

PHILOSOPHY AS A FORM OF LIFE

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Essays in Honour of Olli Lagerspetz on His
Sixtieth Birthday

Edited by Jonas Ahlskog and Hugo Strandberg

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Jonas Ahlskog and Hugo Strandberg (eds)
*Philosophy as a Form of Life: Essays in Honour of Olli Lagerspetz on His Sixtieth
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Preface

This Festschrift celebrates Olli Lagerspetz's 60th birthday on February 23, 2023. Like Olli's own multifaceted scholarly work, the Festschrift avoids homogeneity and embraces thematic plurality.¹ The authors were allowed freely to choose topics that connect either closely or loosely with Olli's work. As a result, the volume contains essays that reflect Olli's broad interest in philosophy and the history of ideas: from religion and dirt to ethics and the philosophy and history of the human sciences. As Olli has argued (2020), it is profitable to read Wittgenstein's concept of 'form of life' as denoting activities and practices – that which is irreducible within a form of inquiry – and not as referring to monolithic social or cultural formations. Consequently, philosophy *is* a form of life – a kind of inquiry that, since it does not have a definite subject matter, can be applied to anything we find important in life. This pluralistic feature of philosophy is laudably exemplified in Olli's work.

Olli's wide-ranging scholarly work has often been written in close dialogue with the philosophical community at Åbo. For about four decades, Olli is – through active participation and presence – an essential ingredient for the upkeep and flourishing of Åbo's philosophical community. It is sometimes said that philosophy itself does not progress. Be that as it may: we are convinced that Olli's clarity of thought and penetrating questions has offered, and continues to offer, an immense improvement of philosophy at Åbo. We are lucky to have him, and the opportunity to discuss philosophy on a day-to-day basis with Olli is a great joy and resource for friends, colleagues and students at Åbo. Therefore, this volume celebrates not only Olli's internationally recognised scholarly writings, but

¹ Unlike the tradition of Festschriften, this volume does not include a Tabula Gratulatoria since the production costs have been covered by a grant from Åbo Akademi University.

also his inspiring work as a teacher and supervisor at the department of philosophy at Åbo Akademi University.

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Lagerspetz, Olli. 2020. "Wittgenstein's Forms of Life: A Tool of Perspicuous Representation." *Nordic Wittgenstein Review* 9: 107–130.

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How Does It Feel Not to Be a Monozygotic Twin? Biographical Notes on a Philosopher

Mikko Lagerspetz

Any effort at an intellectual biography of a scholar involves tracing the roots of their ‘metaphysical pathos’ (Kroos forthcoming, 90), as expressed in explicit and implicit methodological choices, assumptions and foundations of scholarship. One should take into account the many impulses received from teachers and colleagues, and from literature. Writing now on my twin brother Olli Lagerspetz, my ambitions are much more modest. I will here merely report some scattered biographical details and personal memories, thus adding to remarks by other persons much more knowledgeable of his professional contexts. My present text is about his personal life, or some of the parts I know about, from an angle not available for other writers of this volume. May the readers (and even more so, Olli himself) forgive me for tracing some of his philosophical concerns to elements in our joint family history. Certainly, references to impulses from other philosophers might sometimes be more obvious or more adequate. However, I maintain that in scholarship, especially of the kind Olli pursues, the two sides – personal and professional – are closely intertwined. This maybe justifies my contribution to this Festschrift. ‘If you tell a theoretician, that life always is more than all theory, he can answer: “theory is what my life is about”.’¹

¹ Teoreetikko, jolle sanotaan, että elämä on aina enemmän kuin kaikki teoria, voi vastata: ”teoria on juuri minun elämäni” (Ahlman 1992 ,143). Obviously, a reference to Goethe (Faust I): ‘Grau, teurer Freund, ist alle Theorie, und grün des Lebens goldner Baum’.

Our mother Kirsti and our father Kari² had four sons: Eerik (b. 1956), Juhani (b. 1959)³ and the two of us (b. 1963). Our mother was once asked if it was easier to have one, two or more kids. She replied jokingly, that the hardest time was when she had three. Olli and I were born on the morning of 23 February at the Turku University central hospital, with the interval of twenty minutes. That means that I know him not only from our birth on, but even from some months before.

Our parents, both born in Helsinki, moved to Turku in 1957, at a time when the city's both Finnish and Swedish universities were in a phase of rapid growth. In a few years, Father received a professorship in Biology, and Mother in Psychology. Many scholars of the same generation in Helsinki made the same move, and while in Turku, they kept close contacts throughout decades. However, Turku was never a new place for our parents, as they both had deep family roots in the region. Our father's great grandfather,⁴ descending from a family in Westrobothnia in present Sweden, received his theological exam in Turku in 1827, a few weeks before the great fire that destroyed most of the town and resulted in the university's move to Helsinki. His wife came from a family of innkeepers in Turku and had relations with old families in the region.⁵ Our mother's great grandfather⁶ had in 1853 purchased Metsämäki, a manor house in the vicinity, and two of his sons (out of eight children) became principals of the Finnish and Swedish Gymnasiums of the city.⁷ The manor was in the family's hands until 1976. Time

² Kirsti Maria Johanne Lagerspetz, née Ahlman (1932–2001), Professor of Psychology at Åbo Akademi University and University of Turku; Kari Yrjö Henrik Lagerspetz (1931–2012), Professor of Zoophysiology at the University of Turku.

³ Yrjö Eerik Lagerspetz, Professor of Practical Philosophy at the University of Turku; Juhani Henrik Lagerspetz, Concert Pianist, former Professor of Piano Music at the Sibelius Academy.

⁴ Carl Ephraim Lagerspetz (1801–1856), Vicar of Rymättylä.

⁵ Fredrika Gustava Amalia Riedell (1808–1867).

⁶ Gustaf Ahlman (1818–1869), factotum of the City Council of Turku, owner of Metsämäki Manor in Maaria (S:t Marie).

⁷ Johan Markus Ahlman (1858–1922); Konrad Felix Ahlman (1862–1935). Ekman, Arne (1953) *Släkten Ahlman från Angelniemi*. Helsingfors: Genealogiska samfundet i Finland.

seemed to stand still in the house, where we children spent parts of our summer leaves inspecting the old library, playing 78-rpm gramophone records and ruining an early-19th century Square Piano in the attic.

Our maternal grandfather Erik Ahlman⁸ was born in Turku, studied Linguistics and Philosophy in Helsinki and became one of Finland's leading cultural philosophers of the first part of the 20th century, an introducer of psychoanalytical and phenomenological thought in the country (Salmela 1998, 266–363). Ahlman was a moral philosopher who did not believe in the possibility of basing morality on objective foundations. ‘If morality could be rationally justified, the result would be – the end of it.’⁹ He did not appeal to any theological or metaphysical source either, but explained morality with reference to the guidance of ‘an inner self’ he considered common to all humans. As I have heard, he was a keen observer of moral dilemmas in both his own and in other people's everyday lives. This personality trait he shared with our mother.

Ahlman died years before we were born; only in my late student years, I started studying his published works and hand written diaries. I was astonished to see how many of his ideas, concerns and thoughts were similar to my own. They seemed to have been handed down to his grandchildren not through personal contact or independent study, but indirectly through the attitudes, opinions and ways of reasoning of our mother, our grandmother,¹⁰ the housekeeper,¹¹ and other people around him. Maybe even somehow by the childhood environment in the manor house that we effectively shared with our maternal grandfather?

Even our father had a keen philosophical interest. His doctoral thesis was about teleological explanations in biology (Lagerspetz

⁸ Erik Gustaf Ahlman (1892–1952), Rector of the Pedagogical University in Jyväskylä, Professor of Practical Philosophy at the University of Helsinki.

⁹ “Jos moraali voitaisiin perustella, olisi seurauksena – moraalin kuolema” (Ahlman 1992, 146).

¹⁰ Else Valborg Ahlman, née Friis (1894–1976), niece of the Danish poet Holger Drachmann (1846–1908).

¹¹ Regina Aino Saarinen (1912–1987).

1959). From the adults' discussions overheard in childhood I remember understanding (not altogether correctly), that 'reductionism' was something bad. His last published articles were about emergence and the origins of life (Lagerspetz 2011; 2012). I think that the reason why some people do not become philosophers is that they never have been passively exposed to serious philosophical discourse. Not just Olli, but also our elder brother, Eerik, became a professional philosopher.

'How does it feel to be a (monozygotic) twin?' was a question that Olli and I were routinely asked by our schoolmates, teachers and other adults alike. As the standard answer, we adopted the counter-question: 'How does it feel not to be a (monozygotic) twin?' A fish can hardly describe the water, and we understood that the same goes for those who receive such a question. Reconstructing memories from our shared childhood is sometimes difficult when we two seem to be at odds about which one of the two of us, and in which way, was involved in a certain event. In much of our early lives, we two functioned as one social unit and were expected by our environment to do so. (This experience makes me seriously doubt the validity of twin studies designed at showing the heritability of personality traits, etc.: Monozygotic twins are not only similar as to genetic inheritance, but are by their environment placed in a bubble dissimilar to anything else that society provides in terms of social roles (cf. Joseph 2003, 58–84)).

Olli's scholarly work concerns a wide range of issues: history of Finnish philosophical, anthropological and sociological thought, especially that of Edward Westermarck and his students; national identity; trust; dirt; Wittgenstein and the philosophers inspired by him. The portrait would be incomplete without mentioning Olli's active musicianship as a superb tuba player; organ player in certain social gatherings; or his private enjoyment of musical creativity. Or his role as something of a legend in the context of Åbo Akademi University's student Big Band, the *Axelbandet*; or his and his wife's, Carita's¹² devoted work in the reconstruction of a summerhouse, a two-hundred-year old farmhouse in the archipelago of Turku.

¹² Carita Felicia Lagerspetz, née Ahlgrén (b. 1965), music teacher.

Much of the directions in which Olli's scholarship has developed might become more understandable against the background given above. Our parents' profession created in us an interest in the social dynamics of the Academia, and the bilingual larger family and our Danish grandmother made us aware of the relativity of 'ethnic' belongings (to which also, of course, Olli's stay in Wales contributed in the 1990s). The question of the headline points at the difficulty or impossibility of explaining something unique to people without any similar experience. Much of Olli's writing inspects the limits of what can be expressed by analytic thinking, or indeed by words. It echoes Wittgenstein's statement from the *Tractatus*: There are many things that cannot be put into words.¹³ (Our parents' library contains the book in two copies: the first edition of 1922, owned by Erik Ahlman, and the fifth impression from 1951, purchased by Kari Lagerspetz in 1953.)

In September 1996, Olli and I defended our Doctoral Theses within the interval of one week; Olli in Philosophy, I in Sociology. During our studies, we had both proceeded from one discipline to a neighbouring one, I from Psychology to Sociology and Olli, after completing his MA in Sociology, to Philosophy. The background in sociology is still visible in Olli's writings. He went on to contribute to studies in the history of sociology in Finland, and his angle to philosophical problems takes into account the ways in which they are relevant in a social context. Concepts such as trust or dirt are not just a matter of finding a logical definition; Wittgenstein's concept of Life Forms (to which Olli has paid great attention) echoes with the concept of life-world, central in phenomenological sociology (Schutz 1967, 125). There are different paths of entrance to philosophy; the arrival through sociology certainly brings with it interests that differ from those important for people from, e.g., mathematics, physics, politics or from literature studies.

¹³ Ludwig Wittgenstein (1922): *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 6.522: "Es gibt allerdings Unaussprechliches", in the English parallel text: "There is indeed the inexpressible". I should maybe add, just in case, that Olli hardly equates 'the inexpressible' with 'the mystical', but rather acknowledges the limits of reducing individual experience to any universal framework of meaning.

Olli's Doctoral Thesis (1996; 1998) was about trust. He dedicated it to the memory of our housekeeper, Regina. That gesture was related to the book's contents and contributed to its message: Trust is not about explicit commitments (as can be spelled out in words), but about something *shown* by an individual to another. There are motivated expectations and demands that do not need to be explicated. The trust between Regina and us, the children was never based on explicit commitments or expressed in so many words, but shown in everyday interaction - in preparing food, keeping track of where everybody was. She was also the person that represented the religious trust in our scientifically oriented family; not in the form of any dogmatic faith, but in the silent love of your neighbour, be it a friend in need or a marginalized person unexpectedly found in the housing condominium's garbage container.

The book that Olli considers his *chef d'oeuvre*, *On Dirt* (2006), also attaches a place between several disciplines. It is about philosophy, but also about anthropology, sociology, history and all things human. It is about expectations and demands, again. In this case, non-human objects intake the front scene. Reading Olli's texts on dirt and cleanliness, I cannot avoid associations with our shared childhood experiences from cherished places and memorable objects. One more childhood environment, our family's summer house in Nagu, also in the Turku archipelago, had (and still hasn't) running water or a water closet, which also bestows any ideal of cleanliness with some relativity. According to Olli, the concept of dirt is intimately bound with the teleology of any given object. As he summarizes his argument in a more recent article:

It seems to me that disagreements about what constitutes soiling in a given case may be quite often traced to differences in opinion about the nature of the master object. [...] Not only *we* have demands on our environment but, conversely, the objects around us have demands on us. [...] We recognise the difference between objects in their clean or ideal state and in their disturbed state. And we see that it is someone's responsibility to restore or protect the ideal state from which soiling is a deviation (Lagerspetz 2020, 62–63; cf. Lagerspetz 2006, 253).

Without any reference, sociologists are reminded of a similar shift of interest towards artefacts within their own discipline, as in the Actor-Network Theory approach (Latour 2005). Nonhumans seem to have the capacity of being participants in systems and networks of social action. Erik Ahlman was in fact pointing at the same direction in his discussion of technology: Tools are given a shape that ensures their compatibility with other tools (books should fit in a bookshelf, and bookshelves should be designed as suitable for books; cups and bowls have flat bottoms in order to stand steadily on the flat surface of a table; and so on). At the same time, technology also requires compatibility from human activity (Ahlman 1976, 127, 195). I speculated earlier, that some of our grandfather's habits of thinking were handed down to us indirectly, by close people but even by sharing a childhood milieu with him. Olli's view on the actorship of artefacts could give support for such an interpretation.

As adults, monozygotic twins tend to lead their separate lives and develop different interests and capacities. Work and education (and marriage) guide them to slightly different paths. Whereas a sociologist such as I is more likely to be influenced by the perceived topicality and societal relevance of a research issue – and also by the possibilities and limits of data collection, philosophers may be more free to follow their personal inclinations. They share with sociologists, and probably with researchers in general, an attitude of critical curiosity. Citing our grandfather again: 'Is there any reason to prefer society, the state, or the family to an individual; rationality to irrationality; education to non-education; consequence to inconsequence; health to illness; human to animal; or independent reasoning to reliance on an authority, or the present to the future?' (Ahlman 1992, 10–11). In some shape, questions like this are present in sociology too, and in some other disciplines. However, with philosophers, the way of questioning receives a more total and also a more personal character. – A person familiar with both of us once described Olli as the more anarchist inclined of us two. However, his flexibility of action in everyday situations is balanced by his readiness to shoulder long-term responsibility for his environment, and to share it with others in unselfish hospitality.

Philosophical work has, as I suggested before, often a more personal character than scientific work within other disciplines. At its best, it is an expression of an internal ‘philosophical urge’ (Ahlman 1992, 16). The personal and the professional become intertwined.

Following one’s internal urge is a key for great scholarship.

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Lagerspetz, Wittgenstein and Anscombe on Idealism

David Cockburn

Amongst philosophers unsympathetic to Wittgenstein there is a widespread feeling that in his later work he is clearly committed to some form of idealism, however sophisticated and well concealed. This may well be one of the central factors in convincing philosophers in other traditions that Wittgenstein does not merit their attention: his “commitment to idealism” places him too far off the map of views to be taken seriously today to make close attention to his work a good use of one’s time. Amongst those *sympathetic* to Wittgenstein’s later thinking there is a strong consensus that this is a mistake: that he is clearly not any kind of idealist. In his paper “The Linguistic Idealism Question: Wittgenstein’s Method and His Rejection of Realism” (Lagerspetz, 2021) Olli Lagerspetz challenges the consensus, arguing that Wittgenstein’s work has clear affinities with idealism of a certain form; and that the affinities are to be welcomed.

Lagerspetz captures a key aspect of the reaction of the unsympathetic group in the following remark:

The problem with Wittgenstein – if that is the word – was not any endorsement of idealist ontology on his part. It was rather his refusal to deliver the expected *realist* ontological messages. Ultimately, the stumbling block was his general vision of philosophy; a view markedly different from the ‘realist’ approach. For him, the task of philosophy was not to establish correspondence between thinking and reality, thus issuing metaphysical warrants to our fact-finding practices. Instead, philosophy was about clarifying what is at stake in those practices. (Lagerspetz, 2021, 38)

I believe this to be an accurate, and very helpful, assessment of the situation. Wittgenstein simply does not deliver what is widely expected from philosophers these days: commitment to an “ontology” that justifies or casts in doubt aspects of our everyday ways of thinking. And not only does he fail to deliver, he firmly sets his face against the idea that this is the business of philosophy at all.¹

Lagerspetz’s main purpose in this paper, however, is to draw distinctions between different things that might be, and have been, meant by the term “idealism,” and, in light of this, to suggest that the strong resistance to the label by those sympathetic to Wittgenstein is misguided. Distinguishing “ontological” and “epistemological” idealism, Lagerspetz (39) observes that “For Moore and Russell, idealism was the ontological thesis that ‘the universe’ ... ‘is *spiritual*’ (Moore [1903] 1948, 1); that ‘whatever exists, or at any rate whatever can be known to exist, must be in some sense mental’ (Russell 1923, 58)”: a view of the kind widely associated with Berkeley. Lagerspetz remarks:

While departing from the analytic school in significant ways, Wittgenstein nevertheless inherited its definition of idealism, which he conflated with solipsism [...] Moreover, he passed it on to his students. My argument is that this flawed conception has blocked full understanding of real ways in which Wittgenstein and the Idealists shared common ground: not an ontological position, but a view on philosophy, its methods and purposes. For them, the task of philosophy was not to investigate the nature of reality, but our relation to reality (Lagerspetz 2021, 39)

These are very interesting suggestions: ones that merit close consideration. I am, myself, inclined to think that the philosophical world might well be a healthier place if we could be completely shot of the terms “realism” and “idealism.” But given that this is a pipe

¹ Some of those who are clear that if it is to be a worthwhile enterprise philosophy should be delivering ontology are also clear that this is the central business of the sciences; and, in particular, of physics. It may then become slightly unclear what we need our philosophers for; and it may be tempting to conclude, as some of our top physicists do, that the answer is: ‘Nothing’.

dream, careful work, of the kind Lagerspetz provides in this paper, is enormously valuable.

That said, I am not sure that Lagerspetz's distinction between "ontological" and "epistemological" idealism is completely adequate to the task of clarifying the issues here. A failure to bring into proper focus the form of idealism at issue in Elizabeth Anscombe's paper "The Question of Linguistic Idealism" (Anscombe 1981, 112–133) leads him, I believe, to a significant misrepresentation of her argument, and, with that, to a failure adequately to identify all of the forces in play in discussions of these issues.

Anscombe considers Wittgenstein's remark: "*Essence is expressed by grammar*" (Wittgenstein 1968, § 371). She suggests that someone might take this remark in this way:

As Plato suggested in the *Cratylus*, words for the same thing in different languages – e.g. *equus*, *cheval*, *horse*, *ἵππος* – are like the same tool made of different materials, say iron, steel, bronze, brass. A tool which is designed to catch hold of something will perhaps have a shape corresponding to the shape of the object. So a word has something, which we will call its logical shape, answering to the essence that it catches hold of (or expresses). [...] This logical shape is the grammar of the words. (Anscombe 1981, 112)

Anscombe then explains that what she means by "linguistic idealism" is the view that, in opposition to that picture, "*Essence is created by grammar*".

Lagerspetz comments on this:

It is important to see that, the way she sets up the problem, *Anscombe* is already adhering to a picture of language that is 'idealist' in a bad sense (but implicit in the 'realist' approach). Language-games are self-contained activities with words; so the question is how those words connect with Reality [...] A central part of the picture is that language-games themselves are *not* part of Reality. And vice versa: Reality is not part of the language-game. Is it logically possible for any fact or argument to penetrate this wall of self-confinement? (Lagerspetz, 2021, 55)

This passage very nicely captures a way of thinking to which, I believe, many readers of Wittgenstein succumb – or perhaps better: readily slide into in forgetful moments – and that it is absolutely essential to resist. But it is not, I think, a picture that has much, if any, pull on *Anscombe's* thinking. I believe that Lagerspetz gets Anscombe wrong; and that he does so in very instructive ways: ways that bring out the truth in her remark: “It is enormously difficult to steer in the narrow channel here: to avoid the falsehoods of idealism and the stupidities of empiricist realism” (Anscombe 1981, 115).

Picking up Anscombe's example of the first-third person asymmetries in our sensation language Lagerspetz writes:

Anscombe asks whether the asymmetries are created by grammar or are a real feature of sensations, picked up by grammar. She supports the latter alternative, even though she acknowledges that a different sensation-language might be theoretically possible (Lagerspetz 2021, 48)

He then remarks that Anscombe “has embraced exactly the position that Wittgenstein, in ‘Notes for Lectures on “Private Experience” and “Sense Data”’ (ca. 1934 – 36), identifies as a problem and a temptation” (48). Her mistake, he argues, arises from the fact that the above picture of the options – that either the asymmetries are created by grammar or they are a real feature of sensations, picked up by grammar – embodies a confusion. I am sure he is right about that. The confusion is one that, I believe, is central to a way of thinking of the contrast between “realism” and “idealism” that holds significant sway amongst contemporary philosophers. I am also, however, pretty sure that Anscombe agrees.

It may seem that she does not, and that she plumps for the option Lagerspetz warns against, when she writes: “If we assent to ‘Essence is expressed by grammar’ we may very likely say ‘The words for what I am talking about *have* to have this grammar.’ E.g.: The language for talking about sensation must have first–third person asymmetry.” (Anscombe 1981, 112–13) But I believe that we misread this remark if we take it as an endorsement of the view Lagerspetz is clear we must reject. For Anscombe immediately carries on:

But here we don't mean: This property (say, of first-third person asymmetry) is rightly ascribed to this kind of thing (say, sensation). For the property mentioned is a property of language. So we should rather say: Language that doesn't have these features, this grammar, is not about sensations but about something else, and if you took language about sensations and changed this aspect of it, it would cease to be language about sensations. (Anscombe 1981, 113)

What Anscombe is rejecting here seems clear. It is, surely, the view that Lagerspetz ascribes to her when he writes: "She [Anscombe] wanted to say that the word 'horse' does not simply pick out a piece of reality in an arbitrary cookie-cutter fashion, but that it *rightly* designates a natural kind or essence." (Lagerspetz, 2021, 47) What she is replacing it with is, perhaps, less clear. Her suggestion is helpfully read in the light of Wittgenstein's remark: "You cook badly if you are guided in your cooking by rules other than the right ones; but if you follow other rules than those of chess you are *playing another game*; and if you follow grammatical rules other than such-and-such ones, that does not mean you say something wrong, no, you are speaking of something else." (Wittgenstein 1967, § 320) A way of speaking that lacked a first-third person asymmetry, whatever other similarities it might have to sensation language, would not be a way – a *wrong* way – of speaking about *sensations*. Now, the force of this denial that it would be a way of speaking about *sensations* might be expressed like this: rendering this word of their language (say "pensation") as "sensation" in English would misrepresent the relation between their talk of "pensations" and our talk of "sensations." It would fail to represent properly the *radical* nature of the differences between their lives with this word and our lives with the word "sensation"; fail to represent properly the *radical* nature of the difficulties we will encounter in attempting to speak with them in this area. The difficulties would be of a different order from those we encounter when speaking with people who have some wild views about pains: believing, say, that all physical pains could be removed by the correction of some specific dietary deficiency. Their speech in this area would be too different from ours for anything close to dialogue between us on these matters to be possible or fruitful. Or

better: to be possible without moving to a quite different level – one, perhaps, at which we talk as much about the *word* “pain” as about pains.²

“But might it not be the case that with their word ‘pensation’ they are *referring to* the very same range of objects that we refer to with our word ‘sensation’: as I and a child are referring to the very same person when I speak of ‘Jane’ and she speaks of ‘Mummy’ even though we speak of her in radically different ways and, we can imagine, are not even aware that we are referring to the same person?” No. This is not an image that we know how to transfer from the case of reference to a particular individual to that of the term “sensation.” If we try to imagine a society that lacked a first-third person asymmetry – operating roughly as it does in our thought and talk about sensations – we will be imagining a society with which there would be no possibility of our reaching even rough agreement over the presence or absence of sensation in particular cases: that is, no grounds for a suggestion that the reference of our words “pensation” and “sensation” are, at the general level, the same. In this respect there is a clear contrast with the case of a proper name of an individual.

I *think* Anscombe is grappling with issues of this kind in her comparison between language about horses and language about sensations: that she is suggesting that the difficulties in applying the image in the case of the word “sensation” are greater than they are in the case of the word “horse.” However that may be, we should not expect there to be a clear line between cases in which the image can be usefully applied and ones in which it cannot.

That Lagerspetz is misreading Anscombe’s claim that “the language for talking about sensation must have first-third person asymmetry” comes out clearly when she writes:

[Wittgenstein] says “You learned the *concept* pain when you learned language.” That is, it is not experiencing pain that gives you the

² The claim stands in need of a defence that I am not able to provide here. While I believe the claim is correct, my aim here is simply to get clear on what Anscombe’s view is.

meaning of the word “pain” How could an experience dictate the grammar of a word? You may say: doesn’t it make certain demands on the grammar, if the word is to be the word for *that* experience? But the word is not just a response to that experience at that time: what *else* is the word to apply to? (Anscombe 1981, 114)

Here Anscombe clearly rejects “empiricist realism.” There are, however, significant excuses for taking her as Lagerspetz does. I believe it is, as Anscombe says, “enormously difficult to steer in the narrow channel here.” But I also suspect that Anscombe herself contributes to the difficulty, or at least fails clearly to identify and defuse one source of it. Consider this:

These essences, then, which are expressed by grammar, are not created by grammar. It must be a misunderstanding of ‘essence’ to think otherwise: to think, for example, that though there doubtless would have been horses, the essence expressed by “horse” would not have existed but for human language and thought. (Anscombe 1981, 114)

It is easy at this point to reason in some such way as this:

If the essence expressed by “horse” would have existed in the absence of human language and thought and if essence is expressed by grammar how are we to think of the relation between these arenas in which ‘essences’ are found? Presumably there is, in some sense, an alignment between the two: between what exists independently of language and what only exists *in* the language. And assuming that the alignment is not some bizarre cosmic coincidence, don’t we *have* to think of the ‘essence’ found in our grammar as in some way “picked up from,” or “a reflection of,” that which exists independently of it?

Perhaps some such reasoning underlies Lagerspetz’s reading of Anscombe. If so, the blame lies squarely with the term ‘essence’.³

³ I suspect that it is reflected in the thought of those followers of Wittgenstein who sometimes sound strikingly like “idealists” of some form. Lagerspetz mentions İlham

Lagerspetz writes:

Anscombe's use of the word 'essence' is different from Wittgenstein's. She treats 'essences' as entities that *either* predate human language (to be picked up by it) *or*, as Anscombe's linguistic idealist would have it, are made to *exist* through linguistic practices. But it seems to me that Wittgenstein is consciously avoiding this contrast. He just thinks of 'essence' (*Wesen*) as whatever is essential, central or important (*wesentlich*) about a thing we are considering; what is essential about it in a given context of discussion and inquiry. Grammar expresses essence because, *in* using a word the way we do, we specify *the concept we are using*.⁴ (Lagerspetz 2021, 47)

I think he is right about the first half of this (aside from his insertion of "to be picked up by it" – however tempting that insertion may be), but see little evidence for his proposed alternative. It seems to me that the clear majority of Wittgenstein's uses of the term in *Philosophical Investigations* are in the context of characterising ways of thinking to be rejected (see, for example, §§ 46, 65, 92, 97, 547, 113, 116). But further, there is, I believe, an instructive tension in the final two sentences of Lagerspetz's remarks about "essence." In the first, there is an emphasis on the particular conversational context: what is essential about a thing "*in a given context of discussion and inquiry*". In the second, the emphasis is on what one might have supposed to be something general – the "concept" we are using – that *enables* us to say something in a particular context. While it is possible that Lagerspetz would reject this articulation of what he is ascribing to Wittgenstein I believe his remark is a nice illustration of a way in which a certain terminology may be peculiarly resistant to an employment in which something true or helpful is said. I do not mean to suggest that if we are seriously to enter into the spirit of Wittgenstein's thought here we must focus on "the particular

Dilman's book *Wittgenstein's Copernican Revolution: The Question of Linguistic Idealism* (2002) in this connection.

⁴ When he speaks of "a thing we are considering" does Lagerspetz have in mind, for example, "gold" or "this particular lump of gold"? I am not sure that it is clear; and this unclarity may be one symptom of the concerns I will raise.

conversational context” to the exclusion of the general: to the exclusion of the wider context implicated in the language.⁵ It is central to Wittgenstein’s thinking that what a person is doing now in uttering these words is what it is only through the fact that the individual words are employed by herself and others in other particular contexts. And we might employ the term “concept” simply as a way of marking this fact: to say that she is using the concept “horse” is to mark the fact that certain ways of relating her words to others, spoken on other occasions, is in place.

But while we *might* use the term “concept” to mark this fact, there may be dangers in doing so. For it may incline us, in our off guard moments, to overlook the contrast between such a vision of language and one in which the notion of a “concept” plays a role that is a direct decedent of the role played by “ideas” in Locke’s thinking: where to have a particular concept is to have something in one’s mental equipment that one can reach for when needed. On this understanding a concept is a building block of thought: a mental possession that *enables* us to employ words in ways that others will acknowledge as appropriate. Or, to stress a different face of this picture: a concept is something whose instantiation in the individual makes her thought the one that it is – makes her utterance of these words the speech that it is – quite independently of the particular context of utterance or the wider context of the language that she speaks. The term “concept” may, in philosophy, be too loaded with such imagery to make it helpful in anything but a negative way: too loaded with such imagery for us ever to be sure that we are free of it, however vigilantly we are on our guard.

I believe that analogous concerns may arise with the term “essence”: that it, too, is one that is likely to confuse our thinking. For the term owes its place in philosophy to a tradition, perhaps

⁵ Lars Hertzberg was hesitant about the way in which I speak here of “the wider context implicated in the language”; though he does not dispute the importance of the idea of a relation between this conversation and others on other occasions. He suggested, it seems to me correctly, that *talk about talk* – for example, reference in other conversations to this one – is of particular significance here. Hertzberg’s paper “How Do Sentences Do It?” (Hertzberg 2022, 53–71) – in particular, comments in that paper on doubts I raised about it – is relevant here.

again exemplified most straightforwardly and clearly by Locke,⁶ in which language is pictured as a mirror of the world of which we speak. On this image, *what* we say is true or false in virtue of its mirroring the situation of which we speak, and (and this is the crucial point now) *the language in which we say it* is, in a deeper sense, correct or incorrect in virtue of its mirroring a structure in that of which we speak. The “essence” of a thing of a certain kind – of gold, of time, of redness, of sensation – is that in the world that our *language* – the *way* in which we speak – is an attempt to mirror. Once the notion of “essence” is detached from the role that it plays in a philosopher such as Locke – as I have argued Anscombe clearly wants to detach it – it is not clear what could be left of the suggestion that the existence of the essence expressed by “horse” is independent of human language and thought.

Well, Anscombe does not actually *say* any such thing; she says only that it would be a misunderstanding to deny it. Fine. But perhaps, then, we will do best to avoid either affirmation or denial here by eschewing the term “essence” in such contexts. Perhaps the use of the term “essence” in philosophy is so tightly wedded to the imagery of empiricist realism as to make it simply a liability. Perhaps we will do best to set aside Wittgenstein’s pithy slogan “Essence is expressed by grammar,” replacing it with a pithy injunction along the lines of: “Don’t ask for the essence; ask for the grammar.”

There is another, closely related, misunderstanding Anscombe wants to dispel:

⁶ The joint exemplification is, surely, no coincidence. For it is no coincidence that the same term, “idea,” plays a pivotal role in Locke’s understanding of both perception and language. It is, in this connection, a striking fact that – even though I have argued that Lagerspetz is wrong to identify such “realism” in Anscombe – strongly empiricist imagery still retains a clear grip on the thinking of some philosophers who draw extensively on Wittgenstein’s work. See, for example, McDowell’s suggestion that, since its having rained yesterday “can be, in memory, immediately available to consciousness,” the child’s grasp of a conception of the past – of the meaning of the past tense – can be “drawn from actual confrontation with instances of the sort of circumstance involved” (McDowell 1978, 140).

Now what is there in all this to make a difficulty about saying: “Even if there had never been any human language so that there *was* ‘no concept of pain’ at all – still, if there were animals, there would have been pain?” Nothing. (Anscombe 1981, 114)

Lagerspetz has reservations about such remarks: “[...] framing the question in terms of the existence of specific *things*, and in terms of ‘before’ and ‘after’, diverts it from the original concern that gives rise to it” (Lagerspetz 2021, 47). But while there may be dangers of diversion here, some *have* argued that Wittgenstein’s picture makes a difficulty about saying such things (see, for example, Williams 2006, 361–79), while others have struggled to see how he is not committed to there being a difficulty. And if they were right about this that clearly *would* have implications that we might be concerned about: for example, implications for what can be said by scientists about early stages in the evolution of the Earth or of life. So if they are *wrong* it might seem clearly in order to say so.⁷

Lagerspetz suggests that the ways in which Anscombe speaks in these remarks “reproduces the Realist contrast between how things are in themselves and how the mind presents them” (Lagerspetz 2021, 47). With this, he argues that the attempts by sympathetic commentators to show that Wittgenstein is a long way from any form of idealism are misguided. But it is important to keep in mind which “realist” and which “idealist” is being spoken of here. Would he, for example, object to Fergus Kerr’s assessment that “if idealism, in the philosophical sense, means that ideas are more fundamental than action, or that meanings are all in the head, then it is hard to imagine a more radically non-idealist way of thinking than Wittgenstein’s”? (Kerr 1986, 118.)

Kerr’s remark relates to Wittgenstein’s talk of the significance of “general facts of nature.” Lagerspetz suggests that what is at issue here centrally involves two related ideas: “(1) Language-games are

⁷ As with “essence,” Anscombe is careful in her formulations. If she had asserted, in a paper on linguistic idealism, as opposed to one on, say, evolution, that “Even if there had never been any human language so that there was ‘no concept of pain’ at all – still, if there were animals, there would have been pain” there might have been room for legitimate concerns. But she doesn’t.

not invulnerable, because new discoveries might render them obsolete; (2) Language-games can be different for communities living in different circumstances” (Lagerspetz 2021, 51). I believe, however, that expressing the matter in terms of “discoveries” that might render a language game “obsolete” fails to highlight something central to Wittgenstein’s thinking at this point. The key point is rather that something’s *being this* language game is inseparable from the fact that the talk is talk within a world in which things behave in certain ways. Wittgenstein’s concern is better brought out through a consideration of *changes* in the world: for example, the way in which changes in their physical environment imposed on North American Indians by European settlers were such as to *leave no place for* central features of their traditional ways of thinking and speaking (for a philosophically rich discussion of this example, see Lear 2006.) Or, to take one of Wittgenstein’s examples that Lagerspetz discusses, if pieces of cheese were to expand and shrink unpredictably it is not simply that the language-game of selling cheese by weight, along with the practice of weighing cheese, would become “obsolete.” There would be no such thing as that language game and that practice. I do not mean “We would give up these practices.” I mean, rather, “However we carried on there would be nothing that even looked like these things.”⁸

I have focused on ways in which I believe Lagerspetz gets Anscombe wrong. I believe his mistakes, as I see it, are instructive: that it is very important to appreciate just how easy it is to go wrong in discussions of these issues. It may also be important to recognise that there are points at which Anscombe, and perhaps Wittgenstein too, leave potential obstacles to the attempt to achieve clarity. I would like, however, to close by returning to something that seems

⁸ I will not offer a defence of this claim. I suspect that all readers of this will know what the defence will look like. Wittgenstein himself writes: “The procedure of putting a lump of cheese on a balance and fixing the price by the turn of the scale would *lose its point* if it frequently happened for such lumps to suddenly grow or shrink for no obvious reason” (Wittgenstein 1968, § 142) The words that I have italicized do, I believe, involve a mistake. Lars Hertzberg has suggested to me that my reservations about Lagerspetz’s discussion at this point may rest on a misreading of the text.

to me an enormously important positive lesson of Lagerspetz's essay. This is the suggestion that we do well to read Wittgenstein in light of the possibility that there is very significant common ground between his thinking and that of "the Idealists" in the way in which both are sharply at odds with a conception of "realism" – and, with that, of the proper business of philosophy – that has dominated philosophy for a long time, to its great impoverishment.⁹

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⁹ I would like here to acknowledge a debt to Lars Hertzberg for some very helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper.

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Reflections on the Dirty and the Clean

Lars Hertzberg

Olli Lagerspetz's book *A Philosophy of Dirt* (2018) is a pioneering effort to create an overview of the way dirt – the quality of being dirty – enters our thought and language.

More widely, it could be said that the book discusses an aspect of the way human life is vulnerable to the contingencies of our environment, the material world: not only objects being dirty or soiled, but also breaking, malfunctioning, being worn out, disfigured or lost.

This dimension of Lagerspetz's work is brought out in the subtitle of the Swedish edition of the book (2006): *En bok om världen, vårt hem* – “A book about the world, our home.” Dirtiness, in this book, constitutes the central form of such contingency. Dirtiness, roughly speaking, is that undesirable condition of objects or people, the recognition of which is expressed as a need to wash or clean them.

Reading the book – originally written in Swedish and later published in an English edition abbreviated, amended and translated by the author¹ – is an intellectual pleasure, its topic notwithstanding.² While Lagerspetz pays attention to varying historical and cultural perspectives on dirtiness and cleanliness, the main emphasis is on our own, present-day thinking about these properties. The book is mainly essayistic in form, but it also contains rigorous

¹ Translations have also appeared in Estonian, Finnish, German and Mandarin. A Turkish translation is planned.

