts could be understood to generate the specific features characteristic of GTR. Note that the reduction in question here is not the general issue of how to understand minded agency in terms of GBC. We have seen that issue before in section 3 as one of the problems of the project that starts from the assumption that GBC is the relevant trajectory on which minded agency depends. Here the issue is about the relation between GBC and GTR, on the assumption that GTR is the relevant trajectory on which minded agency depends.

An example might work. Learning to speak *in public* is a process we could describe informatively with GTR. It makes sense to maintain that learning to speak in public involves the acquisition of the four modes of taking responsibility I have discussed in the previous section. Learning to speak in public requires someone (1) to acknowledge being an addressee, (2) to take a stance and reflect on how to say what you want to say, (3) to find the means to support your views in the light of possible disagreements, and (4) to gain the entitlement to stand for what you say in public. Obviously, learning to speak in public is a process that also involves bodily control. Someone unable to control their speech organ will be unable to learn to speak in public. But it is very difficult, if not impossible, to imagine what it would look like to build up the process of acquiring the capacity to speak in public merely out of sequences of learning to control your speech organ. Note that the example involves linguistic competence even though its point does not depend on it. For imagine a man who has learned to open doors for women as an instance of taking responsibility. Could we reduce his learning trajectory to a trajectory that merely involves his growth in bodily control? It seems we won't have a chance to do this satisfactorily, i.e. in explanatorily fruitful ways, ways that would not require us to presuppose acquaintance with GTR, and would yet make us understand the patterns of the man's courtly behaviour in scenarios involving doors and women merely in terms of his capacity to control his bodily movements. I conclude, therefore, that an attempt to reduce GTR to GBC is very unpromising.

The examples discussed, however, might seem to suggest another way out. Perhaps reducing GTR to GBC might be impossible. But it might be the case that GTR depends for its success in analysing the trajectory dependency of minded agency on the availability of GBC. That is, there might be a dependency relation between GBC and GTR. Infants might first learn to control their body before they can begin to learn to take responsibility. This is a familiar picture. It seems plausible to assume children should first learn to control their speech organ before they can begin to learn to speak in public (i.e. take responsibility for what they say). A number of strategies is available to those who wish to argue for such a dependency relation between GTR and GBC. One might accept that GTR is needed to account for minded agency as a trajectory-dependent property, but claim that GTR is itself a trajectory-dependent property that depends on GBC. Call that a friendly strategy. A more hostile strategy would be to claim that GTR is not needed to account for the trajectory dependency of minded agency, because GBC can itself take care of that. On such a strategy GTR would be an optional extra that human beings need not (or even do not) pass through to develop full-blooded minded agency. In terms of the example the claim would be that a child might learn to speak without ever learning to speak in public.

The hostile strategy might well be worth pursuing in the present intellectual climate. It is in fact just the strategy discussed in section 3, a strategy many would think offers the best chance in times one feels obliged to downgrade the distinction between human and other kinds of agency. It is a strategy that just tries to leave issues of taking responsibility out of theories of minded agency. But even if one would feel uncomfortable, as I sometimes do, with descriptions of minded agency that seem to involve a serious, almost principled distinction between human and other forms of agency, there is no need to accept a hostile strategy. Even if one does not favour a special status for human agency a friendly strategy might be most promising, or so I should like to argue.

We should distinguish between two interpretations of the main claim of the friendly strategy. Remember that trajectory-dependent properties are vulnerable to future contingency. That is, a trajectory-dependent property may be applied to a temporally relatively non-extended part of the trajectory in virtue of the part's location in the trajectory. This trajectory, the broader, structured, temporally extended sequence of events, might consist of events some of which may happen *after* the time at which the property is instantiated. This implies that GTR may depend on GBC without it being the case that GBC is completed in time *prior to* GTR's appearance on the scene. Taking responsibility for one's behaviour might depend on bodily control even if the growth of bodily control is not yet completed at the time one takes responsibility. Here is an example: a toddler needs some bodily control to say "ca," but she may begin to take responsibility by happily nodding when you ask her "Do you mean 'cat'?" thereby anticipating her further growth of bodily control that would eventually allow her to say just what she means: "cat." Interestingly the example shows that there

seem to be two equally correct, but different descriptions of the toddler's speech act. It was an act of saying 'cat,' and also an act of saying 'ca.' The fact that a typical toddler in appropriate circumstances should like to endorse the first and not the second, if challenged, shows how GTR can play a role in GBC. It is precisely with respect to the speech act's being an event in GTR (and not in GBC) that GTR, *but also* GBC, shows itself to be what Jones calls an "interpretation-sensitive trajectory" (Jones 2008, 274). Endorsing the first description as correct, and rejecting the second as incorrect, requires that the toddler takes the responsibility to support a specific further development of the trajectory that allows her speech act to be indeed, retrospectively, an event of saying 'cat.' The direction within which the trajectory unfolds is in this way sensitive to how parts of the trajectory are interpreted by those who play a role in the trajectory (the child and its interlocutors). The apparent plausibility of the mistaken interpretation of the toddler's speech act as an event of saying 'ca' challenges her to improve the control of her speech organ so as to really say 'cat' and not 'ca' on further occasions. Rightly describing the speech act as an event of saying 'cat' is again a matter of the vulnerability to future contingency of trajectory-dependent properties. Of course no one could rely on the correctness of the first description as evidence for the claim that this person was once able to say 'cat' when it would for instance turn out to be the case that due to a deficiency of this person's speech organ she is unable to pronounce the letter 't' so could never have said 'cat.' Note that the second description, that the toddler said 'ca,' is correct, but not *simpliciter*. It is a correct description of the toddler's speech act, i.e. a description we are entitled to, only within contexts in which it is appropriate to take what Dennett called 'the physical stance' to the toddler's behaviour. In ordinary circumstances we need reasons to take such a stance; i.e. taking up this stance is itself a move in the deontic game of giving and asking for reasons.

Interpreting the dependency relation between GBC and GTR shows that it is not a strictly serial relation. GBC and GTR now appear to be parallel processes, the claim being that a certain level of GBC should be guaranteed for steps in GTR to be possible, *and vice versa*. Call this the parallel claim that could be distinguished from the now apparently not-so-friendly *serial* claim. According to the serial claim GTR is a trajectory an agent can begin to traverse only after having first completed GBC. The serial claim accepts that human agency differs from other types of agency because to appreciate its defining characteristics one needs a story involving GTR. But even if this is so, human agency is, according to this claim, nevertheless in the same ballroom as other types of agency, because it is a further development of a capacity we share with other agents, namely the capacity to control our body.

Whether the parallel or the serial claim applies to human agency will basically be an empirical matter. But once we have distinguished them, the serial claim does not appear to be very plausible. This is clear from the example above. Toddlers begin to take responsibility for what they say long before they control

their speech organ well enough to be entitled to correct descriptions of what they say. They acknowledge the attribution of descriptions of what they say (smiling happily when you ask them whether they meant 'cat'), endorse or reject your descriptions ("Spaghetti?" "Yah, pusdetty!"), and even commit themselves to descriptions they can't bring about (getting very upset because they want 'dam' ('jam') on their bread). An entirely different type of compelling evidence against the serial claim comes from people who need a highly developed mode of bodily control, such as surgeons, dentists, ballet dancers and sportsmen. The refinement of the bodily control sportsmen need to excel in their sports, would simply be impossible without their capacity to take responsibility for all those hours of training.

But if the parallel claim turns out to be the most plausible, something interesting follows, something that might appear to disturb the friend of neo-Humean naturalism (McDowell 1996). If GBC and GTR are parallel trajectories together making up a person's childhood, it does not seem to make much sense to claim that GTR depends on GBC without at the same time claiming that GBC depends on GTR. If this is right, it might help us make sense of the observation that many kinds of bodily control (such as those of sportsmen) would simply be impossible without GTR.⁷ This would provide grounds to argue that although there are lots of fascinating questions about agents' control of their body (How do they do that? – Lee 2005), asking questions about *minded* agency would be primarily a matter of asking questions about GTR as the trajectory on which minded agency depends. Stated differently the claim would be that characteristic minded actions, i.e. actions we would pick out as paradigms to show the distinction between what we *do* and what happens to us, would be actions we could not describe correctly without implying GTR.

6. Coda

This concludes my argument against the attempt to look for an account of minded agency as a trajectory dependent property without accepting that GTR would be the trajectory on which it depends. Of course, this is much less than a positive argument for, let alone a convincing account of minded agency as a GTR-dependent property. But let me summarize the steps I have taken by sketching the kind of story I should like to favour about what it means to learn to act, stressing that it requires selfhood and a normative framework.

My first step has been to suggest to Midgley's creator that if he really should like to create free beings capable of full-blown action, he should begin with children (*and adults*⁸), creatures that need *and have* a care-giving

⁷ I leave the issue undiscussed here, but the kind of effortless action that interests psychologists interested in *flow*, seems to be a paradigm. Cf. Velleman 2007.

⁸ The need for adults in my story might be considered an argument for the fellow creators' claim that the project is philosophically confused. I obviously need a further story about the

environment populated by adults. The idea has been that the vast difference between the deontic statuses of children and adults allow and force a child *to take a stance*. Unpacking this idea of taking a stance requires the concepts of selfhood and normativity. During childhood human beings are allowed and forced to locate themselves in a normative framework. In certain ways the idea derives from Taylor: being an agent means being oriented in moral space (Taylor 1989). It requires selfhood as well as normativity: a perspective on one's own behaviour as (in)appropriate.

My second step has been to propose that minded agency should be understood as a trajectory-dependent property. This led me to consider two trajectories of which it would make sense to claim that they mainly take place during childhood: GBC, or the growth of bodily control, and GTR, or the growth in taking responsibility. The point of this step has been to exploit the two fascinating features of childhood, both the difference in deontic status, and the dynamics of development.

The bulk of the paper, then, consisted of a description of GTR as consisting of a succession of four progressive, ever more advanced modes of taking responsibility. This description was needed to provide us with the means to begin to think of full responsibility as a sophisticated capacity that develops over time.

My final step has been to argue that the prospects of understanding GTR in terms of GBC are not very promising. This means that if minded agency is a trajectory-dependent property it will depend at least as much on GTR as on GBC. One consequence of this is that it should be possible, and that I claim it to make explanatory sense, to describe certain early developments in childhood in terms of GTR rather than in terms of GBC. And indeed that is what I claim: learning to act has often more to do with matters of selfhood and normativity than with matters of bodily control, even where it is easy to overlook this. The example I discussed can be used to support this claim.

It makes explanatory sense to think of the toddler's acquisition of the capacity to speak as primarily – both in the sense of what comes first as in the sense of what is essential – a matter of learning to speak *in public*. The child who says 'ca' is not just training her speech organ in order to acquire control over her body, but she's primarily engaged in communication, locating herself in a normative framework of people who mean something by what they say. Of course infants and toddlers babble a lot, just uttering sounds and noises using all the muscles involved in speech. I'm not claiming that there is no long and important story to tell about the low-level development of gaining control over one's body. But learning to say 'cat' and 'car,' and learning to say them appropriately on different (i.e. on the *right*) occasions, is a matter of

evolution of a species characterised by childhood to escape from a vicious circularity. Cf. Griffith and Stotz 2000. Bell 2010 does a great job in exploring an evolutionary and biological story of adulthood.

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communication, of exchanging sounds in an attempt to take a stance. Just try it out. Here is a simple experiment. Look together with your toddler at a very smart-looking smashing red car in which a cat is very dimly visible behind the window. Respond with "Oh, yes, a cat!" when your toddler says 'ca.' Her nods show enough! The child is taking position, she is taking a stance, she is speaking *in public*, right from the start, long before she's capable of controlling her speech organ well enough to speak correctly in the sense of making the appropriate pronunciations. So what she tries to do, what she's engaged to learn, is to perform behaviour we need to analyse in terms of GTR. Her performances are proto-actions, not because they are early attempts to display controlled bodily movements, but because they are early attempts to take responsibility for her stance in the normative framework of human society.

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Toward an Epistemology of Art

Arnold Cusmariu

Abstract: An epistemology of art has seemed problematic mainly because of arguments claiming that an essential element of a theory of knowledge, truth, has no place in aesthetic contexts. For, if it is objectively true that something is beautiful, it seems to follow that the predicate “is beautiful” expresses a property – a view asserted by Plato but denied by Hume and Kant. But then, if the belief that something is beautiful is not objectively true, we cannot be said to know that something is beautiful and the path to an epistemology of art is effectively blocked. The article places the existence aesthetic properties in the proper context; presents a logically correct argument for the existence of such properties; identifies strategies for responding to this argument; explains why objections by Hume, Kant, and several other philosophers fail; and sketches a realization account of beauty influenced by Hogarth.

Keywords: epistemology of art, aesthetic properties, the problem of universals, realization, Plato, David Hume, Immanuel Kant

1. Preliminaries

Philosophers have argued that truth, an essential component of any theory of knowledge, has no place in aesthetic contexts, thereby raising a seemingly decisive objection to efforts aimed at formulating an epistemology of art. Thus, while some philosophers might agree that we can be justified in believing that something is beautiful, others would categorically deny that such beliefs are objectively true because this would be to grant that there is such a property as being beautiful. But, it has been argued, there is no such property as being beautiful. In fact, there are no aesthetic properties at all; it's just a *façon de parler*. If aesthetic judgments are not objectively true, the path to an epistemology of art seems effectively blocked.

As a sculptor and a philosopher, I consider the formulation of an epistemology of art¹ essential to building a philosophical foundation for my artwork.² Accordingly, I will defend the thesis that there are aesthetic properties. I will do so by reference to what has traditionally been considered the archetypal aesthetic property, beauty – for me the key goal of art. The defense I will present will cover aesthetic properties generally.

¹ Cusmariu 2012 and Cusmariu 2016 present and defend an epistemology of science and mathematics. Whether a semantic epistemology of art is attainable is discussed in the last section of this article.

² Cusmariu 2009, Cusmariu 2015a, and Cusmariu 2015b explain why such a foundation is important.

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The article proceeds as follows:

Sections 2 and 3 place the issue at hand in the proper context³ by presenting in technical detail a Platonist solution to a key aspect of the problem of universals.

Section 4 presents a logically correct argument to show that beauty is a property, which can be generalized to all aesthetic properties.

Section 5 lists challenges to the soundness of this argument discussed later.

Section 6 explains the distinction between the analysis of predication and the analysis of predicates, whose significance is made clear subsequently.

Sections 7-16 state and then answer objections to beauty as a property raised in the following works: Hume 2008 [1757], Kant 1987 [1781], Ayer 1946, Scarry 1999, Zangwill 2001, McMahan 2007, and Scruton 2009.

Section 17 sketches a realization account of beauty in general terms and Section 18 follows up with details based on the views of William Hogarth.

Finally, Section 19 explores the prospects for a semantic epistemology of art.

2. The Problem of Universals: A Key Aspect

Four clearly distinct meanings of “is” require philosophical analysis:

- (i) the “is” of predication, e.g., “7 is a prime number;”
- (ii) the “is” of existence, e.g., “there is a number greater than 5;”
- (iii) the “is” of identity, e.g., “7 + 5 = 12;” and
- (iv) the “is” of composition, e.g., “a chair is a seat, back, legs and arm rests.”

Analysis of predication entails completing the schemas,

- (1) $\forall x(Fx \equiv \underline{\quad})$
- (2) $\forall x_1 \dots x_n(R(x_1 \dots x_n) \equiv \underline{\quad})$,

where “ Fx ” is any meaningful monadic predicative open sentence and “ $R(x_1 \dots x_n)$ ” is any meaningful relational predicative open sentence.⁴

3. A Platonist Solution

Platonism completes (1) and (2) by appealing to “one over many” properties and relations (in intension) understood as abstract, non-contingent *universalia ante*

³ In *Art & Abstract Objects*, editor Christy Mag Uidhir (2012, 1) comments: “... aesthetics has long cultivated a disturbingly insular character ...” I entirely agree. This is one of the points of this article.

⁴ The term “meaningful” is used here without any commitment to a theory of meaning or meaningfulness.

rem independent of mind, time, space, and empirical reality in general – what Frege called “the third realm” (Frege 1956 [1918], 302):

(1*) $\forall x(Fx \equiv x \text{ exemplifies } F\text{-ness})$

(2*) $\forall x_1 \dots x_n(R(x_1 \dots x_n) \equiv \langle x_1 \dots x_n \rangle \text{ exemplifies } R\text{-ness})$

Platonism interprets (1*) and (2*) as quantifying over properties and relations (in intension),⁵ allowing substitutions for “ Fx ” in (1*) and “ $R(x_1 \dots x_n)$ ” in (2*) whatever degree of latitude is necessary for a general analysis of predication. Thus, truth-values are properties of propositions (Frege 1970 [1892]); mathematics studies properties and relations of and between abstract objects, including properties and relations themselves (Gödel 1944); and laws of nature are causal or probabilistic relations between generic events understood as property exemplifications (Kim 1976; Brown 1992).

Restrictions on (1*) are needed to block counterexamples such as the equivalence class Bertrand Russell discovered that bears his name (Russell 1967[1902], 124-125). The Russell sentence “ $\sim(x \text{ exemplifies } x)$ ” is a meaningful monadic predicative open sentence, hence may be substituted for “ Fx ” in (1*) but fails to express a property because a contradiction follows from this substitution.⁶ Under Platonism, no restrictions are placed on (1*) and (2*) beyond logical form and those required to secure consistency.

Only unbridled Platonism, which I hold (cf. Bealer 1982; Tooley 1977; Wolterstorff 1970), can solve the problem of universals for the whole of science and mathematics (cf. Whitehead 1925; Church 1951; Penrose 2005).⁷ Unbridled Platonism entails the existence of properties and relations of any type or complexity whatever.

Popular ways of begging the question against Platonist *universalia ante rem* is to assert that existence of properties and relations depends on whether:

(a) they are exemplified or exemplifiable;

⁵ Shapiro 1991 covers technical issues involved in such quantification.

⁶ I discuss this problem informally in Cusmariu 1978a and more formally in Cusmariu 1979b. Three other problems for Platonism, negative existentials, the Bradley-Ryle exemplification regress and the “Third Man” argument are discussed in Cusmariu 1978b, 1980, and 1985, respectively. A recent attack on abstract entities (Dorr 2008), considers the Bradley argument definitive (44), evidently unaware that, as shown in Cusmariu 1980, Platonism can easily escape the regress. Briefly: there is no infinite regress of exemplification relations because, being a recurring universal, the same exemplification relation holds throughout, so all stages of the regress collapse into one; even if there were such a regress, an infinity (denumerable or not) of relations is not vicious under Platonism; finally, to insist on a different exemplification relation at every stage of the regress is to beg the question against “one over many” Platonism.

⁷ Predication is implicit in the $\varphi(x)$ condition of the comprehension schema of Zermelo-Fraenkel (ZF) set theory, $(\exists y)(x)(x \in y \leftrightarrow x \in v \ \& \ \varphi(x))$. Only unbridled Platonism meets the requirement that attributes match the logical complexity of predicative open-sentence substitutions of $\varphi(x)$ in the language of ZF.

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- (b) they are related causally, counterfactually, or probabilistically to anything;
- (c) exemplification is contingent or necessary, analytic or synthetic;
- (d) exemplification supervenes on the exemplification of other properties;
- (e) exemplification is "objective," "subjective," "contextual," or "conceivable;"
- (f) exemplification is inferable from other properties an object might have;
- (g) exemplification is justified only if some other property is exemplified;
- (h) an empirical test exists or can be devised for observing exemplification;
- (i) any of (a)-(h) are justified, a priori or a posteriori.

4. Proving That Beauty is a Property

What about "x is beautiful"? This is a meaningful monadic open sentence in which the copula has predicative meaning, hence its account falls under (1*):

(1*a) $\forall x(x \text{ is beautiful} \equiv x \text{ exemplifies } Beauty)$

However, Platonism formally implies the existence of *Beauty* as the property exemplified by all and only beautiful objects if and only if substituting "x is beautiful" for "*Fx*" in (1*) yields a consistent sentence. (1*a) seems to be a consistent sentence. The question whether beauty is a property, then, has an easy answer under unbridled Platonism: it is the same as the answer to every question whether an open sentence expresses a property. On this view, the ontology of "x is beautiful" is nothing special. The same is true of every meaningful open sentence of the form "x is *F*" where "*F*" is an aesthetic predicate.

The existence of *Beauty* can be proved by a simple argument:

(AC1) If "*Gx*" is a meaningful monadic predicative open sentence and the result of substituting "*Gx*" for "*Fx*" in (1*) is a consistent sentence, then there is a property expressed by "*Gx*."

(AC2) "x is beautiful" is a meaningful monadic predicative open sentence and the result of substituting "x is beautiful" for "*Fx*" in (1*) is a consistent sentence.⁸

Therefore,

(AC3) There is a property expressed by "x is beautiful," *being beautiful*.

5. Challenging the Argument

Those who wish to reject the conclusion of a logically correct argument must offer grounds for rejecting its premises, in this case (AC1) or (AC2).

⁸ Syntactically, "x is beautiful" is the simplest member of an equivalence class of open sentences that includes, e.g., $(y)(y = x \rightarrow y \text{ is beautiful})$, meaning that the consistency requirement must apply to the entire equivalence class. This is complex technical issue best left to a paper with a different scope.

(AC1) is a conditional, so the simplest strategy in the present context is to grant that the (conjunctive) antecedent of (AC1) is true for “x is beautiful” and show that the negation of the consequent is true for “x is beautiful.” That is, show the following:

(AC1.1) There is no property expressed by “x is beautiful.”

(AC2) is a conjunction, so there are two strategies for challenging it. The first strategy is to show that the negation of the first conjunct is true:

(AC2.1) “x is beautiful” is not a meaningful monadic predicative open sentence.

The second strategy is to show that the negation of the second conjunct is true:

(AC2.2) The result of substituting “x is beautiful” for “Fx” in (1*) is not a consistent sentence.

Strategies for defending (AC1.1) discussed below in connection with the objections of philosophers named earlier are:

(AC1.11) “x is beautiful” does not express a property because aesthetic judgments only describe attitudes or states of mind and are intended to evoke responses.

(AC1.12) “x is beautiful” does not express a Platonist property because aesthetic properties can be analyzed in terms of “projections of sentiment.”

(AC1.13) “x is beautiful” does not express a Platonist property because beauty does not exist independently of mind; beautiful objects; or properties common to all and only beautiful objects.

