FILOZOFSKI VESTNIK

1/1991

Form

in art and aesthetics

Aspects of form

in philosophy

and other theoretical

discourses

XII

Filozo FV ski Vestnik
1/1991

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Edited by Aleš Erjavec and Vojislav Likar
Supervision of the English translations by Robert C. Kochersberger Jr.

Form in art and aesthetics

The Latin »form« contains the Greek terms »eidos« and »morphè«, the former denoting the inner and the latter the outer form.

It seemed that the structural approach would resolve the traditional separation between form and content, which took place especially in our century. Nevertheless, this was not the case.

In recent times the concept of form (and of formalism) is losing trivial meaning as well as its dependance upon content. In another way this change could be expressed as a passage from Hegel to Kant.

In art and culture the »return to form« is present especially in postmodern works. In this light a new and special position is being attained by the aesthetics called »formalist« and, simultaneously, by those theories which originate in the contemporary, i.e. the most recent art and culture, of which the basic traits are form, repetitiveness, déjà vu, etc.

Our hypothesis is that similar conclusion can be reached in other areas of social practice and knowledge and can be thus discerned also in a series of theoretical areas.

The two questions that we thus put forward are: – What is the contemporary status of the concept of form in different fields of knowledge? – Is this concept (inclusively its conceptual derivations) therefore attaining a different status?

The above letter was sent to various philosophers and social scientists, asking them to contribute articles on the topic of form. This issue of *Filozofski vestnik* contains the received papers.

Papers of Lars-Olof Åhlberg, Paul Crowther, Aleš Erjavec, Charles Harrison and Martin Jay were presented or submitted at the colloquium »Form«, organized by the Slovenian Society for Aesthetics (Ljubljana, 11-12 October 1990).

Form and content revisited

Lars-Olof Åhlberg

O body swayed to music,
O brightening glance,
How can we know the dancer
from the dance?
– W.B. Yeats

1. Introduction

Both the history of the concept of form as well as the linguistic background of the term »form« is interesting and complex. Raymond Williams, commenting on the uses of the word in the 14th and 15th century, notes that »form spanned the whole range from the external and superficial to the inherent and determining«.[1] On the one hand »form« refers to »a visible or outward shape«, on the other hand it denotes »an essential shaping principle«.[2] Both uses are prevalent in aesthetics. The following are some of the senses of the term »form« listed in *The Universal Dictionary of the English Language:* (1) Relative grouping of the parts of a thing; configuration, outline, contour, shape, figure, etc., (2) Method of arrangement, way in which parts of a whole are grouped or interrelated, (3) style, mode of expression, manner of presentation, artistic shape, (4) Particular mode of existence, for example form of government, art forms, (5) Type of life or structure, for example forms of animal and vegetable life, and (5) which is said to be the philosophical sense of the term, the intrinsic, essential, ideal character of a thing, the intrinsic, essential, ideal character of a thing, the collection of qualities, the internal constitution, which make a thing what it is.[3]

Both in and outside philosophy »form« has many different, though often related meanings. We can do things for form's sake, words can be different in form but identical in meaning, there are income tax forms to be filled in, the Vienna Philharmonic often play at the top of their form, a horse can be in good form, the Aristotelian formal cause of this conference is the problem of form, which makes it into a conference on form, and there are the Wittgensteinian forms of life we all participate in.

The concept of form is one of the most complicated concepts in the history of philosophy and in aesthetics and art criticism. In general philosophy this concept has had a rich and variegated history – from Aristotle's analyses of

1. R. Williams, Keywords. *A Vocabulary of Culture and Society,* rev. ed., Fontana, London 1983, p. 138
2. *Ibid.*
3. »Form«, *The Universal Dictionary of the English Language,* ed. Henry C. Wyld, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1952, p. 446.

the relations between form and matter to the early Wittgenstein's search for the logical form of the sentence.

Form plays an important role in many different theoretical frameworks, critical ideologies and programmes in the aesthetic field. The ambiguous legacy of the concept, the many uses it has been put to, the difficulty of making it respectable by defining it once and for all and the unquestioned dualism that seems to be involved in it, are some of the factors that account for the scepticism if not the outright repudiation of the concept in much contemporary aesthetics. »/T/he concept of form, like those of expression and imitation /.../, is infinitely elastic« writes Francis Sparshott.[4] The concept may not be infinitely stretchable, but it certainly has been employed in a great variety of meanings and contexts.

The dichotomy of form and content seems to be a good candidate for deconstructive treatment. While remaining sceptical of aesthetic theories in which form is the key concept and thinking that many confused ideas are often associated with it, I believe the concept, like so many other vague and loose concepts in this field, is useful and perhaps even necessary when analysing and trying to understand the arts and their function in the web of our culture.

The purpose of my paper is twofold. Firstly I want to discuss some influential analyses of the concept and the role of form in the arts. Secondly I wish to remark on the role »form« and its cognates has played in evaluating art.

One way of approaching the concept of form and its role in aesthetic discourse in general and in aesthetic theorizing in particular is to explore what form is contrasted with. This method of contrast, as we may call it, was recommended by William James in his Gifford Lectures, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1901-2) where he claims »that it always leads to a better understanding of a thing's significance to consider its exaggerations and perversions, its equivalents and substitutes and nearest relatives elsewhere«.[5] There may not be any room for speaking about exaggerations or perversion as regards form, but it is certainly possible and fruitful to investigate the equivalents and substitutes of »form«.

Before discussing specific aesthetic uses of the concept I want to mention some dichotomies outside aesthetics where »form« and »normal« occur. Formal logic deals with valid forms of reasoning, with the structure of deductions and arguments and does not pronounce on the factual correctness of the premises, it does not deal with the »content« of an argument. Therefore formal logic can be contrasted with what may be called a logic of content, if there is one and the relationship between formal and dialectical logic has been a subject of heated controversies in the history of Marxism. Yet another contrast is the one

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4. F. Sparshott, *The Theory of the Arts*, Princeton Univ. Press, Princeton 1982, p. 93.
5. W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience. A Study in Human Nature*, The Gifford Lectures 1901-2, Fontana, London 1960, p. 42.

between formal and informal logic, the latter being regarded as an autonomous discipline.[6] In other contexts the dichotomies will obviously be different. The opposite of formal dress is casual dress, not dialectical dress or dress with content. A formal request is contrasted with an informal and inofficial one, a formal visit with a private visit and so on.

2. Form in aesthetics

In aesthetics we encounter the following conceptual pairs: form/matter, form/-subject-matter, form/materials, form/expression, form/emotion, form/-representation, form/meaning, form/structure and form/content. Before discussing a few representative views on form and its role in art, I want to suggest that when using the term »form« and when theorizing about form we are easily misled by the metaphor that seems to underly the dichotomy of form and content. According to the picture that is suggested by an unsophisticated use of the contrast between form and content, form is like the shape of the container in which the content is to be found. If anyone doubts that metaphors can have a very powerful hold over our imagination and that they are capable of shaping and informing a philosophical tradition and its problems, let me just refer to the question of the existence of the external world, a problem that trades on the metaphorical contrast between the inner and the outer. In classical empiricist epistemology the mind and its collections of impressions and sense-data and what not, is the inner world and the problem then becomes to understand how the contents of the container can correspond to what is outside the container – the outer world.[7]

I do not claim that the metaphorical overtones of the terms »form« and »content« somehow make them useless or that the attempt to render them more precise through analysis and stipulations is futile. I just want to make the point that the metaphorical character of these terms adds to the difficulties. The term »form« easily leads to a static conception of the relationship between form and content, as if form were a mould into which a content has to be forced. There is, to be sure, a sense in which »forms« are static and can be said to express a theme and to have a content etc. Think of the sonata form or the sonnet for example. But in other contexts »form« is conceived of as a dynamic principle structuring all features in a work of art.

Form in a work of art is often said to be the way something is said or done, the content consisting of what is said in the work of art. The distinction here is between the how and the what. Sometimes this distinction can readily be

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6. A survey of the field is given in Douglas N. Walton, *Informal Logic. A Handbook for Critical Argumentation,* Cambridge Univ. Press, Cambridge 1989.

7. In one of his lectures in 1930, Wittgenstein having granted that thinking sometimes may »involve images and these we think of as being 'in the mind'« remarks that »This simile of 'inside' or 'outside' the mind is pernicious« *(Wittgenstein's Lectures, Cambridge 1930-2,* ed. Desmond Lee, Blackwell, Oxford 1980, p. 25).

applied, sometimes not. It makes sense to ask how two works sharing the same form, two sonnets or classical tragedies for example, differ in themes, plots etc. In other cases it is very difficult to see that the distinction between form and content makes sense. The formal devices in a classical symphony, for example, can be described in purely musical terms, but what could possibly be the content over and above these formal features? Also there are works of art where it is difficult, if not impossible, to speak of »form« at all, although the works in question may have a theme, express ideas and so on. I am thinking of some works of conceptual art which do not seem to have any physical or material features at all, at least not in any usual sense.

A notable feature of the term »form« is that it often is used evaluatively. It shares this feature with stylistic terms like »realism« or »expressionism« and aesthetic predicates like »graceful«, »sublime« or »tragic«. The evaluative use of »form« implies that we are unwilling to speak of »form« and »formal« features in a work of art if the work in question falls below certain standards, if the form and the formal features of the work aren't interesting enough. When new styles and modes of expression which repudiate traditional ways of writing, painting and composing enter the artworld, art critics who dislike the new developments or are shocked by them express their attitude by claiming the new art to be formless, disorganized, and incomprehensible. They may even say that the new revolutionary art isn't art at all.

When saying that »form« can be used and is used evaluatively I am of course relying on a distinction between the evaluative or normative and the descriptive. There is, however, no agreement as to how this distinction should be drawn and there is no generally accepted theory of the meaning and function of value judgments. We may even suspect that the distinction itself rests on questionable assumptions which are however difficult to unearth.[8] I am not altogether happy with this distinction so it is with some reluctance I invoke it here. Even if no theory satisfactorily accounts for the differences (and the similarities) between description and evaluation it is not so difficult in practice, I think, to apply this distinction. It is easier to reach agreement on what kinds of statements are to be counted as evaluative and normative than to agree on a theory which explains the distinction between description and valuation.

It is instructive to consider Hegel's use of the form-content dichotomy from this point of view. A pervasive theme in Hegel's aesthetics is the unity of form and content. In *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften* (1817) we

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8. Hilary Putnam has pointed out that the discussion »whether values are 'objective' or 'subjective' /.../ is still trapped in the categories fixed by Hume« (H. Putnam, »After Empiricism«, in *Post-Analytic Philosophy*, eds. J. Rajchman & C. West, Columbia Univ. Press, New York 1985, p. 29). This issue is closely bound up with the discussion of the distinction between the descriptive and the evaluative, between facts and norms.

find an illustration of the inseparability of form and content taken from the field of art. He speaks of books that lack form because they are clumsily written, but they don't lack form altogether though, what they lack is an adequate form and he goes on to say that this correct or adequate form (»Diese rechte Form«) »ist so wening gegen den Inhalt gleichgültig, dass diese vielmehr der Inhalt selbst ist. Ein Kunstwerk, welchem die rechte Form fehlt, ist eben darum kein rechtes. d.h. kein wahres Kunstwerk«.[9] In true works of art form and content are identical he claims. In fact the identity of form and content occurs not only in art according to Hegel, this identity is in all fields of human endeavour the precondition of truth and solidity. In the introduction to his *Ästhetik* (1835) Hegel states that in valid art the spiritual and the sensuous form a unity, and this is the reason why he doubts and sometimes even seems to deny that music is an art form at all.[10] In any case music lacks, according to Hegel, a determinate content and in so far as it is art it has little value in his eyes.

The form-content dichotomy and the unity of form and content has a similar evaluative function in the Marxified Hegelianism of Lukács. In his *Ästhetik* (1963) he claims that

die Wirkung des Werks /.../ führt die ästhetisch gereinigten und ästhetisch homogen gemachten Lebensinhalte zur Formvollendung, zur Identität von Inhalt und Form, zur Ausgipfelung des Inhalts in die konkrete Form des Werks; jene leitet mit Hilfe der das Formsystem unterbauenden und ermöglichenden homogenen Mediums dem Rezeptiven in die Welt des Werks: die Form schlägt hier in Inhalt um.[11]

The last sentence in this quotation is taken almost verbatim from Hegel.[12] Nevertheless Hegel has to be turned upside down materialistically as Lukács puts it in his essay »Kunst und objektive Wahrheit« (1954) and form as well as content have to be interpreted as reflections of reality, not as abstract principles or spiritual processes.[13] To turn Hegel upside down, to rescue the rational kernel, the dialectical method, is an undertaking more demanding than Lukács ever realized. In any case such an undertaking presupposes that form and content can at least in some cases be separated and that a philosophical method can be isolated from its applications and its results. It

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9. G. W. F. Hegel, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften* 1, *Die Wissenschaft der Logik,* Werke 8, Hrsg. Eva Moldenhauer & Karl Markus Michel, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/Main 1970, p. 266.

10. G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik* 1, Werke 13, p. 62; *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik* 3, Werke 15, 148-9. Werke 15, p. 148-9.

11. G. Lukács, Ästhetik, *Die Eigenart des Ästhetischen,* 1, Werke 11, Luchterhand, Neuwied 1963, p. 803.

12. G. W. F. Hegel, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften,* 1, p. 265.

13. G. Lukács, »Kunst und objektive Wahrheit«, in *Probleme des Realismus 1, Essays über Realismus,* Werke 4, Luchterhand, Neuwied 1971, p. 626.

seems to me that this is often quite impossible to achieve. Could Plato's philosophy have been expressed *modo geometrico,* could Heidegger's meditations on the essence of language have been expressed in the semantics of Carnap, could Russells's views on our knowledge of the external world have been expressed in the form of philosophical remarks and jokes?

It seems to me that the principle of the unity of form and content and the dialectical relationship between them, for Hegel and Lukács, function as evaluative principles. Failing to show, or not feeling the need to show, what these principles amount to in practice, in the analysis of concrete works of art, they remain obscure. It would have been nice to know how form and content can be identical and at the same time transformed into one another in for example *Hamlet.*

The conceptual opposition between form and content cannot be applied to all art forms and to all individual works of art in the same manner. »Form« and »formal elements« may well mean very different things when applied to different art forms and the distinction between form and content could differ in function and purpose depending on whether we think of literature, painting or music. Too much aesthetic theorizing assumes, consciously or unconsciously, that what applies to one art form applies to all art forms. The belief that the key concepts in aesthetics have a constant meaning regardless of which art form they are applied to is the semantic counterpart of this attitude.

Susanne K. Langer warned us more than thirty years ago against the temptation to overgeneralize. She pointed out that

/w/hen we talk about »Art« with a capital »A« – that is, about any or all of the arts: painting, sculpture, architecture, the potter's and goldsmith's and other designers' arts, music, dance, poetry, and prose fiction, drama and film – it is a constant temptation to say things about »Art« in this general sense that are true only in one special domain, or to assume that what holds for one art must hold for another.[14]

Langer herself may be accused of succumbing to this temptation when she developed her own theory of art as »the creation of forms symbolic of human feeling«.[15] Her theory was originally conceived as a theory of significance in music and then expanded to cover all the art forms. Her view that music – through its dynamic forms – reveals the hidden structure of human feeling and is expressive of the dynamic nature of sentient life is the most interesting and plausible part of her philosophy of art.[16]

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14. S. K. Langer, *Problems of Art. Ten Philosophical Lectures,* Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1957, p. 13.

15. S. K. Langer, *Feeling and Form. A Theory of Art Developed From »Philosophy in a New Key«,* Charles Scribner's Sons, New York 1953, p. 40.

16. See S. K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key. A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite, and Art,* (1942) 3rd. ed., Harvard Univ. Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1974.

Be that as it may, in order to avoid empty and uninformative generalizations it is prudent to follow Langer's advice, if not her practice. Therefore I shall now discuss a few representative views on form in literature, painting and music respectively, before discussing form as an artistic value.

2.1 Form in literature

René Wellek and Austin Warren write in their classic *Theory of Literature* (1949) that the terms »form« and »content« are »terms used in too widely different senses for them to be /..../ helpful; indeed, even after careful definition, they too simply dichotomize the work of art«.[17] They propose to replace them by the terms »materials« and »structure«. These latter terms, however, are not regarded by them as »a simple renaming of the old pair, content and form«.[18] »Materials« stand for »aesthetically indifferent elements« while »structure« includes »both content and form so far as they are organized for aesthetic purposes«.[19] It is difficult to see that this view is an improvement because the terms »form« and »content« themselves can certainly be given the meaning Wellek and Warren attach to »materials« and »structure«. Moreover the terms »materials« and »structure« are no less ambiguous and problematic than the original pair »form« and »content«. Wellek's and Warren's discussion of form and content illustrate the point made by Arnold Isenberg, in an article written in 1944, that everybody is dissatisfied with the distinction between form and content, but that nobody is happy to dispense with it.[20] Isenberg's point was probably truer at the time he made it than it is today, but it certainly applies to Wellek and Warren, because in *Theory of Literature* they also use »form« to refer to »the aesthetic structure of a literary work – that which makes it literature«.[21] Furthermore they claim that form organizes matter and that »/i/n a succesful work of art, the materials are completely assimilated into the form«.[22]

The concept of structure introduced earlier is absent and their view of the relationship between form and content appears to be the traditional one, namely that a work of art is formed content.

In one of the passages quoted from Wellek and Warren, they try to explain »form« in terms of »structure«. This is not an unusual procedure. In Cuddon's *A Dictionary of Literary Terms* (1979), for example, under the entry »form« it is asserted that »/w/hen we speak of the form of a literary work we refer to

17. R. Wellek & A. Warren, *Theory of Literature*, (1949), 3rd ed., Penguin, Harmondsworth 1963, p. 28.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 141.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 140-1.
20. A. Isenberg, »Perception, Meaning, and the Subject Matter of Art« (1944) in A. Isenberg, *Aesthetics and the Theory of Criticism. Selected Essays*, ed. William Callaghan et. al., Univ. of Chicago Press, Chicago 1973, p. 36.
21. Wellek & Warren, p. 241.
22. *Ibid.*

its shape and structure /..../ as opposed to its substance or what it is about«.[23] Although »/f/orm and substance are inseparable« according to the same source, »they may be analysed and assessed separately«.[24] Clearly there are problems with this view. How two elements that are inseparable can be analysed and assessed separately is left in the dark. And in Roger Fowler's *A Dictionary of Modern Critical Terms* (1987) Allan Rodway contrast »form« with »'paraphrasable content'«, »the way something is said in contrast to what is said«.[25] And for good measure he adds that »even though form and content may be inseparable for the 'full meaning' of a work, the paraphrasable content may nevertheless be used to enable the concept of form to be discussed«.[26] He further claims that »form must /my italics/ be either structural or textural, the one being large-scale, a matter of arrangement, the other small-scale, a matter of impressionism«.[27] Again it is far from clear why form must be of only two kinds and what »structure« means here.

A different view of the relationship between form and structure in literature is advanced by Anne Sheppard in her book *Aesthetics. An Introduction to the Philosophy of Art* (1987). She notes that »the range of features which count as 'formal' is exceedingly wide«[28] and instead of trying to give a general definition of form and formal features she proceeds to give examples of formal features in different literary genres. The metre used for verse is one example, the interweaving of plot and sub-plots in certain novels is another. »Despite the diversity of what counts as 'formal'«, she says, »there is one thing which all these examples have in common: in every case relationships between features are involved«, adding that »in every case it is the ordering of the formal features which matters«.[29]

However, there are many things outside the field of art where »relationships bewteen features are involved« and there are works of art where no relationships of this kind seem to be involved. Think of Walter de Maria's *Vertical Earth Kilometer* (1977) in Kassel, which is literally in the earth and cannot be seen or of Robert Barry's »works« which consist of pure thought, like the piece *All the things I know of which I am not at the moment thinking – 1:36 P.M.; 15 June 1969, New York* (1969). These are of course extreme examples and it could be denied that they are works of art because there is no

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23. J. A. Cuddon, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms*, rev. ed., Penguin, Harmondsworth 1982, p. 277.

24. *Ibid.*

25. Allan Rodway, »Form«, in R. Fowler, ed. *A Dictionary of Modern Critical Terms*, rev. & enl. ed., Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1987, p. 99.

26. *Ibid.*

27. *Ibid.*

28. A. Sheppard, *Aesthetics. An Introduction to the Philosophy of Art*, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford 1987, p. 39.

29. *Ibid.*

art object at all.[30] Nevertheless, whatever we may think of the value of conceptual art as art, it presents a conceptual challenge to our discourse about art. Moreover conceptual art was, in the words of one commentator, »probably /.../ the largest, quickest-growing and most genuinely international of all twentieth-century art movements«.[31]

2.2 Form in painting

There are no doubt various formalist positions in the aesthetics of painting. Many discussions of form and formalism in painting in Anglosaxon aesthetics take their starting point in the writings of the English formalist critics and theorists, Roger Fry and Clive Bell. In 1910 and 1912 Fry organized two important exhibitions of what he called the »post-impressionist« painters, which he distinguished from neo-impressionists like Seurat and Signac. In Fry's terminology Cézanne, Gaugin, Van Gogh and Matisse were post-impressionists and their works dominated the first exhibition. Fry's exhibition caused a scandal, but can still be said to have been a great succes. Fry's influence on artistic taste in Britain was considerable, he exerted in the words of Harold Osborne, »a revolutionary influence on the taste of his day«.[32]

Now both Fry and Bell employed an informal method of formalist analysis of painting and were at the same time the champions of a new taste in painting. Fry claimed that what matters in the art of painting are the plastic values, line, colouring and the relations between them. He distinguished between two kinds of painting, »real« painting where the plastic values dominate and representational painting where design and the plastic values primarily serve illustrative and non-artistic purposes. Matisse belongs to the former group and Rembrandt, whom Fry regarded as a great psychologist, to the second. The

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30. Ben Tilghman denies that Barry's »work« is a work of art on these grounds. His main point is not that it lacks many of the properties works of art normally has, but, he says, taking away the art object itself and leave only the idea (whatever that means) may be going too far. If it is going too far, it is not merely because there are too few properties in common with the paradigm, but because what has been stripped away are all those things that seem to give point to calling something a work of art, such things as beauty, a celebration of some aspect of our life, a view of the world, and so on (B. Tighman, *But Is It Art? The Value of Art and The Temptation of Theory,* Blackwell, Oxford 1984, p. 91). I think the issue here is partly normative and partly descriptive. While agreeing with Tilghman that the things he mentions make art valuable, it can be objected that Barry's work and similar conceptual works are a celebration of some aspect of life and that they indeed express a view of the world. If we are not willing to call these »works« art, what are they then? Tilghman seems to think that it is a misuse of language to call them art, but conceptual art certainly belongs to the art world and is treated by many as art. We seem to be faced with the choice between calling them non-art because they cannot fulfil some of the functions we expect art to fulfil or we can accept them as works of art and deny that they are very interesting or valuable.

31. Roberta Smith, »Conceptual Art« in *Concepts of Modern Art,* rev. & enl. ed., ed. Nikos Stangos, Thames and Hudson, London 1981, p. 262.

32. H. Osborne, »Fry, Roger«, in *The Oxford Companion to Twentieth-Century Art,* ed. H. Osborne, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford 1981, p. 208.

normative nature of Fry's distinction is obvious. Fry may have thought that this distinction was based on a sound descriptive theory of what painting really is, in fact he showed the public of his day how to approach works of art they found utterly formless, disorganized, and even perverse. Instead of discovering the real nature of the art of painting, Fry and his follower Bell, introduced new criteria for the appreciation of painting. The following quotation from Fry bears out this point:

/.../ I venture to say that no one who has a real understanding of the art of painting attaches any importance to what we call the subject of a picture – what is represented. To one who feels the language of pictorial form all depends on how it is represented, nothing on what. Rembrandt expressed his profoundest feelings just as well when he painted a carcass hanging up in a butcher's shop as when he painted the Crucifixtion or his mistress. Cézanne who most of us believe to be the greatest artist of modern times expressed some of his grandest conceptions in pictures of fruit and crockery on a common kitchen table.[33]

And Bell, who distinguished between »descriptive painting« and »pure painting«, claimed that »a realistic form may be as significant, in its place as part of the design, as an abstract«, adding that »if a representative form has value, it is as form, not as representation. The representative element in a work of art may or may not be harmful; always it is irrelevant«.[34]

It is clear that both Fry and Bell thought that a precondition of a real understanding of painting is that no importance is attached to the subject-matter of the painting. The artistic value of a painting, they believed, is decided solely by the formal qualities and relations present in the painting. In the words of Isenberg, they thought that »it is not important that a work of art should have an important subject«.[35] So artistic value and artistic greatness in no way depends on the importance or relevance of the subject-matter or the theme of the work. Instead of speaking here of »subject-matter« I prefer to speak of »thematic properties«. The phrase is borrowed from Ian Jarvies Philosophy of the Film (1987) where the thematic properties are properties that »look past the form of the work /.../ to the subject matter or, rather, to what it says about the subject matter«.[36] Jarvie here assumes that a work of art can say something about its subject matter, and he adds that »the question arises, is what /the artist/ is saying: true or false, good or evil, banal or

33. R. Fry, The Artist and Psycho-Analysis, The Hogarth Press, London 1924, p. 16
34. C. Bell, »The Aesthetic Hypothesis«, in C. Bell, Art (1913), Doubleday, New York 1958, p. 27.
35. A. Isenberg, »Formalism«, (1955) in A. Isenberg, Aesthetics and the Theory of Criticism. Selected Essays, p. 28.
36. I. Jarvie, Philosophy of the Film. Epistemology, Ontology, Aesthetics, Routledge & Kegan Paul, New York 1987, p. 182.

profound?«.[37] While accepting the idea that a work of art can say something and that truth is involved in some oblique and obscure way, I don't think it is easy in any particular case to say what a work of art says or suggests.

What do Fry's and Bell's statements about the irrelevance of the thematic properties of a work of art imply in a particular case? Let's consider a few examples. Delacroix' famous painting *Liberty Leading the People* (1830) has been described as »a document of the intimate union of revolution and Romanticism« and as conveying »more powerfully than any other early nineteenth-century painting the political temper of revolutionary Europe«.[38] If we accept the description of this work as »an allegory of revolution itself«[39] the revolution as well as Delacroix' attitude are thematic properties of the work. When judging the artistic value of the work it is surely impossible not to be influenced by the thematic properties of the work. Or consider Picasso's *Guernica* (1937). An integral feature of the work is that it refers to the bombing of Guernica during the Spanish civil war and that it is an expression of Picasso's attitude towards that event. Consider finally the Soviet painter Gerasimov's portrait of Stalin at the funeral of a fellow revolutionary whose death more than likely had been precipitated by the subject of the painting himself. It would be strange, if not perverse, to try disregard the thematic properties of this work. Our attitude to Stalin certainly affects our judgement of the painting.

The view that the thematic properties of a work are irrelevant to its artistic value is very narrow and completely overlooks that relevance to human concerns is a legitimate source of artistic value.

The formalist perspective presupposes that we can isolate the formal feautures in a painting and judge them for themselves. That this approach involves great difficulties is inadvertently admitted by Bell when he says that »significant form« includes »combinations of lines and of colours« on the grounds that »/t/he distinction between form and colour is an unreal one« because we »cannot conceive a colourless line or a colourless space«.[40] Similarly there are not two separate things, form and representative content or expression, but one configuration with properties of different kinds that can be separated only in analysis. This view, which to me seems to be correct, is well expressed by Gene Blocker: »Just as you cannot separate experience of things that are organized from their organization, so you cannot separate form from representational and expressive elements organized in a work of art.«[41] And

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37. *Ibid.*
38. *Gardner's Art Through the Ages,* 6th ed., rev. by Horst de la Croix & Richard Tansey, Harcourt, Brace & Jovanovich, New York 1975, p. 675.
39. *Ibid.*
40. Bell, p. 19.
41. G. Blocker, *Philosophy of Art,* Charles Scribner's Sons, New York 1979, p. 145.

he adds that »this organized whole is precisely what we mean, or ought to mean, by the »form« of a work of art«.[42] I don't think this is the only thing that ought to be meant by »form« and I would also like to add a consideration that is lacking in Blocker's discussion. It is often assumed that it is easy to pinpoint the formal properties or elements in a work of art. In fact there is no agreement as to what counts as a formal element, moreover what is a formal element from one perspective and in one analysis may not be a formal element when seen from a different perspective.

The structuralist attempt to find and define the elements of meaning, the »atoms« of meaning as it were, in the arts and their subsequent failure to do so, should make us see that there are no elements in an absolute sense. In other words what we regard as an element is subject to change and dependent on our theoretical and practical interests. To overlook this leads to bad theorizing and to boring criticism.

Contrary to Fry's contention understanding a representational painting presupposes that we attach importance to the subject-matter, simply because subject-matter and thematic properties are integral to the work. Roger Scruton is entirely right in saying that »the very suggestion that one could understand Rembrandt's Nightwatch, for example, while being indifferent to, or ignorant of, its representational status is absurd«.[43] I suppose Scruton refers to Fry and Bell when he adds that »/t/he suggestion has, of course been made, since every conceivable abusurdity has at one time or another been entertained in the theory of art«.[44] A formalist could retort that if Rembrandt's painting cannot be seen as a pure formal configuration, this only shows that Rembrandt's work is an illustration and not a work of art. Such an argument is very unconvincing, it only betrays the normative character of the formalist definition of art as significant form.

2.3 Form and music

»/O/f all the arts music is the one where formal features are most clearly dominant« writes Anne Sheppard[45] and even those who are not formalists in regard to literature or painting have often espoused a formalist view of music. Eduard Hanslick's _Vom Musikalisch-Schönen_ (1854) remains to this day one of the most influential and consistent formulations of the formalist position. According to Hanslick music, that is instrumental music, is incapable of expressing any specific emotions or feelings. Moreover music cannot represent anything ouside itself, because it lacks conceptual and linguistic powers. »The content of music is tonally moving forms« is the major thesis of Hanslick's

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42. _Ibid._
43. R. Scruton, _Art and Imagination. A Study in the Philosophy of Mind,_ Methuen, London 1974, p. 210.
44. _Ibid._
45. Sheppard, p. 42.

treatise.[46] Music as an art is akin to architecture and dancing, because they also lack any content apart from formal relationships.[47] It may be strange to say that the formal features in a work of art is the content, as if we never could talk about forms without content. However Hanslick insists that »/t/he concepts of content and form mutually determine and complement each other«,[48] and he furthermore thinks that music in contrast to literature and the visual arts »possesses form and content inseparably« whereas the latter art forms »can represent /.../ thoughts and events in a variety of forms«.[49] He mentions the story of Wilhelm Tell which figures as the theme in novels, dramas and epic poems. If music cannot represent any particular events or particular feelings and emotions, it can nevertheless according to Hanslick represent and suggest the dynamic features of feelings. These dynamic features can be represented in virtue of similarities in formal patterns between the dynamics of feelings and the dynamics of music.

Susanne K. Langer's philosophy of music is in some ways a development of Hanslick's point. For she claims that music is »formulation and representation of emotions, moods, mental tensions and resolutions – a 'logical picture' of sentient, responsive life, a source of insight«.[50] The function of music is cognitive, but the insights musical forms can impart cannot be formulated or named. Some things can be known which cannot be named, she says, and »music articulates forms which language cannot set forth«.[51] Langer's theory goes far beyond Hanslick's formalism, but her analysis can still be regarded as a variety of formalism, »formalism with an explicitly expressionist basis« as Sheppard puts it.[52]

I think Langer's semi-formalist view has its attractions. It is certainly possible to listen to instrumental music as if it were a musical analogue to our emotional life and I suggest it is much better to think about music in this way and to listen to it in this spirit than to assume that music has magical powers of representing non-musical reality, be it concrete things and events or the essence of reality. Musical forms can »correspond« to our experience and our emotions in a variety of ways, a fact which may account for the conviction that music can impart knowledge about reality.

Forms can, however, be significant and expressive without signifying or expressing anything in particular. Some people reject all formalist analysis of

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46. E. Hanslick, *On The Musically Beautiful. A Contribution Towards the Revision of the Aesthetics of Music,* 8th ed. (1891), transl. Geoffrey Payzant, Hackett, Indianapolis, Indiana 1986, p. 29.
47. *Ibid.,* p. 78
48. *Ibid.,* p. 80.
49. *Ibid.*
50. S. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key,* p. 222.
51. *Ibid.,* p. 233.
52. Sheppard, p. 49.

»the meaning of music« because they feel that when the cognitive function of music is being denied, its importance and significance goes over board as well. Also there is widespread feeling that in order for music to be expressive it must express some definite feeling, mood or emotion. There is however an intransitive use of »expression« and »express« which does not require an object and this intransitive use of these expression is important in aesthetics.[53]

The failure to understand the intransitive expressiveness of music is responsible for many mistaken ascriptions of content to particular musical works. Consider for example the following description of Liszt's *Ballade in B minor:* »It is less passionate and more full-blooded /than the ballades of Chopin/; concerned, as it were, less with personal suffering than with great happenings on the epical scale, barbarian invasions, cities in flames – tragedies of public more than private, import«.[54] These words were written by the English eccentric Sacheverell Sitwell, but similar nonsense abound in the writings of more sober musicologists.

In contrast to Sitwell, who obviously thought that instrumental music can describe and suggest real world happenings, Deryck Cooke in his book *The Language of Music* (1959) thought that musical forms express definite feelings and attitudes. He thinks for example that the minor third »in the 1-3-5 progression /is/ expressive of an outgoing feeling of pain – an assertion of sorrow, a complaint, a protest against misfortune«.[55] Cooke tries to reconstruct the vocabulary of musical forms, assigning a specific meaning to every form in isolation as if the musical forms had an inherent meaning to be discovered by analysis. The formal features like intervals, chords, harmonies, rhythmic patterns etc. can of course be described in expressive terms and the expressive vocabulary is perhaps the only vocabulary we can use when

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53. For the intransitive sense of »expression«, see Scruton, ch. 14. The concept of intransitive knowledge and its role in aesthetics is developed by Kjell S. Johannessen in his contributions to *Culture, Language and Artificial Intelligence,* eds. M. Florin & B. Göranzon, Berlin, Springer 1989 and to Essays in Pragmatic Philosophy, vol. 2, eds. H. Höibraaten & I. Gullvåg, Universitetsforlaget, Bergen 1990.

54. S. Sitwell, *Liszt,* (1955) Dover, New York 1967, p. 193.

55. D. Cooke, *The Language of Music,* Oxford Univ. Press, London 1959, p. 122. For a more extragavant reconstruction of a musical vocabulary consider the programme for Chopin's *Prélude No 9 in E minor,* written by Hans von Bülow (he wrote programmes for all the Préludes), Here Chopin has the conviction that he has lost his power of expression. With the determination to discover whether his brain can still originate ideas, he strikes his head with a hammer (here the sixteenths and thirty-seconds are to be carried out in exact time, indicating a double stroke of the hammer). In the third and fourth measure one can hear the blood trickle (trills in the left hand). He is desperate at finding no inspiration (sixth measure); he strikes again with the hammer and with greater force (thirty-second notes twice in succession during the crescendo). In the key of A flat he finds his powers again. Appeased, he seeks his former key and closes contentedly. (Quoted from Harold C. Schonberg, *The Great Pianists from Mozart to the Present,* Simon & Schuster, New York 1963, p. 129). It is remarkable that one of the leading musicians of the the second-half of the nineteenth century, the pupil of Liszt and Wagner, the pianist and famous conductor von Bülow could write things like that.

describing our reactions to music. But it does not follow that musical forms as such have a definite, statable meaning.

The expressive properties we ascribe to a piece of music apply to the general character of the piece, not to any particular, isolated formal features. To describe Liszt's *Ballade* as happy and gay would betray a misunderstanding of the piece; to say that is dramatic, tense, wild, feverish and excited would be more to the point and it is this impression Sitwell wants to get across with his fanciful and absurd description.

Consider the expressiveness of a human face which is in some ways is to expressiveness in music. Expressiveness in a human face depends on a great variety of imperceptible and in themselves inexpressive features, like eye-movements, posture of the head and so on. Similarly, the expressiveness of a passage in music is dependent on a number of factors which in themselves may be inexpressive. When »the air of majesty« of the first themes in a Bruckner symphony is thought to depend on the the fact that they »are clearly defined in harmony and /that they/ are usually based on fifths or octaves«[56] this cannot be the whole truth. This claim is sensible only if we presuppose a certain orchestration, a definite volume, a particular rhythmic pattern and tempo, a musical context, in other words the context provided by Bruckner's score itself. For imagine one of these Brucknerian themes being played on a flute accompanied by a tuba, or imagine them being played piano pianissimo or presstissimo and the air of majesty vanishes into thin air. The total expressive effect of a work depends on the total relationships of the formal features and it is a fruitless task to assign meanings – expressive or descriptive – to single forms and isolated passages. The expressiveness of a certain passage depends on many factors, no isolated formal features are expressive just by themselves.

2.4 Form and artistic value

Many formalists not only think that the formal features of a work are responsible for its status as an art work, its art-making features, they also tend to believe that formal features are the source of artistic and aesthetic value. A non-formalist need not of course deny that there are formal values and that they contribute to the overall artistic value of a work. A non-formalist can even admit that in some works of art formal features and formal values dominate at the expense of all other artistic values.

John Hospers, who is certainly no formalist, distinguishes between three kinds of values that are important in art, sensuous values pertaining to the texture, colours and shapes, formal values which have to do with the overall organization of a work of art, and what he calls life values. While sensuous and formal values in Hospers' view are mediumistic in the sense that »they are

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56. H. Ulrich & P. Pisk, *A History of Music and Musical Style*, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, New York 1963, p. 551.

concerned with what the work of art contains in its very medium« the life values he says »are not contained in the medium but are conveyed through the medium«.[57] Hospers expresses these distinctions in a rather mechanistic way and the idea that some things are contained in the medium and others conveyed through the medium is questionable. Nevertheless his distinctions are, I think, valid. Hospers introduces these three kinds of values under the heading »aspects of works of art«. There are, however, many more aspects of a work of art and several other dimensions of value than the ones discussed by Hospers.

Göran Hermerén distinguishes between no less than five different components or criteria of artistic value. These components are (1) skill and craftsmanship, (2) aesthetic value, (3) communication of feeling, (4) relevance and (5) originality.[58] I will comment on the notion of aesthetic value and its relation to artistic value and say something about the notion of relevance involved here, but let me just add that treating artistic value in this way enables us to understand how works with entirely different characteristics, purposes and origins can possess artistic value. Some works possess all these features, others have several of them and there are works of art which possess only one of them. Some avant garde works which lack a perceptible surface cannot have aesthetic value in the sense under discussion. If we dislike them and think them pointless they have little or no relevance but they could still be artistically valuable in virtue of their originality and there are people who think that originality is the supreme artistic value which makes up for much. If the concept of art is primarily a normative concept, as I believe it is, the possession of at least one of these values is a necessary condition for being an art work.

»The aesthetic value of a work depends«, according to Hermerén, »on the way the surface of that work looks or appears: the way the work is composed, how colors and shapes are distributed on the canvas – and analogously in the other arts«.[59] The term »aesthetic value« has certainly been used in a variety of ways and it is not uncommon to give it a wider application than Herméren does. »Aesthetic value« is sometimes used as a synonym for »artistic value«, but it is sensible and desirable to distinguish between the two. When we speak of the aesthetic value of something, not necessarily an art work, we consider says Hermerén »the 'sensuous' and the 'structural' properties of X, including its expressive emotional qualities: its unity, complexity, balance, and harmony as well as its sadness, joyfulness, happiness, melancholy, or monumentality«.[60] What Herméren counts as »aesthetic values« is a mixed bag and it is

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57. J. Hospers, »Aesthetics, Problems of«, in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vol 1, ed. Paul Edwards, Macmillan, New York 1967, p. 44.
58. G. Hermerén, *Aspects of Aesthetics*, Gleerups, Lund 1983, pp. 62-73.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 64-5.

problematic to treat the sensuous and the structural properties as well as the expressive qualities of a work of art as being of the same kind, viz. as aesthetic. Some of the properties on Hermerén's list are properties that have been called »formal«. Both the sensuous and the structural properties could be regarded as formal properties of a work of art and it is in fact these features that are close to the formalists heart. The formalist then, is interested only in some of the aesthetic features of a work of art and believes that these are the only sources of artistic value.

The category of relevance in Hermerén's list of dimensions of artistic value also contains rather heterogenous things. Here belong »ideas with more or less obvious moral, political and religious overtones«[61] he says, and if we are interested in answering questions pertaining to the relevance of a work of art, we typically ask ourselves to what extent the work in questions says or reveals something important and significant about some aspect of reality. Formalists often explicitly deny that the artistic value of a work of art depends in any way on the relevance of the work. However, even avowed formalists find it difficult to avoid the issue of relevance altogether.

Roger Fry wrote the following remarkable passage where he clearly speaks of something that cannot be subsumed under the concept of aesthetic or formal value:

/T/he emotional tone /of a work of art/ is not due to any recognizable reminiscence or suggestion of the emotional experiences of life; but I sometimes wonder if it nevertheless does not get its force from arousing some very deep, very vague, and immensely generalized reminiscences. It looks as though art had got access to the substratum of all the emotional colours of life, to something which underlies all the particular and specialized emotions of actual life.[62]

We may compare this with the position of a formalist of a very different complexion, Viktor Shklovsky, who in his famous essay »Art as Technique« (1917) claims that the purpose of literature as of all art is to reawaken our sense of reality, to make us see reality anew and to help us to break away from conventional ways of seeing an feeling. This is achieved, Shklovsky thinks, through certain formal and defamiliarizing techniques. Now his view of the purpose of art may be unduly narrow, but his brand of formalism explicitly affirmed the relevance of art to life.

3. Conclusion

It is as crippling to champion just one artistic value as it is illusiory to believe that form in the arts is always one and the same thing. There are many

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60. *Ibid.*, p. 65.
61. *Ibid.*, p. 66.
62. Fry, p. 19.

concepts and conceptions of form. We can certainly create a more or less precise concept of form which can be useful for certain purposes, but to believe that we can find the concept of form rests on an illusion. So a pluralist account of form is combined with a pluralist view of artistic value.

In contrast to Fry and Shklovsky and a host of other formalists and non-formalists I don't believe art has a purpose, it has many different purposes. But one important purpose of art is to say something about reality and hence I think relevance is an important, though not the only, source of artistic value.

What a work of art says about reality and how it says it is mostly inexpressible. As Wittgenstein once wrote about a poem by the German poet Ludwig Uhland: »And this is how it is: if only you do not try to express what is inexpressible then nothing gets lost. But the inexpressible will be – inexpressibly – contained in what has been expressed«.[63]

If works of art could say nothing about life and reality, art would be irrelevant to our deepest concerns as human beings and if what a work of art art says could be conveyed discursively, art would be superfluous. In this sense both form and content are necessary and inseparable.

63. P. Engelmann, *Letters from Wittgenstein*, Blackwell, Oxford 1967, p. 7.

Beyond formalism: Kant's theory of art
Paul Crowther

Introduction

K ant's theory of art has been neglected to an extraordinary degree. In this
discussion, I want to rectify the situation by arguing that Kant's theory
reaches far beyond the constraints placed on his work by the familiar label of
»formalist«.

To show this, I will adopt the following strategy. In Part One, I will outline the
salient features of Clive Bell's and Clement Greenberg's approaches to art, as
examples of both formalism's strategies and its problems. I will then indicate
the basis of Kant's general aesthetic theory, arguing that it suggests a way
beyond the limitations of formalism. In Part Two I shall explore this possibility
in depth, by means of a detailed exposition of Kant's theory of art. In Part
Three I will make a few critical revisions to the theory; and shall conclude
that, unlike the formalist approaches of Bell and Fry, Kant's theory defines art
without severing its connections to life.

Part one

The basis of Clive Bell's aesthetic formalism is his attempt to define art in
terms of »significant form« – which he defines as »relations and arrangements
of lines and colours«.[1] This, it should be noted, does not of itself disqualify
representational works from counting as art. As Bell remarks

*»... a realistic form may be as significant, in its place as part of the design, as
an abstract. But if a representative form has value, it is as form, not as
representation. The representative element in a work of art may or may not be
harmful; always it is irrelevant.«*[2]

Bell goes on to claim that the only sort of knowledge required for the
appreciation of art is a sense of form and colour, and, to a lesser degree, a
knowledge of three-dimensional space. We must also, of course, be
aesthetically sensitive. Again, in Bell's words

1. Clive Bell, *Art,* Chatto and Windus, London, 1931, p. 68.
2. *Ibid,* p. 72.

»... to appreciate a work of art we need bring with us nothing from life, no knowledge of its ideas and affairs, no familiarity with its emotions. Art transports us from the world of man's activity to a world aesthetic exaltation. For a moment we are shut off from human interests; our anticipations and memories are arrested; we are lifted above the stream of life.«[3]

On these terms, then the experience of significant form provokes aesthetic emotion – an emotion wherein we are distanced from the concerns of practical existence. A work only counts as art to the degree that it can arouse such an emotion in us.

Now the apparent strength of Bell's theory is its seeming capacity to establish art's distinctness form all other human activities and experiences. It is, indeed, this affirmation of the *autonomy* of art which is responsible for aesthetic formalism's profound influence on twentieth-century theory and practice in the arts. Bell's approach, however, is seriously flawed in a number of respects. One area of difficulty is as follows. Every visual object *qua* visual object has a formal aspect i.e. it can be viewed as a configuration of line, shape, and colour. But why is it that we do not view *every* such object in these terms? Why is it that some configurations of form arouse aesthetic emotion, but others do not? One presumes that Bell would say »because only some objects (i.e. artworks) have *significant* form«. But again we must ask what is it that makes such forms significant? Bell's only answer would be »because they have the capacity to arouse aesthetic emotion«. This, of course, makes the argument into a logically vicious circle. Bell cannot, in other words, provide us with adequate criteria for distinguishing significant artistic form from insignificant non-artistic form.

At the heart of Bell's problem here is the fact that he argues art's autonomy at the price of a far too rigid distinction between art and life. With the formalist theory of Clement Greenberg somewhat different considerations come into play. Greenberg argues that

»Quality, aesthetic value, originates in inspiration, vision, 'content', not in form. Yet form not only opens the way to inspiration; it can also act as a means to it; and technical preoccupations when searching enough and compelling enough, can generate or discover 'content'.«[4]

Now as I interpret him, Greenberg's approach here holds that the aesthetic value of a work resides not simply in the formal configuration as such, but in the way in which the configuration exemplifies the artist's having had some original ideas about the employment of his or her medium. However, in a recent symposium Greenberg has also emphasised the central role of »taste« in the experience of art. By taste he means »unanalysable« acts of »aesthetic intuition«. Yet, at the same time he also holds that *»Value judgements*

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3. *Ibid,* p. 72.
4. Clement Greenberg, »Necessity of Formalism«, *Art International,* October 1972, p. 106.

constitute the substance of aesthetic experience«, and that »*taste at its best, in its fullest sense, likes whatever is good.*«[5]

On the one hand, then, Greenberg wants to link aesthetic value to a complex appraisal of the formal configuration's relation to broader developments within the medium, and on the other hand he wants to say that judgement's aesthetic value are unanalysable acts of intuition. These two claims are clearly in conflict. Greenberg does, indeed, go one step behind Bell in allowing that aesthetic judgements are logically complex – involving historical factors; but like Bell he is bewitched by the psychology of such judgements. He sees them as private experiences, wholly disconnected from the continuum of life. This is the great problem of all aesthetic formalism in its attempt to comprehend art. To explain why form is aesthetically significant we must account for the aesthetic judgement as a logical complex involving the interplay of perceptual and, in the broadest sense, socio-historical factors. But at the same time we must be able to relate this to the psychology of the experience i.e. its capacity to distance us from the demands of everyday practical existence. Aesthetic formalists such as Bell at one extreme, and Greenberg at the other, fail to make this connection in any adequate way. They dramatically overemphasise the gap between art and life. Kant's theory of art offers a way of bridging this gap. Before addressing it, however, I must first say something about his own version of aesthetic formalism.

The very essence of Kant's position can be grasped in terms of a few basic points (which I shall outline in a different order from that adopted in the *Critique of Judgement*). The first centres on the claim that pure aesthetic judgements have the »form of finality« but are »apart« from any definite »end« or concept.[6] By this Kant means that the aesthetic judgement is simply and solely directed to the relation between parts and whole in phenomenal configurations i.e. ones which are immediately present to the senses. Now an object's relation to the senses can also give rise to pleasure in two other ways. First, when the pleasure is determined by what kind of thing the object is. We might enjoy the look of an object or animal, for example, because they seem to be perfect specimens of their kind; we might enjoy the look of a tool because it promises an efficient performance. In these cases our pleasure arises from the conformity of a particular item to some external »end« or standard. Kant describes this as our pleasure in the »good«. In other cases, our pleasure in the way an item relates to the senses is determined by a purely causal relation. For example, our enjoyment of one particular colour or flavour rather than another is based solely on personal preference – on what one's eyes or taste buds happen to like coming in contact with.

5. Clement Greenberg, »Art Criticism«, *Partisan Review,* vol. XLVII no. 1, 1981, p. 36.
6. Kant's main discussions of this are in the First, Second and Third Movements of the Analytic of the Beautiful, in *The Critique of Judgement.* All further citations from Kant in this paper refer to *The Critique of Judgement* trans. J.C. Meredith, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1973.

The pure aesthetic judgement, in contrast, is determined neither by conformity to a concept or end, nor by mere causal impact on the senses. We may, for example, simply enjoy the relation of balancing shapes and colours in some formal configuration for its own sake. This means that in order to enjoy an object's formal relations, it is not presupposed that we know what kind of thing the object is, nor even whether it is real or not. Kant thus describes the pure aesthetic judgement as being »apart from any concept« and »disinterested« – in a way that judgements of the good and the agreeable are not. But if this is so, how is it possible for us to enjoy the disinterested play of the cognitive faculties upon the aesthetic object? Kant's answer is that our perceptual interaction with such an object is one that brings the understanding and imagination – broadly speaking our capacities to comprehend and to attend and recall – into a harmonious, mutually complementary relationship. The bringing of these capacities into such a relation is of extreme significance. For according to Kant, it is the understanding and imagination whose joint function makes all communication possible. Hence, when the formal richness of a perceived configuration, stimulates these capacities into heightened co-operation, it is, thereby, enhancing our general cognitive hold upon the world. It furthers our »sense of life«. This is why, the formal configuration appears to have structure and purposiveness over and above that which is determined by the kind of thing it is.

Now I have discussed the merits and demerits of Kant's general theory of the aesthetic at length elsewhere.[7] Putting it concisely, he is right in the essentials if not in the details of his theory. However, for present purposes it is crucial to say something now about the theory's scope. First, what Kant is describing are the logical and phenomenological outlines of a very fundamental experience. But he is describing the experience in its simplest and purest state – giving us, as it were, the prototype. This is, in part, why his account gives so much emphasis to nature. Artifacts, and human and animal forms, are things which appeal directly to our practical and instinctual needs, whereas purely natural forms tend not to. It is nature, therefore, which is most amenable to the pure aesthetic judgement. Given this, however, we must not suppose that aesthetic experience arises exclusively from our intercourse with nature. In this respect, Kant offers examples of artifacts of a decorative kind – such as wallpaper – whose function is such that their artifactual status is entirely overlooked. We engage with them as purely formal configurations.

And this at last brings us to the work of art. Kant's treatment of this topic is kept separate from his main aesthetic theory because the demands which art makes upon us cannot be reduced to those of the pure aesthetic judgement. Kant is aware of this, and after the main exposition of his Analytics of the

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7. In my *The Kantian Subleme; From Morality to Art,* The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989. See especially chapters Three and Six.

Beautiful and the Sublime, he gives systematic treatment in a way that brings out both the kinship and difference between the pure aesthetic judgement and the aesthetic experience of art.

Before addressing that, however, I shall conclude this section with a brief comparison between Bell and Greenberg on the one hand, and Kant on the other. First, Kant does, I think, do justice to the pervasiveness of the aesthetic by tracing its root to the enjoyment of formal configurations as such, and most notably, those of nature. Greenberg in contrast, has nothing to say about nature; and Bell's dismissive remarks concerning it, seem to unwarrantably reduce all enjoyment of nature to that which Kant terms the »agreeable«. It should also be noted that not only is Kant's theory more comprehensive in scope, it is also more comprehensive in structure. By linking pure aesthetic judgements to the harmony of understanding and imagination, Kant is able to explain both why we find such judgements pleasurable and why this pleasure is of such existential significance. This latter point is precisely what highlights the common weakness which I noted earlier in relation to Bell and Greenberg. The latter thinkers fail to tie the cognitive complexity of the aesthetic judgement to its elevating psychological effects. But why should the enjoyment of form »transport« us from everyday life (Bell); why should it be felt as »intuitive« and »unanalysable« (Greenberg)? Kant's answer is that as the outcome of an achieved harmony between the two capacities which are the basis of all cognition and communication, aesthetic pleasure further stimulates these functions; it enhances our sense of life. Ironically, enough, through its distance from the pleasures of everyday existence, the aesthetic both lifts us above and relates us back to that life. Let us now investigate the special conditions which, for Kant, govern art's role in this process.

Part two

I shall expound Kant's theory of art by presenting his arguments in substantially the same order as they appear in § 43-50 in the *Critique of Judgement.*

Kant's first major claim is that fine art is a distinctive and privileged mode of artifice which is intrinsically »final« – an end in itself. It is to be contrasted with handicraft which (although there are ambiguous cases – such as watchmaking) is only attractive »by means of what it results in (e.g. the pay)«.[8] Fine art must also be contrasted with two modes of artifice which are commonly regarded as art. The first of these is »mechanical art« which seeks »to actualize a possible object to the cognition of which it is adequate«.[9] What Kant probably has in mind here are representations which are created solely with a view to conveying factual information, and which make no demands on

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8. Kant, p. 164.
9. Kant, p. 165.

us beyond that. The other mode of artifice commonly regarded as art is rather more difficult to comprehend. Kant suggests that when art is intended to arouse pleasure it is called »aesthetic«. Fine art is the major example of this but there is also another mode – which Kant terms »agreeable art«. This applies

»... *where the end of the art is that the pleasure should accompany the representations considered as mere sensations...*«[10]

As examples of this, Kant cites such things as the »entertaining narrative« and

»... *play of every kind which is attended with no further interest than that of making the time pass by unheeded.*«[11]

Kant's characterization of this as »agreeable art« is rather unhelpful since he has earlier made it clear that the agreeable is linked to the causal impact of stimuli upon the subject's sensibilities. Clearly such a relation is not involved here. However, Kant's point is that some representations, in effect, function like this. All we ask of them is that they amuse or entertain. We are dealing with, in other words, *kitsch* – though Kant himself, of course, does not use this term.

In § 45 Kant takes his first major step in the definition of fine art proper. We are told that

»*A product of fine art must be recognized to be art and not nature. Nevertheless the finality in its form must appear just as free from the constraint of arbitrary rules as if it were a product of mere nature.*«[12]

Kant's point here is not that art must represent nature, but rather that artistic representation must appear free from contrivance and »laboured effect«. It must have the quality of – let us call it – *naturalness*. On these terms, the work of fine art is recognized as the product of artifice, but, insofar as it conceals the rules and techniques which governed its production and thence appears natural, it will be more amenable to aesthetic appreciation.

This first major point is of extreme significance in terms of defining art *qua* object. For the naturalness of the fine art object means that it will appear different from products of mechanical and agreeable art. One presumes (though Kant does not remark upon it) that works in these latter categories are produced, by and large, according to familiar rules and formulae, and that these rules will be manifest in their appearance.

Having defined, then, what is distinctive about fine art at the level of reception – our engagement with the artwork *qua* phenomenal object – Kant procedes in § 46 to trace the origins of this, at the level of the artist's creative

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10. Kant, p. 165.
11. Kant, p. 166.
12. Kant, pp. 166-167.

subjectivity. Fine art, we are told, is the product of »genius«. By »genius« Kant does not mean something ineffable and extraordinary, but rather natural talent i.e. that element in the creative process which cannot be acquired by simply learning the technical rules of artistic production, and which, conversely, cannot be adequately explained by the artist to others in terms of such rules. Indeed, it is *originality* which is genius' »primary property« – in the sense of being a necessary condition. It cannot, however, be a sufficient condition, since, as Kant rightly points out, there can also be »original nonsense«. The originality of the fine artwork, therefore, must be »exemplary«. It must serve as a model to stimulate the creativity of other artists.

In § 47, Kant clarifies and deepens several of the points made above. First, genius is the province of fine art alone. This is shown by means of a contrast. In Kant's words

»... all the steps that Newton had to take from the first elements of geometry to his greatest and most profound discoveries were such as he could make intuitively evident and plain to follow, not only for himself but for everyone else. On the other hand no Homer *or* Weiland *can show how his ideas, so rich at once in fancy and in thought, enter and assemble themselves in his brain, for the good reason that he does not know himself, and so cannot teach others«.*[13]

Hence the conclusion that

»In matters of science, therefore, the greatest inventor differs only in degree from the most laborious imitator and apprentice, whereas he differs specifically from one endowed by nature for fine art«.[14]

Kant's point, then, is that since all the steps in the formulation of a scientific theory can be sufficiently explained, whereas those in the creation of a work of fine art cannot, we must infer, accordingly that scientific creativity is of a different order from that of art.

Now Kant is, I think right in his conclusion, but somewhat misguided in his argument – which pushes in a different direction. For the fact that the construction of a scientific theory is sufficiently explicable in terms of the following of logico-mathematic rules whereas for art there are no analogical rules, simply indicates that scientific theories and artworks are different kinds of artifacts. To posit a difference at the level of subjective creativity as well requires a supplementary argument – which I shall provide in Part Three of this discussion.

Kant's other main point in § 47 is an elaboration of his previous claim that the originality of the fine artwork must enable it to serve as a model for others.

13. Kant, p. 170.
14. Kant, p. 170

This is not simply a case of such works being imitated. Rather they are »followed« – in a kind of creative dialogue.

As Kant puts it

»The artist's ideas rouse like ideas on the part of his pupil, presuming nature to have visited him with a like proportion of the mental powers«.[15]

However, this being said, Kant insists again that originality is not a sufficient condition of fine art. Again in his words

»there is ... no fine art in which something mechanical, capable of being at once comprehended and followed in obedience to rules, and consequently something academic *does not constitute the essential condition of art«.*[16]

Now it might be thought that in making this stipulation Kant is simply asserting the prevailing late eighteenth-century ideology of neo-classicism, against the wilder innovations of the *Sturm und Drang* tendency. That this may be a part of Kant's meaning is shown by the fact that in the course of the earlier contrast between scientific and artistic creativity, he notes that, despite not being grounded in genius, science admits of continuing progress, whereas

»genius reaches a point at which art must make a halt, as there is a limit imposed on it which it cannot transcend. This limit has in all probability been long since attained«.[17]

In these remarks, Kant is possibly exemplifying the neo-classicist view that the highest standards of creativity were attained in classical antiquity. However, even if in his discussion of originality Kant is indeed giving neo-classicism its due, there is certainly more to his position than just that. For if an original work is, as Kant holds, to be exemplary, and able to stimulate creativity in others, then it will only do so insofar as there is some common ground between artist and pupil. Technical issues and the academic system of rules provide such a shared starting point for dialogue.