² A problem about translating the Swedish word “smuts” into English is that the Swedish noun primarily refers to whatever has actually soiled an object or a person – where there is “smuts” there is a problem – whereas the English noun “dirt” may also refer to some substance which may potentially soil an object, but will actually become “smuts” only when it does.

argument: the author presents an analysis of the meaning of dirtiness, and argues against some of the confused, distorted or reductive ways in which we are inclined to interpret our own thinking about dirt.

Lagerspetz introduces his conception of dirtiness as follows:

The logically primary notion in this usage [in which ‘dirty’ is contrasted with ‘clean’] is not dirt as a *substance* but the underlying object’s *quality* of being dirty or soiled. It is a quality that appears when two elements combine: an unwanted substance makes contact with some item perceived as standing in need of protection. The additive collects on the original item, sticks to it or – as with liquids – blends into it. Dirt in this general sense certainly consists of matter, but it is ‘dirt’ because of its relation to the master object [i.e. object said to be dirty]. (2018, 46)

An object is dirty because of the presence of an unwanted (alien or foreign) substance. Paradigmatically, the things that may be dirty are what Lagerspetz calls “ordinary objects” – or better: to consider something dirty is to regard it under the aspect of an ordinary object. The concept of an ordinary object stands in contrast to that of a physical object, that is, an object thought of under the aspect of physical investigation. To the physicist or the chemist their objects of research are not dirty as such, at least not in the sense of needing to be cleaned. Natural science does not provide an account of what it means to be dirty or clean, even though some particular case of dirt may be subjected, say, to chemical analysis.

Most ordinary objects are artefacts. In thinking of something as an ordinary object we think of it in terms of its significance in the context of human practices; as I would like to put it, it is an object that *is supposed to be* some way or the other. A knife is supposed, among other things, to be sharp, a graduation dress is supposed to be pretty, a musical instrument is supposed to have a clear and beautiful sound. And in general ordinary objects are supposed to be clean. For an object to be dirty, then, is for it to fall short of what it is supposed to be like in a certain respect – just like its being broken, or worn-out, or discoloured, or decayed. Lagerspetz expresses this

point by saying that dirt-related concepts are defined teleologically – in relation to the *telos* (in Aristotle’s sense) of the object in question. Not only ordinary objects but also living organisms may fall short of their *telos*: a dog may lack a leg, the leaves of a tree may be discoloured by a fungus, etc. Physical objects, on the other hand, do not have a *telos*.

Apart from ordinary objects, human beings (and to some extent other living beings) are among the things that may become dirty and be in need of being cleaned, or in need of cleaning themselves.

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For Lagerspetz, the discussion of dirt provides an opportunity to take a closer look at some of the dichotomies that are often unquestioningly adopted in much contemporary analytic philosophy. He writes:

This kind of study is particularly instructive for one specific reason. Philosophy works with conventionally established dichotomies, such as the mental *versus* the material, factual vs normative, objective vs subjective. The concept of dirt seems to be one that falls between every philosophical stool [sic] imaginable. For instance, descriptions of dirt and how it attaches to objects are quite obviously descriptions of material reality. And yet ‘dirt’ is not a concept of physics even though physics is supposed to be the science of material reality. Let me simply suggest at this point that we stop trying to force round blocks into square openings. (2018, 15)

Later on he enlarges on this theme:

Summing up, we get two conclusions. Firstly, dirt exists because certain attitudes and patterns of behaviour exist. Secondly, those attitudes and patterns of behaviour exist because dirt exists. My argument was that neither side of the coin should be explained away, for describing a world as dirty and clean and, on the other hand, describing *life* in a dirty and clean world, amount to the same thing [...] But perhaps the reader is still under the impression that there is a

question unanswered: do objects objectively have teleologies and ‘thingness’, or is this simply something that human beings read into objects? At this point I must simply hope that the question no longer appears relevant to anyone who has followed my reasoning. For the central aim was precisely to dissolve the question in this general form. As perceiving subjects, our perception and judgement depend on the one hand on subjective aspects (such as human anatomy, our culture and our historically specific individuality) and, on the other hand, on objective aspects having to do with the character of the objects that we encounter in perception. However, what this general distinction amounts to in specific situations is not at all self-evident. How do we distinguish in a concrete case between what belongs to the object as such and what is an addition by us? At this juncture, it is no use to take up positions in an already existing war of attrition between realists and antirealists, a conflict that has produced much heat and confusion in the philosophy of science. (2018, 177–78)

Along these lines, I would suggest that the conventional debates centring around the question of what has independent reality, which judgments are objectively true, which judgments are factual and which are evaluative, etc., rest on a failure to consider language in its actual contexts of use – in fact, on two different levels: on the one hand, to consider the context of a speaker’s uttering of a judgment, and on the other hand, to consider the purpose for which someone means to apply one of these labels (“independently real”, “objective”, “factual”, or their opposite) to that judgment.

Another important feature of Lagerspetz’s presentation is his emphasis on the idea that our thinking about dirt is not, across the board, to be reduced to a matter of utility, thus resisting the attraction of another line of thought which can be considered characteristic of contemporary culture. We tend to be drawn to the idea that when people hold things to be important in their lives, they do so because those things are taken to be instrumental to one aspect or another of their mental or material well-being or to the maximal fulfilment of their preferences. To this way of thinking, considerations of dirtiness and cleanliness might be thought to have a place within a conceptual hierarchy. An ordinary object has a role in some

human practice in which it is used for certain purposes. Those purposes – its *telos* – determine how it should be constructed and what shape it should be in. For an object to be dirty means that the purpose for which it is to be used will be defeated, or at any rate hampered. On this conception, what counts as being dirty and in need of cleaning are matters that rest on purely instrumental considerations. Where no such foundation can be found, our judgments are thought to be irrational. Lagerspetz claims to find this view expressed, for instance, in Martha Nussbaum’s article “Secret Sewers of Vice” (1999). He sums up her argument as follows:

What currently elicits human disgust is largely determined by symbolic associations; but this is a kind of distortion, for the proper objects of disgust are merely the substances likely to be harmful to us. And it is a task for educators and reformers to make people see this. (2018, 75–6)

Now in the first place, Lagerspetz does not take it to be the business of philosophy to pass judgment on the rationality or lack of rationality of human practices. Rather, his aim is to make the reader aware of the rich variety of practices in which dirt and the need for cleaning have a role, and to do so in the face of our inclination to force them into preconceived categories. Second, he argues that in a great many cases, issues of utility do *not* have a decisive role (though in some cases they do have a role) in shaping the cleanliness requirements we apply.

Let us consider a couple of examples (of my choosing, but I believe in line with Lagerspetz’s argument). First, consider an object in the case of which cleanliness requirements have a utilitarian aspect: a pair of binoculars. Binoculars are an instrument that was probably initially developed to assist in navigation, but which has also found a use in astronomy, warfare, among theatre-goers, bird-watchers and tourists. What these contexts of use have in common is that the binoculars provide a closer view of things that, for one reason or another, we are reduced to observing at a distance. Here it is obvious what the cleanliness requirements for a pair of bin-

oculars should be: the lenses should be in a state which permits optimal conditions for observation, hence they should be free of dust or any other substances preventing an unobstructed view. (We might call these primary cleanliness requirements; the body of the binoculars should also, preferably, be clean even if this does not have any bearing on vision.)

Now, for a different example, consider the use of national flags. A flag should be highly recognizable and evocative, with clear colours and distinct shapes. A flag (or a flag icon) may have an instrumental function, as when used to mark language choices on a website or in guiding people to the right passport queue, etc. But primarily it is flown as a symbol of national pride, say, on specific occasions or on special days, on certain buildings or ships, or when carried at the head of a procession or march. If a flag were seen to be stained or soiled, this would commonly be regarded as a disgrace (except, perhaps, if the flag were thought to be soiled in battle or stained with the blood of a fallen soldier). In fact, the flag of a hateful regime (as in the case of Belarus) or of an enemy in war (such as Russia during the war against Ukraine) will sometimes be trampled underfoot as an expression of contempt or hatred. Here there is no independently given *telos*, the fulfilment of which is dependent on the flag being clean. Whether the flag fulfils its purpose is not a matter to be tested. Rather, the cleanliness requirement for a flag is fulfilled when those for whom the flag is important judge it to be in the condition that is owed to that for which the flag stands.

In this case, it might be said, the cleanliness requirement is not subservient to some independent purpose which the flag is meant to fulfil, but rather belongs to what constitutes fulfilling that purpose. The way we talk, say, of people or people's clothes or their homes or buildings, streets, cars, etc., being clean or dirty might be considered along similar lines. In these connections instrumental concerns may have a larger or smaller part to play, but on the whole the cleanliness requirement is not reducible to instrumental concerns. What a philosophical account of cleanliness and dirt can do in this connection is not to find a justification for the requirement,

but rather to provide a description of the practice within which the requirement is applied.

As Lagerspetz puts it:

Consider why we believe cleanliness to be important, and why we engage in specific cleaning operations [...] The most immediate explanation might simply be: my white shirt needs to be washed because the collar is not clean. This would be a valid piece of information if you were just asking me why *this particular* piece of clothing needs washing, but it would not explain why clean shirts are *generally* preferred. Sometimes there is a special reason why I want a clean crisp shirt, for instance because I hope to make a good impression at a job interview. But this of course gives rise to almost the same question once again: why do *interviewers* prefer candidates with clean shirts? Why are clean shirts generally taken to be preferable to soiled ones? Here I feel the impulse to cut the conversation short and say: clean shirts just are superior, full stop. But that would invite the renewed question [in] what kinds of *way* clean shirts are superior. [...] In the end, these questions would concern the very point of the language game of 'clean and dirty'. (2018, 71–2)

A particularly tempting form of the attempt to find an instrumental justification for our concern with cleanliness is the notion that cleanliness requirements are grounded in our concern with health – what Lagerspetz terms 'hygienic reductionism.' This notion, in fact, seems to offer a way of rationalizing practices which actually existed for a long time before the risks of bacterial contagion were discovered. Lagerspetz writes:

The assimilation of cleanliness to hygiene is [...] less than compelling [...] I am certainly not washing my white shirt because I fear infection. On this theme I have consulted a brochure by the National Swedish Board of Health and Welfare. The reader is told that we can be relatively unwashed without any hazard to the skin: 'In medical respect [sic], the removal of dirt is in most cases not of any consequence.' On the whole, 'standards of cleanliness in the home are above all a question of what we are personally comfortable with.' The claim is not that washing serves no health purpose at all, for in many

situations it is an extremely efficient way to fight contagion. However, cleanliness has obvious additional functions that fall outside hygiene, having more to do with aesthetic and social considerations. (2018, 73)

To my mind, Lagerspetz's argument against hygienic reductionism is fully convincing. I might add one more example. Most of us are naturally inclined to suppose that plastic cutting boards are more hygienic than wooden boards. After all it is much easier to keep a plastic board shining clean. But in fact, it seems to be the other way round: partly because of a difference in texture between the two materials, partly because wood is naturally anti-microbial, wooden boards are possibly more hygienic than the plastic kind (see, e.g., Milan 2018). Here, cleanliness and hygiene part ways.

The upshot of this is that in order to give an account of what dirtiness and cleanliness amount to, we have to consider the variety of considerations – some instrumentally motivated, some not – that bear on the application of these labels in connection with various practices. Cleanliness requirements, we might say, constitute a family, normally bound up with practices of washing or cleaning.

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According to Lagerspetz, for an object or individual to be dirty is for it (her/him) to be soiled by an alien or unwanted substance. We might call this the way in which dirt *manifests* itself. The manifestation is often visual, as when a dress is visibly stained or soiled, but it may also be detected through smell or touch, as Lagerspetz points out. We may decide that a piece of clothing needs washing because it is foul-smelling (say, it smells of fish or of bodily fluids), or because it feels sticky or rough to the touch, even though no dirt can be detected by sight. Indeed, a smell may indicate dirt even if it is not unpleasant in itself. Rather, it simply reveals the presence of a substance “in the wrong place.” It is not always clear what will count as a manifestation of being dirty. Thus, the same window will look dirty when the sun is shining through it, and look perfectly in order

when there is no sun. It may be called either clean or dirty depending on one's purpose in labelling it. (It would obviously be a mistake to argue that the window *is* dirty when the dirt is visible and that it *is* clean when it is not – any more than all cats are *actually* grey in the dark.)

There is, however, another aspect of dirt to which Lagerspetz does not pay a great deal of attention. We might call this the “*aetiology*” of dirt: the ways in which an object or person *comes to be* dirty. This will often be held to be important over and above the manifestation as such. First of all, the circumstances in which things or people get soiled may make a difference. Soiling may be part of the normal course of events, or it may occur accidentally. The clothes and body of a miner, fisherman or car mechanic will inevitably become soiled in the normal course of his work. In these cases, it would seem that no embarrassment attaches to being dirty during work or on the way home from work. On the other hand, suppose someone is about to give an important speech, and just as she is ready to step onto the podium, she notices a clearly visible ink stain on her dress. In this situation, the stain would be a source of embarrassment. The speaker may refuse to go on until the situation has been remedied in one way or another, even though it could be thought that the stain has no bearing on the speech she is about to deliver. She will perhaps think of the stain as showing loss of control, but of course that feeling is ultimately grounded in the sense that a person's clothes are supposed to be clean when one performs in front of an audience. Compare Lagerspetz's discussion of the need for a clean shirt, presented above. (Think also of the case of having a speck of food on a tooth, in one's face or beard on a social occasion.)

Second, the source of the soiling may make a great difference. If it is known that a dress was soiled by faeces, urine, vomit or some other bodily fluids (in which case it might be called filthy), this will usually call for immediate cleaning or a change of clothes, as compared to a case in which it is stained by some neutral substance such as oil – regardless of the fact that oil stains are harder to get rid of. This brings attention to another distinction: some forms of soiling

may only be a problem while we appear in public – in being a cause of shame or embarrassment –, while other forms, such as those involving the bodily fluids mentioned, will normally be considered bothersome even in a private context.

In some applications of the clean/dirty distinction the manifestation actually recedes to the background. I am thinking of the practices in which we periodically wash things, or wash ourselves, on the ground that a certain time has passed since the previous wash, independently of noting the presence of unwanted substances. For instance, very many people in our culture will shower daily or at least every other day. Some people may feel a need to shower twice a day (especially when it is hot); in earlier times, one took a bath or went to the *sauna* maybe once a week. The appropriate interval is largely a matter of custom, this, in turn, being shaped by the availability of resources for washing. Analogous considerations go for the periodic changing of clothes, sheets and towels, as well as the cleaning of homes, etc. The periodicity of the cleaning is not contingent on the discovery of patterns of soiling, although the participants in the practice are likely to argue that some undesirable substances are bound to accumulate in the interval. Actually, however, if an object should be found to have been soiled, we will probably clean it right away rather than wait for the next laundry day. Two notions of dirtiness seem to meet here. When it comes to periodic dirtiness, the issue becomes a matter of pure aetiology while the manifestation more or less drops out of the picture.³

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³ It could perhaps be suggested that with respect to the things we wash periodically, not being clean, as it were, is the default state, whereas being newly washed is the exception. In the Swedish version of his book, Lagerspetz has an eloquent description of the way we may relish the smell of freshly washed bed linen (2006, 207). I am thinking also of the way people in the past used to feel almost a spiritual uplift after having had their weekly bath on Saturday night. The ready availability of various methods of washing and cleaning have perhaps bereft those who live in affluent societies today of the sense of enchantment that simple cleanliness may inspire.

The above observations are intended to indicate directions in which a further philosophical study of the concepts of dirtiness and cleanliness might move. Another possible departure would be to explore the “grammar” of the vocabularies of “dirty” and “cleaning,” the occurrence of these and related words in conversational contexts. In any case, one great value of a work like Lagerspetz’s, in which new areas of human thought and experience are made the object of philosophical inquiry, is that it may challenge us to take a fresh look at the methodological presuppositions customarily taken for granted in philosophical discussion, and thus to open up new perspectives on what may be involved in a philosophical study of human forms of life.

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Dirty but Pure

Remarks on the Grammar of Natural Wine

Martin Gustafsson

1.

In *A Philosophy of Dirt*, Olli Lagerspetz compellingly argues that the uses of anthropological and historical data in academic discussions about dirt often show more about ourselves than about those foreign or past people that the discussions ostensibly deal with. According to Lagerspetz, such discussions tend to reproduce our own viewpoints, self-conceptions and anxieties, rather than provide a fair account of how the significance of dirt and cleanliness vary between cultures and over time: “A major function of our representations of the ‘pre-moderns’ is to serve as building-blocks of *contemporary* self-understanding” (Lagerspetz 2018, 155; original italics).

Lagerspetz is not saying that our contemporary self-understanding, thus articulated, constitutes one monolithic conception. On the contrary, he shows that this self-understanding itself contains tensions, which come to the surface in the historical and anthropological debates. Thus, whereas there is widespread agreement that pre-modern people had and have much lower hygienic standards than modern Westerners (an assumption that itself is far from clear, since, as Lagerspetz observes, there is not *one* neutral way of measuring levels of hygiene), there is an ambivalence in our own attitude towards this alleged difference between ourselves and the pre-moderns. Before the Second World War, the dominating attitude among both academics and social reformers was that the presumed increase in hygiene, and the fostering of self-discipline that allegedly came with it, constituted definite improvement and

progress. This attitude lives on in much contemporary public discourse, but during the last five or six decades a wish to question the idea of such univocal progress has grown stronger. Wasn't something important lost in this "civilizing process"? Didn't modern hygiene and self-discipline mean that people were deprived of a more intimate, uncomplicated and spontaneous relation to their own bodies, their fellow human beings, and the natural, living environment on which we all depend for our biological survival? Wasn't an instinctive but deep sense of such dependency replaced by a misdirected and ultimately vain wish for mastery and control, paired with a conception of the material world as "external" to our isolated, individual egos?

My aim in this paper is not to discuss to what extent Lagerspetz is right in his criticism of the contemporary use of historical and anthropological data to bolster such notions. Again, I find his objections largely compelling. My purpose is more modest. I will look at one example of how questions of the sort just formulated can resonate with *us*, Westerners living in the 21st century. The discussion I will investigate is not particularly "academic" (even if it sometimes makes use of academic work), and it is often polemically heated at the expense of clarity and charity. However, its relatively unguarded character is useful for my purposes, since it lays bare, in illuminating and often amusing ways, pictures and habits of thoughts which, if Lagerspetz is right, underlie also more sophisticated controversies.

The discussion I will investigate is the extensive debate during the last two or three decades over so-called "natural" wines and wine-production. This is a very sprawling and in many ways frustrating discussion, and my investigation will necessarily be partial and tentative. My aim is just to add some material to consider for readers who are interested in the sort of topics that Lagerspetz discusses in his book on dirt. I will leave it to the reader to draw conclusions from this material. Treat what follows as food (or drink) for further thought.

2.

The term “natural wine” has no precise, officially established definition. This is sometimes seen as a good thing: “No rules please. If the bureaucrats define natural, we can be sure that the movement will be co-opted” (Lynch 2013, 238). However, many proponents of natural wine would like to have an established definition, since the lack of any official legal accreditation “leaves the term open to abuse and thus to criticism” (Legeron 2014, 18). In any case, there has gradually developed a fairly robust list of conditions on which most producers agree. For a wine to be natural, the vineyard must be cultivated according to organic or biodynamic principles; the grapes must be harvested by hand; the fermentation must be spontaneous, which means that one relies only on wild yeasts that are naturally present at the skin of the grapes, and not on added cultured yeasts; there must be no or minimal filtration and fining; there must be no chaptalization (addition of sugar to the fermenting grape juice to increase the alcohol content), and no other additives except a minimal dose of sulfur (some producers do without sulfur altogether, and this is seen by many as the ideal). Fulfilling these conditions involves a lot of manual work in the vineyard, without any use of pesticides, fungicides, insecticides, herbicides, artificial fertilizers, and so on – and then minimal intervention in the post-harvest wine-making process. In that process, the producer is supposed to “just let nature take its course” (Legeron 2014, 61).

To understand why the natural wine movement has gained such force during the last couple of decades, a bit of background history is needed. In the 1970’s and 80’s, wine production went through a revolution. Farming became thoroughly mechanized, and the use of additives increased enormously. Today, the EU allows around 60 additives in wine, and no list of ingredients needs to be given on the bottle or the box. In many non-EU countries even more additives are legal. In the 1980’s, the wine world saw another new phenomenon: the power of the wine critic. I use the definite singular intentionally, since there was indeed one critic who was the dominating voice: Robert Parker, whose reviews in his own journal

The Wine Advocate had enormous effect on the market. Parker was a very talented and knowledgeable wine connoisseur, but his dominance was still unhealthy in several ways. He invented the now common 50–100 scale for quantitatively ranking the quality of wines, and even if he himself warned against taking the scale too seriously, wines were and are still often sold with a reviewer's numerical value given on the shelf. If Parker graded a wine in the top-90's, that would multiply the price many times. So it was not surprising that wine producers tried to manipulate their wines in order to achieve such high scores. And even if Parker was in fact quite a nuanced and sensitive critic, many producers did their best to make their products satisfy what they took to be his taste for relatively full-bodied varieties of classical French and Californian wines. At the same time, more and more money flowed into the wine business, and this led to an almost surreal increase in the price of the most prestigious wines. Today, it is difficult to find a bottle of 2015 Petrus for less than 4000 euros, and, according to wine-searcher.com, the average price of one bottle of 2015 Romanée-Conti La Tâche Grand Cru Monopole is 9167 euro.

Parker himself hated industrially produced wines, but one effect of the developments just described was that the wine market became divided into two segments: one of mass-produced, manipulated and relatively cheap wines with a lot of additives, and one luxury segment of very good or great wines that only rich people could afford. What threatened to disappear were traditionally made but modestly priced local products from less prestigious vineyards and districts – the sort of everyday but well-made wine that used to give wine-producing countries there enormous plurality of different, locally characteristic flavors.

Thus, traveling in Beaujolais in the 1980's, the writer and wine importer Kermit Lynch sadly noted:

Here in Beaujolais one sees that the nightmare can happen. A recipe, a formula, can take over an entire region. [...] When I see the wine writers taking the current formula Beaujolais seriously, treating it like wine, awarding points and stars, discussing the “banana” aroma, for example, I want to scream, *THESE ARE NOT LIVING WINES*. These

are wine robots rolling off the assembly line, millions and millions of them. (Lynch 2013, 186)

According to Lynch, the true spirit of Beaujolais – at that time kept alive only by a couple of very old wine makers – was the exact opposite of such predictable mass production:

Start by accepting Beaujolais as a gift of nature, with all that implies, including the cliché: *Don't look a gift horse in the mouth*. Value what nature gives, quirks and all. If you ever find a real Beaujolais, glory in its virtues, its immediacy, its spirit, instead of swirling and sniffing and seeking size and grandeur. Americans, comparative newcomers to wine, seem to look for a Great Experience every time they uncork a bottle. (Lynch 2013, 187)

Lynch, himself an American, was an important early proponent of wine as “what nature gives”, and the just quoted passages exemplify an attitude and a sort of rhetoric that has become very typical of proponents of natural wine. I will now look at bit closer at what this attitude and rhetoric involve.

3.

Let me begin, however, with one of wine's traditional companions: cheese. In the early 1990's, an EU attempt to prohibit non-pasteurized cheese met with widespread protests. Among the protesters were King Charles III (at the time, Prince Charles of Wales), who argued that the proposal “should strike terror into the hearts of any trueborn Frenchman [...] and all other people [...] who find that life is not worth living unless you have a choice of all the gloriously unhygienic things which mankind – especially the French portion of it – has lovingly created”. Isabelle Legeron, one of the most important natural wine advocates today and the author of what has become a standard introduction to the topic, *Natural Wine*, quotes King Charles approvingly, and says that we should try to think of wine in similar terms (Legeron 2014, 73). So, what does “unhygienic” mean when it comes to natural wine?

Natural wines are sometimes described by their champions as “dirty” (there is even a natural wine store in Australia called “Dirty wine shop”). Why? Perhaps the most direct reason is their unfiltered character: natural wines are often cloudy and contain a fair amount of sediment. However, similarly to how King Charles uses the term “unhygienic” in contrast to “pasteurized”, the dirtiness of natural wine should be understood more broadly in terms of a tolerance and, indeed, a welcoming of high levels of bacteria and other microorganisms. Even if all wine contains microorganisms (since they are all fermented), the levels are *much* higher in natural wines than in industrially produced ones.

Natural wine enthusiasts often describe this as a celebration of *life*. As Legeron puts it, “life is key”, since this flora of microorganisms “protects, defends, conquers, grows, reproduces, sleeps, ages, and dies. This is fundamental to what makes wine wine, rather than a simple, sterile, manufactured alcoholic drink” (2014, 49–50). Indeed, according to Legeron, such celebration of life permeates the natural wine farmer’s whole self-conception and world-view:

For these growers, what they do goes well beyond the wine itself. Instead, they promote a philosophy, a way of life, which undoubtedly contributes to the profound appeal of their wines to people across the globe. In a disconnected world that worships the Money King, these are people who chose otherwise and who did so well before it became popular. They chose this route out of conviction, of love of the land, and a desire to nurture the most fundamental force of all – life. Be it human, animal, plant, or other life forms, natural growers are primarily, as Jean-François Chêne, a natural producer in the Loire, puts it, about “respecting the living above all else.” (Legeron 2014, 95)

It is important to see that this “respect of the living” goes well beyond the use of environment-friendly farming methods, even if such methods are of course essential to the natural wine movement. Particularly interesting for my purposes is a contrast that is made everywhere in the natural wine literature, on the webpages of natural wine producers and so on, namely, the contrast between the monotonous predictability of industrial products and the *capricious*

character of life. Lynch's celebration of "what nature gives, quirks and all", and his complaint about the Beaujolais wines of the 80's as "wine robots" rather than "living wines" invokes precisely this contrast. Similarly, Legeron writes about how natural wine growers are "working with unpredictable wildlife" (Legeron 2014, 58). Such unpredictability means that natural wine-making is *risky*. However, as the champions of natural wines never tire of telling us, such risk-taking is required if one wants to achieve something of real, human significance. As Legeron puts it, "Natural growers don't make wine to a formula or for a market. Instead, what they share is the pursuit of excellence, based on a love of land and life, in its most complete and wondrous sense. It is like walking a tightrope without a safety net". She goes on to quote Bernard Noblet at the Domaine de la Romanée-Conti: "It is only when you stand at the edge of the precipice that you have the most beautiful view. It's here, as you risk falling into the void, that you see the extraordinary – overhead, underneath – and it's here that greatness is possible" (Legeron 2014, 105).

Indeed, it is a crucial part of the self-image of the movement that it takes *courage* to make natural wine. The character of this courage is quite interesting, however. For it is not the courage to be active and to dominate, but, on the contrary, the courage to be *passive* – to *not* control the processes of nature. The natural wine grower must learn to accept that these natural processes involve "an incredibly intricate web of inputs that is infinitely more complex than anything that man can create. Nature, in all her profound subtleties, can always do it better" (Legeron 2014, 42–43). The Champagne producer Anselme Selosse explains how he came to understand the need for such passive courage:

As a young winemaker, it was out of the question that I be subservient to nature. I was determined to be the boss. I dominated the vines and wines entirely. And, although I was making wine exactly as I had wanted to, none of the results captured my interest. That is, until I realized that my way of being was totally uncondusive to the creation of great art, since the originality, or singularity, of a place, which I so

fervently sought, was in fact entirely dependent on my giving it the freedom to express itself. (Quoted in Legeron 2014, 40)

4.

In the summer of 2020, the Hollywood star Cameron Diaz branded what she called “Clean wine”, and this label has started to spread. The descriptions of Clean wines may sound quite similar to the descriptions of natural wines: “no unwanted additives”, “no added sugar”, “100% Organic grapes”, and so on. My sense, however, is that natural wine growers despise Clean wines. This should not be surprising, given the grammatical landscape I have just mapped, in which natural wines are described as dirty and unhygienic, and in which this dirtiness is connected to life, unpredictability, risk, and passive courage. A quick look at the webpage of Diaz’s brand (drinkavaline.com) suffices to realize the difference. Clean wine is not only filtrated (“transparent”, as its sellers like to say), but is all about control and predictability. Its primary selling-point is that wine consumption should in no way interfere with the presumed wish of successful women to stay slim, young, healthy and good-looking. It is true that natural wine producers often claim that their own products are healthier than industrially produced wines, and, also, that they give less of a hangover. But the spirit of the natural wine movement is nonetheless very different from that of Clean wine.

However, I don’t want to give the impression that the natural wine movement is without internal tensions or conflicts. In fact, it is possible to identify two quite different and potentially conflicting attitudes among natural wine enthusiasts. These two different attitudes sometimes clash overtly in debates about what should be the overall aims of natural wine production, but they can also be present in one and the same person, which results in apparent inconsistencies in what that person says or writes about natural wines. As we shall see, Isabelle Legeron is an important example of someone who tries to harbor both these attitudes, and this makes her passionate

arguments for natural wine production somewhat obscure at certain important points.

The first attitude can be described as one of free experimentation and creativity. There are plenty of natural wine producers who feel imprisoned by and therefore transgress the detailed and strict appellation rules that have for a long time governed wine production in many countries, including France and Italy – rules about which sorts of grapes, fermentation processes, and so on, are allowed in which places. The experimental attitude of such producers is one of playful anarchism, in contravention of what is seen as stale and off-puttingly restrictive legal frameworks. If you enter a natural wine shop in Berlin or Paris or London, you will find yourself surrounded by these playfully anarchistic experiments, bottled in artsy bottles. Not all are great, but they are often a pleasure to consume: juicy, very drinkable, and relatively low in alcohol.

The second attitude is a more traditionalist one, where one aims at returning to how wine was made and how it tasted prior to the “nightmare” of mechanization, additives and commercialization. Here, the emphasis is on the hard-to-define concept of *terroir* – what Legeron characterizes as “a sense of place’, a unique, irreproducible combination of factors (plant, animal, climate, geology, soil, and topography, etc.) in a particular year” (Legeron 2014, 40). These traditionalists do not see established appellation rules as boringly restrictive laws, but as rules that crystallize the experience and wisdom of generations of wine growers who have noticed how some grapes, fermentation processes, methods of farming, barrels, and so on, are in harmony with the particular place at which they are working. The aim of traditionalists is to produce a wine that reflects the place in having flavors that are not possible anywhere else. Hence the necessity of the sort of passive courage that I talked about above: only by daring to be subservient to nature can one produce wines that genuinely express their place of origin. It is no coincidence that Nicolas Joly, the grand old man of natural wine production in the Loire Valley, is also the founder of the growers’ association *La Renaissance des Appellations*, and calls *terroir* “a glorious concept”.

Even if they don't like the epithet "clean", a favorite characterization of natural wine among both experimentalists and traditionalists is *pure* (Legeron uses this term over and over again in her book). For the experimentalists, natural wine is "pure" primarily in the sense that it contains no additives. But the traditionalists also talk about a "purity of expression", and by this they mean precisely that the flavor of the wine constitutes an undistorted expression of the place and time at which the grapes have grown. Being a wine connoisseur has always been taken to involve a capacity to identify origins and years of different wines, and, according to the traditionalists, this is not a matter of mere braggadocio, but manifests a real understanding of what wine is about.

In sum, the grammar of natural wine builds an arc from dirtiness to purity, via the notions of life, unpredictability, risk, courage, passivity and terroir. However, this grammar is not a matter of unanimous agreement, but allows for tensions and potential conflicts among natural wine enthusiasts. Let me end this paper by saying a little more about what such conflicts can look like.

5.

In 2013, Kermit Lynch published a 25th anniversary edition of his celebrated collection of travel reports from different wine regions in France, *Adventures on the Wine Route*, from which I have already quoted above (the book was originally published in 1988). The new edition contains an added epilogue, "Twenty-Five Years Later", in which Lynch, among other things, reflects on the natural wine movement. He is proud to have been one important early promoter, and has mostly good things to say about it. However, he also has certain reservations and worries, largely due to the fact that, as Calvin Trillin has put it, purity has a price – namely, purists. According to Lynch,

the natural wine movement is showing some self-destructive tendencies, and it is the fault of the true believers who in their zeal leave their palates behind. It is a faith-based religion:

"Hey, wait! This wine is spritzzy and oxidized."

“Well, you don’t have faith. If you had faith, you’d overlook those problems and drink the wine because it’s natural.” (Lynch 2013, 238–239)

Lynch ridicules such “true believers” – often urban hipster sommeliers – who refuse to admit that natural wine production *is* really risky because natural wines do collapse into undrinkable vinegar more often than wine with additives. The so-called “bottle variation” common among natural wines is not only a sign of life, but a real problem for wine sellers, restaurants and ordinary consumers. Natural wine can taste really bad – why else would the production of it involve courage? It is no coincidence that people who want reliable products have used sulfur and other additives. Non-natural wines may be a bit dull, but for a restaurant owner who wants to remain in business they can be a blessing.

Lynch insists that good natural wine is good because it tastes well; it does not taste well because it is natural. The palate is the final arbiter, and letting the fact that a wine is natural adjust one’s criteria of what is good and bad is to put the cart before the horse. This puts him squarely among the traditionalists within the natural wine movement: the point of natural wine-making is that it can make wine taste as good as it used to do. The idea of naturalness should not fundamentally alter our conception of what constitutes a good wine.

By contrast, Isabelle Legeron argues that “the best way to enjoy natural wines is to try to forget everything you know about wine, and start afresh” (Legeron 2014, 73). She compares it to the first time you taste kombucha (a fermented tea drink): “The first time you try it, it is surprising. You know it started off as sweet tea, but now it has a distinctly sour flavor profile and is slightly fizzy. But since you know these traits are meant to be there, you let go and begin enjoy what you’re tasting. This is because the unknown is scary” (ibid.).

This sounds like a pretty radical form of experimentalism, according to which the natural wine movement should aim not only at changed practices of wine production, but to a paradigm shift in

our very notions of what constitutes a good wine. It also sounds dangerously close to something that the hipster sommelier in the Lynch quote above would want to agree with – namely, the idea that failing to appreciate a natural wine means failing to let one’s taste undergo the sort of conversion that natural wines call for.

Interestingly, however, there are many passages in Legeron’s book where she sounds much more like a traditionalist. For example, she is obviously very happy to make the reader aware that the Domaine Romanée-Conti – perhaps *the* most prestigious wine producer in the world – has always produced wine in a “natural” fashion (Legeron 2014, 105). So, is she contradicting herself? Perhaps. However, it might be arguable that when she tells us to forget everything we know about wine, she has in mind readers who have had their sense of what a wine should taste like completely shaped by industrialized wines. If so, “starting afresh” would not mean throwing traditional conceptions of wine quality overboard, but to begin understanding such traditional conceptions for the first time.

Whether or not Legeron’s seemingly contradictory statements can be reconciled in this fashion, I think it is undeniable that the two attitudes that I have identified above are characteristic of the natural wine movement as it exists today. They sometimes co-exist peacefully, but it also happens that their hard-liners run into sharp conflict with one another. Not that such tensions and conflicts are necessarily a bad thing. Perhaps they should instead be seen as expressions of the life of this movement itself.

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The Bounds of the Sayable

Hugo Strandberg

As far as I know, there are two papers by Olli Lagerspetz in which he discusses problems in the philosophy of religion. The second one (2009), “The Resurrection and the Philosophical ‘We’,” could be said to be the official one; the first one (2000), “Religion inom gränserna för det sägbara allena,” is, in a way, a preliminary study, differing from the later one also by its satirical form. The title, which in English would be “Religion within the bounds of the sayable alone”, alluding to Kant, might at first seem to be only loosely connected to its content. I will nonetheless use its reference to “the bounds of the sayable” as my starting point in this essay, discussing two quotations from Raimond Gaita and Stanley Cavell, not mentioning religion, before returning to Lagerspetz’s two papers and the topic they discuss.

Gaita

In *Good and Evil*, Gaita writes (2004, 209), quoting R. F. Holland (1980, 128):

“Absolute goodness *is something*” – that is not a report following an intellectual voyage of discovery. Someone cannot be compelled to speak this way merely because others have, because he has read about it, or argued about it, or because he has studied moral philosophy. But he could not speak that way unless others have.

The general drift of Gaita’s discussion is to emphasise the personal nature of Holland’s statement that “Absolute goodness *is something*.” In this regard, Gaita’s last sentence points in another direction. Gaita does not say why he claims that Holland could not speak

that way unless others have, and he does not explain how the claim should be understood. (Holland himself does not make a similar claim, although he makes a reference to Plato in this context.) Is it an empirical claim? Understood in one way, it is not difficult to test it: just google “Absolute goodness *is something*”! In fact, we get no other hits than from Gaita’s *Good and Evil*, but even if we would, that would not mean much, for it would not be difficult to reformulate Holland’s statement, making it definitely unique. Of course, this is not what Gaita means; the decisive phrase is “that way.” The difficulty, however, is how to specify this phrase, not too narrowly, which would make Gaita’s claim false, as we have seen, not too widely, for it is certainly trivially true that someone prior to Holland has said something that bears *some* similarity to “Absolute goodness *is something*”. After all, anything could be seen as similar to this statement, under a suitable description.

This far, we have not even touched upon what is central to Gaita’s claim, however. For his point is not only that others have said things that are more or less similar to “Absolute goodness *is something*”, but that this is a condition for the possibility of saying such a thing. To test this claim, one would have to come up with potentially “impossible” statements and then try to voice them. But this would already be to “speak,” in the relevant sense of the word. In other words, the bounds of the sayable are supposed to be the bounds of the imaginable also; only after people have started to speak in a specific way will we come to see what was previously unsayable and unimaginable. However, this raises the question how a new way of speaking could ever come about. Holland could not speak that way unless others have, who could not speak that way unless others have, who could not ... This regress could only be broken off by claiming that it is only in retrospect that a new way of speaking is a way of speaking, which hence was devoid of sense until it was possible to see it as such a way of speaking. The speculative nature of such a metaphysical argument would only be possible to avoid by going into details, by seeking to show how the sense of Holland’s statement that “Absolute goodness *is something*” is intimately bound up with the way others have spoken before him. But

Gaita does not do so; that the way others have spoken constitutes bounds of the sayable is so obvious to him that he does not see any need of discussing it.