(AC1.14) Science does not recognize the property of being beautiful.

(AC1.15) “x is beautiful” does not express a property because a property provides information relevant to object recognition or to an object’s function or purpose; *being beautiful* provides no such information.

(AC1.16) “x is beautiful” does not express a property because this property is not the reason why things are beautiful.

(AC1.17) If “x is beautiful” expresses a property, then we must analyze it in terms of properties had by all beautiful things; but this is unwarranted.

I am not aware of anyone who has adopted strategies (AC2.1) or (AC2.2). I will skip the latter but will discuss the former in the case of Hume and Kant because of the opportunity to apply tools of modern logic to the views of two great and influential philosophers.

It is beyond the scope of an article such as this to discuss the following claims:

(i) “x is beautiful” does not express a Platonist property because there are no abstract objects of any kind.

(ii) Sentences containing an apparent reference to the property of being beautiful can be paraphrased into logically equivalent sentences without such reference.

(iii) An adequate theory of the aesthetic dimension is possible without assuming there is such a property as being beautiful, or any other aesthetic property.

6. A Basic Distinction Explained

Though the term “aesthetics” is a 17th century invention (Baumgarten 2013 [1739], §533, 205) the subject itself has been in philosophy ever since Plato put beauty on the philosophical map. He singled it out as a special form and placed it alongside truth and justice at the foundations of civilization.

When we apply Plato’s Theory of Forms to the problem of universals, we find that the ontological status of beauty, truth, and justice is the same – indeed, no different from that of other forms. A conundrum arises: How can the ontology of these forms be the same when the analyses of the forms themselves are so very different, belonging to three branches of philosophy: aesthetics, epistemology, and ethics?

The appearance of inconsistency can be dispelled by drawing a basic distinction between the analysis of predication and the analysis of predicates.

(AP1) “*x is beautiful*,” “*x is true*” and “*x is just*” univocally express monadic predication, which Platonism analyzes according to (1*) as exemplification of *Truth, Justice* and *Beauty*. Flowers are beautiful, sentences (propositions, beliefs, statements) are true, and actions are just in the same sense of “are.” Moreover, the ontology of the forms involved must be treated the same way under the Theory of Forms for a simple and technically sound reason: quantifiers must be given the same interpretation for all objects so that the system can define rules of inference for quantifiers (the usual four). “There is” must have the same interpretation in “there is a property all and only beautiful things have in common,” “there is a property all and only true sentences have in common” and “there is a property all and only just acts have in common” even though the properties in question are different and are exemplified by objects of different categories.

(AP2) Logically separate from the analysis of predication and its ontology is the analysis of predicative content, e.g., how the predicate “*F*” in “*x is F*” is to be analyzed and even whether such an analysis is possible, necessary or justified. It would be irrelevant to object to an analysis of predication or its ontology by raising problems for an analysis of predicative content. Thus, while Plato proposed an analysis of what it is to be just as well as an analysis of the form justice, he might well not have done both. It would be irrelevant to object to the Theory of Forms as an analysis of predication in “*x is just*” by raising problems for Plato’s principle of non-interference in his analysis of justice.

7. Hume 2008 [1757]: Objection Answered

Hume stated the following in a famous and often-quoted passage:

Beauty is no quality of things themselves: it exists merely in the mind which contemplates them; and each mind perceives a different beauty. To seek the real beauty is as fruitless as to pretend to ascertain the real sweet or real bitter. (2008 [1757]: 136-137).⁹

Objection: There is no property expressed by “x is beautiful” because beauty exists merely in the contemplating mind.¹⁰

Comment: The argument below is a reconstruction using modern terminology to make Hume’s objection easier to grasp in the present context.

(H1) Beauty exists merely in the contemplating mind.

(H2) If beauty exists merely in the contemplating mind, then the open sentence “x is beautiful” is not objectively true of anything.

(H3) If the open sentence “x is beautiful” is not objectively true of anything, then it is not a proper substitution in the abstraction schema for properties (1*).

(H4) If the open sentence “x is beautiful” is not a proper substitution in the abstraction schema for properties (1*), then the open sentence “x is beautiful” does not express a property.

Therefore,

(H5) The open sentence “x is beautiful” does not express a property.

Reply: (H3) is false. An open sentence need not be objectively true of anything to be a proper substitution in the abstraction schema for properties (1*). It is sufficient that the open sentence “x is beautiful” is meaningful, monadic, and its substitution does not lead to contradiction. The Humean condition would severely hamstring (1*) as part of the solution of the problem of universals.

8. Restating Hume’s Objection

Comment: The objection below was not available to anyone writing philosophy during the 18th century. I raise it only to answer what I think is an interesting “what if” question. The same applies to the restatement of Kant’s objection in Section 10.

Objection: “x is beautiful” does not express a property because this sentence is not monadic; hence it is not a proper substitution in the abstraction schema (1*).

⁹ Hutcheson 1973 and Burke 1958 held a similar view.

¹⁰ Another discussion of Hume’s objection is Mothersill 1984, 177-208. This book also approaches the question whether beauty is a property without regard to the problem of universals; nor is there an effort to extract technically detailed arguments from Hume (or Kant, Mothersill 1984, 209-246.)

A promising approach here is Russellian (Russell 1905): Show that the apparent logical form of “ x is beautiful” is not its real form. That is, appearances to the contrary notwithstanding, the logical form of “ x is beautiful” is not monadic. The argument would go this way: Propose an analysis showing the logical form of “ x is beautiful” to be very different from what it seems to be – call it H^* – such that H^* may no longer be substituted for “ Fx ” in (1*), thus blocking the existence of the property *being beautiful*.

What, then, is the logical form of “ x is beautiful” that Hume can be construed as proposing? His comment that beauty “exists merely in the contemplating mind” suggests that the logical form of “ x is beautiful” can be rendered not as monadic but rather as relational because the relational terms “considered” and “contemplates” occur in it:

(H^*) “whoever contemplates x considers x to be beautiful.”

Thus, substituting (H^*) for “ Fx ” in (1*) is inappropriate because only monadic substitutions are allowed, whereas (H^*) seems not to have that form.

Reply: Let us make the logical form of (H^*) explicit:

(H^{**}) “(y)(y contemplates $x \rightarrow y$ considers x to be beautiful).”

What determines the degree (power) of an open sentence is the number of variables occurring free in it, as decided by Frege’s development of quantification theory. (H^{**}) contains only one free variable, “ x .” The fact that this variable occurs twice, once on each side of the conditional, does not mean that (H^{**}) is not monadic, nor is it relevant that relational terms occur in it. Therefore, (H^{**}) may legitimately be substituted for “ Fx ” in (1*), resulting in the property *being considered to be beautiful by whoever contemplates it*. Of course, from the fact that this property is exemplified it does not follow that anything is beautiful, just as Hume correctly implied.

However, the issue is whether the existence of the property *being beautiful* follows from the existence of the property *being considered to be beautiful by whoever contemplates it*. Further analysis is necessary to make this clear. In a paper of this scope I can only explain informally how syntactical requirements on substitution in (1*) would handle logically complex open sentences such as (H^{**}).

The consequent of (H^{**}), where the aesthetic predicate “beautiful” occurs, is ambiguous between a *de re* interpretation,

($H^{**}a$) “ y considers x to be beautiful,”

and a *de dicto* interpretation

($H^{**}b$) “ y considers that x is beautiful.”

($H^{**}a$) shows a relation between a person, an object and a property as an instance of *de re* attitudes, which are triadic. Therefore, on the *de re* interpretation of (H^{**}), the complex property *being considered to be beautiful by*

whoever contemplates it has the property *being beautiful* as a constituent; hence the existence of this property follows.

In (H**b) monadic predication occurs in the propositional clause owing to the predicative use of the copula. When this use is analyzed as part of a solution to the problem of universals, the existence of the property *being beautiful* follows. Thus, the property *being beautiful* is a constituent of the complex property *being considered to be beautiful by whoever contemplates it* under a *de dicto* interpretation as well.

Therefore, the existence (not exemplification) of the property *being beautiful* follows from the existence of the property *being considered to be beautiful by whoever contemplates it*. Modern logic does not help Hume avoid having to grant that there is a property expressed by “*x* is beautiful.”

Counter: Another parsing of “*x* is beautiful” that would change its logical form in a way that is consistent with Hume’s view on the nature of aesthetic judgments is this:

(H***) “Pleasurable sensations are experienced while contemplating *x*.”

Reply: (H***) won’t do because pleasurable sensations can be experienced in contexts having nothing whatever to do with beauty or any other aesthetic property. Changing logical form does not render a parsing immune to counterexamples.¹¹

Counter: Perhaps Hume can complicate the parsing of “*x* is beautiful” slightly:

(H**a) “Pleasurable sensations are experienced while contemplating *x* aesthetically.”

Reply: (H**a) won’t do because predication of “beautiful” is embedded in the true counterfactual this parsing entails: “Were it not for the fact that *x* is beautiful or has aesthetic value or has properties that are beautiful or have aesthetic value, *x* would not invite aesthetic contemplation.” Counterfactuals have properties as constituents by virtue of predication as well. Thus, a proposition expressed by a sentence of the form “were it not for the fact that-*p*,” it would not be the case that-*q*” entails the existence of whatever properties are entailed by predication implicit in *p* and *q*, as we already saw in (H**b). Finally, there is the very real possibility that pleasurable sensations could be experienced while contemplating aesthetically something grotesque. It is easy to find examples in modern art that prove the inequivalence of “*x* is beautiful” and (H**a).

¹¹ Ramsey’s comment that Russell theory of descriptions as a “paradigm of philosophy” (Ramsey 1965, 263) is true also in this sense: The theory contained the novel methodological insight that the analysis of logical form requires nothing less than logically necessary and sufficient conditions. On methodological aspects of Russell’s theory, see Black 1944, 242-244.

I conclude that a Russellian construal of Hume's view that "beauty exists merely in the mind which contemplates them" does not show that "x is beautiful" is not a proper substitution in (1*). It appears that modern logic cannot rescue Hume.

9. Kant (1987 [1781]): Objection Answered

Remarks at several junctures of the *Critique of Judgment* indicate that Kant agrees with Hume on fundamental issues regarding judgments of taste:

A judgment of taste is not a cognitive judgment and so is not a logical judgment but an aesthetic one, by which we mean a judgment whose determining basis *cannot be other than subjective*. (Kant 1987 [1781], §1, 204)

He will talk about the beautiful as if beauty were a characteristic of the object and the judgment were logical (namely a cognition of the object through concepts of it) even though in fact the judgment is only aesthetic and refers the object's presentation merely to the subject. (Kant 1987 [1781], §6, 211)

Just as if, when we call something beautiful, we had to regard beauty as a characteristic of the object, determined in it according to concepts, even though in fact, apart from a reference to the subject's feeling, beauty is nothing by itself. (Kant 1987 [1781], §9, 218)

Objection 1: "x is beautiful" does not express a property because judgments of beauty only refer to feelings experienced in reaction to an object's presentation.

Reply: Kant's views about the nature of judgments of taste appear *prima facie* to be equivalent to Hume's. Thus, we could generate a Kantian argument for the conclusion that "x is beautiful" does not express a property with only slight revisions of the Humean argument presented above:

(K1) Judgments of beauty only refer to feelings experienced in reaction to an object's presentation.

(K2) If judgments of beauty only refer to feelings experienced in reaction to an object's presentation, then the open sentence "x is beautiful" is not objectively true of anything.

(K3) If the open sentence "x is beautiful" is not objectively true of anything, then it is not a proper substitution in the abstraction schema for properties (1*).

(K4) If the open sentence "x is beautiful" is not a proper substitution in the abstraction schema for properties (1*), then the open sentence "x is beautiful" does not express a property.

Therefore,

(K5) The open sentence "x is beautiful" does not express a property.

Reply: (K3) is still false and for the same reasons as before.

10. Restating Kant's Objection

Objection 2: "x is beautiful" does not express a property because this sentence is not monadic; hence it is not a proper substitution in the abstraction scheme for properties (1*).

Kant has available in his aesthetic theory resources that may allow him to defend this objection for different reasons.¹²

Judgments of taste are part of Kant's effort to explain how judgments in general are possible – the possibility of judgment being a key concern in all three *Critiques*. Judgments of taste are possible, says Kant, only after a kind of conceptual purity has been achieved at the last of four "moments" – a notoriously difficult concept to interpret that I can only sketch here (cf. Allison, Guyer, and Wenzel).

In the first moment, one frees the mind of expectations of personal gain. This poses significant challenges because it runs counter to the mindset required to accomplish goals needed for survival. With self-interest switched off, one moves on to the second moment, where creativity occurs in the form of free play of the imagination. In the third moment, one withholds the application of concepts related to objects of aesthetic appreciation, including concepts related to purpose or function. Having reached the fourth moment, one is now "open" to the aesthetic dimension and judgments of taste are possible, i.e., seeing an object only as an aesthetic "end-in-itself."¹³

If Kant is to block the substitution of "x is beautiful" for "Fx" in (1*) under a Russellian variant of strategy S3, he must also supply an explanation of why this open sentence does not have a logical form that implies the existence of *being beautiful*.

The four moments together with Kant's views on judgments of beauty suggest the following parsing of "x is beautiful:"

(K*) "x is an object of disinterested and purpose-free satisfaction unmediated by concepts."

However, (K*) fails to capture the subjectivist aspect of beauty in the Kant quotes above. Let us also be explicit about the logical structure of (K*):

(K**) "(y)(if y is a person, then x is an object of disinterested and purpose-free satisfaction unmediated by concepts for y.)"

(K**) is a meaningful open sentence in one free variable, hence may be substituted for "Fx" in (1*). The result is the complex property *being the object of*

¹² In light of the "antinomy of taste" (Kant 1987: §5), S3 may be an option for Kant as well; how exactly is beyond the scope of this article. An insightful recent discussion of the antinomy is Allison 2001, Ch. 11.

¹³ Kant's description of the four moments suggests he is an aesthetic attitude theorist in a sense that leaves him open to well-known objections (Dickie 1964).

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disinterested and purposeless satisfaction unmediated by concepts for any person, which does not seem to entail the property being beautiful.

Reply: The inequivalence of (K**) and “x is beautiful” leaps to the eye. We can easily choose aesthetic predicates other than “beautiful” and find cases of “disinterested and purpose-free satisfaction unmediated by concepts for a person.”

Counter: Kant can try to block the substitution of “x is beautiful” for “Fx” in (1*) on grounds of logical form without claiming equivalence between (K**) and “x is beautiful,” regarding which here are three options.

Option 1: A deductive argument with the conclusion,

(C) “x is beautiful” is not a monadic predicative open sentence.

Give his fourth-moment view about the possibility of aesthetic judgments, the premise Kant has available to support this conclusion is,

(P1) x is an object of disinterested and purpose-free satisfaction unmediated by concepts for a person.

However, P1 is insufficient for a valid inference to (C). To secure validity, a second premise would be needed, such as

P2. If x is an object of disinterested and purpose-free satisfaction unmediated by concepts for a person, then “x is beautiful” is not a monadic predicative open sentence.

Reply: The problem here is that the logical form of sentences about an object x does not depend on psychological factors about the sort of attention that a person can direct upon x. Thus, Kant is open to Frege’s critique of psychologism (Frege 1974 [1884]), which warns against going from psychology to logic. So Option 1 is a failure.

Option 2: Assert a non-logical relation R between “x is beautiful” and “x is an object of disinterested and purpose-free satisfaction unmediated by concepts for a person,” such that “x is beautiful” features neither monadic nor relational predication owing to bearing R to “x is an object of disinterested and purpose-free satisfaction unmediated by concepts for a person.”

Reply: The problem here is that it is not easy to say what R might be. A possible candidate is supervenience. However, supervenience is usually understood (Kim 1984, 1990) as a relation between sets of properties, not properties taken singly. Second, if Kant chose to redefine supervenience to hold between properties, he would have to agree that “x is beautiful” expressed a property, which is precisely what he is trying to deny! In any case, even if a suitable definition of property-property supervenience could be formulated according to which judgments of taste supervened on satisfying disinterested and purpose-free satisfaction unmediated by concepts for a person, it would not follow that the logical form of judgments of taste supervened on the conditions that must be satisfied in order for someone to be in position to make such

judgments. Supervenience is also a non-starter. What this relation *R* might be remains a mystery. Option 2 also fails.

Option 3: Kant could give up on “*x* is an object of disinterested and purpose-free satisfaction unmediated by concepts for a person” as the logical form of “*x* is beautiful” and try to block substitution of “*x* is beautiful” for “*Fx*” in (1*) by regarding the logical form of judgments of taste as inferable from the three moments prior to the fourth – where, by definition, one is not yet in a position to make judgments of taste, including whether something is beautiful.

Reply: The problem here is that, unlike truth and justification, logical form is not the sort of property that can be passed from step to step even in a deductive sequence. So, Kant is not entitled to expect the logical form of “*x* is beautiful” to be other than monadic in the fourth moment just because (assuming for the sake of argument) it is not monadic in the three prior moments.

I conclude that Kant’s four-moment theory of aesthetic judgments does not show that “*x* is beautiful” is not a proper substitution in (1*). It seems that modern logic cannot help rescue Kant either.

11. A Different Problem for Kant

Kant’s “disinterested purposelessness unmediated by concepts” constraint is beset by a serious problem that is independent of whether he can block substitution of “*x* is beautiful” for “*Fx*” in (1*): Such a constraint would make it all but impossible to appreciate, let alone derive satisfaction from, the beauty of works of art that are conceptually challenging (Wenzel 2005, 70), some created in Kant’s own day.

Consider Beethoven’s String Quartet in F Op. 59 (1806), whose four sonata-form movements require grasping complex musical concepts to fully appreciate their beauty.¹⁴ Without the mediation of such concepts, this music will seem disconnected noise, as it did to contemporaries unfamiliar with the new idiom.¹⁵ It will not do to respond that appreciating such music involves technical rather than aesthetic judgments, which Kant can admit entail the mediation of concepts, because the beauty of technical innovation in matters of musical form is central to Beethoven’s music and musical form qualifies as an aesthetic property in its own right. Beethoven’s predecessors Mozart and Haydn went to great lengths to make it such; he strove to realize it in his own music as well.

¹⁴ Cf. Radcliffe (1965, 48-60) and Kerman (1979, 117-154). Bell (1913, 23-24) makes similar points in his observations on conceptual demands involved in music appreciation.

¹⁵ Kerman writes (1979, 119-120) “They [the Razumovsky Quartets, of which Op. 59 is No. 1] were the first great works by Beethoven to have been lost on their essential audience;” and later (153-154) about the same music: “In their own day they puzzled and even repelled listeners.”

An even more dramatic example is the *Grosse Fuge* in B-flat Op. 133 (1826), which achieves terrifying aesthetic effects by beautiful technical means, tearing tonality apart in a feat of virtuosity whose lessons took the rest of the 19th century, and beyond, to absorb. The paradox that is the *Grosse Fuge* drew the admiration of Stravinsky.¹⁶

It might be argued that Kant's theory has merit because it predicted the course of modern art, which took an abstract turn in the twentieth century. The beauty of abstract art can seemingly be appreciated only if viewers are willing to suspend mediation of concepts.¹⁷ What is closer to the truth, however, is that aesthetic appreciation in a modern art museum or a modern music concert need only suspend familiar concepts about sight and sound. These must be replaced not by a fourth-moment conceptual *tabula rasa* but rather by new and even more complicated concepts of tonality and form if what is seen and heard is to make sense, let alone be judged aesthetically.¹⁸

Tristan Tzara famously asked (1989 [1922], 248): "What good did the theories of the philosophers do us? Did they help us to take a single step forward?" I argued (Cusmariu 2009 and Cusmariu 2015) in the context of sculpture that conceptual change – and with it progress – in art is as real as it is in science. Those articles contain paradigm shifts to which mediation of concepts from ontology and epistemology is essential, to the artist during the creative process as well as the art lover seeking interpretation. As a working artist, my most serious reservation about Kant is that the third *Critique* makes no room even for the possibility of such developments. Philosophers writing on the arts need to keep this in mind, if only to avoid Barnett Newman's famous barb (Newman 1952) that "aesthetics is for me like ornithology must be for the birds."

12. Ayer 1946: Objection Answered

In a passage that echoes Hume and Kant, A.J. Ayer wrote:

Such aesthetic words as "beautiful" and "hideous" are employed, not to make statements of fact, but simply to express certain feelings and evoke a certain response. [T]here is no sense in attributing objective validity to aesthetic judgments. (Ayer 1946, 113)

Objection 1: "x is beautiful" does not express a property because the term "beautiful" is only used to express feelings and evoke a response, not to make a statement of objective fact.

¹⁶ Radcliffe notes (1965, 181) that Beethoven's late quartets at the time "were generally considered repellantly eccentric" and that the *Grosse Fuge* was "dismissed as an unintelligible freak" (121).

¹⁷ A new theory of abstraction in art is presented in Cusmariu 2015a.

¹⁸ Hume observed (2008, 151): "A common audience can never divest themselves so far of their usual ideas and sentiments, as to relish pictures which nowise resemble them."

Comment: To put Ayer's point in argument form, we need only restate slightly the Humean and Kantian arguments above:

(A1) People use the term "beautiful" to express feelings and evoke a response.

(A2) If people use the term "beautiful" to express feelings and evoke a response, then the open sentence "x is beautiful" is not objectively true of anything.

(A3) If the open sentence "x is beautiful" is not objectively true of anything, then it is not a proper substitution in the abstraction schema for properties (1*).

(A4) If the open sentence "x is beautiful" is not a proper substitution in the abstraction schema for properties (1*), then the open sentence "x is beautiful" does not express a property.

Therefore,

(A5) The open sentence "x is beautiful" does not express a property.

Reply: The problem, once again, is that (A3) is false. An open sentence need not be objectively true of anything to be a proper substitution in the abstraction schema for properties (1*). It is sufficient that the open sentence "x is beautiful" is meaningful and monadic.

Objection 2: Here is what Ayer has to say about universals:

The assertion that relations are universals provokes the question, 'What is a universal?'; and this question is not, as it has traditionally been regarded, a question about the character of real objects but a request for a definition of a certain term. Philosophy, as it is written, is full of questions like this, which seem to be factual but are not. (Ayer 1946, 58-59)

Reply: The problem of universals arises in part because of the need for "a definition of a certain term," i.e., the predicative meaning of the copula, whose analysis must be necessary and sufficient for science and mathematics as well as ordinary language. Such an analysis is not a simple matter.