I am arguing, then, that in making originality *and* academic rule following into necessary conditions of fine art, Kant is both making obeisance to contemporary values *and* setting forth a position with claim to more general validity. The awkward relation of these two strategies reaches a crisis point in § 48 – which is entitled *»The relation of genius to taste«*. Here Kant makes the crucial claim that

»A beauty of nature is a beautiful thing; *beauty of art is a* beautiful representation *of a thing.«*[18]

In order to enjoy the beauty of nature we do not have to know what kind of thing the object which sustains the beautiful form is. The enjoyment of artistic

15. Kant, p. 171.
16. Kant, p. 171.
17. Kant, p. 170.
18. Kant, p. 172.

beauty, however, is rather different. Here there are two mediating factors. The first is as follows

»If, ..., the object is presented as a product of art, and is as such to be declared beautiful, then, ..., a concept of what the thing is intended to be must first of all be laid at its basis«.[19]

Kant's point here is that if we are to judge a work of art to be beautiful *qua* art, then we must be able to recognise it as, say, a picture of a landscape, or a poem about love, or a sonata in a minor key, or whatever. However, as well as being able to recognize the work's format and subject-matter, Kant stipulates the mediation of a further condition as follows

»... since the agreement of the manifold in a thing with an inner-character belonging to it as its end constitutes the perfection of the thing, it follows that in estimating the beauty of art the perfection of the thing must also be taken into account...«.[20]

Kant's argument here is ambiguous. By »perfection of the thing« he could mean either that of the kind of subject-matter being represented, e.g. the perfection of the landscape itself, or ideal love itself, or he could mean the perfect or ideal standard of achievement for artworks addressing that kind of subject-matter e.g. such works as Claude Lorraine's landscapes or Shakespeare's Sonnets. Actually, there is evidence that he means *both*. For in an important passage Kant now formally defines what he means by the »beautiful representation of an object«. It is

»the form of the presentation of a concept, and the means by which the latter is universally communicated. To give this form, however, to the product of fine art, taste merely is required. By this the artist having practised and corrected his taste by a variety of examples from nature or art, controls his work and, after many, and often laborious, attempts to satisfy taste, finds the form which commends itself to him«.[21]

This is a strange passage. For in it Kant stresses how the artist must draw selectively upon examples from both nature and art. But surely this is not a question of taste – as Kant explicitly suggests. It is rather the striving for perfection, a feature which enables art to transform what is ugly in nature. Significantly, Kant goes on to describe the process involved here in the following terms. The achievement of the beautiful artistic form – the *artistic* function of taste

»... is not, as it were, a matter of inspiration, or of a free swing of the mental powers, but rather of a slow and even painful process of improvement,

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19. Kant, p. 173.
20. Kant, p. 173.
21. Kant, p. 174.

directed to making the form adequate to his thought without prejudice to the freedom in the play of those powers«.[22]

This yields an apparent contradiction. In § 46 Kant traces the achievement of naturalness in art to the effect of genius. Yet here he ascribes it to the effect of patient and systematic study. It may, of course, be that Kant is simply wanting to give the neo-classicist aesthetic of perfection its due, but again, there is a case for saying that he is also trying to make a more universal claim. In this respect, we must remember that, for Kant, naturalness is a property of the art object, and genius is a property of the creative subject. To get from the latter to the former in such a way that the art object will be exemplary, demands that the artist has not only assimilated the most perfect products of nature and tradition, but is also able to embody these in original artifacts. Taste in art, in other words, is the *process* whereby genius is *refined* by mastery of perfection. It is the ability to *achieve* the quality of naturalness in an artifact.

What Kant has been doing so far, then, is moving from the naturalness of the artworks'appearance, to a detailed analysis of the demands which this imposes on the creator. What he has not yet done is to show in any depth what enables the reception of the work of art to be regarded as aesthetic. He addresses this task in earnest in § 49.

The key concept here is that of the »aesthetic idea«. Kant formally defines it as

»... that representation of the imagination which induces much thought, yet without the possibility of any definite thought whatever, i.e. concept, being adequate to it...«[23]

Further on he offers a much richer description –

»the aesthetic idea is a representation of the imagination, annexed to a given concept, with which, in the free employment of the imagination, such a multiplicity of partial representations are bound up, that no expression indicating a definite concept can be found for it – one which on that account allows a concept to be supplemented in thought by much that is indefinable in works, and the feeling of which quickens the cognitive faculties, ...«[24]

On these terms then an aesthetic idea is a concept whose embodiment in an image or sensible form, serves to energize that concept by allowing it to be taken up and imaginatively developed by the receiver. This does not simply mean that the aesthetic idea evokes a trivial play of associations. In its highest function, imagination can »remodel experience« in two ways. First, by

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22. Kant, p. 174.
23. Kant, pp. 175-176.
24. Kant, p. 179.

addressing fictional subjects, or, in the case of material which does occur in experience, to make that material present to the senses »with a completeness of which nature affords no parallel«.[25] The upshot of this re-modelling is that we are no longer tied to familiar empirical laws of association. Artistic form does not simply present the world, it re-presents it, so that it is known and responded to in a new way.

Now it is artistic form's capacity to take familiar material and to overwhelm our customary understanding of it that is, as I read Kant, the basis of its aesthetic character. The pure aesthetic judgement – addressed to nature – places understanding and imagination in a *generally* harmonious relation. The diversity of a formal configuration – its imaginative richness offers different ways of perceptually exploring i.e. unifying it. In the work of art, a particular way of unifying – the artist's presentation of his or her material – opens up a diverse play of imagination. Art, in other words invites a more focused form of aesthetic judgement. It's narrower scope, however, is, as we have seen, by no means a disadvantage.

To summarize, then, Kant argues that fine art consists of artifacts which have the quality of naturalness – a quality which is both a function of a unique mode of creativity – namely genius, and the capacity to refine such talent through the mastery of artistic and natural perfection i.e. taste. The artifacts which embody this relation are sources of aesthetic ideas. They instantiate concepts in a way which stimulates the imagination in creative directions. Given the theory, I shall now offer a critical review of it.

Part three

A first point to note is the usefulness of Kant's general outline of fine art. He clearly identifies it as a mode of artifice in whose exercise and in whose finished product, both producer and consumer find enjoyment for its own sake. Kant is, therefore identifying art with *unalienated labour* i.e. a mode of artifice wherein the creator achieves self-recognition, and through which his or her audience can *share* the artist's view of things. Kant is also right to separate this from mechanical and »agreeable« art, which simply relate information, or provide mere distractions from everyday life.

These distinctions are given their force by Kant's detailed analysis of fine art. His notion of naturalness is central here, but requires very careful appraisal. Clearly there are works wherein the artist has mastered tradition, but whose work does not declare itself as derivative or academic. However, this »absence of laboured effect« cannot have quite the fundamental role which Kant assigns to it. Within the category of fine art itself we need criteria of both good and bad works. Naturalness is *one* such criterion. To insist that all works *qua* fine

art must have this quality, would be to restrict the class of fine art works to an unacceptable degree. For surely we need to be able to talk of good art, bad art, and non-art. Kant's approach, however, would leave us with the distinction between art and non-art as such.

Given this, we should look for the *real* basis for distinguishing fine artworks from other artifacts, in the direction of Kant's other key notions starting with genius. The »primary property« of genius, we will recall, is originality. We must, however, also remember that Kant does not mean originality *per se,* for, as he puts it, there can be original nonsense. Hence the quality of originality in art, essentially involves the mastery of perfection in terms of both natural form and the tradition of the medium. Originality, in other words, must be tasteful. Now Kant's claims here cannot be accepted quite as they stand. For one thing, the concept of originality is itself complex. It has two opposite poles. On the one hand, there is its use in the sense of innovation, literally the invention of new things; on other hand there is the case where, an item refines some existing genre to an exceptional degree of sophistication. A single work can, of course, combine elements of both these. Delacroix's *Death of Sardanapolus,* for example, is radically innovative in one sense *vis-a-vis* its handling of violent subject-matter, yet in another sense it can be seen as a sophisticated refinement of *Rubeniste* painterliness. Kant's failure to define originality in terms of both innovation and refinement *and* the overlaps between the two, is again symptomatic of the tension between proposing a general theory of art, and ratifying a particular neo-classical ideology. In particular, his stress on originality's link to taste means that, he is in effect privileging originality in the sense of refinement, at the expense of originality in the sense of innovation. This affirmation of the neo-classical ideology is unacceptable; for there can clearly be art which is original in the innovatory sense, but without being either original nonsense or, a mere refinement of tradition. The greatest achievements of *Sturm und Drang* such as Goethe's early novels are excellent examples of this.

Now if we insist that originality be understood in this more complex sense, what is of general validity in Kant's theory of art beings to stand in clearer relief. The original artwork – the work of *fine* art – is one which breaks with traditional rules of production, or which refines them to an unexpected degree, or which combines elements of both these. Whichever case applies, the key point is that what defines art is not simply an artifact's possessing an appropriate form (a topic which I will address in a moment), but also the form's relation to other works – and that means, in effect, its historical situation.

Now whilst being a necessary condition of fine art, originality cannot be a sufficient condition. For clearly other kinds of artifact can be original in the senses just described. We must, therefore look for further conditions which, in

conjunction with originality can serve to demarcate fine art from all other modes of artifice. The first of these is to be found in the notion of the »aesthetic idea«. This (we will recall) is a sensible or imaginative manifold which presents a concept or symbolic content in such a way as to engage the imagination in a non-arbitrary and explorative play. In such an engagement, the symbolic content is taken up in a way that »remodels« experience. This is where the link with originality proves crucial. For the »entertaining narratives« of »agreeable« art can also involve the sensible presentation of symbolic content, as is the case in T.V. »soap operas«. But here experience is not remodelled. We are simply lifted into a world that is an alternative to our own. It furnishes us with a route to voyeuristic escapism. If, however, the sensible or imaginative manifold generates its symbolic content in an original way, this arrests our normal relation to things. We view the content in a way opens out new ways of assimilating it, and indeed, which places us in a sharing and empathic relation to the creator.

We thus reach a final fascinating point, which is a function of the relation between originality and the aesthetic idea. In this respect, it will be recalled that in Part Two I argued that Kant's attempt to separate art and science on the basis of genius is not wholly successful. The fact that all the steps in the creation of a scientific theory can be sufficiently explained, and taught, but those involved in the creation of fine art cannot, means only that we are dealing with different kinds of artifact – and not different kinds of creativity at the subjective level. To establish this latter claim requires an additional argument. One might provide it briefly as follows. Scientific theories are founded on principles of inference, deduction, and measurable quanta. This means that, in principle, a scientific theory could be devised by someone *other* than the person or persons who did in fact formulate it. The identity of the work of fine art *qua* original aesthetic idea in contrast, logically presupposes the existence of just that person or persons who is or who are responsible for its production. The creativity involved in art draws directly on the creator's personal orientation towards history (in the broadest sense) and upon what is distinctive about that person's view of the world, and his or her capacity to handle material. In science and other modes of technological production, the identity of the creator is contingent *vis-a-vis* the objective meaning of the end-product. In the work of art, in contrast the piece's objective meaning – its general human significance – flows decisively from the particularity of its origins and articulation. Kant, of course, did not explicitly propose this argument. It is, however, not only consistent with his position, but is, in effect, also pointed towards by his contrast between scientific and artistic creativity.

Conclusion

In Part One of this study I argued that, in its most general terms, Kant's general aesthetic theory is more comprehensive in both scope and structure than those of Bell and Greenberg. Kant's theory of art consolidates this superiority to an extraordinary degree. He offers general criteria whereby fine art can be clearly distinguished from other modes of artifice and the aesthetics of nature. But much more than this, he clarifies and explains something of art's existential *depth.* This achievement is grounded on his analyses of genius and the aesthetic idea, which, with the modifications proposed in Part Three, do justice to fine art at the level of its object, the psychology of its reception, and the artist's creativity. Of especial significance is Kant's willingness to stress that what defines fine art is not just the possession of an appropriate kind of form, but the fact that this appropriateness is actively determined by the work's relation to rules and standards established by other works. This relational context is the very flesh of artistic form. It is through this emphasis that Kant's approach is able to overcome the tensions and restrictiveness of Bell and Greenberg's formalism. He overcomes the unwarranted gap between art and life by making social and psychological dimensions a part of art's full definition. We are thus led *far* beyond aesthetic formalism.

Why form?
Aleš Erjavec

M artin Heidegger starts his essay »The Source of the Work of Art« in the following way: »The source here means everything from where and through which a thing *(eine Sache)* is what it is and how it is.«[1]

And Heidegger goes on, describing exactly what he means by poetry and its role in history as well as what he thinks about different ontic levels of a work of art. But let us limit ourselves for the moment to this »source« metaphor, which does not, of course, relate to some metaphysical archē-topos, but nevertheless does have a historical connotation: it focuses our attention on the primordial meaning of poetry and of a work of art as understood by Heidegger, to whom poetry does serve, as in the original Greek setting, as the basic, the essential and the truest work of art (in contemporary sense of the term). This metaphor appeals to us to see »through« and »behind« in the sense of the »Ur-Sprung«, in the sense of the pre- or archē- source, similarly to words like »truth« and many others that etymologically relate back to their primordial meaning, in the case of »truth«, of alétheiā, of being uncovered or, if we turn to something present also in English, of being dis-covered.

The source in the sense of the word that Heidegger uses signifies, as he himself writes, simultaneously »from where and through which a thing« – some-thing – is what it is. Through this immediacy we become aware of some of the meanings of words, of terms, of their, if not hidden but certainly usually the not-thought-about, meaning. That is exactly what, in Heidegger's opinion, art and a work of art do: they uncover or dis-cover that which lies in the origins, in the sources and at the same time »behind« the phenomenal reality. Or better, that which *is* the origin and the source.

But can the same method of uncovering be applied to all terms or concepts? Do they, too, contain this hidden meaning that helps us to discern between the phenomenon and the »essence«, or is here at work a different approach, the chess-game approach, one that prevents us from searching for »hidden meanings« behind the ordinary words or words used in an everyday sense? Are we not in a situation in which certain words serve as empty signifiers into which different semantic contents can be invested? This is certainly true of words that serve as strong vehicles of power, words like democracy, ideology, freedom, politics, etc., words through which and in which relations of power

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1. Martin Heidegger, *Holzwege,* V. Klostermann, Frankfurt/M 1972, p. 7.

are embodied. Fortunately, the term »form« seems to be such that it cannot serve this function of power. We could say, and the history of the term and the concept as presented by Władisław Tatarkiewicz[2] shows this clearly and persuasively, that differences in meaning of this term arose more from translations into different languages and into different cultures. Tatarkiewicz distinguishes 5 meanings of form. It could certainly be argued that we could find other main meanings of the term and the concept, as well as question some of those that described by him. We certainly deal here with a loose notion, whose meaning is attached to a variety of other terms like eidos (signifying forms that can be seen) and morphē (signifying spiritual or non-concrete forms).

The interesting point made by Tatarkiewicz is defining form per negationem, stating that the opposites of form are content, matter, the represented thing and the theme.

As the same Tatarkiewicz writes, the merging of »morphē and eidos into form«[3] caused the plurality of meanings of form. Thus form was historically used in different ways and many philosophers, like Aristotle and Kant, felt free to attribute the term special meanings, i.e., such which the term did not possess before.

In the *first* sense, form was the same as the arrangement of parts. Its opposite in this case were the elements, components and parts that the form unites into a whole.

In the *second* case, form is that which is accessible to the senses in a direct way. In this case, the opposite would be the content. In the first case, form is an abstraction and in the second, a concrete thing.

In the *third* case, form is the border or the limit of an object. All these three meanings were developed by aesthetics itself. The next two derive from philosophy. The first of these two – or the *fourth* – is the conceptual essence of an object, or Aristotle's *entelecheia.* The second of these two meanings derived from philosophy (or the *fifth* to follow Tatarkiewicz), is form in the sense of Kant, that is, the investment of the intellect into an object that is the object of cognition.

This certainly is nothing new, and something very similar is also happening to a term that is very close to most of us, that is, to the term »aesthetics« itself. But still we probably would agree that even today, when dealing with art, we associate form with a kind of symmetry, harmony and the like. This was especially true in classical aesthetics, when mimesis was the leading principle of art and mimesis meant imitating nature. With romanticist aesthetics, which

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2. Wladislaw Tatarkiewicz, *Istorija šest pojmova* (History of Six Concepts), Nolit, Beograd 1981 (in Serbo-Croatian).

3. *Ibid.,* p. 212.

had as its starting-point the expression of ideas, and especially with postromanticist – one which understood art as creation – the situation changed. In these last two cases form does not imply the outer, but the inner form: it signifies the eidos and not the morphē. Thus Herbert Read in 1931 gives an interesting example of this postromanticist and, we could also add, of modernist vision of form. »There is form as soon as there is shape, as soon as there are two or more parts gathered together to make an arrangement. But of course it is implied, when we speak of the form of a work of art, that it is in some way *special* form, form that affects us in some way.

Form does not imply regularity, or symmetry, or any kind of fixed proportion. We speak of the form of an athlete and we mean very much the same when we speak of the form of a work of art. An athlete is in good form when he carries no superfluous flesh; when his muscles are strong, his carriage good, his movements economical. We might say exactly the same of a statue or a picture.«[4]

Read here states that form does not imply regularity or symmetry. But then he continues and, by the example of an athlete, really applies the very same criteria, that he negates at the beginning. What he really obviously means and speaks about is the inner form, or the eidos. Read then goes on to explain his point on a color print by the great Japanese artist, Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849), and it is through this color woodcut and its interpretation by Read that we come to the second point, which is really also the idea or theory here defended by Read: it is the theory of empathy, or Einfühlung. Or, as he himself writes later: »We may conclude, therefore, that besides purely formal values, such as we find in a pot, there may be psychological values – the values arising out of our common human sympathies and interests, and even those arising out of our subconscious life.«[5]

It is not my aim here to discuss the ideas that can be discerned from Read's words that I have just quoted. I would simply like to point to the idea of empathy, which brings us to the present relevance of form, for the whole complex of the so-called »formalist aesthetics« might be something that concerns us today. It concerns us in two related, although distinct, ways. In the first case, we really must go back to Konrad Fiedler and to his distinction between the beautiful and the visual, which is a parallel of the distinction between aesthetic and the artistic. Art is a creative development of visual nature, and the artistic development of the form is, according to Fiedler, done under the strict laws of nature. Also, form is not the classical eidos anymore, but becomes active. »To see, speaking artistically, means to see forms, i.e., to go from undistinct to distinct, from undefined to defined. (...) Every representation needs as its basis an organic reacting, and this one, itself, is

4. H. Read, *The Meaning of Art,* Faber & Faber, London 1972 (1931), p. 36.
5. *Ibid.,* p. 48.

correlative with a certain affective act which we include into representation, thus developing pathoeidetic synthesis of the object. And this is the elementary basis of Einfühlung.«[6]

Although the term remains ambiguous throughout its history, for it combines two Greek words but it was nevertheless never subject to big shifts of meaning. Also, it retained none of that deep meaning to which Heidegger refers, when speaking about a work of art and, on other occasions, of some other words containing a primordial meaning hidden in the origins of these words themselves. By contrast, form still means (1) a shape, form, exterior, good built, beauty (2) picture, sign, plan, the basis, quality etc. – to mention the original Latin meanings of the word. Especially those that I listed at the beginning are certainly those that still today mean exactly what they meant almost two thousand years ago. Obviously, there was something constant in the concept itself.

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By contrast, a certain term originating from form was subjected to a totally different reception and evaluation. This term is, of course, formalism. If we speak of formalist aesthetics, this connotation today has a different meaning than it had in its original setting, for it also implies all the debates of our century about the relation between form and content, the first and maybe also the most typical among them being the polemics about the so-called Russian Formalism at the beginning of this century. The name »formalist«, which as we know was really meant as a criticism, contained a hidden truth, for what it was about basically was the formalists' defence of the emerging Russian futurism and the critique of the Russian symbolism. It really meant a support for a typical modernist art, a support that went parallel with a method of research with long-ranging consequences in the later development of structuralist literary analysis.

In this sense the Russian formalists were symbolic defenders of modernist art, for which the hidden form, or the eidos, was the basic category. This form could in a certain sense mean also the Gestalt, but one could say that this functions really on the level of reception, although this is of no lesser importance.

It is in our century that the relationship between form and content became an important one. This relationship was basically tied to the question or the relationship between realist (or figurative) and non-realist (or non-figurative or abstract) art. Abstract art was often subject to criticism and for similar reasons as the Russian formalists were. The idea behind all of this criticism was really the question of the representational and non-representational art, or

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6. Guido Morpurgo Tagliabue, *Savremena estetika* (Contemporary Aesthetics), Nolit, Beograd 1968, p. 79 (in Serbo-Croatian).

as Pierre Bourdieu states, the intellectuals always search for the hidden truth, while the majority of the population prefers the moral and the pleasurable, and these two features are best accessible through figurative and representational art.[7] Through this argument we can understand the rejection of formalism, and through it, also of modernist art as art based on the inner form, referential only to its own sphere and not that of the exterior reality – nature or society.

Still, when we say formal or formalist, this does not apply to all areas of art in the same way. We can speak about formalist painting or music, about poetry, but hardly about prose. It seems fairly obvious that today's art and culture are primarily visual art and culture. The sound of music plays here a special role, too, while the written word is being pushed – in the arts – into the background. This might be one of the reasons for the present philosophical criticism of postmodernist art or at least some of its interpretations and social or even political implications.

The basis of the classical formalist aesthetics, i.e., the one from the end of XIXth century, are the visual arts and music. Thus we return to the geometric or mathematical ideals or antiquity. Already Konrad Fiedler stressed that the laws of visuality are the laws of optics and geometry.

One of the features of so-called postmodernist art, or certainly art after modernism, was that is brought back what might be termed the »outer form«. Works of art again have more or less recognizable shapes, classical aesthetic criteria could be applied to a larger extent, and the inner form, usually of conceptual nature, gave way to a variety of forms and figures, which enabled double or triple reading or coding – a feature typical both of the visual arts and the literature. In this sense, the question of the eidos, of the inner form and thus also of the message of the work of art, changed. It changed from the classical modernist or the avant-garde incessant changing and negating the past forms – outer and inner – into an aesthetised product to which classical aesthetic criteria could often be very easily applied. That such tendencies existed already in modernist art at its prime is something that only now comes to light – whether dealing with literature – as shown, for example, by Martin Jay[8] or in neoclassicist art from the time of modernism. From such a perspective the modernist art – or its prime exhibits – seems to be just another leaf in the history of art. As in some other areas the artistic one too, appears to

7. »The subjects of the popular classes, which expect from every image to explicitly serve a certain function (...) exhibit in their judgement often an explicit reference to norms of morality and pleasure. If they reprimand or praise, their judgement appeals to a system of norms whose principle is always an ethical one (...) We could say that the intellectuals believe into representation – of literature, theatre, painting – more than into the represented things, while 'the people' ask from representations and conventions, which put them into order more than anything else to enable them to believe 'naively' into the represented things.« Pierre Bourdieu, *La distinction,* Minuit, Paris 1979, p. v-vi.

8. *Cf.* Martin Jay, Modernism and the retreat from form, p. 61.

have become more orderly. Modernism in its avant-garde form is turning before our eyes into a tradition.

This might be just a battle over interpretations, as in the case of the debate over the end of art, where it was asked whether this is something that is really happening or it might be just something limited to criticism and theory. But then, modernist art more than many others depended upon theory and criticism, it was really consubstantial with it. Even more: without it, it would often not exist as art. Nevertheless, to a certain extent it is true that art after modernism at the same time differs from it and is the same. Modernist art was to a large extent built on the myth of originality, as Rosalind Krauss showed and as is obvious from almost any modernist, and especially avant-garde, art that we take a look at. »All those terms – singularity, authenticity, uniqueness, originality, original – depend on the originary moment of which this surface is both the empirical and the semiological instance. If modernism's domain of pleasure is the space of auto-referentiality, this pleasure dome is erected on the semiological possibility of the pictorial sign as nonrepresentational and nontransparent, so that the signified becomes the redundant condition of a reified signifier. But from *our* perspective...« – continues Krauss – and that is the main point – for it is exactly from our perspective that we discern the vehicle of avant-garde modernist art, that is the originality as a myth, but which could not identified as such when it still functioned. And, it could be added, when it functioned inside that epistemological formation in which it was tied to the all-embracing totality – to use such a modernist notion. And to continue with the quotion from Krauss: »But from *our* perspective, the one from which we see that the signifier cannot be reified; that its objecthood, its quiddity, is only a fiction; that every signifier is itself the transparent signified of an already-given decision to carve it out as the vehicle of a sign – from *this* perspective there is no opacity, but only a transparency that opens onto a dizzying fall into a botomless system of reduplication.«[9]

If modernism, then, was built on a false myth and its basic trait was autoreferentiality, then the art after modernism is, as Krauss states, really built on the principle of unlimited reproductibility, copying and reduplication. We do not have to go far to see art like this in the making, for it is being made all around us.

What consequences does this have for form as such? The concept of reduplication and of incessant inclusion of past and present art into new or more appropriately, *other* artworks, does form an order, for repetition in itself is a kind of order and thus form. But here we are speaking about the series, about lines of development or change. Though, still, in artworks themselves, we can discern these features as those essential traits of contemporary art.

9. Rosalind Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., London 1988, p. 161.

Examples can certainly also be found in literature, whether this be Borges or Eco. But there is even more to this. As mentioned before, the modernist past is turning before our eyes into something partly different: the present reevaluation of modernism – from Jugendstil to neoclassicism in architecture of the XXth century – and the previous art history from the sixteenth century mannerism to French neoclassicism of the XIXth century, transforms the history that considered itself as a rather unchangeable one into a relativistic arena devoid of grand narratives that would guard the coordinate systems. Also, previous cases of contemporary methods or features are brought to light. What all this appears to turn into all the time – even in modernism – is that certain formal criteria functioned *all the time*. Today the inner form of modernist art is slowly disappearing, for it does not function as a value of the same order as before, in its own temporal setting. It is becoming aesthetisized in a similar manner to what happened some time ago with the historical avant-gardes, which really represent the apogee of modernist art, and their aesthetization marks the end of modernism. If this renewed interest in the avant-gardes a decade or two ago seemed to be born out of curiosity, it caused them to start to function in an aestheticised way. Thus they soon became included into postmodernist art, whether this be El Lissitsky, Malevich or futurism. Their inner form, the idea in them that made them in their time a work of art only with difficulty and often with aggressive and violent practices, fused with their outer form, which was taken for granted in our time. Once these avant-gardes were conquered and assimilated, postmodernist art and culture swallowed up art history. Today, we witness the whole past of art merging into one enormous inventory to be used by contemporary artists. Form is becoming omnipresent. Art has, in a way, become traditional, and traditional also means of traditional form. This situation was well depicted by Arthur Danto,[10] who in 1981 claimed that with Andy Warhol's Brillo Boxes art history really came to an end. If such procedures and works contain a form, an art form, then it is obvious that art has lost its historical role and that it became a part of post-history, history meaning here history as we know it. If art lost its essential function as depicted and explained also by Heidegger, that is, of showing the truth, the uncovered reality of the reality, then its role remains the role of a play of forms. Whether this is true, I would not want to judge here. However, there is another interpretation of this Heideggerian idea, the one developed by Gianni Vattimo, who thinks that now art will really attain the position that it was prevented to play in modernism.[11]

Still, it seems that contemporary art and the evaluation or reevaluation of past art, i.e, of art history, witnesses that art lost its role as the highest form of

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10. Arthur Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1981, p. vi, 208.
11. Gianni Vattimo, *La fine della modernità*, (The End of Modernity), Aldo Garzanti, Milano 1985.

creativity and the highest instance of truth. It is turning into an object of everyday use and here the visual and the musical fit well. This has more to do with general historical processes than with art itself, which, although it is an important part of our reality and totality, it may not be as essential as was long though to be. That is why form in the arts is again becoming a crucial issue.

»Form« and »finish« in modern painting
Charles Harrison

This paper is concerned with a group of paintings made earlier this year by Michael Baldwin and Mel Ramsden, the artists whose work is issued under the name of Art & Language. Each is approximately 180 cm high by 120 cm wide. The paintings belong to a sub-series within the longer series which Art & Language have called *Hostages.* Since December 1989, all the paintings given this title have been based on a simple and consistent landscape motif.[1] An uneven row of poplar trees is seen within a relatively featureless field, receding diagonally or running parallel to the picture plane according to the variations of a simple perspectival scheme. The horizon line is marked with indefinite, painterly traces which casually signify a hedge. The paintings are individuated by effects of light and weather, though the pictorial atmosphere thus established appears rather as a conventional aspect quoted than as a natural property directly expressed. These are the token materials of landscape as an alienated genre – a genre abandoned by the critical interests of Modernism and rendered bathetic by the conditions of modernity. To those familiar with his paintings of the 1890s, the motif of the poplar tree inescapably evokes the work of Monet, and thus refers, albeit laconically, to the last moment in western art when the identification of intentional human content could be made consonant with a comfortable concept of nature.

In the works with which I'm primarily concerned, each painting is divided vertically. The landscape motif occupies only a certain proportion of each canvas. The remainder is painted in a single flat colour. As components of the initial design, these vertical areas may be seen as wholly decorative and non-naturalistic, as forms of reference to those types of (principally American) abstract painting which have been conventionally associated with metaphysical profundity, or as figurative devices of a sort familiar from the works of Degas and Matisse, where they serve to qualify the spectator's psychological experience by framing a scene or by distancing an imaginary viewpoint. In the *Hostages* it is not clear whether it is landscape or painted band that is practically and conceptually basic. Are the vertical bands to be read figuratively, or are they to be read as abstract incursions into basically

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1. *Hostages XXIV-XXXV* were exhibited at the Marian Goodman Gallery, New York, from 6-31 March 1990. The present sub-series commences with *Hostage XXXVI. Hostages XXXVI-XLV* were shown at the Basel Art Fair in June 1990, by the Lisson Gallery, London.

figurative paintings, or are the *Hostages* basically abstract paintings in which landscape motifs appear as forms of ironic quotation?

The nearest surface of each painting is comprised of a sheet of glass. The glass ends just short of the unframed edges of the canvas and is fixed by screws driven through the canvas into the support beneath. Over large areas of each painting the glass adheres directly to the paint-surface; or rather the paint is pressed up against the glass and spread out by pressure from behind the canvas to provide an intermediate layer between canvas and glass.

Various forms of evidence thus mesh to establish the appearance of the recent *Hostages:* what remains legible of the token landscape and of the evacuated illusionistic world it proposes; the literal surface of paint with its decorative incident and its own cultural and artistic associations; and the spectator's own phenomenal environment, reduced to a pattern of half-reflected highlights and shadows, for it is a further effect of the procedure here employed by Art & Language that the glass is made practically and conceptually inseparable from the canvas, so that not only its immanent properties of hardness and transparency but also its content of reflections become part of what each painting connotes. It seems that the possibility of the aesthetic is almost cancelled out by the visual noise of the circumstantial.

To view these paintings is to be caught between levels of representation in a world of conflicting descriptions. They are evocative as illusionistic and richly decorative paintings may be. But they are also literally slab-like and weighty. They are broadly figurative but their figurative components merge without significant transition into areas which read as literally flat. The discriminating tones and colours of referential detail blur into seemingly accidental pattern. The fictive and pictorial depth of the perspective schemes extends uneasily in face of the very different kinds of spatial disjunction established between the landscapes and the areas of flat colour, and in turn between these and the literal planes of paint, canvas and glass. We might sum up our experience of these paintings by saying that their literal aspects and their figurative aspects tend to converge and to coincide. To put it crudely, to see them as pictures – and thus as potentially open to all the complexities of the pictorial – is not to rule-out or to suspend the possibility of their being seen as slab-like objects, inviting associations with the »three dimensional objects« of the American Minimalists at one extreme and with the polished surfaces of commercial décor at the other. On the other hand, that a given surface is seen as a literal surface of glass and paint does not rule out the possibility of its also being seen as representational – a point to which I shall return later.

I claim no originality for the observation that pictorial illusion is a thoroughly dispensable condition of representation. On the other hand, there is no cognitively significant representation in visual art without some form of

reference to *pictorial* representation. What I wish to emphasize is the apparent importance to the effect of these specific paintings *both* of their literal and obdurate physical presence and of their figurative and unsettled pictorial properties. Prompted by these works of Art & Language, I suggest that some significant aspect of the modern in painting may be discovered in the relationship between literal objecthood on the one hand and suspension of finish on the other. What's required for this to be the case is that the operative conditions of both objecthood and finish should have some critical bearing upon the ways in which we are accustomed to represent – or to picture – the world to ourselves. I believe there is a category of paintings of which it might be said that some significant lack of finish – some intentional refusal of customary modes of termination of both technical and psychological activities – is a significant condition of their formal integrity and their qualitative presence. »Category« is perhaps too strong a term. What I have in mind is rather an aspect discoverable in many notable paintings of the modern period, though to differing degrees, barely noticable in some, inescapable and crucial in others.

If I am right, that Art & Language's recent paintings bring the literal and the figurative into a critical coincidence is not so much a mark of their originality, as a testimony to the painters' engagement with conditions which have been pervasive and persistent. In art as elsewhere, the conditions of both making and seeing are historical and ideological. In fact, I suggest that the generation of tension and paradox in the relationship between literal form and figurative form – form which is the form of some pictorial illusion – has been the defining evidence of self-critical activity in painting for at least the past century and a quarter.Not, of course, in all painting. To identify self-criticism in these terms is to impose a form of evaluative qualification. I am talking of modern painting, or, more specifically still, of that tendency within nineteenth and twentieth-century western painting which is identified as modern in Modernist theory and criticism. I'll rephrase the generalization accordingly: what tends to define self-critical activity in painting as specifically Modernist self-criticism is that it leads to some unaccustomed tension or paradox in the relationship between literal form and figurative form.[2] This is to say that while there may be many other factors determining upon the relative quality

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2. I have in mind here Michael Fried's essay, »Shape as Form: Frank Stella's New Paintings«, first published in *Artforum,* New York, vol. 5 no. 3, November 1966. In this important statement of late-Modernist aesthetic principles, Fried considers the relationship between literal shape and pictorial form as a crucial issue for the preservation of quality in modern painting. For Fried, as for all critics in the mainstream Modernist tradition, the sine qua non of aesthetic achievement is the victory of the noumenally »present« over the physically »literal«. In considering form as both a more practical and a more *provisional* concept than Fried allows it to be, I mean to modify the terms of his argument and rather to suggest that it is the persistence of a *dialectic* between the (meanings of the) figurative and the (meanings of the) literal that secures the continuing possibility of painting as a form of art.

of a modern painting, no painting can be entirely sucessful as a *modern* painting if some such tension is not sucessfully established – and established in terms of the psychological experience of competent spectators. (We may note that such a qualification will tend to relegate those fashionable forms of post-Duchampian post-Modernism in which modes of aestheticization of mere commodities are treated as forms of psychological or cultural game.)

So far we are on familiar ground: the ground of Clement Greenberg's »Modernist Painting«,[3] for example, or of Richard Wollheim's »The Work of Art as Object«[4] – essays now 30 and 20 years old respectively. Lately, such canonical statements of Modernist aesthetics have been reconnected to some of their own forgotten or suppressed antecedents in the literary theory of the earlier twentieth century – to the work, for example, of Shklovsky, Bakhtin and Benjamin – and given a new if cloistered lease of life in a fashionable form of Art History. The New Art Historian now effortlessly acknowledges the status of art as device, the social and material character of the sign, and the role of the artist as producer. He is also alert – formally at least – to the persistent presence of the contingent within the black heart of the universal. The Postmodern, it has been discovered, is not Modernism's cultural successor, but rather its intellectual sibling, if not its virtual parent.

Let's return, then, to the origins of the Modern in the already Postmodern: to Manet's *Olympia,* say, and to the establishment of that difference vis-à-vis its evident comparatives – such as Cabanel's near-contemporary *Birth of Venus* – which identifies *Olympia* as a modern work. This is a painting which was seen at the time of its first exhibition both as flat and as unfinished. It was derogated as a sketch, an *ébauche.* We might say that Manet did enough to secure reference to the form of such paintings as Cabanel's, and to the range of forms to which such paintings themselves referred, but not so much as to deliver up what such paintings were supposed to deliver in the way of opportunities for unreflective enjoyment – which is to say not enough for the imaginative and realistic activity of looking to be entirely overwhelmed by the distractions of a figuratively-enabled fantasy. In the eyes of the normal contemporary spectator Manet stopped before he had finished – before the barrier of the literal surface had been sufficiently penetrated by the plastic effects of figurative form to permit a confusion of figuration with fantasy.

Significantly, the view that the *painting* was unfinished tended to coincide with the judgement that the *woman* was both deformed and immoral. That's to

3. First published in *Arts Yearbook IV,* New York, 1961; reprint in C. Harrison and F. Frascina eds. *Modern Art and Modernism,* Harper and Row, New York and London, 1982.

4. First published in *Studio International,* London, vol. 180, no. 928, December 1970; second version included in R. Wollheim, *On art and the Mind,* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1973; edited version included in C. Harrison and F. Orton eds., *Modernism, Criticism, Realism,* Harper and Row, 1984.

say, an ethical judgement on the means of representing was mapped more-or-
-less directly onto the represented. In the unrequited gropings of fantasy the
woman was damned as grotesque. To put it another way, if Manet's painting
could be seen as incompetent – if its stylistic features could be seen as
accidental – then the represented woman could also be dismissed as a kind of
accident. *Olympia* – or rather Victorine – was thus dispossessed of critical
intention and of imaginary agency, and reduced to the status of a person for
sale. She was an image to be refused.[5]

Of course, Manet is now seen as vindicated. We accept Victorine as a model of
the modern woman – an appropriate subject for feminist biography – while
those kinds of technical abbreviation which the nineteenth-century spectator
took as evidence of involuntary incompetence we now accredit as the means of
expression of an intentional and critical regard. The painting is an image of
refusal. Indeed, by the turn of the century, avant-garde observers were already
identifying the technical signs of this refusal as the very conditions of form in
its modern guise. In that Modernist critical tradition, Cézanne's notorious
doubt – his compulsive staving-off of the moment of figurative individuation
and completion of his formal motifs – has been seen as a measure of ethical
virtue and a guarantee of aesthetic interest and merit.[6]

The history of modern painting abounds in examples of the kind of tension I
have in mind. In the works of Degas and Matisse, for example, moments of
apparently casual suspension of modelling typically occur just where our
attention is otherwise most thoroughly absorbed by passages of painterly
mimesis, of pictorial narrative and of figurative embodiment. Measured against
the conservative standard of an absolute iconic correspondence, these are
moments of disruption, discontinuity and distortion. But it is by means of such
devices that the painter recalls us to the worked surface in all its manifest
facticity, inviting the engagement of our imaginative capacities and powers of
discrimination with the painting as an intentional object, and disqualifying
those tendencies to unreflective fantasy and self-projection which are licensed
by the business-as-normal of modern culture.

These are not just the tricks of the modern painter's trade. I believe that a
powerful form of necessity attaches to the deployment of such devices. Indeed,
they are the typical marks of that qualitative distinction which we intend in
designating works as *»modern«* rather than merely *»contemporary«*. They

5. The view of Manet's *Olympia* as a form of refusal derives from the work of T.J. Clark and
has been elaborated in the discussion which that work has generated. See Clark,
»Preliminaries to a Possible Treatment of Olympia in 1865«, Screen, London, Spring 1980
(edited reprint in Frascina and Harrison 1982); P. Wollen, *»Manet, Modernism and the
Avant-Garde«, Screen,* Summer 1980; M. Baldwin, C. Harrison and M. Ramsden, *»Manet's
Olympia and Contradiction«, Block,* No. 5, Middlesex, 1981; Clark, *»Olympia's Choice«,* in
The Painting of Modern Life, Thames and Hudson, London, 1985.
6. See M. Merleau-Ponty, *»Le Doute de Cézanne«,* 1945, in *Sens et non-sens,* Paris, 1966.

function like metaphors of cognitive alertness, rousing us from the state of »aesthetic impotence and insensibility«[7] which is our normal condition, and instigating those complex forms of mental process through which critically pertinent aspects of our conscious existence are made actual in our experience as spectators.

Let us be clear. What we are concerned with here are the technical *effects* of art – the effects and their ethical implications. We are asking not simply how it is that paintings work upon the viewer,but also why it is that their working in this specific way seems to be – or to have become – indissolubly associated with qualitative presence. This is to ask how form contingently becomes meaning, which includes both the question of what it is that pictorial form is made of and refers to and the question of how pictorial style and finish are perceived.

Answers to such questions have normally been pursued within the social history of art, but the social history of art has proved itself relatively insensitive to the complexities of pictorial effects. It may be more fruitful to look for answers in the conversation and conduct of the studio, where critically to consider the form of a painting is both to consider its success in referring to what it is figuratively and conceptually made of and also to consider the conditions of its being finished. These questions are addressed by the painter in practice and empirically, in front of the thing being made and in exploration of its manifest or latent effects.

For the purposes of argument I distinguish two different modes of self-critical assessment, which go to two different ways of understanding the concepts of effect and of effectiveness. In the first, the artist scrutinises the painting for confirmation that an intended and envisaged effect has been achieved – and that the painting is therefore finished. In the second, what the artist hopes to discover in the possibly completed painting is something that he or she did not already know. What he requires of the work is that it should be that which he could not have envisaged; that its effect be other than what he could have intended. And he will only know that he must stop when he sees that he does not understand how to go on.

In practice, these two forms of self-criticism will rarely be distinct. In reviewing his work the artist looks for a match with intention, anxiety or whatever. He may not recognise it when the match is achieved. He may believe he has achieved it when he hasn't. But the latter form of self-criticism is the one which has been associated with the development of modernist art - or, at least, with the prevailing idealisation of that development. One thinks of

7. The phrase is taken from J.N. Findlay. See his »The Perspicuous and the Poignant«, in *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, vol. 7 no 1, January 1967; reprint in H. Osborne ed., *Aesthetics*, Oxford University Press, 1972.

the priority which Picasso accorded to »finding« rather than »searching«,[8] or of Pollock's view of the emerging painting as a being with a life of its own.[9] On the other hand, in the long-standing dialectic between Modernism and Realism, Realism has traditionally been associated with a purposive grasp on the world, with knowing what one was seeing and doing and with there being an examinable end to which that seeing and doing was directed. From the perspective of Realism thus defined, the apparently restless iconoclasm of the Modernist has been seen as individualistic, asocial and elitist. From the perspective of Modernism, on the other hand, the ethical commitment of the soi-disant Realist masks the moral complacency of the propagandist, for whom pictorial imagery and form must always be transparent, effective, and properly finished. Though the propagandist's work may partake of the apparently unfinished style of an ébauche, say, or of an informal montage, that style will always turn out to have been standard cultural currency. What Modernism has shown is that there can be no Realism deserving of the name without a critique of the immanent logic of iconography and of conventions of imagery; that the possibility of going-on and of learning entails a continual and vigilant unfixing of the grounds of descriptiveness and correspondence in pictures, and a continual scepticism and resistance in the face of demands for effectiveness.

It is certainly true that vigilance of this order is inconsistent with an elitist indifference to the mechanisms and tendencies of the broader culture. It is also true – and particularly so since the emergence of abstract painting – that Modernist art has been tarred with the brush of unpopularity, which is to say with failure to conform to predominant conventions of visual identification and individuation. Modern art has not been popular – of that there can be no doubt. It would be a serious mistake, however, to assume that that tendency to formal autonomy and to abstraction which is celebrated in Modernist theory entails a disengagement from the culture at large. On the contrary, what is evident from the actual paintings of Malevich and Mondrian, of Pollock and Rothko, even of Stella and Noland (through it is not generally evident from reproductions of those paintings), is that the critical tension between figurative form and literal form is tuned to a high pitch in the best abstract art. The abstract painting is nothing if it is not also a virtual object, which resonates in the world of other objects, other surfaces. For the pioneers of abstract art, the critique of the figurative connections between paintings and the world – the

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8. »In my opinion to search means nothing in painting. To find, is the thing ... When I paint my object is to show what I have found and not what I am looking for ...« P. Picasso, from an interview with Marius de Zayas, published as »Picasso Speaks«, *The Arts*, New York, May 1923.

9. »When I am *in* my painting, I'm not aware of what I'm doing. It is only after a sort of »get acquainted« period that I see what I have been about. I have no fears about making changes, destroying the image, etc., because the painting has a life of its own. I try to let it come through...« J. Pollock, statement in R. Motherwell and H. Rosenberg eds., *Possibilities*, New York, Winter 1947/8.

critique, we might say, of a trivial realism-as-correspondence – was a necessary condition of art's actual realism. This strengthening of the connection between paintings and other things renders the achievement of aesthetic distinctness and quality all the more poignant. But the poignancy does not lie in the achievement of the aesthetic as a value independent of the social. On the contrary, given the nature of the artist as producer, it is precisely as the representative of the moral and social culture at large that the canonical abstract painter is revealed in his work. He is revealed, that is to say, as troubled by the appearance of the human world, by his own implication in that world of appearances, and by the forms of significance which forms of appearance may be made to reveal.

With the emergence of abstract art, the question of finish came to occupy not simply an important but a central position in the business of practical self-criticism in painting. Or rather we might say there was an increasing tendency to equate practical self-criticism with keeping the figurative at bay on the one hand and with preserving the possibility of aesthetic life on the other. For Malevich and Mondrian the question »Is this painting finished?« must often at the beginning of abstract art have been of such moment as to absorb not only the self-critical question »Is this good enough?«, but also the ontological question, »Is this a work of art?« For any of these questions to be answered in the affirmative it was not enough that the painting appear well designed and balanced. On the contrary, the condition of the emergent abstract work's being accorded the status of a work of art was that it should be unforeseeable and inexhaustible in experience as painting may be but as design is not. Barnett Newman is supposed to have deliberated for some eight months in 1948 over his *Onement I*, presumably waiting to be sure in his own mind that no further work was required to transform what he had made into a painting.[10] I don't mean to overdramatise or to overdignify the matter of the artist's deliberations upon his work. The neurotic demand for self-reassurance no doubt plays as large a part in the painter's practice as in anyone else's. On the other hand, I don't think that Newman was waiting to be satisfied that *Onement I* was finished. On the contrary, only the impossibility of its termination could have assured him that it was a work of art he had produced and not simply a well-designed object.

As for Pollock, in his last years it seems that he often had to do damage to his own work, as it were to *un*finish it, in the attempt to retrieve it from the world of the already recognisable, the finality of established taste. In the years from 1952 to 56 his frequent failures to redeem his own work read as the signs of a tragic disenablement or defeat. Since Pollock, painting which presents itself too securely as complete has either tended to look bureaucratic and

10. As reported by T. Hess in *Barnett Newman,* catalogue of an exhibition at the Tate Gallery, London, June 1972.

self-important or to disappear without aesthetic remainder into the world of mere design.

Though Modernist theory has not generally addressed the question of form and finish in quite the term I have used, it has made much of the requirement of newness rather than mere novelty, of the »challenge to taste« associated with this newness, and of the importance to both of the factitious painted surface. Unlike the social history of art, Modernist criticism has been remarkably successful in drawing attention to works of interest, and in putting spectators on their mettle before them. It has furnished relevant discussion of significant technical characteristics, and by one means or another it has maintained a continuing agenda of moral uncertainty. The problem with this theory and criticism, however, is that it has tended to autonomise the developments it has observed, speaking of what painting has had to do and not of the conditions under which agents have had to act, nor indeed of the contingent determinations upon the act of looking. »Why«, we ask, »does painting get flatter, form less plastic, finish less securely defined?« And Greenberg replies (with some justice), »Because otherwise the art will not be good enough«.[11] But if we ask why this flatness, this formlessness, this indefiniteness should be or have been necessary accompaniments to the achievement of aesthetic quality, such answers as we get refer us back not to the historical conditions of our experience as subjects, but to the specialised and supposedly objective competences of painting itself. We are in need of some theory of change and development in art which speaks not only of what artists do and have done, but also of how that doing is determined in a world which is also the world of the spectator.

It's time to return to the paintings of Art & Language. I wish to reexamine the strange dual character of the *Hostages* and in the process to suggest how the tendencies we've been observing might be reconnected to some actualities of social existence and thus in part explained. In particular, I want to concentrate on the implications and effects of the bizarre technical procedure by which the production of these paintings is distinguished.

There are three principal stages to the making of the recent *Hostages*. Firstly the basic composition of landscape and vertical plane is transferred from a preparatory drawing onto canvas. Certain areas are marked out on the drawings by configurations of black lines. These are composed by graphic deformations of the letters S-U-R-F, signifying »surface«.[12] In the process of

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11. See, for instance, T. Evans ed., »A Conversation with Clement Greenberg«, *Art Monthly,* London, (three parts) Feb, March, April 1984.

12. This convention was first employed by Art & Language in a series of works of 1974-5 exhibited under the title »Dialectical Materialism«. See C. Harrison, »The Condition of Problems« in *Essays on Art & Language,* Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1991; »In the first panel of a typical work from the series, a number of indices signifying points of depth is mapped onto a configuration taken from a sample of Constructivist graphics. Certain areas of the same

enlargement onto canvas these areas are covered with masking tape. At a second stage, this tape is removed and the composition is continued and completed, but now using much thicker paint over the previously masked-out sections. The third stage occurs while this thick paint is still wet. The glass is applied over the painting and screwed down into the wooden support. The canvas is then loosened from the stretcher, a steel bar is inserted between the canvas and its plywood backing, and the wet paint is spread out behind the glass, forming runs and patterns which are relatively controlled but also relatively unpredictable. By this process an apparently complete or finished figurative scene is apparently blotted and smeared. Across much of the picture surface the material components of the illusion – the patches of coloured paint – are rendered literal and flat.

Or flat, at least, from the standpoint of that sophisticated culture within which the illusion of the poplar trees is perceived and its referential character understood. In fact, as their illusionistic surfaces are smeared and spoiled, the paintings also invoke a different culture, a differently positioned viewer. This is a viewer for whom the very smearing and spoiling establish representation. In the culture which this second viewer represents, illusion and reference are familiar properties of synthetic surfaces. They are to be found in the slippery effects of kitsch abstract art, in the laminated decor of up-market boutiques, or in the hygienic surfaces of expensive bathrooms. This is a viewer for whom decorativeness is a value at odds with the culture of high art. From his imaginary point of view, it is those few remnants of the original figurative scheme which remain undisturbed – the touches of paint which still signify branches, ground and sky – that read as literal, factitious and unfinished.

These paintings do not address or accommodate themselves to one viewer or the other, nor do they avail any moral grounds on which to distinguish between them. What they establish is that forms of conflict attend inexorably upon the aesthetic. If this is contingently true in the world we know, it is probably also true of any world we can now sensibly envisage. This is the intuition which is set in play as these paintings are worked over, changed and unfinished. By this process of unfinishing, Art & Language draws into the play

configuration are designated as 'surface' and are marked out as such by reiterations of the abbreviation 'Surf'«. The second panel displays a printed text. This addresses the nature of Art & Language work and dialogue, questions of ideology, learning and language. The separate sections of text are variously marked with those indices which appear on the graphic panel alongside. The suggestion made in this work is that there is a possible 'reading', of the dialogical text which is a kind of picture; i.e. which amounts to a mapping of its surface and depth upon one synchronous surface. The work will also sustain the corollary that there is a possible 'viewing' of the graphic image which quantifies its formal ingredients by reference to a linguistic text.« In the recent *Hostages*, the configurations to which the letters S-U-R-F are made to conform are taken from canonical examples of abstract art, from the graphic idealizations of town-planners, from the ground-plans of would-be Postmodernist museums and from such-like attempts to give modernity a proper *shape*.

of artistic genres and effects the dangerous and transforming substance of a culture with no regard for art. The apparent damage gone to the figurative schemes – the atmospheric landscapes – is not simply a matter of avant-garde cancellation or iconoclasm, though it is significant that a tradition of artistic iconoclasm has persisted within the margins of the Modernist mainstream. Rather, what is involved is a purposeful refusal to the spectator of the possibility of certain normally accredited modes of experience and understanding. The semantic hiatus leaves us with work to do. To recognise the painting for what it is – to be able to represent it to ourselves – is to look not simply through the iconic conventions of artistic culture, but rather to look in the face of those conventions into an unaesthetic world, or rather into a world unamenable to aesthetic ratification and control. This world is evoked in Art & Language's *Hostages* by both the literal and the figurative components of their surfaces. It is also present as a form of visitation in those reflections of the viewer's actual situation which are visually indissoluble from the artistic materials.

There is of course a risk that no aesthetic remainder will be left by the process of unfinishing, or that none will be recoverable through the welter of reflections. But I think this is a kind of risk which has to be taken if art is to survive as a critical presence in our culture. It is a realistic requirement of modernism that the substance of the aesthetic be found and worked in face of the unaesthetic. If paintings do not establish their meaning by reference to something other than other paintings – texts by reference to something other than other texts – if there are not some actual materials being worked upon in culture, then there can be no non-arbitrary and non-aesthetic criteria of success and failure, nor any dialectic of form and finish. That we experience the relations between the figurative and the literal as problematic is a testimony to our cognitive vitality in face of the world. In the end, this is why painting matters.

To paraphrase Greenberg – though to conclusions other than his – I speak here not of commitments or of programmes, but of the apparent mechanisms shaping art's modern development as these are noticeable in a retrospective view. The evidence suggests that any dominant modern order will attempt to represent and to administer the aesthetic as a kind of bureaucratic certainty – to stabilise the relations between the figurative and the literal, between form and finish, and thus to regulate opportunities for cognitive adventure. The evidence also suggests that it is a condition of the possibility of cognitive alertness that we dare to be both prodigal and ironic in face of any political culture which seeks the regulation of the aesthetic – prodigal with its scarce imaginative materials and ironic about its spurious certainties.

It cannot quite be true, but for some while now it has seemed as if this scarcity and spuriousness are all we have left to work on. In one version of the

Postmodern, art's reduction to the synthetic has been celebrated as a wilful form of modernité. We should be alert to the emptiness of such rejoicings. For this is Postmodernism as the fulfilment of that petit-bourgeois dream which Modernism has always opposed, and which has always been the condition of the defeat of the aesthetic. However radically disguised, it is the world of absolute utility and value for money, the world in which morality is made of the logic of the market. In another version of the Postmodern, it is proposed that taste heals all wounds. The literal detritus of the petit-bourgeois consumer's world is subject to a form of aesthetic recuperation in the picturesque tableaux of Tony Cragg. The optimism is unjustified, however. Picturesque tableaux are the signs of a dead theatre, an already enchanted audience.

In fact, if there is little left for art to be made of, it is because the materials of celebration have been so rapidly exhausted. It is from the unaesthetic processes of exhaustion themselves that Art & Language's *Hostages* have been made. Whatever capital has reached out to enclose, the artist has had to undo; whatever capital has sought to represent as essential and universal, the artist has had to ruin with the evidence of its own contingency; whatever forms capital has learned to use for its own designs, the artist has been driven to unfinish. In the language of hinsight these imperatives tend to read as if impetted by a politics. This reading is a form of misrepresentation. In the experience of the studio, the imperatives are aesthetic.

Modernism and the retreat from form
Martin Jay

T he History of aesthetic modernism has often been written as the triumph of form over content,the apotheosis of self-referentiality over the representation or expression of anything external to the artwork.[1] The critical discourse accompanying modernism has likewise been preoccupied with formal issues, whether approvingly, as in the case of writers like Roger Fry, Clive Bell and the Russian Formalists, or not, as in that of most Marxist critics. For the latter, the very term »formalist« became, as we know all too well, a convenient term of abuse, with opponents like Georg Lukács and Bertolt Brecht ingeniously concocting ways to pin the label on each other.[2] No less heated has been the discussion, extending at least as far back as Simmel, of the putative links between the formal abstraction of modern life as a whole and its aesthetic counterpart. Modernity, in short, has sometimes seemed coterminous with the very differentiation of form from content, indeed even the fetishization of self-sufficient form as the privileged locus of meaning and value.

In what follows, I want less to overturn this conventional wisdom than problematize it, by pursuing the trail of what can be called a subordinate tendency in aesthetic modernism, which challenged the apotheosis and purification of form. That is, I want to explore what might be called a powerfully anti-formalist impulse in modern art, which can be most conveniently identified with Georges Bataille's spirited defense of *informe*.[3] In so doing, I also hope to provide some insights into the complicated relations between modernism, the contest over the hegemony of form, and what I have elsewhere called the crisis of ocularcentrism, the denigration of vision especially virulent in 20th-century French thought.[4]

1. See, for example, Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde,* trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis, 1984), p. 19; or Suzi Grablik, *Progress in Art* (New York, 1976), p. 85.
2. See the essays collected in *Aesthetics and Politics; Debates Between Bloch, Lukács, Brecht, Benjamin, Adorno,* ed. New Left Review, Afterword Fredric Jameson (London, 1977).
3. Bataille, »Formless,« in *Visions of Excess; Selected Writings, 1927-1939,* ed. Allan Stoekl, trans. Allan Stoekl et al. (Minneapolis, 1985). The article first appeared as an entry in the dictionnaire critique in *Documents,* 7 (December, 1929).
4. Martin Jay, »In the Empire of the Gaze: Foucault and the Denigration of Vison in 20th-century French Thought,« in *Foucault: A Critical Reader,* ed. David Couzens Hoy (London, 1986: »The Rise of Hermeneutics and the Crisis of Ocularcentrism,« *The Rhetoric of Interpretation and the Interpretation of Rhetoric,* ed. Paul Hernadi (Durham, N.C., 1989).

Before entering the obscure and labyrinthine territory of the *informe,* let me pause a moment with the concept, or rather concepts, of form to which it was deliberately counterposed. Although this is not the place to hazard a full-scale investigation of the multiple meanings adhering to that term, it will be useful to recall five different senses that have had a powerful impact in the history of aesthetics.[5] First, form has been identified with the composite arrangement or order of distinct parts or elements, for example the disposition of shapes in a painting or notes in a melody. Good form has in this sense generally meant proportion, harmony and measure among the component parts. Second, form has meant what is given directly to the senses as opposed to the content conveyed by it, how, for instance, a poem sounds rather than what it substantively means. Formal value in this sense has meant sensual pleasure as opposed to a paraphrasable core of significance. Third, form has signified the contour or shape of an object, as opposed to its weight, texture or color. In this sense, clarity and grace are normally accorded highest honors. Fourth, form has been synonymous with what Plato called Ideas and Aristotle entelechies, that is, with the most substantial essence of a thing rather than its mere appearance. Here formal value has carried with it a metaphysical charge, suggesting the revelation of a higher truth than is normally evident in everyday perception. Fifth and finally, form has meant the constitutive capacity of the mind to impose structure on the world of sense experience. Kant's first Critique is the *locus classicus* of this notion of form, with its attribution of *a priori* cognitive categories to the human intellect. Although Kant himself did not attribute comparable transcendental categories to aesthetic judgement, later critics like Konrad Fiedler, Alois Riegl and Heinrich Wölflin did seek universal formal regularities governing aesthetic as well as epistemological experience.

The modernist apotheosis of form has at one time or another drawn on all of these meanings. Thus, for example, the denigration of ornament in the architecture of an Adolf Loos, Le Corbusier or the Bauhaus meant the holistic elevation of structural proportion and measure over the isolated fetish of component parts. Similarly, the stress on the musical sonority of poetry, typically expressed in Verlaine's famous injunction to wring the neck of eloquence, indicated the apotheosis of form as sensual immediacy over mediated content. The autonomization of line and figure in the abstract paintings of a Mondrian or Malevitch likewise indicated the triumph of contour over texture or color, as well, of course, as over mimetic, narrative or anecdotal reference. In the case of a painter like Kandinsky, the liberation of abstract form was defended in the name of a religious essentialism that evoked

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5. Here I am drawing on the excellent essay by W. Tatarkiewicz on »Form in the History of Aesthetics« in *Dictionary of the History of Ideas,* vol. II, ed. Philip P. Weiner (New York, 1973).

Platonic and Aristotelian metaphysical notion of substantial form. And finally, there has been no shortage of modernist artists who characterize their work as the willful imposition of form on the chaos outside them, and perhaps inside as well.

If, however, much of modernism can be interpreted as the hypertrophy of form in many or all of its senses, there has been from the beginning a counter--impulse within modern art which has resisted it, a refusal to countenance the differentiation and purification characteristic of modernist aesthetics in general. It is important to note, however, that this resistance has not taken place in the name of one of form's typical antonyms, such as content, subject matter or element. It has not provided the materialist antidote to self--referentiality that a Marxist like Lukács so fervently craved. Rather, it has preferred to define itself, if it deigned to submit itself to definition at all, in negative terms, as deformation or, more radically still, as formlessness. Instead or privileging ideal formal beauty, it has sought to valorize baseness and ignobility. In the place of purity and clarity, it has favored impurity and obscurity.