As I pointed out above, my impression is that the root of the problem is the vagueness of Gaita's reference to "that way." Here a Wittgensteinian point is of importance (often made by Olli Lagerpetz, in discussion, cf. Wittgenstein 2009, §§ 225–227): the distinction same/different is context dependent. (The same goes for "context," etc.) Claiming that "he could not speak that way unless others have" consequently makes little sense in the abstract. But it is precisely in the abstract that Gaita makes this claim.

Cavell

Although the context of Cavell's discussion is a very different one, he might seem to offer an explanation of why someone "could not speak that way unless others have." Cavell writes (1979, 177):

When you say "I love my love" the child learns the meaning of the word "love" and what love is. *That (what you do) will be love* in the child's world; and if it is mixed with resentment and intimidation, then love is a mixture of resentment and intimidation, and when love is sought *that will be sought*. When you say "I'll take you tomorrow, I promise", the child begins to learn what temporal durations are, and what *trust* is, and what you do will show what trust is worth. When you say "Put on your sweater", the child learns what commands are and what *authority* is, and if giving orders is something that creates anxiety for you, then authorities are anxious, authority itself uncertain. Of course the person, growing, will learn other things about these concepts and "objects" also. They will grow gradually as the child's world grows. But all he or she knows about them is what he or she has learned, and *all* they have learned will be part of what they are.¹

¹ Thanks to Salla Aldrin Salskov and Philip Strammer for discussions about this quotation.

At first, Cavell seems to discuss how specific words are learnt, for example the English word “love.” The ways in which people around the child uses the word in question will then certainly be decisive. (Cavell seems to overstate this point, however, by claiming that “*all* they have learned will be part of what they are,” for I see no reason to believe that every instance of hearing a specific word will be of importance, as if the child’s understanding of the word would be some kind of aggregate of all these instances.) However, this makes Cavell’s claim that “when love is sought *that* will be sought” misleading at best. “When something that is mixed with resentment and intimidation is sought, something that is mixed with resentment and intimidation will be sought” is a tautology, but this only raises the question: who is speaking here? Cavell is equivocating; on the one hand he is relying on the readers’ understanding of love as something to be sought, in contrast to resentment and intimidation, on the other hand he is describing what the word “love” means for this specific child. From the point of view of this imagined child, however, who has heard the word “love” being used in contexts of resentment and intimidation, it will not be love that the child is seeking. (Of course, there are children who grow up under so destructive conditions that they want to be resented and intimidated. This is however not a result just of being subjected to any mixture of the kind Cavell is referring to. Furthermore, there will clearly be tensions in any case, for it is not as if the child who wants to be resented and intimidated does not suffer, on the contrary. Cf. Freud 1987, ch. 9.) Instead, the child will want, say, that its mum were always as she was yesterday, or that the man in the neighbouring house were its dad. (Idealising someone is perceiving someone inaccurately, but idealisation might nonetheless give rise to a better understanding of what life could be.) Cavell seems to believe that distinctions are only available to someone who has specific words for the things distinguished, but as my examples indicate, a child can very well make a distinction between, say, love and love mixed with resentment and intimidation without using any such specific words. Moreover, since resentment and intimidation are very

seldom totally absent from relationships, the situation Cavell is describing is the situation of most of us, but we are nonetheless able to distinguish them from love; if we were not, it would not make sense to speak of a “mixture.” Any account of language acquisition must account for the fact that we are able to refer to things that we have never experienced and to things that have never existed. The one who would like to downplay this capacity as only an instance of abstract intellectualism ought to recall the lively imagination of childhood.

Later in the above quote, it becomes clear that what Cavell is discussing is however not how specific words are learnt. When referring to authority, he is not referring to this word being used. After all, the word “authority” is learnt very late, if at all; it does not belong to the vocabulary of children, neither of all people. (In the light of this, what Cavell says about love becomes all the more absurd. Compare: “If my father sometimes beats me, then I learn what being together with him means. So if I seek his company, I seek being beaten.”) Moreover, Cavell’s example is also in this case a strange one. He imagines me saying “Put on your sweater” to a child. What kind of relation I have to the child he does not say, as if this did not matter. But there is of course an enormous difference between saying such a thing to one’s son or daughter as part of daily routines and saying it to a child on the street who seems to be cold, and there are very many diverse situations between these two extremes. Paying attention to this makes it obvious that what the specific child in question is learning is by no means clear. Say that I tell my daughter “Put on your sweater” and that Cavell is right in claiming that “giving orders is something that creates anxiety for” me. According to Cavell, she will now learn that “authorities are anxious, authority itself uncertain.” But this is not at all self-evident. My anxiety is in all likelihood not present on all occasions, and not present in the same way on all occasions. What she will learn depends in many ways on such details, and me telling her “Put on your sweater” is hence not as such decisive and need not be of much importance at all, especially since the form of the sentence only shows what grammatical mood is being used, not whether it is an order.

Above all, if my daughter learns that I am anxious and that my authority is (sometimes? always?) uncertain, that does not automatically generalise, as Cavell seems to think. That my authority is uncertain does not necessarily mean that paternal authority as such is uncertain, neither that parental authority as such is uncertain, neither that authority as such is uncertain. Cavell, by contrast, jumps to the last conclusion, a conclusion that does not follow from empirical tendencies such as the great psychological importance of the relation to one's father.

The most glaring absence in Cavell's discussion is however the fact that the child has a mind of its own. According to Cavell, "all he or she knows about them [what love, temporal durations, trust, and authority are] is what he or she has learned". Read generously, this could be taken as a tautology, but Cavell does not give any examples of children finding out things for themselves, reflecting on experiences, comparing people they have met with, or the like. In the case of authority, this is of special importance. For children protest often and loudly and do not always do what they are told, and how what the parents say to it is to be taken is something that the child hence finds out by putting it to the test. Furthermore, the plural – parents – is not insignificant. Children have in most cases different relations to different people, and comparisons will be made; asking the parent who will give the answer the child is looking for instead of the one who will not is one early way of shaping – not of learning, and not only of finding out – what authority is. (Cf. Lagerspetz 2015, 146.)

A relation of authority would not exist without the child's response to the person in question; a relation is not to be understood in individual terms, and the same hence goes for relational concepts. Generally speaking, language is all about relationality; central to language is listening to what the one in front of me has to say, or rather listening to her. Even if I test a child by asking it questions the correct answers to which I already know (say, "What is five plus seven?" or "What is the capital of Norway?"), I mind the fact that it is *this* child who gives the answers, and since the child could very well respond by asking me questions, that the child has a mind of its

own cannot be denied even in such a context. If this is denied or overlooked, however, language is lost sight of. The ways in which people around me speaks and acts are no doubt of great importance, especially during childhood, but they do not establish bounds, of, say, the sayable, as Cavell intimates that they do.

Cavell concludes his discussion by writing (177–178):

In “learning language” you learn [...] not merely what the word for “love” is, but what love is. In learning language, you do not merely learn the pronunciation of sounds, and their grammatical orders, but the “forms of life” which make those sounds the words they are, do what they do

Let me here take up another example: learning to tell the time (cf. Segerdahl 1998, 120–127). That this is “not merely [to] learn the pronunciation of sounds, and their grammatical orders” is clear; this is what I would need to learn when learning a foreign language, provided I already know how to tell the time. When learning to tell the time, by contrast, what I need to learn is how to read the clock-face. In one sense, this is about it; you can very well imagine a child having learnt how to correctly answer the question “what time is it?” by means of a clock without knowing the point of this. But of course, learning to tell the time is in most cases closely related to coming to see this point, to becoming able to, say, switch on the telly when the children’s programme is screened (using an example relevant in Cavell’s days but not anymore). Is this to learn “the ‘forms of life’ which make those sounds the words they are, do what they do”? In Wittgensteinian circles, references to “forms of life” are common, but I often find them vague and unclear, also in this case. (Olli Lagerspetz has been helpful in clearing up some of the problems; see Lagerspetz 2020.) Knowing how to tell the time has a point because other people have clocks too, clocks that show (roughly) the same time as mine; this makes coordination possible. Is this what Cavell is referring to when mentioning “forms of life”? Perhaps. But one should then notice that this is at most an implicit part of what one learns; what one does learn is that shops are not always open, that the bus driver does not wait for you, etc. Exactly what relation

learning such things has to learning to tell the time is however indeterminate; for example, I would find it somewhat strained to claim that my understanding of how to tell the time changed the first time I watched a live internet stream. In any case, it would be more in line with Cavell's discussion of love, trust, and authority to claim that the forms of life you learn in learning to tell the time include learning to be punctual. In one sense, this is correct. As I remember it, I learnt to tell the time and got a watch of my own some time before starting school. How strict my first teacher was I do not remember, but being scolded is at least one possible consequence of not being on time, and learning the point of knowing how to tell the time includes learning what such consequences are, which however does not mean that one has to mind them, consequences that in other parts of life are the near impossibility of managing many things if one is not able to be on time. Nevertheless, people differ considerably when it comes to how punctual they are and what kind of importance they see in it; for some, being punctual is a virtue, for others, it has at most a practical significance. These differences are no direct consequences of dissimilar cultural or family backgrounds; for example, a bohemian counterculture can arise as a response to a culture of bourgeois punctuality, and someone growing up in such a counterculture can react to the disorder she is uneasy with by coming to stress punctuality, without however necessarily moralising it. Of course, many social institutions would not exist, for good or for bad, were it not for the coordinated behaviour of people. But this makes punctuality a special case, precisely because some kind of concord is central to it. Someone who finds being on time difficult could very well wish for a society in which more people were like him and punctuality hence not as important in social life. But, connecting to one of the concepts Cavell is discussing, would really the situation of someone who finds it difficult to trust people be improved if more people were like her?

My point here is that as soon as we go into details (cf. Strandberg 2020) – and my discussion above of learning to tell the time is only a short outline of a discussion that could have been much longer – it becomes evident that whether “forms of life” has to be learnt when

learning “language” is not as clear as Cavell seems to think. It all depends on what is supposed to be included in the term “forms of life,” and in my above discussion I gave some suggestions of what could be taken to be included in a particular case. Stated in a general way, by contrast, I find the claim that “[i]n learning language, you [...] learn [...] the ‘forms of life’ which make those sounds the words they are, do what they do” more or less pointless. Is there really a general way of stating what one has to learn when learning “language,” no matter the precise word or concept in question? Furthermore, exactly what importance the things one has to learn have not only depends on the things in question but also on how one takes them, but in the above quote, Cavell gives no space for such differences. Being born means being born into social structures that already exist, of formal and informal characters, and they are there whether one likes it or not – is Cavell intimating that language is such a structure? Well, social structures create bounds (and thereby make other things possible, for example in the way railings prevent movement for the sake of safety), but not bounds of the sayable, for social structures one can accept, be grateful for, curse, and try to improve, demolish, or replace. In language, we express both likes and dislikes, voice protest and support, me to you and you to me (cf. Winch 1987, 195–196).

The personal

In “The Resurrection and the Philosophical ‘We’,” Olli Lagerspetz writes, thereby concluding the main part of his paper (2009, 103): “‘A grammatical remark is one whose validity must be recognised by anyone who hears it and understands it, on pain of philosophical confusion’. In that case, few interesting questions in the philosophy of religion will be about grammar.” One difficulty here is of course how to explain what understanding a philosophical remark is in a way which does not make implicit reference to the recognition of its validity. (There is a similar difficulty regarding “philosophical confusion.”) Few interesting remarks, not only in the philosophy of re-

ligion, but in philosophy generally, are of the kind that understanding them and determining their validity are separate issues, I would claim; rarely is it the case that I could claim to understand a remark perfectly while leaving its validity undecided. (Even though he does not say so outright, the rest of the discussion in Lagerspetz's paper points in a similar direction.)

When thinking through a philosophical problem, whether when writing on my own, when reading a book, or in conversation with others, what the issue concerns is my understanding. If I do not understand a remark made in the book or in the conversation, the author of the book or the friends I am discussing with could help me by explaining what they mean, but that they (claim to) understand something does not mean that I do. Similarly, if I (think that I) have come to understand something of philosophical importance, the fact that there are people who do not share this understanding and whom I fail to convey it to does not as such obliterate my understanding. For that to happen, my attention has to be drawn to some problem I did not notice, with the result, say, that I do no longer know what I was thinking or that I realise that what I wanted to say was something else than what I just said. Hence, that there are people who do not understand a philosophical remark is not an argument against it (cf. Strandberg 2022, Strandberg forthcoming).

Olli Lagerspetz's discussion in "The Resurrection and the Philosophical 'We'" concerns the philosophy of religion specifically. In the introduction to the paper he writes, summing up what is to come (2009, 86):

My general point is that if we really want to describe *possible* uses of religious expressions we cannot do so independently of what we see as religious possibilities for ourselves. And to find out about *this* is not a matter of pure description – whatever that means – but of making decisions for our own part.

His reference to "making decisions" must be a mistake, I guess. Against the background of what one sees as possibilities, one can make the decision to pursue one of them. If I come to realise that there is but one option, there is nothing to decide. (Or is the fact

that I would not stress “making decisions” one example of the role what we see as religious possibilities for ourselves has here?) In any case, Olli Lagerspetz’s main point is definitely right and significant: the personal is of great importance in the philosophy of religion (and in related areas, such as moral philosophy). A religious possibility claims me, and thinking about it in impersonal terms would hence mean not seeing it for what it is. Furthermore, precisely because the possibilities claim me, sometimes in ways parts of me do not like, it can be difficult to acknowledge them, at the same time as this fact can also make it easier to distinguish real possibilities from only apparent ones, for the real meaning of what from a purely intellectual point of view might seem to be unproblematic will become obvious in the context of life, a context less easier to overlook here, to the extent it is challenging.

This means that a general claim to the effect that one cannot speak in a specific, religious way unless others have (cf. Gaita above), or that all anyone knows about God is what he or she has learned from others (cf. Cavell above), will not do. The mere fact that others have said this and that does not mean that I am able to see what they have said as real possibilities. And to the extent it is possible to relate to God, that is, to a person and not to an object under a specific description, such a relation is something fundamentally different than whatever others could have said to me about it, however important that might be. From what others have told me, I might know what being in love is like, but that does not mean that I am in love; knowing many things about God (which one might have learned from others or in other ways) is not the same as knowing God. With Levinas (1963, 606–607), one could here claim that the idea that whatever it is possible to get hold of is the central thing, be it descriptions, information, or knowledge, is effectively atheism, if not by name, in contrast to the openness to the Other. A philosophy of religion that frames the philosophical questions in the former way will in that case already from the start have lost sight of what it claims to be about.

My understanding, yes. But at the same time it is consequently important to notice that in religion, what I do or have is only of

secondary importance, or else there would be no need for salvation (cf. Kierkegaard 1963, ch. 2). Faith is after all not a philosophy.²

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² Thanks to Jonas Ahlskog and Salla Aldrin Salskov for comments on an earlier version of the paper.

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The Responsibility of a Philosopher

Jonas Ahlskog

Peter Winch is a key source of inspiration for Olli Lagerspetz's philosophical work. This is no co-incidence since Lagerspetz was Winch's student. Naturally, there is comprehensive agreement in their respective views of philosophy, and one obvious expression of this is Lagerspetz's many important defences of Winch against his critics. Against the background of their agreement, my aim in this paper is to articulate an apparent *disagreement* between Winch and Lagerspetz concerning the nature of philosophical inquiry. The articulation aims to show (i) that the disagreement is only apparent since Winch should, considering his earlier work, agree with Lagerspetz's critique, and (ii) that the apparent disagreement illuminates the meaning and importance of what R. G. Collingwood called a "rapprochement between philosophy and history", which he saw as the central task for philosophy in the twentieth century. In conclusion, I will discuss how Lagerspetz's views on understanding the Resurrection raises important questions about the continuity between the personal and the philosophical.

Understanding the Resurrection

Lagerspetz's disagreement with Winch is most clearly expressed in the paper "The Resurrection and the Philosophical 'We'" (2009). In the paper, Lagerspetz examines a tension between two motifs that belong to the very idea of philosophy: (i) the requirement to say something general about the meaning or grammar of our concepts and (ii) the need to speak for oneself only. Lagerspetz explores this tension in relation to the philosophy of religion in general and by way of the example of the Resurrection of Christ in particular. Of

central importance is the conflict between a *historical* and a *religious* narrative of the Resurrection: Must one choose between the religious description of what happened, that ‘Christ rose again from the dead on the third day’, and a historical description that explains the event as one in which ‘Certain disciples removed Jesus’ body from the tomb’? Lagerspetz’s main argument is that any serious examination of the conflict between the narratives must involve an exploration of one’s own possibilities of finding religious sense in the Resurrection. He writes that “if we really want to describe *possible* uses of religious expressions, we cannot do so independently of what we see as religious possibilities for ourselves” (2009, 86).

Lagerspetz’s argument derives from an examination of what *describing* the different alternatives for understanding the Resurrection must (logically) involve. For if one is to determine whether two accounts are compatible or in conflict, one must already have access to an understanding of the candidates of comparison. Importantly, there is an asymmetry concerning the kinds of problems that the different accounts involve. The problem for the historical narrative is chiefly one about the paucity of records and not about what kind of understanding of the phenomena that the narrative involves. For to give a historical account (for non-Christian historians) is to explain the events in terms that *do not* invoke miracles or divine intervention. Rather, a narrative is historical to the extent that it explains the events in question as the result of human agency and social conditions; namely, that the tomb was empty *because* the body of Jesus was removed by the disciples or whatever ‘secular’ narrative of the events that does justice to the available evidence.

In the case of history, there is a fundamental agreement about what *kind of assertions* about the past historical narratives may involve, although there may be disagreements about which narrative provides the best historical explanation. Anyone who said that they do not understand what the historical narrative of the Resurrection *means* would be offered a lesson in ‘the historical proof-game’: Given such and such statements about the events by contemporary witnesses, compared with such and such material evidence, the most plausible account is that the disciples entered the tomb and

removed Jesus' body ... If you would then ask the historians what they think about the plausibility of divine intervention, they would not reply that, given their evidence material, divine intervention seems unlikely. Rather, their response would be puzzlement about whether you are, (i) asking the historians whether they believe in the Resurrection, or (ii), whether you are completely ignorant as to what kinds of considerations that are possible candidates for explaining past events historically. If they do not assume you are joking – for there is something odd about having no acquaintance with the language game of history at all – then they would perhaps provide you with some textbook examples of historical explanation to illustrate what kind of a narrative history is.

While understanding the kind of assertions historians make is usually not difficult, the opposite is often the case with religious narratives. For example: What exactly is asserted in the religious narrative that 'Christ was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead'? As Lagerspetz points out, we run in to difficulty already in trying to spell out what the assertion is about: Is the narrative *meant* as a competing claim about history and human physiology? Or does the assertion have a different role? To understand the assertion, one may, as in the case of asking historians to flesh out what a historical narrative involves, consult the practitioners of such expressions, i.e., attend to the use of the expression in religious contexts by real believers. Still, this is not very helpful. For identifying 'real believers' already assumes that we have found what we were looking for; namely, an understanding of religious belief. The reason is that identifying 'real believers' presupposes an appreciation of the distinction between deep belief, on the one hand, and shallow and trivial belief, on the other hand. And making use of such contrasts already implies that we do have the ability to discern relations internal to religious belief itself.

Without an appreciation of the relevant uses of distinctions within religious belief, such as deep vs. shallow, one will not be able to describe what religious belief involves in ways that clarifies when and how such belief does conflict with other ways of understanding

the world. Furthermore, without this understanding from the inside, so to speak, one's descriptions can consist only of an inventory of typical phrases, practices and rituals that (what one believes to be) true believers seem to find important. This insight – that description of social phenomena presupposes an appreciation of qualitative distinctions internal to the explanandum – was one of Winch's central arguments already in *The Idea of a Social Science* (1990, 88, henceforth *ISS*):

[A] historian or sociologist of religion must himself have some religious feeling if he is to make sense of the religious movement he is studying and understand the considerations which govern the lives of its participants. A historian of art must have some aesthetic sense if he is to understand the problems confronting the artists of his period; and without this he will have left out of his account precisely what would have made it a history of art, as opposed to a rather puzzling external account of certain motions which certain people have been perceived to go through.

Lagerspetz critique of Winch on the Resurrection develops what the latter in *ISS* denoted as the requirement of “religious feeling”. For Lagerspetz argues that Winch's later writings on the Resurrection overestimates the possibility of making sense of religious narratives, so to speak, from the outside. Importantly, Winch argues that there can be a rendering of the different grammars – of historical and religious beliefs about the Resurrection – that shows that there is no necessary conflict and that, therefore, one does not *have to* make a choice between them (Cf. Lagerspetz 2009, 98–100). But as Lagerspetz emphasizes, it remains unclear what kind of claim Winch is making. Is the ‘no necessary conflict-claim’ Winch's own confession of *his* view of what religious belief involves – that *his* way of finding religious sense in the Resurrection is not necessarily in conflict with the historical narrative – or is it a claim about how different grammars relate to each other in the abstract? As Lagerspetz points out, Winch never specifies whether he means the claim in the first or in the second sense. If it is meant in the first sense, then Winch's argument is at best underdeveloped – if it is meant in the

second sense, then the claim is misleading since it erroneously assumes that one can examine religious narratives and their relation to other narratives without probing religious possibilities for oneself. Lagerspetz (2009, 91) sums up his argument in the following way:

No sorting out can be done between spurious and actual religious possibilities unless I invoke something like a notion of genuine religion, genuine spiritual nourishment. I may examine what it means for me to be a Christian. Rather than identifying possibilities in the abstract, I must see what would count as a description of the Resurrection I believe in. That is of course no longer Socratically to remind someone of a shared understanding that 'we' had all along. It is to articulate one's faith and *invite* others to join. [...] My examination of *'the* meaning of a religious expression is, in itself, a *use* I am making of the expression in question. I am probing into the meanings that it has, or might get, in my life.

Lagerspetz's argument explicates the ways in which understanding from the inside – which was one of Winch's key concerns in philosophy of the social sciences – comes with personal demands. This personal feature of understanding is not peculiar to religious belief – although that example will often make the personal dimension explicit – but integral to all forms of sense making in history and the social sciences. Occasionally, Collingwood described this personal dimension as a question about the historian's ability to provide a "home" for the thoughts that past action and events embody, which he saw as a condition for something to become the object of historical knowledge. Collingwood (1993, 304) writes:

The gulf of time between the historian and his object must be bridged, as I have said, from both ends. The object must be of such a kind that it can revive itself in the historian's mind; the historian's mind must be such as to offer a home for that revival [...] This does not mean that his mind must be of a certain kind, possessed of an historical temperament; nor that he must be trained in special rules of historical technique. It means that he must be the right man to

study that object. [...] A man who at one time of life finds certain historical studies unprofitable, because he cannot enter for himself into the thought of those about whom he is thinking, will find at another time that he has become able to do so.

Furthermore, Collingwood emphasises, as Lagerspetz does in the case of the Resurrection, that understanding involves a personal dimension in which the historian is probing the sense that *he* can find in the thoughts under examination. Collingwood (1993, 305) writes:

If the historian, working against the grain of his own mind [...] tries to master the history of a thought into which he cannot personally enter, instead of writing its history he will merely repeat the statements that record the external facts of its development: names and dates, and ready-made descriptive phrases. Such repetitions may very well be useful, but not because they are history. They are dry bones, which may some day become history, when someone is able to clothe them with the flesh and blood of a thought which is both his own and theirs. This is only a way of saying that the historian's thought must spring from the organic unity of his total experience, and be a function of his entire personality with its practical as well as its theoretical interests.

There are obvious similarities between these quotes from Collingwood and the previous one from Winch in the *ISS*. This is no surprise since Collingwood was, besides Wittgenstein, one of the central sources of inspiration for Winch's philosophical work. Lagerspetz's archival research shows that Winch studied *The Idea of History* carefully around the time when he wrote the *ISS* (Cf. Ahlskog and Lagerspetz, forthcoming).

As a matter of fact, the personal dimension is central for Winch not only in *ISS* but also in his later work on cultural understanding. This feature is most clearly expressed when Winch construes cultural understanding as a two-way relation. Faced with a foreign practice or belief, the historian or anthropologist must, on the one

hand, redescribe the social phenomena of the target culture in relation to categories intelligible to his readers, on the other hand, the researchers must remain open toward changes in their own conceptions through confrontation with foreign standards of intelligibility. In relation to this two-way relation of cultural understanding, Winch (1972, 33) wrote in “Understanding a Primitive Society” that:

We are not seeking a state in which things will appear to us just as they do to members of S [= the alien society], and perhaps such a state is unattainable anyway. But we are seeking a way of looking at things which goes beyond our previous way in that it has in some way taken account of and incorporated the other way that members of S have of looking at things. Seriously to study another way is necessarily to seek to extend our own – not simply to bring the other way within the already existing boundaries of our own.

This two-way relation of understanding – which was central to Winch’s work on philosophy of anthropology – is curiously absent in Winch’s later work on philosophy of religion in general and the Resurrection in particular. Consequently, Lagerspetz’s critique of Winch’s work on the latter topics can be read as a reminder of central insights about the dialogical nature of understanding in Winch’s earlier work, points which have clear kinship with Collingwood’s view. Lagerspetz is appealing to an understanding of understanding that Winch already implicitly shares. Consequently, there is an important difference between Lagerspetz’s philosophical point about understanding and the character of the inquiry that has articulated Lagerspetz’s critique. For even if Lagerspetz shows that probing the sense of religious belief must go beyond appeals to ‘what we would say when’ – the ghostly philosophical ‘we’ – his own critique of Winch is thoroughly Socratic: a reminder of the grammar of understanding that must be recognised by anyone who hears it and understands it, on pain of philosophical confusion. In other words, Lagerspetz shows what Winch, considering his earlier insights, should have thought about understanding the Resurrection all along.

The Philosopher's Task

Lagerspetz critique of Winch is important not only as an elaboration of what understanding from the inside involves. Lagerspetz is taking Winch to task about what should count among the responsibilities of a philosopher. Winch's writings on the Resurrection seems to suggest that the philosopher remains at safe distance from the practices and beliefs he tries to understand, not to jeopardize his intellectual integrity. This attitude is particularly well illustrated in Winch's relation to the religious nature of Simone Weil's work in philosophy. In the introduction to his book on Weil, Winch writes:

[W]hile there is no point in trying to legislate in a comprehensive way about what is philosophy and what is not, it does seem to me that sometimes one needs to raise a question of that form. One needs to be clear where a particular discussion belongs in order to determine how precisely it is to be understood [...] And according to the tradition within which I work, these are types of questions it is peculiarly the responsibility of a philosopher to press. [...] Difficulties of this kind do arise, sometimes acutely, for someone trying to assess the significance of Simone Weil's work. At least they have done so for me. This is particularly true in relation to the writings springing from the later part of her life, when considerations of a religious nature came to be more and more important. (1989, 1–2)¹

Winch is right about the importance of situating discussions within the contexts in which they belong. Many of Winch's important contributions to philosophy are successful examples of finding sense in supposedly confused or mistaken practices and beliefs by attending to the ways in which their sense derives from the particular social, cultural and existential contexts in which they are embedded. Still, Lagerspetz's point about the need to probe the senses of religious narratives in the first-person shows the insufficiency of portraying the philosopher merely as a researcher who discerns the sense of thought by placing it in the contexts of

¹ I am grateful to Hugo Strandberg who made me aware of this important quote.

use in which it belongs. The insufficiency has two different aspects. Firstly, it is insufficient since making sense of thought will, in many important cases, not be possible by examining connections between thought and context from a third-person perspective. For as Lager-spetz argues in the case of the Resurrection, we are ourselves already part of the context in which certain thoughts do or do not make sense, so it is imperative to pose questions about sense in the first-person. As Lager-spetz writes:

Our conclusions about what it is meaningful to say about God do not follow from logical rules for the production of meaningful sentences. On the contrary, our ideas about what it is to say something meaningful about God depend on our ideas about what it means to believe or not believe in a god. (2009, 90)

However, equally important is another aspect of the insufficiency of the third-person perspective: Without probing the sense of thoughts for ourselves, the ancient aim of philosophical inquiry to provide reflective self-understanding must be abandoned. As Collingwood argued, it is only by probing what kind of thoughts that *I* can render intelligible – which he called re-enacting or re-thinking thought – that one is offered the opportunity to gain reflective self-understanding in light of the contrast between where one does or does not find sense. Consequently, Collingwood called for a rapprochement between history (as the re-enactment of thought) and philosophy since only by engaging with actual, temporally and spatially situated thought, can philosophers meaningfully identify and examine their own (pre)conceptions about the limits of sense. Collingwood (2013, 114–15) writes:

If what the historian knows is past thoughts, and if he knows them by re-thinking them himself, it follows that the knowledge he achieves by historical inquiry is not knowledge of his situation as opposed to knowledge of himself, it is knowledge of his situation which is at the same time knowledge of himself. In re-thinking what somebody else thought, he thinks it himself. In knowing that somebody else thought it, he knows that he himself is able to think it. And

finding out what he is able to do is finding out what kind of man he is.

Collingwood offers a picture of historical understanding as work on oneself about what one can render intelligible. On this view, it should be clear that history will be indispensable for the philosophical task of working towards an honest and responsible self-understanding. Equally clear is that Collingwood did not – contrary to many critics – see re-enactment as a method for solving problems of historical understanding. On the contrary, re-enactment is that which historical understanding necessarily involves: a process in which the individual subject *tries out* whether they can indeed re-think, and thereby discover, the thoughts that human action embody. This sense-making is inherently personal since the individual subject features as an integral part of the process, and, naturally, there are no universal methodological solutions for finding sense in the first-person. Still, failures to understand are not unproductive: for what we after self-scrutiny still consider incomprehensible will show us as much about where we stand as cases in which understanding runs smoothly.

But what is one doing when one is probing the sense of a thought or narrative, and especially if the example is the Resurrection of Christ? Lagerspetz describes what we are doing in such cases as “making decisions for our own part” about what the narrative can and should mean in one’s life (2009, 86). However, ‘making decisions’ may in this case be misleading. For as Strandberg points out in the present volume, finding religious sense is typically not a scenario in which one ponders different possibilities, but rather a case in which the religious sense of the narrative claims me. And in such cases finding sense is tantamount to seeing only one option, so there is nothing to decide.² Still, as Strandberg also suggests, this

² A different way to disambiguate the claim is to ask whether ‘making decisions’ is a first-person present-tense or a third-person post-factum description. If the former, then the description may be misleading in the way Strandberg points out. However, the latter case is rather unproblematic since such uses do not necessarily presuppose deliberation of alternatives. For example, I may tomorrow say that “Olli decided to go to lunch at 12 o’clock yesterday” without this implying that Olli was literally

question may itself be relative to the personal dimension of finding sense in the religious narrative of the Resurrection. For example, if one person finds that the religious narrative is one in which he is claimed by faith – that there is no choice between options – another person may say that the sense he finds in the narrative is one of faith constantly riddled with doubt, that seeing the religious sense of the narrative demands an act of courage, an act he may *choose* not to engage with “in the interests of his own mental and moral welfare”, as Collingwood (1993, 305) described the risks of providing a home for thought.

The Demands of Philosophy

Lagerspetz’s work on the resurrection reveals a certain kind of continuity between the personal and the philosophical. The philosopher interested in the grammar of different beliefs about the world faces questions about sense that *must* be posed in the first-person. Lagerspetz’s critique of Winch takes, as I argued, the form of a reminder of the ways in which understanding a religious narrative may challenge one’s conception of what does and does not make sense – which is a point about understanding social and cultural phenomena that Winch had already elaborated in his earlier work. These are important insights.

But where does this leave philosophy? Does this imply that philosophy simply is the examination of sense in the first person? That the only thing a philosopher will be allowed to say is that the sense of this or that belief depends on whom you ask? A complete abandonment of third-person grammatical inquiries would, for example, mean that there is not even the possibility to point out category mistakes involved in mixing different language games. Consequently, if someone claims that divine revelation provides the most reliable *historical evidence* of the Resurrection narrative, we would never be justified in saying that this is conceptual confusion.

deliberating at which time to go to lunch, or whether to go to lunch. He decided to go to lunch since the act was not unintentional, but he did not decide in the sense of deliberating when or if to go.

Rather, the sense of ‘historical evidence’ is simply where one personally finds it. If this was the case, then both philosophy and interpersonal communication breaks down completely.

One important question that Lagerspetz does not address concerns the relation between philosophy and that which it is about. For one may agree with Lagerspetz’s point about the personal demands of understanding yet still argue that there is an important distinction to be made between the personal and the philosophical. The reason being that philosophy makes claims of its own upon the thoughts that one is thinking philosophically about. Philosophy asks critical questions. ‘Critical’ in this case does not mean ‘negative’, but critical in the Kantian sense: What are the conditions of possibility of making sense of such and such? In which way does this or that concept or thought rely on certain presuppositions, categories and principles? Ever since the days of Socrates, such questions have been posed in philosophy with the aim of making explicit what usually remains implicit in our different ways of understanding the world. Philosophy is inextricable linked to the pursuit of reflective self-knowledge.

If one is doing philosophy in the above sense, then there *is* an important gap between (i) probing the religious sense of the Resurrection for oneself and (ii) examining the conditions of possibility of the religious sense of the Resurrection. The reason is that within the former one relates to the Resurrection in the singular; one is probing the importance and meaning that this narrative may have or get in one’s life. In the latter, one will necessarily be looking for *other* beliefs and attitudes in relation to which the Resurrection narrative can be coherently connected. One is interested in such beliefs and attitudes as the conditions of possibility in light of which someone (including myself) may find sense in the Resurrection. As Collingwood (2005, 174) writes, philosophy is “an attempt to discern the principles which run through experience and make it a rational whole”. Now, Lagerspetz is right that outlining such conditions and contexts will, ipso facto, involve probing the possibilities for oneself. But it is equally true that probing the possibilities for

oneself may come into conflict with one's philosophical examination of the conditions of possibility of one's own sense making. For one may come to think that viewing the religious sense of the Resurrection as relative to certain conditions of possibility of sense *belittles* the role of religious belief in one's life. Conversely, one may of course come to think that examining conditions of possibility clarifies and deepens one's faith – if that examination is understood as a religious task. Still, one cannot *both* be claimed by faith *and* believe that one's faith is relative to certain conditions of possibility of sense. At least not if the former means that faith has chosen me and the latter that I have chosen faith.

The philosopher examines the ways in which the religious narrative makes sense from a certain perspective on life. This involves a distinct attitude to the religious narrative since philosophy, as a form of activity, demands reflectivity in relation to the thoughts or sense under examination. That demand is articulated in the obvious conflict between viewing the religious sense of the Resurrection as dependent on *one* perspective on life, and claiming, as being claimed by faith may demand, that this perspective is the only one for me. To identify something *as* relative to a perspective, or to speak with Michel Oakeshott (1983, 26), “a universe of discourse”, reveals already that one's thought can and does move outside it. Finding religious sense in the Resurrection may therefore be inversely proportional to the extent that one entertains philosophical questions about the conditions of possibility of sense.

While understanding the grammar of belief requires probing the sense for oneself, this probing is itself not the task of philosophy but rather its raw material. It is when we do find sense (or not) that philosophy has something to examine – sense is not given by philosophy itself. It was by way of such considerations that Collingwood called philosophy thought of the second order (thought about thought), meaning that philosophy examines the conditions of a thought in relation to its object. This relates to his view that philosophers do not produce sense or reason but can “only find in [human life] the reason which is in it already.” (Collingwood 1993, 495). This view of philosophy as second-order thought offers an

alternative way of making sense of Winch's (1972, 191) much-discussed claim about the nature of philosophical inquiry. Winch writes:

Philosophy may indeed try to remove intellectual obstacles in the way of recognizing certain possibilities (though there is always the danger that it will throw up new obstacles). But what a man makes of the possibilities he can comprehend is a matter of what man he is. This is revealed in the way he lives; it is revealed *to him* in his understanding of what he can and what he cannot attach importance to. But philosophy can no more show a man what he should attach importance to than geometry can show a man where he should stand.

This should not be read as a claim about the virtues of an ideal philosopher. As if Winch was lending support to the fantasy that only from a completely disengaged and elevated position will philosophers be able to appreciate the world for what it truly is. The 'can no more' elucidates the logic of inquiry of philosophy as second order thought. Consequently, what philosophy cannot do depends not on the supposed elevated position of the ideal philosopher, but on the kinds of questions that are constitutive of philosophy as a distinct mode of inquiry. What we attach importance to in life is not the answer to philosophical questions but their subject matter.

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Vart försvann Singers Zalman i Peter Winchs essä ”Ceasing to Exist”?

Göran Torrkulla

Konsten kan också ha kraften att bygga upp och rätta till. Den kan också på sitt eget lilla sätt försöka avhjälpa de misstag som är begångna av den eviga byggaren till vars avbild människan skapades.

Isaac Bashevis Singer

Filosofin är väsentligen en dialogartad verksamhet, och oenigheter är filosofins livsluft. Om man förstår detta så välkomnar man oenigheter. Oenigheterna tvingar filosoferna att gå på djupet, och ju djupare desto bättre.

Lars Hertzberg

Inte det som *någon* gör *nu*, utan hela myllret av mänskliga handlingar, bakgrunden mot vilken vi ser varje handling, det är vad som bestämmer våra bedömningar, våra begrepp och reaktioner.

Ludvig Wittgenstein

Några inledande ord

Denna text är inte en analys av Peter Winchs essä ”Ceasing to Exist” (1987), utan snarare ett försök att få syn på Singers Zalman, det vill säga den berättande glasmästaren i ett judiskt lärohus, och inte Winchs akademiska Zalman som är intrasslad i Descartes tidsmetafysiska problematik. I den meningen utgör anknytningarna till Winchs essä inte en kritik av hans ingående begreppsliga resonemang, utan mitt syfte är snarare att få syn på vad som inte kom med när Zalman och hans berättelse placerades inom ramen för en analys av ett klassiskt filosofiskt problem. Eller med en annan formulering: Min avsikt är inte att presentera ett alternativ till hans analys,

utan snarare att påminna om vikten att hålla ett öga på vad vi filosofer gör med våra exempel, särskilt då vad som händer när exemplet avlägsnas från det sammanhang där det hör hemma.