13. McMahon 2007: Objections Answered

Echoing Hume, Kant and Ayer, Jennifer McMahon wrote:

Beauty is not a property of objects. A property is something that either exists independently of mind, like solidity or mass, or is a subpersonal response to properties that exist independently of mind, like color or shape. In addition, a property provides us with information relevant to object recognition, the object's function or some determinate purpose. Most succinctly, a property is a feature recognized by science. Beauty, on the other hand, is a subpersonal response to the perception of properties whose construal in perception pleases us. (McMahon 2007, 198-9)

There are three objections to consider here.

Objection 1: "x is beautiful" does not express a property independently of mind; but only exists as a "subpersonal response to the perception of properties whose construal in perception pleases us."

Reply 1: This is essentially a restatement of the views of Hume, Kant and Ayer presented above. The argument corresponding to McMahon's objection is subject to problems already indicated and as such need not be spelled out in detail.

Reply 2: McMahon's "subpersonal response to the perception of properties whose construal in perception pleases us" understates the effects of being in the presence of beauty. In a famous passage of the *Phaedrus* (1961, 251a, 497), Plato put it this way:¹⁹

But when one ... beholds a godlike face or bodily form that truly expresses beauty, first there come upon him a shuddering and a measure of that awe which the vision inspired, and then reverence as at the sight of a god, and but for fear of being deemed a very madman he would offer sacrifice to his beloved, as to a holy image of deity.

However, as Plato well understood, such accounts are a separate matter from the analysis of predication and its ontological implications. Unless reasons are given why aesthetic predication (not predicates) deserves special treatment, which McMahon does not provide, a schema such as (1*) applies and the argument above shows that "x is beautiful" does indeed express a property.

McMahon also begs the question against the Platonist conception of properties, according to which all properties, including aesthetic ones, are abstract objects existing independently of mind, as *universalia ante rem*. Beauty exemplars might well cause a "subpersonal response" in us but this does not mean that the existence of the property itself is contingent upon a "subpersonal response" to instances of it. The objection also begs the question against Platonism in requiring properties to be properties of something, which rejects the Platonist distinction between existence and exemplification. Finally, turning psychological concepts such as "existing independently of mind" and "being a subpersonal response to properties that exist independently of mind" into restrictions on substitutions for "Fx" in (1*) severely limits this schema as a general solution to the problems of universals.

Objection 2: "x is beautiful" does not express a property because science does not recognize beauty as a property.

Reply: It is stating the obvious that aesthetic sentences are not (yet?) sentences of science. But so what? The ontological status of aesthetic properties is determined by an abstraction principle such as (1*), not by empirical science. In any case, science does recognize beauty as a property. Scarry (1999, 52) says as much. Physicists Paul Dirac and Hermann Weyl took beauty very seriously (Farmelo 2002, 158; Chandrasekar 1987, 65). The Dirac equation – where space and time, energy and momentum, appear on an equal footing – is beautiful in an abstract, mathematical sense, making it reasonable to suppose that its exemplification in nature is beautiful in an empirical sense in light of the general

¹⁹ For a cinematic portrayal of what Plato had in mind, see Cusmariu 2015b, 98.

metaphysical relation under Platonism (Penrose 2005) between things mathematical and things empirical, borne out by modern physics. Moreover, logicians and mathematicians routinely attribute aesthetic properties such as elegance to proofs.

Objection 3: “*x* is beautiful” does not express a property because a property provides information relevant to object recognition or to the object’s function or purpose; *being beautiful* provides no such information.

Reply: This requirement is much too strong. It rules out properties closed under the usual Boolean operations: (a) conditional properties such as *being colored if red*; (b) properties everything has such as *being red or not red*; (c) properties nothing has such as *being a unicorn*; (d) properties nothing can have such as *and being odd and even*; (e) vague properties such as *being taller than someone* and *having less money than last year*; and (f) properties expressed by what George Boolos (1998, 57) has called “nonfirstorderizable” sentences such as “being a man who walked into a room unaccompanied by anyone else,” which could be true of several people at the same time. Counterexamples could be easily multiplied. Moreover, if McMahan is understood to use “property” generically to include relations, a list of counterexamples is easily compiled once again. *Being taller than at least one other person* provides no information “relevant to object recognition or to the object’s function or purpose;” nor does *sitting next to someone at the movies*.

Platonist schemas (1*) and (2*) allow any meaningful monadic open sentences to be substituted in (1*) and any meaningful relational open sentences to be substituted in (2*) for sound philosophical reasons: to have available an analysis of predication suitable for any context whatever. Adding an informativeness requirement hamstrings (1*) and (2*) to the point where they can no longer offer truly general solutions to the problem of universals, including, as noted, science and mathematics.

14. Scarry 1999: Objections Answered

Elaine Scarry writes:

At no point will there be any aspiration to speak in these pages of unattached Beauty, or of the attributes of unattached Beauty. But there are attributes that are, without exception, present across different objects (faces, flowers, birdsongs, men, horses, pots, and poems) one of which is this impulse toward begetting. It is impossible to conceive of a beautiful thing that does not have this attribute. (Scarry 1999, 9)

Scarry also raises two objections here and a third later in the book.

Objection 1: “*x* is beautiful” does not express a property of the sort that exists “unattached” to beautiful objects.

Reply: Aristotle’s seems to have held such a view of properties in general – known as *universalia in rem*. Though the context of Scarry’s comment is aesthetics, the implication seems to be that an Aristotelian account of

predication works just as well as a Platonist one; that “unattached Beauty” as an *ante rem* property is dispensable. This is certainly not the case, as Cusmariu 1979a shows. Nor is it the case that predication can be analyzed piecemeal, in terms of *ante rem* properties and relations in one context and *in rem* properties and relations in other contexts such as aesthetics.

Objection 2: The property “x is beautiful” expresses is such that we cannot conceive of a beautiful object without an “impulse toward begetting.”

Reply: “Begetting” for Scarry means imitation or copying or replication, not what Plato found objectionable in the *Phaedrus*. While it may be true that people react in unique ways in the presence of a beautiful object and that such objects have special causal properties, this is neither necessary nor sufficient to an analysis of “beautiful” – counterexamples are easy to devise. “Begetting” does nothing to help us understand the ontological issues involved in solving the problem of universals, even in aesthetics.

Though familiar with Plato’s metaphysics, Scarry erroneously thinks that the role of beauty in the Theory of Forms is to “verify the weight and attention we confer” on beautiful exemplars and “justify or account for the weight of their beauty” (Scarry 1999, 47). As we saw, however, Plato’s analysis of predication in “x is beautiful” appeals to the property *being beautiful* as part of a general solution to the problem of universals.

Scarry writes (1999, 47):

The author of the *Greater Hippias*, widely believed to have been Plato, points out that while we know with relative ease what a beautiful horse or a beautiful man or possibly even what a beautiful pot is ... it is much more difficult to say what ‘Beauty’ unattached to any object is.

Objection 3: “x is beautiful” does not express a property of the sort that exists “unattached to” beautiful objects because this notion is hard to explain.

Reply: The author of the *Parmenides*, the *Republic* and the *Theaetetus* had no such difficulty when he proposed the Theory of Forms as a solution to the problem of universals. It is easy to specify categories of “unattached” properties: (a) logically impossible properties such as *being red and not red*; (b) physically impossible properties such as *moving faster than light*; (c) fictional properties such as *being a unicorn*; (d) extensionless properties such as *being the present King of France*; and (e) mereological oddities such as *being a sparkplug and an eyeball*.

15. Scruton 2009: Objections Answered

Roger Scruton writes:

The reader will have noticed that I have not said what beauty *is*. I have implicitly rejected a neo-Platonist view of beauty, as a feature of Being itself. God is beautiful but not for *this* reason. And I have avoided the many attempts to analyse beauty in terms of some property or properties supposed to be exhibited by all beautiful things. I have not discussed the tradition of thinking,

which again goes back to Plotinus and the neo-Platonists, which sees beauty as a kind of organic wholeness. (Scruton 2009, 195, original emphasis)

There are three objections here. Let us consider them in turn.

Objection 1: “x is beautiful” does not express a Platonist property.

Reply: Scruton’s characterization of Platonism as implying that beauty (or any other property) is a “feature of Being itself” and possesses “a kind of organic wholeness” is unnecessarily obscure. (1*) and (2*) are best characterized in technical terms as implying second-order quantification over properties and relations as part of a Platonist solution to the problem of universals. It won’t do to reject this solution out of hand as if the problem of universals is irrelevant in aesthetics.²⁰ Scruton has no solution to propose and appears unaware that the issue even needs to be addressed.

Objection 2: “x is beautiful” does not express a property because this property is not the reason why things are beautiful.

Reply: The Platonist schema (1*) is not about the reason why things are thus-and-such but rather about the analysis of monadic predication as part of a solution to the problem of universals. (1*) is about what it is to be F in the predicative sense, as distinct from the identity, existence, and composition senses. Moreover, analysis and explanation are logically independent concepts. It is consistent with (1*) to suggest an explanation of why things are beautiful in terms of properties exemplified by beautiful things – even in terms of properties understood non-Platonistically.

Objection 3: If “x is beautiful” expresses a property, then we must analyze it in terms of properties had by all beautiful things, but this is unwarranted.

Reply: This objection seems to confuse the analysis of predication with the analysis of predicates. The analysis of predication in “x is beautiful” entails nothing whatever about the analysis of the predicate “beautiful”; nor whether such an analysis is possible, desirable, necessary or justified; nor whether criteria exist by which to judge competing analyses; and so on. It is indeed a task in aesthetics to analyze aesthetic properties; but whether or not this is done, or how it is done, has no bearing on the ontological status of such properties.

16. Zangwill 2001: Objections Answered

Nick Zangwill writes:

Beauty does not stand alone. It cannot exist by itself. Things are beautiful because of the way they are in other respects. Beauty is a property that depends on other properties. Moreover, when we appreciate the beauty of a thing, we appreciate its beauty as it is realized in its other properties. For example, suppose we find a rose beautiful. What we find beautiful is a specific

²⁰ Zemach 1997 agrees with my top-down approach though he takes a different tack on the problem of universals. I find his critique of Platonism and his solution to the problem of universals unpersuasive but that is story for another time.

arrangement of colored petals, leaves, and stems. Beauty cannot float free of the way things are in other respects, and we cannot appreciate beauty except insofar as it is embodied in other respects. Beauty cannot be solitary and we cannot appreciate it as such. (Zangwill 2001, 1)

There are three objections to consider here.

Objection 1: “*x* is beautiful” does not express a property understood as existing independently of properties in virtue of which objects are beautiful.

Reply: This is a good place to distinguish several concepts of dependence.

Ontological-1: Where *F* and *G* are distinct properties, *F* depends on *G* =df Necessarily, *F* exists only if *G* exists.²¹ The obvious example is where *G* is a logical constituent of *F*. Thus, the property *being red and round* is ontologically-1 dependent on its two constituent properties, *being red* and *being round*. There is such a property as *being red and round* only if the properties *being red* and *being round* also exist.

Reply: Ontological-1 dependence is trivially true under Platonism. Once quantification over properties in (1*) has yielded *F* and *G*, which are non-contingent entities like all abstract object, it cannot happen that *F* exists but *G* does not, so that it is necessarily true that *F* exists only if *G* exists. The ontological-1 dependence of beauty on properties in which it is realized is harmless. It holds for every property derived from the predication schema (1*). All Platonist properties “float free” in the sense of being *ante rem*, including those on which beauty is ontologically-1 dependent, whatever they are.

Ontological-2: Where *F* and *G* are distinct properties, *F* depends on *G* =df Necessarily, *F* exists only if *G* is exemplified.

Reply: Zangwill does not seem to claim that beauty is ontologically-2 dependent on other properties. In addition to begging the question against Platonism, ontological-2 dependence would be a strange claim to make in the general case. For example, what other properties must be exemplified in order for the property *being round* to exist?

Ontological-3: Where *F* and *G* are distinct properties, *F* depends on *G* =df Necessarily, *F* is exemplified only if *G* is exemplified. This is the case for properties such as *being equilateral* and *being equiangular*.

Reply: The exemplification of beauty may well entail the exemplification of some other property (or properties). This, however, is consistent with the Platonist conception of *universalia ante rem*.

Analytical-1: Property *F* is dependent on a non-empty set of properties *G* (of which *F* is not a member) =df Necessarily, the exemplification of *F* is nothing over and above the exemplification of *F* by relation *R* between properties in the set *G*. To use Zangwill’s example, the beauty of a rose is nothing over and above the beauty of “a specific arrangement of colored petals, leaves, and stems.”

²¹ We must add “necessarily” because a material-conditional construal of “only if” is too weak.

Reply: This sense of dependence is consistent with Platonism because it does not entail that the existence of beauty is analytical-1 dependent on other properties. For that we need a stronger sense of analytical dependence.

Analytical-2: Property F is dependent on a non-empty set of properties G (of which F is not a member) =df Necessarily, the existence of F is nothing over and above the exemplification of F by relation R between properties in the set G . To use Zangwill's example again, the beauty of a rose is nothing over and above the beauty of "a specific arrangement of colored petals, leaves, and stems."

Reply: (a) Requiring the existence of a property to be analytically dependent-2 begs the question against Platonism, which rejects such a requirement on property existence, for any property. (b) In any case, even if we grant that "a specific arrangement of colored petals, leaves, and stems" unpacks the predicate "beautiful," this has no effect on the ontological status of the property of being beautiful. Zangwill is confusing the analysis of predication with an analysis of predicates.

Aesthetic: Property F is dependent on a non-empty set of properties G (of which F is not a member) =df aesthetic appreciation of F is nothing over and above appreciating whether "a specific arrangement of" the properties in G is F .

Reply: It may well be, as Zangwill says, that things are appreciated to be beautiful because of the way they are in other respects. As already noted, however, the ontological status of beauty is determined by quantification in schema (1*). Construing aesthetic dependence as an ontological replacement for (1*) comes dangerously close to ignoring the distinction between the analysis of predication and the analysis of predicates. Moreover, aesthetic dependence appears to be an epistemic concept; it is problematic to say the least that a valid ontological inference can be drawn from such a concept.

Nomological: Where F and G are distinct properties, F depends on G =df There is a law of nature connecting an event of which F is a constituent to an event of which G is a constituent.

Reply: Zangwill does not object to the existence of beauty on ground that it lacks a nomological connection to properties in virtue of which things are beautiful. I bring up nomological dependence in case a scientifically minded philosopher is tempted to deny the existence of beauty because (allegedly) there are no laws of nature connecting this property to other properties. The point to make is that nomological dependence holds for property exemplification, not property existence. In other words, laws of nature connect events, which are property exemplifications (Kim 1976), not properties themselves.

Objection 2: "x is beautiful" expresses a property only as a subjective response to certain physical features (color, shape, etc.) contingently associated with beauty.

Reply 1: This is close to the objections of Hume, Kant, Ayer and McMahan already answered above and as such does not require additional comment.

Reply 2: Platonism grants that judgments about exemplified beauty can be based on psychological factors that might as a matter of empirical fact vary from person to person; and even that disagreements about aesthetic preferences are not easily settled. However, these facts only apply to conditions under which exemplifications of beauty can be judged or observed, not to whether there is such a property as *being beautiful* – unless one (i) begs the question against Platonism; (ii) ignores the distinction between the analysis of predication and the analysis of predicates; or (iii) claims (falsely) that the subjectivity of some judgments justifies an inference regarding the ontological status of what the judgments are about.

Interestingly, Zangwill is not opposed to metaphysical entities as such. He considers supervenience (2001, 49) “... a relation between two families of properties, and therefore a metaphysical relation,” signaling acceptance of a realist metaphysics of relations. Why the supervenience relation can “stand alone,” “float free” and “be solitary” but properties – aesthetic or otherwise – cannot is unclear. This is clear: A predication schema for relations but not properties solves only half the problem of universals.²²

Later, Zangwill writes (2001, 19):

Talk of aesthetic properties does not necessarily involve a commitment to a realist metaphysics of aesthetic properties. There could be some kind of Humean analysis of aesthetic properties in terms of projections of sentiment.

Objection 3: “x is beautiful” does not express a property in the sense of commitment to a Platonist view of properties because aesthetic properties can be analyzed in terms of “projections of sentiment” as Hume suggested.

Reply: This confuses the analysis of predication with the analysis of predicates. Hume’s objections have already been answered.

17. A Realization Account of Beauty

Platonists are unsympathetic to a supervenient unpacking of the predicative content of “x is F,” where “F” is an aesthetic predicate, because we see no reason why non-aesthetic properties must necessarily “fix” aesthetic properties; nor why the exemplification of non-aesthetic properties must necessarily “fix” the exemplification of aesthetic properties. Much more congenial to our “one-over-many” view of aesthetic properties as a way of avoiding reductionism is the idea of realization. In this section I sketch a realization approach to *Beauty* in general terms and in the next section provide details based on the views of William Hogarth (2010 [1753]) that complements the general tenets of Platonism, leaving a full theory for another time.

²² Having found no theory of relations in Aristotle, Cresswell 1975 reconstructs only Aristotle’s view of properties. Cusmariu 1979a shows that Cresswell’s reconstruction is seriously flawed. Russell 1912 famously took Berkeley and Hume to task for ignoring relations in their rejection of abstract ideas.

Modern physics tells us in Platonist fashion (Penrose 2005, Ch. 1; Dirac 1977, 113; Whitehead 1925) that empirical reality is an approximation of mathematical reality. One construal of such a view is that abstract relationships asserted as true *simpliciter* in mathematical contexts are only approximately true under empirical interpretations, the stricter relationship being asserted in empirical contexts for ease of computation because we cannot replace the equality symbol = with the approximate equality symbol \approx for computational purposes. Thus, the equality sign in the Ideal Gas Law, $PV = NRT$, is not in laboratory practice identity in the strict Leibnizian sense but denotes approximate equality because of approximations on measurements of pressure, volume and temperature due to instrumental limitations and rounding in the value of the gas constant R , 8.3144621(75); the values in brackets are the uncertainty (standard deviation) in the last two digits of the value of R .

The realization view of beauty I wish to hold is very similar:²³

(R) An object a is beautiful if and only if where A is a set of properties of perfect or ideal form and B is a set of properties a , properties in B approximate properties in A .²⁴

Comment: A full analysis, beyond the scope of this article, would address the following issues: (a) which specific properties in set B are to approximate properties in the realization set A , and (b) what exactly is the meaning of property approximation.

To be beautiful, then, is to approximate maximal aesthetic greatness. The properties in the base set A are a sort of limit or upper bound, which the properties in set B approach but never reach, as Plato told us. Moreover, to say that a is more beautiful than b is to say that properties of a are a closer approximation of the properties in the base set A than properties of b .

The realization view of beauty is Baudelairean, who defined beauty (Baudelaire 1976, 636) as the infinite in the finite – *l'infini dans le fini*.

18. A Hogarthian Variant

A theory due to William Hogarth leads to a realization analysis of the predicative content of “ x is beautiful” along the above lines, though only as a sufficient condition of beauty in physical objects. Hogarth suggests that beauty is realized in S-shaped curvature appearing in an object, from the vantage point of the sagittal or coronal planes²⁵ (or both) in one or more of the following ways: (a) a sinuous line is suggested by the object’s posture, (b) a sinuous line traces the

²³ Shoemaker 2007 expounds a different view of property realization.

²⁴ This is a way of capturing Bell’s famous “significant form” concept (Bell 1913).

²⁵ The sagittal plane is the imaginary vertical plane dividing the human body (and other bilateral animals’) into left and right volumes that are approximate mirror images of one another. Orthogonal to the sagittal plane is the coronal plane, also top-to-bottom, dividing bilateral objects into front and back volumes.

object's boundary line, (c) a sinuous line traces the boundary line of its component parts, or (d) a sinuous line connects major parts. Hogarth associated S-shaped curvature with beauty on grounds that curvature signifies liveliness and activity, and thus attracts viewer almost instinctively as contrasted with straight, parallel, or right-angled intersecting lines which he contended signify stasis, death, or inanimate objects.

Now, S-curvature has mathematical meaning definable by a sigmoid function, of which there are several varieties depending on whether both asymptotes (tangents) are approached by the curve symmetrically, which they are in the case of the logistic and serpentine curves but not the Gompertz curve. On the view I am suggesting, beauty properties in some physical objects are those that describe perfect or ideal form defined mathematically by S-curvature, forming a realization base in the sense that, as with any mathematically describable curvature, what is exemplified in a physical object is an approximation. In a nutshell, beauty in a physical object means approximating S-curvature in any of (a)-(d) that Hogarth suggested.

On this view, there is an intuitive association of beauty in physical objects with the female form. The female figure exhibits S-curvature in all of (a)-(d) as observed from the vantage point of the sagittal and the coronal planes, as the reader can easily verify without my having to describe specifics. This may explain why the female figure has been a key subject in art for such a long time.

19. A Semantic Epistemology of Art?

A semantic epistemology of art would supply semantic concepts of belief, truth and evidence and show that they are applicable to aesthetic sentences. There are two options:

Option (A): Proceed along the lines of semantic epistemology for science or mathematics developed in Cusmariu 2012.

Option (B): Proceed along different lines.

Option (A): This option is available only for aesthetic sentences to which Hogarthian realization applies, as they are the only ones that (right now) could be translated into a scientific or mathematical language. This set of aesthetic sentences is comparatively small, so this option is not realistic.

Option (B): For the time being, I can only indicate some of the problems to be solved under this option.

Semantic Belief: Indexing an aesthetic belief to a language is easy enough:

(B1) Smith believes that the Mona Lisa is beautiful

becomes

(B2) Smith believes-in-English that the Mona Lisa is beautiful.

However, (B1) and (B2) are not equivalent as shown in Cusmariu 1982 and Cusmariu 1983, contrary to Carnap's analysis (1947, 62):

(C) There is a sentence Z in a semantical system S' such that (a) Z in S' is intensionally isomorphic to "The Mona Lisa is beautiful" in English, and (b) persons are disposed to an affirmative response to Z as a sentence of S'.

Now, (B2) could certainly be taken as primitive but that does not eliminate the need to explain its relationship to such key properties of (B1) as that speakers of different languages can believe the same thing or hold logically equivalent beliefs.