Here, of course, there have been precedents, as the history of the grotesque as an aesthetic concept demonstrates.[6] But what gives the modernist turn against form its special power is its linkage with a widespread critique of visual primacy, of the ocularcentric bias of the Western tradition in its most Hellenic moods. The link between form and vision has, of course, often been emphasized, ever since it was recognized that the Latin word *forma* translated both the visually derived Greek words *morphe* and *eidos*. Thus, for example, Jacques Derrida has observed in his critique of form and meaning in Husserl that »the metaphysical domination of the concept of form is bound to occasion some submission to sight. This submission always would be a submission of *sense* to sight, of sense to the sense-of-vision, since sense in general is the very concept of every phenomenological field.«[7] Even linguistic notions of form carry with them a certain privileging of vision. According to the American deconstructionist David Carroll, the structuralism of Jean Ricardou and the Russian Formalists, »stresses the *visibility* of linguistic operations in the determination of the form of the novel. Form is constituted by the visible operations« of language at work in the novel – the frame of all frames.«[8]

The link between form and the primacy of vision is most obvious when the term signifies clarity of outline or luminous appearance, but it also lurks behind certain of the other meanings mentioned above. Thus, for example, the

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6. For a subtle account of its implications, see Geoffrey Galt Harpham, *On the Grotesque: Strategies of Contradiction in Art and Literature* (Princeton, 1982).

7. Jacques Derrida, »Form and Meaning: A Note on the Phenomenology of Language,« *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago, 1972), p. 158.

8. David Carroll, *The Subject in Question: The Languages of Theory and the Strategies of Fiction* (Chicago, 1982), p. 191.

identification of form with the proportion among discrete elements often draws on the visual experience of symmetrical commensurability. So too, the belief that form signifies essential truths draws on the Platonic contention that Ideas exist in the »eye of the mind.« Although it is of course true that form can be applied to aural, temporal phenomena, such as sonatas and symphonies, the capacity of the eye to register from a distance a static and simultaneous field of ordered regularity means that it is the primary source of our experience of form.[9]

If this is the case, it might be expected that an aesthetic modernism that privileged formalism would also be favorably inclined towards the hegemony of the eye. And as the influential school of criticism identified with the American art critic Clement Greenberg demonstrates, this expectation was not disappointed. For Greenberg spoke glowingly of the »purity« of the optical as the defining characteristic of the modernist visual arts, even sculpture.[10] In literary terms, the same impulse may be discerned in Joseph Frank's celebrated defense of the idea of spatial form in modern literature, which sought to undo Lessing's distinction between the atemporal and temporal arts.[11] And it should also be remembered that one of the cherished hopes of Russian Formalist criticism was precisely, as Jameson has noted, »the renewal of perception, the seeing of the world suddenly in a new light, in a new and unforesseen way.«[12]

However valid these characterizations of the dominant tendencies may be, and they were never entirely uncontroversial, uncontroversial, they fail to do justice to the subaltern tradition of formlessness that also must be accorded its place in the story of modernism. One avenue of entry into this alternative impulse can be found in the role of so-called primitive art in the early development of modernist aesthetics. In most accounts, it is recognition of the abstractly formal properties of that art which is given pride of place.[13] Indeed, it was precisely the discovery in primitive artifacts of a universal »will-to-form« in Riegl's sense by critics like Wilhelm Worringer, Roger Fry and Leo Frobenius that allowed their elevation into the realm of the aesthetically valuable.

The accompanying cost of this gesture, however, was the decontextualization of these works, which robbed them of any ethnographical value as objects of cultural practice. Generally forgotten as well as their ideological appropriation

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9. On the relation between vision and form, see Hans Jonas, »The Nobility of Sight,« *The Phenomenon of Life: Towards a Philosophical Biology* (Chicago, 1982).

10. Clement Greenberg, *Art and Culture: Critical Essays* (Boston, 1965), p. 171.

11. See, for example, Frank, »Spatial Form in Modern Literature,« in *The Avant-Garde Tradition in Literature*, ed. Richard Kostelanetz (Buffalo, N.Y., 1982).

12. Fredric Jameson, *The Prison-House of Language: A Critical Account of Structuralism and Russian Formalism* (Princeton, 1972), p. 52.

13. See, for example, Robert Goldwater, *Primitivism in Modern Art* (Cambridge, Mass. 1986).

in the later context of Western imperialism.[14] Instead, their purely formal qualities were differentiated out from the entanglements of both their contexts of origin and reception, and then elevated into instances of a putatively universal aesthetic. As such, they could then provide inspiration for a modernist formalism, which was equally indifferent to its contextual impurities.

Although only recently have critics made us all so aware of the ambiguous role of primitivism in the origins of modern art, their critique was already anticipated in the counter-current that we have called modernist formlessness. In particular, it was implicit in the very different appropriation of the exotic by the French Surrealists, who never forgot the ethnographic dimension of the objects that could also be valued for their aesthetic significance.[15] The circle around the journal *Documents* retained the emphasis on the sacred, ritual and mythic function of the artifacts, which they had imbibed from their readings in Durkheim and Mauss and their contact with fieldworkers like Alfred Métraux.

Foremost among them was Georges Bataille, who combined his interest in the sacred aspects of primitive culture with an appreciation of Dionysian frenzy and violent sexuality, derived from Nietzsche and Sade, into a full-blown defense of the virtues of transgression, hererogeneity, excess and waste. Among the most explicit values to be transgressed, according to Bataille, was the fetish of form in virtually all of its guises. In his 1929 entry on *Informe* in the *Documents* »dictionnaire critique,« he claimed that dictionaries really begin when they stop giving meaning to words and merely suggest their openended tasks instead. »Thus, « he continued, »*formless* is not only an adjective having a given meaning, but a term that serves to bring things down in the world, generally requiring that each thing have its form. What it designates has no rights in any sense and gets squashed everywhere, like a spider or an earthworm.«[16] Whereas conventional philosophers always try to place the world into categorical straightjackets, assigning everything a proper form, what they tended to forget is the conflict between constative meaning and performative function. »Affirming that the universe resembles nothing and is only *formless,*« Bataille concluded, »amounts to saying that the universe is something like a spider or spit.«[17] The »saying« of something so outrageous is not a truth claim in its own right, but rather an assault on all claims to reduce the world to formal truths.

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14. For recent discussions of this issue, see Hal Foster, »The 'Primitive' Unconscious of Modern Art,« *October,* 34 (Fall, 1985), pp. 45-70; and James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature and Art* (Cambridge, Mass., 1988).
15. See Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture,* chapter IV. It should also be noted that the Surrealists were keenly aware of the context of reception of primitive art, as they were among the most vociferous critics of French imperialism in the 1920's.
16. Bataille, »Formless,« p. 31.
17. *Ibid.*

For Bataille, the problematic hegemony of conceptual and aesthetic form was explicitly linked to the ocularcentric bias of Western metaphysics.[18] Distinguishing between two traditions of solar illumination, he identified the first with the elevating Platonic sun of reason and order, which cast light on essential truths, and the second with the dazzling and blinding sun which destroyed vision when looked at too directly. The myth of Icarus, he contended, expressed this duality with uncommon power: »it clearly splits the sun in two – the one that was shining at this moment of Icarus's elevation, and the one that melted the wax, causing failure and a screaming fall when Icarus was too close.«[19] Whereas traditional painting reflected the Platonic search for ideal form, modern painting, most explicitly that of Picasso and Van Gogh, had a very different goal: »academic painting more or less corresponded to an elevation – without excess – of the spirit. In contemporary painting, however, the search for that which most ruptures elevation, and for a blinding brilliance, has a share in the elaboration of decomposition of forms.«[20]

Bataille's plea for the decomposition of form was expressed as well in his valorization of materialism, albeit one very different from that posited by traditional metaphysical or by Marxist dialectics.[21] Rather than a materialism of the object, his was a materialism of the abject. As Rosalind Krauss has noted, »*Informe* denotes what alteration produces, the reduction of meaning or value, not by contradiction – which would be dialectical – but by putrefaction: the puncturing of the limits around the term, the reduction to sameness of the cadaver – which is transgressive.«[22] Refusing to turn matter into a positive surrogate for spirit or mind, he linked it instead to the principle of degradation, which he saw operative in the Gnostic valorization of primal darkness.[23] As a result, it was impossible to mediate between matter and form, as, say Schiller had hoped with his »play drive,« to produce a higher synthesis. The materialism of *informe* resisted any such elevating impulse.

The baseness of matter as opposed to the nobility of form was tied as well by Bataille to the recovery of the body, which had been suppressed by the

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18. Although this is not the place to pursue the relation between visuality and conceptuality, it should be mentioned that not all theorists have found them synonymous. Theodor Adorno, for example, places visuality on the side of sensuality and juxtaposes it to the conceptual dimension of art. See his discussion in *Aesthetic Theory,* ed. Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann, trans. C. Lenhardt (London, 1984), p. 139f. He notes that the term »visuality« was used in epistemology to mean a content that was then formed.

19. Bataille, »Rotten Sun,« p. 58.

20. *Ibid.* For Bataille's appreciation of Van Gogh in these terms, see his »Sacrificial Mutilation and the Severed Ear of Vincent Van Gogh,« in *Visions of Excess.*

21. According to Rosalind Krauss, *informe* meant the undoing of the Aristotelian distinction between form and matter, not the privileging of one over the other. See her *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, Mass., 1985), p. 53. This undoing, however, was more in the nature of a deconstruction than dialectical sublation.

22. *Ibid,* p. 64.

23. Bataille, »Base Materialism and Gnosticism,« *Visions of Excess,* p. 47.

exaltation of the cold, spiritual eye. It was, however, a grotesque, mutilated, headless body, a body whose boundaries were violated and porous, that he most valued. For Bataille, the waste products of the body, normally hidden and devalued as dirty or obscene, were closest to the experience of sacred excess and ecstatic expenditure realized in primitive religion. Here no measured proportion among elements, no sensual pleasure unsullied by violent pain, no sharply defined outlines, no revelation of essential ideas shone forth. Instead, formal beauty was consumed in the flames of a symbolic conflagration like that of the potlatch ceremonies of American Indians, whose conspicuous consumption of wealth he so admired.[24]

So too, form in the Kantian sense as the imposition of structure by a constitutive subject on the chaos of the world was utterly absent in Bataille's theory. His idiosyncreatic concept of sovereignity meant the loss of willed control by a homogeneous agent and submission instead to the heterogeneous forces that exploded its integrity.[25] The »acephalic« (headless) community he sought was based on the ecstatic sacrifice of subjectivity, individual and collective, not an act of conscious choice.[26] It was also the opposite of merely formal democracy, which produced only a sterile and lifeless simulacrum of political freedom.

Bataille's own writing can also be read as instantiating a principled resistance to the subjective imposition of form. Thus, Denis Hollier has claimed that »perhaps Bataille's work gets its greatest strength in this refusal of the temptation of form. This refusal is the interdiction making it impossible in advance for his works ever to be 'complete,' impossible for his book to be only books and impossible for his death to shut his words up. The transgression is transgression of form ... the temptation of discourse to arrest itself, to fix on itself, to finish itself off by producing and appropriating its own end. Bataille's writing is antidiscursive (endlessly deforms and disguises itself, endlessly rids itself of form). «[27]

It would be easy to offer other examples of Bataille's critique of form and link them with his no less severe attack on the ocularcentric bias of Western culture. What is of more importance, however, is to establish the existence of

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24. Bataille, *The Accursed Share,* vol. I, *Comsumption,* trans. Robert Hurley (New York, 1988), p. 63f.

25. For a helpful account of the verieties of sovereignty, erotic, poetic and political, in Bataille, see Michele H. Richman, *Reading Georges Bataille: Beyond the Gift* (Baltimore, 1982), chapter III.

26. Acéphale was the name of the group Bataille helped form at the Collège de Sociologie in the late 1930's, which published a review with the same name. It referred to the headless body he found so attractive. For a sympathetic analysis of Bataille's notion of Community, see Maurice Blanchot, *The Unavowable Community,* trans. Pierre Joris (Barrytown, N.Y., 1988).

27. Denis Hollier, *Against Architecture: the Writings of Georges Bataille,* trans. Betsy Wing (Cambridge, Mass., 1989), p. 24.

a similar inclination among other significant modernist figures. Armed with an appreciation of Bataille's defense of *informe,* several recent critics have provided us with the means to do so. For example, in her 1988 study of Rimbaud and the Paris Commune, Kristin Ross has examined the nature of class in his poetry and linked it to his celebrated call for the derangement of the senses with its explicit spurning of the Parnassian poets' dependence on the mimetic eye. In Rimbaud, as she reads him, »grotesque, hyperbolic, extraordinary, superhuman perception is advocated in opposition to what capitalist development is at that moment defining (in the sense of setting the limits) *as* human, as *ordinary* perception.«[28] The space that is prefigured in his poetry is not geometrically ordered or transparently lucid, a space peopled by formal groupings like parties or bureaucracies. It is instead a more tactile than visual space, an irregular field through which flows of energy and force pass without coalescing into visibly recognizable structures.[29] The word Ross chooses to describe Rimbaud's notion of class is »swarm,« which she compares positively to more traditional notions of a disciplined proletariat expressing its allegedly mature class consciousness by following the leadership of a vanguard party. »If 'mature' class consciousness partakes of the serial groupings like the party or state,« she writes, »then the movement of Rimbaud's swarm is much more that of the *informe* ('it has no form he give it no form'): the spontaneous, fermenting element of the group.«[30] For all his celebrated elevation of the poet into the role of *voyant,* Rimbaud's own work insisted on the importance of the erotic body as opposed to the spiritual eye, and resisted the differentiation of poetic form from everyday life. Just as he refused to be socialized through bourgeois formation, Rimbaud rejected the alternative art-for-art sake's socialization into aesthetic form. His notorious decision to give up poetry entirely in favor of living dangerously was thus already anticipated in the poetry itself, which Ross interprets as the antithesis of the life-denying aestheticism expressed in Mallarmé's fetish of the pure word.

No less exemplary of the modernist turn against formal purity was the remarkable experiments in photography carried out by the Surrealists in the interwar era, which have recently been interpreted in Bataille's terms by Rosalind Krauss. Examining photographers like Jacques-André Boiffard, Brassai and Man Ray, she detected the trace of his, rather than André Breton's ideas on their work. »The surrealist photographers were masters of the *informe,*« she writes, »which could be produced, as Man Ray had seen, by a simple rotation and consequent disorientation of the body.«[31] Even surrealist

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28. Kristin Ross, *The Emergence of Social Space: Rimbaud and the Paris Commune* (Minneapolis, 1988), p. 102.

29. The obvious influence of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari on Ross's celebration of force over form is explicitly acknowledged (p. 67).

30. *Ibid,* p. 123.

31. Rosalind Krauss, »Corpus Delicti,« *October,* 33 (Summer, 1985), p. 34.

painters like Masson and Dali, she argued, were in his debt: »It is to Bataille, not to Breton, that Dali owed the word *informe* with the particular, anamorphic spin.«[32]

According to Krauss, the dominant modernist defense of photography's aesthetic credentials in strictly formalist terms, exemplified by champions of what is called »Straight Photography« like Edward Weston and John Szarkowski, was challenged by the surrealist introduction of textual and temporal interruptions into the pure image. »The nature of the authority that Weston and Straight Photography claim,« she writes, »is grounded in the sharply focused image, its resolution a figure of the unity of what the spectator sees, a wholeness which in turn founds the spectator himself as a unified subject. That subject, armed with a vision that plunges deep into reality and, through the agency of the photograph, given the illusion of mastery over it, seems to find unbearable a photography that effaces categories and in their place erects the fetish, the *informe,* the uncanny.«[33]

Still another instance of the alternative modernist tradition of debunking pure, visible form can be discerned in its receptivity to the aesthetics of the sublime. Although the sublime is often more closely identified with Romanticism or Post-modernism than with High Modernism, no less a celebrant of its importance than Jean-François Lyotard has claimed that »it is in the aesthetic of the sublime that modern art (including literature) finds its impetus and the logic of avant-gardes finds its axioms.«[34] Painters from Malevitch to Barnett Newman, he claims, instantiate what Burke, Kant and other theorists of the sublime meant when they stressed its striving to present the unpresentable, its fidelity to the Hebraic injunction against graven images.[35] »To make visible that there is something which can be conceived and which can neither be seen nor made visible:« Lyotard writes, »this is what is at stake in modern painting. But how to make visible that there is something which cannot be seen? Kant himself shows the way when he names 'formlessness, the absence of form,' as a possible index to the unpresentable.«[36] Although modernism, as opposed to the postmodernism he prefers, is still nostalgic for the solace of presentable from, it nonetheless exemplifies for Lyotard the ways in which art can disrupt the clarity and purity of formal beauty. In so doing, it reveals the workings of inchoate, libidinal desire, which explodes through the deceptively calm surface of both figural and discursive representation.

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32. *Ibid.,* p. 37.
33. *Ibid.,* p. 72.
34. Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge,* trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis, 1984), p. 77.
35. For Lyotard on Newman and the sublime, see his »Newman: The Instant,« in *The Lyotard Reader,* ed. Andrew Benjamin (Oxford, 1989).
36. Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition,* p. 78.

One final instance of the modernist retreat from form can be found in music, where Schoenberg's bold experiments in atonality and *Sprechstimme* were not the only challenge to traditional values. Perhaps even more extreme examples of what might be called musical *informe* can be discerned in Futurist composers like Luigi Russolo, one of the founders of *bruitismo*.[37] Here noise, often that of the jarring world of modern technology, was explicitly privileged over tone. Acoustical phenomena without any discernable pitch replaced those which could be translated into visible notation on a traditional scale. Although Futurist composition was relatively modest in achievement, the increasing incorporation of noise into modern music is evident in works like Igor Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat* (1918) and Edgard Varèse's *Ionisation* (1931). Here timbre and color usurped the role normally given to pitch, as they also did in the so.called *Klangfarben* of Schoenberg and Berg. The new importance of color, however metaphorical that term may be in the lexicon of music, demonstrates a certain congruence with the other phenomena we have been discussing, for it has normally been counterposed to visual form.

Other examples of the retrospective critical appreciation of *informe* in modernist art might be given as the conventional wisdom identified with Bell, Fry and Greenberg has come under increasing attack.[38] But it is now time to explore more closely the implications of this new appreciation. What are the stakes involved when we go from identifying modernism with the abstraction of form in all of its guises from content, matter, etc. to identifying instead it with contested field in which the opposite impulse is also at play? What has been gained by acknowledging the importance of formlessness as at least a significant counter current within modernist art?

First, what has to be made clear is that *informe* does not mean the simple negation of form, its wholesale replacement by chaos or the void. As Bataille contends, *informe* is not a positive definition, but a working term that functions by disruption and disorder. That is, it needs the prior existence of form, which it can then transgress, to be meaningful. Just as the grotesque operates by the disharmonious juxtaposition or integration of apparent formal opposites,[39] just as the sublime keeps the tension between presentation and unpresentability, so too the *informe* needs its opposite to work its magic. If not

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37. For a brief account, see H.H. Stuckenschmidt, *Twentieth-Century Music,* trans. Richard Deveson (New York, 1970), chapter 3.

38. See, for instance, Victor Burgin, *The End of Art Theory: Criticism and Postmodernity* (London, 1986); or the essays in *Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation,* ed. Brian Wallis (New York, 1984). In Mary Kelly's contribution to the latter, »Reviewing Modernist Criticism,« she discusses the importance of performance art in terms that recall Bataille: »The art of the 'real body' does not pertain to the truth of visible form, but refers back to its essential content: the irreducible, irrefutable experience of *pain*.« (p. 96).

39. According to Harpman, »most grotesques are marked by such an affinity/antagonism, by the co-presence of the normative, fully formed 'high' or ideal, and the abnormal, unformed, degenerate, 'low' or material.« *On the Grotesque.* p. 9.

for the powerful formalist impulse that so many critics have rightfully seen in modernism, the _informe_ would not be so insistently summoned up to undermine it.

There are several possible ways to conceptualize and explain the tension between form and formlessness that we have been tracing. One is to assimilate it to a more timeless struggle between structure and energy, stasis and movement, the immutable and the ephemeral. Here we reenter the territory perhaps classically traversed by Lukács in his pre-Marxist work _Soul and Form._[40] But whereas Lukács called form »the highest judge of life«[41] and agonized over the inability of life, with all its chaotic energy, to measure up to that stringent tribunal, the tradition we have been examining in this paper has had the opposite reaction. For the celebrants of the _informe,_ it is precisely the failure of life to remain frozen in formal patterns, with its material impurities purged and its baser impulses expelled, that warrants praise.

From a psychoanalytic perspective more in tune with this inclination, it would be fruitful to consider Lacan's celebrated analysis of the chiasmic intertwining of the eye and the gaze in _The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-analysis._[42] Here he provides a complicated explanation of the ways in which the subject is situated in a visual field split between an eye, which looks out on a geometrically ordered space before it, and a gaze, in which object »look back« at the body of the eye that is looking. Although modernist formalism sought to transcend the perspectivalist scopic regime identified with the eye in its most Cartesian version, it substituted a pure optically in which the tension between eye and gaze was suppressed.[43] The modernist formalism celebrated by critics like Greenberg thus forgot what those critics sensitive to the _informe_ remembered: that the visual field was a contested terrain in which pure form was always disrupted by its other. That other might be interpreted in linguistic terms, as the interference of the symbolic with the imaginary, or as a conflict within the realm of vision itself, but however it be ultimately understood, it meant that modernism, indeed any art, could not be reduced to the triumph of pure form.

That Lacan's own analysis emerged out of the same matrix as Bataille's,[44] that he was himself fascinated with the sublime, as Slavoj Žižek has recently

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40. George Lukács, _Soul and Form,_ trans. Anna Bostock (Cambridge, Mass., 1971).

41. _Ibid,_ p. 172.

42. Jacques Lacan, _The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis,_ ed. Jacques Alain Miller, trans. Allan Sheridan (New York, 1981).

43. Philosophically, perhaps the most important defender of this position was Maurice Merleau-Ponty in such essays as »Cézanne's Doubt,« _Sense and Non-Sense,_ trans. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Patricia A. Dreyfus (Evanstion, 1964). Not surprisingly, he was frequently criticized by those like Lyotard hostile to the high modernist fetish of pure opticality.

44. For an exploration of Lacan's debts to the Surrealist movement in the 1930's, see David Macey, _Lacan in Contexts_ (London, 1988).

reminded us,[45] that he was deeply aware of the challenge to pure optically raised by the recovery of anamorphosis by critics like Jurgis Baltrušaitis,[46] means that his ideas were themselves indebted to the revaluation of formlessness that we are now trying to explain. One comentator, Joan Copjec, has in fact gone so far as to claim that »contrary to the idealist position that makes *form* the cause of being, Lacan locates the cause of being in the *informe;* the unformed (that which has no signified, no significant shape in the visual field); the inquiry (the question posed to representation's presumed reticence).«[47] It may, therefore, be problematic to rely on him entirely for an explanation of the specific dialectic of form and formlessness in modernism. For his analysis of the eye and the gaze was aimed at uncovering the workings of vision in all contexts and for all time.

A more historically specific approach might usefully draw on Peter Bürger's well-known distinction between modernism and the avant-garde.[48] Whereas modernism remained within the institution of art, seeking to explore the limits of aesthetic self-referentiality, the avant-garde sought to reunite art with life, thus allowing the emancipatory energies of the former to revitalize the latter. The high modernist apotheosis of pure form, it might be argued, fits well into the first of these categories; the differentiation of the visible from the other senses, which we have noted as one of the central impulses behind formalism, corresponds to the differentiation of the institution of art from the lifeworld. The counter-impulse we have identified with the *informe,* on the other hand, is perhaps better understood as part of the avant-garde's project, in Bürger's sense of the term. That is, it calls into question the purity of the aesthetic realm, undermines the distinction between high art and base existence, and reunites vision with the other senses. Not surprisingly, Bataille and other defenders of *informe* would often argue for its political value as a way to realize the revolutionary potential of the unformed masses. Kristin Ross's celebration of Rimbaud's notion of class as a swarm is an instance of this impulse, which seeks to protect the proletariat from its form-giving representatives in the vanguard party.

All of these explanations help us make sense of the struggle between form and formlessness in aesthetic modernism, but the context in which I think it might most suggestively be placed is, as I have argued above, the crisis of ocularcentrism in Western culture. That is, with the dethroning of the eye as the noblest of the senses, with the revalorization of the »acephalic« body whose boundaries are permeable to the world, with the celebration of noise

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45. Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London, 1989).
46. Jurgis Baltrušaitis, *Anamorphoses ou magie artificielle des effects merveilleux* (Paris, 1969), on which Lacan draws in *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-analysis*, p. 79f.
47. Joan Copjec, »The Orthopsychic Subject: Film Theory and the Reception of Lacan,« *October,* 49 (Summer, 1989), p. 69.
48. Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde.*

and force over clarity and contour, the »will-to-form« that critics like Riegl saw as the ground of aesthetics has been supplanted or at least powerfully supplemented by a contrary »will-to-formlessness.«

From one perspective, all of these changes might be damned as complicitous with a dangerous counter-enlightenment irrationalism and libidinal politics. And in certain respects the charge may be valid, at least if the complicated dialectic of form and formlessness is forgotten and a simple-minded anti-formalism is put in its place. But from another point of view, there may be less cause for alarm. For may it perhaps be a mark of a kind of cultural maturity that we no longer tremble, tremble, as did Simmel or Lukács, at the »tragic« possibility that life and form cannot be harmoniously united? May we, in fact, conclude that the modernist stand-off between form and *informe* has left us with a willingness to tolerate a mixture of intelligibility and unintelligibility, boundaried integrity and transgressive force, spiritualized ocularity and the messiness of the rest of our bodies, that betokens a less anxious age? Have we learned to accept limits on the form-giving constitutive subject, abandoned the search for timeless essence amidst the plethora of ephemeral appearances, and realized that the distinction between ergon and parergon, text and context, is not as fixed as it appeared? If so, the performative power of saying the »universe is something like a spider or spit« may have actually done some of its work, and the hope of harnessing the emancipatory (but not redemptive) energies of modernist – or in Bürger's terms, avant-garde – art for life may not be so vain after all.

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Form as an art form
Peter Krečič

The title of my paper may seem pleonastic at first glance. Indeed, when form is discussed in artistic circles it is taken for granted that art form is meant. What is more, artists, which includes architects and designers, art historians and critics comprehend the word form as an art form in the fine arts and, in more general terms, as any explicitly, artistically structured information. To be even more explicit, the printed word as well is visual information, yet it appears in the artistically structured information as a surface structured in a particular way and not as a form accessible to reading. Thus, I believe I have at least pointed in the direction of my argumentation by trying, in the most general terms, to discuss the question of art form in the visual arts: the world of visual information constituted by a specific artificial realm of forms which we experience, read, arrange and proclaim as works of art. Here the term form denotes a visual event taking place beyond a clearly defined line dividing the natural universe of forms and the domain of man-made forms, i.e., the defined and selected realm of artistic forms. The shaping process is therefore a conscious, deliberate process of transcending that dividing line. The motives for this act may be very different, ranging from the supernatural to the religions and to the purely artistic. The goal of pure design is the execution of a specific (artistic) vision. I placed artistic in parentheses because design as well can serve quite a practical purpose (industrial design) following its vision, and is ultimately not only artistic. The consequence of giving substance to a specific vision, be it ever so incomplete, is usually the artistic expression producing great creative satisfaction in the artist. For our purposes, artistic expression is the most interesting. It is usually always accessible and therefore the object of many different investigative approaches. On the other hand, creative pleasure, creative satisfaction, creative compulsion or whatever we might call this motivating, compelling, creative drive, does not lend itself to scientific scrutiny and is therefore not important from the expressive viewpoint of artistic achievement.

At this point we have arrived at the work of art proper, i.e., its expression which in nothing but its form. In its form lies a specific message: But what is, in fact, the message. When in a work of art we recognize the performers, establish their interrelations – here I have in mind primarily painting and sculpture – we have succeeded in understanding the depicted theme, but have

in no way grasped its content. The content lies much deeper having to do with the essential characteristic of the work of art – its expression. I would like to introduce at this point another term which may shed more light on the issues at hand – experience. Expression and experience are words currently used as more general terms also in architecture, landscaping and design. Experience is a hierarchically higher notion embracing a work of art in its totality, while the »reading«,the interpretation of the theme, the story line do not come close to the substantive core of the work of art. These may be of some help to the content, but they can not, as a rule, comprehend an artwork in its global dimension.

Content can not be simply equated with beauty. It is true that beauty used to be the chief motivation for artistic creation. More recent times however have ushered in the images and manners which would be considered erroneous by every aesthetic rule of the past. The attained objective would for this reason be exactly the opposite of the goals of artistic creativity of the past: the result of such artistic endeavour would be ugliness, unattractiveness. It was this necessary to introduce, at this point, the notion of experience which is, in terms of content denotation and in terms of beauty/ugliness, more neutral. It allows us to experience everything that is ugly, disharmonious, incomplete, fragmentary, in short everything we were taught by the contemporary fine arts, as an aesthetically fully valid event.

At this point we must ask ourselves how do we approach content? How do we fathom expression? How do we clarify experience? In Antiquity and even in the late Middle Ages people were prepared to believe that beauty laid in the regularity of features in the measure.[1] This meant nothing more than the observance of rules *detérmining* relations and proportions. Artistic inconsistencies which occured due to the passage of time and change in taste – let us simply call them styles – were not understood as the law of evolution. The notion of progress, in our acceptation of the term, simply was not possible because of the very slow evolutionary process, which further buttressed the impression of immutability of social attributes. These discrepancies were understood as the consequence of unskilfulness, primitivism, barbarianism, etc. Consequently such artistic *idiosyncrasies* of the past which conflicted the contemporary aesthetic postulates were rejected, opposed and often scorned. The same aesthetic principle regarding form as a true harmonious arrangement of elements in a work of art was universal and was applied to the classical art of Greece and Rome as well as to Romanesque and Gothic art. The essential changes in terms of form could take place much later, as late as the dawn of the modern age which I place at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century. Hegel's proclamation of the end of art (He of course meant the

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1. Władysław Tatarkiewicz, »Dzieje szesciu pojeć« (1975) and »O doskonalosci« (1976), *Istorija šest pojmova* (History of Six Concepts), Nolit Beograd, 1981, p. 212, 214 sq.

eclipse of traditional, stylistically comprehensive concept of *Gesamtkunst-werk*.) in fact marks the very first application of scientific methods to the humanities and the arts. If historians – Les Bolandies already in the 17th century wanted – without impediments we can here use the term scientifically – to verify the historical sources which were to attest to the sanctity of saints, we may also trace the notion of a scientific approach to art back to the close of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century. Initially it was a matter of investigating the historical patterns for the needs of ever more exact replicas of Antique art and later of the various historical styles. Still later, scientific methods, namely the observation of the formal characteristics of artwork, were used to establish authorship and date of production. Form thus became the object of scientific scrutiny. At this point we must note that it was precisely the Vienna school of art history in the tradition of Wickhoff, Riegl and Dvořák[2] which excelled in the detailed observation of formal changes in the work of art itself, as well as in the broader, comprehensive formal clusters. The Slovene scientific investigation of art also belongs to this school.[3] Form therefore abandoned its traditional area of generally valid, more philosophically than rigidly formally defined framework and became a sensitive gauging apparatus for all kinds of categorizations. Time had come when form in its new role had to shift over to an area of a new system of categories, in other words, to develop a conceptual device for lower and higher levels of classification. The word form now became the decisive element in the definition of style. In other words, only through meticulous observation of artistic form and with the new historical and curatorial orientations was it possible to discern the differences which were not based on the random differences of the artists' hands in the various periods, but could be placed on a common denominator, a joint, formal kinship which the science of art named style. In general terms, the historical styles, as the key determinants of the major artistic shifts, took shape. Let us leave aside the fact that already by the and of the 19th century there was no clear-cut term for Romanesque, or that authors can not agree on the exact boarder between Renaissance and Baroque. What is essential is that we do distinguish between styles as the most general formal category of a given age; that we distinguish between the different regional styles (Italian Renaissance/Nordic Renaissance, and even narrower styles); and that we discern details of a personal style which permits us to establish the author of a work of art and consequently its significance in the advancement of artistic individualism.[4] However, this procedure was not

2. Julius Schlosser, »Die Wienner Schule der Kunstgeschichte: Rückblick auf ein Säkulum deutscher Gelehrtenarbeit in Österreich,« *Mitteilungen des Österreischischen Instituts für Geschichtforschung,* Wien, 1934, Erg.-Bd. 13, Heft 2.

3. Nace Šumi, »Pot in aktualne naloge slovenske umetnostne zgodovine«, *Pogledi na slovensko umetnost,* Ljubljana 1975, p. 13-27.

4. On the contribution of the Vienna School of art history, *cf.* Schlosser, *op. cit.* We should

purely mechanical. It is precisely the evolution of ideas on style, in the spirit of the Vienna school of art history, which shows that its prominent representatives always kept in mind the necessary spiritual background which led Max Dvořák, the last eminent representative of this school, to proclaim the art history on styles as the history of the spirit.[5] It is rather paradoxical that at a time when the word style cries out to be written with a capital letter, when it exalts in a very romantic way the spiritual unity of the period, which could alone give rise to a common, unified style,[6] there was no chance whatsoever of the emergence of a single, comprehensive style. Excessive individualism and the emerging materialism of modern times was blamed for this failure. Can one therefore speak of a paradox, namely that the period which discovered style, stylistic changes, the so-called stylistic advancement, – which the well justified methodological path drew into the dangerous waters of Darwinism – could only give rise to styles, but not to a Style? The answer is no. It is simply a matter of a »natural« phenomenon: The same spiritual process which made 19th-century art dependent on the past and committed to Style, could not, according to its inner logic, produce Style on its own. The explicitly rational character of thinking at the turn of the century, in conformity with its logic, produced two orientations: the formulation of a Utopia, in our case a visionary prediction of a new, all-encompassing Style which of course presupposes a new spiritual unity in one of the ages of the future and the belief in a new omnipotent style which would be simply designated and implemented by order. We know all too well where such attempts occurred in the present century. But reality is different. Already at the beginning of the century the apparatus of classification, which was elaborated by art experts and applied to the different and concurrent historical styles, failed; the path from here to the personal style and back, by way of artistic trends, currents, etc., was simply lost. Form as a significant point of departure for the vast expanses of style has become significant only for brief excursions into its immediate vicinity. It remained essential for the evaluation of a work of art as the vehicle of message, but in now way suitable for exclusively formal interpretations. All kinds of iconological methods, psychological investigations, psychoanalytical approaches to the spiritual background of form and many others were necessary. These attest to the inadequacy of a purely formal approach from the viewpoint of the all-encompassing style. Consider a situation where architecture in terms of different styles, was broken down, after several

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mention Heinrich Wölfflin's main work *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriefe; Das problem der Stilentwicklung in der neuern Kunst,* (1915), Basel/Stuttgart 1956.

5. Max Dvořák, *Kunstgeschichte als Geistgeschichte: Studien zur abendländischen Kunstentwicklung.* This is a selection of his important treatises edited by Johannes Wilde and Karl M. Swoboda, München 1924.

6. Izidor Cankar, »Razstava moderne dekorativne umetnosti v Parizu,« *Zbornik za umetnostno zgodovino,* Ljubljana 1925, pp. 104-108.

centuries of evolution, into its fundamental formal elements: surface, cube, sphere, cylinder, opening ... into painting and sculpture which also experienced the disintegration of their mimetic substance into less and less coherent surfaces and volumes; when finally there is no more beauty and ugliness, no more ordered elements, no more unity; it all becomes »mood«, abstraction; no more image or sculpture; no more shapes, only *artfulness,*[7] if it is at all possible to talk about it. Perhaps it is merely a matter of professed selection of artfulness in a specific natural or artistic environment. In short, modernism confronts us with a host of different artistic events which are ever so slightly linked to the traditional definitions of form as bequeathed to us by history. For the needs of the criticism of modernist and avant-garde trends, several new forms of critical evaluation had to be devised along with the formal categorical apparatus. A major obstacle emerged with the shift of the artistic focus away from the object of art i.e., the work of art and towards the artist himself. The basis of evaluation is this no longer, or at least no longer exclusively, the artwork itself with all its formal ingredients, but the artist and his actions.[8] The yardstick is no longer the artistic or the aesthetic, but the ethical; it deals with the artist's personality as a whole, his life, or as we have already stated several times, his existence in the manner of art. It is true that the work of art is still revealed to us in terms of its formal attributes, these however becomes incomprehensible outside the context of the artist's decisions, mentality, education, in other words, outside his personal mythology. Today these questions can be answered satisfactorily only by trend-setting art criticism. All others remain for the time being inadequate. Nevertheless form still seems, in connection with style, such a crucial scientific tool that the profession of which I am a part, finds it hard to neglect. In the interwar period and in our country during the post-war period the formal view, the observation of formal changes acquired a significant new and essential dimension. Strict observation of formal properties of works of art and their stylistic arrangement on this basis was coupled by the structural approach. This is the view of the »cross section«: the traditional definition of the stylistic attributes is enlightened for the side. The specific formal composition is contemplated also from the general ventage point, and we introduce into our judgement the impression of the whole, the atmosphere, the context or the ambience, revealing a deeply rooted and crucial *inner stylistic principle*[9] beneath the surface of the stylistic language or stylistic labelling. In marginal areas, outside the artistic mainstream, an artist can often use more traditional, conservative formal tools and still manage to express himself in a contemporary way. This formal and

7. Edvard Zajec, »Orphics: Computer Graphics and the Shaping of Time with Color«, *Leonardo, Electronic Art Supplemental Issue,* 1988, pp. 111-116.

8. Pierre Restany in an interview for the revue *Start* no. 320, Zagreb, 25 April .981, p. 19.

9. Šumi, *op. cit,* p. 19 sq.

structural methods proved successful in the specific historical artistic trends. We try to develop it also in the contemporary art criticism along with trend-setting criticism and have high hopes to succeed because in the opposite case there would be no reason whatsoever to seriously address form as an art form.

Three basic concepts of form
A visual form's analysis after the »postmodern«
Miško Šuvaković

1. *Form and formalisms*

Beyond visual form, there is an implicit or explicit theory of form. The theory of form talks about visual shape, the procedures of shaping the surface, the body and the space, in other words, about perception of visual phenomena ranging from the recognition of shape to the coding/decoding of information, reading and comprehension of shape. Different ideological assumptions, systems or models of setting form into nets of discourse of Criticism, History of Arts, Philosophy, etc., are hidden behind primary levels of theory of form. Theory of form exists to specify, describe and explain various visual art works through concepts, productions and receptions of shapes. Often expected from the theory of form is the theory that produces the contextual frame, meanings, values and convictions for the specified production of art works, for example, theory of form of Bauhaus, Suprematism, De Stijl, New Tendencies, etc.

Reduction, approximation or explanation of visual artworks by concepts, models, schemes and discourses of theory of form will be called »formalism«. Modern 20th century frames of formal discourse on visual art could be differentiated through two traditions: (1) aesthetics formalism, and (2) language formalism, which is linguistical and semiotical formalism.

Aesthetics formalism starts from the integrity and autonomy of the art's subject (thing, situation, event). In other words, the art's subject is defined, and produced, and the specific thing, situation, or event is made or produced in the extraordinary, autonomous, and closed frame of art world. Axiology and semantics are derived by aesthetic formalism from a set of concepts of aesthetic contemplation of object phenomenality, which is direct experience that is not mediated by knowledge, and from »existence« of aesthetic qualities derived from the concepts of visual shape and shaping, that is, form. Aesthetic formalism has a long tradition in the history of modernism and in the theory of art. For example, the concept of autonomy was formulated by Kasimir Malevich (»Die Gegenstandslose Welt«, 1927),showing that art no longer cares to serve the state and religion, it no longer wishes to illustrate cultural history and is not concerned with presenting things. English critic Clive Bell described the principle of form productivity (»Art«, 1914.), claiming that forms arranged and combined after certain unknown and mystical laws have the

power to excite us quite extraordinarily. The dominance of experience over knowledge was worked out in the 50's by American critic Clement Greenberg (»Abstract, Representational and so forth«, 1954.), showing that art is a matter strictly of experience, not of principles.

Language (linguistic and semiotical) formalism in visual art's theories belongs to the big »linguistical turn« (boom) in the 20th century theory of ideas. When we consider the unusual course of language formalism – researching myth, psyche, society or its application to the theory of ideas, – we notice that formalism is one of the leading and, at the same time, one of the most heterogenous movements in the 20th century. Contextually, the concept of language formalism is derived from two essentially different traditions: (a) Slovenian (Russian, Pollish, Czech, etc.) formalism, which was later transposed in the concepts of structuralism and poststructuralism through semiotics and metasemiotics, and (b) linguistic and logical conceptualism of analytical philosophy. Language formalism applied to production, reception, and interpretation of visual art works leads to approximation of complex visual phenomenology (things, situation or events), by sign or textual models. They are constructions of hybrid visual forms based both on visual and linguistic phenomenology (for example, collages with text in Analytical Cubism, or textual environment of Conceptual Art).

We will soon consider the actual situation: the dominance of postmodern production and theory and the »formalistic« counterstrike. Postmodern poststructuralistic theory in original French or Slovenian variants developed as a critic of aesthetic formalism by transforming linguistic (semiotical) formalism in extreme relativism of sign arbitrarity, marking practice and textual models. Simplified, according to postmodern poststructuralistic linguistic formalism there are no new forms and meanings, but only new combinations (collage, montage, simulation, citing) of existing products (forms which are read as signs or texts). Artwork production is dominantly semiotical; it exists in the dominance of the discoursive arrangement of painting surface, installation arrangement, performance narration, etc. Postmodern poststructural production and theory shows that artwork isn't determined by ontological parameters, but by semantical uses of medium. The concept of representation is formulated as deciption of way of representations or as mimesis of existing mimesis produced in arbitrary semiotic practices.

The power of poststructural postmodern relativism in practice and theory of arts was dominant in 80's. The first reaction against postmodern semiotic formalism could be seen in pro-capitalistic design of objects exhibited at »Documenta 8«, in eruption of neo-geo paintings and especially in the triumph of sculpture concepts developed in the tradition of the St. Martin School. The new-new British sculpture become on international style connecting the modernistic sculptor's modus of British sculpture from 60's with emptied

fragments of postmodern signs. Today, it is difficult to differentiate the products of British sculpture from Ljubljana or Belgrade new sculpture.

Within the theory of art, the critique of linguistic formalism is developed. The analytical theory deals with the problems of psychology (for example, intentionality and perception), and with the problems of visual representations, which leads to critique of institutional theory of art, critique of arbitrary semiotic models and critique of quasiontological theoretical explanation. These theoretical positions are realistic: they represent the world existing independently of mind, stability and heterogeneity of cognitive mechanisms, ontological and causal nature of subject and object: art is cognitively and not simply culturally significant.

2. *Three cognitive theories of form*

If we look at any picture, sculpture, environment, film or performance, we could ask ourselves what and how do we see, what and how do we feel, what and how do we read, what and how do we talk, or tell by writing to Others, what and how we produce (write, paint, etc.)??? There is also one of the basic questions whose answer enters distinctions among cultural categories of classicism, romanticism, modernism and postmodernism: What is the relation of that what we see and produce in relation to our previous knowledge, our conceptualism and discourses? For example, classicism and different reactions to modernism start from concern for our productions and perceptions led by existing or previous knowledge – language or concept always precede picture. On the contrary, romantism and modernism (especially modernism in the Anglosaxon frame) start from act and perception before our knowledge – picture always precedes language and knowledge about picture.

If we apply the cognitive theory to art analysis, it necessarily ought to introduce a set of limitations. Art work, whatever and whoever it is, is not a part of natural world continuity. It is made and introduced into the world continuity. Reception of art work is a reception of certain material systems of appearance (thing, situation or event) which, along with complex phenomenology, also have a conceptually-linguistic setting. From the standpoint of cognitive theories, art work is understood through superposition of 2 informal systems: directly perceived information about form, thing, and invariants and information about settings of work in the nets of art discourses. According to different types of information, we can also talk about different cognitive systems of receiving and processing information.

We shall take up three basic approaches to visual form: (1) The system of knowledge that stands behind the production and reception of art works is exclusively a linguistic and semiotical system, that is, work of mind can be literally or metaphorically described by logical or syntactical machine (computer analogy). (2) The system of knowledge that stands behind the

production and reception of art works is internalistic, that is, both the production and reception of art work are defined by cognitive ability of the subject, that is, by his vertical (intuition, beliefs, intentions, emotions, desires) and horizontal (perception, motoric skills, etc.) powers. (3) The system of knowledge which stands behind the production and reception of art works is externalistic, that is, both the production and reception of art works are determined by ontological existence of phenomena outside the subject.

2.1. *Linguistic and semiotic concepts of visual form*

The appearance of a picture is analogous to the appearance of writing or letter or text. Elements and structural relations of elements on the picture's surface are defined by linguistic and semiotic character of each human work, that is, the possible nature of human mind, which is similar to a linguistical-semiotical machine. Linguistic or semiotic structure of picture's surface may be: (1) dominantly syntactic, or (2) syntactic and semantic.

To say that the picture's surface (topology of picture's surface) is dominantly syntactically arranged means to say that the appearance of the surface is not in referent relations with the world outside the picture or representation of the world in other pictures, but that appearance of the topology of surface is determined by the rules of formation and transformation. By the rules of formation and transformation, if we follow the transformation of syntactical theory from Morris' semiotic rules to technical rules for production of drawings from Group 143, we call the rules that show how elements are being connected in the visual structure and how visual structure can be derived from another or other visual structure by formal change of relations between the elements of surface. Within this, visual elements may be: texture, colour, composition, line, spot, different pictures, iconic signs, invariants, letters (signs, letters, words, sintagms, texts), etc. Visual form, that is, topology of the picture's surface, is a visual phenomenon constructed by analogy to linguistic and semiotic rules. Visual elements, the constituents of form, are visual appearances used in a way that »sign vehicles« are used (Morris) or »signifiers« (Saussure, Barthes, Lacan) in linguistic and semiotic processes. If we search for a cognitive ontological base for procedures of producing syntactical pictures (geometric abstraction, neoconstructivism, minimal art, etc.), then we can derive the assumption that syntactic pictures are the result of mental processes of pictures (reflections, mimesis, representation), of mental pictures or states. If visual pictures are the result of reflection of mental processes and structures, then we may suppose that the mind is analogous to a syntactical machine.

Syntactic and semiotic character of topology of the picture's surface is interpreted through two instances: (a) the topology of the picture's surface exists in some referent relations with world outside the picture (things,

situations, events, texts, other pictures, etc.), and (b) the artist's mind, which produces the picture, or that of an observer, which perceives the picture, is not analogous to the syntactic machine, but to the syntactic and semantic machine. Relations of reference made by subject (artist or observer), visual forms and the world outside the picture are realised by: (1) similarity of the surface topology and the world's object; (2) generative relations of production, that is, by the possibility of reconstructing the form's realization on the basis of data that are given by the picture's surface topology; (3) symbolic coding of the surface's topology (cross, spiral); (4) analogies to discursive reference: from the relation of titles and topology of picture's surface to the usage of discursive aspects as form elements. Semantic aspects, that is, referent relations of picture and world outside, are determined by phenomenal aspects of the picture itself and relatively unstable central conditions (point of view, context, history etc.).

2.2 *Internalistic theories of form*

Internatistic theories of form start from the attitude that any picture is a part of continuity that is realised by subject through his intentions, beliefs, knowledge, wishes, perceptive and productive powers. Elements and relations of the picture's surface topology are determined by horizontal and vertical powers of the subject.

Causal internalism tends to describe and explain the appearance of artwork by ontological organization of subject's mental system. Then visual form is: (a) the product of a certain mental organization; or (b) »picture« (representation) of certain mental organization. To say that visual form is the product of a certain mental organization means that the mental state of the subject is a cause of visual form, that is, mental state initiates a given state of the picture's surface topology. For example, one of Expressionism's dogmas is that the painter's state (sorrow, happiness, drunkenness, extasy, fury, etc.) causes a certain picture's surface topology, which reveals to us his mental states. Similarly, in Surrealism, the automatic drawing or text is received and interpretated as a result of unconscious work. Insisting on relations of mental states, processes and picture could be generalized through the concept that each picture (from the landscape or portrait to the gird) is preceded by the constitution of mental representation, which is, therefore, realized through possible technical and stylistic categories. For example, the painter who watched Sainte Victorine mountain had some mental representations of the mountain (which differ phenomenally from the real mountain because they are determined by mind's aspects) and he transformed these in visual representations of the mountain. In other words, internalistic theory of visual form places mental representations between the mountain and the picture of the mountain. Hard realistic internalism tends to show that mental representations of the mountain are dominantly determined by ontological aspects of the mind, and so the visual representations of the mountain are

determined by ontological aspects of the painter's mind. In the case of picture's representation, the observer's system »eye-mind« works with specific mental representations, which it treats and relates to the discoursive knowledge, emotional state, etc. The picture can be defined from the internalistic standpoint as a material representation of mental representation or their syntactic and semantic structures.

2.3. *Externalistic theories of form*

Externalism is the explanation of mental states (predominantly or totally) by the characteristics that function outside the organism. Externalistic definitions of the picture explain knowledge, which stands at the base of picture production or reception showing the importance of relations between artwork and world. In this direction, for example, Gibson makes distinction between two levels of the picture's perception: (a) perception of the picture as picture, that is, specific object and (b) perception of that which the picture shows. Externalistic theory of the visual form imposes a question: »How can we describe mental reference or picture reference in situations that are not mental or are not 'from' painting«?

The externalistic answer to the question »What is in the mind/brain of the painter who paints a picture or an observer who watches it?« is: external information about material aspects of the picture and information about world. For example, Gibson carries out a critique of classical externalism, which shows correspondencies of things in the world, retinal image of the object, mental picture and painting. Gibson's thesis is based on critical approach to theory of form and Gestalt. His intention is to show that the subject doesn't perceive forms and colours, that is, the painter does not represent forms and colours. The painter perceives and represents invariants. Gibson's thesis can be explained by comparative analysis of realistic, expressionistic and cubist portraits. Each portrait can be perceived as the portrait of a certain person. We can start with the theory of form. As fans of Courbet's realistic portrait, we would hardly count Klee's or Braque's portraits as portraits, because their form (Gestalt) does not fit the form concept of Courbet's realism. Nevertheless, because even a naive look is able to recognize the face in the realistic, expressionistic or cubistic picture (even on a caricature level), that means that picture-portrait is determined, predominantly, by invariants of the human face, and then, secondarily, by arrangement of those invariants into a specific or individual form. Then, Gibson points out that there isn't anything like literal representation of existent environmental objects (landscape, and even a human face). The idea of literal representation (similarity) is wrong because a picture showes only some (limited number) of invariants of environmental phenomenons. In the Gibsonian frame, the picture is not a record of the world but is a representation of information about the world attained through perception.

It is possible to talk about different externalistic theories: informational (Gibson, Dretske), and classical (image on the retina, Gestalt), but also about specific externalism developed in theory and practice of non-representational painting: concretism. Concretism postulates that only essential aspects of painting (and art) are those determined by the artwork itself, that is, by its objectivity, materiality, surface, space, colour, etc. Production, and also reception of the picture, are reduced to production (treatment, construction, making) that is direct perceiving and experiencing/trying, of the picture's material aspects. The idea of concretism spanning from avant-garde solutions of Doesburg and Constructivist's ideas of concretism are parts of modernistic ideology and reactions on postmodernism.

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Mythos as mode of the presence
of form in literature

Some considerations on the concept of mythos
in Aristotle's Poetics

Valentin Kalan

sophia de kleptei paragoisa mythois (Pind. N. 7. 22)
»L'art nous trompe en seduisant par des fables«[1]

The discussion on the Aristotelian concept of mimesis should not conceal the fact that, according to Aristotelian theory, the essence of poetry is mythos and not mimesis. We shall try to show how mythos in literature functions as presentation of universal truths, as presentation of form, unity and general patterns« Aristotle's theory of poetry can not be sufficently understood through his concept of mimesis, if this concept is explained in terms of analogy with the art of painting.

Therefore, we shall raise the question of the essence of poetry along with consideration of literary works of art, i.e., epic poetry, tragedy and comedy. In our analysis, we shall leave open the fact that in ancient Greek culture, tragedy, comedy and epics were not only literary works of art, but also musical works. We will likewise put in brackets the fact that classical Greek has no exact expression for language although it has a whole series of expressions for linguistic phenomena: glotta, phone, logos, dialektos, hermeneia, pheme, mythos, phasis, phatis, leksis, epos, rhema, rhesis, idioma, onoma, gramma, ainos, ainigma, phrasis; and still more: aude, akoe, boe, prosegoria, kategoria, euangelia, kerygma, tonos, gerys, phthongos, psophos.[2]

Let us start from the chapter 4 of Poetics, where the human being is determined as »the most imitative of living creatures« (transl. Butcher), *mimetikotaton* (Po. 4, 1448b 7)[3]. Perhaps we should say that the human being is the most able to express himself and to represent his feelings and emotions. The human expressive and representational faculty manifests itself not only in movement and gesture (dance) and song, but also and foremost in speech. This surprising statement is found in Aristotle's »Rhetorics«: *he phone panton mimetikotaton ton morion hemin* ... »voice ... which of all our organs can best represent other things« (W. Rhys-Roberts) (Rh. III 1, 1404a 21- 22).

1. Cit. after H. Fournier, Les verbes »dire« en grec ancien (Paris 1946), p. 216.
2. *Cf.* also H. Fournier (1946), 4ᵉᵐᵉ partie: »Noms de la parole«, pp. 211-227.
3. This characterization of human being belongs to the idiographic ones, such as the qualification that man is a »living being that laughs«, etc., whereas the accurate ontological definition of man is, that human being is zoion logon echon (animal rationale) or zoion politikon (animal sociale).

In order to see the role of language in Aristotle's theory of poetry, we must expose some aspects of his theory of tragedy, especially those that will enable us to notice the formal components of literary works of art. In Aristotelian view, the form, which is present in the work of art, is not the dialectically established transcendent form, because artistic activity and arts are considered and examined according to their autonomous process of the production of a form. Instead of a theory of ideas (Plato), we get a theory of literary genres or kinds. Aristotle's definition of tragedy is generally known and has remained a basic concept of literary theory: »Tragedy, then, is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude;...« »*Estin oun tragoidia mimesis praxeos spoudaias kai teleias megethos echouses...*« (c. 6, 1449b 24-5). In this definition of tragedy, which is not cited in whole, mythus is not mentioned, because it is presupposed and implicitly defined. Enumerating the six parts or elements of tragedy, Aristotle once again says that tragedy is »praxeos mimesis«, »an imitation of an action«, representation of certain activity (c. 6. 1449b 36).[4] When he then explains the notorious six individual »parts« or components of tragedy, he defines mythus as »the representation of the action«, *estin de men praxeos ho mythos he mimesis* (ib. 11450a 3-4). The only difference between the definition of tragedy and the definition of mythos is in the fact that the words mythos and mimesis are used with an article, which means that mythos is always a story about a concrete and determined action, a presentation of a determined course of events – mythos is an example of a concrete path through life. From the aspect of mythos, the definition of tragedy could be read in such a manner: tragedy is a mythos, which is serious and complete and which has a certain magnitude ... From this fundamental definition are then deduced the basic, »necessary,« parts of tragedy: mythos or plot, character, diction or speech or »libretto«[5], thought, music or musical composition or melody[6] and scenic presentment or mise en scene *(ho tes opseos kosmos oz. opsis, 49b 32-33)*[7] (c. 6, 1450a 8-10). These elements of tragedy are from one side established according to the criterium that is required by the concept of mimesis, from another side according to the essence of poetry. Following the classification of mimetic products in chapter 1 to 3 of Poetics, Aristotle makes the following distribution of this elements:

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4. In this translation we follow the interpretation of A. Neschke-Hentschke (1979), p. 86f., which speaks about »Aufführung einer Handlung«, »Darstellung einer Handlung«.

5. H. Fournier (1946), p. 227.

6. Aristotle uses three expressions for music in the art of poetry: *harmonia* (stringing, scale, intonation, harmony, concord), *melos* (song, tune, tone, lyric song, melody) and *melopoiia* (making of lyric poems or music for them). In Poetics, the word *melo(i)dia* (singing, chanting, lullaby) is not used, so that it is interesting that in all modern languages the Aristotelian words for music are translated as »melody«; *cf.* Lucas (1990), pp. 57-58.

7. R. Dupont-Roc and R. Lallotu (1980) translate as »l'organisation du spectacle«; the translation »spectacle« I would consider inappropriate, because spectacle is a peculiarity of the Roman valuation of theatre. For Aristotle, the opsis aims at the mise en scene as a component of the tragic representation.

a) two parts, which are »means« or better media of representation (*hois* oz. *en hois,* 50a 18-20); diction and composition of music;

b) one element, which means the manner (*hos*) of representation: theatrical performance;

c) three parts concerning the object or the »objects« of representation (*ha*): plot, characters and thought.[8] This reiteration of the well-known classification of the parts of tragedy can be of good use as evidence, that in these determinations we cannot use the term »imitation« if we are not ready to »gulp down« (Aristotle's word) the following absurdity: tragedy imitates an action (1), the object, which is imitated in tragedy, is plot (2), plot is the imitation of action (3). If we do not accept the statement that tragedy is a plot as word expression of action, we come to the thesis that tragedy is an imitation of an object, which is again an imitation of another object. In other words, this nonsense is resolved as soon as we assume the interpretation of mimesis as representation.

We have stated that mythos is defined with the same characteristics as tragedy. But this is not the only equivocality in the definition of tragedy. Mythos is determined also as »synthesis ton pragmaton«, »the combination of the incidents» (c. 6, 50a 4-5) or as systasis ton pragmaton, »the structure of the incidents« (c. 7, 50b 24 in 1450a 32).[9] Aristotle speaks also of systasis tou mythou, »structure of the plot« (c. 10, 1452a 19).[10] There occurs a peculiar parallelism between story or plot and incidents or action, a parallelism where interpretation must avoid the interference of levels. In the sight of the art of poetry, the tragic representation of a complete practice appears as the capacity of composing stories, which will be convincing, etc. Mythos is a narrative about action[11] and a systematic arrangement of facts. This homology between the terms of mythos and the terms of praxis has an ethical dimension.

Because the tragic mythos represents the human praxis, tragedy seizes the very focus of human ethical problematics, so that theatre is not accidentally in the foreground of discourse on »moral« and ethical problems of the belles-lettres.

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8. On these parts *cf.* also R. Ingarden (1978), p. 36 and B. Kante (1980), p. 44. The structure of tragedy is very well summarized in R. Dupont-Roc and R. Lallot (1980), p. 200:

Critères	OBJETS (*ha*)	MOYENS (*en hois*)	MODE (*hôs*)
Parties	histoire caractères pensée	expression composition du chant	spectacle

9. Bywater: »combination of incidents«; »le systeme des faits« (Dupont-Roc – Lallot).
10. For these cases *cf.* H. Bonitz, Index Aristotelicus, s. v. mythos, col. 475b 47 do 476a 28;
11. Dupont-Roc – Lallot (1980), p. 219: mythos is »la mise en texte de l'action«.