Singers Zalman

Förlust är något av ett ledmotiv i Singers författarskap, och glasmästaren Zalman återkommer ofta i hans berättelser, där människor av kända och okända anledningar försvinner utan att man mer hör av dem för att kanske på nytt dyka upp, eller blir förväxlade med någon annan, och där också tingen på oförklarliga sätt försvinner eller ibland återfinns. Denna tematik kunde karaktäriseras med det välkända uttalandet av Karl Marx i *Kommunistiska manifestet* från 1848: ”Allt fast och beständigt förflyktigas, allt heligt profaneras” (1965, 20). Jag inskränker mig här till att nämna två noveller som är besläktade med novellen ”Stories from Behind the Stove” (Singer 2004), ur vilken Winch hämtar sitt exempel i essän ”Ceasing to Exist”.

I denna novell för Singer oss till byn Vistula, ett agrart judiskt samhälle i det förkrigstida Polen, där folk en kall vinterkväll samlats i det judiska lärohuset, och i värmen från den heta ugnen berättar historier för varandra. Det talas om folk och saker som försvunnit, när glasmästaren Zalman lyfter sitt tobaksgula pekfinger och stiger in i diskussionen med att säga: ”People do vanish” (”Visst försvinner folk”), vilket i mina öron låter som ett genmäle till någonting som tidigare sagts, ett intryck som förstärks av att han fortsätter med: ”*Not* (min kursiv) everyone is like the Prophet Elijah, who was taken to heaven in a fiery chariot” (2004, 54). Är det inte tänkbart att Zalman *utan* någon metafysisk betoning påtalar att frågan också har andra aspekter eller dimensioner än de som framkommit? Såväl Winch som deltagarna i den debatt som hans essä gav upphov till, förbigår dock Elia med tystnad, även om profeten är den första som nämns. Inte heller Zalmans åhörare ställer några frågor om Elia, utan anför olika förslag till ”naturliga” förklaringar av bonden Kuceks försvinnande, vilka alla hämtas ur åhörarnas vardagliga erfarenheter och föreställningar, vilket *inte* i någon entydig mening

måste innebär att de omfattar det Winch kallar en naturalistisk världsbild – en fråga som jag i slutet av denna essä återkommer till.

Nämnas kan också att ingen i debatten om Winchs essä, som mot hans egen avsikt kom att handla om mirakel, verkar att ha läst novellen i sin helt, och lagt märke till att Levi Yitzchock som är berättaren i den andra delen, och vars far varit chassid och efterföljare till en rabbi från Kapelnitza, inleder sin berättelse med att säga: "Nowadays God conseals His face", med tillägget: "If a miracle does happen, it is explained as natural. In my time we could find miracles everywhere" (2004, 58). (I novellen "Förlorad", som jag senare tar upp, heter det (1985, 326): "Här i Amerika är det så att om himlarna öppnade sig och ängeln Gabriel flög ner med sina sex glödande vingar och tog en promenad på Broadway så skulle de inte skriva om det i mer än en dag eller två.") Också novellens tredje del anknyter till den nedärvda religiösa traditionen, när eunucken Meyer i sin tur börjar med att säga:

There is nothing strange about seeing ghosts. My mother died when I was five years old, but whenever I am in danger I hear her voice. She calls 'Meir!', and I know that I must be on guard. There is no death. How can there be death if everything is part of the Godhead? The soul never dies and the body is never really alive. (2004, 62–63)

Det tycks mig uppenbart att Singer med sitt författarskap försöker bidra till att förvalta den nedärvda religiösa traditionen och dess sedvänjor, som inte längre har samma dominerande roll som tidigare, samtidigt som han träffande gestaltar villrådigheten eller rotlösheten hos dem som fjärmats från eller övergett en religiös livsföring i en situation där ett naturalistiskt synsätt håller på att göra sitt intåg, med de existentiella problem som detta medför. Härmed vill jag inte säga att Winch borde ha ägnat sig åt en religionsfilosofisk utläggning, men väl att hänvisningen till Elia visar att Zalman förutsätter att hans åhörare är bekanta med Skriftens berättelse om profeten Elia, liksom att det inte är uppenbart att Singer – med Winchs ord – "is ironical not merely in the direction of naturalism but even in respect of attempts to give a religious or at least supernaturalist interpretation of what was happening" (1995, 201).

Jag finner det viktigt att hänvisningen till profeten Elia himmelfärd inte är en hörsägen eller någonting som Zalman själv i stunden hittar på, utan går tillbaka på det som står skrivet i Andra Kungaboken (2:1, 11–12):

Då Herren tog upp Elia till himlen i en stormvind gick det till så här. Elia var på väg från Gilgal tillsammans med Elisha [...] Medan de gick där och talade med varandra kom plötsligt en vagn av eld med hästar av eld och skilde dem åt. Och i en stormvind for Elia upp till himlen. Elisha såg *det* [min kursiv], och han ropade: ”Min fader, min fader, du Israels vagnar och ryttare!”

Tilläggas kan att det i Kungabokens fortsatta skildring av Elia nämns att Elisha efter att *ha sett* profeten bli upptagen till himlen, tillbakavisade de femtio profeter som erbjöd sig att gå och leta efter Elia, ifall ”Herrens ande [skulle ha] burit i väg honom och kastat honom på ett berg eller i en dal någonstans.” Till detta svarade Elisha: ”Nej, skicka ingen”, men på deras enträgna böner gav han efter, och lät dem skicka ut män för att söka efter Elia. De letade i tre dagar och när de återvände utan att ha funnit Elia, sade Elisha: ”Jag sade ju att ni *inte* [min kursiv] skulle gå.” (2 Kung 2: 16–18) Inom ramen för ett religiöst förhållningssätt skulle sökandet efter Elia innebära ett tvivel på att han upptagits till himlen.

Medveten om risken att läsa in alltför mycket i omnämmandet av Elia, kommer jag, till skillnad från Winch, som betraktar Zalman inom ramen för en klassisk filosofisk problemställning, att närma mig honom mot bakgrunden av den nedärvda religiösa tradition som Singer anknyter till. Ur ett sådant perspektiv framträder en viktig skillnad mellan Elisha och bonden Kuceks son, som består i att den förre såg Elia bli upptagen till himlen, medan den senare *inte* såg sin fader försvinna, vilket väl att märka också gäller skjulet – ingen bevittnade själva försvinnandet. Och även om bondsonen liksom Elisha inte vidtar några vidare åtgärder för att leta reda på fadern, förblir innebörden i hans beteende ändå en öppen fråga. Antyder Singer kanske här en vacklan mellan olika förhållningssätt, som medför att sonen varken vet vad han skall tänka eller vad han borde göra? Kvarstår: den ena bevittnar själva *försvinnandet*, den

andra gör det inte. En annan aspekt av att betrakta det hela ur ett religiöst perspektiv berör Singer i novellen ”Metusalem” (mottot ovan är hämtat från hans förord till samlingen *Den bittra sanningen* (1989, 8), i vilken denna novell ingår), där det berättas att denne var

son till Enok *som aldrig dog* [min kursiv] utan hämtades av Gud till himlen. Hustrun och alla barnen hade sett Enok gå på åkern, på väg till spannmålsmagasinet, när han plötsligt försvann. Några påstod att jorden öppnade sig och svalde honom, men andra hävdade att Guds hand sänkte sig från himlen och lyfte upp honom till de himmelska höjderna” (1989, 228)

Denna dimension faller utanför ramen för den naturalistiska världsbild som enligt Winch dominerar *vår* syn på tillvaron, som han också verkar tillskriva Zalmans åhörare, och sålunda är den förhärskande bakgrunden i Winchs essä.

Den korta upptakten om bonden till den långa berättelsen om skjulet som försvann går såhär:

“People do vanish”, he said. “Not everyone is like the Prophet Elijah, who was taken to heaven in a fiery chariot. In the village of Palkes, not far from Radoshitz, a peasant was plowing with an ox. Behind him walked his son, sowing barley from a bag. The son looked up and the ox was there but his father had gone. He began to call, to scream, but there was no answer. His father had disappeared in the middle of the field. He was never heard from again.” (2004, 54)

På förslaget att bonden Kucek – till skillnad från profeten Elia – kanske föll offer för demonernas ränker, svarar Zalman: ”Jag vet inte.” Här kan jag inte låta bli att fråga mig hur detta stämmer överens med att Zalman enligt Winch med en försåtlig retorik försöker övertala sina åhörare ”by appealing to an example, Zalman apparently seeks to convince his audience that a certain kind of event, which they believe *never* [min kursiv] happens, does sometimes happen” (1987, 83). Påpekar han inte snarare att spørsmålet fortfarande inte blivit löst, och att diskussionen måste fortsätta?

Med tanke på att Winch särskilt framhåller att

the readers of Singer's story, nor the hearers of Zalman's, are actually confronted with anyone or anything that vanishes. We are confronted with *words* [min kursiv]; and our primary problem is to be clear what sort of sense we can attach to the words. Specifically, can we make sense of envisaging ourselves raising a serious question about their truth and falsity? (1987, 84)

undrar jag vad han egentligen avser – en filosofisk text konfronterar ju oss också med ord, om vilken vi likaså kan undra om deras anspråk kan tas på allvar? Tilläggas kan att en noggrann läsning visar att Singer i sin beskrivning av bonden Kuceks försvinnande använder såväl "vanish", "had gone" och "disappeared", men också "never heard of again" – ett stilistiskt drag som ger utrymme för olika läsarter, vilket liksom novellens hela struktur kan tänkas gestalta ett korstryck mellan en traditionell religiös och en sekulär eller naturalistisk världsuppfattning. Inte heller beträffande skjulet slår Singer entydigt fast att dess spårlösa försvinnande betyder att det "upphört att existera", eftersom det efter två veckor åter står på sin plats "som om ingenting hänt", men senare ändå på ett oförklarligt sätt antänds och förvandlas till "kol och aska" (2004, 57).

Till skillnad från Zalmans påfallande ordknappa inledning, som ingenting säger om att vare sig sonen eller byborna skulle ha vidtagit några ytterligare åtgärder för att finna fadern, att han inte skulle ha trott sina ögon, frågat sig om han blivit galen, eller hämtat hjälp i byn för att söka efter fader, utmålas i livfulla detaljer och med ironisk humor den uppståndelse och förvirring som det försvunna skjulet väcker bland byborna, liksom deras planlösa efterforskningar. Som läsare av Singers novell frågar jag mig vad det kan innebära att Singer förlägger tyngdpunkten i novellens första del just till skjulets försvinnande. Kanske ägnar sig Zalman inte åt en bakvänd bevisföring som med en förment sansad och objektiv redogörelse ("sober objective report" (1987, 92)) gör anspråk på att tillhandahålla en alternativ förklaring (så som Winch beskriver det hela), utan istället med den dråpliga liknelsen om skjulets märkliga "metafysiska" kurragömmalek vänder sig mot läsningen vid ett visst förklaringsmönster som söker alla svar eller lösningar i samma riktning eller på samma plan, för att härigenom påvisa att bybornas

resultatlösa sökande sammanhänger med en övertro på att varje anspråk på meningsfullhet i princip förutsätter en allmängiltig förklaring. Det skämtsamma påpekandet att det inte fanns någon spade att gräva med eftersom den försvann med det försvunna skjulet, ser jag som en påminnelse om att åhörarna snarare borde gräva i sig själva än i marken där skjulet stått, och som sådan kanske också en påminnelse om att själva vår ”trängtan efter förklaringar” kan vara det självförvållade upphovet till våra problem.

”Hur kan någonting bli ingenting?”

I novell ”Förlorad” (Singer 1985) blir författaren, som är rådgivare åt läsarna på en jiddischtidning, uppsökt av en polskfödd invandrare vid namn Sam Opal som varit lärare i en Talmud Tora-skola och senare utbildat sig till tandtekniker. Han framhåller inledningsvis att han inte kommer att ”bara tala om teorier”, utan att han ”haft en egen erfarenhet av att dolda makter finns överallt” (en vag antydning om ett (kvasi)religiöst synsätt), och anförtror sedan författaren någonting som han aldrig tidigare berättat för någon, nämligen att hans hustru helt plötsligt och oförklarligt försvunnit ”mitt på ljusa dagen på Manhattan”. Han tillstår att han ”inte var med, för jag hade lämnat henne framför skyltfönstret till en skoaffär och gått hem. Men jag kunde lika gärna ha varit – det skulle inte ha gjort någon skillnad. *Hon kom aldrig hem igen* [min kursiv].” Med en blinkning till läsaren låter Singer tandteknikern Opal säga att anledningen till att han uppsökt författaren var att denne i en artikel hade tagit upp fallet med en bonde vid namn David Lang från Gallatin i Tennessee som 1890 hade försvunnit ”*framför ögonen på* [min kursiv] sin hustru och sina barn”, just för att ”precis samma sak hände min hustru”. Avvikelsen från det han nyss sagt, antyder en villrådighet beträffande vad han varit med om, snarare än att vara ett belägg för att hans berättelse inte är – med Winchs ord om Zalman – ”a genuine example of a person’s vanishing” (1987, 84). Visar inte Singer härigenom att Opal har hamnat i en livssituation där han överhuvudtaget inte är på det klara med vad han skall tänka eller vad han skall ta sig till?

Av Opals berättelse framgår att hustruns försvinnande var kulmen på en märklig i vardagen pågående tingens kurragömmalek, där

föremål bokstavligen talat försvann framför ögonen på henne och ibland också inför ögonen på mig. [...] Varje gång hon förlorade något blev hon hysterisk, och vände upp och ner på huset. [...] Det var en ständig kris och ett ständigt kaos i vårt liv därför att hustrun Anna hela tiden förlorade saker.

Han säger sig vara en ”rationell person av födseln”, och att han ”inte kan tro på det övernaturliga”, men medger att livet med Anna gjorde honom ”så skakig att jag kunde vakna mitt i natten för att försäkra mig om att min klocka, mina pengar och mina dokument för ansökan om medborgarskap inte var borta”. Han hade hoppats att hustrun skulle förändras när deras dotter föddes, men ingenting förändrades, och när ”leksaker kom bort – det hände ofta – blev Anna utom sig. Flickan verkade också att bli skrämmd”. Till exempel teddybjörnen som han en dag köpte åt dottern ”försvann nästan omedelbart”, och trots att han ”vände upp och ner på hela huset fanns det inte en skymt av någon teddybjörn.”

Han hade anmält hustruns försvinnande till polisen, som betraktade det hela som ett skämt, och bad honom ”komma tillbaka följande dag om hon inte återvänt”. Och han ”kom tillbaka i dagar och veckor”, men ”Anna hade försvunnit som en sten i vatten”. Folk kom med allehanda teorier, men ”inget av alla de fall jag fick höra talas om stämde in på mitt”. Han avfärdar också förklaringen att hustrun, i likhet med bonden från Tennessee, skulle ha försvunnit genom att ”jorden hade öppnat sina käftar och svält honom så som det står skrivet i Koras och hans anhängares bibel”, med konstaterandet att ”om jorden hade öppnat sig den där dagen på Second eller Fifth Avenue, så skulle den ha svält mer än bara Anna”.

Han avslöjar att han djupt inom sig var ”medveten om den tragiska och obegripliga sanningen – att naturen eller ödet, vad man nu vill kalla det, hade bestämt att Anna skulle bli en förlorare och gå förlorad”, och tillägger: ”Jag säger ’djupt inom mig’ för mitt förnuft skulle aldrig kunna acceptera något så irrationellt. Vad betyder

det? Hur kan någonting bli ingenting?”. Han medger att han ”inte hittat något svar”, men att hans logik säger honom att ”om materien kan förvandlas till ingenting är hela naturen en mardröm”. Till följd av hustruns försvinnande hade hans liv förändrats på ett sådant sätt att han ”inte längre kan planera något, bygga ett hus, fästa sig vid någon. Andligt sett gick jag själv förlorad”.

Novellen utmynnar i den alltjämt olösta frågan ”Men var är hon?”, som det uppgivna eller nakna uttrycket för den förlust som drabbat honom genom hustruns försvinnande, och som han inte kan befria sig från. Singers novell gestaltar, som sagt, en existentiell belägenhet där livsvärldens vardag genom en förlust i grunden rubbats – en meningsförlust där problemet just är att alla förklaringar kommer till korta. Här liksom så ofta ställer oss Singer – *utan* anspråk på att sitta inne med nyckeln till vad som är begripligt eller inte – inför frågan om vad vi är villiga att acceptera som en förklaring utgående från de uppfattningar som vi själva omfattar, och tvingar oss härigenom tillbaka till en granskning av våra egna tankar och föreställningar – något som filosofin också gör när den är som bäst.

Den historiskt betingade mörka underström som hos Singer genljuder i ordet ”försvinna” i betydelsen ”upphöra att existera”, och allvaret i Opals existentiella trångmål, framgår med drabbande tydlighet i Primo Levis *Är detta en människa* redan när han sammanfattar den extrema utsatthet som vidtog genast vid ankomsten till koncentrationslägret Buna nära Auschwitz på följande sätt:

Man måste nu föreställa sig en människa som förutom sina kära har berövats sitt hem, sina vanor, sina kläder, kort sagt allt, bokstavligen allt hon äger och har: den människan blir tom, reducerad till att känna lidande och behov, glömska av sin värdighet och urskillningsförmåga, ty den som förlorar allt förlorar lätt sig själv (1988, 25)

Den ödeläggelse som genom krig, naturkatastrofer och andra olyckor drabbar oss och vår gemensamma värld med smärta, lidande och död, ställer den filosofiska frågan om en begriplig använd-

ning av verbet ”upphöra att existera” på sin lika konkreta som existentiella spets, där problemet såväl ligger i att alla förklaringar verkar komma till korta, som i svårigheten att säga någonting som skulle förmedla erfarenheten av hur dödens obevekliga majestät kan skaka vår mänskliga tillvaro i sina grundvalar – något som också kan äga rum i den vardagliga livsvärlden.

Om skillnaden mellan att livlösa ting och levande varelser ”upphör att existera”

Descartes’ kunskapsteoretiska (och tidsmetafysiska) uppfattning om en blott och bar distinktion mellan existens och icke-existens oberoende av vilket slags objekt det är fråga om, berör inte skillnaden mellan huruvida det är tal om att ett livlöst ting eller en levande – det vill säga dödlig – varelse som ”upphör att existera”. Vid en första anblick verkar det också som om Zalman tog för givet att villkoren för att tala om att en människa och att ett skjul ”upphört att existera” vore desamma. Häri ser jag dock ett för Singer typiskt sätt att med ironisk humor påvisa begränsningen för att inte säga blindheten i ett sökande som envetet låst sig vid ett visst betraktelsesätt. Även om Winch i sin kritik av Descartes framhåller att ”the sense of an existential assertion is *not* [min kursiv] independent of what it is for something of the kind that is in question ‘to cease to exist’” (1987, 88) berör han inte frågan om den kvalitativa innebörds-skillnaden när vi talar om att människor (och andra levande varelser) ”upphört att existera”. I det följande vill jag därför rikta blicken mot denna fråga.

Såväl medmänniskorna som tingen i vår omvärld påverkar oss hela tiden på olika och mer eller mindre påtagliga sätt, men det ligger en djupgående skillnad mellan våra reaktioner på varandra (liksom andra levande varelser), och den verkan som tingvärlden har på oss. Med risk för att hamna på avvägar vill jag här ställa frågan om denna skillnad, vad gäller våra reaktioner på den förlust som vi i respektive fall konfronteras med. Vi söker visserligen efter ting som kommit bort, och kan klandra oss själva eller någon annan för förlusten av ett eller annat av det vi äger och har, men förlusten

har en helt annan karaktär när det handlar om att en människa försvunnit, och innefattar farhågor som att hen gått vilse, drabbats av ett sjukdomsanfall, förolyckats, blivit bortförd med våld eller kanske till och med dött. Denna skillnad sammanhänger konstitutivt med att vi är levande varelser med ett ändligt liv – att vi är dödliga varelser. När döden genom andra människors (och för den delen djurs) död kommer in i våra liv, får innebörden hos ”upphöra att existera” en helt annan karaktär än när det handlar om livlösa ting. Den kvalitativa skillnaden mellan att ett ting försvinner och att människor försvinner, framträder som tydligast just i att döden är det oåterkalleliga slutet på ett liv: med döden upphör ett liv. Att genom döden förlora sina nära och kära, ställer oss inför en lika oersättlig som oåterkallelig förlust, en förlust som gör sig gällande i den sorg, rådlösa förstumning eller rent av bestörtning och förtvivlan som andras död för med sig.

I en väsentlig mening är den oskattbara och outbytbara betydelse vi har för varandra förbunden med att livet upphör med döden, vilket redan visar sig i att vi *inte* lämnar frågan om vad som hänt med en försvunnen människa därhän, utan vidtar olika åtgärder för att söka reda på den försvunna personen (eller personerna). Också i sammanhang där det inte alls är fråga om att någon har försvunnit, kan vi bli oroliga när någon inte finner sig som avtalat, eller inte hört av sig, liksom att vi som föräldrar vill ha reda på var barnen befinner sig. Nämnas kan också den vikt som fästs vid att identifiera döda i samband med olycksfall eller naturkatastrofer, liksom offren för krigets härjningar. Den ofta ordlösa sorg som drabbar oss inför ett dödsfall, låter sig inte avhjälpas med en naturalistisk förklaring av dödsorsaken (i överensstämmelse med ”what it is for something of the kind that it is in question ‘to cease to exist’” (1987, 88)), lika litet som den kan fastslå vad som begripligt låter sig sägas om den förlust döden – som slutet på ett liv – konfronterar oss med, eller för den delen läggs till grund för ett förhållningssätt som vi alla kunde vara eniga om. Frågan om inställningen till vår dödlighet, och vad som begripligt låter sig sägas om att en människas liv upphör med döden, är och förblir en existentiell och moralisk fråga för var och en att som enskilda individer ta ställning till. I mötet med

döden är vi alltid oförberedda, i den meningen att erfarenheten från ett tillfälle inte som sådan (om alls) låter sig tillämpas vid ett annat tillfälle, och att det sålunda inte är möjligt att på förhand fastslå hur vårt förhållningssätt kan komma att förändras.

I detta sammanhang förs mina tankar till Winchs essä ”Att förstå ett primitivt samhälle” där han i sitt insiktsfulla resonemang framhåller ”att ha en uppfattning om livet är också att ha en uppfattning om döden”, liksom att detta innebär att ”själva meningen hos ordet ’liv’ förändras när det tillämpas på människor”, om vilket ”vi kan ställa frågor om vilket sätt som är det rätta, vad som är viktigt i livet, huruvida livet har någon mening och i så fall vilken” (1994, 191–192). Tilläggas kan att också begreppet tid får en annan innebörd: nämligen en ändlig livstid, vilket innebär att livet måste levas medan vi finns till och inte skjutas upp på en oviss framtid, men också att vi själva liksom de spår vi lämnar som enskilda människor med tiden försvinner och faller i glömska.

Hur enhetlig är egentligen vår naturalistiska världsbild?

I slutet av essän ”Ceasing to Exist” framhåller Winch att han ”certainly do[es] not want to say that all sense must have a basis in a predominantly naturalistic understanding”, utan att hans invändning mot iden om ”a bare cessation of existence is that it has no basis in *any* general understanding of things, naturalistic or otherwise” (1987, 105). I den uppföljande essän ”Asking Too Many Questions” upprepar han att syftet med exemplet från Singers novell varit påvisandet av att ”the verb ‘to cease to exist’, when used in a contextless way, is drained of the kinds of sense it bears in its normal uses.” (1995, 201)

Som jag redan inledningsvis nämnde är min avsikt inte att invända mot hans användning av exemplet som ett led i kritiken av Descartes, medan jag däremot har svårt att komma ifrån att hans formuleringar om förutsättningarna för att meningsfullt tala om att någon eller någonting försvunnit (”upphört att existera”) rör sig på en abstrakt och allmän nivå, som tenderar att överbetona enhetligheten hos den moderna naturalistiska världsbilden, och härigenom

medför risken att överdriva kravet på förklaringar som håller sig inom ramen för denna bild. (Ordet ”världsbild” medför också lätt en intellektualistisk kantring, som tenderar att sätta det vi säger framom det vi gör.)

I sistnämnda essä medger han visserligen att ”in order to make sense of such a conception as that of something’s ceasing to exist, our conceptions of the *things* [min kursiv] we speak of will belong to *some* world picture”, med förtydligandet att ”those concepts in their turn derive their sense from the roles they have in the lives we lead – the kind of life we lead”. Ändå förblir det oklart i vilken mån ”a naturalistic world picture, of the kind that goes with our thinking of event in terms of natural laws and with the dominance of technological considerations in our culture” (1995, 201), ger utrymme för ett beaktande av att vårt tänkande och handlande i den dagliga livsföringen ingalunda i alla avseenden håller sig inom ramen för en sådan världsbild. Redan själva tanken att allt vi säger om tillvaron och vår gemensamma värld skulle (för att inte säga måste) följa rådande normer för meningsfullhet, går på tvären med en strävan att på allvar befatta oss med de existentiella och moraliska frågor som vår tillvaro och den värld där våra liv äger rum ställer oss inför. Likaså anmäler sig frågan om huruvida en överbetoning av eller ett ensidigt fasthållande vid en naturalistisk världsbild låter enskilda individers personliga förhållningssätt komma till sin fulla rätt inom en sådan ram, men också frågan om vilka konsekvenser detta har för uppfattningar som inte överensstämmer med en naturalistisk världsbild. Eller med en annan formulering: Tanken att det finns en naturalistisk förklaring, fastän den tillsviare är okänd, hjälper oss inte när vi ställer oss eller blir ställda inför spörsmål som rör tillvarons mål och mening, eller hur vi skall förhålla oss till vår dödlighet. Hur dominerande en naturalistisk världsbild än är, kan den varken dra upp gränserna för det meningsfulla bruket av verbet försvinna i betydelsen ”upphöra att existera”, eller få våra frågor och problem att försvinna.

Ett kort slutstycke

Avslutningsvis vill jag framhålla att Singer på det hela taget företräder en liknande hållning som den Winch själv ger uttryck för i *Samhällsvetenskapens ide och dess relation till filosofin*, när han skriver att filosofins uppgift består i ”att särskilt vinnlägga sig om att motverka varje anspråk som görs av den ena eller andra typen av undersökningar på att i sig innesluta själva begriplighetens väsen, att besitta nyckeln till verkligheten” (1994, 97). Och även om Singers Zalman inte är Winchs Zalman så bidrar de båda på sitt eget sätt och från sitt eget håll att visa hur såväl livet som språket kan ”skicka[] oss på jakt efter chimärer” (Wittgenstein 2020, § 94), och kan härigenom sporra oss att självkritiskt fortsätta sökandet efter en fördjupade förståelse av oss själva, för att inte förlora kontakten med varandra och den verklighet där våra liv äger rum – en uppgift som vi inte blir färdiga med så länge vi lever och finns till.

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Vad är objektivitet i human- och samhällsvetenskaperna?

Natan Elgabsi

1. Inledning

Objektivitet är ett begrepp som, skulle jag våga påstå, angår alla som skolas i empiriska vetenskaper. Speciellt i olika human- och samhällsvetenskapliga discipliner blir objektivitet ofta en brännande fråga i och med att forskning om människan potentiellt kan innefatta en uppsjö personliga och samhälleliga störningsmoment. En gradvis fördjupad förståelse av objektivitetsbegreppets betydelse i relation till ens specifika vetenskapsgren hör till vetenskaplig skolning, och därmed görs personen i fråga införstådd med ett visst språk och dess mening, som en del av ett vetenskapligt sammanhang.

I human- och samhällsvetenskapernas filosofi, kan man dock ibland hamna i följande funderingar gällande möjligheten till objektivitet. Å ena sidan, om objektivitet utgör en generell värderingsfrihet i en kunskapsprocess, eller en ännu strängare total avsaknad av värde, blir följdfrågan om någonting sådant, speciellt i det senare fallet, alls är möjligt (Douglas 2009 ger en utmärkt redogörelse för värderingsfrihetens problematik). Å andra sidan, om objektivitet formuleras som en persons vetenskapliga ideal, en epistemisk dygd så att säga, eller som en förmåga att kunna urskilja epistemiskt relevanta från irrelevanta värden, blir frågan i sin tur hur detta är möjligt (se exempelvis Carrier 2013, Dongen och Paul 2017).

I bägge ovanstående fall tenderar lätt objektsbegreppets begreppsliga och relationella betydelse, speciellt vad gäller forskning om människan, att falla i skymundan, till förmån för frågor huruvida objektivitet i allmänhet är möjligt att uppnå eller upprätthålla. Trots att slagord så som värderingsfrihet eller epistemisk dygd tidvis

åberopas, verkar en persons *förhållande* till det som skall begripliggöras i egenskap av objekt inte vara en fullt så relevant angelägenhet när objektivitetsbegreppet hänvisas till. Eller kanske snarare, en persons förhållande till det som skall begripliggöras görs till en relevant angelägenhet endast på ett negativt sätt, eftersom all personlig inblandning mer eller mindre ses som ett tecken på avsaknad av objektivitet, istället för att föra en diskussion om huruvida en persons omdöme i en specifik undersökning kan anses vara objektivt i relation till det som studeras, och vad detta i så fall skulle betyda. (Det samma gäller också begrepp som neutralitet eller opartiskhet – begrepp som ofta förstås som motsvarigheter till objektivitet i human- och samhällsvetenskaperna – eftersom det i dylika fall blir än mera uppenbart att begreppen borde förstås relationellt för att deras betydelse inte skall undermineras.) Mot bakgrund av detta, hur kunde då objektivitetsbegreppets relationella innebörd för forskning om människan lyftas fram?

2. Objektiv giltighet i min föreställning

Ett sätt att belysa betydelsen av det begreppsliga och relationella i frågan om objektivitet kunde vara att börja med andra upplagan av Immanuel Kants *Kritik av det rena förnuftet*. I § 17 skriver han:

Förstånd är, allmänt uttryckt, förmågan till *kunskaper*. Dessa består i givna föreställningars bestämda relation till ett objekt. *Objekt* är emellertid det i vars begrepp mångfalden i en given åskådning är *förenad*. (2013, B 137)

Om ett objekt förstås så som Kant ovan formulerar det, nämligen som förståndets relation till ett *begrepp* i vilket mångfalden i en given åskådning (vilket för Kant är liktydigt med en empirisk åskådning) är förenad, kommer jag följaktligen inte att kunna se på frågan om objektivitet som icke-relationell. Snarare skulle min uppfattning, eller det Kant kallar apperception, förutsätta ett medvetandets enhet, men också mitt förstånds relation till det begrepp där åskådningen förenas, i och med att det är genom detta begrepp som jag tänker (se 2013, A 95). I § 17 fortsätter Kant:

Den första rena förståndskunskapen, som hela det övriga förståndsbruket grundar sig på och som samtidigt också är helt oberoende av den sinnliga åskådningens alla betingelser, är alltså grundsatsen om apperceptionernas ursprungliga *syntetiska* enhet. Således är den yttre sinnliga åskådningens blotta form, rummet, ännu ingen kunskap; det ger endast åskådningsmångfalden *a priori* för en möjlig kunskap. Men för att få kunskap om någonting i rummet, t.ex. en linje, måste jag *dra* den och alltså syntetiskt åstadkomma en bestämd förbindelse i den givna mångfalden, så att enheten hos denna handling samtidigt är medvetandets enhet (i begreppet om en linje), och först därigenom erhålls kunskap om ett objekt (ett bestämt rum). Medvetandets syntetiska enhet är alltså en objektiv betingelse för all kunskap – inte bara något som jag själv behöver för att få kunskap om ett objekt, utan också den betingelse som varje åskådning måste vara underordnad *för att bli till ett objekt för mig*, då ju mångfalden *inte* skulle förenas i ett medvetande på något annat sätt och utan denna syntes. (2013, B 137–38)

Om ett objekt då förstås utifrån denna typ av relationalitet, kunde objektivitet i sin tur te sig som en viss typ av omdöme, där det för mig gäller att förstå och utreda exakt vilken typ av relation en åskådning (exempelvis min empiriska åskådning) har i förhållande till det begrepp som förenar en åskådnings mångfald och genom vilket jag samtidigt tänker. Och det finns vissa ord som utmärker bestämningar av sådana relationer, mot vilka mina uppfattningar svarar. Exempelvis ”är” i satsen ”kroppar är tunga” utmärker vilken typ av relation det är fråga om, det vill säga huruvida min nuvarande föreställning hänförs till en nödvändig (objektiv) enhet i min uppfattning, eller enbart till en tillfällig sådan (2013, B 141–42). Samtidigt utgör den nämnda relationen också ett krav på mitt omdöme, förutsatt att jag vill säga någonting mer än ”När jag bär en kropp känner jag ett tryck av tyngd” (2013, B 142). I mitt förstånds relation till ett begrepp – alltså i mitt omdöme som då förutsätter en given omdömesfråga hos mig i ”medvetandets enhet” – blir det också meningsfullt för Kant att fråga efter ”föreställningarnas relation” – det vill säga i första hand mina egna föreställningars relation – ”till ett föremål och därmed också deras objektiva giltighet”, något som

explicit gäller frågan om att utvinna kunskap ur dessa föreställningar. (2013, B 137 och B 140–42)

Även om Kant på ett visst sätt är väldigt upptagen med medvetandefilosofiska frågor, påvisar hans diskussion, enligt min mening, viktiga begreppsliga och relationella aspekter vad gäller hur någonting begripliggörs som ett objekt, och vilket krav detta ställer på mitt förstånd i förhållande till det som ämnar begripliggöras. Man kunde kanske säga att en exakt slutsats om vad som är objektivt, eller av vad som faller innanför det objektivt giltiga, inte är en fullt så intressant fråga för Kant, utan snarare vad det är som förutsätts för att någonting alls skall bli ett objekt för mig, samt hur relationen mellan förstånd, åskådning och begrepp ser ut. I den bemärkelsen är även nykantianska tänkare som Heinrich Rickert och Max Weber intressanta, i och med att de ännu tydligare ställer frågan om vad som förutsätts för att ett så kallat ”kulturellt fenomen” skall kunna bli objekt för en vetenskap om människan. ”Prostitution”, säger Weber, ”är i lika hög grad ett *kulturellt* fenomen som religion eller pengar” (1977, 129; 1922, 181). Vid studiet av kulturella fenomen förutsätts redan mitt begrepp om något. Prostitution, kunde man säga, har redan vissa givna betydelser i den historiskt-sociala verklighet som även en empirisk undersökning av ett sådant fenomen är en del av, betydelser som ett vetenskapligt begripliggörande av detta fenomen samtidigt kommer att förhålla sig till. Men i och med att kulturella fenomen och även kunskap om dessa enligt Webers mening är perspektivdrivna, är det, liksom för Kant, viktigt att klargöra själva kunskapens förutsättning i ett empiriskt studium av människans historiskt-sociala verklighet. Det är i ett sådant studium som frågan om vad som kan anses vara objektivt giltigt eller inte gör sig gällande, som ett viktigt omdöme i dessa vetenskaper. (Weber 1977, 160)

3. Mot ett relationellt begrepp om objektivitet

Om man, som Kant, beskriver förnuftets (eller mitt förnufts) förhållande till ett begrepp som en förutsättning för kunskap – en rela-

tionalitet som nykantianska filosofer också förutsätter vad gäller begripliggörandet av ”kulturella fenomen” – kunde man dock säga att det finns en annan relationalitet som är särskilt viktig i forskning om människan, men som tenderar att förbises i ovanstående resonemang. En vetenskap om människan förutsätter nämligen min relation till andra människor, personer som jag på vissa sätt kommer att vara bunden till, vilket också gör mig ansvarig i det jag säger, tänker och gör inom ramarna för den relation vi har.

I human- och samhällsvetenskapernas filosofi kan denna relationalitet synliggöras genom en reflektion över hur jag är delaktigt i ett delat språk med ett meningssammanhang som jag har förutsättning att begripa eller åtminstone begripliggöra. Peter Winch skriver i *Samhällsvetenskapens idé och dess relation till filosofin*:

Termerna ”skäl” och ”motiv” är inte synonyma. Det skulle till exempel vara absurt att beskriva det stora flertalet fall där någon tillskrivs ett motiv som ett ”rättfärdigande”: att tillskriva någon ett motiv är oftare ett fördömande än ett rättfärdigande. Att till exempel säga att *N* mördade sin hustru av svartsjuka är ingalunda att säga att han handlade förnuftigt. Men det är att säga att hans handling blir *begriplig* med hänsyn till beteendeformer som är välbekanta i vårt samhälle, och att den styrdes av överväganden som hör hemma i sammanhanget. (1994, 81–2)

Detta innebär, för att spinna vidare på Winchs exempel, att min förståelse av den handling som *N* utför bestäms, och hans handling begripliggörs, mot bakgrund av vad det betyder att ha exempelvis skäl eller motiv, det vill säga, mot bakgrund av vad som ingår i skäl och vad som ingår i motiv. I det förra ingår, som Winch säger, en förståelse av förnuftigt handlande (vilket betyder att en beskrivning av en handling som mord i någon mån redan utesluter skäl oberoende av hur svartsjuka uppfattas). Att säga att *N* har följande skäl för att mörda sin fru är en helt annan förståelse av en handling än att säga att *N* har följande motiv för att mörda henne. Därför kommer min förståelse av en handling att vara annorlunda beroende på om jag ser skäl för handlandet eller inte. Och dessa begrepp återaktualiseras i ett delat språk i beskrivningen och förståelsen av en handling som

något det finns eller inte finns skäl för, en förståelse som jag i någon mån förutsätter att ifrågavarande agent *N* också har *möjlighet* att ha. Vad har detta med objektivitet att göra?