Semantic Evidence: Perhaps changing the evidence-bearers of a non-semantic theory from propositions or beliefs to sentences would be sufficient to yield a semantic theory of evidence for natural languages that would cover aesthetic sentences. It remains to be seen, however, which non-semantic theory of evidence – foundationalism, coherentism, reliabilism, etc. – could be made to work and how.

Semantic Truth: Tarski had sound technical reasons for restricting Convention T to formal languages (Tarski 1944; see also Kirkham 1992):

(a) There appears to be no systematic way of deciding whether sentences of a natural language are well-formed.

(b) Natural languages can describe semantic characteristics of their own sentences, such as truth, which we know leads to the Liar Paradox.

Thus, merely changing the truth-bearers of a non-semantic conception of truth, e.g., the correspondence theory, from propositions or beliefs to sentences would not be sufficient to yield a semantic conception of truth for natural languages that would cover aesthetic sentences. What would be sufficient is a very difficult question.²⁶

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²⁶ Thanks to John Hyman, Gary Rosenkrantz, Robert Stecker, and Mark Steiner for helpful comments on earlier versions of this paper.

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An Interpretation of McCall's "Real Possible Worlds" and His Semantics for Counterfactuals

Alexandru Dragomir

Abstract: McCall (1984) offered a semantics of counterfactual conditionals based on "real possible worlds" that avoids using the vague notion of similarity between possible worlds. I will propose an interpretation of McCall's counterfactuals in a formal framework based on Baltag-Moss-Solecki events and protocols. Moreover, I will argue that using this interpretation one can avoid an objection raised by Otte (1987).

Keywords: counterfactuals, branching-time structures, dynamic epistemic logic events, possible worlds

I will begin with a presentation of the Stalnaker-Lewis semantics of counterfactual conditionals (Stalnaker 1968, Lewis 1973). Following McCall (1984), I will point out that they have some common underlying assumptions: that the truth of a counterfactual is decidable by inspecting the most similar possible worlds and that the notion of comparative similarity used is vague, therefore we will not be able to determine in all possible situations what worlds we are supposed to inspect. I will introduce the reader to McCall's (1984) "real possible worlds" and his semantics of counterfactuals, a type of semantics that does not use the notion of similarity, but searching for the closest real possible world that branched off the actual one. I will try to show how to generate such a branching-time structure using (1) a Dynamic Epistemic Logic with operators for ontic change (van Ditmarsch and Kooi 2008) and (2) protocols for such logics (Hoshi 2009, Hoshi and Yap 2009) and restate McCall's semantic definition using this formal apparatus. Further, I will consider one of Otte's (1987) objections towards McCall's theory of counterfactuals and argue that if we interpret this objection in a structure generated by the logical apparatus introduced, it will not hold.

The Stalnaker-Lewis Approach to the Meaning of Counterfactuals

This paper will be concerned with two types of semantics for counterfactuals, the Stalnaker-Lewis semantics and McCall's semantics (McCall 1984). A counterfactual will be a proposition of the following type:

- (1) If A were true, then B would be true.

I will use Lewis' notation (Lewis 1973) for the counterfactual conditional operator, $\Box \rightarrow$. As in the case of the material conditional, $\Box \rightarrow$ is binary, connecting two propositions of a given formal language. Consequently, (1)'s logical form will be $A \Box \rightarrow B$.

According to Stalnaker (1968), $A \Box \rightarrow B$ is non-vacuously true in the actual world if and only if in the closest, meaning most similar to w , possible world in which A is true, B is also true. Following Stalnaker (1968), we can write this in a formal way, considering that: $Atoms(L) = \{p, q, r, \dots\}$ is the set of atoms of a language L , M is a Kripke model composed of a set of possible worlds W , an accessibility relation $R \subseteq W \times W$, $V: Atoms(L) \rightarrow 2^W$ is a valuation function, $\|A\| = \{w \in W / M, w \models A\}$ is the set of all the worlds of W that satisfy formula A (all A -satisfying worlds), and $f: L \times W \rightarrow W$ is a selection function that takes a formula A and a world w and picks out the most similar world to w that satisfies A :

$$M, w \models A \Box \rightarrow B \text{ iff } M, f(A, w) \models B$$

The definition above is read: $A \Box \rightarrow B$ holds at world w of model M iff in w 's closest possible world (meaning the most similar to w possible world) that satisfies A it is true that B . Alternatively, one can write the right side of the semantic definition as: $f(A, w) \in \|B\|$ i.e. the world selected by f is a world belonging to the set of B -satisfying worlds.

To this definition Lewis (1973) has objected that it assumes that: (1) f will always pick at least one world, and (2) f will pick at most one world. Regarding (1), Lewis (1973, 19-21) offered the following example: imagine that in the actual world w there is a 1 inch line drawn on a blackboard. It is consistent with Lewis' theory concerning the nature of possible worlds¹ that there is a world u_1 such that in u_1 there is a 1.1 inches line drawn on the blackboard (everything else, except the length of the line, is identical to the state of affairs in w). However, there is also a world u_2 in which the line is 1.01 inches and a world u_3 in which the line is 1.001 inches long and so on, *ad infinitum*. Consequently, there is no one most similar possible world to the actual world. As for (2), it implies the validity of the conditional excluded-middle: $(A \Box \rightarrow B) \vee (A \Box \rightarrow \neg B)$. According to von Fintel (2012), a counter-example to the principle of the conditional excluded-middle can be found in Quine (1966, 15):

- (a) If Bizet and Verdi had been compatriots, Bizet would have been Italian.
- (b) If Bizet and Verdi had been compatriots, Verdi would have been French.

Quine argues that according to the principle of the conditional excluded-middle, either (a) or (b) should hold, yet none seems to be intuitively true.

Lewis (1973) argued for a semantics that cannot be countenanced by these objections. Say w is the actual world, the world in which we need to

¹ Recall that for Lewis (1979), a possible world is a way things might have been. Things surely might have been such that the drawn line had a different length. So the possible world in which the line has a different length exists.

evaluate $A \Box \rightarrow B$. According to Lewis' formal apparatus, all possible worlds can be arranged in spheres centered in w : S_1^w, S_2^w, \dots , each sphere containing possible worlds similar to w . In case a sphere S_i^w is included in sphere S_j^w , the worlds in S_i^w are more similar to w than the worlds in S_j^w . So, $A \Box \rightarrow B$ is true in w iff (1) A is false in all worlds, or (2) there is a world u in a sphere S_i^w such that A is true in u and the conditional $A \rightarrow B$ is true in all worlds of S_i^w .

Note that in the above definition, the proximity of a possible world to the actual world is given by its similarity to the actual world. But how should we discern the similarity between two possible worlds? Lewis admits to the indeterminacy of the comparative similarity relation, and, since counterfactuals seem to have an innate vagueness, this vagueness can be explained as being an inherited attribute from the intuitive similarity relation used to define them. Moreover, Lewis argues that the intuitive notion of similarity used in the semantics is already entrenched in our language and, so, fit to be a brick in the construction of a semantic definition of the counterfactual conditionals:

... such an account must either be stated in vague terms – which does *not* mean ill-understood terms – or be made relative to some parameter that is fixed only within rough limits on any given occasion of language use. It is to be hoped that this imperfectly fixed parameter is a familiar one that we would be stuck with whether or not we used it in the analysis of counterfactuals; and so it will be. It will be a relation of comparative similarity. (Lewis 1973, 1)

One could wonder, though, whether it could not be the other way around: why is it not the case that counterfactual constructions are more intuitive and "familiar" and, so, fit for offering an explication of comparative similarity?

However, is this a good trade? McCall (1984) argues it is not:

The most obvious difficulty about these semantics lies in determining the degree of similarity a set of possible worlds bears to the actual world. Can possible worlds be inspected and compared? (McCall 1984, 463)

To put McCall's point in different words, Lewis' semantics is inadequate because it does not and cannot tell us in what worlds we are supposed to check whether the two arguments of " $\Box \rightarrow$ " hold or not, and the reason for this lies in the vagueness of the intuitive notion of similarity put to use. To countenance this type of objection, McCall proposes a semantics of counterfactual conditionals that does not rely on similarity between possible worlds.

McCall's Semantics of Counterfactuals

In order to put forth a semantics of counterfactual conditionals that does not need to use comparative similarity, McCall reconsidered the metaphysical framework used by Stalnaker and Lewis. Though McCall adheres to a realist

concept of a possible world², the possibility set of a world w will be composed only of worlds physically possible relative to w . In other words, the accessibility relation R will link w to u if and only if u is a physically possible temporal continuation of w . In order to design this branching-time model, McCall identifies possible worlds with histories of time-instants (McCall 1984, 464-465). If w is what McCall names "a real possible world", it can be described as a structure $(w(t_1), w(t_2), w(t_3) \dots)$, where each $w(t_i)$ is a time-instant in w (McCall 1984, 464). Suppose we are in $w(t_2)$. Then, things go on as $w(t_3)$, but from $w(t_2)$ things could have gone as $u(t_3)$ or $v(t_3)$ and so on. Of course, since $w = (w(t_1), w(t_2), w(t_3) \dots)$, the set of all $u(t_1), u(t_2), \dots$ is world u and $\{v(t_1), v(t_2), \dots\}$ is world v . We will say that world u branches off world w when their histories coincide until instant t_i and diverge afterwards. In the case above, w and u coincide until t_2 and diverge afterwards.

Now, how do we interpret a counterfactual conditional $A \square \rightarrow B$? McCall's proposed answer is the following: $A \square \rightarrow B$ is true in the actual world w iff in w 's closest branching worlds that satisfy A it is true that B :

...we stipulate that the possible worlds in which the antecedent is true must branch off the actual world as close as possible to the time of the antecedent. (McCall 1984, 467)

And:

In asking whether "If A had been the case, B would have been" is true or false, we simply identify the worlds closest to ours in which A holds, and inquire whether in them B holds, without imposing on them any further condition whatsoever. (McCall 1984, 468)

Now, I will try to sketch a formal model M in which to evaluate the truth of a counterfactual conditional. The formal model M in which we evaluate counterfactuals would be a model (W, R, V) constructed following McCall's concept of a real possible world:

1. W is a set of possible worlds, each one of them being a possible history of the actual world. One possible way to represent this is by letting each w of W be a structure $(w(t_1), w(t_2), w(t_3) \dots)$, each $w(t_i)$ being a time-instant in world w .

2. wRu iff u is a physically possible temporal continuation of w , meaning that if w and u have the same history until an instant t_i (meaning that for $t_j \leq t_i$, we have that $w(t_j) = u(t_j)$), they will diverge afterwards: if $t_j > t_i$, then $w(t_j) \neq u(t_j)$.

3. V will have to assign atoms to instants $w(t_i)$ of worlds w in W .

Therefore we will have to evaluate counterfactuals at instants of time: $M, w(t_i) \models A \square \rightarrow B$ iff in every closest $u(t_i)$ A -satisfying worlds branching out of $w = (w(t_1), \dots, w(t_{i-1}))$ it is true that B . This, because the valuation function V is

² Following the (Stalnaker 1976) exposition of Lewis' realism: possible worlds exist, they are as irreducible to other kinds, they are not qualitatively different from *our* world, and actuality is an indexical notion (wherefrom *our* world is the world we live in).

constant only when defined on instants of time. Note that function V can assign truth to A at $w(t_1)$ but it can make A false in $w(t_2)$.

However, this is just a sketch of a formal model, inspired by McCall's (1) directions on how to evaluate a counterfactual conditional, and (2) intuitions regarding in what type of model to evaluate them. We will be able to generate a precise formal model (one resembling Epistemic Temporal structures) that satisfies McCall's intuitions using the apparatus presented below.

Events (BMS-actions) with Postconditions

I will begin this section with presenting the apparatus of Baltag-Moss-Solecki actions (Solecki, Baltag, Moss 1999).³⁴ Event models were introduced in Epistemic Logic by Solecki, Baltag, Moss (1999) as a means of describing the way an agent's knowledge set changes as a result of learning truths about the world or about other agents' knowledge. This change in an agent's knowledge set is realized by changing the agent's epistemic possibilities. As an example, if an agent considers that worlds w and u are equally plausible candidates for the status of the actual world, and p is true in w but not in u , then, after receiving information that p is true in the actual world, then world u should be eliminated from the set of the agent's epistemic possibilities. However, these structures were supplemented so as to allow for ontic change (van Ditmarsch and Kooi 2008), meaning that propositions about the world, and not only facts about what agents know about the world, can change their truth-values as a result of executing an event model in a Kripke model.

Definition (van Ditmarsch and Kooi 2008, 91). An event model is a structure $!Act = (S, \sim, pre, post)$, such that:

1. S is a set of event points,
2. \sim is an equivalence relation on S
3. $pre : S \rightarrow L$ is a precondition of an event's execution in a world.
4. $post : S \rightarrow (Atoms(L) \rightarrow L)$ is a function that changes the valuation of atoms.

The following construction aims at representing the result of executing an event in a Kripke model:

Definition (van Ditmarsch and Kooi 2008, 94). The Modal Product of a Kripke model $M = (W, R, V)$ and an event model $!Act = (S, \sim, pre, post)$ is a structure $M \otimes !Act = (W', R', V')$ such that:

1. $W' = \{(w, a) \mid w \in W, a \in S, \text{ and } M, w \models pre(a)\}$
2. $\langle (w_1, a_1), (w_2, a_2) \rangle \in R'$ iff $(w_1, w_2) \in R, (a_1, a_2) \in \sim$, for $(w_1, a_1) \in W', (w_2, a_2) \in W'$
3. $M', (w, a) \models p$ iff $M, w \models post(a)(p)$

Some observations are due:

³ Also see (van Ditmarsch et al. 2006) for an introduction.

⁴ Called *event models* hereafter.

- (a) The result of executing an event in a Kripke model is a Kripke model.
- (b) The apparatus of restricted modal products allows for recording the history of a possible world in terms of a sequence whose first element denotes a member of W , a possible world, and all the others denote events that were executed in the possible world. This feature makes this device useful in representing McCall's real possible worlds.
- (c) As we can see from condition (1), a world (w, a) , meaning world w after the execution of a , will be part of the domain W' iff w satisfies the precondition of event a . This condition seems intuitive: certain events cannot happen unless some prerequisites are met. For example, one cannot speed their car unless one does not drive a car.

Also, note that because of condition (3), if in $w \in W$ it is false that A ($w \notin V(A)$), then, in (w, a) it will be true that A , if $post(a)(A) = \top : (M \otimes !Act)$, $(w, a) \models A$, although: $M, w \not\models A$.

This framework allows for formulas that state that after the execution of an event, a formula becomes true (van Ditmarsch et al. 2006, 151):

(1) $M, w \models [!(Act, a)]A$ iff: if $M, w \models pre(a)$, then $(M \otimes !Act)$, $(w, a) \models A$

(2) $M, w \models \langle !(Act, a) \rangle A$ iff $M, w \models pre(a)$ and $(M \otimes !Act)$, $(w, a) \models A$

The semantic definition (1) is read: in model M , at world w , it is true that after the execution of event $!Act$ it becomes true that A if and only if: if the precondition of the event a of $!Act$ is satisfied at w , then in the model obtained after the execution of $!Act$, in world (w, a) it is true that A , and (2): in model M , at world w , it is true that the event model $!Act$ can be executed and A is true if and only if world w satisfies the precondition of event a of $!Act$ and in the product model, in world (w, a) it is true that A . Now, formulas like the below will express the fact that even though A is false, it becomes true after the execution of $!Act$:

$M, w \models \neg A \ \& \ [!(Act, a)]A$

How is this apparatus useful in representing McCall's real possible worlds? Recall that a real possible world is a history $(w(t_1), w(t_2), w(t_3) \dots)$, so we can equate such a history with a sequence $(w, a_1, a_2, a_3 \dots)$ composed of a possible world w (of an initial singleton model) and a sequence of events that were executed in w . Now, why is it important to have a method of changing ontic truths (truths about the world)? Take two time-instants $w(t_i)$ and $w(t_{i+1})$. They could have the same valuations for their atoms, or, if things changed from $w(t_i)$ to $w(t_{i+1})$ they could differ in their valuations. Since postconditions can only change one atom, we will assume that two consecutive time-instants can only differ in at most one truth. Then, if we equate histories $(w(t_1), w(t_2), w(t_3) \dots)$ with sequences $(w, a_1, a_2, a_3 \dots)$, the ontic difference between a time-instant $w(t_i)$ and $w(t_{i+1})$ can be represented in terms of executing an event a_{i+1} in $(w, a_1, a_2, \dots, a_i)$. In

other words, we can represent the change that one event brought to a time-instant $w(t_i)$ as the execution of an event a_{i+1} in a sequence $(w, a_1, a_2, \dots, a_i)$.

Now, since two time-instants can differ in at most one atom, for each atom A in the language, we will construct two events models, named $!A$ and $!¬A$, the first making A true and the second making A false, defined as following:

Definition. Action $!A$ is a singleton event model $(\{a\}, aRa, pre, post)$, such that $pre(a) = \top$, $post(a)(A) = \top$.

Definition. Action $!¬A$ is a singleton event model $(\{a\}, aRa, pre, post)$ such that $pre(a) = \top$, and $post(a)(A) = \perp$.

Because the precondition of any such action is \top , all such events will be executable in any possible world. Note that event $!A$ will change the truth value of A to *true* and event $!¬A$ will change A 's truth value to *false*. In addition, we will need an event that does not change the valuation of formulas:

Definition (van Ditmarsch et al. 2006, 150). Event $!*$ is an event model $(\{a\}, aRa, pre, post)$ such that $pre(a) = \top$, and $post(a)(A) = id$, for id the identity function.

Up to this point, executing events in possible worlds cannot give rise to the kind of branching-time structure McCall considers necessary for his semantics of counterfactuals. If we start with a singleton Kripke model and execute singleton events, what we will obtain is a sequence of models: model M with w (the initial world), model $(M \otimes Act_1)$ with world (w, a_1) , model $(M \otimes Act_1 \otimes Act_2)$ with world (w, a_1, a_2) and so on. In order to obtain a tree structure, we can make use of the notion of a protocol for Dynamic Epistemic Logics⁵ (hereafter: DEL), as presented in Hoshi (2009). A protocol is a set of sequences of events, each sequence describing what events can be executed in a possible world of the model and in what order (Hoshi 2009, Hoshi & Yap 2009, 262). Let $Prot$ be the class of all event models: $\{!(Act, a) \mid !Act \text{ is an event model and } a \text{ is an event of the domain of } !Act\}$ and $Prot^*$ the class of all the finite sequences constructed out of elements of $Prot$. Then, a protocol π is a subset of $Prot^*$, closed under finite prefix (meaning that if ab is in π , then also a is in π). Now, given a protocol and a Kripke model M , we can construct *the protocol model* (Hoshi 2009), a model that contains all possible evolutions of M as a result of executing the events in the sequences of protocol π (and in the order specified by π). All the possible evolutions of initial model M are also Kripke models (because executing an event in a Kripke model generates, by the restricted modal product, a Kripke model), so the end result is a Kripke forest, a structure composed of Kripke models. Let us see the construction of the protocol model, using (Hoshi 2009) and (Hoshi and Yap 2009, 262-263):

Given a Kripke model $M = (W, \sim, V)$ and protocol π , the protocol model $M^{\sigma, \pi} = (W^{\sigma, \pi}, \sim^{\sigma, \pi}, V^{\sigma, \pi})$, is constructed by induction on the length of σ , a sequence in π (by σ_n we will denote a sequence of n event models, and by $\sigma_{(n)}$ the n^{th} element of

⁵ See (van Ditmarsch et al. 2006) for an introduction.

sequence σ), following the rules (see (Hoshi and Yap 2009, 262-263), for rules (1)-(3) and (van Ditmarsch and Kooi 2008, 94), for rule (4)):

- 1) $W^{\sigma 0, \pi} = W, \sim^{\sigma 0, \pi} = \sim, V^{\sigma 0, \pi} = V$
- 2) $w\sigma_{n+1} \in W^{\sigma_{n+1}, \pi}$ iff
 - (a) $w \in W,$
 - (b) $M^{\sigma_n, \pi}, w\sigma_n \models \text{pre}(\sigma_{(n+1)}).$
 - (c) $\sigma_{n+1} \in \pi$
- 3) $\forall (w\sigma_{n+1}, u\sigma_{n+1}) \in W^{\sigma_{n+1}, \pi} : (w\sigma_{n+1}, u\sigma_{n+1}) \in \sim^{\sigma_{n+1}, \pi}$ iff $(w, u) \in \sim,$
- 4) $\forall p \in \text{Atoms}(L) : V^{\sigma_{n+1}, \pi}(p) = \{w\sigma_{n+1} \in W^{\sigma_{n+1}, \pi} / M^{\sigma_n, \pi}, w\sigma_n \models \text{post}(\sigma_{(n+1)})(p)\}$

This construction will generate all the possible ways in which an initial model will evolve as a result of executing the events in the protocol. As a consequence of applying rules 1-4, $M^{\sigma, \pi}$ will be composed of other Kripke models, each one of them representing a possible state the initial M might evolve into as a result of executing the events in the protocol. For example, if $\pi = \{!A!B, !A!C\}$ and the initial model M is a singleton composed of world w , then the protocol model will contain: M – with domain $\{w\}$, $M \otimes !A$ – with domain $\{w!A\}$, $M \otimes !A \otimes !B$ – with domain $\{w!A!B\}$ and $M \otimes !A \otimes !C$ – with domain $\{w!A!C\}$. Rule (2) assures us that any new possible world (history) added in the domain of a newly added model meets the prerequisite imposed by the precondition of the event that was executed a step before in the construction. Rule (4) allows for changing the truth value of an atom as a result of executing an action whose postcondition is not the identity function.⁶

In order to evaluate formulas that state what truths change in the model as a result of executing some events, Hoshi (2009, 62) and Hoshi and Yap (2009, 263) chose to use ETL models (Epistemic Temporal Logic models) generated by the protocol model. But in an ETL model the valuation of atoms remains unchanged, so we will call the structure generated by the protocol model defined above a *pseudo-ETL-model*.