Human praxis should be accepted in a strict anthropological sense: praxis is a human specificity, because a human being is the only living creature that can be a principle or a source of certain actions (arche praxeon tinon) (Ethica Eudemia B 6, 1222b 18-22)[12], whereas for children and animals we cannot say, according to Aristotle, that they act (prattein) (Ibid., B(II) 7, 1224a 28-9). Without engaging in an extraordinary decisive discussion on human action and practice, let us take brief notice of the difference in the optics of ethics and poetics, when human action is at stake. The difference between the theoretical, »realistic« and aesthetical or »artistic« approach to the question of practice is created by the the intervention of the medium of mimesis. Ethics invests human beings with certain characters and virtues, which perform actions of one kind or another. Poetic mimesis is primarily concerned with representation of events and actions, whereas characters, virtues and thoughts appear, so to speak, secondarily. Ethical theory is by its nature »moralising«, whereas poetics must precisely not be »moralising«. The parallelism between ethics and poetics is inverse: the proportion between ethic and poetics concerning human practice is such as the relation between analysis and synthesis, where ethics is not necesssarily representing analysis and poetics synthesis. Without trying to display all the consequences of this matter at issue, let us merely mention that in the Aristotelian view, poetics receives the status of a kind of anthropology or at least the status of humanism.[13] Therefore, it is understandable why the primary concern of Aristotle's poetics is in the theory of plot, which is in the theory of poetic narration. Mythos is the essence of

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12. Eudemian Ethics, transl. J. Solomon: »But in addition to this, man alone of animals is also the source of certain actions; for no other animal would be said to act.«

13. In contemporary thought the question of human being is raised in biology as well as in belletristics. About this compare the discussion of O. Marquard, Apologie des Zufaelligen (Stuttgart: Reclam 1986), p. 66. The parallelism between ethics and poetics is shown by following diagram in Dupont-Roc and Lallot' s discussion (1980) o. c. p. 199:

ordre de la »realite«	M	*ordre poétique*	
étudiée par l'éthique	I		
(1) des GENS doués de CARACTÈRE et PENSÉE	M	manifestant necessairement CARACTÈRE et PENSÉE	(3)
	È	par des PERSONAGES AGISSANTS	(2)
	S		
(2) accomplissent une ACTION	I	une HISTOIRE est mise en oeuvre	(1)
	S		

tragedy, because tragedy is representation »not of persons, but of an action and of life« (ouk anthropon alla praxeos kai biou) (c. 6, 1450a 17-8). However, what is at stake here is not a practice whatsoever, but an action, which succeeds or does not succeed, an activity and action, »passing from bad fortune to good, or from good to bad» (c. 7, 1451a 12-15). Tragic mythos is representation of human peripeties, more exactly, mythos is representation of traversing, passing through (metabasis, metabole) such a turn of events. As activity, an action is the end, telos, of human existence (ib. 50a 18), so tragic story or mythos is the end and purpose (telos) of tragedy (ib. 50a 22). According to the famous Aristotelian words, mythos is the first and the most important element of tragedy (c. 7, 1450b 23), it is »the first principle and, so to speak, the life and soul of a tragedy (c. 6, 1450a 38). The characters (ethe), which are the primary concern of ethics, come in second place: ethos has a secondary meaning in poetics. The relationship between mythos and character is illustrated with an example from painting: »The most beautiful colours (pharmakoi), laid on [a picture] confusedly (chyden), will not give as much pleasure as the chalk outline of a portrait« (leukographesas eikona) (c. 6, 1450b 1-2) (Butcher's transl.).

Without raising the very interesting question of Aristotle's valuation of Polygnotus' and Zeuxis' painting[14], let us mention only the accurate homology between the artistic elements of pictorial image and the parts of a tragedy – ut pictura poesis. Human characters are as colours and the characters are in such relationship to the mythos as are colours to image. The image and mythos are the result of a »synthesis«, which surmounts dispersion and disorder.[15] The parallelism between mythos and soul, between mythos and painting, can elucidate some other problems. In Aristotle's theory of substance, the soul has the status of form; soul is the form of a living being. Therefore the mythos signifies the form of a poetic work of art, called tragedy, and the tragic mimesis is a representation of form in a mythos. The soul represents an animating principle for a living being, so that without the soul an animal is »only homonymously« a living being (De Partibus Animalium, A 1, 640b 22 to 641a 21). The soul is a regulating principle of a living organism: The mythos as the »soul« of the work of art is in an analogous way an organic, formal principle, which organizes the other five parts of tragedy – not only characters – in a unity and a totality. The metaphorical expression about mythos as the soul of tragedy also has a specific ethical dimension. As the essence of tragedy consists of human actions, so through the tragic mythos become manifest the decisive and essential possibilities of human existence. And what is the essence of the human being in Aristotelian optics? His soul. And what is the soul? Nothing but the series of vital functions. The human nature and essence as

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14. *Cf.* a very exhaustive and documented discussion in M. Kuzmić (1912), pp. 106-9 and 141-3.
15. *Cf.* on this matter E. Martineau (1976), p. 446.

form (morphe) cannot be judged from the external shape and colour, since in respect to external form the dead do not differ from a living human beings. Therefore, Aristotle contradicts Democritus' thesis that human being is that which we all know (anthropos estin ho pantes idmen) (fr. 165), for a human being without soul is so called only equivocally[16]: a living being without soul is like the petrified Niobe.

We will return later to the analogy beteween the work of art and the living creature. But we can now say that the work of art is not a concrete whole, a *synolon* like living being, although it is a kind of whole, *holon* .

Before further examination of the Aristotelian theory of mythos through optics of the nature of poetry, we would like to add a short terminological notice on the word *mythos*. According to Chantraine, this word has no etymology. Chantraine explains: »Apres Fick, Curtius, Walde-Pokorny ... Frisk pense que mythos est un terme populaire et expressif tire de l'onomatopee *mû* avec un suffixe -*thos* qui ne surprendrait pas ... Mais le sens du mot, des les plus anciens textes, n'est pa en faveur de cette hypothese«.[17] F. Bezlaj mentions the word mythos in his explanation of the etymology of the Slovene word »*misel*« (thought), which is cognate with the Lithuanian verb mausti »želeti« (wish), gothic *maudjan* (remember) etc.).[18] The Liddell-Scott-Jones, Greek-English Lexicon, includes the following significations: »I.1. word,

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16. In the above considerations we were paraphrasing some Aristotle's ideas from the Book One of his work »On the Parts of Animals«: »Does, then, configuration and colour constitute the essence of various animals and of their several parts? For if so, what Democritus says will be correct. For such appears to have been his notion. At any rate he says that it is evident to every one what form it is that makes the man (hoion ti ten morphen estin anthropos), seeing that he is recognizable by his shape and colour. And yet a dead body has exactly the same configuration as a living one; but for all that is not a man. So also no hand of bronze or wood or constituted in any but the appropriate way can possibly be a hand in more than name...

If now the form of the living being is the soul, or part of the soul, or something that without which the soul cannot exist; as would seem to be the case, seeing that when the soul departs what is left is no longer an animal, and that none of the parts remain what they were before, excepting in mere configuration, like the animals that in the fable turn into stone *(ta mytheuomena lithousthai)* ... then it will come within the province of the natural scientist to inform himself concerning the soul..« (PA, A 1, 640a 3O do 41a2 in 641a 18-21) (transl. W. Ogle).

17. P. Chantraine, Dictionnaire etymol. ... (1968), str. 719a.

18. Fr. Bezlaj, Etimološki slovar slovenskega jezika II (Ljubljana 1982), s. v. misel. Also according to the M. Vasmer's Etimologičeskij slovar russkogo jazyka (1971), III, p. 25, are the Slavonic word *misliti* and *misel* cognate with the Greek *mythos* and *mytheomai*. When we accept the etymological hypothesis of onomatopoeia »to say my (mu)«, »to make mm (my)«, then the word mythos would have an expressive power in the meaning of Koller's mimesis as Ausdruck. Therefore, the etymology, discussed in Hj. Frisk, Griechisches etymologisches Woerterbuch (Heidelberg 1973), s. v. mythos, s. v. myzo, can be maintained on the level of meaning, although such explanations concern also the question of glottogenesis.

speech; 2. public speech, plea; 3. conversation, 4. thing said, fact, matter, threat, command, counsel, advice, 5. thing thought, unspoken word, purpose, design; 6. saying, 7. talk, ru-mour, report, message, II. 1. tale, story, narrative (without distinction of true or false), 2. fiction, 3. legend, myth, 4. professed work of fiction, chidrens's story, fable, 5. plot.«

In difference from *epos,* which signifies a word in its abstract and material aspect, *mythos* signifies speech in its indefinite aspect as a thought, which must be expressed, as an »internal speech«).[19] In Aristotle's Poetics, mythos has the following four main meanings: *story, plot, intrigue, narrative.*

If we have stated in our analysis of mimesis that artistic representation means an illustration of form, a presentation of a pattern, paradigma, which is something uniform and universal, then this aspect of art is still more manifest and noticeable in literary works of art.

Because tragedy, respectively mythos, is a representation of human activity, the subject of poetics partly coincides with the subject matter of ethics, politics and rhetoric. But human actions, acts and deeds are also objects of historiography. So Aristotle in two chapters of »Poetics« raises the question of the relation between literature or poetry (poiesis) and history (historia) (c. 9 init. in c. 23. init.). We cannot here display the rather complex question of the Aristotelian theory of history.[20] However, we must mention that Aristotle's thematisation of history in »Poetics« is not something secondary, since it is motivated with the fact that *praxis* is the common object of both discourses. The thesis of Aristotle's discussion is that poetry describes and represents universal »human« values (*ta katholou*),[21] whereas historiography, e.g., »chronicle«, represents the incidents and events that affect the human being as an individuum (*ta kath'hekaston*),[22] e.g. what Alcibiades did or suffered (c. 9, 1451b 7-11). Therefore, in comparison with history, poetry is not only something more philosophic or theoretically more important (*philosophoteron*), but also something ethically more serious (*spoudaioteron*) (ib. 51b 5-6). The authentic value of poetry is its universality. So in his treatise on mythos, Aristotle develops his far-reaching thesis about universality in art. Poetry approaches the philosophic discourse because it puts out, exposes, presents artistic universals or »poetic universals«.[23]

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19. *Cf.* H. Fournier, Les verbes »dire«... (1946), pp. 211-5.

20. Compare the articles K. v. Fritz (1962) and R. Weil (1965); *cf.* also V. Kalan (1974) Tukididovo zgodovinsko mišljenje (1974), str. 182-189 (diss., typescript).

21. Liddell-Scott-Jones, s. v.: »universal truths«.

22. It would be possible to discuss the difference between *ta kath'hekaston* and *ta kath'hekasta* – the latter expression is tranlated by E. de Strycker as »les choses prises une a une«, in: Aristotle on Dialectics, The Topics, ed. G. E. L. Owen, (Oxford 1968) p. 150f.

23. I take over this expression from N. Gulley (1979), p. 171: »literary universals»: *cf.* also Beardsley, History of Aesthetics (1969), p. 21.

In what way is Aristotle defining poetic universals? A universal or general truth in poetry is the circumstance, that to a human being of such and such a kind (poios) happens that he is speaking or doing things of such and such a kind (*poia atta*) in accordance with probability or necessity (*estin de katholou men toi poioi ta poia atta symbainei legein e prattein kata to eikos e to anankaion*) (c. 9. 1451b 8-9).[24] For poetry, therefore, is decisive, a qualitative and an essential characterization of events, since the category of quality (to poion) belongs to the level of substance and form. This aspect of poetry accounts for a new dimension of Aristotle's apology of artistic activity: the arts are concerned with the essential questions of human being and human existence, the arts make visible the »formal« determinateness of human life. The categories of necessity or probability confer to the poetic products a status, which otherwise appertains to scientific statements: eikos, the probable, is what happens for the most part (hos pei to poly) (APo. B 27, 70a 5sl.), whereas the necessary, anankaion, is what cannot happen otherwise, what always happens in the same way (GC B 11, 337a 35) and what is explained in accordance with necessity, which is characteristic for scientific demonstration (Metaph. Delta (V) 5).[25] But distinct from scientific or »philosophic« universality, the literary universals do not presuppose the status of real existence, since the »real« range of the universals is somehow neutralized or suspended in poetry through the fact that in poetry the »interpellational« function of the work of art, its persuasiveness for the recipient – reader, listener, spectator is decisive, or, as Aristotle says: »That is not the function of the poet to relate what has happened, but what may happen, – what is possible according to the law of probability or necessity« (c.9, 1450a 36-38) (transl. Butcher). Therefore, a poet is an artist as »creator« of his myths (*poietes ton mython,* c. 9, 1451b 27). Such understanding of artistic activity paves the way for the theory of literature as »fiction«.[26] Even when a poet is working on (poiein) past events, his representation will reach the level of art only on the condition that the artist will describe these events in accordance to the »law« of probability (c. 9, 11451b 30-32).[27]

Aristotle's concept of mythos is the quintessence of his theory of literature. The translation of Aristotle's mythos with »fabula« is detractive, since mythos must be understood above all as a significational unity of human action and of the course of the presented events.[28] If the essence of poetry consists of its

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24. Butcher's translation: »By the universal I mean how a person of given character will on occasion speak or act, according to the law of probability or necessity...«, cit. after C. Nahm (1975), str. 153.

25. *Cf.* H. Bonitz, Index Aristotelicus, s. v. anankaion, on the passages about necessity as concludendi necessitas.

26. On this aspect of poetry *cf.* expecially R. Ingarden (1978), pp. 41f. and N. Gulley (1979), p. 169.

27. *ta genomena poiein* is a kind of oxymoron: *cf.* also R. Ingarden, (1978), *ibid.,* p. 41 and 46.

28. *Cf.* E. Grassi (1962), p. 135f.

universals, what, then, are the literary universals in the highest poetic genre, i.e., in tragedy; what, then, is the universality of a tragic mythos? As the general or the universal is always a unity (hen), so the universality of mythos will manifest itself through the unity of mythos: as every unity is a whole, so the universality of mythos will appear through the qualification of mythos as a complete whole and an organic unity, »wholeness being in fact a sort of oneness (*henotes = holotes*) (Metaph. Delta (V) 26, 1023b 36).

Poetry reaches the level of literary universals with the composition of such a sort of mythos, which represents necessary or probable relations between events and between characters. Human action represented in tragedy is not »a shadow of a shadow«, but on the contrary is a pattern, a form or a style of human activity. At first sight, it is surprising that this dimension of universality is attained sooner in comedy than in tragedy: the comic poet Crates was to »frame stories and plots of a general nature« (transl. Bywater) (*katholou poiein ... mythous*) (c. 5, 1449b 7-8). What is usually denoted with the commonplace of the »universal and human« character of comedy is an effect, produced by such a representation of human actions and doings, in which the comic poet does not give names to his »personages« and so he does not individualize or identify them. Nevertheless, the poet prevents the dispersion of an identificational mechanism, although the comic characters have no personal names. In a word, for Aristotle the comedy is a more distinguished example for the literary universal than tragedy. (Po. c. 9, 51b 12sl.).[29]

The second moment of the universal in poetry is thought (*dianoia*), which comprises proving of a point and enunciating of moral sentences or gnomes (Po., c. 6, 1450a 6-7). According to the analysis in »Rhetorics«, a gnome is a general maxim on human action and conduct. It is a statement, which occupies in moral theory or practical thinking a place comparable to the status that is reserved for a conclusion in syllogistics or for first principles in axiomatical theory. In other words, a gnome or maxim is »a statement ... of a general kind ... about questions of practical conduct« (transl. W. Rhys Roberts« (*apophansis ... katholou ...peri hoson hai praxeis ...*) (Rh. B (II) 21, 1394a 21-25).[30]

Poetic thought manifests itself in speech (logos), which in its pragmatic aspect always means a demonstration that something is so or not so. Therefore, poetic speech is expression of a general insight or general knowledge (*katholou ti*) (c. 6, 1450b 12-14). Such literary universals can be separately treated in the arts of politics and rhetorics (ib. 50b 6). Speech as diction (lexis, c. 6. 1450b 13-14) is an expression of meaning in words. As the thought in all these aspects, as maxim, as object of political and rhetorical theory and so as a sort of universal

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29. This is surprisingly well-remarked and described in M. Kuzmič (1912), p. 125f. and 149. D. W. Lucas has noted that, for Aristotle, comedy is also a better illustration for the cathartic effect of literature than tragedy; D. W. Lucas (1990), p.288-9.

30. *Cf.* V. Kalan, Tukididovo zgodovinsko mišljenje (1974), pp. 184-5 (diss., typescript).

appears in speech, so is »the universal« present in the process of speaking, in the activity of speakers. Moreover, the function of speech is to make ideas, universals, clear, noticeable and understandable. So Aristotle says: »For what were the need of a speaker, if the proper impression <form, V. K.> were at once conveyed, quite apart from what he says« (transl. Butcher) (*ei phainoito hei deoi /he idea/kai me dia tou logou*) (c. 19, 56b 7-8).[31] In poetic language, the theoretical element is present in the principle figure of speech, namely metaphor.

Poetry in the whole is an exhibition and establishment of the universals. When composing or constructing his poetic mythos, the poet must first epound or set forth a universal form, a general idea (*ektithesthai katholou,* c. 17, 1455b 1). The poetic creation of myth is in this sense the formation of universal notions. Formalistically considered, universality in poetry is the »general outline« (Butcher) of a story[32], which obtains the developed literary form when it is amplified with episodes, whereas the primary universal form is substantially the idea, by which a concrete work of art is distinguished. Artistic production in such a way becomes a kind of comprehension, knowledge and representation, *theoreisthai to katholou* (c. 17, 1455b 1). Literary universality is, for instance, the subject of the myth on Oedipus, the contents of the myths on Prometheus, on Iphigenia, etc.

So, in Aristotle's view, mythos becomes the primary vehicle, the signifier of a literary universality. We have already seen that mythos is a representation of human activity in its passing, changing, turning (*metaballein*) »from bad fortune to good, or from good fortune to bad« (transl. Butcher) (c. 7, 51a 12-5). Without such passing, the turn between the opposite states of luck and misfortune we cannot speak about a tragic myth or story (cf. also 1450a 2-3). Because happiness luck and disaster misfortune, are utmost limits of human practical or moral existence, so mythos in Aristotle can never be a neutral, unaffected description of events. On the contrary, a poetic mythos is always a life story kat'exochen, which necesssarily comprises the following three well known components: *peripeteia, anagnorisis* are *pathos* (c. 11).

Prior to the consideration of the polymorph structure of the myth and also of human nature, which is represented through the myth, let us take a look at Aristotle's theory of the unity and wholeness of the tragic narrative (Po., c. 7-9), which is also a thesis on the unity of action and the unity of mythos. But already this very designation of the problematics is not without a certain equivocation, since we pass without advertisement from the domain of

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31. *Cf.* especially Dupont-Roc-Lallot (1980), p. 305-11, who have noticed in speech (lexis) and thought (dianoia) two aspects, two modes, a formal and a substantial one, of a single logos. Butcher's translation does not reproduce the conjecture of Maggi (Madius) *he idea* for *hedea,* which is later accepted by Gudeman.

32. »le schéma générale«, Dupont-Roc – Lallot (1980), p. 286.

»reality« (action, events) to the domain of artistic creativity, of fiction, of mythos. Is this not a unique paralogism? We will discuss this in the article on Aristotle's apology of the poetic truth.

We have noted in the terminological remark on mythos that mythos properly means an »indefinite« word. As tragedy is defined as a representation of an action, which is complete (teleias) (c. 6, 49b 25 in c. 7, 50b 24) and of a proper magnitude (megethos), an action, which is whole (1450b 24), is now required, so that mythos is composed according to such standards of the action itself. Poetic mythos must exhibit the following qualifications: completeness, wholeness, proper magnitude, unity (c. 8). What is the principal meaning of these characterizations (ideai, 1450b 33) in the scope of Aristotle's philosophy?[33]

Let us illustrate the concept of unity with the following definition from »Metaphysics«: »In general, those things, the thought of whose essence is indivisible and cannot separate them either in time or in place or in formula, are most of all one, and of these especially those which are substances« (transl. W. D. Ross) (Metaph. Delta (V) 6, 1016b 2--3). A whole (holon) is anything, if it has one form (eidos hen) (ibid., 1016b 13). Unity and wholeness of the literary mythos are compared by Aristotle to the wholeness of a beautiful living creature (kalon zo(i)on, c. 7, 1450b 38). In this comparison, the zoion is taken almost in its equivocal connotation, i.e. »picture«.[34] Such a living being must have a certain magnitude (megethos), must have certain quantitative measures. Magnitude is precisely such »measurable quantity« (Metaph. Delta (V) 13, 1020a 9-10).

The aesthetical question now is, what should be a characterisation of the magnitude of mythos, that could have the status of definition adequate to the actual nature of the thing (kat'auten ten physin tou pragmatos, c. 7, 1451a 9-10)? Aristotle finds this measure in our own faculty of perceiving and representing. The decisive passage reads: »Beauty is matter of size and order and therefore impossible either in a very minute creature, since our perception becomes indistinct as it approches instantaneity (Butcher: an almost imperceptible moment of time); or in a creature of vast size – one, say, 1,000 miles long – as in that case, instead of the object being seen all at once, the unity and wholeness of it is lost to the beholder (Butcher: spectator)« (transl.

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33. For an elemetary but systematic elucidation, we can refer to the key-words of the philosophical dictionary of »Metaphysics«: on the completeness (*teleion*) in c. 16, on whole (*holon*) in c. 26, on unity (*hen*) in c. 6 and on magnitude (*megethos*) – the category of a quantity in c. 13. These categories must be explained in every monographi about Aristotle's philosophy. The unity in decisive and primary sense signifies a unitary or unique substance (ousia mia) (Metaph. Delta (V) 6, 1016b 9).

34. But *cf.* the note of D. W. Lucas (1990), p. 112-3, where a the notion of organic unity is illustrated with a parallel term *somatoeides* (Rh. Al., c. 29, 1436a 29), which is a technical term for »structurally coherent«.

Bywater) (Po. c. 7, 1450b 36 – 1451a 21). (dio oute pammikron an ti genoito kalon zoion, syncheitai gar he theoria engys tou anaisthetou chronou <chronoi – dat. Gudeman) ginomene, oute pammegethes, ou gar hama he theoria ginetai all' oichetai tois theorousi to hen kai to holon ek tes theorias). As a living being or a picture must be of an appropriate magnitude in order to be »easily taken in at a glance« (Liddell-Scott-Jones), eu-syn-opton (ib. 51a 4), mythos must have an appropriate length in order to be easily embraced by memory (eumnemoneuton, ib. 51a 5-6). The sufficient magnitude must be of such a kind that it is possible to represent through it the development and change, the passing and turning (metaballein) of human situation.

The question of the wholeness of mythos is thus immediately connected with the question of unity. Before interpreting the above passage, let us consider the Aristotelian view on the unity of mythos (c. 8 in 9). The eighth chapter of »Poetics« begins with the homonymity of the notion »one« and »unity« (*heis*), which can signify (1) one thing as an individual being in contrast to plurality or to »many« and (2) one as a unity, established by one form. In our case of human activity, that means an action, where the inner cohesion of the constituent parts is present. A mythos is not yet one, if it speaks about one person, one hero, for example, about Heracles. A mythos is unitary, when it is representing a unitary activity, an action which is one (mia praxis, c. 1451a 31-32). Such an action must have the characteristics of an ordered whole (to holon). This wholeness of mythos will be qualified as universality (katholou) in the ninth chapter. Through its universal value the composition of mythos is distinguished from the historiographical representation of human practice.

The question of the unity and wholeness of the poetic narrative has thus attained the level of literary universals. On the other side, it was made possible for Aristotle to establish the difference between simple and complex plots (c. 10). This distinction concerns the way of presenting the shifting or passing over (*metabasis*)[35] of events and their change or turnover (metabole) (c. 11).

The far-reaching recidivism of Aristotle's theory on the magnitude, wholeness and unity of story in the classicist aesthetics and poetics is generally known.[36] Aristotle's position is important, that unity and wholeness of the story are achieved through the poetical procedure, which consists in representing events or incidences in such succession and order, that takes in account the rules of probability or necessity (c. 7, 1451a 12-14 in c. 9). But such a composition of events is not easy to achieve, since the world of human action, which is the subject of practical philosophy, i.e., ethical and political theory, is the world of contingency, which does not permit the same degree of precision or exactness in knowledge as, for instance, mathematics. Moreover, the human or social world exhibits such great »variety and fluctuation« (plane kai diaphora) that

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35. The translation of M. Kuzmić has »razvoj« (Croatian: development).
36. Compare M. Fuhrmann (1973), pp. 185f.

there is even not an agreement if »fine and just actions« (kala kai dikaia) exist by mere convention or also by nature (transl. W. D. Ross) (EN A (I) 1, 1094b 14-19).[37] So, poets cannot achieve the appropriate necessity or probability in the composition of incidents, i.e., story or mythos, whereas the philosopher has, so to say, insurmountable difficulties in describing the structure of human action. Furthermore, poets are not successful in fashioning a story according to the immanent rules of poetry, but take refuge in the intervention of gods, when they unravel the mythos (denoument) with the assistance of a machine deus ex machina (theos apo mechanes,prim. c. 15, 1454b 1-3). Aristotle is somehow indulgent of such compositional devices, arguing that human beings cannot know everything, »for to the gods we ascribe the power of seeing all things« (transl. Butcher) (*hapanta gar apodidomen tois theois horan*) (ibid., 54b 5-6).[38] Therefore the question of literary composition becomes the question of knowledge and poetic becomes, or moreover remains, a sort of truth and wisdom, »sophia«. Insofar as a human being cannot have a divine, universal and total view, an absolute knowledge, so it occurs that a poet must resolve the complication of the mythos, the intrigue (mechane) of human practice with an artificial device, introducing a god into the course of events or into the play.[39] The theoretical ideal of a myth, which has »an organic unity of a living creature« (hosper zoion hen holon, c. 23, 1459a 20),[40] is something that exceeds human capacities or, at least, signifies the extreme terms of human knowing. But within the art of poetry there must be established such rules for the composition of plots that a mythos could receive its unity and wholeness and so attain its desired »beauty«. The question of the composition of myths remains the central subject of Aristotle's poetic, so that Aristotle's theory of poetry is foremost a philosophy of composition in the sense of E.A. Poe. It is not by chance that in the first sentence of Poetics Aristotle announces an inquiry »into the structure of the plot as requisite to a good <beautiful, V. K.> poem« (transl. Butcher) (c. 1, 1447a 19-10).

Thus Aristotle's mythos becomes a polymorph matter – as the Greek myths in general are – since it is a representation of human nature and »essence«, which is to say, a narrative of human activity. The final solution of the

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37. On this also N. Gulley (1979), p. 168.

38. The use of theos apo mechanes is indicated also in the chapter 9, where Aristotle speaks about events, which are more surprising as the incidents happening spontaneously (apo tou automatou) or by chance (apo tyches) (c. 9, 1452a 4-6).

39. This Aristotelian theory of poetical composition was assumed by Porphyry in his criticism of Homer, when he discussed the departure of Achaic fleet in the second book of Iliad (Il. 2, 73): »L'art poétique interdit (apoieton) de dénouer l'intrigue (to mechanema lyein) autrement que par l'histoire elle-même (ex autou tou mythou); Aristote dit bien que ce qui est poétique (poietikon), c'est de représenter (mimeisthai) ce qui arrive habituellement...«, cit. after Dupont-Roc – Lallot (1980), pp. 264-5.

40. Bywater: »a single and coherent picture of a living being«; Dupont-Roc – Lallot: »semblable a un être vivant un et qui forme un tout«.

question concerning the composition of tragic myths would mean a resolution, a deciphering of the question about human existence: tragedy is a mode of answering such questions. However fragmentary a theory of poetic plot remains, it must follow the question of the structure of human practice and human destiny or fortune. Each tragic mythos is a »drama«, is »dramatic«, because in its form and growth must be deposited the shifting and passing (metabasis, c. lO, 1452a 16) of activity and its changing and turnover (metabole, c. ll, 1452a 23). A myth or a story must represent a passage through the sequence of events from good fortune to bad and vice versa. According to Aristotle, a tragic mythos is marked by three elements:

1) reversal (peripeteia, c. 11, 52a 22);

2) recognition or discovery (anagnorisis or anagnorismos, 52a 15 and 52a 29-30);

3) disastrous occurrence (pathos, 52b10).

A reversal of fortune is »a change by which a train of action produces the opposite of the effect intended« (transl. Butcher) (52a 22-23), recognition is »a change from ignorance to knowledge« in the sphere of personal identity or in the sphere of intersubjective relations; recognition is knowledge that one person is bound to another person on the basis of love or hate. Finally, the tragic incident (Butcher), *pathos*,[41] is »an action of a destructive or painful nature» (transl. Bywater) (52b 10). These three constituent parts of a myth are impressed on every tragic story and should not be understood as supplements to mythic narrative. So the tragic reversal should not be conceived of only as a change in the dramatic process, but especially as a turnover in the course of incidents, that occurs »unexpectedly« (Bywater) (para ten doxan, c. 9, 52a 4) and so produces an effect of surprise and astonishment, since the entire story is composed according to the »law« of probability or of necessity: a peripety is something that happens »contrary to probability« (transl. Butcher) (para to eikos, c. 18, 56a 25). R. Dupont-Roc and R. Lallot therefore translate peripeteia as »le coûp de theatre«, which produces a »choc de la surprise«.[42] Anagnorisis and peripeteia transfer to the persuasive structure of mythos an inner dynamics necessary for a story to function as a representation of human action. A tragic story without a peripety would be like a drama »without event«, as a tragedy without »soul«.

The reversal and recognition express a certain ignorance of tragic heroes on an important matter: presupposition of a recognition is, for example, ignorance about personal identity, whereas peripety implies an activity or suffering in ignorance of the result.[43] But the change in the sequence of events from good

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41. R. Dupont-Roc and R. Lalot translate as »l'effet violent«.

42. *Ibid,* pp. 231-2.

43. *Cf.* the article of D. W. Lucasa »Simple and complex tragedy«, in Aristotle: Poetics (1990), Appendix III, pp. 291f.

fortune to misfortune has its specific cause, which is called *hamartia,* »mistake« (c. 13, 1453a 10 and 16). Unwillingly, we shall not start with a discourse on this exceedingly important issue of the Aristotelian theory of tragedy. Nevertheless, we must mention that in the optics of Aristotle's theory hamartia is primarily a matter of the tragic story[44] and not a property of tragic character. The mistake in a tragedy, hamartia, signifies an »ignorance combined with the absence of wicked intent« or »the defective knowledge of one who thinks he knows«.[45] Considering the sequence of events, composed according to the rules of necessity or probability, it is precisely a wrong decision, made in ignorance or in lack of knowledge, by some fault, i.e., by hamartia, producing disastrous effects or a peripety.[46] On the other side, however, the very possibility for a mistake, a greater or smaller one, is given through the contigent, even »casual«, *tychikos* character of the world in general and especially of human existence, what is remarkably discussed in the second book of Aristotle's Physics (Ph. II, esp. c. 5-8). Human existence as contingent is also subject to ignorance and mistake: Aristotle would say that a human being is – sit venia verbo – not only tychic, but also hamartetic, »prone to err» (Liddell-Scott-Jones), *hamartetikos* (EN, II 2, 1104b 33).

The manner of establishing reversal, recognition and mistake in a tragic story is the process of composing and resolving (desis in lysis, c. 18) the riddle, the problem or the conflict.[47] The dramatic story or mythos may therefore be called plot or intrigue. Aristotle's theory of mythos is a proof more for the thesis of O. Marquard, that as Aristotle's ethical theory concerns particularly human activity in its average prosperity, so the poetic or dramatic mythos represents human action in its conflicting dimension or aspect.[48] It is important to notice that Aristotle accurately distinguishes the levels of ethical and poetical analysis, what many translations, which render mythos with »action«, rather obliterate.

Regarding the inner structure of the tragic mythos, Aristotle has an entire series of terms for it:

1) *synthesis* (c. 23, 1459a 22) and *systasis* (c. 24, 1459b 21) signify mythos as composition, combination, structure

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44. Compare D. W. Lucas, Poetics (1990), pp. 143-4.

45. These are the exemplary definitions by D. W. Lucas, o.c.p. 302 and 149.

46. *Cf.* D.W. Lucas, o.c.p. 303 and his article on hamartia in Appendix IV, pp. 299-307.

47. D. W. Lucas has noted that Aristotle has no single word for the tragic conflict any more than he has for the tragic hero, o.c.p. 129.

48. *Cf.* O. Marquard, »Ueber-Wir, Bemerkungen zur Diskursethik«, in: Poetik und Hermeneutik XIX, Das Gespraech, hg. K. Stierle, R. Warning (Muenchen 1984), str. 312: »... waehrend Aristoteles ... die Konflikte den Tragoediendichtern ueberliess, von denen nicht die Ethik handelt, sondern die Poetik«.

2) *drâma* (c. 15, 54b 3) is a mythos as tragic myth and as play, as story performed on the stage[49]; Aristotle says that the deus ex machina may be used only for events »outside the play« (Bywater), »external to the drama« (Butcher) (exo tou dramatos), which means that it is not permitted to introduce the stage-artifice into the play or into the composition of the mythos.

3) tragic mythos as narrative: logos, mythos, mytheuma[50] (c. 24, 1460a 27-33):

a): of logos we have already spoken (cf. above p. 9-10). Logos is the argument of tragic mythos, its subject, the general outline of a sequence of events. Such kind of logos is the *hypothesis* of Alexandrinian scholars. It will become a mythos only through its concretisation with episodes, names of characters, etc.[51]

b) mythos: this is a story in all its variety, even absurdity (atopon, c. 24, 1460b 2), and sometimes unreasonableness or irrationality.

c) mytheuma (c. 24, 1460a 29): this is a narrative in its developed or finished form and so to say the narrative presentation of the whole story.[52]

When a tragic poet succeeds in composing a tragic mythos in such a way, that he realizes all different formal (logos, mytheuma, desis and lysis) and substantial (peripeteia, anagnorisis, pathos) constituent parts, when further he represents an action according to the rules of probability or necessity – not excluding paradoxality – then his poem will be a unit and a whole, it will be like a beautiful creature or picture arousing astonishment, attaining its telos and achieving its ergon. The poetical mimesis is then the art of producing such quasi-real or – to employ an expression of R. Ingarden – »automatic world«[53], which is the world of artistic illusion. In summing up, we can say that Aristotle's theory of poetry became a theory of mythos, but theory of mythos itself became theory of poetical composition, »philosophy of composition« (E.A. Poe). So the theory of poetry becomes a theory of poetical fiction, of artistical illusion, which is the mode of existence of poetic truth. It is immanent for Aristotle's philosophy of art to be an apology of the so-called poetical truth or truth in the arts, which shall be the explicit subject matter in the chapter 24 and 25 of his Poetics.

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49. According to R. Dupont-Roc – R. Lallot (1980), »drâma« signifies »mettre en acte sur la scene« (p. 266) or »la réalisation sur la scène« (p. 385).
50. Butcher translates mytheuma as »the action of the day«, whereas Liddel-Scott-Jones has »the plot of a play«.
51. *Cf.* M. Kuzmić (1912), pp. 179-80.
52. Dupont-Roc – Lallot (1980), p. 383-4.
53. R. Ingarden (1978), p. 47.

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Benjamin's aspect
Darko Štrajn

A simple example

F orm makes a difference. Saying such a thing seems a truism, seems quite obvious, quite easily verifiable in the so-called world of objects, not necessarily only the aesthetic ones. In general terms, »everything« around us has a certain form, which can be seen or otherwise perceived. Our daily experience is full of semiconscious or even unconscious recognitions of many forms. In an urban surroundings »forms« are standing around us in the shape of more or less architectural erections, »forms« are driving in the streets as Alfa, BMW, VW... cars, people's faces are appearing in oval, long, rectangular forms, etc. Any particular form is perceived as being different, that is to say, as being identifiable among all other forms, which we can recognize in a certain »class of forms«. Cars can be identified as the vehicles on four wheels, made of steel, having windows, a steering wheel, etc. But a particular car can be recognized by its form, stored in our memory, as a car, which is different in comparison to all other types of cars. This rather simple example (which is only one among hundreds of possible empirical examples) reminds us that form in general has a prominent function in the world, decidedly marked by the production in series. Most certainly, the usage of different forms helps to prevent confusion, although not rarely it enhances it, because at the same time as meaning a difference, a particular form means a similarity as well. But when we talk about such practical general aspects concerning rather unproblematic, and simple aspects of the question of the form, we should not forget Walter Benjamin and his intervention in the field of the aesthetic discourse.

The mechanical reproduction

»The mass is a matrix from which all traditional behaviour toward works of art issues today in a new form. Quantity has been transmuted into quality. The greatly increased mass of participants has produced a change in the mode of participation. The fact that the new mode of participation first appeared in a disreputable form must not confuse the spectator.«[1] Now our simple examples do not look so simple. Taking into account every known Benjamin text, no doubt quite apprehensible within the framework of its argumentation, brings a certain aspect, concerning a border between objects deemed to be aesthetic

1. Walter Benjamin, The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction, *Illuminations*, Schocken Books, New York 1969, p.239

and objects we usually call just »things«. If, as Benjamin has said, the very notion of art gets thoroughly changed by the process of the mechanical reproduction, then we should presume that the world, being mirrored, expressed, articulated... in such an art, was some way changed. Maybe we can risk an assumption that this meaning goes without saying with Benjamin's insight. After all we are talking about a relatively short piece of writing, a glimpse of a genius – as much as one could agree with such an assertion, and yet we are talking about a quite schematic hypothesis, which is rather open in its meaning. Benjamin hasn't expressed any clear idea how the change in modes of the production of the art has really affected »the world«; his intention seems to be much other way around. True, he doesn't omit the question. Before his discourse unfolds, he makes it clear that his starting point was Marx's theory containing »prognostic value« concerning the abolition of capitalism. Although Benjamin himself held this starting point as a theoretical basis of his analysis of the changes of the cultural bias, brought by the development of »the capitalist« mode of production, it has been soon identified by his distinguished reader – namely Adorno – as the »undialectical side« of his approach. As it is precisely reported in Richard Wollin's book on Benjamin, Adorno's criticism has been aimed at all the weakest points in Benjamin's text,[2] which is not to say that Adorno grasped the full meaning of the article, which could be apprehended only few decades later. Or, in other words, Adorno has been most probably concerned with the aesthetic problems, on which he shared a common interest with Benjamin. And maybe it can be even proved that the »The work of art...« occupies a special place within the context of the whole fragmented Benjamin work. As much as this paper obviously isn't in accordance with Adorno's views, it isn't in accordance with, at least, Benjamin's style and approach in most of the rest of his discourse on aesthetic phenomena of his time.

However, taking into account Adorno's criticism helps a bit in our evaluation of those meanings of the Benjamin's text, which transcend the boundaries of the age in which it was written. Some political motives, the intellectual revolt against fascism most visible among them, clearly belong to historical determinations, which caused Benjamin's strong criticism of the idea of the autonomous work of art. Such a stand could be well understood within the logic of the text itself seeking to define artistic production as a kind of a »material force«, as an agency of the emancipation – not as a product of a

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2. Dialectical though your essay may be – writes Adorno to Benjamin – it is not so in the case of the autonomous work of art itself; it disregards an elementary experience which becomes more evident to me every day in my own musical experience – that precisely the uttermost consistency in the pursuit of the technical laws of autonomous art changes this art and instead of rendering it taboo or fetish, brings it close to the state of freedom, of something that can be consciously produced and made. *Cf.* cit., Richard Wollin, *Walter Benjamin* (An Aesthetic of Redemption), Columbia University Press, New York 1982.

solitary intellectual effort (which an autonomous work of art is usually supposed to be), but as a consciousness creating force. Benjamin's supposed over-reaction against *l'art pour l'art* is not based on a perception of the fascism as only a »brutal totalitarianism«. On the contrary, the problem is that the... »aesthetic concept of culture (Kulturbegriff) isn't... exterior to fascism, to his cult of the form as the power claim by the privileged Subject, who in his tendency already encircles the totality of the form-able material into the political sphere...«[3] So the problem is that fascism makes use of the mass culture, made possible by mechanical reproduction, and Benjamin's intention is to show that, *in spite* of it, the dawn of the age of a new mode of production – the aesthetic products included – brings means of the emancipation through the »transformation of the superstructure«.

Benjamin's »clash with fascism« clearly helped the author to express some views, which could be considered along the lines of Adorno's criticism as a distortion or even as a bit crude reductionism. Nevertheless, a question could be put forward: how really important is this side of the text for its main points? The communication, personal as it may be, between Benjamin and Adorno, reflected two different points of view at the same traumatic problem. Adorno's approach led to problems of »enslaved subjectivity« of the Subject, who »lost his spontaneity«, and autonomy in a subjection to market forces, etc. Consequentially, Adorno's aesthetic theory became a brilliant illustration of the philosophy marked by the pessimism and even nostalgia. Although Benjamin's discourse hasn't been developed in such a wide scope, confined to fragments and not finished more or less short essays, quite often, as already mentioned above, treating rather disparate (and desperate) subjects, especially the »Work of Art...« – along with a few other probes in the same direction – opened some questions, which continue to bother us a long time after the author's unfortunate death.

The mystery of non-mystery

The manner in which the set of questions we have in mind was put forward in the »Work of Art...«, is somewhat schematic, but that is precisely the form of theoretical problems, which most often proves to be very productive for a further development.[4] The »mystery« of the effectivness of such a type of

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3. Ansgar Hillach, »Benjamins Diagnose des Faschismus«, in *Walter Benjamin (Profane Erleuchtung und rettende Kritik)*, (ed. by N.W. Bolz and R. Faber), Koenigshausen+Neumann, Wuerzburg 1985, p. 257.

4. The same may be said, for example, about the Althusser's concept of the »ideological apparatuses of the state«, which caused a lot of controversy in the philosophical and political debate in the previous decade, but has been also repudiated many times over on the ground of its »schematicism«. But it looks like that especially those Althusser's critics, who tried to eradicate the concept itself, prolonged its life by causing many Althusser advocating counter-attacks. Very often they admitted that a dose of schematisism is obvious in the Althusser's theory, but this cannot belittle the fact of »genious« of the scheme.

discourse isn't its depth, much less anything »hidden behind« its obvious meaning. Of course, what could be a »depth« of a »schematic« text, and how could anything be »hidden« under the surface of written words and sentences? So the »mystery« must be elsewhere. To put it simply: the mystery is that there is no mystery, the genius lies precisely in provoking a *deja vu* effect in the reader. Yes, everybody sees that the print, photography, cinema, etc., are the result of an intellectual (or the aesthetic) endeavour, but at the same time they are the products of machinery, the products of the process of mechanical reproduction, and everybody feels that a possibility to bring close many works of art from secluded places means a change in a way. But what way? This is the question, which »just anybody« couldn't feel important to answer. Well, all right, copies of the portrait of Mona Lisa suddenly became accessible and could decorate a wall in a no matter how humble a home, the great novels of French realism are accessible in cheap editions, etc., so what? This is the point, where Benjamin's intervention proved to be fruitful. Simple as his discovery may seem (though in the final analysis it isn't so simple at all), it happened as a finally uttered knowledge of the fact, which had been repressed by the dominant »class culture«. And probably it isn't just a coincidence that Benjamin named this »fact« vaguely the »aura«, which as a notion gets its meaning through the process of disappearing. The aura is, by virtue of »being something through non-existence«, in a full sense of the word, a dialectical notion, which marks a profound change in the symbolic order of things. Aesthetic objects certainly occupy a distinguished place in this order. But, as Benjamin found out, their »aura« secured a special sphere of the effectiveness of their symbolic power, they were a part of an order of the especially divided social imaginary, which continues to be active long after the mechanical reproduction has taken place. The disappearance of the aura through intrusion of the reproduction of the classic works of art, and even more significantly, through a development of the new forms of art, made possible by technical devices, brings a turn into the function of the art itself. Characteristically, the »new forms of art« were dismissed by privileged public as a cheap entertainment for the uneducated.

Let us now take a look into a problem of what happens with the form. The aesthetic views elaborated at the beginning of the modern age (notably within the German philosophy and the movement of romanticism) in general developed the concept of the form in accordance with a concept of the Subject. Tu put it briefly, subjectivity has been perceived as being inscribed into the difference, which is brought into existence by the form. Although Benjamin does not say so, subjectivity has been seen as a constituent of the aura, participating in the divine or even replacing it. Of course, the problem of the form, much easier explained in a case of visual arts, paintings and sculptures, than in a case of narrative arts, especially in a confrontation with

the problem of the content, in different solutions gave way to the construction of the certain rules providing paths to creating the sensation of beauty, etc. But all the time there was no doubt that the aesthetic creation belongs to nobler human activities, and that it is in possession of the »higher« truth, and there was no doubt that enjoyment of the preciousness of the works of art requires an adequate education, especially for the purpose of perceiving the sublime qualities of different forms. One may object, saying this is an oversimplification, but such an objection doesn't rule out the point, which is, that the form »formed« a separate reality of the works of art. With a gradual transformation of the original (and even revolutionary in their age) aesthetic theories into the ideology of art, the ideology of an »elite« public, the form »as such« became an object of obsession on both sides: the public and the artists. But when this point was reached, it was already obvious that all around emerge all sorts of »entertainment«, and that »unworthy« forms of decoration invade the streets in the metropolitan areas.

Orchid in the land of technology

Benjamin, using the terms of political economy in defining the superstructure, saw the decisive transformation, crucial in attaining a new form of society. It isn't so important as it may seem, that he understood this movement as a way to communism, which had been a lively idea at the time. Much more significant is his conceptualization of the consequences of the perceived properties of what had been going on. »The equipment-free aspect of reality here has become the height of artifice; the sight of immediate reality has become an orchid in the land of technology.«[5] The results of such an assumption may be taken as sociological, but no less are they significant for the idea of the subjectivity as well. What we may say today is, that Benjamin was on the verge of discovering not only the disappearance of the aura, but the disappearance of the Subject itself, too. Again in Benjamin's »sociological« observation the change concerns the art as much as the »masses«: »To pry an object from its shell, to destroy its aura, is the mark of a perception whose 'sense of the universal equality of things' has increased to such a degree that it extracts it even from a unique object by means of reproduction. Thus is manifested in the field of perception what in the theoretical sphere is noticeable in the increasing importance of statistics. The adjustment of reality to the masses and of the masses to reality is a process of unlimited scope, as much for thinking as for perception.«[6] What is seen here from the side of object is at the same time reflected by a change in the structure of subjectivity, whose reality must become split in a way as a contradiction of form against form (replacing the old contradiction between the form and the content). The instrument representing the new structure of reality – the movie camera –

5. Walter Benjamin, *Ibid.*, p. 233.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 223.

functions on the level of a new »science«, which ruins the idea of the Subject born to be autonomous: »The camera introduces us to unconscious optics as does psychoanalysis to unconscious impulses.«[7]

Entering mass perception, the new forms of aesthetic *praxis* overturn the whole functioning of the arts in the social imaginary. Although discussing the problems of the form of the aesthetic objects, the products of »technological« arts included, may still be a »noble« task of aesthetic theory, there is no doubt that Benjamin's observations approve an assertion, that the aesthetic production interferes with the reproduction of the society in a much more decisive way than anybody ever dreamed of before the emergence of the mechanical reproduction. (Maybe today we could widen the number of synonymous adjectives, beside »mechanical«, i.e. »electronically«, »multimediatically«,etc.) The recognition of the form became in a broad sense simply functional, and everybody has been trained to recognize forms automatically by being exposed to almost continuous and often unwanted influence of images, sounds, signs, designs, etc. There is no way to sell new »contents« in approved forms. The public must be shocked into perceiving the difference, which is nothing else but the form.

Meanwhile the »subjectivity« turns into a set of »looks« prescribed by the »artists« in the make-up and fashion industries. Declining to be »formed« by them or at the same time not to be affected by images and sounds, now even pouring down from the sky, always neatly packed into a appropriate form, means only acquiring a different form. However, following this path would bring us to another more recent intellectual account of the world foreseen by Benjamin, namely to Christopher Lasch and his »Culture of Narcissism,« and his deciphering the world of forms as a »form of existence«.

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7. *Ibid,* p. 237.

Aspects of form in philosophy and other theoretical discourses

Return to form – return to Kant?
Rado Riha

The invitation to contribute to the current issue of the Philosophical Journal suggested that we should consider whether and how the notion of form – the notion nearly as old as philosophy itself – can still play an operative part in the philosophy of the postmodern age.

We claim that the answer to the question referring to the conditions of the possibility of »returning to form« depends upon another question, which, too, has already been indicated in the introductory presentation of the problem; namely, the question of whether and how a »return to Kant« is possible in postmodern philosophy, whether and how Kant can appear our contemporary. When defending our standpoint, we do not consider only the fact that the notion of form has acquired its modern meaning through Kant's philosophy, that since Kant it has been connected with the conception of the universalization of content which but establishes each moment of the content in its necessity and lawfulness. Rather, we bear in mind that the specific mode of reading Kant, which can be now observed in various contemporary philosophical currents, introduces the theoretical context that makes possible the reactualization of the notion of form, its postmodern interpretation.

The »return to Kant,« as the only setting appropriate for philosophy after the end of metaphysics, was described by L. Ferry and A. Renaut in their article bearing the same title and published in the periodical Ornicar?[1] in 1980. Their way of returning to Kant was described in more detail in their later works,[2] their basic claim being, in accordance with the original, that *man's limits should be considered* [3] and that reason should now be *restricted* [4] and not praised or destroyed. Another characteristic of their view can be observed in the effort with which they try to demarcate their »Kantian orientation« from sterile repetition or restoration of Kant's standpoints, and to present it as a constituent of live philosophical practice. In their opinion, »return to Kant« is possible and sensible only if it is different from the traditional research field of academic philosophy, if it is more than just »training of mind,«[5] to use Kant's

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1. *Cf.* L. Ferry/A. Renaut, »Retour à Kant«, in: Ornicar?, No. 20-21, Seuil, Paris 1980.

2. *Cf.* L. Ferry, *Philosophie politique 1*, PUF, Paris 1984, *Philosophie politique 2*, PUF, Paris 1984, L. Ferry/A. Renaut, *Philosophie politique 3*, PUF, Paris 1985.

3. *Cf.* L. Ferry, *Philosophie politique 1*, PUF, Paris 1984, p. 137.

4. *Cf.* L. Ferry, *Philosophie politique 2*, PUF, Paris 1984, p 16.

5. I. Kant, »Über den Gemeinspruch: Das mag in der Theorie richtig sein, gilt aber nicht für die Praxis«, Kant-Werkausgabe, vol. XI, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/M 1971, p. 127.

words. Their third characteristic is their regard for Kant as a posthegelian philosopher. For them, Kant does not represent the first step leading to the notion of all-embracing subjectivity, to the substance that has turned subject, but is in fact already the *answer* to the crisis and the decline of the absolute subject.

Within the complex of various philosophical orientations to contemporary philosophy, Ferry and Renaut are not the only ones to base their philosophical practice upon the reactualization of Kant's concepts. If »return to Kant« is understood as a philosophical attitude that reads Kant so that he is implicitly or explicitly interpreted as a contemporary of the basic problems of postmodernity, so that the restoration of his concepts functions as radical reexamination of these problems, then it is possible – with some schematic constraint – to separate several variants of such an attitude from the heterogeneous complex of contemporary philosophies. In addition to L. Ferry and A. Renaut (and their teacher A. Philonenko, an excellent commentator and authority on Kant and Fichte), the »return to Kant« current also is represented in France by various poststructuralist and deconstructivist philosophical orientations.[6] In Germany, Kant's exegesis within the sphere of »school philosophy« not being taken into consideration, effectual Kantianism can be mentioned above all in the connection with the transcendental *pragmatic* of K.-O. Apel and the widely conceived theory of communicative activity of J. Habermas. The third variant of »return to Kant« can be found in Anglo-Saxon legal philosophy, especially in the works of R. Dworkin and J. Rawls.[7]

6. We think above all of J.-F. Lyotard, J. Derrida, J.-L. Nancy, and Ph. Lacoue-Labarth.
7. The classification is taken from the book by J. Lenoble and A. Berten *Dire le norme,* E. Story-Scientia, Bruxelles 1990 (*cf.* also their article »Jugement juridique et jugement pratique: de Kant à la philosophie du langage«, in: *Revue de la Metaphysique et de morale,* No 1, Armand Collin, Paris 1990). The authors, Belgian philosophers of law, also refer to Kantianism as the only appropriate philosophical starting point for the articulation of the finality of reason. They understand their own standpoint as a kind of synthesis of deconstructivist radical decomposition of reason and postmodern Kantianism, developed by L. Ferry and A. Renaut. In their opinion, the basic thesis of neo-Kantianism, namely that Kantian criticism contains essential elements for the construction of metaphysical reason as well as positive condition of its postmetaphysical use, can be justified only on the basis of the results of the philosophy of language. According to Lenoble and Berten, the postmodern comprehension of rationality is possible only on the basis of the phenomenon they call »the paradox of the logic of enunciation.« The paradox, which they consider the logical operator of every production of meaning, is derived from the basic fact that there is no meta-language, that ordinary language is already its own meta-language. Kant's philosophy as an indispensable starting point of every theory of reason that wants to articulate the radical finality of the subject is to be reformulated on the basis of pragmatic turn in the contemporary philosophy of language; with the pragmatic-linguistic reformulation of Kant, we can also achieve the rational kernel of the philosophical standpoints of Ferry, Renaut and Habermas, who try to renew the project of western rationality by limiting the demands of reason. Lenoble and Berten consider this point of view justified, yet it loses sight of the constitutive role of the paradox of enunciation, the impossibility and inconsistence of the

Considering all three currents – they are incompatible with one another, of course, and deep and unbridgeable differences exist among individual authors within the currents themselves, regarding not only basic concepts but also the specific mode of appropriation of Kant – we come to three key features, which give contemporary »neo-Kantianism« its »postmodern« character.

First, with wider or narrower conceptual elaboration, the system of Kant's three Critiques is interpreted, once already by Fichte, from the standpoint of *Critique of Judgment.* In this case, the third *Critique,* however, plays the key role in understanding entire Kant's philosophy, inasmuch as a special form of the power of judgment, the form of *reflective judgment,* is developed and treated in it. With the central position of the third *Critique,* entire Kantian ontology is subjected to »reflective« reading, the reading that revolves round the problem of Kant's determinative judgment presupposing »reflective judgment in the very kernel of its foundation,«[8] to use A. Philonenko's formulation. In sharp contrast to the scientistic-instrumental conception of Kantian understanding being the legislator of nature, which secures only »its formal unity,«[9] to use Kant's words, and is methodologically separated from

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universal, in short, it neglects the fact that »there is no meta-language as there is no language about All and the Universal«, J. Lenoble/A. Berten, *Dire le norme* Bruxelles 1990, p. 30). According to Lenoble and Berten, French as well as Habermas' and Apel's »neo-Kantianism« is insufficient if their accession is hermeneutic in addition. Ferry and Renaut reconstruct the postmetaphysical use of reason in such a manner that they change Kantian ideas to the mere *horizon of meaning.* Habermas and Apel find the demand for universal validity to be an indispensable *pragmatic presupposition* of every discourse. Their insufficiency consists in the fact that the demand for the universality of discursive logos is re-entered in the logical of the ideal of selfidentity, so that they idealiter presuppose the logic possibility of the identical universal. On the contrary, Lenoble and Berten claim that the universal, though understood as a mere horizon of meaning, represents a moment that is immanent in every discourse, yet transcending it at the same time (*cf.* J. Lenoble/A. Berten, *op. cit.,* p. 32). It really escapes the logic of identity only when it is not comprehend as a moment that cannot be empirically achieved, but is rather understood as being impossible in itself. The ideal of reason, which is, to quote Habermas as an example, a constitutive condition of every communication in the form of presupposition of the consensuality of truth, must be comprehended, according to Lenoble and Berten, as *entirely empty form, as something that is nothing in its essence:* »the ideal is an empty form – inconsistent – it is reduced to mere procedural rationality. The ideal as an exterior point of discourse returns in a certain way to what is the innermost in the operation of meaning, to the paradox, which moves it« *(ibid.).* In this place we cannot develop an explicit critique of Lenoble and Berten's understanding, which tries to develop the positive concept of postmetaphysical reason by comprehending reason as an instance of the symbolic, as an empty space, round which a signifier's network is structured. Such critique should state to what extent the empty space of the symbolic can be preserved only by being always already embodied in some chaos of the real, inaccessible to symbolization. The implicit critique of such comprehension is included in our attempt at reading Kant from the standpoint of the anti-philosophy that deserves to be called »return to Kant«, although it is mentioned neither by Lenoble and Berten nor »neo-Kantianism« of Ferry, Renaut or Habermas, nor various philosophies of deconstruction.

8. *Cf.* A. Philonenko, *L'oeuvre de Kant I,* Vrin, Paris 1989, p. 170.
9. *Cf.* I. Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft,* (KRV), Kant-Werkausgabe, vol. IV, Frankfurt/M 1971, p. 702.

empiric diversity, a question now stands out of how determinative, constitutive understanding is to be apprehended if a reflective element functions in the middle of it, if a use of understanding that is determined by the very absence of determination[10] functions in the middle of determinative cognition.

The second characteristic of the postmodern »return to Kant« is connected with the enlargement of the applicative field of reflective judgment: Kant's philosophy is interpreted as a standpoint that puts forward the radical finality of the subject and the irreducible contingency of the real. This is a matter of either, in its weaker variant, the use of certain segments of Kant's philosophy – the theory of the sublime, the philosophy of the politico-historical etc. – within the scope of different philosophies of deconstruction; or in its stronger variant, Kantian criticism is comprehended as a philosophy that has so far criticized metaphysics most radically and in which the deconstruction of metaphysical reason has achieved its fulfillment. Its fulfillment because, in this latter case, Kant's philosophy concedes the righteous claims of rationality even after critique of reason has been completed, since it develops the concept of rationality that is indispensable, yet at the same time paradoxical, in its nature and insubstantial, in short, because it develops the frame and positive conditions of the concept of postmetaphysical rationality: »The project of the critique of metaphysics which would not mean a complete denial of the claims of Reason is still open, and without exaggeration Kant can be said to remain the most important author on this way.«[11]

The third characteristic of postmodern »neo-Kantianism« is the interest in the status and the role of law and politics in contemporary democratic culture. In this connection, Kantian criticism is understood as a framework that provides conditions for the possibility of theorization of contemporary democracy, whereas the models of aesthetic and teleological reflective judgment are comprehended as a basic conceptual means that makes possible the answer to the question of what political conditions of freedom secure the realization of a lawful community of equal subjects.

In the continuation, we are going to limit ourselves to the first characteristic of the postmodern »return to Kant,« interpreting the »reflective« reading of Kant's philosophy in more detail.

We know that Kant often compares critical philosophy to a tribunal. According to Kant, it is typical of the age of critique, in which we live, that reason has begun to get to know itself once again, for which purpose it has founded a tribunal, which protects its righteous claims and rejects the unfounded ones. This tribunal is Critique of Pure Reason.[12] The purpose of

10. Philonenko has in mind the chapter in which Kant treats the problems of transcendental deduction in *Critique of Pure Reason.*
11. *Cf.* L. Ferry, »Preface«, in: *Critique de la Raison pure,* Flammarion, Paris 1987, p. XXII.
12. I. Kant, KRV, *loc. cit.,* p. 13.

philosophy as critique is not to propagate cognition but *its* justification, critique being a touchstone of the validity or invalidity of all a priori cognition. Critique as such a propaedeutic enterprise is indispensable, for it prevents reason from falling into dogmatism, the mode of cognition that is based only on the principles of pure cognition without examining their origin and their justification beforehand.

The essential characteristic of critical philosophy – tribunal – is that the verdicts of this tribunal are, to use the language of *Critique of Judgment,* reflective judgments, that critical philosophical *findings* have the structure of reflection. In the most general sense, this reflexive structure can be defined as follows: a verdict as *a finding* that distinguishes and decides upon something is possible only if the judgment includes the standpoint of the instance bringing the verdict, if the point of enunciation, too, is a constitutive part of the verdict. However, this standpoint is not given at the very beginning; it is only a result of the verdict activity: »To *reflect* [überlegen] is to hold given presentations up to, and compare them whim, etiher other presentations or one's cognitive power [itself], in reference to a concept that this [comparasion] makes possible.«[13] Reflection is judgment that is but establishing, inventing the universal notion, on which it rests and relies during the process of judgment.