I ett dylikt fall kunde man tänka sig att frågan om objektivitet följer Kants logik, om än på ett lite annat sätt. För i någon mån är det mitt förnufts relation till ett begrepp som står på spel, ett begrepp som upprätthålls i ett delat språk och liv. Även om min förståelse och beskrivning av en handling inte behöver omfattas av *N* själv annat än som en möjlighet, handlar en objektiv beskrivning av ifrågavarande handling inte i första hand om agentens självförståelse utan snarare om handlingens innebörd i ett delat språk, som jag relationellt måste ha kapacitet att se och bedöma. Det är i denna levda kontext – som samtidigt i Winchs mening utgör human- och samhällsvetenskapernas kontext – som det blir meningsfullt att säga eller tänka att *N*s handling (mord) faktiskt saknar skäl, och följaktligen att en sådan beskrivning av ifrågavarande handling är mera objektiv än om jag skulle säga eller tänka det motsatta.

Det som gör frågan om objektivitet lite kluven, vilket möjligtvis är en anledning till att Winch själv inte diskuterar den nämnvärt, är på vilket sätt agentens självförståelse ingår i frågan om hur en handling bör begripas. Det är, skulle jag säga, på denna punkt som en närmare utredning av objektivitetsbegreppets betydelse i olika human- och samhällsvetenskapliga studier blir viktig. Medan det i studier av andra samhällen och livssammanhang kan finnas starkare skäl för att se saker ur, som Clifford Geertz (1997) säger, ”den inföddes synvinkel”, vore det i ett fall där *N* har mördat sin fru av svartsjuka viktigt att säga att de skäl som *N* möjligtvis ser är bundna till *N*s falska uppfattning (se också Ahlskog och Lagerspetz 2015, 309–314). På denna punkt blir en relationell förståelse av objektivitet (till exempel om man följer Winch) annorlunda än den blir för Weber, eftersom det för Weber är oklart om och i vilken mån objektivitet handlar om någonting annat än att på giltiga premisser beskriva agentens självförståelse.

Winch hävdar:

De fenomen som undersöks framstår för vetenskapsmannen som ett forskningsobjekt; han observerar dem och lägger märke till vissa fakta om dem. Men att säga om en människa att hon gör detta förutsätter att hon från första början har ett sätt att kommunicera inom vilket man redan följer regler. Ty att lägga märke till någonting är att identifiera relevanta kännetecken, vilket betyder att den som lägger märke till dem redan måste ha ett *begrepp* om sådana kännetecken; detta är möjligt bara om han kan använda en symbol i enlighet med en regel som fastslår att den refererar till dessa kännetecken. Och härvid kommer vi tillbaka till vetenskapsmannens relation till sina kolleger, det enda sammanhang inom vilket han kan sägas följa en dylik regel. (1994, 84)

I human- och samhällsvetenskaperna kunde man då säga att objektivitet närmast framstår som en diskussion om hur vi borde förstå någonting som ett objekt för en vetenskap om människan, och i vilken mån forskaren själv, som en person som förhåller sig både till ett liv i språket och mera specifikt till ett forskningssamfunds normer, är delaktig i en relation till de personer som på olika sätt berörs av att vara möjliga objekt för en vetenskap. På detta sätt framkommer olika typer av objektivitetsfrågor, beroende på om det gäller, säg, en statistisk insamling och analys av alkoholkonsumtionen bland 20–40 åringar i Svenskfinland, en jämförelse av frikyrklig verksamhetskultur i Österbotten, eller en undersökning av hemmafrontens minneskildringar av Finlands fortsättningskrig. Det är, så att säga, inte på förhand klart vad det skulle innebära att förhålla mig objektivt till det eller dem jag undersöker, trots att det inomvetenskapligt finns vissa objektivitetskriterier eller forskningsregler som till synes gör det klar för mig. Snarare innebär ett relationellt begrepp om objektivitet att frågan i någon mån måste vara öppen och att frågan om vad rättvisa åt de personer som berörs av en vetenskaplig objektifiering innebär bör vara ständigt närvarande för mig i det specifika forskningssammanhang där jag befinner mig som forskare, eftersom jag är relationellt bunden till dem.

4. En vetenskap närmare livet

I många avseenden delar filosofi och modern vetenskap en megalomanisk idé om att kunna tänka och beskriva världen som om jag inte existerade på något specifikt ställe alls, ”en utsikt från ingenstans” för att citera ett känt uttryck (Nagel 1993). Eller ännu mera abstrakt, en utsikt *sub specie aeternitatis*, det vill säga en beskrivning av världen ur evighetens synvinkel. Att dra sig tillbaka från livet på detta sätt kan tänkas vara, som Bennett Gilbert säger, ”katafysiskt” för vår existens, inte bara onaturligt utan egentligen omöjligt (se 2019, 67–70). Någonstans i gränslandet mellan tron på möjligheten att kunna leka Gud och den radikalt skeptiska tron att det är omöjligt att existera som annat än ett rent medvetande föds objektivitet som den moderna kunskapens absoluta ideal.

I någon mån är en vilja att ta ett steg tillbaka kanske inte alltid ett problem så länge jag förstår att även mina utsagor – också om jag tror mig bara beskriva en värld så som den ”är”, som om jag satt i molnen – betyder att jag redan är invävd i ett delat språk och liv där mina utsagor betyder någonting i förhållande till dem som berörs. Med andra ord är det kanske möjligt och ibland även behjärtansvärt att se att ens existens inte är så fäst vid det ställe jag intuitivt tror. Men detta betyder förstås inte att jag kan stå i världen som om jag och mitt förhållande till andra inte fanns; också ett ahistoriskt eller metafysiskt perspektiv kommer att fästa sig i mig som ett förhållande till dem jag lever med. Möjligheten att kunna förändras, att se andra och sig själv i ett nytt ljus, betyder i någon mån att jag rör mig i relation till andra i ett liv i språket, på ett sätt som både rycker upp ens existens och fäster den, men inte var och en för sig själv utan tillsammans med andra.

Det är i denna riktning som ett relationellt begrepp om objektivitet leder oss (om vi behåller begreppet), förutsatt att forskning i human- och samhällsvetenskaper inbegriper möjligheten att kunna förändras i relation till dem man forskar om. Det förutsätter, som Ruth Behar skriver i sin välkända bok *The Vulnerable Observer* (1996), att jag i någon mån öppnar mig själv för att bli en ”sårbar

observatör”, där ett vetenskapligt liv samtidigt betyder ett sammanvävt liv med dem jag i vetenskapens namn kommer i kontakt med. Behar tar själv exempel ur sina etnografiska fältstudier i Spanien, där hon som antropolog inte bara har fått ta del av människors berättelser, liv och livsöden, som hon i olika vetenskapliga sammanhang återberättar, utan också har fått en flera decennier lång vänskap, där hon själv har märkt att hennes relation med de människor hon studerat, och de berättelser hon har fått ta del av, påverkar henne själv (se också Behar 2011). Det är kanske konstigt att tala om objektivitet i dylika sammanhang, i och med att det, som Behar visar i sin etnografi, snarare handlar om att i det som kallas en vetenskap om människan förvalta ett visst förtroende i de olika relationer vi kommer att ha. Det är också i dessa relationer som ens omdömesförmåga är av yttersta betydelse, just precis för att mitt förhållande inte är ett förhållande till ett abstrakt begrepp utan till en annan person som jag svarar för.

Litteratur

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Love and Capital

Joel Backström

1.

This little essay is based on a talk I gave at a workshop on ‘The ethics of home’ at the Centre for Ethics in Pardubice in June 2022. One of my reasons for going there was to see Olli Lagerspetz, who was then a visiting scholar at the Centre. I also briefly visited Olli’s temporary home, where he had, in a way one would expect from no-one else, made his bedroom in a kind of broom cupboard at the back of the bathroom with only a minimal window and not quite enough floor space to fit the mattress. He said he found it so very cosy. There’s something of that same intimately personal, and at the same time somehow defiant, homeliness in the subtitle of the original Swedish version of Olli’s book on the philosophy of dirt, titled *Smuts* (‘Dirt’). The subtitle is: *En bok om världen, vårt hem*, ‘A book about the world, our home’ (Lagerspetz 2006). The whole world, but looked at, lived in, like that little cupboard in Pardubice.

The essay below looks at two principles which, in our world, put the sense of home under pressure, perhaps threatens it with disappearance, or calls on it to be transformed. One is the capitalist principle of profit maximization, the other the biblical principle of neighbourly love. Both have formed the Western(ized) world in many ways, directly as ideas and in the various institutional embodiments they’ve taken or inspired. The biblical principle calls us to give ourselves to each other unconditionally, infinitely, with no demand for return; the capitalist principle to make as much as possible, increasing our returns infinitely. In their very opposition, however, both these equally ‘unnatural’ principles subvert established notions of ‘home’, understood as a communally defined place

– familial, local, national or global – where individuals have or find *their* places. But neighbourly love isn't just a principle of subversion, of course; it also calls us to reimagine and remake 'home'. And even capitalist competition is a mode of organizing people, of tying us together in the very process of home-breaking unleashed by it.

2.

Let's start with capitalism. Profit maximization is not the only thing that goes on in capitalism. It couldn't be, because the maximization is parasitic on our needs and desires, and on our caring for each other. It's ultimately by selling us things that provide for these needs and this caring – or that *seem* to do so – that companies make their profits. If everyone cared only for profits, no one could make any. Nonetheless, an economic system is properly characterised as capitalist only to the extent that profit maximization is a decisively determining principle of its operation – capitalism is *not* given with the mere existence of markets (Polanyi 2001, 59 ff.) – and resources of whatever kind become 'capital' in the relevant sense when they are viewed and *systematically* used as means for profit-making (cf. Weber 2005, 22–3). Insofar as capitalist companies employ us, we ourselves thus become, in the precise technical term, 'human capital.' That term epitomises the basic inversion of the 'natural' attitude to things that characterises capitalism, as underlined by both Marx (cf. Smith 2018, 106) and Weber (2005, 18; 32–3). Capital, in the specific capitalist sense, exists only as an endless process of profit-making where capital increases itself, and where the good things money can buy – and ultimately: life itself – are treated as mere means to making profits, and even money isn't an 'end in itself', but only a means for making more money: capitalist money never sleeps (cf. Postone 2009, 41–2).

The basic point isn't about the psychological motivation of capitalist market actors, as though they would be especially greedy, driven only by 'the profit motive' praised by capitalism's apologists and abhorred by its critics. At issue, rather, is the logic embodied in institutional design, in the making and remaking of the legal and

other rules of a particular organization of social life which we call ‘the economy’, and which is *constituted* as such by this rulemaking (cf. Dardot and Laval 2013; Pistor 2019). Insofar as the maximizing principle is written into the rules of the game, maximization happens regardless of individual motivations – as long as individuals agree, out of whatever motives, to play the game at all. Whether, say, a CEO is personally greedy or not, their job is to maximize company profits, and competition will tend to ensure that they do, or try to. It is thus *as if* capital had a ‘will’ of its own: imagine a pile of cash that *wants* to grow. But, of course, the maximizing logic is counteracted and undermined by – as it is also supported by, and in its turn supports – many other logics, manifest in different contexts, from worker’s struggles and executives’ power to use companies to their own advantage and to the detriment of the companies (the capital) they manage, to the formation of general cultural and psychological trends.

In concrete social, institutional, technological, and economic terms, the insomniac logic of capital drives a process of cataclysmic change that has created unprecedented wealth and standards of living, but also threatens us with homelessness, actually and spiritually. The word ‘economy’ originally meant providing for the needs of the household and the people in it, but the capitalist system is defined by a fundamental *decoupling* of ‘the economy’ in its productive aspect from the home and its needs (cf. Weber 2005, xxxv). In pre-capitalist economies production overwhelmingly takes place in the home; the work is done by household members to fill their own needs. Some of the produce is typically appropriated by feudal lords, the state or other powerful actors – *taken* by them, in a socially ‘legitimate’ manner, such taking being, roughly speaking, what defines ‘civilization’ – but they leave the organization of the work to the households. By contrast, in capitalism, workers are forced or enticed out of their homes and put to work in factories organized by profit-maximizing capitalists, where the exploitation of the workforce is rationalized and intensified in ways unimaginable where work is an organic part of household life (cf. Wood 1995; Thompson 1967). – The fact that, typically, all

members of a household are not equal means that there's plenty of scope for exploitation and oppression in subsistence economies, too, of course. We'll return to this; here, the point is to note the different *form* that exploitation takes in capitalism, and the radically reduced role of the home in it.

In capitalism, the relation to the home is fundamentally changed in other ways, too. In precapitalist agricultural societies, 'home' typically means a piece of land cultivated by the family living on it (often, they have lived there for generations). Precisely because the family regards it as home, that is, a place they're attached to – they may feel they belong to it more than it to them – such land is usually sold only under compulsion (cf. Macfarlane 1979, 23–7). Capitalism, however, demands that land, like labour and everything else be transformed into mere resources of production, means of profit-making bought and sold on the market. Here, people's attachment to their homes is an obstacle to be overcome by whatever means necessary. This is illustrated by one of the earliest significant social transformations of, or into, capitalism: the enclosures in England from the 16th century on, where wealthy landowners appropriated small landholdings and converted them into endless sheep pasture, wool being the great profit-maker of those days. In his *Utopia*, Thomas More vividly described how the docile sheep were "turned into man-eaters" by capital; "Fields, houses, towns, everything [went] down their throats", as small farmers were "either cheated or bullied into giving up their property, or systematically ill-treated until they're finally forced to sell", and "Out they have to go from the homes that they know so well, and they can't find anywhere else to live" (1988, 46–7).

Similar processes of eviction, of expulsion of people from their homes, have been going on in the countryside and in cities all over the world ever since. This isn't some unfortunate aberration of capitalist development, but part of its defining dynamic force, which Schumpeter famously characterized as a "perennial gale of creative destruction" (1994, 84). In the even more famous words of the *Communist Manifesto*, in capitalism, "All that is solid melts into air,

all that is holy is profaned” (Marx and Engels 2004, 17). Putting profits first, capitalism ultimately has no respect for the ties of solidarity and hierarchy, customary rights and obligations, that keep people tied to each other and to their places in traditional societies – and all societies are to some extent traditional in this sense. Otherwise put: the specific form of ‘value-creation’ (singular) in capitalism is destructive of the values (plural) of the social worlds into which it enters; values that are more or less ascribed a character of holiness or sacredness in the social worlds whose order they help constitute, and that capitalism exploits even as it undermines them, as when values related to ‘manliness’ or ‘femininity’, say, or of ‘security’ or ‘traditionalism’ are appealed to by advertisers. – Note that, like the *Manifesto*, I offer a *descriptive* characterization of capitalism’s operation; whether or in what sense the profanation and dissolution it brings may be good or bad remains to be determined. (I offer some comments relevant to this question below.)

The ‘solidity’ capitalism dissolves isn’t just that of orders of social authority, but concerns, at the limit, the very permanence of the man-made environment, our common home within the natural world, as the drive to increase profits implies constant pressure to accelerate the pace of commodity-circulation, which means constantly tearing down and throwing away the old to make room for the new. Thus, we have, as in More’s England, the countryside emptied of people; cities destroyed by ‘property-development’; the ‘planned obsolescence’ of products deliberately designed *not* to last; ever-faster changing fashions in all areas and ever-accelerating technological advances making the latest models hopelessly outdated over-night. Olli Lagerspetz underlines how different capitalism’s world of disposable things – a kind of “non-objects”, “artefacts expressly produced for throwing away” – is from the world of pre-industrial cultures, where material possessions are few and precious, taken care of and repaired, and the dominant attitude is what, following Susan Strasser, Lagerspetz calls a “stewardship of objects” (2018, 184ff.). This is connected to the fact that, in traditional societies, things are generally made by oneself or someone one knows (perhaps an ancestor), so that caring for the things and

caring about particular people, respecting the work they put into making things, are two sides of a coin. “A dress that you have made by your own hands, or one made for you by Aunt Edna, is not so easily thrown away as one that comes from an unknown sweatshop of an unknown country” (Lagerspetz 2018, 186). Capitalism works precisely by severing personal ties between people and things, and between the people who make and those who use things, or it makes these human relationships, which are still there, harder to see. This ‘cleansing of the personal’ is part of what viewing a thing as a ‘commodity’ means. Note, that this can often appear as a relief, because the difficulties and moralized power-games that infect human relationships also infect our relations to things, insofar as these become (what they were traditionally) concrete symbols of our personal relationships; just think of the often bitter disputes about dividing up an inheritance.

At the extreme, the tendency of capital, like More’s sheep, to consume the world, threatens, as Hannah Arendt underlined, a veritable loss of world (1998, 118–135). To be sure, a complete such loss seems strictly speaking unthinkable; we would lose our orientation and ourselves along with our world (cf. Arendt 1998, 133–4; Lagerspetz 2018, 186–7). But developments may go further in this direction than one might think. We should also note that the much-discussed move from a ‘waste’ economy to a ‘circular’ economy doesn’t directly affect this problematic. Recycling our waste instead of polluting and depleting natural resources would in one respect bring us back to the norm before the advent of industrial capitalism, when nothing was really thrown away, *wasted*, but everything was used for some good purpose or other (Lagerspetz 2018, 187–191). It might also help save the natural world from the ravages of capital – we must hope it will – but if the circulation of commodities keeps accelerating, as capital demands, the creative destruction of the *human* world will continue unabated.

This is not all. Capital undermines our very sense of having something of our *own* at all (a personal home), and, as the other side of this development, having anything genuinely *in common* (a shared home). Because no-one can make a profit from what is freely

available for use, there's constant pressure in capitalism to privatize resources held in common, from the enclosures of the village commons in early modern times – this was one aspect of the destructive work of More's sheep – to today's struggles over the 'digital commons.' In this basic sense, capital is hostile to the very idea of a common world, even if it cannot in fact make its profits without the infrastructure the common world provides; public roads, legal institutions, etc. Less obviously, and contrary to its own official ideology, capitalism is, as Arendt clear-sightedly noted (1998, 66–7; 72), equally hostile to private property – insofar, that is, as that property is withdrawn from the process of capital-accumulation and used to make individuals and families self-sufficient. For capital, privatization is simply the prerequisite to making profits, and the self-sufficiency of someone tilling their privately owned land is just as bad for profits as someone living off the commons.

Now, this hostility extends, in principle, to anything at all we do ourselves, insofar as such activities 'prevent' companies from making money by selling us those things or services instead. That now quaint 1950s invention, the TV-dinner, illustrates how capital fixes 'problems' of this kind. Families used to cook their own meals and tell each other stories; the TV-dinner, or today's updated versions of it, are bought ready-made and eaten in front of screens providing the stories ready-told by corporate employees. The tendency of capital is to colonize and replace with its own commodified 'reality' everything that is our own and that we ourselves do. In this sense, capitalism threatens our private homes and indeed our inner worlds, for there's no money to be made in our thinking our own thoughts or dreaming our own dreams.

As with the common world, a total loss of everything of our own seems strictly speaking unthinkable, but again, it may be possible to go very far in this direction. Google-founder Larry Page gave "personal information" as the essence of his company's business: "Everything you've ever heard or seen or experienced will become searchable. Your whole life will be searchable" (Zuboff 2019, 98). Shoshana Zuboff (2019) calls the current stage in capital's development "surveillance capitalism"; in it, everything that used to be

private is registered and turned into behavioural data, by means of which our behaviour can be ever better predicted and manipulated, all in the interest of increasing profits. The possibilities and dangers appear staggering when this total surveillance is combined with the development of the 'Internet of Things', an interlinked web of 'smart machines' that will do ever more of our thinking, remembering and planning for us. We can just sit back and be stupid; the machines will – so we're told – be smarter than we ever could be, and our own dreams will be revealed as insignificant, 'merely human', compared to the never-dreamed-of things our machines can actually realize. Another aspect is added by the way we're getting used to moving in virtual digital worlds created by various 'service-providers'. We don't just buy products any more, we live our life inside them. This 'inside' is not the shared home of a common world, for different consumers get it fed to them in different, 'personalized' versions, so that 'my' world looks different from 'yours'. Nor is it one's own world in the way one's private home is, or used to be, but a world designed and controlled by others, by algorithms aiming to make profits from our moving in it. In sum, we are on the way of becoming, as Zuboff says, "the native peoples now whose tacit claims to self-determination have vanished from the maps of our own experience" (2019, 100).

So much for capital. Before we move on to discuss love, let me emphasize that my claim is not that there's a conspiracy by Evil Capitalists that inevitably makes us homeless – although there are certainly conspiracies around, both clandestine and shamelessly open ones. But as I've indicated, there are all kinds of forces working, consciously and not, against the tendencies I've mentioned – indeed, individual capitalist actors themselves try to limit competition and create permanent structures favourable to them wherever they can – and the outcome of these conflicts is undecided. Secondly, as consumers we generally seem to 'want' the developments capital is selling us, they're not forced on us. We want comfort and affluence, we're excited by the new and bored by the old. I don't say human beings must feel this way, only that we often seem to. Capital can move only as long as we join the movement; in

the end, we are the one's moving 'it' (cf. Smith 2018, 116–7; 129). This doesn't mean, of course, that individuals are free to stop moving, to 'step out of capitalism', for one's livelihood is generally dependent on not doing so, on taking the jobs that are offered, etc. Nor is it clear, without further argument, whether, or how, we should collectively try to change the system in some radical way. But we should certainly consider carefully where the movement of capital is taking us, what it is we really want, and that in getting what we think we want we may also be getting things we never knew we bargained for.

3.

Let me now sketch the very different way in which neighbourly love in the New Testament conception also tends to challenge the sense and reality of 'home' – and to avoid tedious repetition, I'll simply say 'love' from now on, where I mean 'neighbourly love'. I am not concerned here with the otherworldliness that has marked much of the Christian tradition growing out of the bible, and largely in defence *against* it (cf. Ellul 1986), oriented by the conviction that "This world is not my home, I'm just passing through", as an old spiritual song says. Instead, I focus on the gospels' radical "questioning not just of one power but of all power" (Ellul 1986, 14). The gospels designate power's dominion 'the world', and to *that* world love is indeed 'other' (cf. Wink 1984 and 1998).

The gospel sense of 'neighbour' isn't limited to, although it certainly includes, 'people from the neighbourhood'. Your 'neighbour' is anyone you encounter and are thus, by the sheer fact of this encounter, called to love, even if by social standards, the standards of your worldly 'home', they are strangers or enemies. As Chesterton put it, our neighbour is "the sample of humanity which is actually given us" and we are to love him not because we like to or because social mores demand it, but simply "because he is *there* – a much more alarming reason for a much more serious operation" (1908, 186; cf. Backström 2007, 388–390). This isn't merely a widening of love from kinsfolk to all humanity – as in the parable of the good

Samaritan loving an enemy Jew as his neighbour (Lk 10.25–37) – but a radical challenge to the supposedly primary loyalty to our home communities, whose dark side is indifference and often active hostility towards ‘outsiders’. In the eyes of the community, love unites the ‘wrong’ people in loving concern, and loving even the enemy, as Jesus teaches, amounts to treason.

Love challenges communal loyalties also, or even more, by questioning whether the ‘love’ by which ‘we’ inside the community claim to love each other is itself really love. For our social homes are shot through by structures of power and authority – authority being the form power assumes insofar as it manages to present itself as legitimate. These hierarchical structures give some of ‘us’ rights and privileges, permanent or temporary, in relation to others, who ‘must’ obey and serve us in various, often brutally exploitative ways. After all, even slaves and untouchables are members of their communities, have their own, terribly defined places within them, socially justified as being necessary for the good of the whole, and even beneficial to the people forced into them.

In effect, Jesus asks “Are you joking? You call *that* love?”, and the very asking outrages the powers that be and provokes furious backlash. By associating with the outcasts of society, with the “sinners and tax-collectors”, Jesus radically challenged social hierarchies (cf. Borg 1998, 93–134). He says that he “did not come to bring peace, but a sword [...] to turn ‘a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law – a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household’” (Mt 10.34–6). Note: it’s the (relatively) powerless who are set against the holders of power in the home. Crucially, however, Jesus doesn’t urge the powerless to become the new power, but rather to give up domination for a love that liberates from wishes for and anxieties about power. While other communities have rulers and ruled, Jesus tells his followers: “Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all” (Mk 10.42–4). That is, in a community of love, there’s no hierarchy at all. And Jesus insists that this love – he calls it “the kingdom of God” – isn’t a mere ideal

but a constant possibility already “in our midst” (Lk 17.21). It becomes reality insofar as, but also no further than, we dare to open ourselves to it. (Cf. Crossan 2012, 113–40.)

Wherever respecting the rules and demands of worldly communities and institutions – demands which they regard as sacred – involves treating one’s neighbour lovelessly, there love refuses that respect (cf. Borg 1998, 161). Jesus ostentatiously offends against religion, against everything held most holy, by healing the afflicted and encouraging his hungry followers to eat on the Sabbath, the day reserved for holy rest, in effect implying that the ‘lowest’ need of the least regarded human being is more important than the ‘highest’ communal values, for “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath” (Mk 2.27; cf. Borg 1998, 156–73). Now, this attitude destroys the ancient idea of the home, religiously defined as it was by piety towards its ancestral family divinities, with the fireplace as its shrine. “A man never went out of his dwelling without addressing a prayer to the fire”, Fustel de Coulanges tells us in his classic work on the ancient city; “on his return, before seeing his wife or embracing his children, he must fall before the fire, and invoke it” (1956, 27). In the proclamation of Jesus, the hearth loses this sacredness; home is now ‘where the heart is’, love alone keeps the family together.

The ‘holy’ is thus profaned by Jesus’ proclamation of neighbourly love no less than by capitalism, and the insistence on rootedness in a place called ‘home’ is given up. In contrast to capitalism, however, love isn’t restlessly driven to ‘consume the world’; it simply refuses to put ‘worldly interests’ above people – that is, it refuses to give power the last word. And capital, too, *is* power – the power to buy, that is to command, the time and work of others. Even if capital is a permanently destabilizing mode of power, in contrast to the conservative mode of traditional communities, its incessant form of ‘value creation’ destructive of the ‘sacred’ values of traditional authorities, capital too, like all power, subordinates and uses people. Love, by contrast, is the longing to be oneself with the other, implying a refusal to use or force them, or oneself; a refusal of rule.

Love is anarchy, that is: not chaos, but life itself unfolding unconstrained between us. Insofar as love implies a radical questioning of power, a questioning not just in intellectual terms but on the level of one's whole being, it is also a questioning of capitalism – as of socialism, Christianity, etc. Its incandescent light exposes both the ways in which people are mercilessly expelled from or manipulated in their homes by capital *and* every kind of claim to a 'home' that demands or allows power, of any kind, to rule us in it.

4.

Needless to say, the anarchy of love never became dominant social reality, and our modern ideas of a home founded on love are, as we'll see, very different from, if also inspired by it. Ironically, the Christian church for its part went on to become one of the most effectively organized and powerful institutions in history, and rather than anarchically questioning 'traditional family values', created its own version of them. It could hardly have been otherwise, insofar as the very idea of institutionalizing the anarchism of love is nonsensical. What a pervasive cultural awareness of the possibility – the challenge – of a life of love can do, and I think has done in our culture, is to induce an uneasiness, a kind of collective sense of guilt about institutions and authority generally. This is a central contention in René Girard's work; "the formidable difference that separates our world from all those that came before it", he says, is that "*today, victims have rights*" (2014, 8) – the victims, that is, of the violence of the collective itself.

This sense of collective guilt has manifested itself in many, ambivalent and contradictory ways, one important aspect being a drive for institutional reform, making institutions serve human beings rather than our serving them – even if this 'humanization of the Sabbath' can never fully or permanently succeed. The idea that basic and equal human rights place limits on institutional demands, that individual human dignity and suffering are paramount concerns, and that the consent of the ruled is the only legitimate basis for authority; all these ideas are central to modern political thought,

regardless of how flagrantly modern practice has often ignored them. Clearly, these ideas and their institutional embodiments are not automatic consequences of the proclamation of neighbourly love; after all, it took almost 2000 years for them to be at all effectively institutionalized after that proclamation was first heard. Nonetheless, they can be seen as inspired by it – as indeed can capitalism itself, insofar as it insists on (formally) free contracts and so refuses to grant anyone a ‘natural’ right to rule and exploit others. That this freedom has often been – and in a certain sense must remain, due to the structure of the relations of production in capitalism – merely formal, masking what are in practice various forms and degrees of coercion, is true, but it is still crucial that there is this formal demand for, or pretence at, equal freedom.

How far and in what ways precisely neighbourly love may have inspired institutional change and change in cultural values is a matter for historical investigation and contention. In closing, I’ll merely offer some remarks on the inherent ambivalences of any such inspiration, returning to the theme of capitalism and the home.

5.

In the 19th century, ‘love’ and the ‘home’ came to be connected and understood in a new way which was both inspired by the idea of neighbourly love and completely subverted it. In its bourgeois form, the family, shrunk down to ‘nuclear’ size, was isolated in a home from which productive activity was removed and only consumption of commodities bought on the market remained – in addition, of course, to the all-important ‘function’ of raising children, which capitalism has never truly appropriated, even if many aspects of the life of children and parenting are now commodified, while the state has largely taken control of the education of the young. From love’s perspective, of course, raising children is no mere ‘function’ but one of the crucial dimensions of love itself, and in the ideology of the bourgeois family, too, there was endless talk of love. This ‘love’, however, was privatized and sentimentalized, domesticated in the sense of tamed, so that it could be contained in a home explicitly

portrayed as a refuge from the brutal, loveless world of capitalist production. As one 19th century American magazine explained, only in “the sanctuary of home”, do we find “disinterested love [...] ready to sacrifice everything at the altar of affection” (quoted in Coontz 2006, 164).

This new religion of domesticity, still invoking ‘altars’ and ‘sacrifices’, was as despotic as ancient patriarchy, even if it spoke of ‘love’ and ‘affection’, insofar as it refused to countenance conflicts within the home. Even John Ruskin, generally no simple-minded ideologue, spoke of the home as “the place of Peace; the shelter, not only from all injury, but from all terror, doubt, and division”, ruled by a wife “enduringly, incorruptibly good; instinctively, infallibly wise – wise, not for self-development, but for self-renunciation [...and] modesty of service” (n.d. [1865], 118–20). And in turning away from the outside world, this domesticated ‘love’ effectively legitimised it, turning a blind eye to its destructiveness and injustice. This is the kind of thing that happens when the reality of love – actual human beings longing for truthful contact – is replaced by an *ideology* of ‘love’, by ‘love’ as a ‘value’ or ‘ideal’. Real love is wholly personal; it is, as Lagerspetz puts it, the longing “to be *someone* to someone” (2018, 202). One could say: love is not *a* personal relation, it is what is personal in our relations, or what makes them personal. But ‘personal’ is not the same as ‘private’, and loving someone does not imply indifference towards ‘other people’ (Backström 2007, 229–316).

Today, the ideology of ‘family’, ‘home’ and ‘love’ looks quite different from the 19th century version, of course. In accordance with changing realities on the ground, we don’t stress the unity and permanence of the ‘loving family’, but the provisional character of its changing forms, through which it is expected to provide a ‘platform’ for its members’ individual self-realization. The home is also no longer seen mainly as a ‘haven from the world’, but is increasingly treated as a shop-window for displaying one’s family-life to the world on various social media. This illustrates Zygmunt Bauman’s observation that the essential feature of the society of consumers is “the transformation of consumers [themselves] into commodities”

(2007, 12). In the virtual worlds of digital capitalism, our homes are turned into image factories producing images of themselves, of ourselves, and as such are integrated into what Guy Debord called “the society of the spectacle”, the spectacle being “*capital* accumulated to the point that it becomes images”; “the world [...] that the spectacle *holds up to view* is the world of the commodity dominating all living experience [...] its development is identical to people’s *estrangement* from each other and from everything they produce” (2005, 17).

We ourselves consume and are impressed by these images of ourselves as much as others are; we are always already in the audience. The compulsive need to get one’s phone and make a visual record of everything beautiful and living one encounters is one obvious manifestation of this attitude whereby we turn life itself into a series of scenes, a ‘spectacle’ – which really means that we start living life as if we were only imagining or already remembering it. (The appetite for AI-produced ‘virtual reality’ simulations is natural enough once real life has been in this way ‘virtualised’, turned into an image of itself.) While the specific techno-capitalist form of this tyranny of the image is new, the basic logic at play is ancient. The concern with how we are seen, with impression-management, is the basic form of collective life – by which I mean a life where love is sacrificed to power (cf. Nykänen 2009). In a loving encounter, we look into the other’s face, into their eyes; we don’t anxiously look around to see how the other or third parties view us, worrying about how the encounter appears in social terms. To the extent that that concern with one’s image enters, love is pushed out – that is, we then close our hearts and start judging instead of living, subordinating ourselves and our neighbour to the judging gaze of collective norms. We start calculating, worrying about ‘costs’ and hoping for ‘profits’. Whether we calculate in terms of social standing or money, we sacrifice life for an image of life, reality for an abstraction, even if there’s nothing abstract about the anguish that drives us to do so.

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Speaking Souls

On Expressing Attitudes and Showing Faith

Camilla Kronqvist

Introduction

If my son comes home all wet and I *say* “You didn’t have an umbrella with you today”, I *show* my understanding of rain and how to decrease its effects. I know you get wet from walking in the rain, and I know that an umbrella might help to alleviate that wetness. If I see someone falling in the street and I say “Do you need help?”, I *show* my understanding of pain and its possibly debilitating impact on human action and movement. But if I go to bed and do not give any thought to, let alone *say* anything about, the possibility that my partner could stab me with a knife while I sleep, then what does my behavior *show*?

One answer philosophers have wanted to give to this question is that it shows our trust in people. But not in the ordinary way I may trust a friend to help me out when I am in trouble. What my behavior shows, these philosophers have said, is a kind of *basic* trust in my relation to my partner, or in my relation to other people *per se*.

Olli Lagerspetz has partly questioned this intuition. He has, both in writing but more vividly in my memory of different discussions, remarked on the seeming peculiarity in saying that I trust my partner not to stab me in my sleep. I do not, he has emphasized, even consider this a possibility! If we as philosophers here speak of a basic trust, we thus misrepresent the matter. We fail to make clear that in many cases in which we can be said by others to simply trust, the kind of attitude we take to another changes if we attempt to speak about it, or try to justify this attitude or relation to the other by

putting it into words. This thought in some ways seems to mirror the earlier Wittgenstein's concern that we cannot *speak* about what can only be *shown*.

In a discussion of the role of trust in conversation, David Cockburn (2022) responds to Olli's concern that philosophers speak too lightheartedly about "trust" when they claim that trust, or basic trust, is always an aspect of our relations. Owing his formulation to Knud E. Løgstrup, Cockburn too seems to suggest that trust is always an aspect of our conversations. However, he thinks that this emphasis on the role of trust in conversation only makes sense against the background of a philosophical tradition whose framing of the questions has been characterized by *doubt*. He thus opens for the possibility that we in some situations may be called upon to speak in ways that in other contexts appear as unspeakable. This may be taken to suggest a peculiarity in forms of speech that appear to be more narrowly ethical.

In this article, I consider these issues in the context of a discussion of what it means to think of the attitude I take to another human being, or other human beings, as an attitude towards a soul. I discuss why such ways of speaking should not be read as offering theoretical justification of the claim that other people have souls but as expressive of an attitude we may take to another being. But I also question attempts to ethically ground certain ways of perceiving other human beings by attending to such attitudes, and finally suggest that such sayings do not just invoke an ethical perspective, as Olli together with Lars Hertzberg propose, but can be seen as ways of speaking from "a religious point of view" (Rhees 1984, 94), involving not just trust but a leap of faith.

My presentation of the issue is heavily indebted to David Cockburn's understanding of these questions,¹ but it is at the same time a continuation of the dialogue on trust that Olli has been central in furthering at the research seminars at Åbo Akademi University

¹ In fact, the bulk of my paper, in section 1 and 2, builds on an essay written for a course on "Later Wittgenstein" that David Cockburn gave and that I attended in 1998–99 at the University of Wales, Lampeter.

during my years of both studying, researching and teaching philosophy there.

1. An attitude towards a soul

I cannot pinpoint my first encounter with Wittgenstein's remark, "My attitude towards him is an attitude towards a soul. I am not of the *opinion* that he has a soul." (Wittgenstein 2009, § II:22), but I know that a seminar course based on the manuscript of Cockburn's *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Mind: Souls, Science and Human Beings* (2001) in my second year of studying philosophy played a crucial role in changing my perception of the relationship between the human body and mind, as well as interpersonal understanding. Two years after the seminar I relate my experience of the shift it occasioned in the following way.

One of the first thoughts that struck me when I encountered Wittgenstein's remark that our attitude towards other human beings is "an attitude towards a soul" was that with this idea, much of the importance I had previously seen in the question whether human beings have souls or not disappeared. Before that, I had often had the feeling that, with the decreasing influence of the church and the Christian faith, we were slowly losing what grounds we might have had for acting morally towards our fellow human beings. I am not sure if I can describe exactly what my concerns were at this point, but they went in the direction that, if there were no such thing as a soul to the human being, there would be no justification for treating human beings in the special way the Judaeo-Christian tradition demands of us. Without a concept of a soul, there would, as I saw it, be no reason for treating a human being any differently than an animal, a tree or a stone, bearing in mind the great differences there are in how we treat these. There would, I thought, be no reason for regarding the human being as something special, no reason for valuing and respecting the human life.

To be able to defend our moral behavior, which I wanted to maintain unaltered, it then seemed as if we needed to provide a definite description of what a human being is, to make sense of the

idea that a human being is to be treated in some other way than an animal, a tree or a stone. As I tried to find such a description of what a human being is, I looked for something that could be understood in terms of a non-religious soul, or, to escape the religious connotations, a mind, an entity that possessed certain qualities such as thinking or self-consciousness. Saying what this “something” was, much less finding it, or what the words “soul” or “mind” were meant to refer to, was of course very difficult, but the temptation to say, as Cockburn has put it (2022, 4), that the “real person” was something other than the human body was still very strong.