A pseudo-ETL-model $\mathbb{H} = (H, \sim', V')$ generated by the protocol model $M^{\sigma, \pi} = (W^{\sigma, \pi}, \sim^{\sigma, \pi}, V^{\sigma, \pi})$ is constructed as below (Hoshi 2009, 62, Hoshi and Yap 2009, 263):

- 1) $H = \{h / h = w\sigma \in W^{\pi, \sigma}, \text{ with } w \in W, \sigma \in \pi\}$
- 2) $(h, h') \in \sim'$ iff $(h, h') \in \sim^{\sigma, \pi}, \text{ for } \sigma \in \pi \text{ and every } h, h' \in H \text{ such that } h = w\sigma \text{ and } h' = u\sigma$
- 3) $h \in V'(p)$ iff $h \in V^{\sigma, \pi}, \text{ for } p \in \text{Atoms}(L), \sigma \in \pi, h = w\sigma.$

Recall that the protocol model presented above constructs a series of models out of an initial Kripke model. The above rules grant that a pseudo-ETL-model will include the worlds of all models of a protocol model. As a consequence, H will be a set of worlds (represented as sequences of events executed in the world of the initial singleton model) and not a set of Kripke

⁶ A postcondition that is an identity function leaves the assignment unchanged (van Ditmarsch & Kooi 2008, 91-92).

models. The epistemic accessibility relation \sim will play no role in our construction, since we will only use singleton models and singleton events. But for each sequence, we will introduce relations R by the following rule:

- 4) $(h, h') \in R, \sigma_{(n+1)}$, for each $h = w\sigma_n$ and $h' = w\sigma_{n+1} = w\sigma_n !\sigma_{(n+1)}$

This relation holds between two worlds h and h' (two time-instants of the same real possible world) iff h' is a possible future state of h , or, in other words, if h' can be obtained by executing an event in h . Now we have a formal representation of the set of physically possible temporal continuants of a world h as being the set $\{h' \mid \text{there is an action } !a \text{ such that } hR_{!a}h'\}$.

This construction allows for different formulas to be evaluated in possible worlds of \mathbb{H} (Hoshi 2009):

- 1) $\mathbb{H}, h \models A$ iff $h \in V(A)$
- 2) $\mathbb{H}, h \models \neg A$ iff $h \notin V(A)$
- 3) $\mathbb{H}, h \models A \& B$ iff $\mathbb{H}, h \models A$ and $\mathbb{H}, h \models B$
- 4) $\mathbb{H}, h \models \langle !Act \rangle A$ iff $h!Act \in H$ and $\mathbb{H}, h!Act \models A$
- 5) $\mathbb{H}, h \models [!Act]A$ iff: if $h!Act \in H$, then $\mathbb{H}, h!Act \models A$

Definition (5) will be read: in model \mathbb{H} , at world h , it is true that after the execution of event $!Act$ it is true that A iff: if $h!Act$ (meaning world h after the execution of event $!Act$) is a part of H (meaning that $h!Act$ is a possible state h might evolve into, according to the protocol), then in $h!Act$ it is true that A .

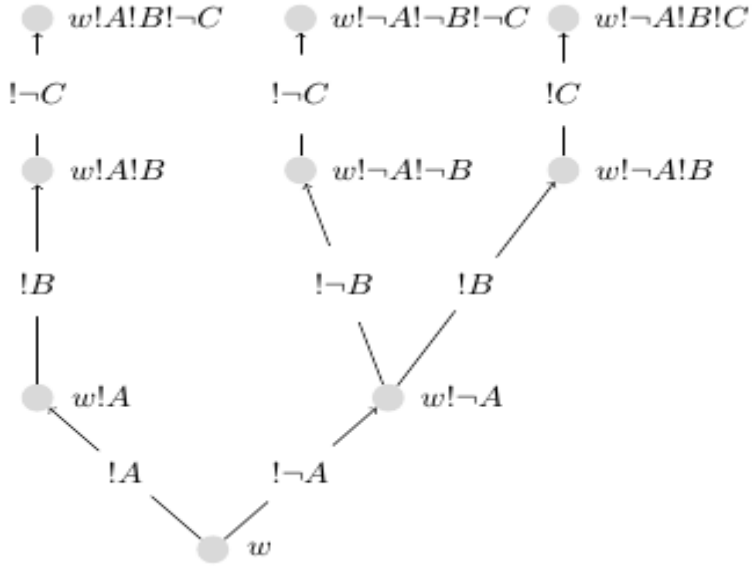
- 6) $\mathbb{H}, h = w\sigma_{n+1} \models BEFORE(A)$ iff $\mathbb{H}, h' = w\sigma_n \models A$

This semantic definition is read: in model \mathbb{H} , at world h , meaning a sequence composed of w and $n+1$ events, it is true that before the last event was executed it was true that A iff in the same model, in the immediate past of h (meaning w followed by the first n events) it is true that A . This definition makes sense only in case the model is a structure in which each node has only one parent. But such a structure is the one McCall argues for using in interpreting counterfactual conditionals.

Now, we can use the apparatus presented above to illustrate the process of obtaining McCall's real possible worlds. Note that if the updated model is a singleton model, then the structure of a pseudo-ETL model will be a tree-like structure, similar to the one recommended by McCall to establish the truth value of a counterfactual. Also, as already proposed, McCall's real possible worlds will be sequences $w!a_1!a_2\dots$, with w in W , each $!a_i$ an event, and $!a_1!a_2\dots$ a sequence of events (a historical description of that world).

Let us see how we can obtain the model used by McCall (1984, 470) to prove that his semantics invalidates the transitivity principle. The protocol for this model is $\pi = \{!A!B!\neg C, !\neg A!\neg B!\neg C, !\neg A!B!C\}$ and the initial model is a singleton domain Kripke model, $M = (W = \{w\}, wRw, V)$. By applying the rules for generating the protocol model, we will obtain a Kripke forest composed of the following

singleton Kripke models: (1) M , the initial model, (2) $M \otimes !A$, (3) $M \otimes !A \otimes !B$, (4) $M \otimes !A \otimes !B \otimes !\neg C$, (5) $M \otimes !\neg A$, (6) $M \otimes !\neg A \otimes !\neg B$, (7) $M \otimes !\neg A \otimes !\neg B \otimes !\neg C$, (8) $M \otimes !\neg A \otimes !B$, (9) $M \otimes !\neg A \otimes !B \otimes !C$. Now, the pseudo-ETL structure generated will only contain the worlds of each model in the protocol model: (1) w , (2) $w!A$, (3) $w!A!B$, (4) $w!A!B!\neg C$, (5) $w!\neg A$, (6) $w!\neg A!\neg B$, (7) $w!\neg A!\neg B!\neg C$, (8) $w!\neg A!B$, (9) $w!\neg A!B!C$:



Let us see McCall’s argument that his view on how counterfactuals should be understood makes “ $\Box \rightarrow$ ” non-transitive. The argument focuses on trying to find a situation in which though $A \Box \rightarrow B$ and $B \Box \rightarrow C$, it is not the case that $A \Box \rightarrow C$.

So we have, for f_A a function that selects the closest branching A -satisfying possible world (this selection is possible, given the construction of the model):

- 1) $M, w!\neg A!\neg B!\neg C \models A \Box \rightarrow B$ iff $f_A(w!\neg A!\neg B!\neg C) = w!A!B!\neg C$ and $M, w!A!B!\neg C \models B$.
- 2) $M, w!\neg A!\neg B!\neg C \models B \Box \rightarrow C$ iff $f_B(w!\neg A!\neg B!\neg C) = w!\neg A!B!C$ and $M, w!\neg A!B!C \models C$.

Note that the $f_B(w!\neg A!\neg B!\neg C)$ is not $w!A!B!\neg C$, since this world branches off from the actual world earlier than $w!\neg A!B!C$.

- 3) $M, w!\neg A!\neg B!\neg C \models \neg(A \Box \rightarrow C)$ because $f_A(w!\neg A!\neg B!\neg C) = w!A!B!\neg C$ and $w!A!B!\neg C \not\models C$.

Now, that we have a formal model M that corresponds to McCall’s intuitions, we can state his semantic definition as following:

An Interpretation of McCall's "Real Possible Worlds"

$M, w\sigma \models A \Box \rightarrow B$ iff in all worlds $w\tau$ such that: (1) τ and σ are of equal length and (2) $w\tau$ are the closest A -satisfying branching off of $w\sigma$ worlds, it is true that B .

Although there are sound and completely axiomatized logical systems of Dynamic Epistemic Logic with ontic change (van Ditmarsch & Kooi 2008, 96) and of Epistemic Logic with Protocols (see, for example, Hoshi's Temporal Dynamic Epistemic Logic and Temporal Arbitrary Dynamic Epistemic Logic in (Hoshi 2009) and (Hoshi and Yap 2009)), a sound and complete logic that incorporates both ontic change operators and protocols is still due.

An Objection to McCall's Semantics of Counterfactuals

In this section I will offer an interpretation in the logical framework presented above of one of the objections raised to McCall's semantics of counterfactuals by Otte (1987). I will argue that the objection, as interpreted, will not hold.

Otte (1987, 422) imagines the following situation. Suppose Franz is a very bad skier who fraudulently secured himself a place at the World Ski competition. Most of the track is extremely tough, so he finishes the last. Now, consider Otte's counterfactual:

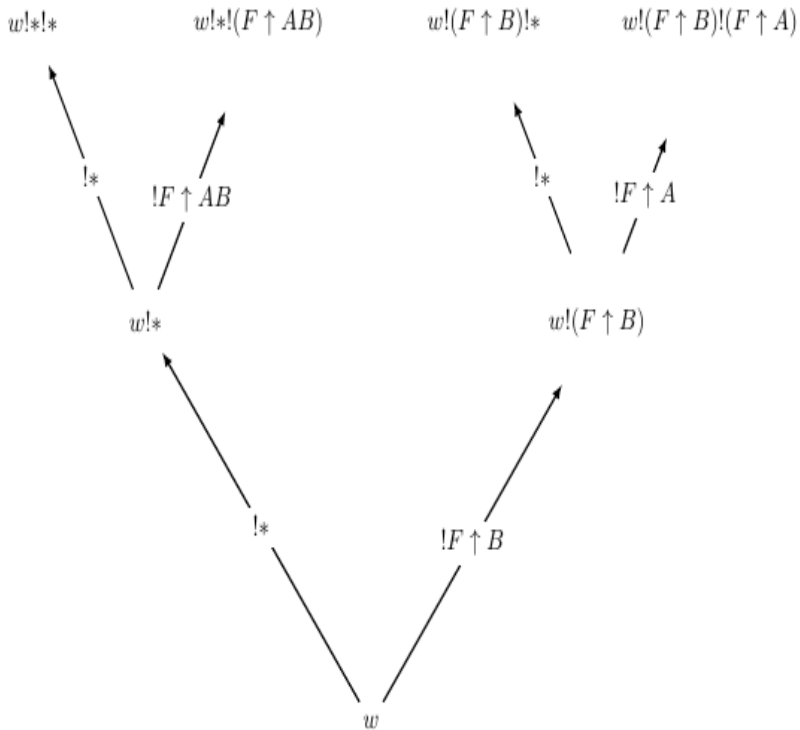
If Franz had won the race, all of the other skiers would have been ahead of him throughout the race until just short of the finish line (Otte 1987, 422).

Otte argues that this counterfactual comes out as true by McCall's semantics, because the closest world that branches off the actual one in which Franz wins is a world in which every other racer is ahead of him until short of the finish line. However, intuitively, this counterfactual should not hold.

Let us restate Otte's objection in the logical framework presented above. We will create a model for the situation in which Franz's opponents are A and B . First, we will have to create a vocabulary of atoms and other useful formulas and events:

- Atoms $F_is_in_front_of_A$ will be true in all worlds in which F has passed A , and $F_is_in_front_of_B$ will be true in all worlds in which F has passed B . Atom F_wins will be true in all worlds in which Franz wins.
- $F \uparrow A$ is a singleton event that makes atom $F_is_in_front_of_A$ true.
- $F \uparrow B$ is a singleton event that makes atom $F_is_in_front_of_B$ true.
- $(F \uparrow AB)$ is a singleton event that makes atom F_wins true.
- $!*$ is a singleton event that does not change anything in the model (its postcondition function is the identity function).

Now, let us state what worlds will be used in order to offer a model for Otte's objection. The protocol that will generate the model will be $\pi = \{!*, !*(F \uparrow AB), !(F \uparrow B), !(F \uparrow B)!(F \uparrow A)\}$, each of the worlds in its domain being:



- w - is the initial possible world,
- $w!*$ and $w!*\!*$ - have the same valuations with w ,
- $w!*\!(F \uparrow AB)$ - is world $w!*$ after Franz passes both A and B and, so, wins,
- $w!(F \uparrow B)$ - is world w after which Franz passes B ,
- $w!(F \uparrow B)!*$ - is world $w!(F \uparrow B)$ after which no other atoms change their truth values,
- $w!(F \uparrow B)!(F \uparrow A)$ - is world $w!(F \uparrow B)$ after which Franz passes A also (and therefore, wins).

Regarding the valuation function, F_wins is true in the following worlds: $w!*\!(F \uparrow AB)$ and $w!(F \uparrow B)!(F \uparrow A)$.

In this model, world $w!*\!*$ is the actual world, the world in which Franz lost the contest as the last of all the competitors. Otte's objection can be interpreted as saying that the closest world in which Franz wins that branches off the actual one is $w!*\!(F \uparrow AB)$. We will argue that his objection does not hold because world $w!*\!(F \uparrow AB)$ is inconsistent in the model created with the intention to reflect Otte's context in which a counterfactual comes out as true though it should intuitively not. In order to establish our argument, first, let us observe that the following formulas should be considered true in every possible world of the model:

(1) $F_wins \rightarrow (F_is_in_front_of_A \ \& \ F_is_in_front_of_B)$

Its meaning is intuitive: if Franz wins, then he must be in front of every competitor.

(2) $F_is_in_front_of_A \rightarrow BEFORE(<!F\uparrow A>T) \vee BEFORE(BEFORE(<!F\uparrow A>T))$

(3) $F_is_in_front_of_B \rightarrow BEFORE(<!F\uparrow B>T) \vee BEFORE(BEFORE(<!F\uparrow B>T))$

The meanings of (2) and (3) are also intuitive: in order to be in front of each one of the competitors, the event of Franz's passing *A* and the event of Franz's passing *B* must have been executed in the model.⁷

Now, since at $w!*(F\uparrow AB)$ Franz wins the race (this is the assumption of the model), F_wins must be true:

$M, w!*(F\uparrow AB) \models F_wins$

However:

$M, w!*(F\uparrow AB) \not\models BEFORE(<!F\uparrow A>T) \vee BEFORE(BEFORE(<!F\uparrow A>T))$,

Moreover:

$M, w!*(F\uparrow AB) \not\models BEFORE(<!F\uparrow B>T) \vee BEFORE(BEFORE(<!F\uparrow B>T))$

This, because in each case both disjuncts are false in $w!*(F\uparrow AB)$. Therefore F_wins should be false, reaching a contradiction with the assumption on which the model was constructed. As a consequence, $w!*(F\uparrow AB)$ is not a consistent possible world. But (1) according to McCall, the accessibility relation only links physically possible worlds, and (2) logically impossible worlds are not physically possible worlds, therefore: world $w!*(F\uparrow AB)$ is not accessible from the actual world, $w!*$.

Conclusion

In this paper we have presented the Stalnaker-Lewis semantics of counterfactual conditionals. First, we introduced the reader to Stalnaker's (1968) semantics and presented some of the objections raised by Lewis (1973). We have presented Lewis' solution to the objections raised, in terms of a different semantic theory of counterfactuals. Different indeed, but following the same underlying intuition: that counterfactuals can be defined in terms of a comparative similarity relation between possible worlds. McCall (1984) addressed this issue – using comparative similarity, a vague concept, as a brick in the foundation of a theory of truth for counterfactual conditionals – and proposed a different semantics, devoid of the vagueness implicit in the first two. Using the apparatus of Event Models (Solecki, Baltag, Moss 1999, van Ditmarsch et al. 2006) with ontic change (van Ditmarsch and Kooi 2008), and that of protocols for Dynamic Epistemic

⁷ Formula $<!F\uparrow A>T$ means: event $!F\uparrow A$ has been successfully executed (T is a tautology, therefore a formula true in all possible worlds).

Logics (Hoshi 2009, Hoshi and Yap 2009) we have presented a method to generate the branching-time structure that McCall uses to evaluate counterfactuals. Moreover, we have presented an interpretation of one of Otte's (1987) objections to McCall's theory in the formal apparatus introduced. We have argued that the interpretation of that objection can be countered using the logical apparatus introduced.

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Transhumanism Between Human Enhancement and Technological Innovation*

Ion Iuga

Abstract: Transhumanism introduces from its very beginning a paradigm shift about concepts like human nature, progress and human future. An overview of its ideology reveals a strong belief in the idea of human enhancement through technologically means. The theory of technological singularity, which is more or less a radicalisation of the transhumanist discourse, foresees a radical evolutionary change through artificial intelligence. The boundaries between intelligent machines and human beings will be blurred. The consequence is the upcoming of a post-biological and posthuman future when intelligent technology becomes autonomous and constantly self-improving. Considering these predictions, I will investigate here the way in which the idea of human enhancement modifies our understanding of technological innovation. I will argue that such change goes in at least two directions. On the one hand, innovation is seen as something that will inevitably lead towards intelligent machines and human enhancement. On the other hand, there is a direction such as "Singularity University," where innovation is called to pragmatically solving human challenges. Yet there is a unifying spirit which holds together the two directions and I think it is the same transhumanist *idea*.

Keywords: transhumanism, technological innovation, human enhancement, singularity

Each of your smartphones is more powerful than the fastest supercomputer in the world of 20 years ago. (Kathryn Myronuk)

If you understand the potential of these exponential technologies to transform everything from energy to education, you have different perspective on how we can solve the grand challenges of humanity. (Ray Kurzweil)

We seek to connect a humanitarian community of forward-thinking people in a global movement toward an abundant future (Singularity University, Impact report 2014).

Introduction

It is axiomatic for most of us that technological innovation implies progress and leads eventually to progress. It is well-known that the very notion of progress emerged in the early modernity, a long time before what we nowadays call technological innovation. However, right from the beginning, technological innovation was assigned with the mission of solving particular human problems,

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or at least the most pressing of them, including some natural human imperfections. This teleological mission is still present today, but we are now facing a new perception about technological progress. For the first time in history, progress is directed towards a deeper fusion between human being and machine.

The aim of my paper is to analyze the ideological structure of such concepts as transhumanism and innovation. I will make a distinction within transhumanism itself between human enhancement and technological innovation. First I will outline the idea of innovation and human enhancement used in transhumanist tradition. This clarification will give us a better view about the crucial impact of innovation in our contemporary society. In the first part of this study I will focus on some main transhumanist ideas expressed by Max More, Hans Moravec, and Ray Kurzweil. In the second part I will argue that transhumanism introduces a revolutionary conception of innovation which is now seen disruptive *par excellence*.

Transhumanist Principles and the Possibility of Human Enhancement

Any reference regarding philosophical legacy of transhumanism goes up to the origin of modernity, when the whole perception of being in the world was changing. The autonomisation of nature and human being and the aim to find new means for ameliorating sufferance and to create a better social order are only a few general examples we can enumerate here. Transhumanism extracts its ideological vigor from these revolutionary representations of reality. Other schools of thought can be associated with transhumanism, such as utopianism, humanism, Enlightenment, positivism, or Darwinism. (In this enumeration I have a special mention for Friedrich Nietzsche. The concept of “posthuman” can be easily associated with Nietzschean term of “superhuman.” It is still to be demonstrated the way in which transhumanist ideas were influenced by Nietzsche. Max More tries to give a sketch about the philosophical influences of transhumanism in: More 2010, 1-4. James Steinhoff has also found some philosophical connections between transhumanism and Marxism in: Steinhoff 2014).

It was not a coincidence the fact that “transhumanism” as a notion was invented by Julian Huxley who was biologist. He took as a premise Darwin’s principle of natural selection and proposed the enlargement of this process beyond the limits of nature (J. S. Huxley 1958, 8). In a study about Darwin’s idea of evolution, Huxley underlined the necessity of monitoring and measuring the evolution rate. He was referring in this context to “biological progress (Huxley 1958, 9).” If 19th century biologists were interested in the origins of species, those from the 20th century will explore new possibilities regarding human nature. For this trend to occur it was necessary a completely new idea of evolution with the specific purposes of realization these new possibilities (Huxley 1958, 10). The inherent biological limitations are applicable to the

biological evolution governed by the natural selection and not to the artificial devices. Huxley gave the examples of telescope and electronic microscope, the instruments that significantly enhanced the visual human capacities (Huxley 1958, 11). This theory of biological evolution still exerts an important influence on the most part of transhumanist theories today. Therefore, one can distinguish within the very origins of the notion of transhumanism a new concept of innovation closely related with the idea of human enhancement.

Promoters of transhumanism like Marvin Minsky, Hans Moravec or Raymond Kurzweil provided some credibility to their theories as they are established scholars in areas such as computational sciences, innovation, and artificial intelligence. Other philosophers or futurologists like Max More and Nick Bostrom endow transhumanism with intellectual and philosophical meanings.

The so-called *Transhumanist Declaration* signed in 2012 by many adherents takes two premises: (1) the inevitable and ultimate impact of science and technology in the future; and (2) the assumption of enlargement of human potentialities through overcoming limitations like ageing, "cognitive shortcomings," "limitations on human and artificial intellects, unchosen psychology, suffering, and our confinement to the planet earth (Max More and Natasha Vita-More, 54-55." The premises cover two aspects: the absolute character of technological innovation and the strong desirability of human enhancement. To put it differently, I would say that *Transhumanist Declaration* is based on two limitless processes within innovation and inside the human nature.