Lyotard also calls attention to the structural analogy of critique and reflective judgment in his essay *L'enthousiasme.*[14] According to Lyotard, the work of critique is to judge the demand for validity, made by different cognitive powers and propositions belonging to them – empiric, rational, dialectic, teleological propositions, etc. In the proposition pointing to the truth, it judges whether and how it can reach it; the propositions pointing to the good or introducing the moral norm are judged in the same way – in short, critique judges the appropriate use of cognitive power each time, and limits it to its »realm,« its »territory« or its »domain«,[15] using the notions of the third *Critique.* During cultural development, reason must have achieved a certain degree of self-knowledge, the cognition of its range and bounds in order to establish itself as a tribunal. Kant even says that the tribunal of pure reason follows the »eternal and unchangeable laws« of reason[16]. But the philosopher given the role of the critical arbiter cannot judge the demands for the validity of different cognitive propositions with the help of stable rules of universal validity; »he has neither a penal code nor even a body of verdicts, which

13. I. Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft,* (KUK); *Kant-Werkausgabe,* vol. X, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/M, p. 24; *cf.* english translation: I. Kant, *Critique of Judgement,* trans. by W. S. Pluhar, Hackett Publishing Copmany, Indianapolis 1987, p. 400.

14. J.-F. Lyotard, *L'Enthousiasme. La ciritique kantienne de l'histoire,* Galilée, Paris 1986.

15. I. Kant, KUK, Einleitung, *op. cit.,* pp. 81; engl. trans. pp. 12.

16. I. Kant, KRV, *op. cit.,* p.13.

would allow him to lead to inquiry or to formulate verdicts.«[17] Critical philosophy does not function as an instance which applies a given rule to new phenomena. The legal norm or the rule with regard to which the critical philosopher brings the verdict is established only in the process of judgment, the object of the verdict being even the possibility of the application of the rule to the given material. The subsumption of a separate example by the universal law is not typical of the critical proceedings; critical philosophy rather is given the role of the instance that enunciates »das ist der Fall« – »that is the case,« this proposition holds true, it is »an example of the rule,«[18] it is a model example of the beautiful, the good, the reasonable... The definition of the model rule is a procedure that establishes the universal direct in the particular: the application of the rule is at the same time the process of its constitution.

Kant calls attention to the fact that the critique of pure reason is systematic and thorough,[19] but the critical philosophical proposition is reflective and not determinative in its nature.[20] Our statement that criticism has a reflective structure implies two things. First, if we assume that the rule with regard to which the tribunal of reason judges its example is established only in the process of critical judgment, the critical examination of the a priori power of cognition is not a cognitive standpoint which is *before* and *outside* the cognition itself. On the contrary, critical judgment is always already included in a specific way in the sphere that it judges: after all, the rule of judging the demands for the validity of different cognitive powers is established only in the verdict that defines the example of the rule. And second, because the universal is intrinsic to its particular, because the rule exists only in a concrete example, judgment never has at its disposal either the final rule or an ultimately determined universal. The absence of the already given rule or the given universal, which is essential to reflective judgment, is reflected in two ways in Kant: either in the orientation of judgment towards the endless search for the criterion of criteria, or in the form of an attempt to base the power of judgment on a »natural gift,«[21] indeterminable in the last instance. In both cases, however, the absence of the rule in not defined as such, in its positive meaning.

If we are to understand the model of reflective judgment, the very absence of determination, on which this judgment is based, has to be defined. Lyotard, too, calls attention to the necessity of such a definition in his observation that reflection is marked by a manner of determining a particular object that also

17. J.-F. Lyotard, *op. cit,* p. 18.
18. *Cf.* I. Kant, »Über den Gemeinspruch...«, *op. cit.*
19. I. Kant, KRV, *op. cit.,* p. 65.
20. For the distinction determinative judgment – reflective judgment *cf.* I. Kant, KUK, Einleitung, *op. cit.,* p. 87; engl. transl. p. 20/21.
21. I. Kant, KRV, *op. cit.,* p. 185.

contains the moment of the undetermining among its determinative rules.[22] The reflective structure of critique, the process of searching for the universal, in which the universal is but being established, appears in this respect as an attempt at the articulation of a moment of the undetermined, which as such is determinative for our cognitive power, as an attempt at the definition of a radical loss, on which each cognitive determination of the object is based.

Kant's answer to the problem that the positive condition of each cognitive determination of the object is also a moment of the undetermined represents the model of the reflective aesthetic judgment in *Critique of Judgment*. It is characteristic of the aesthetic judgment that it lacks a notion that would lead it, and that it is not directed towards the construction of the universal notion. Nevertheless, the reflective aesthetic judgment is not a judgment that would not be capable of achieving its basic purpose, firm notional determination. It is not a judgment blocked and therefore turned back into itself, reproducing its own self.[23] What is at stake in Kant's conceptualization of aesthetic judgment is something else: to find the notion for the moment of the irreducible want of notionality, which only establishes aesthetic judgment as a judgment of universal validity, to find notional determination that will determine the absence of notional determination as the essential determination of the notion.

With his statement that Kant's critical philosophy is in fact reflexive,[24] Lyotard already transcends the framework drawn for critique and reflection by Kant in *Critique of Pure Reason*. Lyotard's statement interprets both the notion of critique as well as the notion of reflection from the standpoint of *Critique of judgment*. His retroactive reading of Kant's *Critiques* implies that it is only with Kant's critical discovery of aesthetics in the third *Critique* that the concept of critique gets developed in all its meaning. In the first *Critique*, reflection is defined as »thinking (reflexio), which does not deal with objects themselves in order to get notions direct from them, but it is a state of mind in which we first prepare ourselves for the discovery of subjective conditions, on which we can come to notions.«[25] The universal vocation of the power of judgment is that it is »an ability of subsuming under rule, i.e., distinguishing whether something belongs under the given rule or not (*casus datae legis*)[26]; the basic problem of the transcendental power of judgment, how to present pure rational notions in sensible intuition, is dealt with by the theory of schematism. Within this framework, reflection is hardly more than some kind of the »subjective side« of the basic objective cognitive function, which the power of judgment has when showing those sensible conditions on which pure rational notions can be used: instead of to object, reflection refers to cognitive

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22. J.-F. Lyotard, *op. cit,* p. 12.
23. About self-reproduction of the aesthetic judgment *cf.* I. Kant, KUK, § 12.
24. J.-F. Lyotard, *op. cit,* p. 12.
25. I. Kant, KRV, *op. cit,* p. 285.
26. *Ibid,* p. 184.

power itself or to the relation between different cognitive powers. Within this framework, the basic activity of the power of judgment is *subsumption*, reflective judgment being just the subordinated, derived modus of the subsumptive activity. Here the absence of the determinative notion, whose example the power of judgment could follow, plays only the role of the postponed, not yet achieved, presence of the notion.

As soon as we get to understand the absence of the notion, the moment of the constitutive indetermination of critical judgment to be the essential moment of critique as reflection, we no longer subordinate reflection to the subsumptive logic of the theoretic cognition of the object, but we ascribe an independent cognitive position to it, as in Kant's third *Critique*. The concept of the reflective power of judgment is Kant's answer to the question of how to find a notion that would not have the characteristics of the Adornits notion, the notion for the non-notional – how to determine notionally the indeterminable without drowning it in the notion.[27] In *Critique of Judgment* the difference between determinative and reflective judgments is shown as their radical contrast, whereas the reflective power of judgment is put forward as specific and original cognitive power,[28] which is as important as the power of the objective theoretic cognition of the object. Its autonomous status makes possible the »reflective« reading of Kant's entire opus and demands at the same time that we should correct the traditional image of Kant's criticism. Since Hegel, criticism has been reproached for trying to perform research into cognition before the cognition, that critical judgment is in the same relation of the exterior to its object as tools are to their object. This topos, referring to the instrumental nature of Kant's cognitive critique, is undoubtedly justified, yet simplified, considering the problems treated in Kant's third *Critique*. It neglects the fact that the exterior of cognition is possible in criticism only on the basis of specific inclusion of the interior of cognition in its object, which critique articulates as reflection. In other words, the reflective structure of Kant's cognitive critique does not allow us to read the critical research of cognitive power before cognition simply as an attempt to secure a firm basis of

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27. *Cf.* I. Kant, I. Kant, KUK, Vorrede, p. 75; engl. transl. p. 6: »So judgement itself must provide a concept, a concpet through which we do not actually cognize anything but which only serves as a rule for the power of judgement, since then we would need another power of judgement in order to decide whether or not the judgement is a case of that rule.«

28. Here we rest upon the detailed analysis of Kant's third Critique in the work by F. Guillermit *L'éducation critique du jugement de goût selon Kant*, Editions du CNRS, Paris 1986. Guillermit calls attention to the fact that Kant's argumentation introduces a new type of the universal through the contrast between determinative and reflective judgments. In the third Critique, too, we can find some traces of understanding that determines the power of judgment as a mere activity of subsumption. So in § 35, for example, the difference between determinative and reflective judgments is comprehended as the difference between the level of the product (notion and intuition) and the level of the producing power (reason and imaginative power), the power of judgment in both cases preserving the same form of subsumptive activity (*cf.* L. Guillermit, *op. cit.*, p. 45).

cognition, excepted from any cognitive doubt. We should rather read it as a standpoint that tries to articulate the moment of indetermination, which is the basis of the theoretic and practical, in the last instance judicial, cognitive determination of the object.

On the basis of what has been said so far, we can now return to the starting point, to the notion of form and its topical meaning. We agree with M. Frank's thought that for Kant form does not mean a picture, an outline or configuration, but it stands above all for the indetermination with the material principle, the absence of reference to material content. The analysis of Kant's third *Critique* and the model of reflective judgment helps us to understand better the absence of material content expressed by the notion of form. On the basis of the principal purpose of reflective judgment – to articulate the moment of indeterminable, upon which it itself is based – M. Frank's thought can also be expressed as follows: form is not the result of abstraction, the removal of material content; it represents a concept with which the absence of content as such is defined, a concept in which absence itself is present.

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Beauty as a four-fold paradox
Alenka Zupančič

I n this study we will attend to the problem of the beautiful as it is posed in Kant's philosophy, where it is closely associated with the problem of the form. First of all, however, it is appropriate to make a problem out of the beautiful, that is to say, to point out the »problematical« status of the beautiful.

The paradox of the beautiful arises above all from the fact that »scientific analysis« is of no use on this territory. Beauty does not stand the definition as long as the latter means positive determination of what makes something beautiful. – If such a definition of the beautiful were available, we would have missed what we call the »specifics of art«: by following certain rules or instructions anyone could produce beauty. The whole prestigious status, charm and spell of beauty is due to its quality of something that cannot be »captured«, to the fact that it cannot be reduced to the »actual« description of a certain object.

Nevertheless, beauty is something we discuss extensively, make judgments about it, and try to articulate theoretically one way or another. We are concerned here precisely with the possibility of a theoretical articulation of the beautiful – bearing in mind that beauty eludes the fundamental apparatus of theory, i.e. the concept. One of the most productive attempts to pursue such a theoretical articulation is Kant's analysis of the beautiful, in which the very impossibility of the classic definition of the beautiful is taken as a positive starting point of the theory. As we are about to see, Kant tries to approach the beautiful in four steps, with four paradoxical definitions, the essential part of which is »the signifier of the lack«, the word *without*. (Beauty is »a liking without interest«, »universality without concept«, »purposiveness without purpose«, and »necessity without concept«.) The essential twist that Kant's analysis achieves is his conception of the lack, which is not tied only to our knowledge of the beautiful, but turns out to be in some intimate and irreducible relation to beauty itself. This is not simply the question of »some« lack. If we look a bit closer at the definitions quoted above, we will soon discover that with formulations as »X without Y« Kant always deprives the first concept (X) exactly of that (Y) which is regarded as its *essential* characterization. – Is it not the essence of every liking that it is bound with interest, is it not the essence of universality that it is based upon concept, is it

not the essence of purposiveness that it has a purpose...? On the grounds of these paradoxical »descriptions« we could formulate Kant's »project« in the following way: *we can achieve the qualities of the beautiful only by way of following the effect of beauty itself on these very qualities* – what happens to a liking when it is tied to the beautiful, what happens to universality when it is tied to beauty...? This also represents the mode of our reading of Kant's theory.

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Although the beautiful as a domain of the aesthetic is on the one hand defined as the third link, the link between theory and practice, it could, on another perspective, be read as the fourth moment: if the first three are sensibility, understanding and reason. Kant's theory of the aesthetic is based upon the concept of sense, but nevertheless it cannot be reduced to it. Aesthetics in the third *Critique* is not the theory of sensibility. When Kant introduced the concept of »transcendental aesthetics« in the first *Critique* he pointed out the double use of the word aesthetics. The difference between aesthetics as a theory of sensibility (which is the original meaning of the Greek *aisthesis* and which is at stake in *Critique of Pure Reason)* and aesthetics as a theory of the beautiful or a theory of judgements of taste is in the following: for sensibility as such it is possible to find a priori principles (space and time as a priori forms of sensibility) but this is altogether impossible for »sensibility« appearing in the phenomenon of the beautiful (a priori conditions of the beautiful cannot be defined). This is the main problem of the third *Critique*: what do we base the discourse of the beautiful on if there is no defined (a priori) concept, law or purpose to rely on. – If, therefore, we can neither rely on theory nor practice, how do we then define the phenomenon of the beautiful? In the following pages we will follow Kant's analysis from § 1 to § 22, in which Kant tries to approach the definition of the beautiful in four steps, each representing a peculiar paradox.

»Pure pleasure« or primacy of the form

A formulation as »pure pleasure« or »pure liking« (*Wohlgefallen*), *Wohlgefallen* without any interest, seems to be in general – and especially in terms of Kant's philosophy – *contradictio in adiecto.* Did not *Critique of Practical Reason* teach us exactly that the essential component of any pleasure is its being pathological, i.e. its being »non-pure«? Nevertheless, Kant uses this very formulation for the first definition of the beautiful, the definition in terms of quality. Pure pleasure, liking without any interest, without any desire in the common sense of the word, is the first condition for aesthetic judgements to exist at all and for »critique of taste« not to be dissolved into the puddle of *de gustibus non est disputandum.* Pleasure in the beautiful is pleasure without interest, enjoyment or representation (*Vorstellung*) of a concept. First of all, this means that we can comprehend and judge an object

aesthetically only when its *existence* is put in parentheses. – Namely, Kant defines interest as liking that is associated with representation of existence of an object. I am »interested« in something if its existence means something to me. I do not like only the object but also its existence. If an object is pleasant for me and evokes contentement in me, this is usually connected with desire for that object. Pure pleasure, though, is pleasure that is not the pleasure of satisfaction. The fact that our senses or our reason are pleased with e.g. a piece of art does not make it beautiful. The beautiful is not what our senses revel in, nor what our understanding would enjoy, nor is it connected with reason's concept of the good. Although a piece of art could consist of all three components, what we call the beautiful cannot be reduced to any of them. After Kant develops the difference between the concept of the good, the sensation of the agreeable and pure liking, the only sensation connected with the beautiful, he concludes: »*Taste* is the ability to judge an object, or a way of presenting it, by means of a liking or disliking *devoid of all interest.* The object of such a liking is called *beautiful.*«[1]

There are different readings of this thesis of Kant. For example, Manfred Frank[2] attaches it to Sartre's thesis from *L'imaginaire,* in which Sartre emphasizes that the aesthetic object is a kind of *irréel.* There are the results of brush strokes, the saturation of canvas with colour, the grained structure of canvas, the gloss with which we cover the colours, which are real. But all this, says Sartre, does not at all form the object of aesthetic evaluation. On the contrary, the »beautiful« is a being which is not offered to perception and which is in its own nature separated from the world. The artist's aim is to create a totality of *real* shades of colour, which enable the manifestation of that unreal.

According to this interpretation the aesthetic judgment does not refer to a »real« exhibit, an object, but to something in this object that cannot be reduced to its »existential description«. Attractive as this interpretation may seem, its range is nevertheless rather limited. It offers no basis, on which we could conceptualize that »unreal« and above all its relation to the subject that »evaluates aesthetically«. We are only told that Beauty is an X, some paradoxical surplus of all the material and »real«, of everything that can be »objectively« stated e.g. about the quality of a painting. Above all this interpretation cannot save Kant from the accusation of not being consistent in his theory. The essential question remains: what authorizes Kant suddenly to introduce the sensation of pleasure as *pure,* non-pathological, when all his previous theory has demonstrated quite the opposite? In comprehending the beautiful, how could we eliminate the sensibility of our senses, which are in fact our only approach to the beautiful? Does Kant not require an

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1. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment,* Hackett, Indianapolis 1987, p. 53.
2. Manfred Frank, *Einführung in die frühromantische Ästhetik,* Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/M, 1989.

impossiblility? Is there not a lie of some artificial »spiritualization« hidden in this requirement? And does Kant's insistence on pure pleasure not mean that before each comprehension of the beautiful one should go through an infinite process of purification of one's senses and one's »pleasure«?

In this respect, Lacan's interpretation is much more farreaching, i.e., his commentary on Antigone, which is not just a commentary on Antigone but also a commentary on Aristotle's and Kant's aesthetics.

Let us take turns. At first Lacan avoids the slippery and often obscure field of distinctions between the real and the unreal by establishing some other distinction, a split between reality and the real, between existence and ex-sistence. From this perspective, beauty has at most to do with the real, and at the same time, it cannot be something attained through description of reality. This is not only a correction in terminologically-cosmetic terms. The real is – as opposed to the unreal – concept; concept in terms of which also that mysterious X gets its name: *objet a,* the object-reason of desire. Hence one can derive the subject's basic relation to the beautiful, a relation which is guided by the dialectic of desire. In Lacan's perspective, it is the subject's desire that plays an essential role in the »sensation« of the beautiful. But the way – and this can be seen as Lacan's interpretation of Kant's pure *Wohlgefallen* – taken by Lacan in his commentary on Antigone is the very way of distinguishing between two components of desire: desire *for something* and »pure desire«, desire in »pure condition«, the way, if we may say, of purification of desire.

»By crossing this field, this area, the ray of desire is here reflected and refracted, thus giving us this extraordinary effect, this most basic effect that we call the effect of the beautiful on desire. It is to see what duplicates desire on its way. We can by no means say that by comprehending beauty, desire completely fades away. Desire goes its own way, but here it is more than anywhere else accompanied by the feeling of deception, in some way displayed by the field of ray and glitter, into which desire has allowed itself to be mislead. On the other hand, there is its non-refracted, but reflected, rebounded unrest, about which desire knows that it is as real as possible. But there is no object anymore. From there stems two sides of nature or fading away of desire in view of beauty, on which some scholars insist, such as Thomas Aquinas, whom I previously quoted. On the other hand the breakdown of every object originates here, the breakdown on which Kant's analysis insisted in Critique of Judgement.*«*

Lacan thus interprets Kant's insistence on the breakdown (of existence) of any object when we enter the territory of beauty. Concerning the problems and questions which were revealed above and were brought forth by Kant's introduction of pure, non-pathological liking, the following Lacanian emphasis is essential: this breakdown of an object or of our interest is already an *effect*

of the beautiful. Not that we must purify our »pleasure« of all pathological impulses and inclinations, interests, to be able to sink in pure contemplation of the beautiful. On the contrary, this pureness of pleasure or desire is already a sign that we have encountered the beautiful, is already »the effect of the beautiful on desire«. Kant alone emphasizes that pleasure« is the effect of and not the cause for our comprehension of beauty (cf. 9). An »indicator« of our dealing with beauty is the very fact that we cannot enjoy (uživati) it, that we cannot consume (užiti) it. We are dealing with beauty only when it is accompanied with the threat »do not touch the beautiful...!« in our conscience. This is the moment completely overlooked in Derrida's interpretation[3], which is preoccupied with the search for »clean cuts«. So the formulation used by Derrida himself, namely »fascination without desire«, is for him merely an inscription of the clean cut on the way of searching for a coherence of the system. And it leaves aside the possibility that fascination may actually have such, that is the rebounding *effect* on desire: that I can never come too close to what really fascinates me, that beauty is something *to which the subject himself responds by a »clean cut«,* that a clean cut is not merely a theoretically-metaphysical instrument.

Furthermore, Kant's insistence on the suspension of existence may be related to what we could call »primacy of the form« and to a specific meaning of the form itself. The beautiful is a form. However, a form, »the pure form of a liking«, does not here mean the shape (which is meant in some other contexts), but, as M. Frank has already pointed out, above all the absence of every consideration of the existence of matter of representation. Or, more precisely, it is exactly what is left if we, for example, subtract all – if we may say so – that can be »seen« in the picture. Form is not simply the (beautiful) shape of matter, it is more than this: it is something that »deprives« matter of the character of materiality and an object of the character of object, the character of something accessible. We may say that it is the object which has lost the character of being object, that is beautiful. The form is not something beyond matter but matter itself which has lost its materiality – it is »sublimated matter«. Here is this coexisting attraction and repulsion of the beautiful: what seems to be a beautiful body, an enticing body, turns into, turns out to be »beauteous body« – and exactly in the sense we use formulation *luminous body.* The body is here only to make light visible. The turned-off »bulb« is »the bulb«, but the turned-on »bulb« is no longer »the bulb«, it is light itself, which, such as it is, keeps us at a distance – if we touch it, we meet only hot matter, too hot for us not to be burnt. In this sense beauty is »the breakdown of an object« and in this sense *Wohlgefallen,* which is dealt with in beauty, is pure, it is without any interest in the object – for, as Lacan says, »there is no object anymore«. It may not be irrelevant to note that Lacan

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3. Jacques Derrida, *La vérité en peinture,* Flammarion, 1978.

here uses the word object in its usual sense and not of *objet a.* The words above could also be understood like this: *objet a* »frees itself«, distracts itself from every particular object with which it may otherwise inhabit the subject's fantasy. The moment of catharsis is also connected with this, the moment which cleanses our feelings of all that is »pathological« – that is of fixation to any particular object which is supposed to promise satisfaction. Antigone is beautiful but she is not the »object of lust«.

Universality without concept, necessity without concept

A further problem that Kant tackles in his analysis of the beautiful is the problem of universality. What is in my aesthetic judgment that makes it more than mere opinion? This is not a small dilemma. It seems to be insoluable in terms of Kantian paradigm, as is stated in *Critique of Pure Reason.* If we start with a division between objective and subjective judgments in the strict sense, then the case is so to say lost. Aesthetic judgments cannot be objective judgments since that would mean that they arise from pure concepts of understanding as *a priori* concepts. If this were true, it would be possible to list in advance all conditions that something has to satisfy in order to be beautiful.

Aesthetics would become science and art mere technical implementation, realization of pure concepts. But if aesthetic judgments were merely and purely subjective, then they would lose all validity. They would not be judgments anymore but expressions of opinion. *De gustibus non est disputandum.* Aesthetic judgments are neither a priori nor a posteriori, they come neither from law (or concept) nor from (past) experience. Then what are they? Kant's solution to this problem is extremely elegant. It simply assumes that besides the a priori universality of the law, there also exists some other universality – symbolic universality, the universality of »symbolic pact«.

For Kant, the judgment of taste is an unique act of interpellation:

»He must not call /the object/ beautiful if he means only that he likes it. Many things may be charming and agreeable to him; no one cares about that. But if he proclaims something to be beautiful, then he requires the same liking from others; he then judges not just for himself but for everyone, and speaks of beauty as if it were a property of things. That is why he says: The thing is beautiful, and does not count on other people to agree with his judgement of liking on the ground that he has repeatedly found them agreeing with him; rather, he demands that they agree.«[4]

The judgment of taste »lays claim to the agreement of everyone«, »it does not postulate everyone's agreement, it merely *requires* this agreement, as instance of the rule«.[5] Derrida's reading of Kant sees in this a kind of simple »legalization of suppression«, which is of course in itself »bad« enough, and

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4. Kant, p. 55.
5. *Ibid.,* p. 59, 60.

therefore he does not try to discover the theoretical interest of the mentioned Kant's assumptions. (Except, of course, that »universality without concept« is again a clean cut, incorporated in the word *without.*) Here we will rather start from the question, what is in this »clean cut« which separates universality from the concept and a priori laws that may be of theoretical interest? As already mentioned, we do not arrive at the universality of judgment of something as beautiful on the basis of (former) experience, nor on the basis of the a priori concept of the beautiful, but through a kind of *speech act.* Thus we arrive at the moment we usually refer to as »how to do things with words«. In this context *Urteilskraft* could be translated quite literally as *power of judgment,* power of judgment to constitute a symbolic universe of validity of this judgment.

But the »speech act« that is characteristic of aesthetic judgments is quite specific. Let us look at it closely. Judgment of taste is a demand with which the subject refers to others. Thus it has to contain in its own form a place, *the place of all others,* wherein every singular subject has to recognize himself. This is, says Kant, the constellation *»eines jeden für jeden anderes«.* – Although we can draw from this the conclusion that everyone is with his judgment the *first* Judge (which means in other words that there is no first Judge) the whole thing is worth reconsidering. It is not simply a particular subject, a particular »I« that utters the demand, wherein all the others have to recognize themselves. On the contrary, »every one«, everyone that utters the judgment »this is beautiful«, already recognizes himself as the addressee of this very demand as the demand of the Other, of some symbolic place. The essential step we have to make is then in the following: it is not that I as I »impose«, that I attribute my judgments to others. In my judgment I myself already speak as the Other, I do not refer to »all the others« with my demand, but with the demand of the Other himself, the Other as the place, on the basis of which universality of judgments of taste is possible and only on the basis of which may I ask for consensus from all the others. Let us try to explain this by means of Kant's examples. Kant resolutely insists that judgments such as »I think this is beautiful« or »this is beautiful for me« are *contradictio in adjecto.* I may say »I like this« but I cannot say »this is beautiful for me«. If something is beautiful, says Kant, then it is beautiful precisely because it is not beautiful *for me* as a particular subject. The aesthetic judgment is therefore constituted in the transition from

<div align="center">

»I like this«

to

»This is beautiful«.

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We can immediately see what happens by means of this transition: the judgment is »desubjectivized«. The inscription of the subject of the annunciated disappears, but the subjectivity is »removed« to the predicate (the

beautiful is the subjectively-universal concept). And this is how 1.) the subject of annunciation, the Other and 2.) the empty place, where »all the others« may recognize themselves as agents of annunciation, are inscribed in the judgment. Of course, the subject of annunciation is inscribed in the judgement precisely as absent. The statement seems to come from »nowhere«, and that is why (every) addressee can recognize himself as the source of it. It is now time to answer the question of what legitimizes my judgment that something is beautiful: the assumption that this is beautiful to the gaze of the Other. It is not that in my judgment I take into consideration »all the others«, what the others will say. I take into consideration the Other as a symbolic entity which only enables me as I to utter the universal judgment »this is beautiful«. What is in the beautiful thing »given to the universe«, is the way the look of the Other has already been inscribed in it. This answer is still partial. In the first place, it refers to the linguistic mechanism which makes this paradoxical universality possible where there is neither concept nor law. It has to be read together with Kant's fourth definition of the beautiful, which says that the beautiful is *»necessity without concept«.* Here Kant goes into the detail of that moment of the second definition (»universality without concept«), which says that in our judgment we *demand* consent from others. Kant lays stress on »exemplary« necessity, necessity that stems from a particular example from which I in my judgment make *an instance of the rule.* In the final analysis, it is only an example – entirely different from an object – that makes transmission possible in the category of the beautiful.[6] And it is the example that is the inscription of the Other, constitutive of the symbolic place, which gives *my* judgment *more universal* validity and opens the dimension of truth in the register of discourse about the beautiful.

It is important here that Kant distinguishes between the example and the ideal. The example does not and cannot have the role of the ideal, it is the agent of a symbolic and not imaginary function in the register of the aesthetic. The difference between the two might be most simply explained by means of the question of the »form«. The example is »pure« form, while the ideal is linked with the imaginary of a certain »content«. Let us try to explain this in particular. Lacan's analysis of Antigone is one of the clearest illustrations of the analysis of the beautiful that takes the beautiful as an example, namely as a »form«. Lacan interprets Antigone's beauty as the result, as the effect of a certain formal, symbolic constellation – of the fact that Antigone will be buried alive, confined in the tomb, condemned to »eternal suffering«. Her beauty is the effect of her being in the field »between two deaths«, and this gives her this mysterious ray that fascinates us (aesthetically). Therefore the beautiful is here the result of a certain entirely »formal« constellation and not

6. Lacan takes this basic Kantian premise as a starting point for his commentary on Antigone, Antigone as an example.

the collection of some positive or visible characteristics that Antigone may possess. This is what makes access to universality possible: we may say that we will perceive the mysterious ray of beauty in every being which turns up in the constellation of such an »instance of the rule«. On the other hand, the ideal of beauty, which always aims at a certain »content«, at the imagery of the image itself, functions as an exception or the point at which we are only approaching infinitly, as an inaccessible »model«. The analysis of the beautiful in the context of ideal is more or less always based upon fantasy, while the analysis of beauty as an example reveals the very mechanism and the role of fantasy (e.g. the fantasy of »eternal suffering«) in our understanding of the beautiful.

Purposiveness without purpose

Purposiveness without purpose (also »formal purposiveness«, »subjective purposiveness«) is the third step in Kant's analysis of the beautiful, the third crucial moment of the beautiful. It could be defined most simply like this: formal purposiveness does not concern things (in their relation to purpose), but the way we conceive these things. We could comprehend the thing as purposive by being led not by representation (*Vorstellung*) of a certain purpose, but by the pure form of purposiveness itself. The beautiful corresponds to something whose concept is not known. M. Frank interprets this moment through Sartre too, more precisely through Sartre's interpretation of the grace (*grâce*) of movement, which he defines as the surplus of mechanical movement. A gracious body is »*the instrument* that manifests *freedom*«. Sartre's interpretation here follows the paradigm, which we have pointed out above in reference to the problem of form: in gracious movement »the nudity of flesh is entirely present, but it cannot be *seen*«.[7] This interpretation rather belongs to the interpretation of the first question, the question of »the quality« of the experience of the beautiful. Later, Frank actually connects it with the moment of the »unreal« in the aesthetic object. But the definition »purposiveness without purpose« brings into discussion about the beautiful also another, new dimension that cannot be reduced to the concept of the »ideal object« of art, whether understood as »unreal« or »real«. It introduces the *dimension of sense,* which was developed in detail by Eric Weill in his text »The sense and the fact«.[8] Although we may not agree with all the conclusions drawn by Weil (especially that in this way the gap between theory and practice is abolished), his argument is well worth summarizing. His starting point is that – in accordance with Kantian's diction – there are two elementary, irreducible *facts:* the fact of understanding or the fact of science on the one hand and the fact of reason or the fact of moral law on the other. He adds a third »fact«, namely that mere fact in itself has no sense. Our

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7. J.-P. Sartre, *L'être et le néant,* Paris 1943, p. 470.
8. Eric Weil, »Sens et fait«, *Problèmes kantiens,* Vrin, Paris 1990.

thinking as such has the character of contingency. For Weil the third *Critique* is written exactly as the answer to this question, the question of sense. The new fact introduced by this critique, is sense, *Sinn,* and not only *Sinn* as sensation, but also and above all as *meaning.* If we say this with Weil's words, »la *Critique de la Judicaire* veut comprendre les *faits sensés* ... à présent, le sens est un fait, les faits ont un sens, voilà la position fondamentale de la dernière *Critique.*«[9]

It is of course purposiveness that introduces the dimension of sense into the discussion. Beauty is beauty only if it is contingent, if we know that it does not serve any purpose, that it is not created with any particular intention. That is why, for Kant, elementary examples of the beautiful are natural creations. But what some natural creation makes beautiful is at same time what evokes in us the feeling *as if* nature *knows* what it is doing, as if this contingency has meaning. Kant calls this effect »purposiveness without purpose«. The expression »without purpose« which is inscribed in Kant's persistent repetition that this purposiveness or necessity is itself contingent, has the same consequences for the status of sense which it introduces: in this context the moment of contingency by definition attaches to sense.

So we come across form again. Due to formal purposiveness we are facing something that is purposive in terms of the form, but not in terms of the »content«, where the content simply means the description of the positive purpose which is to be served. In other words, it is the form of our vision which cannot see the gaze, *for which* this seeming purposiveness has a defined purpose. The absence of purpose generates our *assumption* that there is the gaze, for which this purposiveness follows some purpose. – We are dealing with the beautiful as long as this remains an assumption, as long as we cannot see anything but form itself. However, when this assumption turns into certainty, into knowledge of such a gaze and through it of some defined »content«, the object loses the charm of the beautiful and becomes a kind of »work of craftsmanship«.

The formal purposiveness which is at stake here, is not the work of a particular mind or a particular person, it is not the result of some activity, but simply is, we come across it, it always has the form of *an encounter,* of something we do not expect.

This starting paradigm has two interesting consequences, the first refers to the status of the subject and the second to the status of the thing in itself. Let us start with the second. According to problems of the sense of the relation between the thing in itself and the phenomenon, »the thing for us«, could be seen in a new light. The thing in itself is as such the field of a radical absence of the sense, it is the incorporation of non-sense. The thing is »in itself«

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9. *Ibid.,* pp. 64-65.

exactly because »for us« it has no sense. And the phenomenon is exactly the thing in itself, which has been given some sense. It is also the sense what makes of the world of phenomena something more than a mere conglomerate of causes and effects since it introduces a new dimension, the dimension of the symbolic which is not reducible to them. (Hence we could understand Kant's insisting that »practice« as the register of pure moral acts should be tied to the sphere of the thing in itself, noumen, of that which escapes phenomena. The ethical act is never a »sensible« act. I perform an act only if I follow exclusively a pure, »senseless« form of the categorical imperative. The act draws its sense from remaining outside sense, from its being *hors-sens* in the strict meaning of the word. It is therefore not possible to say that by the inscription of the sense the gap between theory and practice, understanding and reason, is erased. On the contrary, only by this inscription does it gain its real dimension.)

What does this dimension of sense mean for the status of the subject, which, for example, comprehends something as beautiful?

It is well known that the third *Critique* deals with facts that do not provide the material to construct science in the classic sense of the word, which are not therefore a priori definable and legal, in a word, which are *contingent.* So we are dealing with a kind of nonsense which is found on the level of mere phenomena, but which nevertheless reveals some sense or, more precisely, to which we respond with sense. Our knowledge of nature (in a broader sense) remains »incomplete«, »non-whole«: and it is exactly this lack of knowledge that makes us the masters of sense. We are the masters of sense because we are not the masters of facts. It is the irreducible contingency, groundlessness, the absence of a cause of certain facts that generates the production of sense. Where the mechanism of causality fails, sense comes to take its place. And beauty is the effect of such a »missing link«. We could also place Lacan's thesis that beauty always arises from a certain lack or emptiness in this line of interpretation.

On the other hand, this lack of cause or purpose in the phenomenon of the beautiful is inscribed in this phenomenon as the impossibility of »knowledge of the beautiful«.

Scientific discourse can tell us everything about an object, everything but the reason for its being beautiful, – since its beauty is due precisely to the fact that it has no reason at all to be beautiful. The tulip has no reason to be beautiful, and this is its beauty. This »ignorance«, this lack of knowledge, the impossibility of finding the grounds of beauty, is necessary in terms of the structure, and it is not something that could be gradually »compensated for«. – This is precisely the conclusion at which Derrida arrives in his analysis.[10] We

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10. J. Derrida, *La vérité en peinture*, p. 103.

may know everything about the tulip, claims Derrida, everything but the reason for its being beautiful. Why it is beautiful is not something that could be accounted for some day by means of progress of knowledge, providing us with an ability to regard it as beautiful and to know why. Ignorance is a standpoint, the irreducibility of which enables the beautiful to exist.

The function of judge or the postmodernist challenge in contemporary legal philosophy

Kelsen – Hart – Dworkin

Jelica Šumič-Riha

O ne of the main challenges of contemporary philosophy of law is to solve the problem of form, that is to say, of consistency, of completeness, of »wholeness« of law. From the point of view of predominantly positivist legal theory, the problem of wholeness of law could be: how to achieve a unified legal system, and in what way is it to be guaranteed? Leaving aside the question why the law is supposed to be whole at all, why is it necessary to conceive the law as a unified system, we should, nevertheless, point out that this presupposition has never been put into question by contemporary legal philosophy. A full account of this problem is yet to be given, though not in the present paper, since it could not be integrated within its general framework. In this context, we could suggest only the general idea of the possible answer to this question, that the universally accepted presupposition of wholeness of law is a part of the problem, not the method of its solution.

The aim of this paper is to suggest why the interpretation of law, by taking as its basis the very presupposition of the wholeness of law, also could be understood as a rejection of the challenge of postmodernism. For our present purpose, postmodernist enterprise in theory and practice could be characterized as an attempt to demonstrate how truth, consensus, unity and sameness are produced by marginalization, exclusion and suppression of differences. In the case of the institution of law as a practice of social regulation, the postmodernist project is preoccupied, generally speaking, with the denouncement of the totalitarian feature of the universalizing pretensions of legal discourse and, more specifically, with the paradoxical relation between finding the truth or, rather, the »right« interpretation, and the exercise of power.

For our present purpose, it is not necessary to analyse in detail how each of the three legal philosophers mentioned in the title tackled this problem. What is important, however, is to show in what way the answers given to this question by Kelsen, Hart and Dworkin focus on the role of the judge in exercising legal power. Our starting hypothesis is that the judge or, rather, the exercising of judicial power, may well be understood as the point at which the whole interpretation of law as a unified system breaks down.

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The solution proposed by Kelsen in his first major work, *Reine Rechtslehre*, is a hierarchical system of legal norms with a fundamental norm *(Grundnorm)* as

its basis. But in his later work, a legal system is conceived as a set of individual judicial decisions, »linked together,« as B. S. Jackson puts it, »only by the fact that they belong to a common system of authorisation.«[1] Regardless of important differences between *Pure Theory of Law* and Kelsen's later doctrine of norms, for Kelsen, the wholeness of law is not at issue. According to Kelsen, a system of norms belongs to the legal universe if and only if the condition of normative consistency is fulfilled. In other words, a legal system is experienced as unified and taken for granted as such from the very start.

For Hart, the law is to be conceived as the union of primary and secondary rules, where primary rules are rules to guide the behaviour of individuals, while secondary rules are rules about primary rules, of how they are to be created and recognized. The rule of recognition is a means by which an appropriate authority provides an »identity card« indicating that a rule in question belongs to a legal system and has, therefore, legal validity. In short, the law is that which is declared as such by the »rule of recognition.« This fundamental rule, which in many ways functions analogously to Kelsen's *Grundnorm,* is based on universal acceptance by a given community or, at least, by officials exercising judicial power.

For Kelsen as well as for Hart, declaring themselves legal positivists, the law is a system of rules unified by an exceptional rule. Because of its exceptional position, this rule – *Grundnorm* for Kelsen or the rule of recognition for Hart – could be called a master rule. It is nothing but a pure signifier, giving unity and identity to an assemblage of unrelated rules or, rather, totalizing a field of dispersed rules into a discrete, hierarchical legal system.

From the point of view of legal positivism, every legal system has an ultimate norm or rule, a rule of recognition, or the *Grundnorm,* which is the basis of all legal norms/rules. This fundamental rule/norm defines the ultimate criteria of validity for all rules/norms of the system. At the same time, it defines those practical considerations and principles that are relevant and legally binding grounds for judicial decision-making. This fundamental rule/norm, being ultimate, cannot itself be valid, at least not in the sense in which other legal rules are valid, because it does not rest on some further standard of validity (a more fundamental rule/norm), but simply on its universal acceptance. It is the sole rule in a legal system of rules whose validity or, rather, binding force depends upon its acceptance. It is noteworthy that accepting a positivist conception of law leads almost automatically to the conclusion, drawn also by Kelsen and Hart, that what could not be subsumed under a hierarchical system of rules falls out of law or, strictly speaking, is not law.

For legal positivists as Kelsen and Hart, the legal system is distinguished from other normative systems by the fact that the validity of legal norms/rules is

1. B.S. Jackson, *Semiotics and Legal Theory,* Routledge & Kegan Paul, London and New York 1985, p. 234.

determined by their recognition by certain authoritative institutions, namely the courts, which are charged with interpretation and application of the norms/rules of the system. On the other hand, legal norms are conceived not only as standards guiding human behaviour, but also as standards and criteria defining judicial duties and guiding judicial decisions. For every legal system to function, at least from the point of view of legal positivism, there must be a shared context of interpretation of rules in which legislator (law-maker), judge (law-applier), and ordinary law-follower participate.

To establish this shared context of interpretation of rules or norms, we must distinguish, according to Kelsen, two forms of meaning: subjective and objective. Subjective meaning is the meaning given to an act by the subject or law-follower himself. Objective meaning, on the contrary, is the meaning of an act resulting from its interpretation in light of a legal norm. The general idea of Kelsen's conception of legal interpretation is that not only law-maker and law-applier, but law-follower as well, is in a position to know whether his/her act is legal. Any reasonable individual is, therefore, capable of judging his/her own behaviour objectively. Objective knowledge is in *Pure Theory of Law*, at least in principle, available to all:

»If the 'ought' is also the objective meaning of the act, the behaviour at which the act is directed is regarded as something that ought to be not only from the point of view the individual who has performed the act, but also from the point of view of the individual at whose behaviour the act is directed, and of the third individual not involved in the relation between the two ... then the 'ought' as the objective meaning of an act, is a valid norm binding upon the addressee, that is, the individual at whom it is directed. The ought which is the subjective meaning of an act of will is also the objective meaning of this act, if this act has been invested with this meaning, if it has been authorized by a norm, which therefore has the character of a 'higher' norm.«[2]

Kelsen's conception of the norm is ambiguous, even controversial – the evidence is this very passage – because the norm is presented as a »schema of interpretation« of an act and, at the same time, as the meaning of an act of will. The only reasonable solution would be – since the norm cannot be both a schema of interpretation and its object – to disregard one of the two alternatives. It is not always clear which alternative was chosen by Kelsen himself. One of the reasons for this embarrassing situation is that the universally available objectivity of meaning is compatible only with the conception of norm as a schema of interpretation. But it is difficult to reconcile the universalisation of objective meaning with the conception of the norm as the »meaning of an act of will.«

This tension between two conceptions becomes even more obvious in Kelsen's position on conflicting norms. The answer to this problem, as presented in his

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2. H. Kelsen, *Pure Theory of Law*, 1967, p. 7f.

first conception of norm, could be formulated as follows: If a legal system contains incompatible prescriptions obliging the law-follower to behave in a certain manner and, at the same time, not to behave in this way, then no objectively valid legal norm is present. The second conception is a rejection of this view. Two rules within the same legal system may be in conflict and, therefore, may place a rule-follower in a dilemma: to follow one or the other? But this conflict of norms is by later Kelsen no longer regarded as relevant to the meaning of the act as legal, because each rule, each prescription within a legal system is to be understood as a separate act of will. What is required, however, is that those acts of will should be issued by a competent authority. The same could be said of the objective or legal meaning of an act. The official, that is, legal quality of an act is determined only by the decision of a legal authority:

»Objective meaning is a form of institutional meaning, but it is conferred not in accordance with the views of the participants but according to objective criteria, even though these objective criteria appear, in the later Kelsen at least, as no more then the fact of decision by a competent legal organ. The act of a footballer in kicking the ball into the net may have the subjective meaning of a 'goal,' in that the player understands his act as having that significance under the rules of the game of football. If the referee so rules, the act also has the objective meaning of a goal; if he whistles for off-side, the subjective meaning of the act does not correspond to its objective meaning.«[3]

In the application of legal rule by a judge, the interpretation of the rule in question rests on an act of will by which the judge as law-applier chooses between the possible interpretations of rule. It is, therefore, possible that a judge may choose the wrong alternative and make the wrong decision. But even if such a decision is considered a mistake, it is not null or invalid. Until this decision is annulled by a higher legal authority, it is legally valid, since it was made by a competent legal organ. Notwithstanding the fact that Kelsen regards legal errata or wrong legal decisions as legally valid as correct legal decisions, this does not mean that judicial decision-making is arbitrary. As Kelsen puts it:

»In Plato's ideal state, in which judges may decide all cases entirely at their discretion, unhampered by any general norms issued by a legislator, every decision is, nevertheless, an application of the general norm that determines under what conditions an individual is authorized to act as a judge.«[4]

In theory, every interpretation of a statute, every application of law, is, according to Kelsen, legal insofar as it remains within the frame constituted by the statute itself. But this frame, as shown, does not preclude possible mistakes. Kelsen, of course, being a legal positivist, cannot concede in advance that a

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3. B.S. Jackson, *Op. cit.*, p. 238.
4. H. Kelsen, *Op. cit.*, p. 235.

mistaken judicial interpretation is possible. Even more, for a legal positivist like Kelsen it is impossible to reconcile the idea that the statute itself renders the wrong decision possible.

The solution offerd by Kelsen is the following: Inasmuch as a decision is made by a competent legal organ whose competence was conferrerd to it by a higher legal authority, it should be regarded as legally valid. Even a wrong decision counts as valid until annulled by a higher instance as erroneous. What confers to a decision its validity is, therefore, not its »correctness,« but, rather, the fact that it was made by an official charged with the task to issue authoritative decisions. A mistake counts as a mistake if and only if it was declared as such by a competent (higher) authority. In other words, the legal meaning of judicial decision, whether »right« or »wrong« in itself, is determined, necessarily, retroactively.

We might say that in spite of Kelsen's own intention to preserve the wholeness of law, a legal system as unified, his later conception of norm undermines his initial project. It is true that a higher norm determines a lower norm, that »the act by which the individual norm of judicial decision is created is usually predetermined ... by general norms of formal and material law,«[5] but Kelsen, nevertheless, rejects any logical relationship of inference between a general norm and an individual norm. It is a mistake, according to the later Kelsen, to believe that the two most important logical principles, the law of non-contradiction and the rule of inference, are applicable to the relations between norms of positive law. A general or »higher« norm is not to be regarded as a premise having an individual norm as its conclusion. To illustrate Kelsen's position, we might use his own exemple:

So far as the applicability of the logical rule of inference to legal norms is concerned, the question is whether, from the validity of a general norm such as »All thieves should be punished,« the validity of an individual norm such as »Smith the thief should be punished« follows logically in just the same way as it follows from the truth of the general statement »All men are mortal« that the individual statement »Socrates is mortal« is true. But there is no similar normative syllogism: even if the general norm holds, that »All thieves should be sent to prison,« it is still possible for the individual norm to hold, that »Smith the thief should not be sent to prison.« If a norm is conceived as a meaning of the act of will, then no individual norm could be implicit in the general norm because, as Kelsen puts it, the judge is a different man from the legislator and his act of will cannot be implicit in the act of will of another man. Whether the judge decides that Smith the thief should be sent to prison or not, his decision is based only on his act of will, not on the relationship of inference between higher and lower norm. Even if the decision made by the judge is in accordance with the rule of inference, this is only because the judge

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5. *Op. cit*, p. 242.

wanted to make it so. But Kelsen goes even further and states that, whatever motives the judge might have in making his decision, these motives are irrelevant to the legal status of his decision.

Notwithstanding the fact that this view of the later Kelsen concerning norms is hardly acceptable even to his followers, it is a logical consequence of his positivist position. But there still remains to be explained how to preserve the objective validity of judicial decisions. In the absence of the normative syllogism, which means that the legal validity of judicial decisions can not be guaranteed in advance by any logical relationship between norms, the only answer seems to be that legal validity is presupposed. In this sense we could say that whatever a judge decides, it should be regarded as legally valid because the decision was issued by a competent legal organ. What guarantees the legal validity of the legal application is only the authoritative status of the law-applier.

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For Hart, to solve the problem of judicial interpretation is to find the middle way between »formalism« and the »skepticism« or »realism.« The stability and order, necessary for legal interpretation are guaranteed by the »core of the settled meaning« of general expressions. On the other hand, »penumbra of uncertainty« saves the legal interpretation from the dangers of formalism. But Hart's distinction between central clarity (a core of the fixed meaning) and peripheral shadow (a margin of uncertain meaning that is yet to be determined) implies more than a conventional theory of language. As to the question of why is it necessary to presuppose a »core of settled meaning« at all, Hart's position is clear and firm:

»If it were not possible to communicate general standards of conduct, which multitudes of individuals could understand, without further direction, as requiring from them certain conduct when occasion arose, nothing that we now recognize as law could exist«[6].

And even more explicitly:

»If we are to communicate with each other at all, and if, as in the most elementary form of law, we are to express our intentions that certain type of behaviour be regulated by rules, then the general words we use... must have some standard instance in which no doubts are felt about their application. There must be a core of settled meaning, but there will be, as well, a penumbra of debatable cases in in which words are neither obviously applicable nor obviously ruled out.«[7]

We could summarize Hart's answer to this question as follows: the presupposition of a »core of settled meaning« is necessary because the

6. H.L.A. Hart, *The Concept of Law*, Oxford 1961, p. 121.
7. *Ibid.*

existence of law as an institution of social regulation depends upon it. But even though his theory of judicial interpretation is based on distinction between paradigm-cases or clear-cases and difficult cases, Hart is nevertheless forced to admit that there is no answer or, at least, no unproblematic answer to the question »what makes a 'clear case' clear or makes a general rule obviously and uniquely applicable to a particular case.«

In *The Concept of Law*, Hart presents the question of legal interpretation not as a question of »what is the meaning of expression X« but, rather, as a question of »does/ought expression X apply to situation Y?« And it is in the context of this reformulation that we must situate Hart's distinction between »plain cases constantly recurring in similar contexts to which general expressions are clearly applicable«[8] and difficult cases, possesing only some of the features of plain cases but lacking others. Hart describes these debatable cases as follows:

»There are reasons both for and against our use of a general term, and no firm convention or general agreement dictates its use, or, on the other hand, its rejection by the person concerned to classify. If in such cases doubts are to be resolved, something in the nature of a choice between open alternatives must be made by whoever is to resolve them.«[9]

The significance of this reformulation of the question of legal interpretation is not only that we do not know in advance whether concept X applies to situation Y, but also that it is the interpretation itself that decides whether concept X should or should not apply to situation Y.

The gist of this distinction between clear and penumbral cases is not that the clear cases are unproblematic and need no interpretation because they are characterized« by a »core of undisputed meaning« but, rather, that they are recognized as unproblematic because the meaning of the general expressions applied in them has not been disputed. The same could be said of the applicability of legal rules to concrete cases. As Hart puts it:

»Legal rules may have a central core of undisputed meaning, and in some cases it may be difficult to imagine a dispute as to the meaning of a rule breaking out. ... Yet all rules have a penumbra of uncertainty where the judge must choose between alternatives. Even the meaning of the innocent-seeming provision of the Wills Act that the testator must sign the will may prove doubtful in certain circumstances.«[10]

We could say that, according to Hart, for all rules some unforseen circumstances may arise that could render their application questionable. In other words, though the distinction between easy cases and hard cases is useful and perhaps even necessary for judicial interpretation, it is impossible to decide in advance which case is easy and which is difficult.

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8. *Op. cit.,* p. 123.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Op. cit.,* p. 12.

But how, then, is the judge in the position to know if a certain general rule applies to particular cases in the absence of a positive standard or criterion for his/her interpretation? Hart's answer to this question is phrased almost in Wittgensteinian manner: Even if canons of interpretation existed, they could not eliminate the uncertainty of interpretation since they would be themselves rules and would, therefore, require their own interpretation.

In fact, the discretion left to the judge by language itself is very wide. Whenever the judge applies the rule to a particular case, notwithstanding the fact that his/her application may be correct, wrong or even arbitrary, his/her interpretation of the rule in question is a result of a decision, of a choice among possible alternatives. The reason that makes such choice necessary is that which Hart labeled »open texture« of all rules and standards. At some point of legal practice, all legal rules prove to be ultimately indeterminate and their application uncertain because they use expressions of a natural language which is, by hypothesis, irreducibly open textured.

Judicial discretion is, then, founded in the nature of the interpretation itself, in its ultimate uncertainty. Of course, it would be inacceptable, at least for Hart, to imply that judicial interpretation is in essence arbitrary. On the contrary, rather than arbitrariness, open texture of legal rules implies judicial responsibility. It is clear that the ordinary meaning of general terms could not be taken for granted, since the ordinary meaning as warranted by everyday usage is often burdened with ideological implications. But on the other hand, if the judge decides to take the ordinary meaning for granted, he is nevertheless responsible for that decision. We could say that, despite the fact that our everyday legal experience may present different evidence, there is, in principle, no »automatic« application of legal rules to particular cases and, therefore, no alibi for judicial decisions.

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Amongst contemporary legal philosophers, R. Dworkin has dealt most explicitly with the questions relating to the function of judge and, consequently, developed in detail a theory of adjudication, a theory conceived to be both a description of how a judge in fact interprets a given legal doctrine and how s/he should interpret it if his/her interpretation is to be valid or – to put it in terms of Dworkin's philosophy – the right one and if the »rightness« of his/hers interpretation is to be guaranteed.

One of the slogans of Dworkin's theory of adjudication is that there is always a right answer to a question of law and, therefore, always a right, unique solution to all cases, even the most difficult. It is clear that this position is in conflict with the positivist conception of law. Dworkin criticizes two tenets of positivist theory: the positivist doctrine conceiving the law as a system consisting only of rules, and the doctrine of judicial discretion saying that in the absence of a clear rule judges have discretionary power to create a new rule.

Dworkin rejects the positivist approach and its methodological principles, above all, the separation of law and morals. Dworkin argues that the ultimate foundation of law is not a rule of recognition or a Kelsenian basic rule, but a set of legal principles. Legal rules can be morally unjust – this is especially evident in the case of Nazi law – but they are, nevertheless, in their essence, based on moral principles. This does not mean that legal principles are »morally correct principles« or that law is always morally right. Legal principles are not fashioned in accordance with a given positive morality. They may be morally disputable, but with regard to their form they are necessarily moral.

If a positivist picture of law is a hierarchical system of rules, Dworkin offers a pluralistic picture of dispersed principles, linked together in a loose web rather than in structure. It would, therefore, be absurd to seek to discover their origin, to locate their utterer:

»We make a case for a principle, for its weight, by appealing to an amalgam of practices and other principles in which the implications of legislative and judicial history figure along with appeals to community practices and understandings'.[11]

Contrary to hierarchically organized legal rules or legal norms, »a principle is a principle of law if it figures in the soundest theory of law that can be provided as a justification for the explicit and substantive rules of the jurisdiction in question.«[12]

As a consequence of this modern, though not modernist, picture of law, Dworkin refuses to establish a typically positivist distinction between legal theory and legal practice. For him, legal theory is in its essence (interpretative) practice, on the other hand, legal practice is already in itself a theory of interpretation. Dworkin describes a judge as a Hercules who is capable of finding a solution for every case by being a philosopher and a practitioner at the same time. As a philosopher he builds a theory as a means to justify his decisions as judge, as a law-applier he verifies a theory that he himself has developed before. The weakness of this theory of adjudication is clearly in its circularity:

»If jurisprudence is to form principles capable of justifying practices and rules, what are the practices and rules that have to be justified?«[13]

What is needed to identify principles as foundation of legal practice and theory is a construction, a creative interpretation rather than a discovery. We might say that in theory it goes smoothly, but in practice Dworkin faces again the circularity:

»Since there are no permanent criteria enabling the scholar to identify them, he is forced to look among the principles elaborated from the rules for the

11. R. Dworkin, *Taking Rights Seriously*, London 1977, p. 18.

12. *Op. cit.*, p. 36.

13. M. Troper, »Judges Taken to Seriously: Professor Dworkin's views on Jurisprudence,« *Ratio Juris*, Vol. 1, No. 2, July 1988, p. 168.

criteria that will serve to select those rules, which will in turn serve to elaborate the principles, etc.«[14]

Despite the fact that Dworkin describes practicing law and theorizing about it as a creative activity, he nevertheless criticizes positivists for stating – as shown on Kelsen's and Hart's example – that judges actually create new rules, in short, that judges make law. In Dworkin's theory of judicial decision-making, the judge can never make law, he is never in the position of legislator, autonomous in relation to legal discourse. If for positivists, especially for Kelsen, unity of law is not given in advance but, rather, constituted only retroactively by an act of will of legal authority, for Dworkin the legal universe is always already coherent, consistent, whole. The position of the judge changes radically:

»Each judge must regard himself, in deciding the new case before him, as a partner in a complex chain enterprise of which innumerable decisions, structures, conventions, and practices are the history; it is his job to continue that history into the future through what he does on the day. He must interpret what has gone before because he has a responsibility to advance the enterprise in hand rather than strike out in some new direction of his own.«[15]

Creativity of interpretation is not in itself an end but it serves a higher end that is to »advance the enterprise hand,« as Dworkin puts it. The very essence of Dworkin's interpretative activity is to preserve the continuity of the enterprise. Even more, judicial interpretation can never be really innovative, creative since beliefs of a judge – as a precondition of his interpretation – are already shaped by the legal enterprise itself. Judicial interpretations may differ, they may even be controversial but this controversy does not testify against the unity of law, since all interpretation must be regarded as links of the same chain, as elements of the same narrative tradition.

Where legal positivists, especially Kelsen and Hart, insist on judicial responsibility in the process of decision-making, the obligation of Dworkin's judge is only to follow instructions arising from the legal enterprise itself. He is not responsible for his interpretation, since his interpretation is already predetermined by legal tradition. In so far we may agree with M. Troper,[16] who claims that Dworkin's theory of adjudication provides an ideological justification for ideological judicial practice. Dworkin, by merely denying the existence of the judicial discretion, only repeats what judges themselves say that they are merely applying the legislator's intentions or, as in Dworkin's case, fundamental principles embedded in the legal enterprise.

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14. *Ibid.*
15. R. Dworkin, *A Matter of Principle*, London 1985, p.159.
16. M. Troper, *Op. cit*, p. 174.

Rousseau's great legislator:
an empty form of authority?
Eva D. Bahovec

R ousseau is supposed to be the father of the modern theory of the state. The third book of his *Social Contract* is a teatise on different forms of government – on democracy, aristocracy, monarchy – but also on government in general and »its tendency to degenerate.« How could this tendency to degenerate be explained in relation to the concept of the legislator as an instancy of pure, impersonal law, an empty form of government, introduced in the second book?

Besides the idea of Rousseau's »invention« of the modern state, he is suffering from a much wider range of »paternity complex,« and he is regarded as the father of many other things: modern educational theory, anthropology, literary theory, theory of music, theory of theatre, etc. But the problem of paternity in Rousseau could be approached from quite a different point of view, claiming that the very instancy of the father, in all its multiple forms and images, was invented by Rousseau himself.

The central issue of Rousseau's work is, so to speak, civilization and its discontents. Examining the paternal figures and the images of authority, we have to start with his famous sentence, according to which »Emile is an orphan.« Schérer understands it as the abolition of the paternal function, and Châteaux as if the tutor has to take the place of the father.[1] But speaking of the modernity of Rousseau's project, the problem should be brought together with the whole range of paternal functions, as reinvented in Freud, making government, together with education and psychoanalysis, one of the three impossible professions.[2] What is to be questioned, is the very nature of this impossibility.

If we look at Rousseau's images of authority, the multiple images (some of them partly overlapping, the others distinguished from a common counterpoint, some of them clearly different, the others slowly sliding into each other), all these multiple images become suddenly intelligible in the horizon of Rousseau's prevalent endeavour. First, one has to cope with the

1. *Cf.* R. Schérer, *Emile perverti ou des rapports entre l'éducation et la séxualite,* Laffont, Paris 1974, and J. Château, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau et sa philosophie de l'éducation,* Vrin, Paris 1962.
2. *Cf.* S. Freud, »Die endliche und die unendliche Analyse« (1937d), *Studienausgabe,* Ergänzungsband, Fischer, Frankfurt/M 1975, p. 389.

actual authority, the »biological« father in the sphere of the political, the royal authority. His role is to maintain the false, destructive social order, and his interest lies precisely in exploiting his subjects. But this is not just the problem of heredity, for even elective kings become tyrants. Thus, the difficulty seems to be a deeper one, concerning the very essence of the government.[3]

Then there are, in opposition to the actual authority of the monarch, several other paternal figures: the legislative authority from *Contrat social,* acting as »merely a mechanical device;« the therapeutic authority, as examplified in Wolmar from *Julie ou la nouvelle Héloïse;* the palliative authority, (again in Wolmar, but in the image of the legislator as well); and finally the domestic or preventive authority from *Emile ou de l'éducation.*[4]

The royal authority is analyzed in tension with the ideal authority of the pure, impersonal rule of law. Yet, the pure legislative authority with no personal influence on people is again of no real value, since law is not self-perpetuating; so the legislator has to reconstruct every man of the community, being responsible for the spirit of laws, and thus for continuing education. It has to be a creative authority, as Judith Shklar puts, proceeding by force of personality. Nonetheless, here again Rousseau remains ambiguous, since he finally doubts, once again, whether it was possible at all.