Through engaging with Wittgenstein's remark, however, the question whether human beings have souls, or what a soul, or a mind is, lost much of its appeal. The question that now started to occupy me, was not so much whether we can be said to have souls or not, or how we could understand the notion of a soul. The point was that we react to human beings as we react to souls, and that this was where we needed to start if we wanted to know what is meant with words such as “souls” and “human beings”.

Already looking back on my old thinking a few years on in my studies, I had some difficulties in understanding that this was the way I thought about these things. I could, however, still remember the struggle I had with some of these questions and the importance I attached to finding an answer to them. I still think I was right in suggesting that this shows the powerful grip the Christian division between body and soul and the Cartesian division between body and mind has had on our thinking, including mine. We seem to be tempted to think about human beings in this way; it seems to be very easy to see the real human being or the real person as something else than the body and to attach more value to this unobservable non-bodily being than to the bodily being standing in front of us.

Our being drawn to this picture of a human being, however, does not only reflect the impact certain philosophical or religious traditions has had on our way of thinking. There seems to be something more in our lives that tempts us to think in these ways, even if it is probably impossible to state exactly what. Descartes was not simply

stupid or mistaken. He rather caught on to something that everyone of us has experienced who ever wondered whether they in fact were alone in the world or if they ever really could understand other people.

My first reading of Wittgenstein's remark also feels as quite a crude reading of what he is saying. I think however that there is something important in the way I first understood it. With the remark, Wittgenstein wanted to direct our attention away from one way of looking at the questions involved. He wanted to show that the questions we are asking are the wrong questions, that we, in a way, are looking in the wrong place when we are both asking and trying to answer these questions.

The question is not whether I can be justified in thinking that other people have minds or souls, or a mental life like my own. The point that Wittgenstein wants to make is rather that we respond to human beings in a certain way, without having any further justification for it. We take a certain attitude toward other human being that is not grounded in opinions about what kind of beings they are, but rather presupposes responses of this sort. These reactions, what Wittgenstein sometimes calls primitive reactions, do not build on certain thoughts or ideas, which would justify us responding in this way. Rather, our thoughts and ideas build on such responses. The "behaviour is pre-linguistic ... a language-game is based *on it*, ... it is the prototype of a way of thinking and not the result of thought." (Wittgenstein 1967, 541). In the next section, I will discuss how we are to understand these remarks in relation to the Cartesian picture of the human being as consisting of two parts, a material body and an immaterial mind or soul. I will then return to the kind of understanding these remarks can provide if not seen as providing us with another form of grounding of our thought.

2. The best picture of the soul?

One of the main problems I now see in my initial attempt to answer the question whether human beings have souls or not, is that it is very difficult to grasp what the question is about. How can I separate

something like a soul or a mind from the living human being that I meet? What would it even mean for me to think of them as not possessing this soul or mind? As John W. Cook (1969) says in an early attempt of stating the problem of other minds in relation to Wittgenstein's writing, there is something awry in asking "Do other people have a mental life, as I do?" since asking that of other *people* already comes with the acknowledgement that they are people, that is, beings with a mental life, thoughts, feelings and so on. When we are posing the philosophical question about other minds, Cook points out, our interest is not to find out whether any particular person has a mental life, is able to think and feel, as in a case where they are in a coma. The question rather seems to be, "Are the things that I take to be people really people, that is, do they have thoughts and emotions and so on?" (Cook 1969, 121). If this is the question, it is indeed very difficult to answer. If they are not human beings, then what are they? What could they be? When I look at other human beings, talk to them and so on, it is very difficult for me to think of them as something else than a human being, such as a statue or a machine. There does not seem to be room for the doubt to creep in that the "thing" I have in front of me, is not a human being.

Descartes's meditations, however, seem to leave room for such a doubt. His thought experiment works on the assumption that, when I look at other human beings, I could imagine that they were mere bodies or automata, moving around by some strange force but not having minds as we do. Wittgenstein responds to this idea when he asks, "But, can't I imagine that the people around me are automata" (Wittgenstein 2009, § 420). In response to such a question he says, he can picture "people with fixed looks (as in a trance) going about their business" (Wittgenstein 2009, § 420). When he tries to imagine that "[t]he children over there are mere automata; all their liveliness is mere automatism" however, the words only become meaningless or produce an "uncanny feeling" (Wittgenstein 2009, § 420). In other words, even if we, like Wittgenstein, can picture people as machines in some circumstances, allowing that it can be a bit uncanny, there is something strikingly difficult in pressing the picture of machines on human beings in their ordinary circumstances, at

least not without getting the feeling that something weird is going on.

Now, Wittgenstein claims that this is not because I believe or am certain that they are not automata. I do not see them as automata because I am justified in the belief that they are something else, namely human beings. I see them, first and foremost, as human beings and this is something that is more basic than anything I can entertain any beliefs about. Saying “I believe that he is not an automaton’, just like that, so far makes no sense.” (Wittgenstein 2009, § II:22). At least not in the way we can recognize sentences like “I believe she is tired after being up so late,” or “I believe he is not coming, if he is not here yet” can make perfect sense in some easily imaginable contexts. In contrast to these sentences, “I believe that he is not an automation” does not carry with it any self-evident meaning. It is, for instance, unclear what it would be to be uncertain that he is not an automaton, in the way we can be uncertain whether someone will make a meeting on time, due to oversleeping because of partying too much, or failing to get a bus because the bus drivers are on strike.

In renouncing the idea that we could provide justification for holding these attitudes to other people, Wittgenstein distances himself from the idea that we could provide an intellectual argument for seeing people in this way. Instead, he inquires into the pictures of the human being we bring into our philosophizing, and the picture of the human being that seems to lend support to the Cartesian separation of body and mind. It is, as it were, only possible to doubt whether other beings are the same as I am, if I start seeing the mind as something distinct from the bodily being, if I see it as the “real person” behind the veil of the body. For, the Cartesian argument goes, whereas I am directly conscious of the “real person”, the mind, in myself, I am never directly conscious of the “real person” in the other beings I meet. I am only confronted with their bodies and can only infer indirectly that they have minds as I do.

However, as Cook remarks, there is something “highly extraordinary” in the use we make of the word “body” to present this Cartesian picture of body-mind dualism. There is nothing in this

use of the word that reminds us of how we think of bodies, when we say things like, “‘His body was covered with mosquito bites’, ‘His body was found at the bottom of the cliff’, ‘He has a strong body but no brains’” (Cook 1969, 123–4). In none of these cases do we rely on a distinction between him and his body. We do not, for instance, say, “His body, but not his mind, was covered with mosquito bites”, and might just as well say, “He was covered with mosquito bites” (Cook 1969, 124). Furthermore, Cook makes the point that when we are just talking about a person’s “body”, we are sometimes talking about the dead. We use the word body to describe a corpse. This contributes to the uncanniness of imagining other human beings as mere automata, since it seems to invite us to think of other people in zombie-like ways as moving corpses, the mind or the soul as a Rylean “ghost in the machine” (1955).

To expel the hold such ghost stories have on our thinking, Wittgenstein remarks, “The human body is the best picture of the human soul” (Wittgenstein 2009, § II:25). This remark follows his remark that “my attitude towards him is an attitude towards a soul” (Wittgenstein 2009, § II:22). It suggests that we may be helped by thinking of the human body itself as soulful (in terms of “full of soul”). On the Cartesian view, the bodily movements of another in themselves appear to have become empty of meaning. They derive any possible meaning they may have only from the mind behind the movements. This suggests that seeing other beings doing various things is a matter of seeing limbs moving purposelessly, muscles contracting and so on. But this, Wittgenstein suggests, is not the way in which we usually see others. We see movements with a purpose, and people acting for reasons. We see people walking in the street, waving their arms in greeting each other, or writhing on the ground in pain. There is no step where we just see the bodily movements, and then go on to infer that they are walking to the shop, waving at passers-by or writhing in pain. We do not see the multitude of individual movements that goes to form the walking, waving or writhing, we simply recognize and describe the person as doing these things. This does not exclude that we at times can also be puzzled about what a person is doing, and what their movements

are aiming at. However, it is perhaps primarily the moments of puzzlement that give us an idea of bodily movement as distinct from meaningful actions and reactions in the first place.

At the forefront of Wittgenstein's thought is thus the living human being, not a body in motion. As he writes in a remark to which Cockburn repeatedly returns (cf. Kronqvist 2023), "only of a living human being and what resembles (behaves like) a living human being can one say: it has sensations; it sees; is blind; hears; is deaf; is conscious or unconscious" (Wittgenstein 2009, § 281). As in the case of bodily movements, this remark reminds us that we do not come to the conclusion that another is joyful, angry, afraid or in pain by inferring to an inner state from the measurements or the physiognomy of their faces. We see joy, anger, pain or fear in people's faces and that we do so comes to show in how we speak of these emotions (Wittgenstein 1967, § 225). In other words, the joy, anger and so on, we see in somebody's face are not external to our concepts of "joy", "anger", "pain", or "fear", and are not some behavior that merely might accompany our inner feelings. A baby responding to its mother's smile with a smile, you feeling intimidated by my angry look, perhaps wanting to hide from it, him nervously looking around when someone's eyes fill with fear, her reacting to someone groaning and clutching their foot by tending to the foot (cf. Wittgenstein 1967, § 540–541), and attending to the other person, show what it means to understand others as joyful, angry, afraid or in pain.

In asking us to acknowledge the other living human being, with all its vitality and variety of expressions, as part of how we come to understand others as feeling, thinking, and seeing, Wittgenstein also calls for a reconsideration of how we think of ourselves in relation to another. The Cartesian story, and other similar stories, about the mind as the real person behind the body, promotes a picture of an individual thrown into the world, already equipped with the knowledge of minds and sensations needed to make sense of themselves. He (because he often seems to be a he) knows what it is to be conscious, to see and hear, feel pain, joy, anger or fear. He knows this because he can refer to his own private experience. He does not,

however, know whether other people have similar experiences when they talk about pain, joy, anger and fear. Considering that he is a rational, intelligent being, however, he manages to conclude that, since the other beings behave as he does, they do also, with most probability, feel as he does. The possibility that he has made a mistake, however, always lurks in the background.

The problem with this idea is that we do not come into this world as rational, thinking beings that already know how to make conclusions about ourselves and the rest of the world. Rational, thinking beings is something we become when we grow into a language and a community where much of the groundwork for being rational and thinking has been provided *to us by others*. The idea that I come to know about emotions, minds and human beings in a way that is essentially private is thus problematic. I do not come to know what pain, joy, anger, fear, minds and human beings are solely from my own private experience, where I mark an inner experience with the word “pain”. I learn to speak of pain, joy, and so on, in a complex interplay with others in which I do not only speak about my own experiences, but also about the experiences of others, and significantly speak *to* them about what we are experiencing, together and as individuals.

Here there are two important points to be made. First, I use these words not only to speak *about* feelings and emotions, I speak *out of* them. I do not learn what pain is only because I have an inner experience of this pain, but also because I react to this inner experience in different ways, I cry out, wince, rub the sore part and so on, and because other people react to me and my pain in both similar and different ways. They may wince, cry out, but also ask me what hurts. (The words “I am in pain”, as Wittgenstein says, replaces the spontaneous cry, it comes to form a new pain behavior (Wittgenstein 2009, § 244).) Second, I do not only react to or out of my own pain, but also to the pain of others. I see pain in their faces and behavior, I tend, treat the part that hurts, look into their eyes, and so on. As Wittgenstein says, I pay attention to their pain behavior in a way I do not attend to my own (Wittgenstein 1967, § 541). These

two points show what it could be to think of mental language as an extension of a form of pre-linguistic behavior.

3. The end of justification

As I said, the remark addressing an “attitude towards a soul” exemplifies a case in which “[j]ustification by experience”, as Wittgenstein says, “comes to an end” (Wittgenstein 2009, § 485). “[M]y spade is turned” (Wittgenstein 2009, § 217), and instead of asking “How do I know that (others are human beings, have a mental life as mine)?”, I am asked to acknowledge that here there is no answer to my question. I need to accept that not being able to answer it in a meaningful way is not a failure of our language but an ineliminable aspect of our life. There is in this case no place or need for an explanation.

Wittgenstein rejects the idea that we think of these words as providing epistemic grounds for the belief or opinion that human beings have souls. Nevertheless, we may ask whether in the end he also offers a kind of grounding of such beliefs. I cannot help but wonder whether this was also part of what impressed me in my first reading of this rebuttal of skepticism. He does, on this reading, not offer rational grounds for taking certain statements as true, or for accepting certain reactions to others as justified. He does, however, show how our understanding of the words we use to speak about our mental life is grounded in more “primitive reactions”. He thus seemingly suggests that certain forms of reactions underlie the concept of a human being and contribute to forming such a conception. For is this not what he says in suggesting that this kind of behavior is pre-linguistic and that “a language-game is based *on it*”. Or when he says that certain forms of reactive attitudes is not “the result of thought” but the “prototype of a way of thinking” (Wittgenstein 1967, § 541).

I think there is something right in this. Wittgenstein’s writings do suggest that the language we use to speak about our own and others’ mental life presuppose ways of reacting and acting that can be seen as part of our natural history. Without these “very general

facts of nature” (Wittgenstein 2009, § II:365) our ways of speaking would not have the meaning that they have. This we could say is a *logical* point. There are ways of speaking, as it were, that rely on ways of reacting for their sense. The logical point, however, is all too often taken as a *psychological* or *anthropological* explanation. On such a view the words used to talk about our mental life are simply taken to refer to some individual or generally shared natural reactions. Therefore, we may think that we can explain the meaning of the concepts by pointing to these reactions. The meaningfulness of speaking about others as having souls, whether it has meaning, and what meaning it has, is then an outcome of enough people exhibiting the requisite attitude. This cannot be right.

The problem we encounter here seems to surface when we read Wittgenstein as not just offering a description of how we do understand words such as joy, anger, fear and pain, but also of how we should understand other human beings. This becomes especially evident in discussions where one starts speaking, as I also have, in general terms of *an* attitude towards a soul, as if this were the attitude people take to living human beings per se. (See Winch 1981 for an early discussion and Dain 2019 for a later discussion that seem to invite this reading.) This is unfortunate because it seems to muddle Wittgenstein’s point.

We may well register the logical point that our spontaneous ways of responding to other people do not fit easily with regarding them as moving corpses. Nevertheless, there are many reactive attitudes to others as living human beings that do not seem to measure up to the awe and wonder one may associate with the more religiously sounding “attitude towards a soul” (cf. Philips 1992). A spontaneous reaction to joy in another’s face may be to quench it. Rather than caring for someone who is hurting, a possible reaction to a pained expression on someone’s face can be to humiliate the other even further. An angry tirade may be met with laughter and dismissed as expressive of bad taste or poor intelligence. Also these kinds of reactions contribute to our forming our concepts of human moral psychology, and it is at least unclear why a consideration of

these reactive attitude should necessarily lead us to a particular conceptual framework, such as one including “souls”.

Here I agree with Olli, who, with Lars Hertzberg, seems to suggest that the kind of trust in others Wittgenstein *shows* in speaking about his attitude to others as “an attitude towards a soul” “invokes an ethical perspective on human action” (2013, 39) and, I add, reaction. Any seemingly neutral description of what reactive attitudes “our concept of a human being” are based on therefore seems to smuggle in a conception of what are valuable ways of relating to others. Any such concealed attitude should, we may think, be made explicit, and not be allowed to work as a secret assumption in our thinking.

The point of Wittgenstein’s remark in this perspective is not to classify his reaction to another as “an attitude towards a soul”, and to raise further questions as to how prevalent such an attitude is among people generally: How do *we* react to others? Rather, his speaking about “*my* attitude towards him” (emphasis added) is itself a way of speaking *out of* this attitude: His *saying* this *shows* his attitude. (In the way of “If I think of and respond to him in these ways, then my attitude towards him can be characterized as an attitude towards a soul”). By contrast to the remark about a living human being of which “one only says ...”, it is here the first person singular that speaks. It is “my attitude” rather than “what *we* do” that is at stake. The saying thus reveals a personal stance, a kind of commitment, that is both formed by the person’s responses to others and informed by the words they together with others use to make sense of them.

Over the years, however, I have started to wonder whether Wittgenstein’s remark not only has an ethical point, but whether it at times is better read as addressing a problem that Wittgenstein, as he confessed in a conversation with his friend M. O’C. Drury, could not help but seeing from “a religious point of view” (Rhees 1984, 94). The saying, as it were, does not just reveal something about its speaker. It is also a confession to, perhaps not an ideal, but a certain form of life. It testifies not just to what he, himself, deems as important but what he thinks should be of importance to *us*.

One may ask whether it makes a difference whether we regard this as an ethical or as a religious remark. Depending on what we put into the words, it may not matter much. Perhaps, a better question is what changes if we see it first as an ethical remark and then as a religious one? For me, the religious is here a way of bringing in an absolute perspective, an idea of something higher, or greater, whereas a focus on the ethical may still lead us to relativize too much of what is shown in these ways of speaking. The man who reacts to another as a soul, tends to his wounds, rejoices in his successes, concedes his anger when just, certainly reveals to us the kind of man he is. His actions, words and reactions, reveal his goodness. But acknowledging that a person's actions and reactions reveal something about himself, his character, does not reveal to *us* the value of being that kind of man, why *we* should care about being good, why it matters to *us* if *I* am not.

There is nothing in my reactions or my concepts that prevents me from looking at others as living corpses, as automata, or in perhaps more readily and personally available language as gullible but astoundingly destructive sheep. If you feel uncertain about what I mean by seeing people in this way, I am also quite certain that given enough time I could help you see what I see. The experience that this is not the way to see them, that is, *us*, then, does not lie in what is either conceptually or humanly available to me. The words I use to make sense of others may as well lead me farther away from them, than closer to them, and again farther from any deeper appreciation of what characterizes not *them* but *us*. The experience that in certain ways of thinking and speaking of others, *I* alienate myself from them, that *I* no longer conceive myself as part of an *us*, therefore has another root. It speaks out of and to a different kind of doubt than the epistemic craving for certainty and justification. And if this feeling of alienation is what the skeptic's outspoken doubt shows, it shows itself, not just as a form of metaphysical doubt, but as a kind of religious doubt, a failure of belonging to the world.

Where is this root? Of what does this doubt speak? I do not know. But I want to say, of a sense of uprootedness and rootlessness

(cf. Weil 2001). Of a fear of not belonging and a longing for belonging, of being part of something greater, possibly higher, a greater whole.

What answers to this doubt? Is trust as Cockburn suggests an answer in this ongoing conversation? I do not know. But if the doubt is religious then the religious answer seems to be faith.

Coming to an end

I ended my first student essay on an attitude towards a soul with the sentence: This is where everything begins, and where my need for justification ends. As many of my ending sentences, it is and was overly melodramatic. As it stands, it is probably wrong. At least I had not specified what it could mean. I think, however, it can be partly helped by adding “everything of importance”, for it seems, if we follow Wittgenstein, that when it comes to matters of importance, we must give up any imagined need for justification, and rather recognize, acknowledge and accept what is important, without being able to say just why it is, and without necessarily relying on anything given by our shared practices with others. (Except in the way perhaps that we may think that sharing such practices is important itself.)

Thinking of what is important in those ways reveals the aspects of our life where every one of us must speak for ourselves, and as I have put it, out of ourselves. For Wittgenstein, speaking in such ways has an ethical or religious character. It is ethical, I have wanted to suggest, in that these ways of speaking reveals something about the person speaking, reveals their character. It is religious in the way it reveals something about the speaker’s world (in the slightly technical sense Wittgenstein speaks of a world in *Tractatus*.) Is there for instance a place for wonder in or at the world?

As I planned this article, I hoped to develop the ways in which Wittgenstein’s speaking of “my attitude towards a soul” revealed a place where people have been drawn to think that he is taking an ethical stance. Starting from that I wanted to show that we might be helped by thinking that he is speaking from a religious point of view,

and that Wittgensteinian philosophers who only focus on the ethical aspect of this speech perhaps do it in an attempt to, if not naturalize, then secularize his thought. I did not have a chance to do this. I have rather recorded the thought processes that led me to say this. But as in the case of Wittgenstein's remark, I have perhaps shown where a certain kind of thought begins. As Wittgenstein, I leave it open where thinking of another as a soul might end.²

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² I have already acknowledged many of the roots of my thinking on this issue in the Wittgensteinian conversations furthered by Olli, but also by David and Lars. Finally, I want to acknowledge the short e-mail exchange with Henry J. Staten that occasioned me to look back on my early engagement with these conversations, and consider both the ways in which my own thinking has changed over the last 25 years and how it in some respect has remained the same.

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Ny synvinkel på helighetens flyktighet

Kirsti Suolinna

Westermarcks forskning i Marocko

Westermarck påbörjade sitt fältarbete i Marocko år 1898. Landet hade en sultan som överhuvud, men dennes makt nådde inte över hela landet. Rebelliska stammar kämpade emot sultanens makt att uppbära skatt. Oroligheterna försvårade Westermarcks arbete, men med tiden kunde han fullfölja sin plan att jämföra seder och bruk i olika delar av landet, bland både arabiskt talande och berbertalande stammar (Lahtinen 2000). Strax före första världskriget förlorade sultanen sin makt, då Spanien och Frankrike delade landet som protektorat. Detta skedde år 1912, men den franska makten nådde inte hela landet. Stora Atlasbergen kvarstod som rebelliska till år 1933. Något över tjugo år senare, det vill säga 1956, kunde Marocko utlysa sig som en självständig stat.

När Westermarck påbörjade sitt arbete var han intresserad av bröllopsceremonier som en komplettering till sin stora arkivarie-studie "History of Human Marriage" (1891). Under arbetets gång frapperades Westermarck av ett fenomen, som gick under benämningen *Baraka* eller välsignelse, det vill säga en undergörande kraft från Gud. *Baraka* kan också översättas som helighet. Westermarck fann en mycket mångfasetterad helighet. Hos människor kunde heligheten gå i arv, men den kunde också med fromt liv förvärfvas. Heligheten kunde dessutom gå förlorad. Profeten Mohammed, islams grundare, hade innehaft stor helighet. Den hade gått i arv hos hans släktingar. Dottern Fatima och hennes man, kusinen Ali, innehade denna helighet. Denna släkt hade spritt sig till olika delar av världen. I Marocko hade Mulay Idris, den första sultanen, innehaft detta arv. En gren av denna släkt bestod av sherifferna av Wazzan.

När Westermarck kom till Marocko spred sig många mirakelberättelser om denna Wazzan-sheriff, som dött bara sex år före Westermarcks ankomst till Marocko. Det berättades att sheriffen hade på osynliga vingar flugit till Mecka, och att han ridit över till Gibraltar och i Europa inför ett sällskap förvandlat sig till ett lejon. Det berättades också att han kunde stjäla sina gästers helighet, om dessa i samband med gemensam måltid inte åt sina tallrikar tomma (Westermarck 1915–1916, 13, 77, 78).

De sultaner, som härskade under Westermarcks tid, tillhörde likaså en erkänd släktgren (Alawyzin) med bakgrund hos Profeten. Det oaktat förlorade sultan Abdel-Aziz sin helighet och sin politiska makt eftersom han vid sitt hov umgicks med kristna och var intresserad av västerländska seder och bruk. När hans bror Mulay Hafid år 1909 tagit över makten, tolkades det goda sardin-året som ett tecken på hans helighet. Heligheten stannade i samma släkt fastän en medlem förlorat sin helighet. Westermarck hade all orsak att fundera över helighetens flyktighet, men var det fråga om en chimär? Jag har tillsammans med Olli Lagerspetz (Lagerspetz och Suolinna 2017) diskuterat Westermarcks syn på heligheten. Westermarck ansåg ju att hans resultat utmanade Durkheims sätt att klart skilja mellan heligt och profant. I jämförelse med Durkheim hade Westermarck fördelen av ett eget personligt fältarbete, och därigenom kunde han visa på en högst komplicerad bild av helighetens olika manifestationer. Yttre omständigheter formade heligheten. Det var ett högst flyktigt fenomen.

Ernest Gellners forskning i Marocko

Gellners fältforskning i Marocko utmanar Westermarcks syn på heligheten. Gellner valde att göra en punktstudie, att se på helighetens manifestationer i ett lokalsamhälle. Han valde den heliga bosättningen i Stora Atlasbergen, som ju länge varit ett rebelliskt område. Det kan nämnas att Westermarck våren 1901 besökte Stora Atlasbergen och han fann våren i Atlasbergen högst inbjudande (Westermarck 1918, 146–191). Författaren av Gellners biografi, John A. Hall (Hall 1978, 59), såg åtminstone två orsaker till att

Gellner valde som studieobjekt Atlasbergen. För det första tyckte han om att röra sig i bergslandskap och för det andra kände han till Westermarck som en tidigare forskare och lärare vid London School of Economics and Political Sciences (LSE). Gellner utförde sitt fältarbete under sju olika terminpauser mellan åren 1954 och 1961. Hans hustru deltog i arbetet och enligt Gellner var hennes insats av stor betydelse. Hon var forskningsassistent, sekreterare, kock, psykoterapeut och sjuksköterska. Beskrivningen ger en vink om att arbetet i denna miljö inte var av det lättaste laget. Fotografierna svarade de båda för. I förordet tackade Gellner speciellt Youssef Hazzmaoni, en ung man, som senare blev guide för många vetenskapliga expeditioner och påminner något om El-Baqqali i unga år.

Gellner sökte sig till den centrala knutpunkten i Atlasbergen, nämligen Zawiya Ahansal, en by, som bestod av ca 300 invånare. Byn fanns utsatt på The Times Survey Atlas av år 1922, vilket säkert berodde på dess berömdhet. Byn grundades i slutet av 1300-talet av Sidi Said Ahansal, som av magiska orsaker valde just detta ställe att bosätta sig på. Platsen han valde var naturskön, med snö under vintrarna och tillgång till vatten under somrarna. Skogen, betesmarkerna och för odling lämpade marker gjorde området attraktivt. Byn var tätt bebyggd, husen låg vägg i vägg. En del hus var ståtliga, medan andra var mera anspråkslösa. Invid byn låg Ahansals gravkapell, som i dessa dagar var mål för pilgrimer. Sidi Ahansal ansågs tillhöra en släktgren, som via Idris den äldre förde sin genealogi till Profeten Mohammed. Gellner räknade ut att Ahansal tillhörde den 18:e generationen efter Profeten och att de yngsta invånarna nu tillhörde den 35:e generationen. Personer, som anses höra till Profeten Mohammeds släkt brukar kallas sheriffer. Gellner skiljer dock nu mellan sheriffer och agguram. En sheriff kan vara latent helig, medan en agurran aktivt utövar sin uppgift som förmedlare av Guds välsignelse. I byn Zawiya Ahansal hade sju familjer en agurram som familjefar. Dessa familjer bodde i byns ståtliga hus och familjerna var stora med många barn. Lekmannahushållen bodde mer anspråkslöst och bestod av ett mindre antal barn, eller var helt barnlösa. Två av agurram-familjerna var mer prominenta än de andra.

De var mer uppsökta av pilgrimerna. Pilgrimerna som besökte Ahansalis gravkapell sökte hjälp för sina personliga problem. Pilgrimerna hade gåvor med sig. Agurramen skulle å sin sida vara gästfri mot besökarna. Detta bruk ledde dock ofta till att agurramen kunde föröka sin egendom. Gellner uttryckte detta på följande vis: "Thus his agurram-hood helps to procure the wealth which also marks him out as an agurram. This is a very crucial circle" (Gellner, 1969, 75).

Heligheten var kombinerad med många samhälleliga, om vi så vill saga, profana, uppgifter. Agurramen skulle övervaka val av chefer bland lekmannastammarna. Han förmedlade i konflikter och ledde rättsprocesser då kollektiva eder framfördes. Hans auktoritet hörde ihop med olika mirakelberättelser, så som att han flugit utan tekniska medel till Mecka (jfr Wazzan-sheriffen).

Tolkning

Gellners studier visade att den ärvda heligheten gav samhället stabilitet och historiskt djup. Varje medlem i en helig släkt blev inte nödvändigtvis en agurram, som aktivt utövade sin uppgift. En viss rörlighet fanns. Det gällde att ta sig an uppgiften som agurram. Mirakelberättelserna gällde ofta döda män vars gravar blivit föremål för pilgrimsfärder. Heligheten bekräftades genom berättelser om mirakel.

Westermarck betonade helighetens föränderlighet, men vi torde nu kunna säga att han förbisåg helighetens strukturerande egenskap. Samtidigt tycks en sökan efter tecken på heligheten leva vidare. Här kunde en parallell dras till kalvinismen. Enligt predestinationsläran, som formulerats av John Calvin, har Gud på förhand bestämt vilka människor som kommer till saligheten och vilka som blir utanför. Människan kunde inte påverka sitt eviga öde. Genom att i sitt arbete troget fullfölja sin uppgift kunde människan bekämpa sina tvivel. Men människorna började söka efter tecken på att de tillhörde de utvalda. Framgång i arbetslivet och speciellt ekonomisk framgång tolkades som tecken på att man tillhörde de utvalda (Weber 1904, 1905; i svensk översättning 1978).

Islams lära om den ärvda heligheten ser ut att ge full säkerhet om helighetens gåva. Gellners studie visade dock att även här behövdes tecken på att heligheten var verksam. Agurramens ekonomiska framgång gav honom själv och omgivningen trovärdighet om att heligheten var en verksam, undergörande kraft.

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Anteckningar om bastuns fenomenologi

Antony Fredriksson

Tidigt i december, under en förvånansvärt kall söndagsmorgon, beger vi oss mot kulturbastun Nuuk vid utkanten av Hradec Králové. Till sällskapet hör undertecknad, doktor Ryan Manhire samt docent Olli Lagerspetz. Vår promenad löper längs med floden Labe (Elbe), till höger reser sig ett komplex av panelbyggnader från sovjet-tiden, till vänster öppnar sig vyn över en utsträckt äng med några trailers.

Nuuk består av en liten reception med förfriskningar, varmt te, påsoppor och öl från bryggeriet Kozel. Själva bastuavdelningen består av en bastu formad som en tunna och en mera reslig vedeldad trailerbastu.

Väl inne i värmen påbörjar vi en dialog som intuitivt kommer att inspirera följande iakttagelser om bastuns fenomenologi.

§ 1

Michel Foucault använde begreppet heterotopi för att beskriva en plats från vilken subjektet kan inta ett perspektiv som är oberoende av eller utanför rådande hierarkier och institutionella ideologier. Skeppet har ofta fått stå som exempel för heterotopin: sjömän har inget fosterland, havet – i varje fall på internationella vatten – hör inte till någon nation. Det är ingen slump att idéer som födde anarkismen och socialistisk internationalism ofta uppstod till sjöss. De nationella gränser som definierar vår identitet, vår lagstiftning och våra seder, saknas ute på oceanen. Från skeppet kan subjektet betrakta de olika rådande institutionella sammanhangen och för en gångs skull vara delvis utanför deras inordnande tendens. Något i den stilen tänkte sig Foucault (1997, 336).

Jag är inte den första som drar paralleller mellan bastun och Foucaults heterotopi. I bastun är alla avklädda och med nakenheten försvinner våra identitetsmarkörer som inordnar oss i en viss position i samhället. De yttre markörerna för kön, klass, hierarkiska strukturer och social status lämnas kvar i omklädningsrummet. I bastun råder en form av direkt demokrati, envar har rätten att inta positionen som den som kastar bad på stenarna och alla har rätt att bestämma över värmenivån och intensiteten. Den här platsen utgör en avvikelse från andra offentliga rum, i och med att bastun har sin egen kodex som skiljer sig från prestations- och konsumtions-samhällets riktlinjer. Foucault själv hängde sig upp på att den skandinaviska bastun innefattar en totalt sekulariserad renlighetsrit, befriad från andlig mening: en rit för pur hygien (Foucault 1997, 334). Här har han naturligtvis fel. Men hans beskrivning av platser som möjliggör ett perspektiv utanför den rådande ordningen, ger en fruktbar förståelsegrund för bastun.

§ 2

Ifall vi nu går med på huvuddragen i Foucaults analys av heterotopin och drar paralleller till bastun som en plats som innebär en avvikelse från den normativa ordningen, väcks frågan: Är bastun utanför den moderna civiliserade samhälleliga ordningen – innebär bastun ett brott mot en rådande ordning?

Olli Lagerspetz tangerar den här frågan i sin bok om smuts. Han beskriver hur historiker ofta sett den finska bastun som en plats för en praxis som avspeglar en förmodern kultur, där civilisationens kyskhetsideal och tabun om nakenhet och kön fortfarande inte fått fotfäste. Men Lagerspetz faller inte för den här sortens enkla kulturhistoriska förklaringar. I *A Philosophy of Dirt* beskriver han hur italienaren Giuseppe Acerbi fascinerades av bastun under sina resor i Finland i början av 1800-talet. Acerbi var förvånad över hur obrydda badarna var över sin nakenhet i den blandkönade bastun. Han märkte dock att han som främling lyckades skapa en viss reaktion hos kvinnorna i bastun då han klampade in oanmäld, ljuset som sken in då han öppnade dörren fick kvinnorna att maka på sig

och det blev tydligt att skenet gjorde dom medvetna om sin nakenhet. Acerbi roade sig med att provocera fram dessa kyska reaktioner, han tänkte sig att han på det här sättet förde in lite upplysning i den för övrigt ociviliserade bastun (Lagerspetz 2018, 139).

Lagerspetz påpekar att det här avslöjar en viss blind punkt, inte bara hos Acerbi, utan även hos historikerna som enkelspårigt ser bastun som ett uttryck för det förmoderna, ociviliserade och rent av barbariska (bland annat fördömde reformisterna i Finland bland bastun som en skamlig institution). Frågan är: ur vems perspektiv är nakenheten i bastun ett tecken på primitivitet, okyskhet eller någonting ociviliserat? Det blir klart att bastubadarna inte ansåg sig bryta mot någon ordning, för dem var bastun inte en plats för erotiskt umgänge i kontrast till vardagens kyskhetsnormer. Tvärtom, i bastun blev ens blick mera kontrollerad, man aktade sig för att stirra på den andras nakenhet, kontrollen blev skärpt. I bastun väcker en blottad kropp en större ansvarskänsla för hur man använder den egna blicken. Det här innebär att bastun definitivt har sin egen institutionella ordning. Möjligen en ordning som omvandlar det vardagliga, utan att upphäva det vardagliga.

§ 3 Vinterbad

På vintern kan man kombinera bastun med vaksimning. Växlingen mellan den varma bastun och det kalla vattnet skapar ett särpräglat rus i kroppen. Genom pendling mellan extrem kyla och värme gör sig kroppens levnadsmekanismer påminda. Det kalla havets omfamning skapar en chock som håller i sig även då du stiger upp ur vaken. Alla tanketrådar kapas av och medvetandet blir blankt, sinnen skärps, det inre grubblandet stannar av och den yttre världen tar över ens uppmärksamhet: där blåser vinden, där knastrar isen, där skriker måsen och jaget är tyst.

Vinterbad innebär att du medvetet och med vilja utsätter din kropp för extrema temperaturer. Ifall jag av misstag faller genom isen är upplevelsen en helt annan: kylan och chocken *drabbar* mig, medan att bestämt gå ner i en vak är ett val och därmed någonting man utsätter sig för i stället för att vara utsatt för. Men då du väl är

i vattnet, tar en annan mera direkt vilja över, kroppen börjar fungera på det sätt som den bör fungera i extrema situationer, den är inte mera styrd av det jag kallar jaget, kanske den aldrig är det.

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Filosofi pilan esineenä

Eerik Lagerspetz

1.

Eri säätyihin ja ammattikuntiin kohdistuva pilanteko on vanha perinne. Esimerkiksi lääkäreitä ja juristeja on pilkattu kautta aikojen. Modernin lääketieteen kehitys on vaimentanut lääkäreihin kohdistunutta naurua, mutta lakimieshuumori elää ja voi hyvin. Papiston pilkkaamisella on silläkin pitkät perinteet, mutta joinakin aikoina se on vaatinut erityistä rohkeutta.

Tämän esityksen perustana on se huomio, että oppineet, ja heidän joukossaan filosofit, ovat kautta aikojen myös olleet naurun kohteina, vanhahtavalla suomella ”pilan esineinä”. Huumorin suhde filosofiaan on toki laajemminkin kiinnostava aihe. Tästä esityksestä olen kuitenkin rajannut pois sekä filosofisiin teksteihin itseensä sisältyvän pilanteon, että kaikenlaiseen huumoriin usein liittyvät filosofiset aspektit. Esityksessämme ei tavoitella kattavuutta. Tavoitteena on vaatimattomammin vain nostaa eri ajoilta esimerkkejä siitä, mikä filosofeissa ja filosofiassa on kirvoittanut naurua, ja mitä tämä pilailu mahdollisesti voisi kertoa filosofiasta itsestään.

2.

Filosofien pilkka on suurin piirtein yhtä vanhaa kuin filosofia julkisena toimintana. Vanhin lukemani filosofeihin kohdistettu irtavilju on Aristofaneen komedia *Pilvet* (419–416 e.a.a.). Siinä tunnetusti tehdään pilaa Sokrateesta, joka esitetään samalla kertaa saivartelevana sofistina, joutavan spekulaation harrastajana ja Ateenan perinteistä uskontoa halventavana skeptikkona. Nämä

kolme filosofin karikatyyriä tulevat vastaan myöhemmissäkin koomisissa teksteissä. Lukijan, joka on tottunut Platonin antamaan kuvaan Sokrateesta, on vaikea tunnistaa Aristofaneen ylimielistä ja röyhkeää filosofia, saati nauraa hänelle. Sokrates vilahtelee myös muissa antiikin komedioissa. Aristofanes tuo hänet uudelleen näyttämölle *Sammakoissa* ja *Linnuissa*, ja vähemmän tunnetut komediakirjailijat kuten Kallias, Eupolis, Ameipsias ja Telekleides irvailevat hänelle hekin. Sokrates oli tunnettu hahmo, julkkis, jonka näyttäminen koomisessa yhteydessä varmaan itsessään sai katsojien suupielet nykimään. *Pilvet* muistuttaa meille samalla, että pilalla voi olla vakavia seurauksia. Sokrates tuomittiin opetustensa vuoksi kuolemaan, ja *Sokrateen puolustuspuheessa* Platon antaa ymmärtää, että Aristofaneen näytelmässään antama kuva filosofista osaltaan vaikutti tuomioon. Ehkä tämä kokemus aiheutti sen, että Platon halusi karkottaa näytelmäkirjailijat ihannevaltiostaan. Tämä komedian halveksunta muuttui Platonin teosten myötä osaksi intellektuaalista perinnettä; surullinen lopputulos, koska Platonin kuvaama Sokrates oli itse selvästikin huumorintajuinen henkilö.