Max More argues not surprisingly that transhumanism is a philosophy of life, an intellectual and cultural movement, and a field of research (More 2013, 4). Thus he emphasizes the ideological complexity that stands behind the transhumanist project. Transhumanism can further be regarded as a part of secular humanism at large. One can argue that transhumanism promotes a secularized type of transcendence, its own ethical code, and no doubt it foresees an eschatological post-human time. It assumes however the possibility of creating a bright future exacerbating the theme of progress; it maintains a full trust in the power of reason and human creativity and it hopes for the improvement of human condition. When linked to human enhancement, all these principles lead to the idea that human nature has the possibility to overcome its actual limitations through technology. The novelty of transhumanism is underlined by More in the following words:

'Trans-human' emphasizes the way transhumanism goes well beyond humanism in both means and ends. Humanism tends to rely exclusively on educational and cultural refinement to improve human nature whereas transhumanists want to apply technology to overcome limits imposed by our biological and genetic heritage. Transhumanists regard human nature not as an end in itself, not as perfect, and not as having any claim on our allegiance. Rather, it is just one point along an evolutionary pathway and we can learn to reshape our own nature in ways we deem desirable and valuable. By thoughtfully, carefully, and yet boldly applying technology to ourselves, we can

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become something no longer accurately described as human – we can become posthuman. (More 2013, 4)

Transhumanist discourse is obviously directed towards the achievement of human enhancement. Therefore innovation is of great importance since it uses technology as a tool for life improvement (More 2013, 5). I will further depict the way in which this view of technological innovation is specific to transhumanism and even radicalized in some of its theories. It seems that for the first time in human thinking, innovation is called to operate simultaneously within biological and artificial bodies. In order to avoid being too general, I will exemplify my idea using a specific and representative transhumanist theory: technological singularity.

Ray Kurzweil and Technological Singularity

Those who anticipate technological singularity foresee an ultimate acceleration of the rate of progress which will lead to a definitive change of humanity, and finally to the emergence of super intelligent entities. Radical human enhancement comes with an overestimation of the role of technological innovation.

Vernor Vinge introduced the term “technological singularity” in January 1983. The concept was announcing the upcoming of intelligent machines:

We will soon create intelligences greater than our own. When this happens, human history will have reached a kind of singularity, an intellectual transition as impenetrable as the knotted space-time at the center of a black hole, and the world will pass far beyond our understanding. This singularity, I believe, already haunts a number of science-fiction writers. (Socrates 2012)

Vinge has developed this idea 1993 in his essay *The Coming Technological Singularity* (Vinge 1993, 2013). In the abstract of his article, Vinge formulated a firm statement: “Within thirty years, we will have the technological means to create superhuman intelligence. Shortly after, the human era will be ended (Vinge 1993).” The magnitude of this anticipated and imminent change seems comparable with the emergence of life on earth. The progress would be much faster compared with the previous evolution. Like J. Huxley, Vinge was making a parallel with the evolutionary process in biological realm. We cannot prevent the singularity since its upcoming is the inevitable extension of the humankind’s capacity to adapt to the environment. To this it adds the infinite possibilities offered by technology (Vinge 1993). In Vinge’s discourse, a techno-utopian optimism brings human enhancement to a different level, in the sense that we have already been placed in a post-human age. The super-human intelligence will have all the prerogatives for such a transition. In this recalibrated scale of progress, the innovative process itself will attain a certain autonomous trajectory. Transhumanist assumptions reveal a specific determinism and a rigid optimism that can be particularly seen within the theory of singularity of Hans

Moravec. He became known among the representatives of the theory of singularity after he published his book *Mind Children* (1988). He argued here that robots will evolve in a new generation of artificial species by 2030 or 2040. They will probably be successors of *homo sapiens* (Socrates 2012). In his article "The Age of Robots," published in 1993, Moravec states:

Depending on your point of view, humanity will then have produced a worthy successor, or transcended inherited limitations and transformed itself into something quite new. No longer limited by the slow pace of human learning and even slower biological evolution, intelligent machinery will conduct its affairs on an ever faster, ever smaller scale, until coarse physical nature has been converted to fine-grained purposeful thought. (Moravec 1993)

Ray Kurzweil is probably the most famous figure to be associated with the concept of singularity. He is writer, inventor, futurist, and currently director of engineering department at Google. He wrote on topics like health, artificial intelligence, transhumanism, technological singularity, and futurism. In 1999, Kurzweil received National Medal of Technology and Innovation, the highest American award in technology. In 2001 he received Lemelson-MIT prize, the most important reward in the field of innovation. Kurzweil wrote many books, among which we mention: *The Age of Spiritual Machines* (Kurzweil 1999), *The Singularity is Near* (Kurzweil 2005) and *How to Create a Mind: The Secret of Human Thought Revealed* (Kurzweil 2012).

In *The Age of Spiritual Machines*, Kurzweil conceives the 21th century as the first in our post-biological future, a future when the definition of humankind will be reevaluated (Kurzweil 1999, 15). In *The Singularity is Near*, this future means that human life will be irreversibly changed by the astonishing rate of technological progress. Singularity will enable us to transcend our body and brain limitations and we will have full power on our destiny (Kurzweil 2005, 24). It is a matter of time until we find the optimal combination between human intelligence and computer superiority in terms of speed, accuracy, and fast access to memory. Once they are integrated in the same body, the moment will mark a tremendous leap (Kurzweil 1999, 15).

Kurzweil anticipates that by the end of the century, non-biological intelligence will be a trillion times more powerful than human intelligence. We are now in the preliminary phases of this transition, but the exponential growth will reach the curve prior to the stage of explosive increase. This will be immediately followed by the perfect vertical direction (Kurzweil 2005, 25). We see here again that the very concept of human enhancement appears to be exceeded or even outdated. Prior to the mid 21th century it will be difficult to make a distinction between human capabilities and the intelligence of machines, believes Kurzweil (Kurzweil 1999, 16).

There is one remarkable aspect which is typical not only for Kurzweil, but for most transhumanists: they have a physicist view over the biological world and a biological representation of the artificial field. Hence the big relevance of

the Darwinist theory of species I mentioned before. Singularity is ultimately the fusion of our biological existence with technology so there will be no distinction between human and machine, or between physical and virtual (Kurzweil 2005, 25). Human intelligence is considered by Kurzweil the work of billion years of evolution. The emergence of a new type of intelligence able to compete with human intelligence and to exceed it will be the most important novelty which ever shaped the history of humankind. This transformation will have deep implications in all human activities including labor, learning process, governance, war, and the way we conceive ourselves (Kurzweil 1999, 16).

În *Singularity is near*, Kurzweil enumerates the principles of singularity, among which I mention here only: 1) The rate of technological innovation doubles every ten years; 2) By the end of 2020s it will be no difference between the computational intelligence and the biological intelligence; 3) The non-biological intelligence will be able to download abilities and knowledge from other machines, eventually from humans; 4) Computers could access the whole knowledge of our civilization through the Internet; 5) Nanotechnology would be capable to make nanobots at the molecular scale. They will have multiple functions such as to invert the aging process or to create virtual realities at the level of nervous system; 6) Human ability to manifest emotions will be also dominated by machines (Kurzweil 2005, 37-40).

The issue of singularity seems rather a subject for SF movies and novels. Nevertheless it deserves the interest of scholars for multiple reasons. One of them is the new perspective on technological innovation. In which way this perspective really modifies our perception about innovation remains to be demonstrated. Innovation has necessarily an accelerate rate not only in the transhumanist worldview, but in our perception too. Yet in transhumanism and in scientific circles innovation is mostly oriented towards intelligent systems and artificial intelligence. The distinctive idea of transhumanist innovation is the autonomisation. The innovation needed for the next evolutionary steps will be generated by the machines themselves, creating an ascendant spiral. As a matter of fact, innovation will not be a human prerogative any more since the boundaries between human and machine will be indistinguishable.

I pointed so far that the merging between human enhancement and technological innovation is called to attain physical human transcendence. In the following I will offer an account of this transhumanist *idea* with regard to the changing paradigm of innovation nowadays.

Enhancement and Innovation

The contemporary innovative process is realistic and pragmatic by definition. Researchers in the area of intelligent technologies seldom make philosophical statements about changing the human nature and about a future golden age. Their top priority is to develop intelligent technologies that improve health, comfort, and security. They look more tailored to meet individuated demands

and market requirements. Yet the proliferation of intelligent artifacts, systems, and devices that are context-aware and self-adjusting is another occasion to talk again about a “paradigm change” (Rapoport and Safra 2014, 17). Such a paradigm change can be followed in different directions like for example in our new imaginary about the world, a new consciousness, a new worldview in terms of totalizing *Idea*. In this paper I refer particularly to a paradigm change in the idea of innovation. In this regard I will argue that innovation gets some transhumanist features.

I will refer first to an interesting, intriguing and unusual institution, “Singularity University.” I consider that this is a relevant example for a study focused on the idea of technological innovation. Singularity University was founded in 2008 by Peter Diamondis and Ray Kurzweil. One might believe it is a futuristic institution focused on predictions and research that aims to facilitate the advent of singularity. A closer look will offer a totally different view about this “University.” Situated in Silicon Valley, it is an organization having the only purpose of innovation. More precisely it is concerned with the implementation of “exponential technologies” in order to answer the big challenges of humankind like food, health, poverty, education, and environment. Innovators from all over the world are encouraged to use technologies in a way that could change the lives of billions of people. In the annual report of 2014 of “Singularity University” we find a clarification concerning exponential technologies: „Exponential technologies demonstrate continued accelerating growth of capabilities (speed, efficiency, cost-effectiveness or power), driven both by advances in the individual technologies themselves, as well as through their interplay and synergies. These technologies are seen to be generating tremendous disruption: artificial intelligence & robotics, biotechnology, nanotechnology & digital fabrication, network & computing systems and medicine & neuroscience.” (Impact Report 2014)

Singularity University is interested about the impact of technologies from nine key domains: medicine, neuroscience, computational sciences, artificial intelligence, robotics, biotechnology, bioinformatics, nanotechnology, and energy. According to Nicholas Haan, the director for “Global Grand Challenges” at Singularity University since 2013, one of the key questions for those who want to join the “University” is how they can positively influence the life of a billion people in the next decade. To this purpose there are organized Global Impact Competitions (In 2014 the GIC contest was organized in 20 countries having 25 winners in total. The first competition in 2015 was in Finland. <https://www.slush.org/2014/11/singularity-uni/>). When he was asked how the exponential technologies can solve the big challenges of humanity, Hann answered:

Exponential technology creates whole new opportunities to solve humanity's grand challenges in that it becomes more digitized, democratized, demonetized, and dematerialized. Exponential trends in the performance of computing are

mirrored in a wider range of industries: the price of decoding the human genome is plummeting, the price of solar production is plummeting, and so on. Increasingly technology is in the hands of innovators around the world – including the people who are most facing challenges. (<https://www.slush.org/2014/11/singularity-uni/>)

Haan views “Singularity University” both as an institution committed to solve the big challenges of humanity, and as an opportunity to create a positive vision about a future when everyone’s needs shall be satisfied and people will thrive. Kurzweil sees the “University” as an intellectual community where people share their interest for information technology and its exponential growth.

Singularity University is a laboratory of innovation. Vivek Wadhwa, vice president for innovation and research is confident that the next decade will be the most innovative from the history of humankind. Technologies advance so fast that whole industries will disappear and new ones will emerge. Nevertheless, Wadhwa declares himself realist and pragmatic. He does not take into account the convergence between humans and machines. He considers this science fiction and refers only to practical implementation of contemporary technologies that can help humanity (Rowan 2013). According to Wadhwa, the mission on the “University” is to teach leaders, CEOs, entrepreneurs and innovators about technologies situated in exponential advance. Few are aware of the fast advance in areas like robotics, AI, medicine, biotechnology, or computing, and of their potential solutions for the global challenges (<http://singularityu.org/2011/12/01/singularity-university-appoints-vivek-wadhwa-vice-president-of-academics-and-innovation/>).

Rob Nail, director at the Singularity University, extends the meaning of innovation. Innovation shouldn’t be the prerogative of inventors and researchers, but also of leaders, economists and entrepreneurs. Innovative is the one who has a visionary perspective towards the future of technology and education and who wants to solve the problems of humankind.

The final question of this paper is this: what is the correspondence between the transhumanist idea of innovation and the view about innovation promoted by an institution like “Singularity University”? In my opinion the two views are complementary. Without doubt, it is no coincidence that one of the founders of this University is Ray Kurzweil, a famous transhumanist. The name of this institution remembers the most representative transhumanist theory. Exponential technologies have a central role in transhumanist views as well as in the projects of “Singularity University.” Other similarities are: (1) both views share a high optimism concerning a future that will be once and for all transformed by innovation; (2) the future is bright and completely new; (3) progress is seen at an accelerated rate, growing towards an unmatched level; (4) life will be improved through the aforementioned exponential technologies.

Within the broad current of transhumanism one can notice an extreme optimism, but this is never naïve and exalted. However, the idea that change

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occurs at a level that cannot be compared with any former technological revolution in the whole history is difficult to assimilate. The transhumanist *idea* comes to absolutize technology to the extent that human enhancement is even overwhelmed through innovation. Although transhumanism seems difficult to be absorbed in our imaginary, certain aspects of its spirit penetrates the way we understand innovation and human empowerment. The limits of innovation are pushed out. Innovation is called to open itself toward society and contemporary problems. Standard innovation (intelligent cities, supercomputers, spatial missions) is moved ahead by the transhumanist mentality which grants technology with a strong feeling of enhancement. In singularity state, our contemporary problems will be simply out of question. This kind of post-human status offers a serious impetus for contemporary innovation. Thus, transhumanist ideas are not turned away from concrete reality which is for them both a starting point and a source of inspiration.

Conclusion

The premises and the main concepts of transhumanism can be easily identified: human nature is the subject of innovation and transformations. Technology is seen as a continuation of human evolution. By way of consequence, a deep symbiosis between human and machine up to the emergence of post-human entities will occur. This paper made the distinction between human enhancement and technological innovation as it is designed by transhumanists. I have argued that this distinction lead to a modification of the paradigm of technological innovation.

A representative transhumanist theory, “technological singularity,” exemplifies how this paradigm reaches an extreme level up to the dissolution of innovation itself. “Singularity University” was a moderate example of hybridization of innovation. On the one hand, it manages to promote a certain pragmatism concerning exponential technologies linked to solving stringent human problems. On the other hand, it maintains the transhumanist view on innovation when it emphasizes human enhancement. So, we cannot speak about two distinct and contradictory views of innovation in respect to emergent technologies. The transhumanist *spirit* permeates the one and the same concept of innovation. However, we can talk about a new paradigm of innovation. This becomes visible in the idea of human enhancement and in the artificial intelligence research. One can see transhumanism as a symptom of mutations that occurred in the representation of innovation. This current of thinking is certainly part of its age and it has the potential to interfere strongly with its context.

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The Self-Other Relationship Between Transcendental and Ethical Inquiries*

Irina Rotaru

Abstract: This paper discusses two approaches of the relationship between subjectivity and intersubjectivity. The Husserlian one, a transcendental phenomenological investigation of the possibility of subjectivity and intersubjectivity, and the Waldenfelsian one, an ethical phenomenological investigation of day to day intersubjective interactions. Both authors pretend to give account of the conditions of possibility of intersubjective interaction. However, Husserl starts with the investigation of the transcendental structure of subjectivity, that is, the fundamental conditions required for the appearance of consciousness. By contrast, Waldenfels looks first at practical interaction and draws conclusions on the deeper structure of subjectivity based on the traces he discovers to be characteristic for this interaction. Our interest lies in determining which of the two approaches should be given priority for the investigation of the constitution of intersubjectivity.

Keywords: subjectivity, intersubjectivity, transcendental phenomenology, ethics, Edmund Husserl, Bernhard Waldenfels

Introduction

This paper discusses two approaches of the relationship between subjectivity and intersubjectivity. The Husserlian one, which is a transcendental phenomenological investigation of the possibility of subjectivity and intersubjectivity, and the Waldenfelsian one, which is an ethical phenomenological investigation of day to day intersubjective interactions. Both authors pretend to give account of the conditions of possibility of intersubjective interaction. However, Husserl starts with the investigation of the transcendental structure of subjectivity, that is, the fundamental conditions required for the appearance of consciousness. Relevant turns out to be the interplay between temporality of consciousness and embodiment with its sensitivity. By contrast, Waldenfels looks first at practical interaction and draws conclusions on the deeper structure of subjectivity based on the traces he discovers to be characteristic for this interaction.

The Husserlian theory on intersubjectivity is a phenomenologically descriptive theory; it aims at giving account on how intersubjectivity is possible:

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How come that we recognize the other person, or animal, as subjects. How come we do not perceive each other as mere objects, or simulacra. Because phenomenology is a method of investigation from the first person perspective, accounting for the subjective conditions for possibility of experience and perception in general, intersubjectivity is also investigated as a phenomenon given to the first person perspective. Regarding constitution, Husserl will arrive to the result that subjectivity and intersubjectivity are constituted reciprocally, none holds priority. Still, the subject is a principle of individuation. There cannot be inter-subjectivity without individualized subjectivity. Where there is no individuation, there is no inter-, but only idem. Where there is only idem, there is no consciousness of self or other. The subject has priority for the transcendental phenomenological investigation only in what regards the method. The question to be answered is: What are the subjective conditions for the possibility of perceiving the other as another subject? Therefore, the subjective mechanisms of perception are those primarily investigated to account for the constitution of intersubjectivity.

Transcendental phenomenology is concerned with the ontological conditions for the possibility of experience. Our concern here will be with the ontological conditions for the possibility of experiencing intersubjectivity, or the other as a subject just like ourselves. The level of interaction transcendental phenomenology is interested in is not the practical level, the level of aware consciousness, of act intentionality, of cultural interactions, etc. Rather, it is primarily interested in the passive syntheses that take place at the pre-cognitive level of consciousness, characterized by operative intentionality. These pre-aware processes support, make possible aware interaction at the practical level. So, once again, transcendental phenomenology does not aim at giving account of the practical norms for intersubjective interaction.

A descriptive theory aims at describing what is the case. By contrast, a normative theory sets standards, rules for what should be the case, for what ought to be. Descriptive theories are not entirely strange to normativity. All research has to respect general norms like truthfulness, engagement to an objective attitude, etc. These are epistemological norms, but they can also be understood as ethical norms. Despite the Husserlian theory on intersubjectivity being descriptive, it has been widely criticized by ethical, normative theories for being solipsistic, as it has subjectivity as the center of its investigations.

In this paper I will review and analyze some of Bernhard Waldenfels' arguments targeted against the Husserlian theory of intersubjectivity. Waldenfels develops a responsive phenomenology on ethical grounds. He continues the French tradition of phenomenological ethics. I argue that he interprets the Husserlian statements as if they would describe the practical level of interaction. Therefore, Waldenfels declared transcendental phenomenology as violent and offering the *I* a privileged place to the detriment of the *other*.

Waldenfels suggests that one should always start from ethics, as every human enterprise has ethical consequences.

The biggest challenge for all kinds of research is to avoid being influenced by what the researcher would like to be the case, or to turn previous knowledge into norm, in which case knowledge becomes presupposition. Being very sensitive to these kinds of dangers, Husserl aimed at developing a philosophical method to help one get rid of all the presuppositions and hopes based on established knowledge. The philosopher who adopts this method should pay very close attention to how things themselves are given to her in different modes of experience, and describe her own discoveries. The result should be a purely descriptive philosophy.

In this paper I propose that we understand individuated subjectivity as a fact about human understanding and interaction that cannot be simply given up, overcome to the point of dissolution, of becoming no-one. In descriptive terms, subjectivity is just a fact; in normative terms, it could be understood as a limit of our freedom. Ethics blames metaphysics and transcendental philosophy of being idealistic when it comes to the rational capacities of subjectivity. I suggest that ethics itself falls prey to idealism if it thinks it can approach the other and the world in general independently of the ontological facts determining subjectivity. Waldenfels argues that any kind of research should start with ethics, as long as every human endeavor and any human action have ethical consequences. I argue that every action with ethical consequences is grounded in human limits. Therefore, practical theories should ground their accounts in the results of ontological theories.

I will interpret Waldenfels' statements in transcendental phenomenological manner, as long as they are directed to the Husserlian phenomenology. Anyway, I am aware of their different implications and importance for the practical intersubjective interaction and for our day to day existence.

Should we Start with Ethics?

Waldenfels rejects the Lévinasian phrase by means of which ethics is defined as first philosophy. He argues that any philosophical endeavor *should* start with ethics, but to define it as first philosophy denotes a belief in principles, in *arche*, concepts which involve authority. As long as Waldenfelsian philosophy claims that no one is ever the first one, but everyone is always the second, encouraging talk about first philosophy would be contradictory. Likewise, the idea of ethical principles cannot be argued for, as long as ethics is grounded in experiencing the other as affect, demand. Anyway, our author is of the opinion that any philosopher should first pay attention to ethics, to make sure they start with the right attitude. Let us first see how this requirement works in the case of giving account on perception.

The philosopher admits that perception for instance is not an ethical act; but he emphasizes:

Wenn man wahrnimmt, ist das etisch oder nicht? Natürlich ist das kein etischer Akt, aus dem ich jemandem einen Vorwurf machen kann, aber das Ethos einer bestimmten Lebenseinstellung ist beteiligt. Jemand stürzt auf der Straße. Sie übersehen dies, gucken nicht hin. Das ist Wahrnehmung, aber keine bloße Wahrnehmung. Der Wahrnehmende verhält sich nie etisch neutral.¹ (Waldenfels in: Rotaru 2010, 267)

There is truth to this view. In every act of perception one can read ethical aspects. But even if we admit that no act of perception is pure perception, it does not mean that perception cannot be investigated only regarding pure perceptive aspects. That someone fails to perceive, let's say, someone else's appeal could be explained through their general attitude towards others. At the same time, overseeing something could be rooted in objective facts about perceptive mechanisms: vision impairments, or even facts that do not represent impairments. As Waldenfels definitely agrees, these failures do not fall under ethical requirements. Then why should they be judged by means of ethics? It is true that working on the attitude towards the other one can learn to perceive more, to be more sensitive to the other's call. But perception here does not refer to natural, physiological aspects of perceiving; the concern is rather with *understanding*, being open to the other's situation and need. How can one expect from a descriptive theory, interested in objective, embodied facts about perception to be careful not to violate ethical norms concerning behavior towards the other? I find this request to be in contradiction with the ethical norms for rigorous research. I argue for the opposite: Pure perceptive aspects should be taken into account by ethics, as constitutive aspects of perception set the boundaries for what I can be held responsible for perceiving or not.

The most famous example for how Husserl analyzes perception draws on the fact that perception is perspectival. According to my position in relation to things, I can only see some of the sides of the things perceived. If I walk around the things that I perceive, or if I turn them around, I gain access to the sides that were first hidden from me. Still, at no time, under no circumstances, will I have direct access to all the sides of what I perceive. Despite this, I perceive unities, not only sides. This fact about perception rises for Husserl questions regarding the unity of consciousness, the unity of the perceived, the relation between consciousness and world.