Then we have the therapeutic authority of Wolmar, his self-sufficiency, justice and love of order. Like the legislator, he is made according to the image of God, having the palliative force of his invisible omnipresence, needing to do very little – he just simply must be there. Wolmar is the most perfect image of a man of authority, although very little is said about his outlook. His look, *»fin et froid,«* reaches everyone's heart directly, and he knows all about them.

And here again, this rule of abstinence could be perhaps even better pursued analyzing the tutor's first and principle rule of negative education – pure prevention of perversion and deviation from nature, because of which Emile has to be under total, omnipresent surveillance of his tutor. Emile is not supposed to make a step on his own, not previously previewed or intended by the tutor. He is never to be left alone, neither during the day, nor at night; the tutor's control is not to relax even for a moment. And like Wolmar, he does not hesitate to employ deceits. Even when Emile is grown up and is about to

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3. *Cf.* J.-J. Rousseau, *Contrat social, Oeuvres complètes,* Vol. III, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Paris 1964, Book III, Chapter 10, and *passim.* I am also referring to A. Grosrichard's unpublished lecture at University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, February 1988.

4. I am referring to J. Shklar, *Men and Citizens.* A study of Rousseau's social theory, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1969, and her paper »Rousseau's images of authority,« in M. Cranston (ed.), *Hobbes and Rousseau.* A collection of critical essays, Anchor Books, New York 1972, p. 333-365. However, Shklar is speaking about four distinctive images of authority, but from the paternal instancy point of view there is no essential difference between the last two.

marry, the tutor says: »I must be very careful, that he chooses his beloved according to his, that is, according to my choice.«[5]

The three Freudian images of authority and of impossible professions meet here another, yet related, question, namely, how to explain the greatness of the paternal figure on which authority is based. This is the problem Rousseau has to cope with all the time, as soon as he discovers that the magical force by which they operate has to be personal, that one has to have the law *plus* the magnetic personality. This is also why Shklar is so puzzled by the fact that of all Rousseau's images of authority, the legislator is the least well drawn and the least convincing figure. They have to have an example, so impressive that it inspires the wish to imitate – the guiding hand, of course, has to remain hidden. The real legislative authority is supposed to prevent perversion, like Emile's tutor, and he has to be a Godlike creature as well, like Wolmar, a *subject who is supposed to know,*[6] creating a kind of psychic dependency that is the condition of possibility, the necessary condition for freedom and order.

Instead of speaking about the tension between the actual and the ideal, doubtfully possible – or impossible at all – we have more likely to do with the instancy of the law, the name of the father, on the one hand, and the characteristic of greatness itself, the greatness of the great man, which, according to Freud's analysis in *Der Mann Moses und die Monotheistische Religion* (1939a),[7] is not to be measured by their work, the products of their activity, but by the way they influence the others, by their broad impact and fascination.

Namely, when Rousseau mentions the concrete examples of the great legislators, he says: Licurgus, Numa and Moses, or Numa, Solon, and Moses, and this puzzles Rousseau's interpreters very much.[8] The Spartan and the Roman are brave heroes, of course, since the myth of antiquity was so important for the Enlightenment, but why Moses, why this figure from Jewish, not Christian, religion?

Here again we have the two images of Moses, the image of the great legislator and that of *faiseur des miracles,* a miraculous personality, and it has nothing to do with, or should at least be taken apart from, the *légation divine.* But it has to do with Rousseau's invention of the paternal instancy, reinvented by Freud,

5. Cf. J. Château, op. cit., p. 189. On »negative education« cf. J.-J. Rousseau, *Emile ou de l'éducation, Oeuvres complètes,* Vol. IV, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Paris 1969, p. 323 ff.

6. Cf. J. Lacan, *Les quatres concepts fondamentaux de la psychanalyse,* Le Séminaire XI, Seuil, Paris 1973.

7. Cf. S. Freud, *Der Mann Moses und die Monotheistische Religion* (1939a), *Studienausgabe,* Bd. IX, Fischer, Frankfurt/M 1975, p. 455; cf. also S. Freud, *Massenpsychologie und Ich-analyse* (1921c), *ibid,* p. 61.

8. Cf. B. Baczko, »Moïse, législateur...«, in S. Harvey, H. Hobson, D. Kelley & S. S. B. Taylor (eds.), *Reappraisals of Rousseau.* Studies in honour of R. A. Leigh, Manchester University Press, Manchester 1980, p. 111-130.

where Moses is put into relation to Oedipus and to its beyond, to the basic impossibility of its resolution.

Whereas Lycurgus, Numa and Solon are the embodiment of an ideal, the pure negative of the present-day tyranic kings and governors, Moses represents the other side of the coin. His magnetic personality, as Rousseau puts it, his secret, hypnotic power derives from what Freud calls the uncanny, *das Unheimliche:* »something archaic and very well known,« which has been subjected to repression. The hypnotism of the archaic places thus Moses, beyond the series of the great legislators, into a quite different line of succession. Together with the primal father, *Urvater,* he represents a horrifying image of the big Other, a tribute to be paid to enter into civilization and the reason of its discontents. It is the side of the paternal instancy which opens the dimension of *the real,* of the impossible – an irreductible remnant and a residue of *the symbolic.* It is the other, darker side of the legislator, of this symbolic instancy of impersonal law, decribed by Lacan as an instancy of wholeness, of horrifying, unavoidable presence.

One of the main difficulties in interpreting Rousseau's work lies in its ambiguous, even contradictory nature. The theoretical tensions and conflicts seem to be so powerful that many interpretations, compared to each other, ended in the extreme opposites: Rousseau was proclaimed to be either totalitarian or liberal, promoting the civil society or the state, pure individuality or strict collectivity, not to speak about the discussions about his influence on the French revolution. This duality and contradictions should not be understood only as useful contradictions, showing us where a new concept has been produced and thus where to proceed, but as indicative of the basic position of his philosophy.

The latter could be grasped through the break in Rousseau's interpretations, brought about by Ernst Cassirer.[9] Here the famous unity of Rousseau's work, no less famous than his contradictions, is put into relation to Rousseau's place in the philosophy of the Enlightenment. Rousseau's claim for universality, for an all-round picture of humanity, is but the counterpart, the other side of the coin of Rousseau's, as Cassirer puts it, »passionate fight with his time,« and his being »the most dangerous enemy« of the Enlightenment. If Rousseau could be regarded as the central figure of the Enlightenment philosophy, it is precisely because he managed to displace its central point, not from reason to sensibility, from rational to irrational or from philosophical deduction to the nostalgic daydreaming, but to displace it »from the inside,« to point out its irreductably contradictory and deconstructive nature. He did so, not by turning away from it, but quite to the contrary, by deepening the project of modernity beyond its very limits.

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9. *Cf.* E. Cassirer, *The Question of Jean-Jacques Rousseau,* Yale University Press, New Haven and London 1989, and his Philosophy of the Enlightenment, Beacon Press, Boston 1959.

For Rousseau the only possible solution is the very perverted, alienated civilization that he attacks as thoroughly as nobody else. The corrupted society becomes the foundation, even a new beginning, beyond any political revolution. But this one as well, of course, is marked by a constitutive impossibility, not only of the negative, say, natural and non-perverted education, but also of the government, for we have to live in monarchy, since nothing better is or could be available. The doing away of the monarchy, as unsatisfactory as it might seem to Rousseau and his contemporaries, could lead us only to an even worse solution, to despotism. On the other hand, we have the counterpart of the third of Freud's impossible professions, of analysis, in the paternal function, exemplified in Rousseau's therapeutic and palliative image of authority, in Wolmar. Here again, there is no way back, just as it is not possible to return to the state of nature, and in a certain sense also no way out, no future. As divine and as irreproachable Wolmar's procedure might be, the impossibility itself, *the real* in Lacanian sense of the word, turns out to be the ultimate reality: Julie cannot do anything else but commit suicide.

In its own way, the very solution to the perverted universe, the education of Emile, seems to be perverted as well, since we need a whole life, full time equivalent job of a tutor, one tutor for one child. And if that condition could somehow be fulfilled, the aim of education would perish anyway, as soon as the tutor would not be under the constant surveillance of his tutor, not only in his childhood, but all the time. In that very moment, the marriage with Sophie, which is supposed to engender the new human race, would become, like in Emile, a total disaster. Although the education is thus, at least for Rousseau, asymmetrical as regards to the other two professions, so to say, slightly more possible as they are, it at the end turns out to be an illusion, a necessary illusion as the only way out, and at the same time, the very source of the civilizational discontents he wanted so passionately to do away with.

But Rousseau, who was the first to point out the inner crack of the Enlightenment, did not identify himself either with the tutor or Wolmar, nor with any other images of authority. He identified himself with Saint Preux, with someone who has to submit to authority and to total dependency, with someone who is not able to find the way out of the perishing world. And the more he inclined to the self-sufficiency of the life outside society, the more he was aware that authority, forcing the man to live in freedom, as Rousseau says in *Social Contract,* is not just irreductible. The paternal authority, the father as a symptom, the instancy of otherness, of the outside, is for the father of the modern – or should one say postmodern? – theory of the state the very constitutive moment of the human condition. Rousseau's attitude towards the instancy of authority was as ambiguous as his work is with regards to all the other crucial points of his philosophy, but he never really believed that the total liberation, the disappearance of authority could, in principle, be possible.

If Sparta and Rome perished, what can endure? Speaking about the great legislator and paternal images of authority, Lacan's answer to this Rousseau's question would be: the archaic, the real, the impossible.

Democracy, culture and education
as a question of form
Pavel Zgaga

The categories of *eidos* and *morphe* were elaborated in Aristotle's *first philosophy;* as such, they weren't central notions of his *practical philosophy.* However, general philosophical approaches in modern times can't be imagined without the category of *form,* neither in the field of pure ontological or epistemological issues nor in the confrontations of social philosophy. »Formal democracy« seems to be impossible in Plato's *Republic* or in Aristotle's *Politics,* and it looks convicing to make an analogy between the categorial couples *hyle – morphe* and *natura – cultura* (if the latter is understood as the appearance of »our second nature,« phylogenetically as well as ontogenetically). Nevertheless, there is a place that enables us to make such analogies.

Aristotle knew very well that education – basically – only makes up »the deficiencies of nature« *(The Politics,* 1337a).[1] Discussing what education should be at the end of the seventh book of *The Politics,* he raises specific questions: is it necessary to lay down any regulations about the upbringing of children? should the care of them be the concern of the state or of private individuals alone?

At the very beginning of the eighth book, he sincerely states his opinion: education principally can't be a matter of private individuals. It should be »one and the same for all,« it should be »public and not private,« it is above all the duty of the legislator. Aristotle laments that the care of children as a private concern »is in our own day the common custom« and that »at present every one looks after his own children separately, and gives them separate instruction of the sort which he thinks best.« Such blindness about the common interest »does harm to the constitution.« It's not the willfulness of a dictator but the fundamental reason of *being-in-polis* that »the citizen should be moulded to suit the form of government under which he lives« (1337a).

In an earlier place (1310a) he wrote that the adaptation of education to »the form of government« contributes most to the permanence of constitutions. (Besides, here we can read again that »in our own day this principle is universally neglected.«) It seems to be obvious to Aristotle that undisciplined individuals – and it really sounds modern! – hinder the realization of

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1. The translations of passages from *The Politics* are cited by *The Works of Aristotle,* vol. X., Oxford 1952 (3rd ed.).

community, city and state that they contradict »the true interests of the state.« Nevertheless, it has to be stressed that the category of the state here can't be understood in modern way, for example, as pure abstract force under individuals. It is not a question of different notions, but a question of different social worlds. Despite defending the right of – as it looks like – government to be concerned about upbringing children, and despite neglecting – as it looks like – the parents' rights, Aristotle can't be aligned with the sources of modern totalitarism. In the same place just cited, he says: »Now, to have been educated in the spirit of the constitution is not to perform the actions in which oligarchs or democrats delight, but those by which the existence of an oligarchy or of a democracy is made possible« (1310a). He speaks about the adaptation of education to the »form of government,« not to the material self-will of the master. For Aristotle, ethics, politics and economics are parts of a whole and it is a question of numerous historical transitions and mediations why they are separated today.[2] In the same context it could be said that Aristotle's concept of *the adaptation of the education to the form of government* doesn't concern the *modern notion of politics,* but rather that of *culture.*

So, the improvement of deficiencies of nature as »the entrance to to civilization«, if the modern concept is used, is understood as a step to the *polis* and as the preservation of it. This step is – among other perspectives – defined by the famous ancient idea of *searching for virtue or the best life,* that is, by certain accumulated knowledge *(the wisdom)* and by certain civilised (here it can be even said »policed«) behaviors that we are able and obliged to learn and to teach. Let's accept the consensus that the pure notion of the education – i.e., education not as an instrument of domination, not as a self-will of master, but the education as a mode of »culturation« – is possible only in the form of common, public and, to a certain degree, unitary education. However, it is obvious to Aristotle that there are issues that remain to be considered: »what should be the character of this public education and how young persons should be educated?« (1337a). Speaking pragmatically, the question of *curriculum* is opened here and, as we are acquainted with the mentality of educators (specially with so-called »pedagogues« of our own day), every educator insists that his own subject is the basis and the last sense of the education. »As things are,« Aristotle established, »there is disagreement about the subjects.« It is not only the case that there is no agreement about the things to be taught, »neither is it clear whether education is more concerned with intellectual or with moral virtue.« If we try to transfer again into modern discourse, e.g., in that of »the eastern« experiences, here is the relationship between enlightenmented, liberal instruction, developing of the reason, on the one hand, and partisan (»partial«), ideological (»the right course,« »universally accepted ethics« etc.) moulding of people's behaviors on the

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2. This is the issue of recent re-elaborations in the ancient concept of the *practical philosophy.* – *Cf. e.g.* W. Hennis, *Politik und Praktische Philosophie,* Klett-Cotta, Stuttgart 1977.

other. It is evident that in Aristotle's time there was no agreement on the principle to be followed in education: »should the useful in life *(poiesis)*, or should virtue *(praxis)*, or should the higher knowledge *(theoria)* be the aim of our training?« The famous Stageirian usefulness distinguishing between *liberal* (»if he does or learns anything for his own sake or for the the sake of his friends, or with a view to excellence«) and *illiberal* occupations has to be considered (1337b), but it was also clear why there is no agreement about the means of education: »for different persons, starting with different ideas about the nature of virtue, naturally disagree about the practice of it.«

Ancient *polis* ended at the very walls of *oikos* (which have hidden children, women, slaves), and in this ancient discourse it primarily hasn't appeared as a place of conflicts and exclusions. It has much more been the mediation between the still-limited concept of public and the inhibited (patriarchal) concept of private and therefore it has appeared as the relatively harmonic regulation of the relationship between *natura* and *cultura*. In such understanding of *polis,* many aspects are linked that modern social knowledge carefully distinguishes or even comprehends as totally uncompatible.

As the modern age arose, the idea of education as an improvement of the deficiencies of nature was in front again. In his paper *On education,* Kant defined a man as the only being that must be educated *(das einzige Geschopf, das erzogen werden muss).* He maintained that a man can become a man only by means of education.[3] In his hand-written legacy (fragment 1423), we can even read that a man is *»an animal that has the need of education«.* Jean-Jacques Rousseau, on the other hand, began his *Émile* with the assertion that education provides us what we lacked at time of our births and what we need later.[4] But a moment that radically distinguishes Rousseau from Kant is grasped in the first sentence of the book: »Coming from the hands of the Creator, everything is good; everything corrupts in hands of a man.« The displacement of the accent has a deep conceptual importance for the understanding of the relationship between education and civic order, too: politics becomes a bitch.

Education is no more reflected as an instrument that can best assure the permanence of constitution, as an entrance to *politicum* understood as the very fundamentals of civilization. Ancient harmonic understanding of basic civilised relationships decayed with the progress of the civilization. Wisdom was replaced by knowledge. Ethics and politics can't coexist in the concept of virtue any more, and a human being as an ancient freeholder divides into a man and a citizen. For Rousseau, we are forced to fight either against nature

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3. *Cf.* Immanuel Kant, *Schriften zur Antropologie, Geschichtsphilosophie, Politik und Pädagogik,* 1, 2; in: *Kant Werke in zwölf Bänden,* Bd. XI, XII, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main 1964, p. 697 and 699.

4. *Cf.* Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Émile ou de l'éducation;* in: *Oeuvres complètes,* T. IV., Gallimard, Paris 1969, p. 247.

or against social orders; therefore, the question is whether to mould either a man or a citizen: both at the same time are not possible.[5] Despite taking examples from the antiquity, despite becoming enraptured with Plato's *Republic* (»the best discussion on education ever written«), Rousseau lives in an entirely different world. »Public education *(l'institution publique)* doesn't exist and can't exist any more; for if the country *(la patrie)* ceased to be, there could be no more citizens. The words country and citizen should be canceled in modern languages. I know well the reason why, but I don't want to put it down; it is not connected with my issue«.[6]

What happened to the country, e.g., to the state and citizens, that they caused them to disappear? What kind of reason does Rousseau hide and why doesn't he quote it? It seems evident that the answer can't be sought in his *philosophy of education;* a more promising place is his *political philosophy.* »Why then do people pay so much respect to ancient laws?« Rousseau asks in *The social contract* while researching »the death of the body politic.« The origin of this respect lies in »the excellence of these ancient decisions« (»for if the sovereign had not constantly found them salutary, it would have had innumerable opportunities to revoke them«), it lies in the continuing will of the *sovereign* (»whatever it once has said it wills, it continues to will, unless it revokes it«). He finishes the chapter with the following words: »and wherever, on the contrary, laws grow weaker with age, it is a proof there is no longer any legislative power, and that the state has ceased to exist«.[7] For on the contrary, »if the constitution of a state is to be really firm and enduring, the natural fitness of things must be so well observed that the laws and natural circumstances coincide at every point and that the former do no more, so to speak, than to guarantee, accompany and rectify the latter.«[8]

Similar thoughts can be found out at the beginning and at other places of his *Émile,* too. If public education is not possible any more, as we have already seen, there is the concept of *domestic or natural education* to be considered finally. Its essence is *negative:* »namely, to prevent something to happen«. – »Therefore watch carefully over a young man; he will be able to protect himself from other things, but your duty is to protect him from himself.« In comparison with antiquity and its »synthetic« tonality (education as cultivation, i.e., »policing«) here is the opening of an entirely new aspect of differentiation in the concept of education: »Thus the first education must be purely negative. In no way it consists of instructing in virtue and truth; it has to prevent the heart from sins and the reason from mistakes.«[9]

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5 . *Cf. ibid.,* p. 248.

6 . *Ibid.,* p. 250.

7 . Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract;* in: *Political Writings,* Nelson, London 1953, p. 97.

8 . *Ibid.,* p. 56-57.

9 . *Cf.* Rousseau, *Émile ou de l'éducation,* p. 251, 663, 323.

As in Rousseau's *political philosophy,* laws »do no more, so to speak, than to guarantee, accompany and rectify« natural circumstances, so in his *philosophy of education* the educator can only »prevent the heart from sins and the reason from mistakes,« he can only »prevent something from happening.« The right government and the right education coincide in the same moment: both are *negative.* This negativeness is elementary. The power of »the first« education doesn't add anything to young people, it doesn't »consist of instructing in virtue and truth,« and the »excellent« power of law doesn't regulate the world beneath on the way well known from the first sentences of *Émile:* a man »mixes and muddles climates, elements, seasons. He mutilates his dog, his horse, his slave. He inverts everything; he disfigures everything: he likes distortions, monsters.«[10]

Historically, more and more progressive improvement of the deficiencies of nature (as »cultivation«) is seen just as the declination from nature. The initial act of education is »only« to improve the deficiencies of nature. However, education as a way to »perfect nature« is a process without end: it is a way to culture understood as a dualism of *original* and *mediated,* as an *alienation.* The same process is going on in the field of politics: »Let us assume that men have reached the point where the obstacles to their self-preservation in the state of nature are too great to be overcome by the forces each individual is capable of exerting to maintain himself in that state. This original state can then no longer continue; and the human race would perish if did not change its mode of existence.« But the inevitable *state of culture,* i.e., »substituting justice for instincts,« the formation of morality, etc., demands that a man »consults his reason before listening to his inclinations.« This transition is signed by a specific trade: »what man loses by the social contract is his natural liberty, and an unlimited right to everything he wants and is capable of getting; what he gains is civil liberty, and the ownership of all he possesses.«[11]

Thus, the central problem of Rousseau's writing isn't »the glorious arising of the civilisation,« the appearance of specific human, the entrance to culture. Using the Freudian concept of discontents in the civilization (das Unbehagen in der Kultur), Eva D. Bahovec showed inside Slovene discussions on this issue that it is rather the question of something constantly present as »a certain disturbance or a stain which should be removed, but there is no success.«[12] Culture is not possible as pure replacement of nature, replacement without any reminder. In such process something always rests. The former moulds the substance, just »gives form« to the latter.

10. *Ibid,* p. 245.
11. *Cf.* Rousseau, *The Social Contract,* p. 14 and 20.
12. *Cf.* Eva D. Bahovec, »Podobe avtoritete pri Rousseauju: gospostvo, vzgoja, analiza« (in slovene; »The images of authority at Rousseau: domination, éducation, analysis«); in: *Teorija vzgoje: moderna ali postmoderna? (Theory of education: modern or postmodern?* Materials from the colloquium with James Donald, Ljubljana, april 1990), University of Ljubljana 1990, p. 29.

Last, but not least, uneasiness in civilization arises from the polarisation of the original, from the inner evolution of *polis,* that results – through many historical mediations – as dualism of the modern *state* and modern *civil societies.* The elements being inhibited in antiquity have been actualised in modern times. With the French revolution, the concept of public education already openly indicated the possibility of institutional control over privateness. Education and the school as its main institutional form are gradually losing the prevailing features of their old character. It is not more or less the exclusive mechanism of privateness any more, that is, of the state – as we saw before at Aristotle – when »every one looks after his own children separately, and gives them separate instruction of the sort which he thinks best.« The ancient *oikos,* the closed sphere of household economy, is opening now. It is no longer left behind the fence – together with women, children and slaves – when *paterfamilias* as a constituting element of public is going to the *forum,* to the life of the political. Thus, certain aspects of the ancient *oikos* transform into the capitalist market, and others decay into the modern family and some ruins. Parallel with this new economy, questions of education and school ceased to exist as the responsibility of the *paterfamilias* or the guildmaster (who, e.g., trusted his brewery prescription to his assistant at the death-bed, in extreme privacy); they become social investments and new ambitions of *an entirely new social discourse.*

However, the French revolution didn't create the school; it just came across it as a historical fact. As Furet and Ozouf perfectly showed in their study on literacy in France, the formation of the modern school was mediated through numerous processes: it is simultaneously »the outcome of three interacting factors: the Church, the State and the community« and the result of »the long maturing of social demand, independent of the evolution of institutions and régimes.«[13] Already from the standpoint of the Church it is much more than »ideological counteroffensive« against the Protestant challenge. Mass literacy has a distinctive civilizing power and the school as its main instrument stands »at the crossroads of two different ways of thought: the first, religious in nature, picked up the Protestant gauntlet and sought to root orthodox Catholic piety in instruction. The second was instrumental, being concerned with normalizing social behaviour through the internalizing of a practical morality with a few simple rules: respect for one's parents, obedience towards one's masters, purity of thought and deed, turning away from evil.«[14] Further, from the standpoint of the absolute State, »we find nothing comparable to what happened in the Church as regards elementary education: rather a movement in the opposite direction.«[15] At last, from the standpoint of the third

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13. *Cf.* Furet F., Ozouf J., *Reading and Writing. Literacy in France from Calvin to Jules Ferry,* Cambridge University Press, 1982, p. 59 and 82.
14. *Ibid.,* p. 61.
15. *Ibid.,* p. 62.

interacting factor, »the community,« the concept of public school offered possibilities for social promotion. The growth and anchoring of the school inside the heterogeneous social body didn't depend only upon the institutional offer (the Church, the State). A very important factor in its success was an active demand from partial communities such as: »The school was a product of local societies before becoming a factor in their transformation,« »it was a social phenomenon before being a technical instrument: the image of an order to be created, or of prestige to be won.«[16]

The time of the revolution brought »the revolutionary school.« Even while it legitimated itself as »the national school,« i.e., as the institution of common interest, as a formation of citizens (not members of one or another faith), it played a paradoxical role of the performer of »the Church's conception of education.« Furet and Ozouf maintain that the French revolution created only its own school ideology, while the school praxis remained more or less the same. Despite its proclamation of the triumph of the light of reason over ignorance, it kept certain mythology of school. »The school became the central figure of society's limitless powers over happiness of the individual: under *Ancien Régime* its job was to produce Christians, but under the new order it was expected to make men happy and free,« say the authors, who continue in another place: »Turning the Counter-Reformation's educational obsession with fashioning minds and behaviour against the Church, the Revolution fought to gain control of the school, not to transform it.«[17] The growing discontent with »the revolutionary school« – which was literally decaying – and the returning of »the old school« can be observed also as a rebellion of civil society against »general« education, as the mainly spontaneous reaction of – in the meantime deeply transformed – community against the alignment of the concept of »salvation« instruction among »educational« competences of the State.

The cross-points of politics and education in every fundamentalist praxis of the present time prove the same. It is not the issue of this paper, but I would like at least to speak against the recent »Slovene spring« among eastern experiences. Some Slovene authors have showed already that a large critisism of the state-planned school reform (so called »career-oriented education,« which began at the end of seventies and in reality aimed at a complete subjection of the school to the economy and management, at destruction of traditional intellectual and critical potentials of schooling, at fulfilment of the school as the main ideological state apparatus) among intellectuals and the public in general at the beginning of the eighties played a significant role in the accumulation of democratic potential at the late eighties. Furthermore, this critisism had even caused important democratic changes in the school system *before* the global reform of the political system in this country began.[18] As the

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16. *Ibid.,* p. 68.
17. *Ibid.,* p. 83 and 93.
18. Soon after the constitution of the new Slovene government in spring 1990 – the Ministry of

quarrels on the independence of media and public institutions in general (which are going on inside and outside of the democratic national Parliament, constituted in the meantime) show, a new revolution has just passed the country, promising new absolute solutions. They show that the »absolute« liberation always ends with the reconstitution of domination. The only alternative against continued repetitions of the risk of restoring the school as an instrument of salvation and/or happiness, seems to be a well-known model that separates knowledge, instruction, minds from training of behaviours, certain life praxis, rituals, etc. This model foresees *public* education only as *a form.*

In modern societies, it is not possible any more that »everyone looks after his own children separately, and gives them separate instruction of the sort which he thinks best.« Everyone is bombarded by several models of uniformity. However, modern democracy has to recognize the ability and the right of educating to each individual (parent) and, in certain degree, also to their numerous and specific partial (ethnical, racial, religious, class, etc.) communities. Supporting the idea of the *Only-One-Education* would quickly turn a wise sovereign into a totalitarian tyrant. Yet, at the first sight a paradox arises from such a solution. If it is allowed that »everyone looks after his own children separately,« that everyone strives – exclusively – for the type of the school education that corresponds his ethnical, racial, religious, national, class, gender, etc., persuasion, then it »does harm to the constitution,« as Aristotle had already noticed. The State would cease to exist and the civilisation is at risk... Instead of public education, there would be lots of partial schools bound to the existence and reproduction of many partial, more and more self-sufficient communities. In this way, public education as an instrument of developing democratic *politicum* and tolerance seems to be seriously put in

education was controlled by Christian Democrats – a discussion on restitution of religious instruction in schools began. While the Church carefully supports the idea of such restitution and while some other militant groups openly declare that »only return of religious instruction can save the deep moral crisis (divorces, suicides, abortions etc.) of our society«, the official standpoint of the ministry is that there is no need for restitution of *catechesis*, but religious aspects of certain issues are normal elements of school subjects and instruction. – These declarations were interpreted by Slavko Gaber as follows: »It seems that the recent uneasiness of the government, provoked by the school problems, lies in the fact that the reform of schooling had begun before the reform of political system. At least two things are obvious: 1) the school has done already with many images of previous (i.e. communist) »reformers« and it is going to build gradually a way not subjected to any entirely concrete power; 2) counter-reformers who stopped the assault of previous »reformers« and who are not the part of new political power would not give way to the possibilities of new assaults of new reformers«. – *Cf.* Verouk v šole?! (in slovene; *Catechesis to the schools?!*), ed. by S. Gaber and Z. Kodelja, Ljubljana 1990, p. 10.

Cf. also contributions as follows: Eva D. Bahovec, »School Ideologies and Educational Theories: An Eastern Europe Case«; Zdenko Kodelja, »Decomposing Socialist Pedagogical Discourse: A Case for Althusser«; both in: *The School Field* (publ. in English by Slovene Society of Researchers in the School Field, Ljubljana), Autumn 1990, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 90-103.

question, particularly when these partial communities stimulate the parents to try for »generalizing« their goals, that is, to alter »private« opinion or certain life style to the »common«, »the one and the right« ideology. We know this dialectic very well.[19]

There is another possibility: to articulate the relationship between the State and the personal »educative fortune«, not by the mediation of certain partial community (Church, nation, race, class or gender, etc.) but by the citizenship of one's individuality. Public education has to consider a citizen, not as a member of a closed social loggia, and it has to consider several possibilities, not uniform behaviours of all. This approach has only to consider common human sense and common human rights. While numerous partial educations mutually exclude one another in regard to their different »material«, a truly »republican« (i.e., which belongs to *res publica)* public education is possible only as »a form« of practicing several social styles. Such a process doesn't only improve the deficiences of nature, it should also »improve« uneasiness in the civilization, by acknowledging it as uneasiness, that is, not by transforming it into an ideologically promised perfection of the lost and forgotten nature: education of »an all-round developed personality« or that of »the good man.«

In this direction I understand – among discussions on education and human rights – Carole L. Hahn's definition of *the political education:* it is »the process by which individuals can acquire knowledge of their rights and the desire and abilities to exercise them.«[20] The conditions of exercising, nothing more. The process at issue doesn't educate in a strictly concrete sense: it trains no specific life styles, no techniques. It doesn't provide happiness and it doesn't promise any salvation; it doesn't search for a complete and absolute (closed) educational universum, saved from all uneasiness. It is not defined by this or that empirical life praxis or ritual. As their *form,* it can be only the *condition* of social variety.

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19. Democratic politics' first principle today »is that there is no pure democracy and its condition is the uneasiness in democracy«. – *Cf.* Tomaž Mastnak, »Uneasiness in Democracy« (contribution from the international colloquium »Democratic Politics Today«, Ljubljana, March 1989), published in English in: *Filozofski vestnik,* Vol. X., 1989, No. 2, pp. 157-159.

20. Carole L. Hahn, »The Right to a Political Education«; in: *Human Rights and Education* (ed. by Norma B. Tarrow), Pergamon Press 1987, p. 173.

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... as far as I understand ... essay ... remarks on education and human ... role L. Hahn's definition of the «formal education», it is «the ... which individuals can acquire knowledge of their rights and the desire and abilities to exercise them.»[20] The conditions of exercising, nothing more. The process at issue doesn't educate in a strictly concrete sense; it trains no specific life styles, no techniques. It doesn't provide happiness and it doesn't promise any salvation; it doesn't «catch» for a complete and absolute (closed) educational universum, saved from all uneasiness; it is not defined by this or that «implicit» life, praxis or ritual. As their form, it can be the only the condition of social variety.

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20. Carmel L. Hahn, «The Right to a Radical Education», in Human Rights and Education (ed. by Norma B. Tarrow), Pergamon Press 1987, p.135.

Reference and the true value
of clauses NPr be NPp
The creation of non-linguistic entity
as a consequence of a linguistic one
Olga Kunst-Gnamuš

1. Purpose, problem, and hypotheses

M y attention has been drawn by the question of how to explain the illocutionary force of ordinary speech which makes it possible, primarily in ideological discourse, to completely govern the beliefs and actions of individuals, sometimes against the evident facts or in contradiction to them. This issue of modern linguistics was asked very persuasively by Chomsky: »Plato's problem is to explain why we know so much although existing evidence is so scarce. However, it is Orwell's problem to explain why we know and understand so little although the evidence at our disposal is so rich. Orwell was, like many other intellectuals of the 20th century, very impressed by the ability of totalitarian regimes to implant beliefs that are firmly valid and widely accepted although completely unfounded and often even in disagreement with the facts« about the world which surrounds us« (Chomsky, 1989: 6).

I agree with Chomsky who states that the reasons must be sought in institutionalized and other factors which in the decisive spheres of our lives block insight and understanding. My hypothesis, however, is that the sources of the convincing force of ordinary speech must likewise be sought in its inner structure, in its possibility to present entities as equal although they in fact belong to different worlds, thus creating possibilities for their exchange. I will try to demonstrate this hypothesis through the semantic, pragmatic, and grammatical structure of the clause *NPr be NPp* where index *r* stands for reference and p for predication. The clause has an underlying proposition P: r equals p. The use of these clause structures will be illustrated by examples taken from both fundamental functional discourses, namely the ideological and the scientific. They are characteristic of both discourses and frequently used in both of them. We are going to investigate their semantic-cognitive and illocutionary function. We will point out that the true value of a clause does not depend on its semantic-logical structure but rather on the functional discourse in which the clause is used as well as on the communicative principles that particular discourses abide by. This means that classification of the communicative space in functional discourses (discourse of art, science, ordinary speech) and the communicative principles governing them must necessarily be taken into account as a significant pragmatic factor that influences the interpretation of these clauses. Linguistic studies that do not

take this into account inevitably lead to overgeneralizations. This is undoubtedly true of many conclusions of speech act theory.

An *NPr be NPp* clause is simultaneously a means of expression which makes possible the understanding of procedures of equating the so-called »real world« with the world of intentional mental states of the speaker (mind world), equating and transposing entitties that belong to different worlds. I will call this phenomenom »communicative blindness«. Clauses with the same surface structure whose deep structures expresses a relation between value and role (value be role) will be excluded from this study. Example: *M. K. is the president of the Republic of Slovenia.* As Fauconnier (1985) states, these clauses express a relation between value and role, between entities that belong to the same mental space.

NPr be NPp clauses will be considered in the pragmatic context of their utterance. The paradigmatic space builder of the pragmatic space is the explicit performative verb *to say: S says that P.* This fact makes the issue of the true value of a clause even more complicated, as from the point of the true value, identifying relation between P and S *says that P* is problematic.

2. NPr be NPp in the context of speech act theory

We will investigate the structure of the propositional act and the relationship between propositional and illocutionary acts. We will try to answer the question which illocutionary act is performed by uttering the *NPr be NPp* clause with the underlying proposition *P: r equals p.* To be able to answer the question whether this is an illocutionary act with constative illocutionary force (assertion) or an illocutionary act with performative illocutionary force, the true value of the assertion has to be determined. According to Searle, assertions bind the speaker towards the true value of the expressed proposition: »The point or purpose of the members of the assertive class is to commit the speaker... to the truth of the expressed proposition. All of the members of the assertive class are assessable on the dimension of assessment which includes true or false« (Searle, 1979: 12). It must be added that the true value is a necessary but not sufficient condition in determining the type of illocutionary act, as in indirect speech seeming assertions are not selected with the intention to describe an actual state of affairs or fact, but rather with the intention of performing some other illocutionary act by means of description, e.g., a request, promise, or threat. The intention of the utterance is not a true proposition; the latter is chosen as a means of performing the illocutionary act with performative illocutionary force. This means that besides the true value, intention has to be taken into account in determining assertions: assertions are illocutionary acts whose intention is a truthful description of the actual state of affairs or facts. In order to make the intention recognizable, reasons to believe P to be true or false must be ensured. Let us try to investigate whether

utterances with the *NPr be NPp* clause structure are determinable as to their true value. A clause has the apparent structure of an assertion, it appears to be a description of a state of affairs; we are going to demonstrate – which has already been done by Fauconnier (1985) – that this clause is a typical space builder, i.e. an utterance that does not represent reality but rather creates new mental spaces composed of ungrounded beliefs. True value conditions of this clause and reasons to believe it really being true or false can be ensured only in scientific discourse.

According to Searle, the expression of a proposition is a propositional act composed of reference and predication: »The utterance of a referring expression characteristically serves to pick out or identify a particular object from other objects« (Searle, 1969: 28). In the clause *Sam is drunk,* the proper name *Sam* is the referring expression and is drunk is the predication. Searle defines »referring expression« as follows: »An expression which serves to identify any thing, process, event, action, or any other kind of 'individual' or 'particular' I shall call a referring expression. Referring expressions point to particular things...« (Searle, 1969: 26-27).

Having been asked what the reference of the expression *is drunk* in the clause *Sam is drunk* is, Frege answered »the concept of drunkness.« »He appears to think that the use of a predicate expression commits one to the existence of a property.« Searle, however, does not agree with Frege: »From the fact that a statement I utter commits me to the existence of a property it does not follow that in that statement I referred to a property« (Searle, 1969: 98-99). Asked about the function that a grammatical predicate can have, Searle answered with two statements taken from Frege: »a grammatical predicate refers to a concept and a grammatical predicate ascribes a property« from which follows »a reference to a concept simply is the ascription of a property« (1969: 100). Searle rightfully called attention to the inconsistency of this usage and solves the contradiction by insisting on the difference between reference and predication »and the correct description is to say that the predicate expression is used to ascribe a property« (1969: 100), adding: »Remember that 'ascribe' here is meant to carry no assertive force.« Searle does not believe that the referring expression and the predicate expression refer to identical entities: »... I believe that the notion that some entity stands to a predicate as an object stands to a singular referring expression should be abandoned« (1969: 103). (...) »It is easy to see in what sense the term identified by the subject expression, 'the rose', is non-linguistic, it is material object, its existence is a contingent fact. (...) But is the meaning of the predicate expression a linguistic or non-linguistic entity? And can the existence of a non-linguistic entity follow from the existence of linguistic entity? (...). Universals are not entities in the world, but in our mode of representing the world; they are, therefore, identified not by appealing to facts in the world, but in the utterance of expressions having the relevant meanings« (1969: 114-116).

Searle maintains that »Strawson avoids saying that predicates refer by adopting the (apparently) neutral term 'identify'« (1969: 113) and stresses that the expression »identify« has two completely different meanings: »... the means of identifying universals are quite different from the means of identifying particulars, and that this is a consequence of the fact that universals are parts of our mode of describing the world, not parts of the world« (1969: 117).

The ideas developed above seem important for the pragmatic interpretation of *NPr be NPp* clauses in ordinary everyday speech as well as for Fauconnier's theory of mental spaces. Complications as to the true value of this type of clause and their apparent constative function are the reason for a scientific discourse to develop which fulfills Frege's hypothesis that the reference of a predicate expression is a concept and at the same time creates conditions for determining the true values of these clauses. Therefore it is vital in the interpretation of *NPr be NPp* clauses to take into account principles, strategies, and intentions of functional discourses which determine interpretation of the illocutionary acts performed by uttering these clauses. In ordinary speech the true value of these clauses cannot be determined, and they cannot be considered assertions, but rather utterances with performative illocutionary force or, as Fauconnier says, as space builders. They obtain the constative illocutionary force of assertions by scientific discourse. Not taking into account this context leads to overgeneralizations in linguistic science. The usage of these clauses in ordinary speech, however, has a blinding effect, i.e. the phenomenon in which performative illocutionary force and its perlocutionary influence are exchanged for the constative illocutionary force, beliefs for these clauses to be descriptions of actual state of affairs and facts. In other words: intentional mental states which are expressed through our choice of predicate expression are understood as a part of the actual state of affairs and which we equate with facts, expressed with subject expression.

It is time to undertake the analysis. Examples will be chosen in which referential properties are not ascribed by adjectives but with nouns, i.e. in the metonymic mode: the whole denominated by a noun in the function of a predicative ascribes the reference, expressed by NP in the role of subject, typical properties contained in the predicate meaning. These properties are evaluated as acceptable or unacceptable, desirable or undesirable, permissive or unpermissive within the given context. A change of context may change the evaluation.

3. *NPr be NPp clauses in ideological discourse*

A detailed definition of ideological discourse would reach beyond the scope of this paper. Simply, we can say that this is a discourse which is primarily directed toward having a perlocutionary effect and forming beliefs,

irrespective of the true value of the assertions and occurs in ordinary speech. In order to answer the question what illocutionary act is performed by uttering *NPr be NPp* clauses, the true values of these clauses must be determined and the intention of their utterance in pragmatic contexts which are paradigmatically expressed by the performative *to say*. This verb allows the following questions to be asked: who has uttered the clause, to whom, when, from what reason, with what intention. A pragmatic analysis therefore presupposes that a clause is placed in a context of utterance and based on the relation between literal meaning and the actual state of affairs or facts to make conclusions about the true value; whereas by taking into account the context, intended meaning can be concluded from literal meaning and the question may be answered as to what the intention of the uttered clause was, in other words, what illocutionary act was performed by the speaker through the utterance act.

In 1990, an article appeared in the main Slovene daily entitled *B.Š. – The Last Bolshevik*. *B.Š.* is a proper name that enables us to identify a very concrete person who functioned as a university vice chancellor. The copula *to be* is left out of the title; in full the predicate expression would run *is the last bolshevik*. The person who can be identified with the referring expression *B.Š.* in the role of subject (NPr) is ascribed properties of meaning expressed by *bolshevik*. The copula *to be* expresses equality in the value of the referring subject expression and the predicate expression. Can the clause be considered an assertion, i.e. the true description of the actual state of affairs or of the reference? To answer this question, the following must be verified: (1) does the reference have truly ascribed properties? and (2) does the copula *to be* have the value of a logical equivalent? The analysis of (1) will be performed by investigating the relations between the signifying expressions and corresponding two entities. The analysis of (2) will be performed through an investigation of the grammatical relations in the surface structure. There is no problem identifying entities denoted by the referring expression NPr *B.Š.*. But how to verify whether the person possesses the properties ascribed by the predicate expression? What does this word mean? The definition of the word *bolshevik* as taken from the Dictionary of Standard Slovene: *1. at the beginning of the 20th century, an adherent of the left wing of the Russian social-democratic workers' party or a member of the Russian social-democratic workers' party (of the Bolsheviks): Lenin's followers began to be called Bolsheviks, his opponents Mensheviks / expr. for communist in general. 2. expr. for the opponents of communism, atheist, rebel: let them alone, they are only bolsheviks.*

Besides the denotative meaning, this word also has an expressive connotative meaning depending on the attitude towards its denotation, i.e. it depends on whether the speaker is an adherent or opponent of communism. Referent *B.Š.* cannot be ascribed the properties of the denotative meaning but can be ascribed the value connotation. The referent is negatively evaluated through

the utterance. Properties ascribed to the referent by the predicate expression have been completely revalued by the changed ideological context: the formerly positive connotation adopted a negative connotation during the period of anti-communism. Bolshevism is an undesirable and unacceptable property. From the point of view of true value, we are found in a contradictory situation: the same referent has conflicting properties in different ideological contexts: in context A these properties are evaluated as positive, in context B as negative. Obviously we are not dealing with an illocutionary act of assertion but with an evaluating judgement with a performative illocutionary potential which influences our attitude toward the reference. This can be further confirmed by the fact that different speakers ascribe the referent different, conflicting properties although in the same context. While speaker A says that B.Š. is the last of the bolsheviks, speaker B says that it means the same as if said that B.Š. is the last of the Mohicans. The connotation is no longer a negative one. Speaker C may define the referent to be a democrat, another a Stalinist. It is obvious that the choice of the predicate expression does not depend on the referent, but on the intentional mental state of the speaker, his positive or negative attitude towards the reality that he is describing. If we wanted to ascribe true value to *NPr be NPp* clauses, we would have to remove differences in beliefs, desires, and intentions from the ideological context and proclaim only individual convictions or convictions of single homogeneous communities of interest as acceptable; these in turn could then proclaim their »assertions« expressed by *NPr be NPp* clauses as true. That this hypothesis is true can be demonstrated by the actual experience of totalitarian regimes. Sometimes uttering of this type of clause was sufficient reason for the persecution of individuals who were negatively evaluated by them.

On the other hand, the dependence of these utterances on the intentional mental states of the speakers and their vague true value is summed up in the folk wisdom that there are many truths. This saying also confirms man's right to take a different attitude toward reality.

NPr be NPp clauses set up a seemingly equal relation between two expressions, NPr and NPp, which express differing entities belonging to different worlds. NPr represents a reference in the »real world« of actual state of affairs or facts, whereas NPp represents the speaker's intentional mental state, his beliefs and attitudes towards reality. Although the discourse values expressed by NPr and NPp appear identical, the NPp expression actually represents the speaker in the clause. The NPp expression is bi-relational: (1) it appears as a reference property via the equality relation with NPr, and (2) is optional and the option depends on the speaker and is the expression of his convictions, desires, and intentions.

Thus a speaker does not express his intentional propositional attitude towards reality and toward the listener explicitly, by denominating intentional mental

states but rather indirectly by his choice of the predicate expression NPp that contains either positive or negative connotations. With the seemingly equal relation between NPr and NPp, personal attitudes and evaluations are presented as part of the actual state of affairs. Clauses with the underlying proposition *P: r equals p* and with the expressive realization *NPr be NPp* are in ordinary speech the basic means of so-called communicative blindness, as it permits a seeming equalization of the real world with the world of the intentional mental state (mind world). They appear as descriptions of actual states of affairs and facts, as assertions, when in fact they express the speaker's beliefs, desires, and intentions, and by way of connotative meaning exercise influence on the listener's evaluation of reality and his actions resulting from it. Their performative illocutionary force stems from the connotative meaning of the predicate expression NPp.

It is therefore not surprising that this is the form in which slogans are written on the front of the Ministry of Truth: *War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is power.* (Orwell, 1983: 7,15). They transform reality and its usual understanding into its opposite. Searle's question of whether the existence of a non-linguistic entity follows from the existence of a linguistic entity can be answered positively.

4. NPr be NPp clauses in the theory of mental space

In accordance with the hypothesis of the performative illocutionary force of clauses under analysis and in accordance with the indefinability of their true value, we can agree with Fauconnier's claim that »Relative simple grammatical structures give instructions for space construction in context. (...) Language, then, is not merely interpreted with respect to worlds, models, contexts, situations, and so forth. (...) It builds up mental spaces, relations between them, and relations between elements within them« (1985: 2). (...) »The space elements are not referred to by expressions of language: they are set up, identified, etc., and may then be used for purposes of reference (or possible purported reference). Mental space construction is an important part of natural semantics and pragmatics« (1985: 158).

Fauconnier already classed *Npr be NPp* clauses among space builders, i.e. linguistic expressions that establish new mental space: a »construct distinct from linguistic structures but built up in any discourse according to guidelines provided by the linguistic expressions« (1985: 16). He also established that *be* links elements that are counterparts in different spaces: »In other words, even though a simple clause usually expresses relations within a space, those of the form NP be NP may establish a counterpart relation between elements of different spaces. As opposed to many other verbs, *be* may express transpational links: this is a consequence of its general metonymic function and of the metonymic nature of pragmatic connectors in general, and of interspatial

ones in particular« (1985: 145). Thus, the copula *be* is not a logical conjunction but a pragmatic connector that »can stand for metonymic relations in general and in particular for the relation between a role and its value« (1985: 137).

Its function in *NPr be NPp* clauses is worth special attention as it links two entities that belong to different worlds and corresponding mental spaces into a seemingly equal relation. NPr represents the actual state of affairs or facts of the »real« world, while NPp the entities that belong to the world of intentional mental states (mind world). The speaker does not express his beliefs, intentions, and desires through propositional attitudes but through the predicate expression NPp containing the performative illocutionary potential contained in the connotation. Thus the intentional worlds appear as real worlds. The function of the connector *to be* that connects entities belonging to different mental spaces into a seeming equal relation is similar to the function of pronouns »because the connectors that link elements in different spaces are open, ... a pronoun with an antecedent in one space freely identify its counterpart in another, connected space:

(1) Vivien saw herself in Gone with the Wind.«

The pronoun *herself* identifies the true person with her role in the film. This would come as no surprise if one viewed all the counterparts being in some sense 'the same' elements« (1985: 35). This blinding illusion which makes possible the equalization of entities that belong to different worlds or mental spaces was convincingly dashed by Cary Grant who said, »Everyone would like to to be Cary Grant, even me!« This type of mechanism built into the structure and interpretation of *NPr be NPp* clauses and other means of expression that set up equal relations between entities in different spaces makes possible the creation of a non-linguistic entity as a consequence of a linguistic one. This enables the full swing of symbolic imagination, but also a schizophrenia of mind, the substitution of a linguistic creation of an entity for a non-linguistic one.

5. Grammatical structure of NPr be NPp clauses

What is the grammatical and logical structure of *NPr be NPp* clauses like? Is the relation between NPr (trigger) and NPp (target) symmetrical and reversible or asymmetrical and irreversible? Jackendoff maintains that »the trigger will always be real referents, while the targets may be concrete or mental representation of them. However, this asymmetrical view is not reflected by the linguistic data: the triggers may be in the pictures, beliefs, etc., and the target in the so-called real 'world'« (Fauconnier, 1985: 14). Let us see what opinion is valid for *NPr be NPp* clauses.

NPr is the trigger and has the function of a subject in the surface structure, while NPp is the target and has the function of the predicative in the surface structure. The predicate consists of the copula *to be* and NPp. In the Slovene

language, subject and predicate are unambiguously definable. Slovene does not have the definite article to identify the referring expression and to separate it from the predicate phrase, but recognition of these syntactic functions is made possible by the rule of agreement: NPr in the function of a subject agrees in gender and number with the form of the copula. This, in fact, does not show in the present and the future tenses of the auxiliary *to be,* but it can be noted if the verb is put in the past tense: *Peter je bil; Marica je bila; dekleta so bila; dečki so bili* (Peter was; Marica was; the girls were; the boys were). On the other hand, NPp functioning as a predicative is a syntactic free form, a simple adjunct to the verb. As both NP are in the nominative and if also of the same gender and number, difficulties arise in defining them. Some examples:

(1i)   Avtobusna postaja je največji problem Ljubljane.
        (The bus station is the biggest problem in Ljubljana.)
(1ii) Največji problem Ljubljane je avtobusna postaja.
        (The biggest problem in Ljubljana is the bus station.)
(2i)   Ta hiša je opera.
        (This building is the opera.)
(2ii) Opera je ta hiša.
        (The opera is this building.)

Which nominal phrase in these clauses has the function of subject (trigger) and which the function of predicate (target)? An empirical experiment was carried out. The test population were students of Slovene language and students of the fourth class of a natural sciences secondary school, i.e. linguistically highly educated individuals with a developed linguistic sense. Everybody ($n = 45$) chose the nominal phrase *avtobusna postaja* as the subject in the clause (1i). In clause (1ii) 43 out of 50 test individuals attributed the function of subject to the nominal phrase *največji problem Ljubljane*. This means that test individuals in accordance with the rule of the functional perspective chose the first nominal phrase in the clause to be the subject. The experiment, however, also confirmed the working of semantic intuition which tends to ascribe the function of subject (trigger) to a nominal phrase with a »concrete« semantic feature and the function of predicative (target) to the nominal phrase with an »abstract« semantic feature. This tendency is even more obvious in clause (2ii). All tested individuals ascribed the function of subject to *ta hiša* in clause (2i), whereas in clause (2ii) the same function was ascribed to the nominal phrase *opera* by only 32 out of 45 individuals. It must be mentioned that in this clause there is a relation between value and role. It can be concluded that semantic intuition speaks in favour of the asymmetric relation between the two nominal phrases, namely the relation between trigger and target. There is a clearly expressed tendency that the role of trigger is ascribed to a nominal phrase with a »concrete« semantic feature.

Because in the present tense, agreement between subject and predicate, i.e. the copula form, is not expressed in the surface structure, difficulties in defining the subject and the predicate in the clause arise, along with grammatical mistakes. Due to the complicated relations between meaning and expression, grammatical rules are not absolutely defined and speakers must depend on semantic intuition. This may be illustrated by the following example:

(3)* Moja največja ljubezen je bila organizacijske vede.
       (My greatest love was management sciences.)
(4i)* Predmet razprave je bil družbena razmerja.
       (The topic of the discussion was social relations.)

The speaker chose the nominal phrase as the trigger, i.e. the subject in the clause *moja največja ljubezen* (my greatest love) and *predmet razprave* (the topic of the discussion). This can clearly be seen in the surface structure from the agreement between the nominal phrase and the copula. The form of the copula *je agrees* in gender and number with the subject. However, all the test individuals expressed the opinion that both clauses are grammatically incorrect, and that they should run:

(3i)   Moja največja ljubezen so bile organizacijske vede.
       (My greatest love were management sciences.)
(3ii) Organizacijske vede so bile moja največja ljubezen.
       (Management sciences were my greatest love.)

and

(4i)   Predmet razprave so bila družbena razmerja.
       (The topic of the discussion were social relations.)
(4ii) Družbena razmerja so bila predmet razprave.
       (Social relations were the topic of the discussion.)

As already mentioned, this phenomenon is not unambiguously described in the grammar of Standard Slovene, so the question should be posed where the source of this semantic and expressive intuition is. The role of trigger or subject of the clause must be taken on by an NPr that at the same time represents entities outside the speaker, whereas the role of the target or predicate the NPp which is the expression of the speaker's attitude towards the external entity. In clause (3) the management sciences are those that the speaker loved, in clause (4) it is social relations that were chosen as the topic of discussion. Although a semantic rule referring to the precise structure of clauses NPr be NPp is not described and normed in the Slovene language, one can obviously rely on intuition. It could be said that from the grammatical viewpoint, the relation between NPr and NPp is asymmetrical, as the relation between NPr and copula is formally defined, while the relation between copula and NPp is free in accordance with the optional understanding. This can be further confirmed by the following examples:

(5)   Matematika *je bila* moj največji problem.
        (Maths was my greatest problem.)

and not

(5i)*   Moj največji problem *je bil* matematika.
        (My greatest problem was maths.)

(6)   Peter *je bil* moja velika ljubezen.
        (Peter was my greatest love.)

and not

(6i)*   Moja največja ljubezen *je bila* Peter.
        (My greatest love was Peter.)

The following clauses are also correct:

(5ii)   Moj največji problem *je bila* matematika.
        (My greatest problem was maths.)

(6ii)   Moja največja ljubezen *je bil* Peter.
        (My greatest love was Peter.)

The difference between the NPr in the role of subject and the NPp in the role of predicative can be expressed on the level of expression only in the past tense, but not in the present or in the future; it also remains concealed if NPr and NPp are of the same gender and number. Therefore, we should not be surprised that this clause has escaped exact grammatical description, which strengthens the feeling of the equivalent relation between NPr and NPp to the extent that we can say that the grammatical structure of these clauses is favourable for the blinding effect, i.e. the exchange of the external world with the world of the speaker's beliefs, desires, and intentions, especially in the present and future tenses.

On the basis of the analysis performed, it can be stated with certainty that the relation between NPr and NPp in an *NPr be NPp clause* is neither symmetrical nor reversible, although it appears to be such in cases when NPr and NPp are of the same gender and number as well as in the present and the future tenses. Semantic intuition comes into play in these cases and ascribes the role of trigger, i.e. subject, to the NPr which represents entities outside the speaker and the role of the target, i.e. the predicative, to the NPp expressing the speaker's attitude and relation towards external entities. The analysis shows that in the Slovene language, the definite and indefinite articles which help identify the NPr, i.e. the trigger, and the NPp, i.e. the target, are replaced by the rule of agreement of subject and predicate. NPp has two features: (a) it takes a space in the clause structure as an adjunct, and (b) is an optional value in the paradigmatic system. Language rules on one hand permit the differentiation between NPr and NPp, especially in the past tense, while on the other hand, they permit the necessary exchange and equalizing which permits communicative blindness.

6. *NPr be NPp in scientific discourse*

NPr be NPp clauses are not only frequent in ideological discourse, but also in scientific discourse. These are clauses that categorize remarks belonging to the actual state of affairs into conceptual categories belonging to the system of scientific concepts. E.g.:

(1) *Beseda* Peter je samostalnik.
    (The *word* »Peter« is a noun.)

If in ordinary speech the true value of such clauses is non-definable and the relation between NPr and NPp is only seemingly equivalent, it is not valid for scientific discourse. The true value of clause (1) can be determined within the frame of grammatical theory and its conceptual system by means of syllogistic inference:

Definition: nouns are words that denote beings, things, or concepts, and whose gender, case, and number can be determined.

Recognition of the defined properties under consideration: the word »Peter« denotes a being, it is masculine, nominative, singular.

Conclusion: the word »Peter« is a noun.

Let us consider how scientific discourse can ensure conditions for defining the true value of clauses as opposed to everyday human speech. It ensures those conditions that are not ensured in everyday human speech: (1) the choice in denomination is replaced by the use of non-selective denominations, i.e. terms; (2) the meanings of terms are precisely defined without connotative value surplus; (3) this makes possible by means of syllogistic inference to verify if a clause of perception has the properties contained in the concept and thus determine the true value of a clause. Ensuring these conditions is therefore a constituent component of the communicative laws of scientific discourse. In this way it is scientific discourse that ensures the truth of Frege's hypothesis that the reference of a predicate expression NPp is a concept. It could be said that both Frege and Searle were correct to a certain extent; Searle's conclusions are valid for the ordinary speech that was the dominant topic of his research; Frege's conclusions are valid for the logical metalanguage of science. Their conclusions are wrong in as much as they do not take into account the functional segmentation of communicative space in functional discourses. Not taking this very obvious fact into account presents the danger of overgeneralizations.

The fact that *NPr be NPp* clauses are impossible as assertions in ordinary speech can be best confirmed by examples with logical tautologies:

(2) Življenje je življenje.
    (Life is life.)

Logical equivalence of NPr and NPp in such clauses is achieved, but the price for it is their sameness. The copula certainly has the value of logical

equivalence, but the clause demonstrates the impossibility of understanding and the necessity of agreeing with reality as it is. These are clauses that meet the need for true definability, but at the price of coinciding of two entities, the intentional and the real. Language structure makes it possible for us to escape from the state of unperceptiveness and passivity. In everyday human speech, *NPr be NPp* clauses enable the performative illocutionary force which performs beliefs, attitudes, and acting, i.e. transformation of a linguistic entity into a non-linguistic one. Clauses with the same structure in scientific discourse, on the other hand, allow us to perceive a non-linguistic entity with linguistic means. Thus the linguistic structure of *Npr be NPp* clauses meets both fundamental human intentions, the intention to change the world according to one's desire and the intention to perceive the world.

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equivalence, but the clause demonstrates the impossibility of understanding and the necessity of agreeing with reality as it is. These are clauses that meet the need for true definability, but at the price of coinciding of two entities; the intentional and the real. Language structure makes it possible for us to escape from the state of unperceptiveness and passivity. In everyday human speech, NP be NP? clauses enable the performative illocutionary force which performs beliefs, attitudes, and acting, i.e. transformation of a linguistic entity into a non-linguistic one. Clauses with the same structure in scientific discourse, on the other hand, allow us to perceive a non-linguistic entity with linguistic means. Thus the linguistic structure of NP be NP? clauses meets both fundamental human intentions: the intention to change the world according to one's desire and the intention to perceive the world.