Myöhäisantiikkiin kuuluva Lukianoksen (n. 125–160) *Filosofisten lahkojen huutokauppa* on puolestaan eräänlainen sketsisarja, jossa käydään läpi Rooman valtakunnassa suositut filosofiset suuntaukset, ja tehdään ne yksi toisensa jälkeen naurunalaisiksi. Osansa saavat niin Pythagoras, Herakleitos, kyynikot, epikurolaiset, peripateetikot, Sokrates kuin stoalaisetkin. Viimeksi mainittuja saa näytelmässä edustaa antiikin ehkä etevin loogikko Khrysippos (279–207 e.a.a.). Näytelmässä ylijumala Zeus, Hermeen avustuksella, tuo filosofit myytäviksi kuin orjamarkkinoilla ikään. Ostajat tenttaavat filosofeja. Lukianos oli itse kiinnostunut filosofiasta, ja tunsii irvailemansa koulukunnat melko hyvin, vaikka näytelmän filosofien antamissa vastauksissa näkyvät myös aikakauden pinnalliset ennakkokäsitykset. Esimerkiksi loogikko Khrysippoksen (Lampénin suomennoksessa¹ Krysippos) filosofista dialogia parodioiva tentti etenee seuraavaan tapaan:

¹ Lampénin käännös on sievistellen sanottuna melko vapaa.

Krysippos: Minä teen sinut noloksi ja pakotan sinut vaikenemaan ja aikaansaamaan kauhean hävityksen sinun aivoissasi, niin, ja mikä vielä pahempi on, minä tuossa tuokioissa muutan sinut kiveksi.

Ostaja: Kiveksikö?

Krysippos: Tässä seuraa todistus. Kivihän on esine, eikö totta?

Ostaja: Tietysti.

Krysippos: Elävä olento on myöskin esine?

Ostaja: Niin.

Krysippos: Sinä olet myöskin elävä olento?

Ostaja: Niin, luulisin.

Krysippos: Sinä siis olet kivi – koska olet esine.

Ostaja: Ei totta toisen kerran. Mutta etkös tahtoisi olla niin ystävällinen, että taikasi peruuttaisit ja tekisit minusta taas ihmisen.

Jatkossa Khrysippos peruuttaa (virhepäätelmään perustuvan) ”taikansa” korrektilla päätelmällä. Dialogi on kiinnostava siksi, että logiikan samaistaminen hämäykseen ja tyhjänpäiväiseen viisasteluun on myöhemmän filosofiaan kohdistuneen pilailun toistuva teema.

3.

Antiikin filosofiaan kohdistuva pilailu kohdistui vertaisiin ja oli suunnattu vertaisille. Aristofaneen ja Lukianoksen pilan kohteena olivat ilmiöt, joita he pitivät älyllisinä muoteina, ja jotka komedioiden yleisön oletettiin jossakin määrin tuntevan. Tämän tyyppisiä komedioita ei keskiajalla kirjoitettu. Kuitenkin jo varhaiskeskiajalla kukoisti parodinen kirjallisuus, jonka kohteena oli erityisesti kirkon virallinen ideologia ja rituaalit, mutta myös kielioppi, kouluviisaus ja aikakauden tieteelliset menetelmät (Bahtin 1995, 15).

Renessanssin myötä komediakirjallisuus nousee taas arvoonsa. Erasmus Rotterdamilaisen *Tyhmyyden ylistys* (1509) pilkkaa monien muiden asioiden ohella myös aikansa filosofiaa. Erasmus oli itse merkittävä filosofi, ja hänen satiirinen teoksensa vilisee filosofisia viittauksia. Teologit, intellektuaalisesti paljon

vaikutusvaltaisempi joukko, ovat pilkan pääkohteita, mutta Erasmus jakaa muutaman läimäyksen filosofeillekin:

Vaikka he eivät tunne edes itseään ja pudota mätkähtävät tämän tästä aivan keskellä tietä avautuvaan kuoppaan tai kompastuvat aivan nenänsä edessä kohoavaan kiveen, koska ovat tihrusilmäisiä ja hajamielisiä, he siitä huolimatta väittävät havaitsevansa pitkän matkan päästä milloin ideoita, milloin universaalisia, milloin perusmuotoja tai alkuaineita tai hahmoja ja tosiolioita, toisin sanoen niin hiuksenhienosti eriytyviä asioita, että Lynkeuksenkin olisi ilmeisesti tunnustettava voimattomuutensa.

Erasmus oli kääntänyt Lukianosta, ja tunsii siis tarkastelemamme perinteen. Humanisti Erasmusta ärsyttää erityisesti Platonin uudelleen löytämisen myötä alkanut geometrian ja astronomian liittäminen filosofiaan Irvaillessaan aikansa filosofialle oppinut humanisti omaksuu jopa hieman populistisen sävyn:

Milloin marssitetaan esiin A, milloin B tukemaan toisiaan tai törmäämään toisiaan vastaan niin, että oppimaton kansa menee täysin sekaisin.

Ymmärsikö 1500-luvun ”oppimaton kansa” Erasmuksen omista latinankielisistä kirjoituksista sen enempää?

Vielä *Tyhmyyden ylistystäkin* häijympi puheenvuoro humanistien ja skolastikkojen välisessä kiistassa on *Epistolae obscurorum virorum* eli *Hämäräin miesten kirjeet* (1515–1517). Teos on olevinaan skolastikko-teologien välistä kirjeenvaihtoa; todellisuudessa se on, nykyterminologiaa käyttäksämme, humanistien harjoittamaa trollausta. ”Kirjeet” on kirjoitettu tahallisen huonolla latinalla, ne ovat täynnä virheellisiä viittauksia, naurettavaa etymologiaa ja epäilyttäviä raamatunselityksiä. Hämärämiehet käyvät kirjeenvaihtoa erityisesti vilkkaasta sukupuolielämästään, mutta myös kertovat juoruja, panettelevat vastustajiaan ja saivartelevat joutavuuksista. He mahtailevat myös logiikan taidoillaan. Maisteri Bartholomaeus Kuckuck kertoo

maisteri Ortvinukselle tapaamastaan juristista, tohtori Martinus Gronigenista, jonka hän päihittää väittelyssä:

Ja uskon, ettei hän tunne riviäkään *Sententiarum libri* –teoksesta eikä hän kykene muotoilemaan minkäänlaista syllogismia sen enempiä Baroco kuin Celarent –muotoonkaan koska hän ei ole loogikko. (...) Sitten kävin vielä enemmän hänen kimppuunsa ja sanoin: ”Minä väitän, että sinä olet aasi. Ensimmäinen premissi: Se, joka kantaa taakkaa, on aasi. Sinä taas annat taakkaa: olet siis aasi. Jälkimmäisen premissin todistan sillä, että sinä annat tuota kirjaa.” (...) Hän ei sillä hetkellä ollut niin nokkela, että olisi kyennyt kiistämään ensimmäisen premissin, sillä sitä en olisi pystynyt perustelemaan, mutta yhtä kaikki tiesin, ettei hän ymmärtänyt logiikasta mitään.

Sententiarum libri on maineikkaan skolastikon Petrus Lombarduksen pääteos. ”Baroco” ja ”Celarent” taas ovat kahdesta skolastisen logiikan hyväksymästä päättelymuodoista (yhteensä niitä on 24; ks. Spade 2002, 21–25) käytettyjä nimityksiä.

4.

Erasmuksen aikaisessa kansanomaisessa huumorissa oppineiden maailmanselittämistarve johtuu samaan tapaan pilkan kohteeksi. Arkkikeppostelija Till Eulenspiegelin (suomennoksessa Till Pöllöpeili) seikkailut sijoittuvat perinteen mukaan 1300-luvulle, mutta ensimmäinen Eulenspiegel –tarinoiden kokoelma ilmestyi ilmeisesti vuonna 1478. Vanhin säilynyt laitos *Ein kurtzweilig lesen von Dyl Ulen spiegel, geboren uss dem land zu Brunnswick on vuodelta 1515*. Alkuperäiset Eulenspiegel –tarinat olivat paljon suorasukaisempia kuin suomeksi käännetty valikoima (*Till Pöllöpeilin ilveellisiä kepposia*, 1906). 1500-luvulla, kuten nykyäänkin, huumori liittyi pitkälti siihen, mistä puhuminen katsottiin sopimattomaksi, kuten ruumiin eritteet ja sukupuoliasiat (Lehto 2020). Monet Pöllöpeili-tarinat ovat vanhaa yleiseurooppalaista kansanperinnettä; esimerkiksi suomalaisissa hölmöläistarinoissa on samoja aineksia kuin Pöllöpeilin

seikkailuissa, kuten vaikkapa yritys tuoda valoa sisään säkillä kantaen.

Kuljeksiva ilveilijä Till Pöllöpeili saattoi kepposillaan naurun alaiseksi milloin minkin ammattikunnan, suuria herroja ja papistoakaan säästämättä. Suomennetun valikoiman yhdennessätoista luvussa ”Till harjoittaa tiedettä” Pöllöpeili vaeltaa Böömin maahan (jonne moni muukin merkittävä henkilö on vaeltanut), ”Pragin” eli Prahan kaupunkiin. Siellä hän ilmoittaa julkisesti ”ryhtyvänsä selvittämään kaikkein vaikeimpia ja pulmallisimpia kysymyksiä, joista kukaan muu oppinut ei voinut antaa selkoa”. Tästä röyhkeydestä närkästyneenä yliopiston rehtori kutsuttaa kaikki oppineet neuvottelemaan, miten tuo vallattomuus voitaisiin torjua ja Pöllöpeili saattaa häpeään. Oppineet päättävät asettaa Tillille kysymyksiä, joihin kukaan ei voi vastata. Mutta Till osaakin vastata joka kysymykseen:

Rehtori lausui: ”Kolmas kysymys kuuluu: Missä on maailman keskipiste?” – ”Tässä! Tässä, missä minä seison”, vastasi Pöllöpeili, ”ja jos ette mieli uskoa, niin mitatkaa vain nuoralla. Jos puuttuu oljenkorren leveyttäkään, niin olkoon minun väitteeni väärä.”

Huomaamme, että viisaana miehenä Till julisti vain osaavansa *vastata* kaikkiin kysymyksiin, väittämättä, että hänen antamansa vastaukset välttämättä olisivat oikeita.

5.

Jos Pöllöpeilin tarinoista on meille saatavilla vain siistitty versio, François Rabelaisin *Gargantua* (1534) on onneksi käännetty suomeksi kokonaan, kaikkine törkeyksineen. Myös Gargantuan seikkailuissa esiintyy filosofi. Pariisin vierailullaan Gargantua tulee ottaneeksi mukaansa Notre Damen kirkonkellot, ja pariisilaiset lähettävät Sorbonnen oppineen, mestari Janotus de Bragmardon, perustelemaan Gargantualle, miksi heidän on saatava kellonsa takaisin. Mestarin tietämättä kellot on jo palautettu, joten Gargantua ja hänen seurueensa voivat keskittyä nauttimaan retorisesta esityksestä. Sorbonnen yliopisto oli yrittänyt kieltää

Rabelaisin ensimmäisen teoksen, *Pantagruelin*, ja Janotus de Bragmardon hahmo on ehkä kirjailijan yritys maksaa samalla mitalla. Rabelais joutui kuitenkin nöyrytykseen: vuoden 1542 painoksesta suorat viitaukset Sorbonnen yliopistoon on postettu, ja mestari de Bragmardo nimitetään ”solistiksi”, ei enää ”sorbonnelaiseksi” (Bahtin 1995, 192).

Eri aikoina kirjoitetussa filosofiaan kohdistuvissa pilailuissa muotoillaan monenlaisia ”todisteluita”, mutta yksikään niistä ei ylitä mestari de Bragmardon suoritusta:

Hyvä! nyt todistan teille, mistä syystä teidän on annettava kellot minulle. *Ego sic argumentor:*
Ominis clocha clochabilis, in clocheria clochando, clochans clohativo clochare facit clochabiliter clochantes. Ergo gluc.

Hah, haha, tämä se vasta puhumista on! Todisteeni on *in tertio primae, Darii*’ssa tai jossain muualla.

Mestari de Bragmardon mainitsema ”*Darii*” on jälleen eräs päättelymuoto syllogismien kaanonissa (”Kaikki A:t ovat B, jokin x on A, siis jokin x on B”; Spade 2002, 21–25). Muuta selitystä kaipaavaa ei de Bragmardon todistelussa olekaan: se on hölynpölyä alusta loppuun. Latinankielellä ilveily ja kirkon käyttämän latinan parodiointi kuuluivat olennaisena osana keskiajan ja renessanssin huumoriin.² Tämä irvailu oli kaksiteräistä: latinaa ymmärtämätön kansa nauroi oppineiden käsittämättömille puheille, klassista latinaa osaavat humanistit kuten Rabelais tai *Hämäräin miesten kirjeiden* kirjoittajat taas kirkonmiesten käyttämälle kömpelölle munkkilatinalle.

6.

Paljon myöhemmin kirjoitetussa Ludvig Holbergin komediassa *Erasmus Montanus* (1731) on meille jo tutuksi tulleita aineksia.

² Muistumana tästä huumorin lajista meille on jäänyt taikasana ”hokkus pokkus”, joka on väännelmä ehtoollisella käytetystä ilmauksesta *hoc est corpus*.

Päähenkilö on opiskelija, joka poikkeaa kotiseudullaan, pienessä tanskalaiskylässä. Alkuperäiseltä nimeltään hän on vaatimattomasti Rasmus Berg, mutta nykyään peräti *philosophiae baccalaureus* Erasmus Montanus. Montanuksen intohimona on väitteleminen:

Minä osaan väitellä hyvällä latinan kielellä mistä aiheesta tahansa: jos joku tahtoo sanoa, että tämä pöytä on kynttilänjalka, niin minä puolustan sitä; jos joku sanoo lihaa tai leipää oljeksi, niin sitäkin minä puolustan, olen tehnyt niin monen monituista kertaa.

Latinaa viljelevä Montanus kulkee ympäriinsä mahtailemassa, ja muun muassa ”todistaa” äitinsä olevan kivi aivan samaan tapaan kuin Krysippos todistelee Lukianoksen komediassa. Filosofia on Montanukselle lopulta vain väline:

Jos on hyvin harjaantunut logiikkaan ja metafysiikkaan, niin pelastuu joka tilanteesta ja pystyy keskustelemaan kaikista aiheista, vaikka vieraistakin. En tiedäkään semmoista aihetta, minkä puolustamisesta minä en selviäisi.

Kaikista tilanteista logiikka ja metafysiikka eivät kuitenkaan Montanusta pelasta. Mahtaileva ja viisasteleva filosofi joutuu lopulta nöyrytykseen. Ei siinä kyllin, että hän joutuu lopettamaan väittelyn ja latinalla ylvästelyn; saadakseen rakastamansa naisen hän joutuu jopa peruuttamaan väitteensä, jonka mukaan maa olisi pallon muotoinen. Moinen väite on Montanuksen tulevan appiukon (*in spe*) mielestä pahimmanlaatuista harhaoppia, eikä hän anna tyttärtään harhaoppiselle. Aluksi oppinut nuorimies yrittää vastustella:

Montanus: Kun joku loukkaa filosofiaa, niin hän loukkaa minun kunniaani. Kyllä minä pidän mademoiselle Lisbedistä, mutta *metaphysikani* ja *logicani* ovat minulle tärkeimmät.

Nille: Oi poikakultani, mitä minä kuulenkaan, oletko mennyt kihloihin kahden muun tytön kanssa Kööpenhaminassa?

Montanus joutuu kuitenkin lopulta antamaan periksi maan muotoa koskevissa näkemyksissäänkin. Lukijaa (tai näytelmän katsojaa) alkaa Montanuksen alennustila jo säälistää. Tosin Montanuksen tinkimättömyyden takana on muutakin kuin rakkaus totuuteen:

Emmekä me oppineet ihmiset muutenkaan luovu mielipiteistämme, vaan puolustamme viimeiseen mustepisaraan saakka sitä, mitä kerran olemme sanoneet.

Mihin Holberg pilansa kohdistaa? Holbergin komedioista puuttuu se hierarkioita ravisteleva sävy, jonka Bahtin (1995) liittää erityisesti keskiajan ja renessanssin nauruun, mutta jonka hän on taipuvainen yhdistämään kaikkeen komiikkaan. Kun *Erasmus Montanusta* lukee muiden, samoihin aikoihin kirjoitettujen Holbergin komedioiden kanssa, joutuu toteamaan, että pilkan takana piilee syvä konservatismi. Jokaisen on pysyttävä omalla paikallaan ja säätynsä asettamissa rajoissa; tämä on niin *Valtioviisaan kannunvalajan*, *Jeppie Niilonpojan* kuin *Erasmus Montanuksenkin* perimmäinen viesti. Rahvaan ei sovi pyrkiä herroja neuvomaan, mutta oppineet eivät liioin saa sekoittaa rahvaan päätä omalla oppineisuudellaan. Oppineet eivät liioin saa yrittää valistaa rahvasta. Jos tavallinen kansa ei voi käsittää maan pallonmuotoisuutta, sen on saatava pitää päänsä tässäkin asiassa. Holbergin komedia antaa myös vihjeitä siitä, miksi filosofit, oppineet tai yleensäkin vapaiden ammattien harjoittajat olivat erityisen sopivia pilkan kohteita. Heillä ei ollut asemaa perinteisissä hierakioissa, ei hierarkian antamaa legitimaatiota eikä turvaa. Pikemminkin he yrittivät rakentaa omia hierarkioitaan väitettyihin erityiskykyihinsä vedoten. Perinteisille herroille he olivat tungetteliijoita, rahvaalle edelleen herroja.³

7.

Jos Rabelaisille ja Holbergille logiikka ja metafysiikka olivat tyhjää viisastelua, Goethen *Faustissa* (1808) ne näyttäytyvät vapaan

³ Nämä huomiot perustuvat Mikko Lagerspetzin kanssa käytyihin keskusteluihin.

ajattelun esteinä. Mefistofeles, ”henki joka kieltää aina”, nujertaa innokkaan ylioppilaan opintosuunnitelmat yhden toisensa jälkeen. Jokainen tiedekunta saa ironiasta osansa, mutta irtailu aloitetaan yleisimmästä tieteestä:

Niin päivä käyttäkää, se kuluu pian,
 mut uupuu aika, jos järjestys on poissa.
 Siks saakoon ystävä, opinnoissa
Collegium logicum ensi sijan.
 Saa henki säännöstelyt niin,
 puristuu Espanjan saappaisiin⁴;
 nyt aatos hiljaa hiipii vaan
 niin varovasti radallaan
 ja on mahdoton ristiin rastiin sen
 vale-virvana liehua harhaillen.
 Miten päätelmä tehdään, opitaan,
 ei henkäyksessä ja solkenaan
 se vapaasti enää tapahdukaan,
 vaan: yks! kaks! kolme! temppujen mukaan.
 Yks poljin liittyy sataan lankaan,
 käy sukkulat ees-taas niisissä kankaan,
 ja langat juoksee yhtä perää;
 lyö kaide – ja yhteen ne kaikki kerää.
 Filosofi silloin sisään saa,
 niin täytyy olla, hän todistaa:
 Ens säie on näin, toinen on näin,
 siis solmuun kolmas ja neljäs näin:
 mut ensi ja toinen jos evätään,
 niin kolmas ja neljäs ei pädekään.

Mefistofeleen logiikkaan kohdistuvan skeptisismien takana oleva ajatus tiivistyy hänen kuuluisimmassa – usein vähän epätarkasti siteeratussa – repliikissään: ”Harmaata, rakas ystävä, on kaikki teoria/Ja vihreä elämän kultainen puu” (*Grau, teurer Freund, ist alle Theorie/ Und grün des Lebens goldener Baum*).

⁴ “Espanjalaiseksi saappaaksi” kutsuttiin kidutusvälinettä, johon jalka puristettiin.

8.

Logiikan pilkkaajien sankan joukon viimeinen puheenvuoro annettakoon August Strindbergille. *Punaisessa huoneessa* (1879) käydään filosofinen mittelö, jossa vastakkain ovat Fichten filosofiasta innostunut taiteilija Olle Montanus (Holbergin päähenkilön ilmeinen sukulainen, ainakin henkinen sellainen) ja tuomari Falk. Kuten Holbergin päähenkilölle, näillekin oppineille herroille filosofia on väline sosiaalisessa pelissä. Pelin avaa filosofoiva notaari Ygberg:

Taideteos voidaan käsittääkseni jakaa kahteen osaan: sisältöön ja muotoon. Mitä tämän taideteoksen sisältöön tulee, se on syvälinen ja yleisinhimillinen, aihe on kauttaaltaan antoisa ja siihen sisältyvät kaikki ne käsite- ja voimatekijät, jotka taiteellisessa työssä voivat tulla kysymykseen; mitä taas muotoon tulee, jonka sinänsä de facto on ilmaistava käsite eli toisin sanoen ehdoton identiteetti, oleminen, minuun – niin en voi olla pitämättä sitä vähemmän adekvaattina.

Seurue pitää tätä Falkille heitettynä taisteluhansikkaana. Falk ”tähtää umpimähkään, lataa Aristoteleella ja pamauttaa”:

Mitä notaari tarkoittaa sanalla adekvaatti? En muista Aristoteleen käyttävän sanaa metafysiikassaan.

Olle Montanus kuitenkin heittää Aristoteleen takaisin vastustajalleen:

Vaikka olenkin oppimaton mies, rohkenen kuitenkin epäillä, mahtoiko tuomari äskeisellä kumota vastustajansa todisteet. Uskon, että adekvaatti voidaan asettaa määräykseksi loogisessa päätelmässä ja saattaa sellaisessa esiintyäkin siitä huolimatta, ettei Aristoteles mainitse sanaa metafysiikassaan.

Falkin on nyt ”pelastettava Upsalan kunnia” itseoppineilta vastustajiltaan. Hän ”heitteä filosofisen korttipakan nurin ja saa

käteensä ässän”, eli tukkii vastustajansa suun loogisella hämäyksellä:

Herra Montanus on kieltänyt yläauseen eli yksinkertaisesti sanonut *nego majorem!* Hyvä! Selitän edelleen, että hän on tehnyt itsensä syyppääksi *poster priukseen*; kun hänen piti tehdä sarvipäätelmä, hän erehtyikin tekemään *ferioquen*, sen sijaan että olisi tehnyt *barbaran*; hän on unohtanut kultaisen säännön: *Caesare Camestres festino barocco secundo*, ja siksi hänen päätelmästäan tuli *limitatiivinen!* Enkö ole oikeassa, hyvät herrat!

-Ihan oikeassa, ihan oikeassa, vastasivat kaikki, lukuun ottamatta filosofiparia, sillä he eivät milloinkaan olleet perehtyneet logiikkaan.

Tuomari Falkin latinankieliset termit kuten *ferioque* ja *barbara* ovat jälleen niitä koululogiikan sääntöjä ja päätelmäskeemoja, joiden ulkoa opettelulla opiskelijoita kiusattiin melkein tuhannen vuoden ajan. ”*Caesare Camestres...*” on validit syllogismit mieleen palauttavan, heksametrisäkeisiin puettun listan toinen säe (Spade 2002, 24). Keskustelun yleisökin tunnistaa termit, mutta ei muista niiden merkityksestä enää mitään, koskapa kerran Falkin hämäys menee heihin täydestä.

Renessanssista Strindbergin jatkuva filosofialle irvailu on olennaisesti pilailua skolastiikan läpi suodatetun aristoteelisen filosofian kustannuksella. Aristotelismi säilytti vaikutusvaltaisen asemansa yliopistoissa aina 1800-luvulle ja se, minkä nykyään miellämme uuden ajan alun filosofiaksi, Baconista ja Descartesista aina Fregeen, kohdisti kritiikkinsä osiin samoihin akateemisen filosofian piirteisiin kuin kaunokirjalliset pilkkaajat. Logiikka oli viimeinen alue, jossa Aristoteleen ajattelu säilytti arvovaltansa, aina 1900-luvulle saakka. Aristoteelisen syllogistiikan vaihduttua moderniin logiikkaan päättyi ilmeisesti myös logiikalle irvailu. (Lukijalle jää arvioitavaksi, onko moderni logiikka vähemmän naurettavaa vai onko siitä muista syistä vain vaikeampi tehdä pilaa.)

9.

1900-luvulta nostan filosofialle irvailevien kirjailijoiden joukosta vain yhden, jo melko unohdetun esimerkin. Italialaisen Giovanni Papinin (1881–1956) satiirisen juttukokoelman *Gog* (1931) päähenkilö on Mr. Gog, sivistymätön ja hieman epämiellyttävä, mutta ehtymättömän utelias rahamies. Gog on päättänyt käyttää loppuelämänsä ja valtavan varallisuutensa tutustuakseen länsimaiseen sivistykseen, joka on tähän asti jäänyt hänelle jokseenkin tuntemattomaksi. Vaelluksillaan Gog tapaa lukuisia merkillisiä, kiinnostavia ja irvokkaita hahmoja, joista useimmat fanaattisesti julistavat hänelle kukin omaa pelastussanomaansa – ja yrittävät lypsää häneltä rahaa kummallisten suunnitelmiensa toteuttamiseen. Tarinoiden joukossa on todellisten henkilöiden (esimerkiksi Freudin, Leninin ja Einsteinin) fiktiivisiä haastatteluja, mutta enin osa Gogin tapaamista henkilöistä on pikemminkin aatteiden kuin henkilöiden karikatyyreja. Papini itse oli kiinnostunut filosofiasta, uransa alkuvaiheissa erityisesti pragmatismista. Monet Gogin juttukumppaneista ovat enemmän tai vähemmän filosofeja, esimerkiksi Aboan yliopiston yleisen problematiikan professori Murmienni, jonka Gog kohtaa Turun vierailullaan.⁵ Gogin tapaamista filosofeista mieleenpainuvin on kuitenkin pompeijilainen professori Caccavone, metasofian kehittäjä.

Professori Caccavone ottaa yliopiston kolmannen tehtävän hyvin vakavasti. Hän on lukuisien opetusvirkojensa ohella

Kasvien oikeuksien liiton puheenjohtaja, Kansainvälisen terveen järjen hävittämiskomissionin jäsen, koska terve järki katsottiin metasofialle tuhoisaksi; harhaoppisten suojeluseuran varapuheenjohtaja; kolmen kustannustoimiston johtokunnan jäsen; Maallikkoyhtymän Tietosanakirjan ylitoimittaja; Tarpeettomien tietojen levittämiskeskuksen väliaikainen toimitsija; kansallisen pneumaattisen tyhjennysseuran rahastonhoitaja;

⁵ Gogin Turun-vierailusta kerrotaan Papinin teoksen jatko-osassa *Il libro negro* (1951) jota ei ole suomennettu.

maailmanliikehtimisen lopettamisen piirineuvoston puheenjohtaja; metasofisen päivälehden päätoimittaja; lasten hoidon aikakauskirjan, metempirisen politiikan viikkolehden, Atlantiksen tutkimuksen kuukauslehden ynnä muutamien muiden aikakauskirjojen päätoimittaja.

Keskustelussa professori selittää Gogille filosofiansa ydinajatusta.

Muutamia vuosia sitten, hän sanoi, erään sisilialaisen filosofin onnistui supistaa äärimmilleen näyttämällä toteen kuuluisa yhtälö: oleminen = ajatteleminen. Mutta hän ei huomannut, että hänen idealistiseen ja absolutistiseen monismiinsa oli jäänyt yksi dualismin harmillinen jäte. Yhtälön itsepintainen väittäminen, vaikkakin pohjana on sen jäsenten samaisuus, sisältää aina, jos ei muuten niin näennäisesti ja ilmiöllisesti, kahden jäsenen olemassaolon. (...) Minä olen mennyt vielä pitemmälle kuin sisilialainen pääidealisti ja koettanut analysoida niitä kahta yhtälön jäsentä, jotka hän tahtoo samaistaa.

Analyysissaan Caccavone toteaa, että ”oleminen on siinä määrin universaalinen käsite, että se ei merkitse kerrassaan mitään”. Ajatteleminen sen sijaan on ”kovempi pähkinä”. Mutta empirismin ja nominalismin perusteiden avulla Caccavone osoittaa, että ajattelemineenkaan ei lopulta ole mitään.

Johtopäätös: koko tuo mainio ajatus, johon koko oleminen tahdottiin palauttaa, on olematon: se on pelkkä kuvitelma tai yksinkertainen sovinnaisuus. Siihen nykyaikaisen filosofian sankarillinen ajanjakso päättyykin. Sen aloitti Descartes sanomalla: Ajattelen, siis olen olemassa. Ja sen päättää Caccavone dialektisesti johtamalla: En ajattele, siis en ole olemassa. Olemisen todellinen synonyymi tai paremmin homonyymi on Olemattomuus. Me emme ole olemassa, ajatus ei ole olemassa, mitään ei ole olemassa.

Tämä todistelu saa Gogin ymmälleen:

Sallikaa minun tehdä vielä pieni vastaväite, lisäsin. Jos mitään ei ole olemassa ja jos kaikki loogillisesti palautetaan olemattomuuteen,

kuinka silloin selitätte meidän, esimerkiksi teidän ja minun, olemassaolon?

Professori Caccavone saa moisesta kysymyksestä hillittömän naurukohtauksen:

Te siis rahvaan tavoin luulette olevanne olemassa? Olette vielä sen lapsellisen taikauskon kahleissa.

Kuka oli Caccavonen ”sisilialainen edeltäjä”? Tässä, kuten kirjan monessa muussakin kohdassa Papini käy aikansa ilmiöiden kimppuun nimiä mainitsematta. Luultavin Papinin ivan kohde on italialainen (tosiaan Sisiliassa syntynyt) idealistifilosofi Giovanni Gentile (1875–1944). Teoksessaan *Teoria generale dello spirito como atto puro* (1916) Gentile puolustaa teesiä, joka on Caccavonen analyysin lähtökohta, tai ainakin Gentileä voi lukea tähän tapaan. Gentile oli myös Mussolinin pitkäaikainen opetus- ja kulttuuriministeri. Papinikin kuului yhdessä vaiheessa Mussolinin johtamaan fasistipuolueeseen, mutta vaikutusvaltaisesta asemastaan huolimatta Gentilen asema puolueen pääfilosofina ei koskaan ollut kiistaton.

Papinin karikatyyri liittyy siihen filosofien väitettyyn ominaisuuteen, jolle jo Aristofanes ja Lukianos ivailivat: filosofit näköjään pystyvät puolustamaan järjenvastaisia väitteitä ilman, että siitä seuraa mitään käytännöllistä. Vaikka *mitään* ei ole olemassa, se ei estä professori Caccavonea touhuamasta lukemattomien asioiden parissa, ei liioin ahnehtimasta rahaa, jota hän koettaa keskustelukumppaniltaankin heruttaa. Tässä suhteessa Caccavone muistuttaa Tove Janssonin Muumilaaksossa elelevää Piisamirottaa, joka on niin ikään filosofi. Piisamirotta ei sentään julista kaiken olemattomuutta, mutta kylläkin kaiken turhuutta. Tämä filosofia ei estä Piisamirottaa jatkuvasti valittamasta erilaisista käytännön epämukavuuksista. Eräässä vaiheessa hän muuttaa luolaan saadakseen olla rauhassa turhuuksilta, mutta mitään Diogenesta hänestä ei silti tule. Hän pitää yhä itsestään selvänä sitä, että toiset tuovat hänelle ruokaa kaksi kertaa päivässä.

10.

Vieläkö filosofeille nauretaan? Vieläkö filosofia soveltuu pilan esineeksi? Pitäisikö sen olla sitä? Se, että filosofit itse nauravat filosofeille ja filosofialle, on tuttu ilmiö, kuten olemme nähneet. Lukianos oli filosofisesti sivistynyt, Erasmus Rotterdamilainen oli itse filosofi, Holberg toimi yhdessä vaiheessa metafysiikan professorina, Goethe, Strindberg ja Papini olivat niin ikään filosofiasta kiinnostuneita. Olli, jolle tämä teksti on omistettu, on yksi niistä, jotka ovat pitäneet soihtua palamassa. Jo kouluvuosinaan hän yhdessä veljensä kanssa todisti johdonmukaisesti argumentoiden Joulupukin olemassaolon. Myöhemmässä tuotannossaan - esimerkiksi yhdessä Jonas Ahlskogin kanssa julkaisemassaan artikkelissa (”Resolute Anti-anthropocentrism”) - hän on todistanut lisää hätkähdyttäviä tuloksia, esimerkiksi sen, että kalat eivät ui eivätkä linnut lennä. Nämä todistukset olisivat viehättäneet niin Erasmus Montanusta kuin professori Caccavoneakin.

Yleisesti on perusteita toivoa, että filosofeille ja filosofialle yhä jaksetaan nauraa. Perustelumme on seuraava. Jos ihmiset yleensä eivät enää nauraisi filosofialle, se ei johtuisi siitä, että he suhtautuvat siihen vakavasti, vaan pikemminkin siitä, että he eivät enää piittäisi koko asiasta. Jos taas filosofit itse lakkaisivat nauramasta filosofialle, se todistaisi, että he ovat menettäneet huumorintajunsa. Molemmat olisivat kulttuurimme kannalta huolestuttavia lopputuloksia. On siis syytä toivoa, että filosofia säilyy jatkossakin pilan esineenä. QED.

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Urban Life, to Ward off Reality

Patrick Sibelius

There are people who cannot distinguish an oak from a beech and yet they can distinguish a supercar from a common sports car and a trans from a common queer person.

Probably there were people in the city of Uruk, about five millennia ago, to whom cedar meant logs, planks, and furniture and who had never seen a living cedar tree not to say a cedar forest.

Many people dwell in cities all their lives, in a habitat constructed by humans, ignorant of reality not shaped by humans. History is almost exclusively about the lives of such people and their artificial habitats. Among these city dwellers there are many who dwell in intellectual habitats constructed by humans all their lives.

To most people, philosophy is just about and for such intellectuals and their intellectual habitat. We shall argue that during our entire history, such an anthropocentric approach to one's worldview and view of life has been a cause of misunderstandings and misconducts.

Urban life succeeded rural life in time. It continued to depend on the latter for food, of course. As time went on, urban life dominated rural life more and more, which meant that cities grew into city-states, realms, and empires, which finally encompassed the face of the earth. Industrialization made urban lifestyle dominant also in rural areas.

In this paper, we shall try to understand some aspects of the emergence of the modern Western worldview, view of life and of humankind as responses to the urbanization of life and to alienation from the natural habitat of humans.

1. Introduction: Mythologies, religions, arts, and dreams

Among human beings long ago, mythologies, religions, arts, *and* dreams served the truth in people's lives. It is hard to think that these cultural manifestations and dreams would have served some other end. Because, for any living creature in its natural state, truth is a matter of survival, and falsity means mistakes, injuries, hardship, and death.

In these cultures, old and wise persons, sages, shamans, priests, oracles, and leaders knew more about reality and truth than common people did.

Then, at a certain stage, when a culture surpassed its natural state, its members were not at the mercy of nature and truth in the same way as before and *falsity ceased to be an immediate danger*. City walls had been raised between the citizens and nature. At this stage, mythologies, religions, arts, and dreams started to serve the status and the power of shamans, priests, and sovereigns. Deceit and lies became means of upholding power structures and false beliefs spread and took root among the citizens, just because nature/reality was blocked in its function as a prompt corrective. Thus, urban life grew out of *fabrication*, in two of the main senses of the word: *manufacturing and lying*. In urban civilizations, the leaders of people were no longer recruited among the wisest and most knowledgeable but often among the most cunning and ruthless. A long era marred by collective madness and violence began.

One ought to revise the usual heroic success story of the dawn of human civilization to account also for the menaces of fabrication, which were present from the very beginning.

What we have said here about fabrication may seem to be no more than fantasies, or at most educated guesswork. However, it is not easy to find a competing alternative that would refute it. The story of mere success and a steady widening of humans' sphere of true beliefs is not a viable alternative, for sure.

Yet there exist philosophical standpoints that start from city dwellers and hold that there is nothing, or nothing relevant, out there beyond the city walls, so to speak, and that man's intelligence,

rationality, and morality, in the positive senses of these attributes, belong to man in urban civilizations only.

Modern Western civilization is still in its alleged secure state, in which one views falsity as no immediate danger. Notwithstanding, entertaining false beliefs has always been a danger and often a partial internal and/or external cause of the end of a civilization.

In modern (global) human civilization, a so-called scientific worldview, ideologies, entertainment, design, and rational decisions have replaced mythologies, religions, arts of earlier stages, and oneirocriticism. With a few exceptions, modern humans entertain the view that dreams have nothing to do with facticity.

However, it would be preposterous to believe that the current modern phase of development of human civilization has been an exceptional sequence of victories of truths over false beliefs and superstitions and that it has been a development merely in the positive sense.

2. Philosophy: Perceiving, dreaming, and thinking

A definition of perceiving that is useful here, is that perceiving is how one psychically experiences one's physical interaction with one's physical surroundings, *directly*. In the same vein, dreaming is how one psychically experiences one's physical interaction with one's physical surroundings, *indirectly*, i.e., with delay or anticipation. In this sense, dreaming is not restricted merely to sleep, but includes all sorts of processing of perceptions that involves memory and all sorts of mental dynamics that one has obtained by birth or acquired during one's life.

As we shall understand it here, one is steadily dreaming. We know that there are processes going on in one's body all the time. They have a psychic aspect to them albeit it need not be conscious. We shall regard the psychic aspect of these processes as dreaming. Some would perhaps say that these psychic processes are unconscious. However, then one must note that all conscious processes that are involved in acting, perceiving, and thinking, depend on

dreaming and would not exist without dreaming. ... One can compare this to how what one can see on the screen depends on what is going on inside the computer.