Another fact revealed by his inquiries is that spatiality builds itself around the subject's body. Something is close or far, it can be seen or not, it is to my left,

¹ "Perceiving: Is it ethical or not? Of course this is not an ethical action on the basis of which someone could be blamed, but the ethos of a specific attitude towards life is involved. Someone falls on the street. You miss it, you don't look at that. This is perception, but not mere perception. The perceiver never behaves in an ethically neutral manner." (Translation of all German quotes belong to the author of this paper.)

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or above, etc. The change of my position changes the coordinates of the exterior things. One cannot perceive as if the own body would not be the point that opens a perspective on the world. Linked to the concept of perspective is the concept of horizon. Husserl uses this concept as a spatial metaphor for how things or the world as a whole is given to consciousness. It draws attention to the fact that consciousness is not momentarily, it is not restricted to what is presently and directly given to it. Rather, based on what it is directly given to it, it has a perspective on what it could be. That is, what is directly given in intuition opens a horizon of what there could be.

Horizont besagt einen Modus des Bewußtseins, aber gegenüber der Intention im Richtungssinn eines Gegenmodus von 'Intentionalität.'² (Husserl 2001, 196)

Horizon stands for the unthematical background of consciousness. This is why Husserl describes it as opposed to intentionality, where intentionality is understood as describing thematic acts of consciousness.³

Judging from the perspective of ethics, Waldenfels argues for replacing the concept of horizon with that of verticality. The concept of horizon, according to Waldenfels, encourages viewing the relation between self and other as centered in a single pole, namely the subject, subordinating therefore the other to the self. By contrast, viewed by means of the concept of verticality, what is alien would be understood as interwoven with the own. The latter concept is borrowed from Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who in *Le visible et l'invisible* talks about the verticality of history, of the past, of the world, and even of intersubjectivity in order to attribute a universal dimension to existence.

Wenn Merleau-Ponty sich auf eine Vertikalität bezieht, so bevorzugt er nicht eine Dimension neben anderen etwa in der Weise, wie Platon der 'zweiten Ausdehnung' (αὐξή) in der Fläche (ἐπιπέδον) als dritte Dimension die Tiefe (βάθος) hinzufügt. Vielmehr geht es ihm darum, wie es im Anschluß an Heidegger heißt, eine 'universale Dimensionalität' des Seins selbst zurückzugewinnen.⁴ (Waldenfels 2007, 420)

Verticality is supposed to break the perspectival order of the world, which is centered in my present consciousness, in the position of my body. What is situated in the depth, it is said, or in the height, is not accessible by simply changing one's position, as in the case of what is in front or behind. (Waldenfels

² "Horizon means a manner of having something consciously given, but regarding intention in the opposite manner of 'intentionality.'"

³ As we can notice in the quote above, Husserl places *intentionality* between quotation marks. This is because for him intentionality does not characterize only thematic acts of consciousness, but also unthematic processes. The intentionality animating lower levels of consciousness is operative intentionality.

⁴ "When Merleau-Ponty refers to verticality, he does not favor a dimension next to others, in the way Plato adds a 'second extension' to the surface, as a third dimension of the depth. Rather, he wants to win back what in connection to Heidegger means a 'universal dimension' of the Being itself."

2007, 420) The concern is not only with the centered perspective, but also with the ideal possibility of access to what is not me. But Husserl does not admit this ideal possibility. Actually, the concept of horizon can be understood as indicating the fact that we have limited direct access to the world. What is directly given to me opens certain possibilities in the horizon, but also closes up or excludes other ones. To the extent that any positioning enables, it also disables.

Regarding the relationship with the other, the concept of horizon is considered to be inadequate because it entails the image of a fully self-consciousness subject, while in fact the self is intertwined with otherness, with the alienness of the other.⁵ The intertwining is described as “intersubjective verticality.” (Waldenfels 2007, 422) The verticality of intersubjectivity should emphasize that there is no defined place for the self or for the other, that there is no privileged place for what is one’s own in relationship with alienness.

First of all, the sphere of the self, in Husserlian terms, is better described as a set of possibilities than as a privilege. It would be a privilege if the other would have no access to the possibilities granted by the coordinates of my objective position. But the objective position can always be switched between me and the other. Secondly, for there to exist an interweaving between what is one’s own and otherness, the own also has to exist, not only the different. If Waldenfels does not admit the idea that a position open for one certain possibilities and for another different ones, then he cannot justify the talk about the other.

Waldenfels argues that we should give up the concept of horizon even when we talk about physical space and together with it the traditional concept of spatiality, as it involves objective reference points and a hierarchy among different dimensions. (Waldenfels 2007, 422) Experience of spatiality according to the concept of verticality seems to lack the qualities associated with embodiment. I find Waldenfels’ attempt to exclude embodiment from the experience of spatiality to be at odds with his commitment to de-idealize the subject starting from embodiment.

The body does not only give structure to the experience of spatiality, it is what makes the experience of space possible in the first place. Disembodied beings would not be able to experience space; as Descartes would put it, having no extended properties leads to not being able to experience the extended. The body links us to a certain place in space; one does not experience space as from nowhere. In Husserl’s words, as human beings we are our body and this links us to spatiality, which divides into pairs of opposites: Up, down; left, right; far, close, etc. Who could testify that perception does not order itself according to a center, that is, a body? Consciousness depends on coordinates that determine our place

⁵ To name the other, Waldenfels uses both “*der Andere*” and “*der Fremde*.” In English these concepts have been translated as the other, and the alien, respectively. The term used by Waldenfels to stand for the otherness of the other is *fremdheit*, which in English has been translated as alienness.

at different moments. The sum of all these coordinates sets our possibilities and shapes our identity.

The horizon represents an ontological dimension of our being in the world, while verticality is the result of an ethical interpretation interested in the way we ought to be. The natural attitude, according to which the other is given in the horizon, has to be subject of a critical attitude, in order to make place for the verticality of the practical ethical relationship with the other. But this is not a reason to eliminate the concept of horizon from ontological theories.

Replacing the Subject with the Respondent

Waldenfels also argues for replacing the concept of *subject* with that of *respondent*. He argues against the concept of subject associated with the ideal of pure rationality, which ignores embodiment. Embodiment means that we do not have full control upon ourselves, and that our acts do not begin with ourselves.

Die Instanz, die in der Moderne den Titel 'Subjekt' trägt, tritt vorweg als Patient und als Respondent auf, also in der Weise daß ich beteiligt bin, aber nicht als Initiator, sondern als jemand, der buchstäblich bestimmten Erfahrungen unterworfen ist, als Subjekt in jenem unüblichen Wortsinn, den Lacan und Levinas sich zunutze machen.⁶ (Waldenfels 2006, 45)

This view is also a reaction to the Husserlian description of the subject, which is considered to pay tribute to the traditional ideals of rationality. But in fact, embodiment plays a major role in Husserl's theory on subjectivity, which upholds that activity is grounded in affectivity. One can read in Husserl:

'Rezeptivität' ist wohl dem Sinne nach ein Ausdruck, der eine *niederste Stufe der Aktivität einschließt* [...]. Subjektiv im ursprünglichen Sinne ist auch das 'passive' Ich (in einem zweiten Sinne) als *das Ich der 'Tendenzen'*, das von Dinge und Erscheinungen Reize erfährt, angezogen wird und dem Zuge bloß nachgibt.⁷ (Husserl 1952, 213)

So, Husserl had already recognized that responding to affection occurs before any activity, and implicitly that the subject comprises a domain of unknown and uncontrollable.

In support of his argument that the subject should be replaced with the respondent, Waldenfels appeals, for example, to a scene described by Josef Roth in his novel *Radetzky Marsch*: In a war scene, captain Radetzky stands next to the

⁶ "The instance that under Modernity was wearing the title 'Subject' appears first of all as patient and respondent, therefore in a manner in which I participate to something, but not as initiator, but as someone who is literally subjected [*unterworfen*] to something, that is, subject in that unusual sense of the word used by Lacan and Levinas."

⁷ "'Receptivity' is according to its sense an expression that designates a *lower stage of activity*. [...] In original sense, subjective also means the 'passive' ego (in a second sense), as the ego of 'tendencies,' which experiences stimulation from things and appearances, is attracted, and gives in to this attraction."

king on a hill on the battle field. Suddenly, they hear gun fire. Radetzky notices a bullet coming towards the king, jumps on the king and knocks him down to the ground. The king is unharmed. Radetzky is turned into a hero. The incident makes Waldenfels wondering where is the big hero, where is the subject?

Es ist ein Subjekt, dem etwas geschehen ist und das im richtigen Augenblick geistesgegenwärtig geantwortet hat. Deshalb sage ich statt Subjekt Respondent.⁸ (Waldenfels in: Rotaru 2010, 259)

We agree that in this example Waldenfels is right about the subject, or rather about the lack of a big subject. This does not mean that there cannot be situations in which people act as authentic subjects according to the traditional image of the subject. Accounting for only one type of behavior does injustice to the other kinds.

If our behavior looks at times more like responding than like genuine initiative it does not mean that our whole relating to the world resumes to responding. Husserl emphasizes that we are continuous becoming and that the world is history because each of us is a new beginning. By continuously taking over what is already given we turn the already given into life, and so the already given is modified through personalization. If we analyze closer the fact of responding to appeals, it becomes clear that only an identity can respond to appeals. For there to be given an answer, a subject has to exist; there has to be someone to register the affection. In this sense the subject has priority. In answering, the subject is only a respondent, but the fact of responding is subjectively personalized, even if responding is just a reaction of the subject and not something initiated by him. One does not respond to everything; different persons respond in different manners to the same kind of affection or appeal. The response is followed by an action which may not always be the result of genuine deliberation and choice, but which definitely has the potential of authenticity. Action is grounded in affection, acting is grounded in responding. I argue that to the same extent that a person is a respondent, she is an agent. The difference is made by the observer's preferences.

Concerning subjectivity, we must be clear about what aspect of subjectivity we refer to, or to what kind of subject. There can be distinguished three kinds of subjects that our authors are concerned with: the transcendental subject, the psychological subject, and the rational subject. For Husserl, the transcendental subject represents the sum of the fundamental conditions of possibility for subjectivity: the body, temporal consciousness, and intersubjectivity. These are the conditions that make possible human experience. They are the aspects that shape every experience, every perception. The subject that Waldenfels brings into play I will describe as psychological subject, as it brings into discussion personality traces, strength of will, spontaneity, and the

⁸ "There is a subject to whom something happened, and who in the right moment answered quick-wittedly. This is why instead of subject, I say respondent."

like. The rational subject is linked to concerns about the degree of understanding reality. We are less interested in this aspect here. What I want to point out is that while Husserl refers to the transcendental subject, Waldenfels refers to the psychological subject. He holds that the subjective characteristics accounted for by Husserl depict a strong psychological subject.

To argue for the existence of the transcendental ego, at least in Husserlian terms, does not mean to argue for a strong psychological subject. The transcendental ego stands for the possibility of experience; it explains the unity of consciousness and the possibility of reflection. To be a subject means for Husserl to exist for oneself, to be aware of oneself.

Subjekt ist, in der Weise seiner selbst bewusst zu sein, zu sein. Erfasse ich mich in der Reflexion, so ist das, ich erfasse mein identisches Ich als Pol meines Lebens, oder ich erfasse von Leben zu Leben fortgehend, immer neu reflektierend, mich selbst als identische Einheit und mein Leben selbst als Einheit eines vielgestaltigen Stromes usw.⁹ (Husserl 1973, 151)

Self consciousness is far from existing only in extraordinary situations, namely only when we reflexively turn our attention upon our conscious life. Stating that subjectivity disposes of itself by being aware of itself, Husserl does not subscribe to the Cartesian thesis regarding the possibility of complete self transparency and self infallibility. He only points to the profound link between something being lived and given to the first person perspective. According to his understanding, the givenness to the first person perspective does not only secondarily characterize what is lived. Rather, it defines the existence of the lived. By contrast to physical objects that can exist independently of appearing to a subject, what is lived is essentially determined by its givenness to a subject by means of a qualitative feeling. To have something given as lived means to experience “how it is like” to have that specific experience. Every “how it is like” is conscious. The “how it is like” aspect of experience is given directly, not by means of reflexivity or judgments. To have first person experiences involves a primitive form of self-consciousness.

The act of reflection, for example the explicit awareness of seeing a lamp on the desk, is considered double grounded. Reflected awareness does not disclose a subject enclosed in itself, but a subjectivity transcending itself, pre-reflexively oriented towards its object:

⁹ “To be a subject means to be aware of oneself. If I understand myself in reflection, then I understand my identical I as core of my life, or I understand myself, going from life to life, continuously reflecting, as identical unity, and I understand my life itself as unity of a flow.”

Ich in der natürlichen Weltlichkeit habe Weltbewußtsein und Selbstbewußtsein mit dem Sinn, selbst in der Welt zu sein. 'Gerichtet' bin ich nur gelegentlich auf mich, in der reflexive-aktiven Selbstwahrnehmung.¹⁰ (Husserl 1973b, 78)

Pre-reflective awareness is not outside intentionality; it is characterized by operative intentionality.

Reflection is directed towards something already given before thematization; it is disclosing rather than producing its object of interest. In reflection I find myself as already being in relation with something, I find myself as having been affected. Reflection is therefore not a *sui generis* act, it does not appear out of nothing, but requires motivation. For Husserl, to be motivated amounts to being affected and to respond to the affection.

Jeder Akt setzt voraus Affektion; das, worauf er sich hin richtet, ist schon im Bewusstseinfeld, unerfasst [...].¹¹ (Husserl 1973b, 78)

When I start to reflect on something, that something already existed for me for a while.

Ich bin für mich ganz ursprünglich als selbstwahrnehmendes (selbstgegenwärtigendes), ich kann mich selbst aktuell kennenlernen weil ich schon passiv in originaler Selbstgegenwärtigung bin und von da affiziert auf mich aktuell hinsehen und mich in meinen originalen Eigenheiten erfassen kann etc.¹² (Husserl 1973b, 120)

Therefore, the primacy of affection does not contradict the possibility of authentic reflection or the existence of the subject.

Rejecting the subject is closely linked to rejecting intentionality.

So wie das Pathos diesseits der Intentionalität, so ist unsere Response jenseits der Intentionalität anzusetzen. Die Responsivität geht über jede Intentionalität hinaus, da das Eingehen auf das, was uns zustößt, sich nicht in der Sinnhaftigkeit, Verständlichkeit oder Wahrheit dessen erschöpft, was wir zur Antwort geben.¹³ (Waldenfels 2006, 45)

To make the point that intentionality should be replaced by the fact of responding, Waldenfels exemplifies with a situation found in *Der Mann ohne*

¹⁰ "In the natural attitude I have consciousness of the world and consciousness of myself as being in the world. Only occasionally am I 'oriented' towards myself, in the reflexively-active perception of myself."

¹¹ "Each act presupposes affection; that [something] towards which [an act] orients itself already exists in the field of consciousness, ungrasped [...]."

¹² "For myself I am entirely originally self perception (self givenness), I can make acquaintance with myself in an actual manner because I am already passively in original self presence and affected by this [self presence] I can look at myself in an actual manner and I can grasp myself regarding my original traces."

¹³ "Just as pathos is [placed] on this side of intentionality, our response has to be placed on the other side of intentionality. Responsivity exceeds any intentionality, because undertaking what happens to us is not exhausted by the meaningfulness, intelligibility and truth of what we give as answer."

Eigenschaften, by Robert Musil. The related event starts with two persons running by chance into an event „that we are used to describe as car crush.” But this event cannot be defined as such right from the start:

Alles beginnt mit einem ‘Auflauf’, also mit einer gestauten Bewegung: Etwas war ‘aus der Reihe gesprungen, eine quer schlagende Bewegung; etwas hatte sich gedreht, war seitwärts gerutscht, ein schwerer, jäh gebremster Lastwagen war es, wie sich jetzt zeigte, wo er, mit einem Rad auf der Bordschwelle, gestrandet dastand.¹⁴ (Waldenfels 2006, 39)

It seemed that there was also a casualty to this car crush. Reacting, the man walking by explains to the lady accompanying him that the brakes haven’t been hit at the right distance and that the ambulance will come soon; he will mention statistics about the number of victims of car crashes. Due to this attitude, the accident can be integrated into an order, turned into a technical problem and a statistical fact. This way of experiencing the event is for sure an extremely superficial one.

The story of the accident is used by Waldenfels as illustration of a happening that strikes us, imposes on us, attracts, scares, and provokes us, gets us thinking and questions the degree of our rationality. He argues that not everything that happens can be ordered according to existing rules, that pathos precedes and escapes intentionality. But pathos does not rule out intentionality; for Husserl, pathos or affectivity involves a certain form of intentionality – the operative intentionality.

Husserl widens the Brentanian concept of intentionality which characterized only the polarity between consciousness and object. For Brentano’s student, not only reflexive conscious acts are intentional, but also sub-reflexive, sub-conscious processes. Intentionality present at lower levels of consciousness is called operative intentionality. The theory of operative intentionality is aimed at linking consciousness to the body, it is a result of the fact that consciousness is in an operative manner present in bodily processes. Intentionality is what renders the body capable of being affected.

We have a tendency to react with reticence towards unusual, disturbing events that challenge our system of values. Our tendency is to understand everything by means of the values we already submitted to. Waldenfels does not only say that we should become aware of this tendency and try to keep it under control, but he expects us to merely replace it with responsivity. It is pretty difficult to change our habits; this fact indicates first of all that the subject defines itself through its habits. Change is experienced as giving up a part of oneself. The human tendency is to confirm oneself as a unitary subject.

¹⁴ “Everything begins with an ‘agglomeration,’ so with a strangulated movement: something had leaped ‘out of the order, a diagonal striking movement; something rotated, slipped sideways, it was a heavy yet slowed down truck, as it now showed, where it stood aground with a wheel in the curb.”

Does the Idea of Subject Contravene to an Ethical Attitude?

Even if psychoanalysts state that “one is never completely at home,” they do their best to make us feel at home with ourselves. Regarded medically, even if ideal, the idea of a subject at peace with herself is valued positively; it requires good knowledge of one’s own motivation, which is the result of decreasing alienness to oneself.

Concerning the idea that the ego is nothing more than introjection of the other, Ernest E. Boesch wonders:

Indeed, what would we introject? In fact, ‘The Other’ is a fiction. There exist only others, but no Other. And these others are a multiple variety. The shouting politician, the glib banker, the dreaming poet, the harsh policeman, the cruel torturer, the compassionate healer, the Mother Teresa, Hitler and Stalin, the Eskimo in his snow igloo, the bushman in his cave, the insane in the asylum, the beggar in the slum – those and many more are ‘others.’ [...] In fact, ‘other’ simply means ‘not like I’. What of all these should I introject? (Boesch 2007, 4-5)

To introject the other would mean that the other has priority in any kind of interaction, that the subject first understands the other, captures their difference and specificity, and absorbs it to become someone. But in fact, says Boesch, most of the time we are ignorant about what is behind the appearances of the others. Understanding the other is riddled with speculation and guessing. People speculate and take guesses based on what their self-knowledge makes accessible of the other’s difference.

Of course, in the process of constructing our self all we experience around us has its impact, but the process implies selections, evaluations, transformations – in short, what Piaget called a dynamic interplay between assimilations and accommodations. (Boesch 2007, 5)

We do this according to a personal schema, even if not warily. This brings him to the conclusion that alterity is a relational concept, determined from the perspective of the self, perspective that changes depending on the context.

Conclusion

I agree that the responsive theory describes the reality of subjectivity and intersubjective interactions, but not the whole reality. This theory encourages an entirely positive ethical attitude towards the other. I argue that the other cannot be done justice unless we accept the idea of subject, the possibility of self reflection and delimitation. I draw the conclusion that transcendental phenomenology does not contravene to the requests of responsive ethics, or of ethics in general. On the one hand, the two discourses are concerned with different, independent perspectives. On the other hand, even if they were both to be judged according to their practical consequences, the Husserlian transcendental approach proves not to be far from the responsive requests. Transcendental phenomenology is concerned with the natural, ontological

characteristics of subjectivity. Based on these characteristics it can determine our behavioral tendencies and the limits of our understanding. Responsive ethics is first of all concerned with the norms for ethical behavior, leaving the impression that it believes that the ideal can take place independently of any natural limits.

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Explorations in Humanities

Ways of Forgetting and Remembering the Eloquence of the 19th Century: Editors of Romanian Political Speeches

Roxana Patraş

Abstract: The paper presents a critical evaluation of the existing anthologies of Romanian oratory and analyzes the pertinence of a new research line: how to trace back the foundations of Romanian versatile political memory, both from a lexical and from an ideological point of view. As I argue in the first part of the paper, collecting and editing the great speeches of Romanian orators seems crucial for today's understanding of politics (politicians' speaking/ actions as well as voters' behavior/ electoral habits). In the second part, I focus on the particularities generated by a dramatic change of media support (in the context of Romania's high rates of illiteracy at the end of the 19th century): from "writing" information on the slippery surface of memory (declaimed political texts such as "proclamations," "petitions," and "appeals") to "writing" as such (transcribed political speeches). The last part of the paper problematizes the making of a new canon of Romanian eloquence as well as the opportunity of a new assemblage of oratorical texts, illustrative for the 19th century politics, and endeavors to settle a series of virtual editing principles.

Keywords: oratory, personal memory, political memory, recording strategies, professional editing

1. Introduction

Beginning with the end of the 19th century, when the Romanian politicians understand how crucial for one's career it is to have a good command over the art of eloquence, the interest in the selection, organization and editing of influential public speeches becomes manifest. Both the specialized community of political practitioners and their constituents involve in a fame-circuit that implies publishing, reading, commenting, citing, and then spreading the word. Some tribune "heroes" such as Nicolae Fleva and Nicolae Ionescu chose to publish their most complimented speeches immediately after their victory or as soon as they become aware of their speeches' historical importance. Thus, meant to speculate the crest of the wave, such pieces of elocution are flung, without further reflection and editing care, into cheap pamphlets or into the columns of parties' "official" newspapers. Others such as Titu Maiorescu and Take Ionescu are quite keen on giving a compact image of their political actions, so they decide to select, edit, and comment their own speeches, which brings around the first professional editions of political/ parliamentary speeches. The distinction

between the two behaviors already shows diverse specializations within the genre.