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»Pa«, the reverser
of argumentative expectation[1]
Igor Ž. Žagar

T he conjunction *pa*[2] (usually translated in English as plain *and* or *but* or not at all) is one of the formally (e.i. contextually) most diversified and most widely used lexemes of the Slovene language and for this reason probably also among the most self-evident and therefore least researched. *Slovar slovenskega knjižnega jezika*[3] (=Dictionary of the Slovene Literary Language) (hereinafter SSKJ) distinguishes the following four uses of the conjunction *pa:*

I.   in adversative clauses, with a comma;

II.   between lexical units in a sentence, without a comma;

III. in conjunctive clauses, without a comma, usually with omission of auxiliary words in the second clause;

IV.   after a period or semi colon;

In order to present the formal diversity of the usage of the conjunction *pa* to a non-Slovene speaker, we shall translate this schematic classification into the language of examples.

Ad I

In adversative clauses, *pa* is used for

− expressing opposition to what has been said previously[4]

(1) Obljubil je bil, *pa* ni držal besede.
    He promised, *pa* did not keep his word.

(2) Nihče ni mislil nanjo, *pa* je stopila v hišo.
    No one was thinking about her, *pa* she entered the house.

− for expressing moderate opposition

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2. That it is in fact (only) a question of a conjunction is not self-evident. This paper attempts to explain why this is so.
3. *Slovar slovenskega knjižnega jezika,* vol. III, SAZU/DZS, Ljubljana 1986, pp. 502-503.
4. All definitions are taken directly from SSKJ. We do not wish to question the definitions, but only want to show, for the purposes of the paper, the different ways of grammatical and lexical definitions of the uses of the conjunction *pa,* in order that we may in the most contrastive way present the role of the argumentative *pa.*

(3) Po travi so pajčevine, na njih *pa* se blešči rosa.
     There are cobwebs on the grass, *pa* dew sparkles on them.

– for enlargement, explanation of what has been said previously

(4) Potrebno nam je znanje, *pa* resnično znanje.
     What we need is knowledge, *pa* real knowledge.

– for reinforcement of the adverb which introduces the last lexical unit of a sequence

(5) Dela v tovarni, hodi na lov, *pa* še kmetuje pomalem.
     He works in the factory, hunts, *pa* also farms a little.

– for gradation

(6) Pozdrav vsem, posebno *pa* očetu.
     Greetings to everyone, particularly *pa* to Father.

– for expressing a causative-consecutive relation

(7) Ni plačal davkov, *pa* so ga rubili.
     He did not pay his debts, *pa* they seized his property.

– for expressing a causative-conclusive relation

(8) To je zanimiv primer, *pa* je prav, da si ga ogledamo.
     This is an interesting case, *pa* it is proper that we examine it.

– for expressing a conditional-consecutive relation

(9) Njo bi vzel, *pa* bi bilo drugače.
     He should have taken her, *pa* it would be different.

– for expressing a fact despite which the action of the previous clause is performed.

(10) Jože je odličnjak, *pa* nima inštruktorja kakor ti.
     Jože is an A student, *pa* he has no private tutor like you do.

– for emphasising opposition

(11) Moja bo obveljala, *pa* če se na glavo postaviš.
     I am right, *pa* if you stand on your head.

Ad II

– for linking two equivalent lexical units

(12) Pospravi krožnike *pa* kar je še na mizi.
     Put away the plates *pa* what else is on the table.

– for linking one before last to the last lexical unit

(13) Šumenje macesnov, borovcev *pa* smrek.
     The rustling of larch trees, pine trees *pa* spruce trees.

– for stepped emphasis of lexical units.

(14) Fant je še mlad *pa* norčav *pa* zaljubljen.
     The boy is still young *pa* clownish *pa* in love.

– for combining two similar notions into a single semantic unit.

(15) Ves vik *pa* krik je zaman.
    All this howling *pa* yowling is of no use.

– for expressing large quantity or high degree.

(16) Tam je sam pesek, *pa* spet pesek.
    There is nothing but sand, *pa* more sand.

– for adding, counting

(17) Star je pet let *pa* tri mesece.
    He is five *pa* three months.

– for addition

(18) Povedala je samo materi, *pa* (še) teti.
    She told it only to Mother, *pa* (also) to the aunt.

– in set expressions ta *pa* ta (so and so), tak *pa* tak (such and such) referring
    to a known person or thing which can not be revealed

(19) To *pa* to bi še bilo treba urediti.
    This *pa* this would still have to be arranged.

Ad III

– for linking two clauses, expressing simultaneity or sequentiality.

(20) Pili so, peli *pa* šale zbijali.
    They drank, sang *pa* told jokes.

– for stepped emphasis of sentences.

(22) Fant hodi samo v kino *pa* gleda televizijo *pa* bere stripe.
    All the boy does is go to the cinema *pa* watch TV *pa* read comic books.

– for combining two similar verbs into a meaningful unit.

(23) Ves dan vpije *pa* razgraja.
    He screams *pa* carouses all day.

– for expressing intensity of action

(24) Ne dam *pa* ne dam.
    I will not *pa* will not give it to you.

– for expressing intention.

(25) Pojdi *pa* zapri vrata.
    Go *pa* close the door.

Ad IV

– for expressing the same meanings as in I (particulary (7) to (10)) and III

– expressively

(26) Bodite mirni. *Pa* nobenega šepetanja.
    Be quiet. *Pa* no whispering.

– for referring to what has been said previously.

(27) Jaz sem končal. *Pa* ti?
     I'm finished. *Pa* you?

– for calling attention to a transition to another thought.

(28) *Pa* še to. Včeraj mi je pisal Janez.
     Pa one more thing. Yesterday I got a letter from Janez.

– for expressing wonder, astonishment, reluctance.

(29) *Pa* da mi nikdar več ne greš tja.
     Pa don't you ever go there again.

A total of 29 distinctions. Our thesis is that all of the 29 definitions can be reduced to only two: first, *pa* is used for expressing opposition to what has been said before (example (11)) and second, *pa* is used for expressing the unexpected (example (2)). These two definitions can be further reduced to a single definition of the reverser of argumentative expectation.[5]

The condition for the implementation of such a radical application of Occam's razor is, of course, the adoption of a different perspective based on the following two conditions:

    a) *pa* must be treated discursively (i.e., argumentatively) and not (only) grammatically;

    b) *pa* must be treated as a(n argumentative) conjunction and not only as an (argumentative) operator.

By »adopting a different perspective«, we of course immediately encounter the problem of the so-called internal and external hypotheses.

The external hypotheses are those hypotheses which regard a given (empirical) attribute as an object of study, as an object of some science.

In the case of the conjunction *pa,* the external hypothesis, in terms of grammar, lies in the fact that *pa* (as well as all other conjunctions and grammatical parts of speech) is investigated in terms of its grammaticality, or a-grammaticality, i.e., in terms of whether (and under what conditions) it is capable of forming a grammatically correct string of words, sentences.

Jože Toporišič, a leading Slovene grammarian, argues for example[6] that a »conjunctive word is an auxiliary, syntactic part of speech, which points to the relation between two messages.« Regarding the fact that the conjunction (which is the most typical connective word) is, grammatically speaking, primarily a syntactic part of speech, it is important to distinguish it from other parts of speech in view of generating grammatically correct strings of words. According to Toporišič, the conjunction, for example, distinguishes itself from

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5. The term was coined by Oswald Ducrot, for which I owe him my gratitude.
6. Jože Toporišič, *Slovenska slovnica,* založba Obzorja, Maribor 1976, p. 362.

the preposition in that »it does not influence the flexional form of words or word sets which it connects,« while for a grammatically correctly formed sentence, one of the most significant (if not the most significant) condition is precisely the flectional correlation of its parts.

Our external hypothesis, on the contrary, is founded on studying the conjunction *pa* argumentatively (and therefore discursively), i.e., in its ability to link not only two parts of a sentence, as an abstract structure, which belongs to the domain of language, but also two segments of a discourse (which is a particular performance of specific sentence structures and therefore belongs to the domain of speech) so that (rejecting a given conclusion) it provides an argument for another.

Specific external hypotheses, of course, correspond to specific internal hypotheses, i.e., conceptual apparatus, mechanism, which is supposed to explain these external hypotheses. One of the significant internal hypotheses which distinguishes our external hypothesis from the grammatical one is, for example, the distinction between the operator and conjunction. While the operator coordinates the propositional elements of a given sentence (see examples (6), (13) to (18)), we will argue that the conjunction links two (different) speech acts (see examples (26) to (29)).

Elsewhere[7] it has been demonstrated that the argumentative variables have not only an exceptional directional power but also that the link (»buffering«) of several argumentative variables helps us crystallize its argumentative orientation. Let us, as an introduction to the analysis of the conjunction *pa,* consider the variables *ker* (because) and *sicer* (otherwise, or else).[8] Let us compare the utterances

(30) *Ker* si razbil šipo, ne boš šel v kino.
    Because you broke the window, you can not go to the cinema.

(31) Pridi sem, *sicer* pridem pote.
    Come here, otherwise I'll come for you.

with the utterances into which *pa* has been inserted.

(30') *Ker pa* si razbil šipo, ne boš šel v kino.
    Because *pa* you broke the window, you can not go to the cinema.

(31') Pridi sem, *sicer pa* pridem pote.
    Come here, otherwise *pa* I'll come for you.

As we can see, example (30) contains a kind of causal-consecutive *ker* (because), which in an argumentatively logical way connects two speech acts:

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7. Igor Ž. Žagar, »Argumentacija v jeziku proti argumentaciji z jezikom«, *Anthropos* vols. III-IV, 1991, Ljubljana 1991 (in print).

8. Selection of variables *ker* and *sicer* is in no way arbitrary. At several occasions (see the continuation of the article), it was noticed that *pa* provides emphatic »stress« in the company of these two variables.

the assertion that the person spoken to, X, has broken the window (argument) and the interdiction of his (X's) departure to the cinema (conclusion). *Ker* as an argumentative conjunction thus links the two speech acts so firmly that (30) as a segment of discourse comes across as relatively autonomous i.e., coherent (selection of each of the components of the given discourse segments is conditioned by the selection of the whole, or in other words: each of the components of the given discursive segment is a part of that discourse segment due to the entire discursive segment and not (merely) due to itself) and independent (so that it reflects to a sufficient degree the enunciating position and does not have to engage additional, co(n)textual information for its interpretation; in other words: a given discursive segment is independent if for its understanding we do not have to engage some (still) greater discursive segment of which it is a part.)

And what happens if *pa* is inserted into utterance (30)?

The first thing that we notice is the loss of discursive (and thereby interpretative) independence: *ker pa* obviously alludes to some previous argument or discursive segment (which could provide an argument for the opposite conclusion of »You can not go to the cinema,« which is »Yes, you can go to the cinema.«) which is in fact («materially«, literally) absent from the directly provided argumentative connection; however, it is implicitly rejected precisely by the given argumentative connection as insufficient for the conclusion for which it could provide an argument («You can go to the cinema«) and draws its own conclusion («You can not go to the cinema«).

Utterance (30') is therefore discursively and argumentatively not independent. In order to obtain a relatively integrated and independent segment of the discourse, we must engage or reconstruct that part of the discourse to which the *pa* of a given explicit part of the discourse refers. For example:

(30")   A: Res si bil priden: pomil si posodo in pobrisal prah. *Ker pa* si razbil šipo, ne boš šel v kino.

You were really a good boy: you washed the dishes, wiped the dust. Because *pa* you broke the window, you can not go to the cinema.

The situation is completely different in example (31). *Sicer* of utterance (31) can be (quite easily) paraphrased as exclusive either, or: »Ali prideš sem, ali pridem pote.« »Either you come here, or I'll come for you.« The introduction of *pa* into the paraphrase of example (31) does not cause interpretative problems: »Either you come here, or *pa* I'll come for you.« This is in fact a classical *pa* of opposition, which can not be said about the *pa* in utterance (31'):

(31') Pridi sem, *sicer pa* pridem pote.

Come here, otherwise *pa* I'll come for you.

At first glance, the utterance makes no sense since the speaker (the enunciator or various enunciating positions within the given utterance will be ignored for the time being) first orders the realization of a given propositional content and then says that it will grant it its true value with its own action. Let us consider several similar utterances:

(32) Ugasni luč, *sicer (pa)* jo bom sam.
     Turn off the light, otherwise *(pa)* I will do it.

(33) Povrni mi povzročeno škodo, *sicer (pa)* te bom prisilil, da mi jo povrneš.
     Pay for the damage you caused, otherwise *(pa)* I will force you to pay it back.

(34) Zapri vrata, *sicer (pa)* jih bom sam.
     Close the door, otherwise *(pa)* I will do it.

All three utterances without *pa* can be interpreted as exclusive either – or, but if we introduce the *pa,* the second part of the utterance, which is introduced by the expression *sicer pa,* cancels the illocutionary power of the first part of the utterance (in our case the power of command) and endow the entire utterance with an ambivalent, even nonsensical status.

Therefore, utterance (31') is obviously not discursively independent, for this is the only way to justify its enunciatory nonsensical (at least not completely sensical) status. Similarly, it is difficult to construct (on the analogy with example (30')) the preceding discursive segment to which *pa* is supposed to refer, without at the same time fundamentally changing utterance (31') itself. What can in fact be done?

All examples with *sicer* which have been discussed so far could be paraphrased with exclusive either – or and all of them were illocutionary commands. Of course, this is not the only use of *sicer* known to the Slovene language. Let us consider the following examples:

(35) Petra jih je vzela. *Sicer pa* to ni prvič.
     Petra has taken them. *Sicer pa* this is not the first time.

(36) Avto je fuč. *Sicer pa* tako ni bil vreden piškavega oreha.
     The car has had it. *Sicer pa* it wasn't worth a dime.

(37') Prešeren je bil velik pijanec. *Sicer pa* je to znano.
     Prešeren was a big drunk. *Sicer pa* this is a well known fact.

Now let us subject them to the opposite procedure than that in examples (30) to (31) and drop *pa:*

(35') Petra jih je vzela. *Sicer* to ni prvič.
     Petra took them. *Sicer* this was not the first time.

(36') Avto je fuč. *Sicer* tako ni bil vreden piškavega oreha.
     The car has had it. *Sicer* it wasn't worth a dime.

(37') Prešeren je bil velik pijanec. *Sicer* je to znano.
     Prešeren was a big drunk. *Sicer* this is a well known fact.

Immediately we notice that examples (35') to (37') are somehow unfinished, that they »hand in the air.« In order to endow them with discursive interpretative cohesion and independence, we would have to complement them somehow: ((35') = ... she could nevertheless tell us about it beforehand; (36') = ... it was nevertheless useful; (37') = ... still, this is not significant for the appraisal of his poetic greatness), where it is not unimportant that additional information can be introduced only with an adversative conjunction (clause).

On the other hand, examples (35) to (37), where *pa* intervenes, are discursively and interpretatively completely coherent and independent. Here, we could not say that *pa* (or *sicer pa*) round off the given discursive segment into an independent one (only) by referring to some preceding discursive segment. On the contrary, *sicer pa* explains, attenuates, or more precisely, rejects the first part of the utterance, which introduces a given (empirical) fact, as non-new, precisely by making explicit and wording some general, unuttered knowledge. In this case, *pa* not only does not reach back into the discourse of which it is a part or a continuation, in order to clarify a given discursive segment preceding *pa,* but in fact reaches literally outside of the given discursive formation – in the area of fragmented general knowledge – in order the discourse can, if at all, be based on something.

It seems that in critical cases (31') and (32) to (34), this reference to general knowledge is also a reference to general places or topoi.[9] All four critical examples are in fact given discursive independence already by referring to one sole topos such as »The more we want something, the harder we have to work for it.«

In examples (35) to (37) it seems that it is not a question of direct reference to a given general knowledge, but rather, to some preceding knowledge, a knowledge whose generality is limited to some community, class, nation, etc.

The above two hypotheses have been tested on a large computer– processed body of newspaper articles, which allegedly represented (according to the Yugoslav Armed Forces spokesman) 'attacks on the Yugoslav Armed Forces'[10]. The results of this major project can be found in two articles[11], therefore we will not discuss the methodological aspects of data processing in

9. Cf. The works by Oswald Ducrot and Jean-Claude Anscombre on polyphony and the theory of topoi, particularly Ducrot 1980, 1988 and Anscombre, Ducrot 1983. See also Igor Ž. Žagar, »Argumentacija v jeziku proti argumentaciji z jezikom«, *Anthropos* vols. III-IV, 1991, Ljubljana 1991 (in print).

10. The mentioned and discussed text belongs to the glorious period of the »democratization« of the Slovene society, a period before democracy which was introduced following the elections of spring 1990. Even though the diction of some of the texts (articles) today comes across as somewhat archaic, if not grotesque, this is a body of texts whose volume and criteria of selection ensure the greatest possible accuracy and credibility of obtained results.

11. Igor Ž. Žagar and Peter Tancig, »Računalniška analiza 'napadov na JLA'«, *Časopis za kritiko*

this paper. Our analysis, which included 355 articles, of which 169 by known authors and 111 by unknown or anonymous authors, published in 20 different Slovene periodicals and 12 undisclosed sources in the first half of 1988 (from the beginning of January to the beginning of July 1988) yielded the following results:

Of the 2534 occurrences of the conjunction *pa,* only 7 occur in the combination *ker pa,* and 10 in the combination *sicer pa* (this leads us to conclude that either this complex argumentative variable possesses great argumentative power, or that this is a particularly rare method of argumentation). However, the analysis of concrete »empirical« examples does not completely confirm the justification of our differentiation between *ker pa* and *sicer pa,* a distinction which is based on the following two hypotheses: a) in the expression *ker pa, pa* refers to some preceding segment of the discourse, and only this reference enables the completion of the discourse segment, containing *pa* as a discursively coherent and independent element; b) that in the expression *sicer pa, pa* refers not to the preceding segment of the discourse, but rather, to a kind of common, general or at least preceding knowledge.

On the contrary, it turned out that not only *sicer pa,* but also *ker pa* may, in order to refute the said or written argument, reach outside the realm of discourse in progress, and tap from some common, general, or at least preceding knowledge.

Let us consider this affirmation on the example of one of the computer-processed articles by Dragan Đurić titled *Slovenia and Democracy,* first published by *Vijesnik* and reprinted by *Delo* on June 11, 1988. It was selected because it features *sicer pa* as well as *ker pa* (the latter occurring twice).

Slovenia and democracy

In the past thirty days, the Slovene public has experienced two new shocks. After the May rumours that our northernmost republic was getting ready for a »military coup,« June began with the detention of Janez Janša, Ivan Borštner and David Tasić, a journalist, a second lieutenant in the Yugoslav Armed Forces and an editor of *Mladina.* All three have been arrested on suspicion of having divulged a military secret. According to the official statement, parts of top-secret military documents were discovered in their homes or places of work. Accompanied by increasingly vociferous statements by different associations, alliances and forums, Janša, Borštner and Tasić were handed over by the Republic Secretariat of Internal Affairs to the military prosecutor. A military secret is at stake here. Even though in the first case it was only a rumour, and in the second, the epilogue of the story is still not known, the fact

remains that both cases were skilfully combined, so that in some quarters this was viewed as the autumn of the »Slovene spring,« or the beginning of the end of democracy. Is it possible that such assessments may nevertheless be somewhat premature?

As far as Janša's case is concerned – with it in fact began the arrests and searches of the places of work and residences of the accused – *Mladina, Tribuna, Katedra* and Radio Študent issued »public statements« to the effect that this was »inadmissible meddling in the electoral procedure and blatant pressure on the public.« It is obvious that the detention of Janša on the basis of suspicion for having divulged a military secret carried severe political implications. *Ker pa₁* he is one of the candidates for the president of ZSMS (Slovene youth organization), this certainly should not come as a surprise. The current president of the Slovene youth organization Tone Anderlič also made a statement and on behalf of his organization demanded from Tomaž Ertl, Republican Minister of Internal Affairs, an official explanation of Janša's arrest, about which, so he said, he learned from the newspapers.

This request could be in fact interpreted as an undemocratic act. Why should the Secretariat of Internal affairs, proceeding in compliance with its lawful competencies, inform the youth organization differently than the rest of the public? Does this mean that Janša should receive preferential treatment? *Ker pa₂* the pre-electoral procedure for the youth organization elections is drawing to a close – and due to this, it is becoming a prime political event – Anderlič's demand is, despite everything, justified. This could certainly not be said of the joint statement of youth periodicals which in a biased way disqualified the legal authorities, and that even before their task was completed.

After that, the mass media have conveyed, according to a well established Slovene ritual, a series of statements and bulletins for the public. Eighty-eight eminent Slovene personalities from cultural and artistic circles signed a statement which called for an explanation as to who initiated the investigation against Janša. The same is demanded by the Slovene Writers Association, also calling for an immediate release of Janša, Borštner and Tasić. In this context, the writers emphasize that they are indignant »with these investigations, which are creating an atmosphere of a state of emergency in Slovenia.« They are also concerned for constitutional order and freedom of the press.

The administrative board of the Journalist Association of Slovenia pointed out in its declaration that the »majority of journalists of the Journalist Association of Slovenia have expressed their concern regarding respect of the constitution, lawfulness, human rights and democratization of our society.«

Why such a great mistrust of lawful authorities? Why all those questions addressed to the Republican Secretariat of Internal Affairs, social and political organizations and authorities of Slovenia protesting against the »restriction of

information?« Tomaž Ertl said, in a long interview published in the June 1st issue of *Delo* (editor's comment: the interview published in *Delo* on June 8 is probably meant here), that the public is being informed on a regular basis about the proceedings. The public was informed on how the procedure is progressing, what has been discovered, and why the Secretariat of Internal Affairs opted for detention. But one thing is clear: Until it has been proven that the suspicions are well founded – competent legal authorities will have something to say about that as well – no one should be declared a criminal. The competent authorities must be allowed to establish the facts.

Regarding the comment that information is incomplete, one can say only that it simply can not be more detailed and precise until the investigation is completed.

In the same vein, the criticism that this was an unlawful act is probably not justified. Public protests stand on shaky ground, particularly because it is the public who is advocating democracy. If someone is in favor of democracy, then he would have to acknowledge a law-based state, recognized by its constitution and laws, as a civilisational achievement of democracy. In addition to the freedom of expression and thought, positive regulations would have to be recognized. Even if these regulations are incomplete, they must be respected until they are changed. And the authority to do this rests with the Republican Assembly.

The most outspoken defenders of democracy, however, fell into the trap against which they were fighting on the public stage: they force their opinion on others as the supreme yardstick of right and wrong. Just as we are not ready to accept a dogmatist who has no ear for diversity and richness of opinions, so a »democrat,« who is prepared to do away with all those who do not share his views with methods which are not defined by the constitution and law, can not broaden the horizons of democracy. A democratic society indeed does not suggest that it has no dogmatists, just as no social or political system is black and white.

The Presidency of the Central Committee of the Communist League of Slovenia declared in a press release that it »does not wish to influence the course of investigation.« According to the statement, competent authorities, which have initiated and are leading the investigation, are responsible for everything. The lawful authorities should therefore independently – and of course ethically – perform their task and bring it to its completion. In any event, the outpouring of »liberal demands« with which individuals in fact attempt to exert a kind of pressure on the judiciary, can not be characterized merely as pressure on the lawcourts and investigating authorities. Many among them demand the observance of constitutional and legal principles as well as accurate and detailed information.

The fact remains that in the future the judiciary will have to take into consideration public opinion and public itself, which increasingly hungers for complete, accurate information. *Sicer pa* this is the usual price to pay when the doors of democracy are opened. We have achieved, despite everything, a higher level of democracy and this is borne out by the fact that this case is debated every day in public. If times were different, the entire incident would warrant no more than a brief report, or perhaps not even that much says Vijesnik's Dragan Đurić.

As we can see, *ker pa*$_1$ as well as *ker pa*$_2$ do not refer to some preceding discursive segment: The fact that Janez Janša was at the time a presidential candidate for RK ZSMS and that the electoral procedure for the president of RK ZSMS was drawing to a close is never explicitly mentioned in the text. Both items of information were only a matter of preceding, common knowledge. *Ker pa*$_1$ and *ker pa*$_2$ thus introduce into the given text new voices, new standpoints (informations), which are not directly, materially embraced by the given text. In order that we may bestow the required cohesion and independence on the text studied, we must therefore presume that the positions of the speaker (in our case the author of the article) are in fact the result of the confrontation of several enunciators or enunciating positions (which the article only reflects and which are not directly, materially caught in it). This is therefore a polyphonous structurality of the text, which in other words means that we must analyze *ker pa*$_1$ with the aid of (one) speaker and (at least) two enunciators (enunciating positions):

E(enunciator)$_1$ presents a fact F$_1$ (detention of a citizen), which has unusual quality Q$_1$ (severe political consequences);

E(enunciator)$_2$ contradicts him by presenting some (new) fact F$_2$ (this is a citizen involved in politics), where he obviously supports his arguments by referring to topos T$_1$, »The more we ideal in politics, the more politically our actions are interpreted«, and this is acknowledged also by S(speaker), in our case the author of the article.

Even more interesting is the interpretation, or more precisely the possibility of interpretation of *ker pa*$_2$. The interpretation can be considered not only as a conflict between two enunciators, but also as a conflict between two topoi: E$_1$ represents a fact F$_3$ (democratic treatment) with quality Q$_3$ (the same for everyone), where it applies a given topos T$_2$, »The more the laws are democratic, the more we must abide by them.«

E$_2$ concurs with him in this respect, except that instead of T$_2$, he applies topos T$_3$ (which only intensifies T$_2$), »The more the conditions are aggravated, the more democratically we must act,« and S(speaker) concurs with his argumentation.

Of particular interest (particularly for the clarification of the nature of topoi and argumentation based on them) is the possibility of interpreting *sicer pa*. It suggests that different argumentative conclusions can be based on the same topos, which on the other hand again means that several different enunciating positions can be grafted on the same topos. *Sicer pa* could in fact be explained with the aid of the speaker and two enunciators (enunciating positions):

E_1 declares a given fact F_1. (which is completely the same as in the case *ker* pa_1, i.e., detention of a citizen) only that another unusual quality Q_1. is ascribed to it, as in E_1 in the case of *ker* pa_1 (greatly alarming the public).

E_2 contradicts him with fact F_3. (which is equal to the fact used by I_1 in the case of *ker* pa_2,(democratic treatment), only that it ascribes a different quality Q_3. to it than E_1 in the case of *ker* pa_2 (freedom of information), thereby applying topos T_3. (»The more conditions are aggravated, the more democratically we must act.«), with which E_2 in the example of *ker* pa_2 with gradation refutes the argumentation of E_1.

The matter is more complex than it is evident at first glance from the three different analyses. E_1 of example *sicer pa,* by presenting its fact F_1, also polemizes with E_1 of example *ker* pa_1, since it attributes to it a different quality than E_1 of example *ker* pa_1.

E_2 of example *sicer pa,* in addition to refuting the argument of E_1 of example *sicer pa,* also polemizes with E_1 of example *ker* pa_2, since it ascribes to fact D_3. (which is equal to the fact used by E_1 in example *ker* pa_2) a different quality.

It can be concluded that the conjunction *pa,* at least in connection with conjunctions *ker (ker pa)* and *sicer (sicer pa)* represents an enunciatory anaphoric element, which by referring to some common general (or at least preceding) knowledge, external to the discourse in progress, delimits the discursive segment, whose part it is, as an interpretatively and argumentively relatively autonomous unit.

Since the conjunction *pa* introduces a (complex) argumentative variable, which 1) discursively calls for a selection of argument, whose (argumentative) orientation opposes the argument preceding *pa,* 2) the argument preceding *pa* is not opposed by introducing a new discursive argument, but, with referring to an extra-discursive (extra-discursive in relation to the discourse in progress), common general knowledge, *pa* could also be viewed as the reverser of argumentative expectation, and its role could be graphically represented in the following manner:

x   *Ker pa* A, B

x   A, *sicer pa* B.
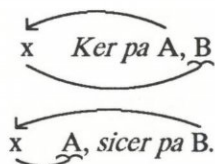
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Kaliban and Ariel

The question of form in contemporary historical theory
Narrativity in the representation of historical reality
Oto Luthar

I n the beginning of the nineties, already more than two decades separate us
from the discussion about whether history should remain an objective
chronicle of political treaties, great battles and famous personalities or whether
it should direct its interest toward a kind of structural analysis of historical
processes. Like Paul Veyne, the contemporary historians don't go after only
mere facts, but – answering, for example, the question of who were the
favorites of Louis 13th – try to find out what this is at all – a favorite. The
extent to which this decision is or is not just a matter of principle is of course
another question to leave aside here. However we can undoubtedly state that
there are only a few historians left nowadays who still think aloud about the
objectivity in the way the German classical historiographical school did. We
are faced, though, with a totally different problem: that we still come across
chroniclers who theoretically claim to agree with the principles of the new
historiography, but who in concrete work avoid attempting an interpretation
of their own wherever it is possible, usually avoiding theoretical self-reflection
of their science. Moreso, until not long ago they despised it as something that
doesn't belong in the historian's sphere of work Nowadays their unexpressed
positions are still seen to exert influence, especially on their frightened
students, who, in abundance of dates learnt by heart, are forced to guess
whether Rudolf the Habsburg was really elected to be the German king in
1274 – or was it perhaps a year later or before?

In short, the initiative for a different view of the nature of historical
explanation, and thus the creative contribution to the development of
historiography, is to be sought elsewhere, by those authors who – following
Humboldt – make distinction between (or join) historical research as
mediation betwen empirical statements about what happened in the past and
historiography, which only gives meaning to these events and thus constitutes
them as history. Within this frame we can place the »grandfathers« (Febvre,
Bloch) and »fathers« (Braudel) of the new historiography, as well as all
younger authors who try to answer the question what is and what is not history
by analysing the forms of historical representation. Thereby, as already noted,
they proceed from distinction between the real (or material) notion of
»history« i.e. the notion that refers to the subject of historical research, and
between the theoretical (or formal) expression which is, on the contrary,

defined by activity concerning the given object, that is to say, by the ways of interpretation of the past.

Within such a theoretical and philosophical frame we are therefore interested mostly in those authors who tackled the problem of historical representation by opening the question of narrative in contemporary historical theory. By analysing their theories we would like to point at the scope of a similar discussion within Slovene theoretical reflection of historiography.

<div style="text-align:center">*</div>

In contemporary historical theory, the topic of narrative has been the subject of extraordinarily intense debate. Viewed from one perspective, this is surprising; on the face of it, there should be very little to debate about narrative. Narration is a manner of speaking as universal as language itself, and narrative is a mode of verbal representation so seemingly natural to human consciousness that to suggest that it is a problem might well appear pedantic.[1]

If the position quoted above – expressed in the middle of the eighties by Hayden White, who wanted, referring to Barth, to substantiate his conceptualization of contemporary historical narration – is now to a great extent already acknowledged, then, the process of this acknowledgment wasn't a very simple one. The authors who undertook such a rehabilitation, or to be more precise, such an analysis of narration, until as long as three decades ago didn't come across – save a few exceptions – to many listeners and sympathizers. The later advocates of narrative conception – White being here a big exception – also often overlooked the meaning and the position of some »classics«, i.e., pioneers in the contemporary theory of historiography. Even rarer were those who included Croce in their »genealogy« from Gervinus up to Danto, although precisely Croce in his »genial confusion or confused genius« was the first to draw the distinction between »theory of historiography« and »philosophy of history«, proceeding from the standpoint that the basic questions of the theory of historiography belong in the sphere of aesthetics.[2]

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1. Hayden White, »The Question of Narrative in Contemporary Historical Theory«, XXIII/1, 1984, p. 1. Reprinted in: Hayden White, *The Content of the Form. Narrative Discours and Historical Representation,* John Hopkins Univ. Press, Baltimore – London 1987. Slovene translation in: Oto Luthar (ed.), *Vsi Tukididovi možje. Sodobne teorije zgodovinopisja,* Ljubljana 1990.

2. Resumed from: Hayden White, *Auch Klio Dichtet oder Fiktion des Faktischen: Studien zur Tropologie d. histor. Diskurses,* Klett-Cotta, Stuttgart 1986, p. 259, where Croce, in a quotation of White, concludes his comprehension of aesthetics with the following thoughts: »In case aesthetics is a pure intuitional science... then we perceive it as philosophy as art; but as soon as it wants to be a theory of a special group of intuitions (intuitions the subject of which is some particular reality), then it appears in front of us as theory of historiography which doesn't meditate about what should have happened in a certain time and in a certain place, but just gets acquanted with what happens in the society in general.« (p. 263).

In this regard, it is almost inevitable, before sketching up the up-to-date discussion on the subject of narrative discourse and historical representation, to present at least those views of Croce enabled this topic at all (or at least made the way to it easier). What we have in mind, first of all, are certain questions concerning his synthesis of evidence and criticism.

Stimulated by Vico's equation of philosophy with science and history, Croce substantiated his distinction between theory of historiography and philosophy of history with the argument that the former is supposed to form the criteria by which the historians would shape and unify their narrations, as well as give them adequate contents, while the latter should, in his opinion, tend toward discovering seemingly general rules, on the basis of which human acts can be displayed in the forms they had adopted on different places in different times.

According to this, he was convinced that the theory of historiography is justified only in cases when we have to deal with intuitional – and not also with notional – logic, that is to say, in cases when it is clearly defined that the activity of historiography is to be placed within the frame of art. In view of this, he strictly separated *poetical* history, as well as *chronicle* and *practically oriented,* i.e., »oratorical« or »rhetorical« history from *philological* history.

His criticism, however, didn't aim only at poetical history, but also at derivation of all representation forms within romantic historiography, as well as at all later forms of historical representation that treated the sources (»reports« and »documents«) merely as assistant means of historical cognition.[3] On the other hand, it is also true that his deepest interest was precisely the analysis of socalled »poetics«, for he kept repeating that insofar as we consider human history to be a history of mind and agree to the mind being a value that can be understood, then it is clear that history is always a history of values. But since in the »historiographical perception the mind is recognizable as thought, then the latter appears as the basic value of historiography. The defining principle of history therefore cannot be the so called 'sensual value'«, since the latter *is* life and not thought. Insofar as this »on the part of mind not yet reflected life finds a way to express itself, then we have to deal with a poem and not with history.« If we therefore want to change a poetical biography into a historical one, »we must keep our ...

3. In the first chapter of his book *Zur Theorie und Geschichte der Historiographie* (Mohr, Tübingen 1915, p. 24-25), Croce – counting up the representatives of poetical historiography (from Herodot up to Mommsen) and introducing numerous cases of such historiography offered to us in enthusiastic biographies of popular and respected persons and satirical accounts of the unpopular ones, as well as in patriotic stories that praise the successes and accuse the failures of a nation, etc., points to the fact that »poetical history cannot be exhausted in such a fundamental and abstract unison of love and hatred (hatred that is love and love that is hatred), but slips through the most complicated forms and the finest devious ways of feeling and appears in front of us as a trustful, loving, melancholic, yearning, pessimistic, resigned, cheerful... poetical history.«

dreams, love and contempt for ourselves and ask for the merits which place the individual whose life we want to show into the frame of social and civilizational activity«.[4] In short, he felt sure that when writing history we must overcome sensual values and modify them into mental values, for in the opposite case, »when we cannot rise up to this 'subjectivity', the result of our work will not be history, but poetry: and the problem of history will remain untouched«.[5]

History, says Croce, has only one duty: to unfold the facts. What we therefore refer to as the search for reasons of these facts, is merely a »more careful analysis and understanding of individual relations among them.« In his opinion, taking into account the claim for »a new form of history,« the history or historiography should be reformed totally or not at all. Here, of course, we have to deal with two levels of reflection. From the »abstract« point of view, says Croce, the tendency towards a kind of »real history« is unjustified: »the history is and will always be the same; that is to say, the living history or history of (ideal) past, as well as the chronicle, the philological, poetical and practically oriented history are, have been and shall always be the same«. It turns out that those who wanted to »thoroughly reform« history could never avoid confrontation between philological and poetical history (and vice versa), unless they opposed both of them to the »contemporary« history. But such an undertaking usually doesn't turn out well, therefore – proceeds Croce – some historians as well as some »dull sociologists and positivists« on the edge of the century, with a lot of noise but a poor knowledge of the essence of history, regretted the fact (if, of course, they managed to realize it at all) that history cannot be subjected to the methodological grips (abstraction, observation, experiment) of natural sciences.[6]

The changes in history, i.e., historiography, should therefore be undertaken concretely. If we look at history from a concrete point of view, thinks Croce, then we are to reform just about everything within its frame, which means that history should constantly be elaborated, enriched and deepened, as well as that »there's no history that could satisfy us entirely.« »Every construction of ours indeed does reveal new facts and raises new questions..., but«, and this is the point he firmly insisted on, »history always reforms itself alone and remains nevertheless always the same; last but not least, it is precisely this persistence of it wherein the power of its development is hidden«.[7]

His criticism of the socalled reformers, therefore, doesn't signify that, like Windelband, he understood history as a merely descriptive science. On the contrary, in a controversy with Windelband Croce argued that »description« is

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4. B. Croce, *Zur Theorie der Geschichte...*, p. 26.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*, p. 35-36.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 36.

undoubtedly an adequate expression for analysis and generalization of description of the subject of empirical research. But if description means what we imagine under this notion in history, then the notion »descriptive science« is *contradictio in adiecto*. A historian doesn't treat facts as a mere reflection of general laws, but »thinks« about his subject. And this is precisely what the artist does as well. Therefore – proceeds Croce – the »comparison« (most clearly articulated by Dilthey) »between history and art is perfectly justified.«[8]

Although some authors, with Collingwood at the head, share the opinion that Croce in his early works spent too much effort trying to justify and ground the connection of history and art, we still think that such views nevertheless signify an important step ahead of the unappealable German positions in the second half of the 19th century. Although German historians have, like later Croce, considered the distinction between the individual and the universal as the key to distinguishing history from science, they still kept thinking of history as science, without answering the question of how a science about the individual is possible at all. This was mostly due to Windelband's distinction between *nomothetical* science (oriented into formation of general laws) and *ideographical* science, where history also should belong, her duty being simply to describe facts. What's more, by adopting this distinction without further reflection, many historians (also outside German borders) even decades later still successfully rejected reproaches on account of their modest possibilities concerning the theoretical reflection of the historian's work.

But this is already another story. The important thing for us is that with the criticism of Croce's views, the discussion about the relation between art and history got a certain continuity. A nice example of this offers us the well-known booklet of Hughes, *History as Art and as Science*,[9] where the author promoted »sensibility« as the manner of author's engagement in creating historical science and argued for the theory that »in writing his report, the historian should act like a dramatist.«[10] Most important, however, is the

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8. In this connection, Robin G. Collingwood (*The Idea of History*, Clarendon Press 1946, Part IV) already points out, not without reason, that in his comprehension of relation between history and art Croce has gone too far into another extreme, since both represented to him the same: intuition and representation of the particular, whereby history is included into art as narration of the possible. Hence the definition of history as »intuition of the real«, which is the same as to assert in the same breath that history is art and yet that it is more than art. But if »descriptive science« is contradictio in adiecto, then so (following Collingwood) is the syntagm »intuition of the real«; for intuition, precisely because it is intuition and not thought, doesn't know the difference between the real and the imaginary.

9. Stuart Hughes, *History as Art and as Science*, New York 1964. The first Yugoslave translation, alas, not until 1989: *Istorija kao umjetnost i kao nauka*, Gradina, Niš.

10. *Ibid.* Hughes says: »When writing his report, the historian must act like a dramatist. As he cannot be on several places at the same time (in this respect he is just a mortal), he must shift the happening from one place to another, whereby his own judgement and feeling tell him whereupon to focus his story.« In Hughes' opinion, the narration goes on in two plans: in the first or in the big plan there's everything that is later to remain as history (the main event,

fact that Croce's views (although only in a close circle of theoreticians) were finally accepted as an important stage on the way to recognition that there's only one sort of judgment in history, and that judgment is of individual nature.

Croce's theories began to be compared also with the French »critique de la science«, i.e., with the German views represented by Rickert. Most outstanding is the analysis of his criticism of positivism and materialism of his time, although also Croce, under the influence of Labriola, at first accepted historical materialism as a corrective of the one-sided comprehension of history. Later, however, he realized also that the very one-sidedness of this abstract doctrine – as he said – doesn't grasp historical facts in their full concreteness. For Croce there's no abstract Truth, but only concrete thinking; there's no Good as such, but only ethical volition; no Beauty, but only poetical and artistic creation. The whole reality is nothing but spirituality in its ever changing-activity.[11]

According to this, Croce considers every true history to be at the same time a contemporary history, for it is born directly out of the activity performed by the mind as the consciousness of this activity. In other words, the real history arises directly out of life, which means that – as self-reflection of the living mind – it must *vibrate* in historian's consciousness; in the opposite case, separated from the living document, what we get is only a chronicle. Proceeding from such a principle, which leads us to the thought that mind itself is history, its creator and as such the result of all preceding history, we can thus trace in Croce's thought also the outlines of Voltaire's comprehension of philosophy of history, for example, in his equation of history as insight into eternal contemporaneity with philosophy. What is by far the most important for the theory of historiography is that he reckoned among the organic works of »philosophy of mind« (»aesthetics«, »logics« and »philosophy of praxis«) also the »theory of historiography.« (Collingwood 1946)

Such a classification, of course, had to be based on the insight that history doesn't consist of books or documents, but of interest and work living in the historian's consciousness when criticizing and interpreting those documents. For Croce, the subject of history is therefore not past as such, but past about which we have a certain »historical evidence.«

Understandable. A great deal of the past is doubtlessly forever lost for us precisely for the reason that we have no documents to reconstruct it. We can, of course, believe that something we are told about by way of some undocumented testimony really happened, yet this is still no historical

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the army general, the most furious battle), and in the second there's the »huge anonymous acting and dying mass«.

11. About this Boris Furlan wrote already in his preface to the Slovene translation of *Croce's History of Europe in the 19th Century* (Zgodovina Evrope v devetnajstem stoletju), published in 1934 (Hram, Ljubljana).

knowledge, but only »chronicle.« Since a similar view can be traced already by Ranke, Croce's novelty should be searched for in his questioning the difference between the »real« history and cronicle.

In his opinion, chronicle is a past in which we believe only on the basis of testifying; but chronicle is also every historical representation where the author cannot or does not know how to live through the experiences of the given agents of the past. From that we can draw the conclusion that mere recapitulation of sources, i.e., testimonies, isn't history yet, but only chronicle. History is – according to Croce – based on the synthesis of two things: evidence and criticism. We can, though, speak of evidence only when it is used as evidence, i.e., interpreted on the basis of critical principles, whereas criticism can be recognized as such only when it is practically used in interpretation of evidence. In short, history becomes history when we revive (in the process of historical thinking) parts and aspects of the past when our present interest, i.e., view of the life we live in, plays a decisive role.

How this »reviving« or »re-experiencing« looks like in praxis becomes evident from the conclusion of the chapter »Pseudohistory,«[12] where its author calls our attention to the fact that we can, »absorbed into research of a certain historical subject, see our sympathies and antipathies (our poetical history), our purposes in the realm of practical activity (our rhetorical history), our memories composed into a chronicle (our philological history) defiling in front of us one after another...«, and concludes the warning with the statement that deeper historical truth can be reached only when we (over and over again) successfully overcome in our mind all these forms one by one.[13]

When he later, on different occasions, keeps assuring us that real history can be distinguished from non-history only through this process of »self-overcoming,« then what we hear in the background is another, no less famous judgment of his where he compares the whole history of historiography – which he experiences as a most effective confirmation of historical errors – not perhaps with Caliban, but with the ever –oaning, crying, misleading and yet ever-escaping Ariel.[14]

The pleasure of this is double. First we enjoy his metaphorics, and second we enjoy the knowledge that his criticism doesn't aim only at positivism and materialism, but also at pseudohistorical romanticism and poetical historiography, the authors of which, insisting on feelings and passions, do not reveal the past, but express merely their own feelings. Additional satisfaction for the reader represents the fact that in his criticism he demands that historian defend only what he is obliged to do on the basis of evidence and thus, consequently, argues for the severity of interpretation. Yet at the same time he

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12. In *Zur Theorie und Geschichte der Historiographie.*
13. *Ibid.,* p. 39.
14. *Ibid.,* p. 38.

in no way denies the literary value of historical record. His writing is the best proof of it, but unfortunately it is also the reason for the fact that after literary theoreticians he was rediscovered for history again only by the adherents of contemporary narrative historiography. Even they discovered him by a roundabout way, through analytical reflection of different approaches to the relation between »to understand« and »to explain.«

<p style="text-align:center">*</p>

From the chronological point of view, we should in this connection first mention the discussion pro and contra Carl G. Hempel's work, The Function of General Laws in History (1942), where the author – on the basis of a hypothetically-deductive model of explanation as the undergird of scientific historiography – assures us that the dichotomy between these two modes of knowledge is unnecessary. Within this criticism we recognize, only conditionally, of course, two main orientations: the complex that creates the first one (hypothetically-deductive and probabilistic, genetic and functionalistic model and model of limited generalization, Nicholas Rescher, Carey B. Joynt), namely in its very essence doesn't exceed the frame of the revision.

More freshness can be traced in Gardiner's and Dray's attempt to draw the language of historiography nearer to colloquial language[15], the attempt Thath in a way proved also that the means for analyzing the historical language shouldn't be limited to a single type or model. Gardiner was also the one who – with the help of Collingwood – rejected the thesis on singularity of historical events and argued that explanation in historiography doesn't »progress« from individual to general, but from general to individual. W.H. Dray in Laws and Explanation in History additionally radicalized his position by impugning his central thesis. According to it every historical explanation, although only implicitly, refers to one of the types of generalization – with the claim that a historian should search out the characteristics of a certain historical happening, and not only state which general criteria this happening suits. Therefore, as he says, we must always – for example when explaining the deeds of a certain agent in the past – first reconstruct the way of thinking of the given time.

But no matter how sharp was Gardiner's and Drey's criticism of Hempel, it nevertheless still rested on his very position, that is to say, on the field of historiographical theory which – although occupied mostly with analysis of explanation – still contains certain recognizable features of Weber's theory of »understanding«. We therefore had to wait for a serious alternative till the midst of sixties and seventies, when William B. Gallie and Arthur C. Danto started developing the so-called narrative theory of historiography; and it

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15. Pietro Rossi, »Einleitung«, in Pietro Rossi, *Theorie der modernen Geschichtssreibung,* Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/M. 1987, p. 9.

should be pointed out immediately that this time the break really signified a turning point in historiography. What happened was not only renaming of notions (*explanation* into *narration*), but also emphasizing the role of the so-called »documented narration«, which leaves the »unessential« understanding, in words of Paul Veyne, to the world of the living, to the world of reasons and ends...[16]

Explanation as narration:

What is narrated (earlier we would have said »explained«) is from now on also comprehensible, since it is narratable; for the historian's »practising« of understanding it therefore »suffices that a man is a man, which means, it suffices that he gives himself up.« Veyne adds that Dilthey would undoubtedly like to see also the humanities using such a way of understanding. But, as he states immediately afterward, it soon turns out that the humanities, not unlike »physical« sciences, as hypothetically-deductive systems, mostly care about a precise explanation.

History, however, is not supposed to explain in the sense of deducing and anticipating or foretelling. Its explanations shouldn't signify a return to some principle in the light of which a certain event would become recognizable, but rather represent the »*meaning assigned to the narration by the historian himself*«[17] (underlined by O.L.). Or as Danto would have said: historiography is essentially not explanation, but narration, narration that is explainable out of itself and as such capable of explaining the events it tells us about without searching for elements out of its own frame. And the reason every narration should be understandable and (implicitly) explainable is that it throws light upon the logical structure of a certain sequence of events. In his work *Analitical philosophy of history,* Danto lays especially great stress on the so-called auto-explicative character of historical narration. In his opinion, the narrative form offers to the historian a kind of organizational scheme that has a similar function as theory of science. The main task of analitical philosophy of history is therefore to discern the logical structure of narration and throw light upon its difference from the logical structure of scientific research. He says: »Narrative statements don't describe only a certain state or particular event, but a certain change and thus bring to light the consequences of individual events, as well as their causal connections with other events.«[18] At the same time he was, like Gallie, convinced that presentation and introduction of narrative interpretation in historiography require the use of the instrumentarium of linguistic analysis.

This appeal was most evidently and nearly simultaneously responded to by Hayden White, one of the most outstanding representatives of the narrative

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16. Paul Veyne, *Geschichtsschreibung und was sie nicht ist,* Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/M. 1990, p. 72.
17. *Ibid.*
18. Pietro Rossi, »Einleitung«, p. 14.

»school« in the last fifteen years. We can realize this already when reading his early texts (1966) and finally with his book *Metahistory*[19] (1973), where the author is seen to have entirely devoted himself to the research of historiographical narration and to have »decided« in favour of that kind of verbal structure of narrative discourse that refers to the insights of modern linguistics and semiology.

The structure conceived in this way doesn't depend on the logical structure of discourse, but – what we must always pay attention to – on some kind of deeper cognitive level on the basis of which the historian makes his own decision concerning the strategy of explanation, type and mode of discourse, as well as his own »style«. It should be pointed out that White comprehends such a decision as *poetical act*; the joint of narration and explanation (which enabled us before the appearance of his theory to attribute the explicative character to the first one) is now substituted by persuasion that historiography is based upon poetical ground.

In this way, the historical narration is brought back again onto the narrative ground of discourse, and historiography – as well as the philosophy of history, which White by all means tries to join to the historian's sphere of work – is justifiably obliged to different forms of explanation, all of them supposed to proceed from »poetical act«. In White's opinion, the logical structure »extends to (touches) the prefiguration of a deeper level,« of the level on the basis of which the historian »creates« the actual subject of research, as well as of the level where basic linguistic decisions »fall«: he is sure that the logical structure is based on a kind of precognitive ground.[20]

Narrative historiography, which experienced its full bloom in the eighties, wants first of all *to change or at least to limit the structurally-historical, theoretical and analytical influence of the sixties and seventies.* Its principles, however, don't announce expulsion of theory, as we are needlessly »warned« by some, but mostly want to establish a certain »tension between narration and theory«[21]. The growing interest in narration that we can trace in the last years therefore doesn't tend towards any kind of restoration of narration from the period of romanticism, but speaks about a »vitally important cultural possibility«, i.e., about an »elementary, all-embracing speech act based on the time experience and brought up to the highest point of conscious organization of human life praxis.«[22] The narration of today doesn't aim only at

19. The entire title runs: *Metahistory. The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth Europe,* Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore 1973.
20. Pietro Rossi, »Einleitung«, p. 16.
21. Jürgen Kocka, *Geschichte und Aufklarung,* Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 1988, p. 10.
22. *Ibid.,* p. 10-11. Also in: Jörn Rüsen, Wie kann man Geschichte vernünftig schreiben? Über das Verhältnis von Narrativität und Theoriegebrauch in der Geschichtswissenschaft«, in: Jürgen Kocka, Thomas Nipperday (eds.), *Theorie und Erzählung in der Geschichte,* München 1979.

representation of the actual state, but searches backward into the very processes of research.

In regard to this, the »discoursive argumentation«, or any other »use of theory,« can also be reckoned among narration; it has only to refer – in one way or the other – to the »time changes of human reality« or to »the need for orientation within the contemporary world of life« (Lebenswelt, J.Rusen 1988).[23] This is the only way how to handle the tension between theory and narration, i.e., between analytical and narrative historiography. What is especially important is that in this way narration becomes a synonym for dealing with reality – it is no more just one of the many special ways of how to treat history (S. Quandt),[24] but a constitutive principle of historical science in general, without any anti-theoretical and anti-structuralist prickle.

All these expressions are concerned with a kind of »time differentiation and specification of what happened in the past« which (following Quandt and Süssmuth) proceeds from a certain »temporality of language« where »time theory« is substituted by language of time.[25] If we understand historical narration as constitutional principle, then we must also explain the meaning of this for the representation of historical knowledge. We also must – when taking over the principle of representation – ask after the constitutional principle of historical knowledge. On the basis of this we then realize that the fundamental questions of contemporary theoretical discussion in historiography have to deal with the relation of representation and constitution and not only – like it used to be – with the question of the form of historical representation. But before we can actually force our way through with such principles, the historical science must (as Theodor Schider tells us) overcome its »solipsistic tendencies«. Overgrow its so called scientific »self-reflectivity« and (besides the gossip, thing itself and narrator) sistematically draw into the »narrative discussion« also the listener. His relevance system and his system of processing, as well as the »narrative environment« itself.[26] Because this is the only way how to come to a consistent narrative expression which includes – besides the problems of representation – also the problems of intermediation. The narration thus shouldn't be understood only as a *»temporal structure of text and argumentation«* (H. M. Baumgartner), but as a *»basic and urgent*

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23. *Ibid.*
24. See: Siegfried Quandt, Bernd Mütter, *Historie – Didaktik – Komunikation. Wissenschaftsgeschichte und aktuelle Herausforderungen. Geschichte, Grundlagen und Hintergründe,* Hitzenroth, Marburg 1988, as well as: Siegfried Quandt, Hans Süssmuth, *Historische Erzählung,* collection of essays, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 1982.
25. S. Quandt, H. Süssmuth, *Historische Erzählung...,* p. 8.
26. Theodor Schieder, »Einleitung«, in: Kurt Gräubig, Theodor Schieder (eds.), *Theorieprobleme der Geschichtswissenschaft,* Darmstadt 1977, p. XI; the beginnings can be traced already in: Theodor Schieder, *Geschichte als Wissenschaft,* Oldenbourg – München – Wien, 2nd remade ed. from 1968.

form of representation (and intermediation, added by O.L.) *of the past reality, proceeding from the basic human existencial need«.*[27]

A similar, though less sophisticated, conclusion also has been reached, as already mentioned, by Paul Veyne. We should also pay attention to the findings of Lawrence Stone – only that he based his striving for return to the narrative form of historical representation mostly on the critical survey of Marxist, »demographic« (the Annales schoool) and »cliometrical« (North American) model. We should, of course, know that the so-called »return to narration« has a somewhat different meaning with the »historians« Veyne, Stone, P.Burke or C. Ginzburg, as it does in case of the philosophically--oriented authors like Gallie, Danto or White.

The former speak in favour of the narrative theory because they see in it the most adequate form for representation of historical work, while the latter see in the badly needed return to narration mostly an alternative to the »programmes of scientification« (Verwissenschaftlichung) of historiography – an alternative to the historical science subjected to general theory of society and to the historiography based on expressive and narrative schemes liable to social sciences.

Translated by Seta Knop

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27. Jürgen Kocka, *Geschichte und Aufklärung,* p. 10. See also: Hans Michael Baumgartner, Jörn Rüsen, *Seminar: Geschichte und Theorie. Umrisse einer Historik,* Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/M. 1976, p. 17-58, and especially the work of Werner Schiffer, *Theorien der Geschichtsschreibung und ihre erzähltheoretische Relevanz,* J. B. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, Stuttgart 1980, p. 23-84.

On structural universals

Bojan Borstner

It is not a necessary truth that there are complex properties, but it is an undeniable fact. It is another undeniable fact that there are properties which appear to us to be simple. (Armstrong 1978, II,67)

I

This paper is just a part of a greater project – A Realistic Ontology. So, we need some preliminary remarks for the present purpose.[1]

(i) The world contains a number of individuals.[2] The number of them is an empirical question that can be decided a posteriori (if it can be decided at all) in the process of scientific inquiry.

(ii) Properties and relations are fundamental constituents of the world. What properties and relations there are cannot be determined a priori, but a posteriori, empirically, on the basis of total science.

(iii) Properties and relations are conceived of as universals. They are not the meanings of predicates and no simple relation between predicats and universals can be assumed.

(iv) Individuals, properties and relations are constituents of states of affairs.[3] We don't use a part-whole relation between individuals, properties, relations and states of affairs because the mereological sum of 'a+F' is not automatically the state of affairs 'a is F'.[4]

II

Simple and complex properties

We accept the Armstrongean position that in the world there are complex and simple properties.[5] Complex properties[6] have constituents that themselves are

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1. I have presented some parts of that project in Borstner 1989a, 1989b.
2. Individuals are first – order particulars. With a particular I have in the mind so-called 'thick conception' of particulars – a particular is a thing taken along with all its properties. When I use a particular in relation to a state of affairs, I mean a particular in 'thin conception' – a thing taken in abstraction from all its properties (and relations).
3. The very idea of states of affairs is taken from Wittgenstein's Tractatus, where he used facts for what we here have states of affair. (see: Skyrms 1981, Armstrong 1989a)
4. The mere existence of an individual (a) and a property does not ensure that a is F. But in the mereology if a and F exist, then also exists their mereological sum.
5. This position is hardly attacked by R. Grossmann (Grossmann 1983, 147): »There is no complex properties, only complex facts.« He assumed the situation where some individual thing A is both green and round – so there are individual thing A, property green and states of affairs (facts as said Grossmann), there are three states of affairs: A is green; A is property round, but no property being both green and round. Or, if we speak in language of

properties. The question that arises here is: are constituent properties simple or not? Both answers are possible:

- complex properties have constituents that are not ultimate – complexity without simple constituents
- complex properties have constituents that are ultimate – simple properties that are finite or infinite in number[7] – complexity may be finite or infinite

A structure; structural properties

We can get an impulse for the further investigation in the area of properties from the distiction between simple and complex properties. At first (as Armstrong does), the old distinction between homoeomerous and anomoeomerous properties[8] will be introduced. As an example, we can take the ball that is used for basketball. This (particular) ball is orange (is a certain shade of orange O), has a mass of 700g, is made of special mixture of synthetic materials. 'Is a certain shade of orange –' and 'is made of special mixture of synthetic materials' are candidates for homoeomerous properties but 'has a mass of 700g' is evidentally a candidate for an anomoeorous property because

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round; A is green and $\overline{A}$ is round. All aditional properties, states of affairs are ontological superstitions which lead to the distorted picture of the world. As Grossmann said we can introduce a new word 'gruond' for 'property' 'being green and round' – we have now a conjunctive property. But, why do we need it? Grossmann tried to show that Armstrongean argument for conjunctive properties as constituents of ontology of the world is invalid and incoherent with Armstrong's thesis that what properties there are can be determinated only on the basis of total science. If Armstrongean takes GR (property 'ground) as a conjunctive property (G+R), then the sign + represents a nexus that connects properties in such a way that the result is a property GR. On the ground of »the eleatic principle« that there exist only such entities which posses causal power a scientist can make a causal test. If the result shows that there are three properties this is not only an argument for a conjuctive property (G+R) but also for the hypothesis that GR, G and R are all simple properties. Somenthing being GR (or something has GR) means that it has (is) both G and R – there is equivalence but not identity. »... I do not see how science could ever establish anything stronger than the equivalence statement. (Precisely the same considerations are applicable... to the claim that science may some day prove that mental properties are really physical properties.)« (op. cit., 152) What has Grossmann said is valid only for the instantiation of conjunctive properties (universals) – if the property is complex, then its constituents instantiate the very same particular as the complex property does. But it does not hold for the structural properties (universals) as shall we see later.

6. But complex properties are not identified with D. Lewis' properties, which are simply classes: »To have the property is to belong to the class« (Lewis 1987, 244). Compare Borstner 1989a for an argument against Lewis.

7. »First, the infinitely complex property might be a complex of simple constituents, but simples of which there are an infinite number. Second, the infinitely complex properties might dissolve ad infinitum into constituents that themselves lacked simple constituents, either a finite or an infinite in number.« (Armstrong 1978, II, 67)

8. »A property is homoeomerous if and only if for all particulars, x, which have that property, then for all parts y of x, y also has that property. If a property is not homoeomerous, then it is anomoeomerous.« (Armstrong 1978, II, 68) This distinction is necessary for the theory of quantities which are universals. (Swoyer 1987, Bigelow and Pargetter 1988b)

parts of the ball do not have this determinate property (but have the property 'has a mass' – determinable[9]). However, this distinction is not so self-evident as we usually think it is – if we analysed the certain part that has a shade of orange (or a carbon atom) on the microscopic level, we would see that these properties are not homoeomerous but anomoerous. But, even in the situation where properties are not genuinely homoeomerous, we speak of them as examples of homoeomerous properties.

The next step we must take is to explain 'structure':

(a) a structure is not identical with the class of all of its parts;[10]

(b) a structure consists of nonrelational and relational parts;

(c) a structure is identical with other structure if and only if they have the same nonrelational parts; they have the same relations; the same parts stand in the same relations to each other (Grossmann 1983, 242).