Dreaming during sleep involves, by comparison, much less acting outwardly and much less (direct) perceiving (of what is currently happening) than dreaming does when one is awake. Nevertheless, also during sleep dreaming involves inward reactions to external events, reactions that will affect one's perceiving and thinking and one's outward acting when one is awake.

By defining perception and dreaming in this way, we can define thinking as perception and dreaming that functions by means of an *artificial* symbolic language. Herein, language has developed primarily as a means of human interaction within certain communities. Commonly, we presume that language use, and thus thinking, existed already long before urban life had emerged, i.e., during prehistory. Humans seem to have developed writing systems about at the same time as urban life emerged. From urbanized people writing systems spread to non-urbanized people.

The following seems to have happened in urban life within the civilization process. Thinking started to dominate in people's dreaming in daily life. Perceiving continued to be important in the transition albeit within surroundings that had become more and more artificial. Again, the shift in which thinking using language more and more dominated dreaming in the citizens' lives, we cannot regard, in a self-evident way, as a development in which truths have successively replaced false beliefs and superstition.

2.1 Truth – falsity and reality – artifacts

A false sentence is a perfectly good sentence if it is well-formed. The dubious and potentially hazardous and destructive quality of the false sentence stems from its semantic relationship to reality, namely that it does not fit in with reality.

Herein, the false sentence resembles a mistake or a non-verbal misunderstanding. As a mental and material event, such a mistake or misunderstanding is as real as a correct deed or conception. The dubious and potentially hazardous and destructive quality of the

mistake or misunderstanding stems from its relationship to the surrounding reality, from its causing confusion, injury, destruction or even death to its beholder and/or to those who depend on the beholder.

An artifact of a living creature is a perfectly good real object if it is well constructed. The dubious and potentially hazardous and destructive quality of an artifact stems from its relationship to the surrounding reality when the relationship is of the same sort as that of a false sentence and that of a mistake or a misunderstanding.

Dreaming in contrast to thinking, as we understand it here, may make the Westerner think of his image of Australian aborigines, as ones who spend most of their lives sitting indolent in the Australian desert. No thanks! See where they have ended up!

We should not consider dreaming as indolence, as sleep or as a state close to sleep, but as the faculty of *making use of the whole arsenal of one's adjustments to reality*, including the ones that are more intricate and indirect than mere perceiving and thinking. In most of Western thinking and philosophy,¹ one has excluded, consciously and systematically, this faculty of dreaming. We shall argue that this constitutes a weak point in Western philosophy.

Dreaming, as we understand it here, concerns veracity as much as perception does. Since dreaming is indirect and involves more complicated inner processing, it is much harder for us to construct abstract theories of how dreaming relates to reality than when we construct theories of perceiving reality.

For visual perception, the mechanistic model turned out to be most successful. One abstracted from everything else than the amount of matter and its location in one's field of vision, i.e., in one's space and time. The immense success of the mechanistic model for understanding celestial phenomena as well as phenomena in practical life inspired Western thinkers to create a

¹ Sigmund Freud, most famously, touched upon this faculty when he used the concept of "the unconscious (mind)". However, in his theory, the concept has a very specific function that fits the psychology of a modern Western person, or perhaps fits ones belonging to the time and place and social class of his patients.

mechanistic worldview and view of life as the intellectual foundations of modern Western civilization.

In the process of creating the Western worldview, and the view of life, one suppressed, evidently, the fact that the mechanistic model was but a barren abstraction that ignored everything except measures of matter and measures of distances in space and time. Hence, Westerners started to conceive life such that veracity and objectivity of something meant its being reducible to the mechanistic conception and that the rest of what one experienced lacked veracity and objectivity and was misleading, false, and subjective.

However, modern epistemology and metaphysics turned the common sense and allegedly “scientific” conception upside-down. They gave priority to the subjective also concerning truth and knowledge and made the mechanistic reality a mere product of the subject.

2.2 Growing versus manufacturing

An oak comes to being by a single microscopic sperm of male pollen fertilizing the ovum of a female oak flower. The fertilized ovum evolves into a nut that falls to the ground and in advantageous condition of the soil sprouts and grows to become the oak tree. Almost all parts of it have grown out from something smaller by itself “from the inside”. The surrounding trees, fungi and algae, the wind, and the cold of winter have formed some features of the tree “from the outside”. One day the work of the fungi, a storm or a man’s saw will end the life of the individual oak tree and make it into nutrients of other organisms, into parquet floors, furniture, or into thermal energy for human beings. By then the oak tree has given life to offspring, a few of which will grow into new oak trees. These processes involve the surroundings of the oak tree, including the skies, the oceans and, most of all, the far-away sun, and in time events that go back to the formation of the solar system billions of years ago.

All there is in its surroundings in space and time exists engraved (or coded) in the very constitution of the individual oak tree, just in the specific manner that makes it an oak and not a bumblebee, a

crab, a pike, or into a human being. ... If there is something such as sacredness, then this carrying in oneself the insignia of the universe, of reality, as a whole, as an oak tree, a bumblebee, a crab, a pike, or as a human being, must be just that. The one who cannot experience sacredness is left in a state of stupor, in which oneself and the outer appearances and doings of the ones one likes are all that counts while the rest of the universe makes a mere scenery and a resource.

As far as we can judge, reality consists, on the one hand, of such “ontic syntheses”, in which more and more intricate compounds emerge and, on the other hand, of “ontic analyses”, in which compounds decay and become components of new compounds.

Not all ontic syntheses and analyses are successful. Some are deformed, malfunctioning, sick or evil, which ousts them, eventually, in the ongoing process of ontic syntheses and analyses or makes them contribute to the vanishing of all of their kind. The sound prevails and the unsound perish. Who knows and who judges which ones should prevail and which ones should perish – not man, at least? Time will tell, or which is the same, the verdict is built-in into the very existence of everything.

From a human perspective, the syntheses and analyses are spontaneous. Scientifically, we can explain and understand only the very simplest ones, causally, and computationally, mostly merely probabilistically.

There is nothing sentimental or bigoted about the sacredness of reality (nature in the most inclusive sense). Rather, its sacredness means that one recognizes reality’s power and its final judgement in every single situation and further that one recognizes one’s own participation in the whole (either as a sound or as an unsound specimen of one’s kind), as one who contributes to the soundness or to the unsoundness of one’s kind.

This “or” forms a fundamental question out of the tautological “to be or not to be” in the minutest as well as in the most far-reaching issues in one’s life, questions that one can answer correctly only by being honest to oneself and by subduing oneself to how reality works, without thinking of how to reshape it.

A supercar, Lamborghini Aventador S, say, engineers have manufactured in a series of car manufacturing processes from late 19th century on, starting from internal combustion engines developed from late 18th century on. The whole process of creating a specimen of this supercar involves a vast number of blueprints, mines, oil drill devices, and factories for developing parts and components of the car. If there is something as a marvel, then the car is one, a marvel of human technology, a process of artificial syntheses and analyses.

A trans, Caroline Cossey, say, has evolved like the sacred oak tree. However, s/he has then acquired her special social identity as a trans woman by means of surgeries and hormone treatments. In respect of being this trans woman, she is like Lamborghini Aventador S, a human marvel.

Perceiving and dreaming belong to the sacredness by being part of the insignia of the universe in every existing creature. This concerns modern human beings too.

Thinking using a language, with rational decision making, writing, and computing, belong to the marvels of modern human beings. If we judge the development as a steady advancement, then the most developed forms of thinking using a language belong to human beings of late modernity, i.e., to us, a rather adulatory thought, indeed. Yet, we cannot exclude that also our artificial syntheses and analyses create occasional monsters that will be ousted or oust us.

3. Modern civilization: Science, technology, and the arts

Our thinking is bound to be confused if we do not separate science from technology. Whereas science is an honest attempt to understand reality, technology is a hazardous enterprise that comprises a fundamental disjunctive split between a sound attempt to live well and soundly and an unsound attempt to conquer and reshape reality. In short, whereas science concerns veracity, technology concerns utility, or more precisely, the purported utility for some.

Since veracity always concerns reality at large and is hard to gain and the drive for utility is hectic and focused on specific tasks, the very concept of utility becomes hazardous with uncertain outcomes. Success in a specific task may be a failure at large. A seeming truth in a limited domain may be a blatant falsity in an extended domain.

A similar disjunctive split, with the uncertainty associated with it, applies to the arts.

3.1 The veracity and utility of artistic works

Let us focus on how urban life has warded off reality/nature and the truth, not only by building city walls, but also mentally, by creating tamed and artificial dangers and falsities for citizens to play with, to mimic, in a safe manner, dangers and truths in reality/nature.

This aspect of warding off reality produces arts for entertainment, decoration, style, and fashion, for artificial experiences of ugliness and beauty, pain and pleasure, grief and relief, substituting, or “improving”, truth and reality. This is *arts qua engineering of mental life*. Works of art winning praise from the art lovers, or from the public, tend to fall within arts as engineering of the mind.

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Whereas Western philosophy systematically denied the aspect of veracity concerning dreaming, dreaming continued to play some role in Western literature and art, often in perverted or politically corrupt way, based on theorizing that had little or no contact with reality.

There was a lot of fabricated “dreaming” of the glorious pasts of nations, with personages of great stature, and a lot of dreaming of Edenic beauty and goodness lost long ago. There was also a lot of alleged and manipulated dreaming of a better future world in which one had succeeded in realizing the promises of modernity universally. As we know, most of this was low-level escapism and propaganda in service of questionable political leaders, parties, and companies.

Yet, also in modern Western culture, one has recognized works of literature and art of which one cannot say that humans created them with the intention of creating something that possessed high value with respect to utility. Not all works have had the purpose of being beautiful, decorative, interesting, entertaining, lucrative to the producers, politically manipulative, etc. Some have revealed truths that one could not have expressed, as effectively and as accurately, using other means, such as mere reports, photos or videos. Often, but not always, such works of arts and literature have had an ethical message, one that has pointed at some misconduct or falsity of commonly held beliefs about the society described.

In modern societies, the misconduct and falsity pointed at has mostly concerned social and political issues, like those raised by Charles Dickens, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Joseph Conrad, Erich Maria Remarque, Thomas Mann, Boris Pasternak, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, Simone de Beauvoir, etc. Hence, the authors dealt with malfunctioning aspects of how one had realized modernity in a society or, to use the metaphor in the ingress, they dealt with malfunctions within the city walls.

In this respect, the works belonged to the same more general genre of utility as the artistic works that merely described or hailed and propelled modernity. Most Nobel prize-winners in literature seem to have written within this genre of utility with a critical stance. The genre exemplifies, within literature, *arts as part of social engineering*.

Works of arts as part of social engineering need not have had very much to do with the fundamental sort of veracity that we apply to perceiving and dreaming that transcends thinking, though.

To start specifying the genre of literature with ambitions concerning “true perceiving and dreaming”, we could list authors with “naturalist” drives, like Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Henry David Thoreau, Rachel Carson, and Mary Oliver. However, such a list would not do, here.

We need to specify the *ambition of artistic veracity from the “inside” and in opposition to arts as engineering of mind and society*.

The most successful sciences, with theoretical physics as the prime example, investigate aspects of the *outer material perspective* on existence in its primordial state unaltered by man. Within such sciences, one strives for the ideal arrangement where the scientists are *detached observers*.

Arts with an analogous ambition concerning veracity ought to function like successful sciences albeit the arts investigate aspects of the *inner mental perspective* on existence in its primordial states unaltered by man. However, as city dwellers the artists cannot achieve the positions of detached observers but must face the challenge to, as a first step, distinguish the real from the artificial in the human mind. They are like physicists who must find laws of nature by investigating artifacts, computers, engines, buildings, and bridges. Such “secondary” or “inverse” problems are often harder than the original ones.

3.1 An exemplar of art as science of the mind

Let us consider the Epic of Gilgamesh as an exemplar of art as science of the mind.

Experts say that Gilgamesh was a Sumerian king who reigned in the city of Uruk about four and a half millennia ago. Not long after his death, he became a legend and the protagonist in some epic poems as well as a deity. Stories about adventures and deeds of the character were retold during the coming millennia and integrated as a stem of the literary heritage of several subsequent cultures, among them the ancient Accadian, Babylonian, Assyrian, Hebrew, and the Greek cultures. Even today, certain stories of the epos constitute the roots of the modern Western literary heritage, mainly through the Book of Genesis in the Judaic and Christian Bibles and through Homer’s works. Stories in the epos are referred or alluded to repeatedly also in contemporary cultural products.

It seems clear that, from the beginning, at least, the most long-lived parts of the epos represent neither art as social engineering nor art as engineering of the mind. Rather, the parts seem to have been

and become constitutive of religions, worldviews, and/or views of life. This makes us consider the epos as an artwork within art as science of the mind.

Today, this is no longer so, though. Rather, the parts in question function, nowadays, mostly as ingredients in works of art qua engineering of the mind.

We shall try to find answers to the following questions. Why was the epos written in the first place? Why and how have certain contents of this literary piece of art had such an impact and endurance in the course of history?

To be sure, there were several other eminent kings in Mesopotamia and elsewhere who never became main characters of literary works., It is therefore not so much the qualities of the real person, Gilgamesh, that are decisive for his becoming this long-lived legend but the circumstances of the development of human civilization that prevailed in the city of Uruk when the story about him was conceived. So we shall assume here. The citizens must have sensed that something momentous or perhaps fatal took place in Uruk at that time. We know now that the citizens were right herein because of how tenaciously other peoples took over and clung to the story.

It is possible, of course, that the story is a later variant of a still older story of an oral tradition, in the way the biblical stories and Homer's stories, according to most experts, are, or rather include, later variants of stories in the Epic of Gilgamesh.

If the epos grew out of an ominous collective mindset at a specific stage in the civilizational development of humankind, in Mesopotamia, then it seems most reasonable to analyze the narrative of the epos in the way one analyzes dreams.

We assume here, of course, that dreams carry information about one's inner mind albeit enciphered into one's own rather idiosyncratic, in most parts visual, "dream language". Yet the dream language of different persons includes some universal features, too, which make them understandable to others. This makes arts qua science of the mind possible, as we shall understand it here. In deciphering dreams, we shall not follow Freud, though.

The beginning of the epos/dream portrays how the gods decide to intervene since Gilgamesh tyrannizes his subjects in Uruk. The gods arrange things as follows. They send the wild man Enkidu of the forests to settle in Uruk and befriend Gilgamesh. To make the wild man suited to enter the city, the gods send the temple prostitute Shamhat to the wilderness to civilize him by means of the art of carnal love. She succeeds and Enkidu can enter Uruk well-dressed. After having lost a wrestle match with Gilgamesh, Enkidu becomes his friend and lover. The reader/listener understands that the plan of the gods will come true: the tyrant Gilgamesh will turn into a good and great ruler and become a hero in the story of Uruk.

Suppose that a person, a woman, say, presents you this story (ignoring here all names and references to gods) as a dream she has had. You realize immediately from the narrative structure of the dream that a conflict between what she believes and what she (“in her heart”) knows to be the case troubles her.

She is patriotic in a commonplace sense and believes that her society is civilized, and that the authorities that she depends and relies on are as good as they can be under current circumstances. However, in her heart, she knows that this is not true, but that something unnatural and weird is taking place. The authorities are not good but bad and her society is not civilized but worse than one could expect on natural grounds. The lives of the citizens have become worse than the lives of those who live outside civilization in nature. She knows in her heart that the authorities and her entire society could recover and improve by connecting better to the natural way of living. The taming of the wild man through copulation with the prostitute suggests that erotic love constitutes a communion of nature and culture through the city walls. One could improve the quality of the lives of the citizens by giving that what *spontaneously grows inside one’s mind and body* a bigger share of everyone’s life.

If you tell her what you think of her dream, she will probably nod and agree, because by remembering the dream the suppressed insights had already risen close to the surface of her dream world. She will feel relieved and start living more intensely than before,

finding out that thinking critically of her society and the authorities is after all not so dangerous. In fact, regardless of the possible dangers connected to her thoughts, her life will gain from the insight and be more truthful than before.

Could it be that the epos, of which we have here considered only its initial part, has had an analogous cathartic effect on people several millennia ago in Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean regions? Could it have had this effect just because it revealed truths that people in their unreflective commonplace life tried to suppress and replace by seemingly simpler and less demanding beliefs, viz. that *things in general* are alright, or as good as they possibly can be?

Although the story/dream concerns society, urban life, and authorities, this does not make it into a piece of art as a part of social engineering. It concerns more fundamental questions of human civilization and life than mere oppression, discrimination, injustice, poverty and misery, problems that people think that one can overcome by social engineering.

Yet, the epos qualifies as a piece of *art qua science of the mind* mainly due to the way it raises questions concerning the entire civilization project. Because, as we noted in the beginning, civilization means fabrication in the two main senses of the word: manufacturing and lying. Thus, it is no wonder that civilization implies difficulties, dangers, injuries, even lethal ones, to human beings, and that there exists arts qua science of the mind to cope with these menaces, with the entire project of creating a civilization, and with urban life as such.

There was an urgent need for stories like the one of the first human beings disobeying the Creator (the natural order) by eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the one of Gilgamesh and his failures to comply with the gods (qua the independent reality).

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We can make a similar distinction, between arts as the engineering of mind or society, on the one hand, an arts qua science of the mind,

also with respect to the visual arts and music. However, concerning them, it is much harder to know what to focus on at the start.

One reason for the difficulties is that philosophy, in contrast to pure science, is part of the engineering of mind and society and in most cases serves the civilization project, and thus pursues political, economic, and military ends rather than truth. Thus, to start we need to create a philosophy qua science of mind and matter as a sort of extension or deepening of the sciences.

4. Warding off reality

As we noted above, the need for arts qua science of the mind emerged when the fabrication in urban life had reached a point at which its unnaturalness and falsity had accumulated to such a degree as to cause such a distress that the citizens did not dare to face their predicament as it was. They suppressed their conceptual, verbalizable, and communicable insights. An inner conflict grew within people between false thinking and knowing on the dream level.

The civilization project had to respond to the situation by inventing means to ward off the true insights that emerge in the dreams of people. It accomplished this mission by intensified fabrication, of course, now also by fabricating arts that engineered the minds of the citizens to fit life within the city walls. This meant new fabricated shared beliefs in the place of specific individual truths. In the process, one also invented philosophy as the engineering of mind and society.

However, as reality revealed itself as insights in dreams of citizens, some individual artists created art qua science of the mind. Some citizens understood their works in the correct way as revealing truths, whereas others took their art as mere engineering of mind or society.

History reveals that the authorities were often troubled and puzzled by the works of artist, and occasionally also troubled by the works of philosophers. As we see it here, the authorities were confused about whether to regard certain artworks or philosophical

works as science of the mind or as engineering of mind (and, during modernity, as part of social engineering), as being acts against or for the advancement of the society and its culture. As part of the civilization project, a process of domesticating art and philosophy as science of the mind into art and philosophy as the engineering of mind in the service of the power of the society took place.

As civilization advanced, reality outside the city walls became less and less discernible to ordinary citizens.

Fabrications and falsities accumulated in the process. This made civilizations grow violent and openly destructive inwardly and outwardly.

In various civilizations that have passed away, phases of *modernity* occurred. This happened when people no longer denied that their civilization was failing morally and that it promoted falsity and evil, when people realized the calamity calmly and cynically by denying the existences of the good and the truth altogether. Anthropocentrism took over. Man had toppled the gods, and reduced nature to a resource for man. Reality had become a construction of man's mind, and man had relativized truth. Soon thereafter, the civilizations crumbled and succumbed amidst all its fabrications. Some other civilization took over, parasitizing on the remnants and repeating the mistakes, or else living nature grew over ruins and remnants.

4.1 Can a civilization exist that accepts reality?

So far, this paper has focused on civilization as fabrication of artificial things and thoughts and on the menaces of it. This is the easy part, the empirical one.

Now we proceed to theoretical question: Is it possible for fabrication (in the original sense) to be in harmony with reality and not in conflict with it? In other words, can human artificial syntheses and analyses concerning matter and in mind be in accordance with ontic syntheses and analyses? In other words, still, can the artificial in human civilization be sound and true? This question is much more important than most questions traditionally raised in philosophy. It

is one of metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics in one package. Science is highly relevant to all three aspects of the question.

Philosophy that makes this a principal question is no longer philosophy about city dwellers for city dwellers, no longer philosophy as the engineering of mind and of society to promote political and economic interests of the city but philosophy qua science of matter and mind, a philosophy that includes the pure sciences, naturally in the self-critical manner typical of scientific work.

The important, and far from trivial, question whether there exists, in a technical sense, a sustainable development of technology and civilization at large, is not the subject of this paper. This is so because, even if it were technically feasible, it does not follow from this that a civilization like ours would put it into practice. Political, economic, and military interests would most likely counteract. Further, crises and wars would interrupt successful attempts at pursuing the goal and thus ruin the whole enterprise.

Therefore, one ought to create a philosophy of mind and matter that will necessarily remove all possibilities for political, economic, and military interests, crises, and wars to wreck a sustainable development if one implements the philosophy in the correct way. This is the necessary condition for sustainable development.

To investigate how to fulfil the condition is a task for philosophers, for philosophers of a new kind. Philosophy within humanities and cultural studies must yield to a new critical philosophy in close connection with the sciences and studies of nature qua reality.

Any sort of metaphysics, epistemology and ethics that ignores nature and the sciences by focusing on human language, human cognition and emotions, human history, arts and literature (in the sense of engineering of human mind and society) is necessarily false from the start. Such an anthropocentric philosophy is but a means to ward off reality and it will necessarily produce false ideas and weird conduct. It will make metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics give priority to utility (artifacts, artificiality and societal matters) over truth and thereby constitute alleged foundations of and justifications for various existing practices within politics, engineering,

arts and literature. The new philosophy must commit none of these mistakes.

Reading Post-1936 Wittgenstein

Christoffer Gefwert

Speaking a language is usually regarded as a competence that is unique to humans, and humans are hence regarded as distinct from all other hominids and animals. This is one of the most entrenched of all modern philosophical ideas. This means, according to Anthony Kenny, that “One can use ‘language’ in a broad or narrow sense. If we mean by the word any old system of communication then there are many sub-human languages. But if we use it in a more precise sense, to mean systems with recursive syntax, then only humans use language” (in a letter to the author 2014). When understood like this, “language” in a more “precise” sense refers to systems with recursive syntax, which is the way Ludwig Wittgenstein’s (1889–1952) post-1936 writings, for example *Philosophical Investigations*, is presently interpreted. The interpretations using recursive syntax are *intellectual in Wittgenstein’s dualist ways of reasoning*.

But interpretations can also *have a spoken languacultural outlook*. A novel word/concept, called descriptive languaculture, is mandated by this outlook.¹ One is then to read post-1936 Wittgenstein through the “spectacles” of Savage-Rumbaugh et al. (1993) and

¹ According to post-1936 Wittgenstein, word/concept is non-separable in the performative practice. It is important to understand that “We are not analysing a phenomenon (e.g., a thought) but a concept (e.g., that of thinking), and therefore the use of a word” (Wittgenstein 1953, § 383). This being the case, people nevertheless “make the mistake of interpreting all words as *names*, and so of not really describing their use, but only, so to speak, giving a paper draft on such a description” (§ 383). But note that this does *not* amount to the *doctrine* of Nominalism (§ 383). It is hence important to understand that “You learned the *concept* ‘pain’ when you learned language” (§ 384). But one cannot learn it before already being acquainted with it. One must thus acknowledge that one has to accept numerous words of primal

Segerdahl et al. (2005, 1–2, 7, 12–13, 22–25). I shall here argue that Wittgenstein’s post-1936 writings can be read with a *non-intellectualist first-person outlook consisting of (1) animal culture and (2) primal language*. Note that primal language is *not* more primitive than ordinary verbal human language. It is important to understand, when reading referential quotations from Wittgenstein’s post-1936 literature, that they are to be read *as* languacultural formulations. And remember that in the languacultural context quotations are *doing* something (see Wittgenstein 1967, 416). I indicate this by writing “see” in the references to post-1936 Wittgenstein. One is then reading his post-1936 writings as *having a languacultural outlook of “animal culture” and “primal language” distinct from interpretative readings having recursive syntax. It is this outlook that opens animal culture and primal language (languaculture) beyond the distinction between humans and non-human hominids.*

For example, one finds two important manuscript collections by Wittgenstein, from 1929 to 1948, that can be used when reading languaculturally, called *Philosophical Investigations* and *Zettel*. Concerning *Zettel*, one finds, according to G. E. M. Anscombe and G. H. von Wright, that Wittgenstein “worked on them, altered and polished them in their cut-up condition” (Wittgenstein 1967, v). These fragments were preserved in a box-file that he “regarded as particularly useful” (v). *In languaculture, these fragments are therefore regarded as particularly useful cultural conceptions when acquiring primal language by “enculturation”*. To be enculturated, one needs to be acquainted with ordinary words (and expressions) having a languacultural outlook as *hominid* “language games”. I want to claim that there are comments by Wittgenstein in his post-1937 writings concerning language that can be read according to languaculture (see e.g. Wittgenstein 1953, §§ 5, 415; Wittgenstein 1967, §§ 114–116, 383–388, 412, 418–419).

Having a languacultural outlook, it is then important to note the connection between “meaning-enculturation” and “meaning-teaching” (see Wittgenstein 1967, § 412). It is of crucial importance

language as being “certain”, in Wittgenstein’s terminology in *On Certainty* (see Wittgenstein 1974, § 358).

to understand *spontaneous* descriptive outlooks of enculturation, as acquisition of primal language is focusing “on doing things together, on living together while communicating through any kinds of means: gestures, glances, touches, bites, displays and subsequently linguistic expressions as these are integrated with real-life situations” (Segerdahl et al. 2005, 22). When communicating with primal language one must then be able to say a word *spontaneously* once one has learnt what the word means, that is, when one “has learnt the technique of using a word” (see Wittgenstein 1967, § 418).

If one, mistakenly, uses recursive syntax in one’s reading of Wittgenstein’s post-1936 texts, then primal language occurs in a different form than expected. This is a mistaken reading of primal language. To avoid this, one must have a languacultural outlook (which is hardly ever recognized) of “tipping points” concerning hominid “animal culture” and “primal language” establishing a non-intellectualist primal language “under certain circumstances, which, however, one does not learn to describe” (see Wittgenstein 1967, §§ 114–117). Gradually one then establishes *intermediary* aspects of hominid “animal culture” having a developing connection between human and bonobo features (Savage-Rumbaugh et al. 1993). This reveals unforeseen linguistic potentials in, for example, bonobos but also neglected cultural dimensions of languages in humans. Animal culture then “turns out to be more tightly integrated into our daily doings and interaction than we originally assumed; more tightly integrated into the developing Pan/Homo culture” (Segerdahl et al. 2005, 4).

Performing languacultural investigations amounts to a combined word/concept of “animal culture” and “primal language”. The result is – in contrast to studies that look at language from an *intellectualist* cultural perspective (see Tomasello 2003) – that primal language amounts to *spontaneous* verbal communication with non-intellectualist integral aspect of practices interlaced with the substrate of certain basic traits of animal culture (Segerdahl et al. 2005, 20–25). This communication is due to the languacultural outlook (and *not* intellectual insights) of *Ape Language Research* (Greenspan

and Shanker 2004, 105–111).² Reading Wittgenstein’s post-1936 texts with languacultural “spectacles” is reading them with a first-person non-intellectualist outlook.

When doing this, one is to note that the acquisition of words (and signs) of primal language is *incommensurable* with *learning* to speak and write different human *mother tongues* like English, German, Swedish, French, Finnish, Chinese, Japanese, etc. One can then, quoting Wittgenstein, say that “Language is not defined for us as an arrangement fulfilling a definite purpose. Rather ‘language’ is for us a name for a collection, and I understand it as including German, English and so on, and further various systems of signs which have more or less affinity with these languages” (see Wittgenstein 1967, § 322). It is then important to understand that “Being acquainted with many languages prevents us from taking quite seriously a philosophy which is laid down in the forms of any one” (see Wittgenstein 1967, § 323).

In order to achieve an understanding of this acquaintance – changing from Wittgenstein’s separable “human culture” to Segerdahl’s non-separable hominid “animal culture” and “primal language” – one requires languaculture with a non-intellectual outlook (Segerdahl et al 2005, 1–4). These non-intellectual languacultural “language games” are then also languacultural “family resemblances”. As Wittgenstein said, “I can think of no better expression to characterize these similarities than ‘family resemblances’; for the various resemblances between members of a family: build, features, colour of eyes, gait, temperament, etc. etc.

² Stuart G. Shanker, who published an article on Sue Savage-Rumbaugh’s papers, writes that “Asked by a colleague to write a review of some of the papers on ape language research by Sue Savage-Rumbaugh, a primatologist who began working with bonobos in the 1980s, I was sceptical of the claim that these apes could have acquired language skills ... She responded to my article with an invitation to come down to the Language Research Center (LCR) in Atlanta and see for myself the work being done with the bonobos. It was an invitation that was to turn out to be one of the most momentous events in my academic career. It marked the start of my long and fruitful collaboration with Sue” (Greenspan and Shanker 2004, 106). But it is also important to understand that Shanker *accepts* the intellectual (psychological) *insight* of (behavioural) language and *not* Segerdahl’s non-intellectual outlook of languaculture. This makes all the difference.

overlap and criss-cross in the same way. – And I shall say: ‘games’ form a family” (see Wittgenstein 1953, § 67). Then it is important to note that *reading* these non-intellectual languacultural “language games” as languacultural “family resemblances” also amounts to languacultural *non-separable families of language games*. It is then almost irrelevant whether one in languaculture is speaking different languages, for example Japanese, Chinese, Swedish or French, etc. One can *acquire* different “language games” in different “families” having different *aspects* in languaculture.

But remember that one in languaculture also have *second* languages. It is then important to be aware of a distinction concerning *two* second languages, each of which is *learned* having competence of primal language. According to Segerdahl et al., one then has (1) a second language of the *first* kind, which is a “mother tongue”, a “specific” language that one *learns* when studying reading and writing at home, in school, and at the university. This is then the first “specific” demarcated second language ability that one learns when already informally communicating (speaking) in primal language (Segerdahl et al. 2005, 23). But one is to note that one has (2) “ordinary” second languages of a *second* kind that one also *learns*, that is, numerous “families” of different “mathematical”, “scientific” and “humanistic” languages. Of course, one also has second languages when dealing with informal everyday language. One can hence note a distinction here between second languages of these two kinds (Segerdahl et al. 2005, 23–24). Remember that *both* kinds of second language *require* competence of primal language in order for one to be able to understand and work with these second languages (Segerdahl 2009a, 36–37).

It is then important to be aware that this reading is NOT any kind of intellectual interpretation. Instead, this reading is promoting an outlook by *applying* languaculture. The reading exhibits verbal languaculture as descriptive non-intellectualist examples of natural language *used like Wittgenstein’s philosophical investigations* – in contrast to separable intellectual (general and theoretical) explanatory “foundations” of language having recursive syntax. The “new subject” of philosophy in languaculture is therefore different

than “analytic philosophy” and other *human* schools of philosophy, for example the Cartesian, Kantian, phenomenological (Husserl), Hegelian, Marxist, and existential (Sartre) ones. But it is also important to note that languaculture *is also distinct* from Wittgenstein’s post-1938 human (*not* hominid) “philosophy”. It is hence important to note that one is reading post-1936 Wittgenstein through Segerdahl et al.’s “spectacles”. This suggests that a key difference between immediate languaculture and the great “philosophical” predecessors (with some exceptions) is the *abandonment of metaphysics altogether in languaculture* (see Wittgenstein 1953, § 116).³

As Lars Hertzberg says, one must realize that “philosophical inquiry is inquiry into the nature of philosophy” (Hertzberg, “On Learning through Confusion”, unpublished). Indeed, once one knows where one is, *the rest is relatively easy in languaculture*. When performing investigations of “philosophy” in languaculture, it can also be called philosophical investigations of different separable “philosophies” (see Wittgenstein 1953, § 121). In other words, one is to investigate assumed second-order “philosophies” as well as different aspects of them, by descriptive languacultural (philosophical) practices dealing with the word “philosophy”. One is to perform these investigations analogously to, as Wittgenstein said, “the case of orthography, which deals with the word ‘orthography’ among others without then being second-order” (see Wittgenstein 1953, § 121). Then one finds that when one in languaculture speaks of the

³ Note that Wittgenstein’s ideas about the “correct” methods in philosophy, both in the earlier *Tractatus* (see 1922, § 6.53) as well as in the later *Philosophical Investigations* and *Zettel*, is reminding a metaphysician that the meaning of a word is not the “atmosphere” (see Frege: “assertion”) around it “accompanying the word which it carried with it into every kind of application” (see Wittgenstein 1953, §§ 117–119). When this is the case then one can say that “A *picture* held us captive. And we could not get outside it for it lay in our language and language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably” (see § 115). But then, having a languacultural outlook, “What *we* do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use” (see § 116). In *Zettel*, one finds Wittgenstein saying that “Only in the stream of thought and life do words have meaning” (see Wittgenstein 1967, § 175). One can then understand that static *metaphysical* assumptions are *redundant* in languacultural non-separable philosophical investigations.

use of the word “philosophy” it amounts to “The confusions which occupy us when language is like an engine idling, not when it is doing work” (see Wittgenstein 1953, § 132). When performing work in languaculture, the “clarity that we are aiming at is indeed *complete* clarity. But this simply means that the philosophical problems should *completely* disappear” (see Wittgenstein 1953, § 133).

Philosophical investigations, when retrospectively correct, are then “homespun” (*hausbacken*) immediate practices (see Wittgenstein 1993, 167–169). The result is a different kind of “universal medium”, namely languaculture, reminiscent of Wittgenstein’s post-1936 texts. One can then say that languaculture *denotes broader cultural dimensions of language than in ordinary grammatical conceptions of language*. I shall follow this up in my forthcoming book.⁴ Then there is “not a philosophical method, though there are indeed methods, like different therapies” (see Wittgenstein 1953, § 133). When performing immediate “homespun” descriptive investigations they are part of languaculture, and one can call the aspects of them different “families.” Hominids having competence of languaculture in *cross-cultural* Pan/Homo communication can therefore in principle also be philosophical but *not* in the more limited sense of Wittgenstein’s post-1936 writings.

One is then to understand that the book mentioned here and this article have important points, due to the outlook of non-intellectual languaculture, that it is important to be aware of when reading this article (and forthcoming book). A characteristic feature of the forthcoming book and this article is that they describe an outlook concerning different cultural aspects.⁵ The result is that they provide *novel* languacultural outlooks on Wittgenstein’s terms like “words”, “culture”, “language”, “dialogue”, “language game”, “family resemblance”, and “form of life”. In my book, I am investigating the way one is to understand Wittgenstein’s terminology when having

⁴ I am presently writing a book concerned with aspects of this novel “universal medium”, languaculture. It is important, in order to clarify uses of words (and expressions), to make investigations of languacultural aspects.

⁵ For example, there is an interesting book written in Swedish by Pär Segerdahl (2009b). I recommend it to everyone interested in these questions. This book has a languacultural outlook on domestic animals and their lives.

a languacultural outlook. One must understand that they exhibit a novel *shared* hominid outlook (but note: in *human* language) as having (1) animal culture (as the central concept for understanding), (2) primal language (in its cultural dimensions), and (3) different “dialogues”/”language games”/”family resemblances” (as communicative *practices*), which all become increasingly prominent in forms of Western *cultural* biology.⁶ For example, this means that empirical biological (scientific) research would often gain by being carried out in tandem with Wittgenstein-inspired conceptual investigations (Segerdahl et al. 2005, 116–117).

The result is that this is an outlook in development, like those one finds in investigations made by, for example, Imanishi (2002), Itani (1985), Savage-Rumbaugh et al. (1993), Savage-Rumbaugh, Shanker, and Taylor (1998), Waal (2001), Segerdahl et al. (2005), and Dubreuil and Savage-Rumbaugh (2019). I here claim that a descriptive (philosophical) outlook can, in addition, also be seen in Wittgenstein’s post-1936 writings when read in non-intellectual languaculture. This developing languacultural outlook makes it possible to investigate different words (and expressions) used in, for example, Wittgenstein’s books *Philosophical Investigations* (1936/1953) and *Zettel* (1967). They are found, for example, in connection to cases concerning “animal culture”, “primal language”, “languaculture” and “dialogues”. But they are also found, in Wittgenstein’s post-1936 books, in connection to Pan/Homo aspects, for example, cases of “language games”, “family resemblance”, and “forms of life”, as they occur in hominid communication in languaculture.

The books and articles mentioned here set the stage for my forthcoming book about reading Wittgenstein’s post-1936 writings in – languacultural – communicative practices. Languaculture is “ett lovvärt parallellt begrepp för att läsa och framhålla en väsentlig sida av Wittgensteins filosofi” (Pär Segerdahl in a letter to me, see

⁶ Note that this is also the case not only in cases of *cultural* biology but also in other scientific cases, like *cultural* mathematics, *cultural* physics, *cultural* chemistry, and *cultural* psychology. All scientific aspects are then languacultural.

Gefwert 2008, 358). But note: this is NOT what Wittgenstein himself advocated, in, for example, his books *Philosophical Investigations* and *Zettel*. To assume this about him turns out to be a crucial mistake (contrary to my earlier position (Gefwert 2008, 355)). Instead, in languaculture one *can* read the paragraphs non-intellectually. Furthermore, this reading is NOT an interpretation of any kind.⁷ Instead, this outlook develops intrinsic aspects of non-intellectual languaculture in the scientific revolution following Darwin's writings. It is done "by exploring the extent to which culture is one of our 'natural' possessions – one that humans share with many other animal species" (Segerdahl et al. 2005, 2). The different outlooks of these practices together exhibit what can be called languacultural anti-intellectual Neo-Darwinism.

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⁷ This is contrary to the view of, for example, Donald Davidson, who argues that all understanding is interpretation. But note that neither is it Peter Hacker's *human* view.

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