2. Personal Memory, Political Memory, and Recording Strategies

Let us notice that the haste to transfer oral deliveries to another type of media (i.e. the printed page) is not only the effect of modernization, but also the symptom of a *cultural crisis*. Glossing Sven Birkerts' fragment about how the "vestigial order" of prints has been replaced recently by new media (Birkerts 1994, 118), we might say that such dramatic shift happened in the 19th-century Romania. In this case, the political "tradition" passes from oral deliveries to written texts; the Romanians acknowledge their need to avail of professionally edited volumes of political speeches. This time, as said before, the volatile order of oral memory is replaced by the determinist order of historical documents, and the charm of public pronunciation is exchanged with mere close reading. As a matter of fact, some of the Romanian memorialists who catch a glimpse of 19th-century life – among them, Nicolae Suțu, Radu Rosetti, Rudolf Suțu, Constantin Bacalbașa or Sabina Cantacuzino, insist on the fact that their decision to turn themselves from tale-tellers into writers has been triggered by the general forgetfulness installed within the rapidly-modernized Romanian society. Weird as it may seem, the authors of memoirs are not people with prodigious memory, but people with a romantic infatuation for history and its objective premises:

Among the talents that the Providence has spent upon me rather covetously, the one that I have mostly missed is memory... I have always regretted the lack of memory, this faculty that replaces study so easily. The zeal to work would have spared two thirds of my misfortunes if memory would have been of any help¹ (Suțu 2014, 37, 81).

Paradoxically, modernization packs up with an accelerated obliteration of past. Apparently, there is a conflict between "the cautiousness not to lose" historical opportunities and "the cautiousness not to be lost" as identity (Bulei 1884, 37). But the new era – of printed speeches, of specialized editors, and of professionalized politicians – does not sweep away only the material proofs of traditional life (Rosetti 2013, 17), but also a ritualized way of interpreting the transcendence of power.

By losing old material references such as state buildings and former political, social and legal institutions, modern people grow into the awareness that they cannot rely on what may be properly called *political memory*. Also the transmission of the few notions anchoring a feeble political memory is very

¹ "Printre însușirile cu care providența a fost zgârcită față de mine cea pe care am regretat-o cel mai adesea a fost memoria." "Am regretat întotdeauna lipsa memoriei, această facultate care înlocuiește atât de lesne învățătura. Sârguința la lucru mi-ar fi economisit două treimi din necazuri dacă și memoria mi-ar fi venit în ajutor" (all English translations of original quotations are mine).

problematic since the Romanian society is 78 % illiterate (Manuilă and Georgescu qtd. in Mihăilescu 2015). The ideological frames freshly imported from the Western world are being grafted now on a discourse of authority, that, lacking a specialized lexis, sounds rather inaccurate, and thus it is forced to resort to literary legitimations and to rhetoric figures (Patraș 2015, 183-218). It is no wonder that later on the politicians themselves will blame the mixture of fabricated political notions and literary memory, chiefly because this slips into verbal prolixity or in something that has been generally called “politicianism.”

Directly linked with the symptoms described above, two categories of “recorders” or “memory-keepers” can be defined: 1. the executants, that is, the orators themselves, who play the part of experts, and try to spread a set of successful practices; 2. the witnesses, or the connoisseurs, who brand the quality of variations. Belonging to a community defined institutionally, political orators are both executants (of their own speeches) and witnesses (to the other’s speeches). The aggregation of the two statuses into one single person leads to an interesting phenomenon. Not only the personal memories subsist in a stylized and transfigured form, but also the various perceptions of the performance’ excellency is resumed through labels such as “sorcery,” “art,” “mystery,” “transfiguration,” and so forth. All in all, something-out-of-common is, most of the times, the chief quality of an eloquent speaker. This is why, his art is “divine” in the same fashion as Pythia’s.

Massive textualization of (political) speeches drives to the idea that “speech scripts” are the most reliable deposits of oratorical performance. The perceptions awoken by one’s talk become truly coherent only when there is also acknowledgement of the instance’s exceptionality. According to the type of judgments issued in the aftermath of the performance, attendants to oratorical shows can be defined as *experts* or as *witnesses*. *Experts* are prone to note the way the orator and his public relate to tradition, either generic (the schools of oratory) or cultural (the past of the Romanian oratory). *Witnesses* are recruited from the public sphere too, being *political literates*, that is, able to read the ideological message and apt to engage into a political relationship with the speaker. They can brand the quality of variations by departing from the instituted model of oratory. Experts tend towards political disengagement, while witnesses are prone to political engagement.

Anyhow, 19th-century Romanian politicians usually resort to a system of internal evaluation. Gernerally, the executants that operate as *experts/ evaluators* of the others’ performances connect poetical invention to the universal “institutes” of eloquence, as defined in ancient treatises written by Quintilian, Cicero and others. But, this translates immediately into a conflict between objective appreciation (as expert) and subjective submission (as witness), between political disengagement (as expert) and political engagement (as witness), between a technical approach (as expert) and a metaphysical perspective (as witness), between the impulse of originality (as expert) and the

need for clichés (as witness), between past and present, between spirit and letter, and so forth (Patraș 2015, 294-299).

Valuable information about the actual staging of political speeches may be found in the theoretical texts authored by “experts” in the art of eloquence (G. Panu, Anghel Demetrescu, Titu Maiorescu, Ion Petrovici, I.G. Duca, Sterie Diamandy, and so forth), among the recollections of “practitioners” or in the biographies devoted to public personalities of the 19th century. However, the most authoritative sources are the series of collected speeches, edited by professional historians or philologist.

3. Professional Editors of Political Speeches

Gh.Gr. Cantacuzino (1832-1913), for instance, becomes the main champion of tradition recovery – especially the political tradition established during the Organic Regulation (1834-1858). In his position as President of the Lower Chamber, he encourages the publication of *The Parliamentary Annals of Romania* (“Analele Parlamentare ale României”), which comprise speeches dating back in 1837. Titu Maiorescu himself, wishing that his own parliamentary deliveries had a better representation than the base and cheap shorthand reproduced in *The Official Gazette of Romania* (“Monitorul Oficial al României”), starts to put them together in 1897. By doing this, he proves himself both an excellent editor and a practical manager of his own posthumous image. Owing to his activity as a leading critic of the “Junimea” literary circle of Iași, Maiorescu is also a professional commentator of other MP’s oratory. Even though twenty years younger than the highly-esteemed “Junimist”, Take Ionescu smells the opportunity of publishing his political speeches into one single book. In the same year when Maiorescu launches the first volume of speeches (*Parliamentary Speeches on the Political Development of Romania under Charles 1st Reign*, vol. 1, 1897), he asks his fellow and “secretary” Cristu S. Negoescu (1858-1923) to prepare for publication his abundant oratorical production (*Political Speeches*, vol. 1, 1897).

Then, following this trend, at the beginning of the 20th century, more and more MPs decide to either commit their speeches to professional historians or to persons from their entourage. Hence, C.C. Giurescu, N. Georgescu-Tistu, G. Marinescu and G. Greceanu take upon themselves the publication of I.C. Brătianu’s massive 8-volume edition of *Acts and Speeches*, Anghel Demetrescu gathers Barbu Katargiu’s scattered parliamentary interventions (1887), Al.G. Florescu and Em.N. Lahovary show the greatness of Alexandru Lahovary’s oratory (1915), while Petre V. Haneș publishes or re-issues various speeches delivered by tribune celebrities such as Mikhail Kogălniceanu, Alexandru Lahovary, Barbu Katargiu.

So, until Vasile V. Haneș publishes in 1944 (a dramatic year for Romania’s foreign politics within the context of World War II) his short *Anthology of Romanian Orators* (*Antologia oratorilor români*), one might notice that our

culture had already crystalized a tradition of jotting down political talk with a certain preciseness. Moreover, a protocol of speech-editing got standardized. This implied not only the collection of texts as such, but also the accurate dating of public deliveries, proposing the most appropriate title, writing the introduction (including information on historical, political and social context) and sometimes supplementary notes on the persons that occasionally interrupt or co-occur within the selected political speeches, and thus deviate their (pre)established course of ideas. Therefore, editing the oratorical text was a difficult and time-consuming endeavor, based on structuring the data that reflected the reception of these “historical” speeches, as well as an in-depth knowledge and interpretation of recent history. Enhanced beforehand through the publication in *The Official Gazette of Romania* – which, in spite of its “official” attire, hosted a section entitled “The un-Official Part”, the political talk is being “tasted” by an expert audience who knows that political activity has now acquired the dignity of any other job. Imposed to the public opinion as mandatory references, the collections of speeches start being disseminated, known, read, and cited. Yet, editing these “spoken texts” also implies a good collaboration between the editor and the orator himself, if the latter is living and agrees to garnish his speeches with personal recollections and information from private archives.

Even though it is still having the air of a “spade work,” Vasile V. Haneș’ collection of speeches was not built on a set of clear editing principles, be they generic, typological or chronologic. *The Anthology of Romanian Orators* (Vasile V. Haneș 1940) looks like a bird’s-eye view on all eloquence genres and on all prominent tribune figures, from Antim Ivireanul (1650-1716) to Mihail Antonescu (1904-1946). No doubt that the volume stands on a broad reading of Romanian political oratory and on a poor knowledge of other types such as juridical, academic or religious oratory.

For instance, the author chose a few speeches of Reception in the Romanian Academy and none from the bibliography of famous pleas (juridical oratory). Among the figures of democratic and nationalist claims that had been voiced during the 48’ Revolution, the anthologist picked only Simion Bărnuțiu (*The Speech from Blaj Cathedral/ The Romanians and the Hungarians*). And this happens even though the texts of Moldova and Wallachia insurgents had been “celebrated” and already packed together – and acknowledged as a coherent corpus, in a 6-volume edition entitled *Year 1848 in the Romanian Principalities. Acts and Documents published with the support of the “I.C. Brătianu” foundation* (“Anul una mie opt sute patruzeci și opt în Principatele Române. Acte și documente publicate cu ajutorul comitetului pentru ridicarea monumentului lui Ion C. Brătianu”), published between 1902 and 1910. In the same vein, Vasile V. Haneș brands as representative for the 19th century names such as Vasile Boerescu, Mihail Kogălniceanu, Barbu Katargiu, I.C. Brătianu, P.P. Carp, and Alexandru Lahovary. It goes without saying that the list above conveys a good-

enough “family picture” and a sure judgment of values; it could stand, as the anthologist had surely planned, for a raw canon of Romanian eloquence. Yet, other remarkable speakers who had been consecrated by the 19th-century tastes and standards are left aside: Dimitrie Brătianu, Anastasie Panu, C.A. Rosetti, Nicolae Ionescu, B.P. Hasdeu, Petru Grădișteanu, Nicolae Fleva, Dim. A. Sturdza, Nicolae Blaremburg, Manolache Costache Epureanu, and George Vernescu. The anthologist’s decision is grounded on no other reason than the fact that their form did not please his taste, which anyway was formed a century later.

At a closer look, one can easily notice that, on the one hand, Vasile V. Haneș willingly ignored the tribune activity of a score of Liberals, even if they had almost the same reputation as their Conservative colleagues. On the other, public personalities such as Titu Maiorescu, Barbu Ștefănescu Delavrancea, Alexandru Marghiloman, Nicolae Filipescu, C. C. Arion, Alexandru Djuvara, and Take Ionescu are represented in the book only through their mature political activity. Briefly, they are proposed to the readers as full-time orators of the 20th century and lesser as experimented political “players” of the previous century. Finally, the last objection to Vasile V. Haneș’s anthology refers to the totally unprofessional editing; the author excerpts/ selects speeches without showing if fragments are skipped, without summarizing the contents ruled out, and without clear indications about the original sources. As the speech samples gathered here are extremely curtailed, a perspective on the performativity of oratory is difficult to discern.

Anyhow, coming just before the changing of political regime (1945), Haneș’s endeavor should be placed rather on the finish than on the starting line of an editorial tradition. This abridged and somehow caricatured version of past shows the reader that underneath there is a rich corpus that should be searched for. As said above, immediately after the establishment of the Communist power, these scripts of political memory succumb under the insidious agency of the official Censure. The following attempt to build a panorama of Romanian eloquence – thus, to propose a canon of great masters, comes 4 decades after, when Vistian Goia publishes the volume *Orators and Romanian Eloquence* (“Oratori și elocință românească”). More rigorous than Haneș’s previous pursuit, the new selection grounds on a diachronic perspective, as well as on a typology of individual “signatures”/ styles. For example, Gheorghe Lazăr, Petrache Poenaru, Ion Maiorescu and Timotei Cipariu are considered “fore-goers.” The 48’ rhetoric is illustrated through Ion Heliade Rădulescu and Simion Bărnuțiu. The next category includes “the orators of the Principalities’ Union, of Independence War, and of the Great Union,” that is, Mihail Kogălniceanu, Vasile Boerescu, Barbu Katargiu, C.A. Rosetti, Ion C. Brătianu, Vasile Goldiș, Iuliu Maniu, Ion I.C. Brătianu. Another chapter is devoted to “Junimea orators,” and it is exemplified through P. P. Carp and Titu Maiorescu. The chapter including “parliamentary orators” comprises Alexandru Lahovary, Spiru C. Haret, and Take Ionescu. Eventually, the anthology closes with a series of “pathetic and visionary orators,”

formed of Barbu Ștefănescu Delavrancea, Nicolae Iorga, Vasile Pârvan, Octavian Goga, and Nicolae Titulescu.

The effort of systematization and reshaping the old canon (established once with Haneș's anthology) is obvious here. Nevertheless, Vistian Goia gives the utmost to the personality of the orator and devotes lesser attention to the art of speaking in public as such. Therefore, the organization principles are not, by far, homogenous. Hence, "Junimea orators" could have been inserted, without great effort, among the series composed of "historical figures" (Chapter 3, 1866-1877). More than that, they also qualify for chapter with "parliamentary orators," since "Junimea" obstinately upheld the cause of parliamentary behavior and regulations (coined as "parlamentarism") and the cause of dynasty. Ultimately, a "pathetic and visionary" orator should be also considered Mikhail Kogălniceanu, even though his art is more prudent than the one of those selected in the last chapter. All criticisms suspended, Vistian Goia's unique effort of systematization provides us with a span of suggestions for future editors.

Noteworthy is also Gheorghe Buzatu's idea to gather the most "important parliamentary" speeches between 1864 and 2004, by this intending to follow the Parliament's evolution in time, therefore a history of the institution through political speeches. Yet his anthology entitled *Speeches and Parliamentary Debates(1864-2004)* ("Discursuri și dezbateri parlamentare...") has also a multifarious aspect. It includes figures selected according to principles that are not always transparent. Consequently, the list is opened by Alexandru Ioan Cuza, and closes with the highly contested ex-Prime-Minister... Adrian Năstase. Underlining the amplitude of a project that was carried out only partially, the anthologist's preface meets further research with a useful bibliography of Romanian oratory. Unfortunately, these very bibliographic references are not fully exploited in the process of selection and editing of texts. For instance, Buzatu's volume does not have an apparatus of minimal explanatory notes as the previous ones. Thus, some of the titles turn into casual mentions, downgraded in the preface's footnotes.

4. Toward a New Edition. Re-Making the Canon of Romanian Eloquence

The scripts of political talk (textualized political oratory) can be approached from various points of view: as "works" authored under the regime of literary production; as cameos bearing the hidden effigy of "prominent personalities", of "heroes", in Carlyle's terms; as recorded pieces of political memory; as facets of modernity and so on. Eventually, all these might be reduced to two perspectives: the first that considers (political) oratory a literary expression and judges public deliveries according to the aesthetic criterion; the second that considers (political) oratory a document of positive history.

We have seen that, trying to give a canon of Romanian eloquence, the previous attempts failed to offer an organic picture of Romanian public speaking. Therefore, future endeavors should make a more varied and complex selection

than the mentioned examples have made. In a nutshell, the next edition of political speeches should be able to leapfrog from political talk to political thinking. The great stake is to show how the political thinking got into adulthood through linguistic and ideological acquisitions, through a variegated range of individual styles and rhetoric approaches.

As already suggested, the coming editor will have to keep a good balance between the artistic attire of oratory and the fanatic rendering of historical details. A fresh list of eloquence masters should depart from the following principles: 1. to contrast, compare and, eventually, corroborate the lists provided by the previous anthologists (Vasile V. Haneș, Vistian Goia, and Gheorghe Buzatu); 2. to include those texts indicated as relevant by the prefaces of 19th-century editions, either for the evolution of Romanian literature or for national history as such; 3. to evaluate the bibliography of the orators who did not collect their speeches, and who had not got the opportunity to be perceived as “authors” (from this point of view, one has to take into consideration those speeches which had already acquired autonomy through their separate publication, in pamphlet form); 4. to profit from information on the political orators’ shows, brought either by direct witnesses or by press.

For the second principle, there are still limits of reliability that should be dealt with. If some of these collections seem reliable enough while others do not, the virtual editor should embark on such a project by judging the professionalism of original editions. For instance, Titu Maiorescu, Take Ionescu, Ion C. Brătianu, Al. Lahovary, Vasile Boerescu, Barbu Katargiu, Nicolae Filipescu, Al. Marghiloman, Mihail Kogălniceanu, Barbu Ștefănescu Delavrancea, Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu, and Ion Heliade-Rădulescu are advantaged figures. Professional editors managed the publication of their political speeches.

Politicians such as Nicolae Fleva, Dim. A. Sturdza, G. Panu, Vasile Morțun, Nicolae Ionescu, Petru Grădișteanu, Al. G. Djuvara, Constantin Dissescu, Constantin C. Arion, Nicolae Blaremburg, Gh. Vernescu, and Manolache Costache Epureanu are still waiting for this opportunity! Unfortunately, they caught neither the interest of publishers nor that of researchers. Nevertheless, among them there are extremely complex personalities, who may just bring atonement, and change their stock quotes on Romania’s market of cultural values.

Apart from reliability of contextual information and fragmentary publication, a third problem refers to the mixed nature of these texts (oral and written at the same time). On the one hand, some documents of 48’ Revolution entitled “proclamations”, “protestations” or “appeals” do not have an exclusive “written” quality. If considered so, this trait should be as debatable as the “oral” quality of some parliamentary speeches. Some of them are rehearsed beforehand, being probably delivered as read-aloud texts. As a matter of fact, both situations imply – in the moment of elaboration and, after, in that of public pronunciation – “writing” on two types of media: the first entails “writing” on paper, the second entails “writing” on the fragile surface of collective memory. The petitionary text

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is written (before speaking) so as to be proclaimed, while the speech is declaimed so as to be transcribed (after speaking).

A very interesting timeline of this development should come out from Titu Maiorescu's view from *Orators, Rhetoricians, Gabblers (Oratori, retori și limbuți)* – a study written in the beginning of the 20th century. The official critic of “Junimea” took year 1899 as a reference point.

If we try to figure out the art of eloquence in our country, the way it has developed from the new Constitution of 1866 on, one has to make distinction (regarding its evolution and, chiefly, the public's appreciation of it) among three stages, that can be dated, with a certain approximation, as follows: from 1866 to 1884, from 1884 to 1899, and from 1899 to our day. (Maiorescu 2005, 688).²

[Note that Maiorescu published this general account of Romanian political oratory in 1902] Beyond the shadow of a doubt, when fixing such dates, the literary critic and politician had in mind the establishment of a bourgeois ethos governed by Guizot's famous incentive “Enrichissez-vous!,” seeded by the Liberal leader Ion C. Brătianu in the Romanian soil. But he must have also considered the gradual acceptance of the dynastic idea in the new South-Eastern European state.

Hence, looking at the aesthetic value of political speeches as such, the “classical” chronologic limits should be fitted as proved by Maiorescu himself: from 1848 to the Union of the two Romanian Principalities (1859); 2. the reign and the reforms of Alexandru Ioan Cuza (1859-1866); 3. The establishment, on the throne of the United Principalities, of the Hohenzollern dynasty and the declaration of Independence (1866-1877). However, for the rest of the 19th century, that is, the period between 1877 and 1899, an attentive evaluation brings out that the historical landmarks are not so effective, because neither the Proclamation of the Romanian Kingdom (1881) nor the turbulent debates on the amending of the old Constitution (1884) determine a change of eloquence fashions and styles. Far more pertinent would be to consider the fall of Ion C. Brătianu's Govern (in March 1888) as a borderline. Before this particular moment, the rallying of the Opposition forces raises the rate of violent expressions and trains the public to tolerate such discursive behavior. Anyway, after Brătianu's withdrawal, the ex-spokesmen of the United Opposition as well as their public have a tendency to emancipate former practices of eloquence and to impose a specific protocol. In other words, the evolution to a higher level of political literacy is marked by the whole society's agreement on the acceptable limits of verbal violence. As proof to this, there are the ample commentaries concerning the necessity of morals in politics and the theorizing articles about the art of speaking in public.

² „dacă încercăm să ne dăm seamă de arta oratoriei la noi, așa cum s-a dezvoltat de la noua Constituție din 1866 încoace, trebuie să deosebim în manifestarea ei, și mai ales în judecata publicului asupra ei, trei faze, pe care le-am putea data, cu oarecare aproximație, astfel: de la 1866 la 1884, de la 1884 la 1899, și de la 1899 încoace”.

5. Conclusion

With a view to the disinterested manner of looking at the local deposits of political memory (pieces of lexis and ideology), I evaluated critically the existing anthologies of Romanian oratory and tried to analyze the opportunity of a new research line. The main question for young researchers in the field of history and philology is the following: How is it possible to trace back the foundations of our versatile political memory, both from a lexical and from an ideological point of view? Collecting and editing the great speeches of Romanian orators seems crucial for today's understanding of politics, the latter implying the politicians' speaking/ actions as well as the voters' behavior/ electoral habits. Within the context of Romania's high rates of illiteracy at the end of the 19th century, the second part focuses on the particularities generated by a dramatic change of media support: from "writing" information on the slippery surface of memory (declaimed political texts such as "proclamations," "petitions," and "appeals") to "writing" as such (transcribed political speeches). This transition brings about a league of professional editors who publish either series of "collected speeches" or anthologies, a generous raw material for building future political corpuses.

The last part problematized the making of a new canon of Romanian eloquence. But it also introduced the project of a new assemblage, gathering illustrative speeches for the 19th-century politics, and endeavored to settle a series of virtual editing principles. From now on, Romanian eloquence (political eloquence in particular) should act as a domain fully aware of its artistry and importance. After the blackout of Communism, new generations should make an effort of recollecting the lost items of Romanian political memory and reconfigure their research agenda.

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