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9. Take as an example: 'Having a mass of 700 g' and 'having a mass of 1kg' These properties have something in common but at the same time they are different. In platonic interpretation: both things with different masses have something in common – a property which they shared is called determinable; the two distinct properties not shared by two things are called determinates. This theory was proposed by W.E. Johnson (Johnson 1921, chapter 11). The determinable is: 'having a mass' (or just 'mass'); the determinants are 'having a mass of 700 g' and 'having a mass of 1 kg' (or 'having this (that) such of mass'). The distinction between determinable and determinate can help us in the explanation of what is in common and what is different in objects. Both determinate and determinable are properties of individuals. This means that the object that has a mass (determinable) is the very same object which has a mass of 700 g (determinate). This exposition is somehow questionable if we really take in account Eleatic principle: Only those things which are causally active are real. What is, then, the causal difference between determinable and determinate? If we interprete causation as a relation between first order preperties (as Armstrong does) – »necessitation« – then determinate and determinable must enter into necessitation relation with other properties. Properties enter into causal relation with other properties – they are causally active and not particulars (individuals). However, particulars are then excluded from the realm of existing objects what is highly implausible. We must weaken the Eleatic principle so that the state of affairs (a particular is just a special sort of state of affairs) is constituent of causal relations and at the same time properties, which are constituents of state of affairs, enter into necessitation relation. So, the causal relation holds between state of affairs and the necessitation relation holds between properties (the necessity relation holds between F and G if the state of affairs consisting in X's having F cause the state of affairs consisting in X's having G). If we accept this weak position, then determinables are second – order properties. In our initial case there are two things with different masses (700 g and 1 kg). As first, we analyse just the second thing with the mass of 1kg. The parts of those things also have a mass and the question is: does the instantiation of mass 1 kg necessitate the instantiation of all masses less than 1kg but no greater mass? The answer is possible only in the field of structural properties.

10. »Imagine three squares, A, B, and C, arranged in a line from left to right in the order mentioned. These squares form a certain spatial structure.. of the three squares and the relation being to the left of between them. Next, imagine the same squares arranged again from left to right, but this time in the different order... C, B, and A. This structure is not identical with the first one. Yet it consists of precisely the same nonrelational and relational parts.« (Grossmann 1983, 242)

What is, then, a structural property?[11] A structural property is a special kind of anomoeomerus property, which means that a property F is structural if proper parts of particulars having F have some property G (or more properties H, I, J,...) not identical with F, and this state of affairs is constitutive of G. Some properties entail others, and sometimes it is necessary that when F is instantiated, also instantiated is another property, G.[12]

III

Properties and universals

As we have stated before, properties are fundamental constituents of reality. But, this could be heard from different sides. There are at least three positions that exclude one another. First is G. Bergmann's thesis that properties are perfect particulars; second is K. Campbell's Trope theory; third is Armstrong's theory of properties as universals.

Bergmann has defended a thesis (Bergmann 1967) that several spots have exactly the same colour property – but this not mean that he accepts the universals. For him, properties are exactly the same in the sense that carries no ontological commitment[13] and the ontological ground for this 'exactly the same' is not a single thing but two things, one in each spot. These two things are perfect particulars that are the simple things of the ontology. He is against platonic universals, which are separable from things, but not against any universals. He holds the Principle of Exemplification but does not infer from the true premise (there are no separable universals) the nominalistic conclusion that there are none of them.[14]

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11. A structural property can be relational and it is relational if it includes relations between its parts.

12. Structural properties are not simply identical with anomoemerous properties. Armstrong divides anomoeomerous properties in: –emergent properties which could be complex or simple; – structural properties, which must be complex (Armstrong 1978, II, 70) Emergent properties that characterized no proper parts of the particular are evidentially anomoeomerous but are also distinct from any property structure possessed by the particulat having emergent property. It is hard to rule out such a property from a consistent realistic theory of properties (universals) a priori, but we have good scientific and methodological grounds for the claim that emergent properties do not exist.

13. »'Literally the same' I use only in ontological discourse such that 'to be literally the same', 'to be one and not two'...« (Bergmann 1967, 85).

14. Bergmann makes a distinction between 'same' and 'identical'. 'Identity' is for him 'identity through time and change'. That means that we can use 'identity' in the contex of substance. 'Substances' ground the identity of objects. (Bergmann 1967, 112) This distinction is like Bishop Butler's characterisation of the 'loose and popular' sense of the world 'same', which is at the heart of Armstrong's argumentation against trope theory. As Butler thought: we say the same human body (the body which is changed over time) but we do not really mean it. It is only a loose and popular identity. But even in this loose and popular case of identity, the things for which it is said to be the same must be the members of the same class – 'same class' is taken in the strict sense. (see Armstrong 1990)

K. Campbell defends on more occasions (Campbell 1976, 1981, 1988) what is from D. Williams' analysis (Williams 1953, 1966, 1983) known as trope theory. For Campbell, tropes are abstract particulars,[15] and abstract particulars are for him basic particulars that are simple[16], fundamental and independent.[17] Real tropes are qualities-of-a-formed-volume and the distinction we can make between say, size, shape and colour are distinctions in thought to which correspond no distictions in reality. (Campbell 1981, 486). A problem that arises from so articulated a theory of tropes is a problem of tropes' individuation. Their individuation does not come from place (as is usual for particulars); it is ultimate and unanalysable.[18] The second problem is resemblance. No one would deny that particulars resemble one another. In Campbell's terminology, the colours as abstract particulars all resemble one another, but how can he define what is exactly the same? Exact similarity is symmetrical and transitive – the relation of exact similarity is an equivalence relation. Campbell could explain this with the postulation of equivalence classes – tropes that are in the relation of exact similarity are members of a class of exact similar tropes. But, for trope theorists this does not mean that tropes that are exactly similar are identical – the trope theory denies identity of tropes that are exactly similar.[19]

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15. He uses the opposition particular/universal and concrete/abstract. A particular is for him an entity that is exhausted in one embodiment (occasion). Abstract he does not take in the ontological sense – existing outside of space and time – but only as the characterisation of an entity that is usually found in the presence of other tropes and which is not multiply exemplifiable. Campbell describes a universal somehow incorrectly as an entity that can have multiple location in the same space at the same time – much better is characterisation that universals are entities capable of multiple exemplification (instantiation).

16. The problem of simplicity of tropes is connected with the problem of extension. Extension involves parts and parts exlude simplicity, but, at the same time, a trope is a-quality-at-a-place. So, we have the contradiction: if a trop is extended, then it is not simple, and if it is simple then it is an unextended entity whose location is that of an unextended mathematical point (Newton).

17. Concrete particulars are bundles of basic particulars (abstract particulars) – tropes. They are dependent, only tropes can exist on their own.

18. Campbell's position is very like Hume's distiction in A Treatise of Human Nature. Hume uses the distinction of reason to explicate the distiction between the colour and form of an impression of a globe of white marble. If this is so, then the resemblances are not grounded in a real entity but in a habit of the mind in perceiving the trope.

19. If we take in account Armstrong's example of two electrons with the very same charge, then according to trope theory strictly the tropes involved are not identical. For trope theorist is exactly resemblance between tropes 'primitive' and he needs the Axioms of Resemblance (specially because necessity which is involved in symmetry and transitivity is fundamental necessity that cannot be explained further). »Explanation is a virtue in metaphysics, as elsewhere. I submit that this startingly easy deduction, indeed reduction, of the property of resemblance from the entirely uncontroversial properties of identity, is a major advantage of the Universal theory. It enables one to see the intuitive force behind the old, inconclusive criticism brought against Resemblance Nominalism that resemblance is resemblance in identical respects.« (Armstrong 1990, 17)

IV

Structural universals

That some universals entail others is undeniable fact. How can entailment be explained? We'll begin with P. Forrest's thesis that complex properties must in some way be composed of simpler properties and relations.[20]

Take 'being carbon monoxide' (CO) as a complex property with the constituents: 'being an oxygen atom', 'being a carbon atom' and 'being bonded'. But, we can have also other complex properties that have these constituents: 'carbon dioxide'(CO_2 O-C-O) which is stable and unstable (C-O-O). The carbon monoxide molecule instantiates universal C-O (C,O,B) and carbon monoxide is intrinsically related to three universals C, O and B. So, necessary, what instantiates carbon monoxide must have three parts (constituents):

– part c – carbon atom – which instantiates universal C
– part o – oxygen atom – which instantiates universal O
– c-o pair, which instantiats universal B

If we make the same analysis for carbon methane, CH_4, we get:

– three universals (C,H,B)
– five spatial parts, c, h_1, h_2, h_3, h_4, which instantiate three universals.

But, a molecule of carbon methane instantiates universal M and five spatial parts instantiate universals C,H,B. There is a problem, because the universal H is instantiated 4 times, universal C just 1 time and universal B also 4 times, so that there are only C-H pairs and never H-H pairs. How could we explain this differentiation in the entailment relation? D. Lewis (1986a, 1986b) has claimed that all theories about structural universals are either Mereology or Magic.

A. Mereology

We take the previous example – CH_4:

– The structural universal methane M is an individual that is the mereological composite of its constituent universals. M is then nothing more than the mereological sum of hydrogen, carbon, and bonding. These are proper parts of methene;
– if M is instantiated, then H also is instantiated – if a molecule instantiates methane, it has a part that instantiates hydrogen;
– hydrogen is instantiated four times – there are four distinct things which instantiate hydrogen;
– if the part – whole relation obeys Goodman's calculus of individuals, then in the case of mereological substraction of hydrogen from methane what

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20. The complex properties in Forrest's sense are structural properties in our (Armstrongean) theory.

remains no longer contains hydrogen because a part cannot occur in a whole several times over.

However, if methane contains hydrogen (universal) as a part, then it contains it just once. The mere existence of a single part cannot explain the entailed four-fold instantiation of that part.[21]

But, let us see a proposal which was made by J. Bigelow (1986):

There are two universals, A and B. A is a part of B; yet (B-A) need not be a universal.[22] If A is a (natural) part of B, then it means that A (universal) is a natural part of four natural parts of B (universal). So, we get a specific structure:

$$hydrogen < part_1 < part_2 < part_3 < part_4 < methane$$

On the other side is the problem with carbon. It occurs in methane in a different way. There are no such intermediate natural parts of methane, each of which is a natural part. Carbon is itself just a natural part of methane.

The structural universal methane M has the characteristics:

– a bonded pair of H and C forms a natural unit of molecule;
– in an individual methane molecule, the carbon atom is a part of four natural units, whereas each hydrogen atom is a part of only one natural unit.

A carbon atom is so a part of four natural units, but C (universal) is a part of just one natural part.

A hydrogen atom is a part of just one natural unit, but H (universal) is a part of four natural parts.

The most questionable aspect of this explanation are the four natural parts that intermediate between hydrogen and methane. Lewis could say that they are »amphibias«, and it could be true, but this is not a conclusive argument against them.

B. Magic

For Lewis, »Magic« is used only in a situation where it is said that the structural property (M) is a simple unstructured property of an individual, and has no parts at all. But, how could it be explained that there is a necessary connection between methane (M – universal) being instantiated and carbon (C) being instantiated if M and C are two universals that are unstructured and wholly distinct. This art of explanation tells us only that there is an entailment (M entails C and H) but nothing more – entailment is just there – something primitive.

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21. A plausible strategy against Lewis is: universals are not proper parts of a whole because a part is always a part of particular – is something particulary, is a particular – for instance a cat Tibless consists of a body Tib and a tail Tail so that Tib + Tail = Tibless; but Tibless could loose its tail – so there could be Tib = Tibless and Tail.

If we do not accept Lewis' explanation, then there is another way: There is a nonmereological composition (complex, structure) so that it is possible to have two different things that are made of exactly the same parts (relational parts are included).[23] But, what is with a relation of entailment? We know that:

necessarily, methane and being carbone are in essential relation – entailment.

$$\Box\,(M > C)$$

M is a relational property of an object (of molecule methane) that relates an object to various properties (C,H,B). So M is second order relational property of molecule – the property of having:

– a part that has the property of being carbon;
– a part that has the property of being hydrogen;
– a second different part, which has the property of being hydrogen;
– a third different part, which has the property of being hydrogen;
– a fourth different part, which has the property of being hydrogen;
– the relational property of being bonded to another part.

The properties C, H, and B are constitutive properties of M[24] – standing in these relations is an essential characteristic of methane. M is related to C so that M cannot exist if it is not related to C. There is the ratio of 4:1 of hydrogen atoms to carbon atoms in methane because the property of »being hydrogen and being part of this methane molecule« stands in the proportion of 4:1 to »being carbon and being part of this methane molecule«.

Proportions are internal relations – essential for things. We can specify proportions if we use the old W. Johnson's (1921) distiction between determinables and determinates. Two objects (two balls having different masses) have distinct properties – first has a mass of 1 kg, second has a mass of 2 kg – determinates – but at the same time they share a property »having a mass« – determinable.[25] There are three ontological ingredients (see Bigelow and Pargeter, 1988):

22. A is convex, B is convex; A is a part of B; (B-A) need not be convex. But, if, for instance, A ia a region, B is a region, A is a part of B, then there is such a thing – a residue (B-A) which remains after A is substracted from B.

23. a and b particulars; R is a nonsymmetrical relation; aRb = state of affairs$_1$; bRa = state of affairs$_2$. SOA$_1$ is not identical with SOA$_2$, but they have the very same non-relational parts, the very same relations, but it is not the case that the same parts stand in the same relation to each other.

24. These properties are not constitutive in the mereological sense, because if this was true then we should come into trouble as we have stated before.

25. These two balls have the property »having a mass« in common – this property is supervenient on the different specific masses: if an object has a determinate, this entails that it has the corresponding determinable. But, vice verse does not hold – possession of that determinable does not entail the possesion of one of determinates falling under its scope (possesion of mass does entail possesion of either this specific mass or that specific mass,... – a thing cannot just have a mass without having a particular specific mass).

(i)   individuals;
(ii) determinate relationships between individuals;
(iii) relations of proportion between those determinate relationships.

Two balls – a, b – are individuals (level (i)); their properties – »having a mass of 1 kg« and »having a mass of 2 kg« (ii) – may be classified because they stand in the proportion to one another (1:2) (iii).[26]

Universals can share properties and relations, and if universals are in relation to each other, then proportions are such relations – internal relations of proportions are universals of level (iii).

We use this result for the methane case:

$$\Box (M > C)$$

If (>) is the essential relation then

$$\Box \text{ for any F and G, if } (F) > (G)$$

any instance of F has a part which is an instance of G.

Because M and C stand in (>) relation, here is an entailment between something being methane and that thing containing a part that is carbon.

V

What do we have from our analysis? We see that there is a special pattern of entailment that is explainable on the ground of primitive relations between universals. However, this is not enough. We need some further explanation of what these relations are. It is a kind of white magic, as Lewis said, because structural universals are not made out of simpler universals in a straightforward sense. But, as we stated before, structural universals are explainable with the help of relational properties – proportions or higher-order universals.

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26. Level (iii) proportions are universals – they can be multiply instantiated so that one and the same relation of proportion may hold between several distinct pairs of level (ii) properties and relations. Several distinct pairs of mass properties may stand in the same level (iii) proportion (1:2) but the same is with the distinct pairs of volume properties ($V_1 = 1m^3$; $V_2 = 2m^3$). When we say b is »twice the mass of« a and b is »twice the volume of«, these two relations are at the same time both the same and yet also different. They are different because one is a mass property standing in the proportion to other mass relations, while the other is a volume property (is not a mass property) and stands in the proportions to volume properties (not to mass properties). But, they have something in commmon. There is a proportion between the mass property of a and the mass property of b and this very same proportion holds also between the volume property of a and the volume property of b. They have the proportion (1:2) (level (iiii)) in common.

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Development of logical form
Andrej Ule

In this paper, I would like to point out the problems of the presently reigning mathematico-functional concept of the logical form of sentences, which presents itself as the final answer to the question of true logical form of sentences and, with this, the final basic scheme of logic. I am of the opinion that the present conception of the logical form of sentences is also a historical result, which in many ways surpasses and encompasses all former concepts in the history of logic, but which is not the only and absolute logical form of sentences, but also of logic itself. It therefore contains some immanent limitations which are, in my opinion, linked mainly to the »functional« concept of the sentence, the elementary predicative sentence, which is the foundation for all other sentence structures.

Logic, with its use of letters for marking variables, which represent arbitrary actual terms, received the possibility of simultaneously treating a whole class of logically identical deductions. Mathematics also analogously received the means for executing general solutions for a whole class of related tasks. For instance, in geometry equations, make it possible to treat the properties of the most general classes of geometrically similar figures.

The link between logic and mathematics is even more tight in the notion of deduction, as both branches are strict deductive sciences, and the ideal of deduction is most surely the axiomatic system. As Lukasiewicz showed, Aristotle's syllogistic can be partly presented as an axiomatic system, constructed from the modi of the so-called »first figures« of the syllogistic as axioms and additional rules of substitution and transformation of individual statements (J. Lukasiewicz, *Aristotle's Syllogistic,* 1951).

Aristotle's notion of the logical form of a sentence is entirely linked to the subject-predicate structure of sentences. It expresses the constant core of the sentence that remains if we exclude the term for the subject and the predicate. To this we must add that Aristotle usually deals with quantified, universal or particular sentences, since sentences on the individual are scientifically irrelevant for him, as they only deal with pure contingencies.

Aristotle's conception of the logical form of a sentence was strongly influenced by his ontology, where the basic ontological fact is the individual substance with its essential or contingent properties. The unity of substance and its properties is expressed by the simple predicative sentence »a is P«, where a is the name of an individual and P a name of its property.

This is not only Aristotle's discovery, as Plato already defined (Platon, *Sophistes,* 262) the predicative sentence as the basic expression of truth, where the »name« *(onomata)* and verb *(remata)* link through a copula. But, for Aristotle, something else was important in expressing a certain fact besides the sentence, namely, the cause of the fact, that is, the cause of the so-linked substance and its properties.

Aristotle's conception of the logical form of deduction attempted to determine the logical place for cause in the syllogism. The basic logical form of the syllogism thus had to correspond to his understanding of cause. And here is the essence of Aristotle's theory of the syllogistic. We could say that Aristotle reached the syllogistic through his search for logical categorization of causes understood as mediators between the subject term and predicate term (Aristotle, *Anal. Post.* II, 89b,90a).

The paradigm of Aristotle's concept of cause was *causa formalis,* which best expresses the essential link of the individual to the general. *Causa formalis* is always something general, the essence of a substance. As stated by J. M. Blond, Aristotle's search for the reason »why something is« is actually reduced to the knowledge of »what a thing is« (»what a thing's nature is«) *(Anal. post.* 90a): »The search for the cause of a thing is actually not the aspiration for a link to another thing, but precisely the search for what it is itself«, (J. M. le Blond, *Logique et methode chez Aristote,* 1973, p. 100.)

Due to this ontological dependency of Aristotle's logic, we must not treat his logic with the attitude »to what extent propositional logic is present and to what extent predicative logic« is developed, because the syllogistic link of premises and conclusions are, for Aristotle, neither prepositional logic implications nor *modus ponens* derived from them (this was introduced by the stoics) or predicate logic. This actually concerns a mixture of both, a logical system that is antecedent to the division of propositional and predicate logic.

Aristotle's logic is thus still far from mathematical calculus or formalism, even far from the partial form of formalism that ancient algebra achieved. Only the use of variables applies to all of them. But while this was only an auxiliary measure for shortening the depiction of logical proofs of valid and invalid syllogisms, in Greek algebra they already served as an operational tool for solving equations (e.g. Diophant and later Archimedes) (M. Kline, *Mathematical Thought from Ancient to Modern Times,* 1972, pp. 139-144). In stoic logic, the next stage in the development of logic, Greek logicians used variables to denote the constant and essential in the form of a logical deduction. But for their foundation they took pure logical »relations« of sentences and the deduction of sentences from sentences, without any ontological support of the sentence or the deduction.

In this sense, their formalism is nearer to pure logic than Aristotle's and, thus, also closer to the logical essence of deduction as a propositional logic

operation. But their logic remains limited because it has once again been confined to sentence logic only. It seems that they accepted Aristotle's syllogistic as valid, but they held their own logic to be more fundamental than syllogistic logic, although it is not known whether they had systematically linked both (W. and M. Kleene, The Development of Logic, 1971, pp. 175).

But in stoic logic, the deduction also was a representative of the very »strong« kind of causality (the causal determinism of all events).

In both (stoic and Aristotle's logic) examples logical form also indicates the basic philosophical premises from which logic proceeds as well as the internal limits for both Aristotle's and stoic logic.

As with Aristotle, the central ontological unit for Leibniz, who attempted to reach a new step in the formal representation of sentences and in the mathematical formalisation of syllogism, was the individual substance (monad) and its attributes, where the basic issue was why a specific substance exists in the present state of the world. The cause was »unified« by Leibniz to such a degree that he does not separately state individual causes but conceives everything as an expression of the law of sufficient reason. Leibniz admits only *causa efficiens* and *causa finalis,* where both are in mutual harmony, but this harmony is »held in the grip« of God only, as the highest cause and reason of all existing (G. W. Leibniz, *Neue Abhandlung über den menschlichen Verstand,* 1926, pp. 480).

The limitations of the syllogistic were also possibly the reason that he could not realize his ideas, as he could never find a suitable calculus that would include all valid syllogisms and exclude all invalid ones, or he had to add a number of unclear operations without any logical sense. Nevertheless, in certain places he had an inkling of sentential logic when, for example, he discussed calculations containing only 0 and 1, the idea of which he derived from Chinese ideograms (Leibniz, *Fragmente der Logik,* 1960, pp. 23).

Only George Boole reached further than Leibniz, but more than 200 years later, in that he discovered the calculus or algebra of sentences. Besides this, he developed a special algebra of syllogisms. But Boole did not understand the meaning of his discovery of sentence logic, as he understood it as a species of a logical game; he developed serious logic in the syllogistic. The basic idea of this algebraic logic is that a specific, general, purely formal symbolic calculus of signs is established, to which we then assign various models of real operations. One of them can also be logical (there could be a number of them, for example, Boole's sentence calculus and extension calculus).

Due to this mainly algebraic method, Boole's logic represented only the »mathematization« of logic and not true mathematical logic. That is, logic and mathematics should be equally linked, without mathematics being applied only on previously derived logical formulations. Even Leibniz's logic can be

understood in this sense as a mathematizing logic, although he tried to give greater stress to specifically logical considerations.

True »mathematical logic« does not begin until Gottlob Frege. It was with him that a move in the conception of the logical form of the sentence came about, and it was shown how this was at the same time the embryo of mathematical operations and the logical analysis of the sentence. He was the first to come to such »mathematical« formulations of logic, which at least does not obviously introduce unnecessary symbols and operations, which only the calculus itself conjures up, without their being founded in logic proper.

Frege introduced three basic syntactical innovations into his logic. The first was a firmly principled propositional logic for all logics, while the second was the concept of logical form of the predicative sentence, constructed according to the model of mathematical functions; and the third was the concept of logical form of the quantified sentence. Then he linked his unique semantics of sense and meaning of linguistic expressions to this logical syntax, as well as his broadly founded and branched axiomatic predicative logical system (more exactly, first-order predicate logic with identity).

According to Frege, the simple predicative sentence without quantifiers represents an example of »completing a function«, namely, the so-called »predicative function«. This is, grammatically speaking, the predicate of the sentence together with the copula. The predicate itself is thus conceived explicitly as an incomplete expression; it is the recipe for constructing full sentences and is not a »part« of a sentence, which would exist besides the names of individuals and with which it would link into a sentence. But the name does step into the predicate in the way an argument steps into a mathematical function.

According to the mature concept of Frege, the function in the sentence maps the name, which enters the place of the argument, that is, the subject of the sentence, into a certain truth value, that is, Truth or Falsity, which Frege understands as two special logico-semantic entities (Truth and Falsity).

But in connection with the logical form of quantified sentences, Frege has warned already in »Begriffschrift« that the logical form of the sentence is something relative, because it is dependent on our context of understanding or context of understanding discourse Frege, e.g., states this example of a sentence:

»Hydrogen is lighter than Carbon Dioxide«, which we can interpret in a number of ways. For instance as an S-P sentence:

»Hydrogen is lighter than Carbon Dioxide.« Here, Hydrogen is the subject, and »is lighter than Carbon Dioxide« is the sentence predicate. Or »Hydrogen is lighter than Carbon Dioxide«, where »Carbon Dioxide« is the subject and »Hydrogen is lighter than« the predicate. Or, »Hydrogen is lighter than Carbon

Dioxide«, where »Hydrogen« and »Carbon Dioxide« are both arguments for the predicate (relation) »is lighter than« (G. Frege, *Begriffschrift,* 1964, pp. 15).

I try to improve this Fregean idea of the relativity of the logical form of a sentence on our context of understanding of sentence with the relativity of a sentence especially on the deductions, which we attempt to carry out with the sentence (the sentence may taken the role of a premise or a conclusion). We now attempt to give this opinion a new weight.

For each of these examples, we could state an example of deduction demanding just this form of sentence for its success.

For ex.:   »No gaseous oxide is lighter than Carbon Dioxide.«

»Hydrogen is lighter than Carbon Dioxide.«

Therefore: »Hydrogen is not a gaseous oxide.«

Here, for the success of the deduction, only an ordinary syllogistic structure of premises is responsible, thus, for our sentence »S – P« (more exactly; Every S is P), where S is »Hydrogen« and P »is lighter than Carbon Dioxide«.

We can follow further this idea of the dependency of the logical form of a sentence from the »deductive context« of sentence in the other cases of deduction. We could e.g. also probably make a certain syllogism for the case when the subject is »Carbon Dioxide« and the rest the predicate (only that it would be more comfortable to write »Carbon Dioxide is heavier than Hydrogen«, which is in sense equal to the sentence »Hydrogen is lighter than Carbon Dioxide«).

But the deduction

»Hydrogen is lighter than Carbon Dioxide.«

»Carbon Dioxide is lighter than Nitrogen Dioxide.«

Therefore: »Hydrogen is lighter than Nitrogen Dioxide«,

despite the appearance of a syllogistic conclusion, does not concern a syllogism or S-P sentences, but a deduction concerning relations, which presupposes the so-called »transitivity« of the relation »is lighter than«. Thus the form of our sentence is relational.

Possibly the form of our sentence with a two-member relation seems to be a »complete« logical form of sentence, but this is only apparent, because in other contexts the sentence, e.g., could show itself as a case of more than a two-member relation or some other logical structure.

If, e.g., we consider that »is lighter than« means comparison of the specific weights of two elements and that this means that two elements have, at the same volume, same temperature and same pressure, two different weights, then our sentence actually means a five-member relation:

»At a given volume, temperature and pressure, the weight of Hydrogen is less than the weight of Carbon Dioxide.«

If we considered also what the expression »weight« means and how we check differences in weight, then we would undoubtedly get a very complicated sentence, whose form would be far from the simple diadic relation of two terms.

It is simple to continue this intuition so far that it also encompasses sentence logic. Namely, in cases with pure propositional logic deductions, only the sentence as such is important, without respect to the internal structure. In this case its »logical form« is the limiting case of form; it is only a bare sentence or perhaps the negation of a certain sentence.

Similarly, we could get inferences demanding explication of quantifiers, hidden in the sentence. Let us take the following deduction:

»Hydrogen is lighter than Carbon Dioxide«, thus
»One liter of Hydrogen is lighter than one liter of Carbon Dioxide«.

If we want to prove the validity of this simple deduction, we must reach for quantifiers in the hypothesis:

»For every x and for every y, if x is the volume of Hydrogen and y the volume of CO_2 and if x equals y, then the weight of x is less than the weight of y«.

If we add the following claim to this sentence: »We have 1 liter of Hydrogen and 1 liter of CO_2«, then, with this additional claim, we can, from the above hypothesis, reach the following conclusion: »A liter of Hydrogen is lighter than a liter of CO_2.«

Possibly we would have to reach even further than quantification if we studied, e.g., deduction in modal and other intentional contexts. Frege and the majority of modern logicians later avoided these contexts with the postulate of extensionality, but already a few simple cases show that we cannot stop with logical forms only at quantified sentences. The context of proving itself »provokes« new, previously unnoticed aspects of possible logical forms in the same sentence. Take, e.g., a certain modal context, the »real« modalities in which we do not ask ourselves whether they exist or not, but we observe only the possible deductions with them. Let as look at the following deduction:

»In mixtures of gas, the lighter gas necessarily separates first.«
»H_2 is lighter than CO_2.«
Therefore: »In the mixture of H_2 and CO_2, H_2 is separated first.«

But we know that in modal contexts, ordinary rules of existensionality do not apply, that is, we cannot simply install only existensionally equal terms (individual or universal) into the place of given terms, but only equal terms, otherwise we reach known paradoxes (W.v.O.Quine, *From a Logical Point of View*, 1963, pp. 43-44).

That is why we must write our sentence in this example also as a necessary sentence, thus: »H_2 is necessarily lighter than CO_2.« Thus the ordinary form of the sentence is joined also with the modal quantifier of judgment.

I think that I have shown enough with these examples to illustrate how the logical form of the sentence is formed in dependence on the deductive context of discourse. We see that the range of the logical form of the sentence reaches from the most elementary form, the bare variable for the sentence or the negation of the sentence, through various versions of predicative, relational and similar sentences, to quantified sentences and to modal and other intentional sentences. Here either extensions (supplements) or narrowings of antecedently given logical forms may occur in the transition from one context to another.

In the Fregean new conception of the logical form of quantified sentences lies also a new ontological role of the subject and the predicate in a sentence. In this new conception, the predicate of the sentence receives the active role, while the subject enters it only as a »filler« of empty places for arguments. In traditional conceptions, it was just the opposite: the subject was the ontological as well as the logical source of the sentence, thus also of predication.

This new conception without doubt brought about many entirely new logical discoveries, especially in mathematics. The new conception of the predicate and bound variables also allowed the discovery of various forms of variable binding, which corresponds to the role of pronouns in language. A more precise analysis of sentences and proof was made possible, especially those where relations appear. But this conception also has its limits because, as we saw before, we cannot say that a certain form of logical sentence structure represents its logical form for ever, in all contexts. The quantification formulation of universal and particular sentences is probably the most suitable for them, but it is a question of whether we can translate modal and other intentional contexts onto it. Here contemporary logic obviously breaks and forks into various currents.

If we are precise, these concepts do not flow smoothly even in the strict dimensions of extensional logic. Thus, e.g., numerous sentences with pronouns are not also examples of quantified sentences. But there, the traditional conception of S-P sentences works out well, which did not know quantification in our sense.

Let as take the following example:
»The woman with whom I saw you is beautiful.«

Contemporary interpretation would understand this sentence as a typical sentence using definite descriptions. In this case we would have the description: (That) »woman with whom I saw you.« But the difficulty here is that in the description itself the pronoun »with whom« appears again, that is, we refer to the same woman to whom we are attempting to give a description.

According to Russell, the above sentence should be an »existential sentence«:

»There exists a being, such that she is the »woman« with whom I saw you« and »she is only one« and »is beautiful«.

But this is not the end of the analysis, because a pronoun is once again in the description of the predicate itself, which obviously refers to the woman, the same, which is also »that being« to whom the link with the quantifier already refers.

Possibly this could pass:

»There is a being$_1$ and a being$_2$, such, that 'being$_1$ is a women' and 'I saw you with being$_2$' and 'for every being$_3$, if I saw you with being$_3$, then (being$_2$ = being$_3$)' and (being$_1$ = being$_2$) and 'being$_1$ is beautiful'.«

More formally written:

$(x)(y)$ (x is a woman & I saw you with y & (z) (I saw you with z $\rightarrow$ $(z = y))$ & $(x = y$ & x is beautiful)). (The symbol »(..)« means the universal quantifier »for each..«, the symbol »&« means conjunction, the symbol »$\rightarrow$« means implication.)

It is obvious that in some way we have become totally lost with this analysis, because all of a sudden, instead of one object to which we are referring, we have two, or, at least, two existential quantifications that independently range over the domain of discourse. And this probably is not equal to the primary logical sense of the sentence, although a modern logician would state that this is the price of exactness. But traditional logic would interpret this sentence simply and clearly, as it would have permanently retained the »link« of reference to the subject, that is, the specific woman.

There are many such examples, and even Quine mentioned somewhere that modern logic is incapacitated before them. The difference is in the fact that modern logic interprets definite descriptions as: »that (woman with whom I saw you)« while the traditional would interpret this as »that woman (with whom I saw you),« which at least seems more natural to the eye (W.W. Quine, *Logic as a Source of Syntactical Insights,* 1976). (G. Englebretsen, *Notes on Quine's Syntactical Insights,* 1984, p. 154).

Besides the stated comments, something more could be said, especially about Frege's introduction of functions instead of predicates. Frege is spinning around in a circle here. On the one hand, function means a certain rule of mapping one class into another; in the case of predicate functions this would be a mapping from a class of possible arguments (of all »objects«) into the class of truth-values.

On the other hand, each class is defined only with a specific predicate or, should we say, function (at least according to Frege). Besides this, every mathematical function actually means a logical rule, which states when two values may be placed into a certain relation (relation of argument and value of

the function). Thus, the predicative is already contained here. That is why we cannot take this same mathematical procedure for »ing« predication, as it is obviously a false circle, explaining nothing.

The conclusion here is that Frege's functional interpretation of the logical form of the predicative sentence is not universal and the only one possible, but that it is only a good analogy for a series of logical forms of sentences in specific contexts of discourse and, even better, in certain contexts of proof. And these are above all the fields of mathematical and natural sciences, where the regulation of existensionality may be quite broadly established. But, as we saw, even there it is not valid for all examples.

This applies less to social sciences, where intentional contexts of propositional orientation appear, and even less in daily »ordinary language«. The revealing of sentence form can thus be an ever-so-innovative venture, and we cannot definitely conclude it if we adhere to antecedently regulated patterns. Now we can fall into dogmatics or, should we say, blindness for logical problems, the way traditional logicians did, who hung onto syllogistic and S-P sentence structures.

The problem presents itself of how to develop this »hierarchy« of logical form, which is provoked by the different contexts with the same sentence, and how to link them to one another so that the »natural« would flow one into another, whereby the deduction systems would similarly change, demanding a certain internal construction of sentences. And, if we turn to Frege once again, as the »paradigm« of contemporary logic, we can say that his functional interpretation of sentences, along with all progress, still contains elements of the »mathematization« of logic, thus that strict »mathematical logic« can exist only in mathematics itself, in the kingdom of algorithms and functions, and that it is a risk to transpose this logic schematically outside this field.

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Deformation of form
Vojislav Likar

W e are not likely to achieve a clear conception of the status of the concept of form in the sphere of contemporary knowledge by »examining« dictionary definitions. Such study of definitions does not give anything but a more or less – which depends on our eargerness – extensive set of definitions that illustrate, first, all the abundance and variety of the modalities of notional connections that a particular concept enters. Second, they illustrate the whole range of historical metamorphoses of its content and, finally, all the philosophical aspects of these implicity or even declaratively neutral vocabularies, encyclopedias and compendia. We by no means want to say that study of dictionaries should prove superfluous and fruitless, and still less, of course, that dictionaries themselves are unnecessary and useless.

On the contrary. We believe, however, that their primary importance – speaking of philosophical lexicons at least – lies in the fact that they call our attention to the multitude of meanings and definitions of a particular notion and present them to us, confirming the plurality of philosophical theories that stand behind individual definitions. In short, they make us feel entitled to believe in fundamentally open and philosophically unconditioned possibilities of our initial choice, as well as in the fact that no critique is possible on this level, let alone hierarchization of philosophical positions from the positions themselves.

So vocabulary definitions of notions show us in the first place, what in an other connection and in a different context Gaston Bachelard called the profile of the notion. It was equipped with the attribute epistemological (because of the character of scientific concepts), whereas in a philosophical context we would rather add the attribute archeological (e.g., in quasi-Foucaultian meaning of the expression). Without any special difficulty, it can be presupposed that the archeological profile of the concept such as form cannot develop in some uniform even line, considering the fact that since Aristotelianism it has no longer played the role of the philosophical technical term, but has been one of the most common and most frequently used notions, a category that has also appeared outside the sphere of philosophy in practically all the fields of theoretical knowledge. Let us end the introduction by repeating that the lexical definition cannot help with the initial clarification of the question that we are interested in and that can be summed up as follows: does the concept of form play any special role in Bachelard's epistemology,

and, if so, what are its function and importance to the conceptual and theoretical constitution of his epistemological theory?

We will try to answer the question in that part of Bachelard's opus where, in his epistemological analysis, he centers on the theory of the concept, or, more precisely, the theory of conceptualisation, for Bachelard finds the analysis of the process of its generation and formation to be of greater importance and theoretical interest than the analysis of the already-fixed and stabilized concept. Therefore, we will be interested primarily in Bachelard's theory of approximation in his earliest work, *Essai sur la connaissance approchée* (1927), which represents a more or less implicit critique of the then-prevailing epistemological approach to the problem of cognition in general and scientific knowledge. In his first work, Bachelard did not yet explicitly thematicize and reflect the object of the critique itself, i.e., the problem of (non)-pertinency of the analysis of scientific knowledge and its results, with the means and on the basis of the philosophically conceived theory of knowledge.[1] Nevertheless, he emphasized already that every attempt at the description, analysis and explanation of cognition as a complex, multilayered articulated process should constantly resist and protect itself from the temptation to determine beforehand the initial, original conditions of the coherence of thought and to formulate them as universal conditions of the synthesis of knowledge.

Bachelard turned this emphasis into the basic axiom of his epistemology. With it, he rejected the possibility of and denied pertinency to every philosophical treatment of scientific activity that would try to approach the problem of scientific knowledge from the already-formed philosophical position and already equipped with a transparent model of the structure of a scientific theory. In short, every philosophical approach to the analysis of scientific thought and the theoretical activity of science in general that originates in its own, outside of a concrete science conceived and formed model of cognition, in the model that receives its configuration and consistency from the philosophical theory itself, in sciences but selects and searches for examples that ultimately only confirm the correctness of this philosophical theory. Bachelard believes that the problem of cognition, if put philosophically, turns inevitably into the *universal* problem of cognition, into the problem of determination of the universal, therefore universally valid, conditions of the objectivity and veracity of cognition. Yet these conditions and frameworks of cognition define in fact »philosophical cognition«, and therefore illustrate the formation of universal notions and categories that cannot be identified with any concrete and particular scientific concepts. The problem of cognition formulated as the problem of the universal model of thought that already secures the objectivity of cognition represents to Bachelard a problem that is

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1. He did this most concisely especially in the preface to his book *La Philosophie du non* (1940), P.U.F., Paris 1975, pp. 1-17.

evidently quite alien to, and incompatible with, the nature of scientific thought and with any concrete ways of the formation and production of scientific concepts and cognitions in contemporary sciences. Therefore, if philosophy no longer wishes to force its own epistemological models on the variety of sciences or, what is actually the same, to interpret scientific knowledge by casting it in the already-elaborate philosophical molds, it must set to a thorough and detailed examination of a concrete scientific practice, i.e., it must try to unfold the epistemological structure of scientific knowledge. The kernel of scientific knowledge, however, its main and also leading element, is scientific conceptualisation, i.e., modalities of the formation of scientific concepts. It is only through analysis of the procedures of scientific conceptualisation that it is possible to comprehend the methods and ways in which cognitions are formed in a scientific practice, to establish the norms that determine and secure their objectivity, and to discover conceptual frameworks and networks that make possible their coordination and organization into the form of the scientific theory.

The fact that we can get no clear idea of the nature of scientific knowledge without scientific conceptualisation being explained as its kernel proves that scientific knowledge is *a process* and should as such represent the object of our research. To study the process of a scientific knowledge in the concreteness of a scientific practice means to study cognition in its life, its movement. From the fact that scientific knowledge is *a process* it can be inferred that scientific truth, which it results in, cannot be reached *en bloc,* with a single act, no matter what nature and power may be attributed to it. Scientific truth cannot be the result of some momentary cognitive flash of wit, a momentary contact of two opposing components – the knowing subject and the object of knowledge – that constitute the philosophically apprehended binary structure of cognition.

Therefore it cannot be shelled out of a particular cognitive act that we would manage to separate and isolate from the cognitive process. On the other hand, scientific truth is far from being a mere sum total of a linear string of atomic acts. Scientific truth is not some kind of integral, a whole achieved only by the complete integration of all the elements that represent the sequences of the cognitive process. So it is not something that is present as a kind of partial truth from the very beginning and at each particular isolated moment. On the contrary, according to Bachelard, the practice of contemporary sciences gives quite a different picture of the nature of scientific truth, and of the character of cognitive processes and experimental procedures whose product it is. Scientific knowledge is a result of a complex, articulated process that consists of series of conceptual as well as experimental precisions, rectifications and approximations. Its complete significance of objective scientific truth is reached at the end of some relatively determined *temporal* of *historical*

perspective. Such a conception of scientific knowledge is obviously incompatible with the philosophical conception, either in its a priori idealistic or its empirical version. In his critique of such philosophical conceptions, Bachelard more or less neglects the latter but strongly opposes idealistic theses in the first place. This can be explained by the fact that Bachelard himself argues for the rationalistic position in philosophy; yet his rationalism is most strongly connected with the specific, let us say scientific, form of rationalism, the form of which is the very negation of classical (Cartesian) rationalism. So the tasks of the critique of idealistic conceptions should also include the prevention of any identification of rationalism that presents itself in contemporary scientific practice with various forms of the idealistic derivations of classical philosophical rationalism.

The idealistic conceptions of knowledge – and Bachelard thinks primarily of Kant here – usually find or postulate the subject at the decisive factor and the guarantee for the convergence, veracity and objectivity of knowledge. According to Bachelard, such a conception of knowledge results in essentially homogeneous truth that discovers its criterion in the harmony of thought with its own self. Such knowledge, based on the structure of subjectivity, must have its own systematic order, of course; it must possess a well-arranged register of methods and rules of construction that secures the coherence and firmness of cognitions. »A'aucun moment la connaissance ne reste sans système puisque la réalité n'est effectivement donnée que dans la mesure où elle accepte les catégories *a priori* de l'esprit.«[2] The elements and components of the cognitive act are shut in its own structure; cognition appears necessarily achieved. To the idealistic conception, the cognitive act always seems complete, full, closed to extension. This, in fact Kantian, vision of the cognitive process is actually extraordinarily consistent and firm within its own definitions and framework. It is true, however, that it also calls for an extremely complicated and multilayered system of methical rules that determine the steps of cognitive activities and the places in their topological structure that are continually occupied by the knowing subject.

The clearest picture of the extraordinary sophisticated construction of such a philosophically elaborated cognitive sample may be offered by Husserl's phenomenology – in a certain sense the most perfect and historically the last form of philosophical, or better to say epistemological idealism.

In phenomenology, the objectivity and apodictic veracity of cognition are reached on the transcendental level, within the sphere of the noetic-noematical structure of transcendental experience after this experience has been purified, through the procedures of phenomenological reduction, of all naive beliefs, the beliefs that are unreflectively given by tradition, and after it has been freed from the contingency of the natural world by the suspension

2. G. Bachelard, *Essai sur la connaissance approchée*, Vrin, Paris 1927, p. 12.

of traditional assumptions. It should be pointed out that, together with various convictions and truths that are handed down by tradition, the entire field of scientific knowledge, too, gets struck by phenomenological reduction as the main procedure whose »strategic task« is to avoid the position of naturalism and to achieve a rise to the transcendental level of pure experience. The argumentative ideal that drives philosophical theory in its efforts to reach and protect the solid grounds where the objectivity and veracity of cognition would be *a priori* secured, turns into the projection of the pure eidetic science of transcendental phenomenology, representing the rigorous science that can provide the variety of empiric sciences with basic categories and clear concepts. It is as a specific form of »the interiorization of science«[3] that we can describe accurately enough the procedure carried out in this connection by philosophy *in general, and presenting itself in the concrete sample of* phenomenology roughly speaking, as the reduction and purification of empiric content and the references of consciousness and as a simultaneous rise of consciousness to the transcendental level, where the evidence and apodictic certainty of cognitions are secured already by the realization of the phenomenological method itself.

Consequently, the critique of the idealistic conception of the theory of knowledge would be logically expected to aim in the first place at its basic, yet at the same time the most vulnerable, point, i.e., the transcendental constitution of the cognitive apparatus. Bachelard, however, took up a completely different point of view. He proceeds from the conviction in which he is backed up by the history of philosophy, namely that every critique that remains strictly within the notional framework and horizon of philosophy, as a rule just shifts theoretical attention from one to another aspect of knowledge, correspondingly moving its emphases, too. So philosophy keeps getting involved in the forms of argumentation fixed with its historical tradition, where varieties of the empiric conception prevail at one time and those of the idealistic conception at other times, whereas its optics, in principle, by no means manages to catch in its focus the complex dimensions of the concrete scientific practice.

Therefore Bachelard raised a radical and, from the view of its tradition, most heretical demand on philosophy: philosophy should approach sciences in their actual form, even more, it should open its conceptual register and rearrange it so that it could interfere theoretically with the conceptual apparatus of scientific discourses. Consequently, it is necessary to redirect thoroughly philosophical optics to the real practice of science in its theoretical and experimental dimensions. According to Bachelard, it can be expected that we

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3. The expression is borrowed from J. T. Desanti. *Cf.* his essay »Sur le rapport traditionel des sciences et de la philosophie« in the book *La Philosophie silencieuse* (Seuil, Paris 1975), where he analyses various aspects of this interiorization, which represent the historical forms of the philosophical foundational approaches to scientific discourses.

will be able to approach the understanding of cognitive processes going on within sciences and determining their progress and with them also their history apprehended in recurrent perspective only if we manage to move, metaphorically speaking, the philosophical discourse from the comfortable topos of the fixed philosophical system and to open and qualify it for the perception, recognition and reception of the theoretical content that is constantly produced and modified in the very kernel of scientific discourses.

So what follows from Bachelard's demands, which are, regarding their nature of normative character, i.e., they obtain the form of rational presuppositions (and limitations) for the constitution of epistemology as the theory of the formation of scientific concepts? What is their, so to say, immediate result as soon as the philosophical discourse in accordance with those principles draws near a concrete scientific activity? First, it is undoubtedly the statement that in actual scientific practice there are at least two clearly distinguishable moments that speak against the traditional, especially idealistic, philosophical conception of cognition. These are on the one hand *the fact that scientific knowledge is a process that is in perpetual motion, progressive development and change,* and on the other hand *the existence of the error* that can be neither denied nor completely eliminated.

Both elements exist on two different epistemological levels: the first one on the macroepistemological level, where it comprises entire theories, or better to say, a corpus of concepts and theories that constitute a certain region of scientific knowledge, and the second element on the microepistemological level, where it »endangers« and »contaminates« all the levels and segments of scientific conceptualisation as well as the corresponding experimental applications. There is a close connection, of course, between the two elements in the epistemological structure of scientific knowledge. The first one, namely the progressive course of scientific cognitions and the parallel progressive modification and transformation of all the components of the cognitive practice itself, can be accurately apprehended as the outer visible form of the dynamics caused by the continuous rectification of errors. Yet the very existence of the error, which proves to be an inevitable constituent of the scientific activity, represents one of those decisive factors that determine scientific knowledge as essentially approximate. The existence of error certainly should be located in the subjective pole of the cognitive process, i.e., within the sphere of scientific thought. Therefore, this Bachelard's epistemological detection of the moment of error in the speculative segment of cognition affects the idealistic conception in its very heart, for it reveals a certain gap in its constitutive category, in the subject and its rational structure. Yet there is still another factor that conditions the approximate character of scientific knowledge: this is reality itself, the very reality that science regards as the object of its research. The nature of this reality was described by

Bachelard as follows: »Cette réalité présente dans son inconnu inépuisible un caractère éminemment propre à susciter une recherche san fin. Tout son être réside dans sa résistance à la connaissance.«[4] The inexhaustable wealth of the (still) unknown and the fact that reality endlessly resists cognition are the two features of the objectual field of the cognitive process that prevent the perfection and finality of the cognitive act. So for Bachelard, the basic inachievement of cognition becomes a postulate of epistemology, which, of course, thoroughly changes the perspective of the analysis of cognition, and above all the valorization of its principal components.

Solid grounds for the change of perspective, i.e., for the shift of the theoretical standpoint from which the analysis of cognitive activity in sciences can take its course, evidently could not be reached in Bachelard's epistemology through philosophical contemplation, but instead through the very transgression of the traditional conceptual frameworks of philosophy, and with its radical reconceptualisation. This could be accomplished only by means of the rational revaluation of the individual philosophical notions and categories, performed in accordance with the norms of the scientific discourse. So the very notions (e.g., error, approximation, rectification, approximative cognition) that the theory of knowledge tried to remove from the speculatively marked frameworks of cognition as negative and limitative elements underwent the procedure of epistemological revalorization. In Bachelard's theory, all these notions acquire positive content, which is not the result of a simple turn, however. It gets its rational justification from an insight and investigation of the real scientific practice in its complementary theoretic-experimental dimension.

The notion of error, for instance, is no longer apprehended as a negative factor in the process of scientific knowledge: it is neither some kind of impure element that attacks and lowers the level of the objectivity of scientific knowledge nor something that as »unhappy coincidence« or »a slip« could be translated into the empiric fact of the mistake, which can be, if nothing else, psychologically explained at least. The error, which was comprehended in its essence as a pure negativity by traditional philosophy, turns into a positive epistemological concept. »L'erreur est un temps de la dialectique qu'il faut nécessairément traverser. Elle suscite des enquêtes plus précises, elle est l'élément moteur de la connaissance.«[5] What follows from this moving principle of scientific knowledge are the corrections, revisions, reorganizations and rectifications of concepts and theories, performed in a way that in the final perspective, or better to say, in the recurrent view of epistemology, scientific truth shows itself as a series of rectified errors, bearing the appearance of approximate knowledge (connaissance approchée). In the same way as error, the notions approximation and approximate knowledge, too, lost

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4. G. Bachelard, *op. cit.,* p. 13.
5. G. Bachelard, *op. cit.,* p. 249.

their negative sign in Bachelard's epistemology. They no longer symbolize epistemological relativism, which was ascribed to empiric sciences by philosophy, thus creating a pretext for its own foundational intentions.

Contemporary science (and it is in this that Bachelard saw one of the main characteristics of modernity) has reached such a level of epistemological autoreflexivity that it can, with its own means, establish and rationally justify theoretical norms and experimental standards within which its research achievements are objective and valid. Science themselves have rejected the cognitive illusion (which philosophy used to share with them) belonging to their pre-scientific period and referring to the need for the unlimited accuracy and the purity of the cognitive process, both in its empiric as well as speculative dimension. The key to the understanding of the objective reach and validity of scientific knowledge is therefore the concept of approximation, or more precisely, the dynamics of approximation – rectification. The epistemological analysis is performed in the sphere of approximation and becomes the theory of conceptual rectification.

The progressiveness and dynamics of contemporary scientific thought cannot be satisfactorily explained if the structure of scientific thought is apprehended as a mere accumulation of permanent rational forms, expressed in isolated, fixed and unchangeable concepts. On the contrary, epistemological analysis reveals that scientific concepts reach their full significance only within the complexity of inter-conceptual relations. But as soon as a scientific concept enters a theoretical relation, i.e., as soon as it is applied to some judgment, its structure gets diversified and modified. Therefore according to Bachelard the criterion of the theoretical fertility of a particular concept cannot be the fixedness and closure of its form: »... la richesse d'un concept scientifique se mesure à sa puissance de déformation.«[6] If we are to comprehend the new statements offered by scientific experimentation, we must deform the original or initial concepts, and study over the conditions of the application of these concepts. Moreover, the conditions of its application must be incorporated in the concept itself. Only if these conditions are already integrated in the structure of the scientific concept, the extension of its cognitive capacities is possible.

The dynamic history, the very progress of scientific thought, is written in these extensions, which every time follow the theoretical deformations and rectifications of scientific concepts: »C'est au moment où un concept change de sens qu'il a le plus de sens, c'est alors qu'il est, en toute vérité un événement de la conceptualisation.«[7] If we paraphrase Bachelard's statement, we can give the following, seemingly paradoxical answer to the question raised in the beginning: the very truth of form lies in its deformation.

6. G. Bachelard, *La Formation de l'esprit scientifique*, Vrin, Paris 1975, p. 61.
7. G. Bachelard, *Le nouvel esprit scientifique*, PUF, Paris 1978, p. 56.

Sinopsisi / Summaries

UDK 111.852
7.01

Aleš Erjavec, »Zakaj forma?«

Avtor uvodoma prikaže nekaj zgodovinskih razlik v razumevanju forme, ki izvirajo že iz prevedbe grškega termina v latinščino. Nato preide v formo v formalizmu in modernizmu ter opozori na razliko med notranjo in zunanjo formo. V našem stoletju se forma zoperstavi vsebini. Postmodernizem znova vzpostavi zunanjo formo ter se v tem temeljno razlikuje od modernizma. Ker s postmodernizmom vizualne umetnosti postajajo dominantne, se po avtorjevem mnenju problem forme pojavlja kot eno od ključnih teoretskih vprašanj sedanjega časa.

UDC 111.852
7.01

Aleš Erjavec, »Why Form?«

In the introductiory part of the article the author presents some of the historical differences in the interpretation of form, which originate already in the translation of the term from Greek into Latin. He then deals with form in formalism and in modernism and points to the difference between the inner and the outer form. It is in our century that form becomes opposed to content. Postmodernism reinstitutes the outer form and in this respect essentially differs from modernism. In author's opinion with postmodernism the visual arts become the dominant ones. Therefore he sees the problem of form as one of the crucial contemporary theoretical issues.

UDK 73:7.01
75:7.01

Peter Krečič, Forma kot umetniška forma

Ko govorijo umetnostni zgodovinarji o formi, imajo avtomatično v mislih umetniško formo. Za umetniško delo je namreč bistvena njena k umetniškemu izrazu usmerjena forma. Prav v formi se torej skriva sporočilo. Ko nam uspe analizirati to, kar se prezentira (tj. slikarski ali kiparski izdelek), s tem še nismo segli do njegove vsebine. Ta leži globlje in zadeva bistvene poteze umetniškega dela, njegov izraz – ki je lahko tudi neko izkustvo. V te okvire je mogoče uvrstiti širše tudi npr. doživljanje arhitekturnih, krajinskih ali oblikovalskih stvaritev.
Umetnostna zgodovina kot znanost je v 19. stoletju iz forme naredila znanstveno in merljivo kategorijo in jo povezala s stilom, s čimer si je zagotovila prevlado nad zahodno umetnostno zgodovino.

UDC 73:7.01
    75:7.01

Peter Krečič, Form as an art form

When art historians speak about form, they have automatically artistic form in mind. For an artwork therefore the essential characteristic is its, towards the artistic expression oriented form. It is in the form then that a certain message resides. When we are able to analyse the presented (the painted or sculptured product), we by this have not yet reached its content. It resides more deeply and concerns the essential feature of the artwork, its expression – which may also be an experience. The terms used apply more generally, i.e. also for experiencing of architectural, landscape or design creations. In the time of XIXth century art history as a science made from form a scientific and measurable category and connected it with style, thus using it to attain domination over the (Western) art history.

UDK 1(091) Aristoteles
    875-96 Aristoteles 7.06

Valentin Kalan, Mitos kot način prisotnosti forme v pesniški umetnosti

R. Zimmermann je v svoji *Geschichte der Aesthetik* (1858) zapisal, da je »forma princip antične umetnosti«, medtem ko M. Fuhrmann začenja svojo interpretacijo Aristotelove teorije literature s stavkom: »Die aristotelische Poetik ist eine Gattungspoetik«. Izhodišče te razprave, v kateri bomo skušali pomiriti ti dve disparatni tezi, je razumevanje koncepta mimesis kot predstavljanje forme, občega, ideala (morphe, katholou) v njegovi lepoti in sublimnosti (epieikeia, paradeigma). Obče, univerzalno v besedni umetnosti pa je mitos, ki je po Aristotelovih besedah duša, tj. formalni in s tem notranji urejevalni princip umetniškega dela. Skozi teorijo ustvarjalnosti kot produkcije in oblikovanja dobi pojem forme nov pomen: forma pesniških zvrsti, ki jih obravnava *Poetika,* ni nič več transcendentna lepota kot ideja (Platon), temveč je forma zdaj notranja organizacija oz. struktura umetnine. Univerzalnost, občečloveška veljavnost pesniške reprezentacije se ustvari s pesniškimi postopki naracije. Ker je mitos pesniška reprezentacija človeške dejavnosti (praxis), ki je človekovo bistvo, ima vzpostavljanje pravil za kompozicijo zgodbe tudi svojo etično razsežnost. S teorijo mitosa pa Aristotelova filozofija umetnosti postane tudi teorija umetniške fikcije in umetniške iluzije kot modusa bivanja pesniške resnice.

UDC 1(091) Aristoteles
    875-96 Aristoteles 7.06

Valentin Kalan, Mythos as Mode of the Presence of Form in Literature

R. Zimmernamm wrote in his *History of Aesthetics* (1858), that »form is the principle of ancient art«, whereas M. Fuhrmann begins his interpretation of Aristotle's theory of literature with the statement: »The Aristotelian poetics is 'eine Gattungspoetik'«. The presupposition of this article, in which we shall try to reconcile these two disparate assumptions, is an understanding of the concept of mimesis as representation of form, the universal and ideal (morphe, katholou) in their beauty and sublimity (epieikeia, paradeigma). The universality of the literary art is mythos, which is »like the soul«, i.e. the formal and in such way the inner organising principle of a work of art. Through the theory of creativity as production and fashioning the concept of form gains a new meaning: the form of the poetical genres, treated in Poetics, is thus no longer the transcendent

beauty as idea (Plato), but rather the disposition, the inner organisation and structure of the very works of art. The universality and validity of the poetical representation is established through the style of literary narrative. As the poetical mythos is a representation of human activity (praxis), which is an essential characteristic of human being, therefore the exposition of rules for the composition of story assumes a genuine athical dimension. Through the theory of mythos the Aristotelian philosophy of art becomes a theory of artistic fiction and illusion as mode of existence of the poetical truth.

UDK 1(091):111.85 Kant I.

Alenka Zupančič, Lepota kot štirikratni paradoks

Tekst analizira Kantovo teorijo lepega, razvito v *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. Skozi razčlembo štirih Kantovih definicij in soočujoč med seboj različna branja le teh (M. Frank, J. Derrida, E. Weil, J. Lacan) podaja specifične interpretacije vsake od štirih definicij lepega.

UDC 1(091):111.85 Kant I.

Alenka Zupančič, Beauty as a four-fold paradox

In the text the author analyzes Kant's theory of the beautiful, as it is postulated in *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. Specific interpretation of four Kant's definitions of the beautiful are revealed through commentary and confrontation of different readings of Kant's theory (M. Frank, J. Derrida, E. Weil, J. Lacan).

UDK 130.2:37:321.011.5

Pavel Zgaga, Demokracija, kultura in vzgoja kot vprašanje forme

Prispevek poskuša nakazati analogijo med kategorialnima paroma hyle – morfe in natura – cultura. Pri tem izhaja iz stališča, da izoblikovanje »naše druge narave« povezuje nekatere vidike demokracije, kulture in vzgoje. V tem kontekstu se dotakne aktualnih procesov v Sloveniji.

UDC 130.2:37:321.011.5

Pavel Zgaga, Democracy, culture and education as a question of form

Contribution tries to make analogy between the categorial couples hyle – morfe and natura – cultura, starting from the statement that the appearance of »our second nature« binds together certain issues of democracy, culture and education. In these context some aspects of actual processes in Slovenia are grasped, too.

UDK 800.1:801.541.2

Olga Kunst Gnamuš, Referenca in resnična vrednost stavkov NPr biti NPp

Opravljena je analiza navideznih trditev s pomensko podstavo NPr biti enako NPp. V teh stavkih je diskurzivna vreednost NPp, ki izraža subjekt izrekanja in vsebuje performativni ilokucijski potencial, predstavljena kot ekvivalenta z diskurzivno vrednostjo NPr, ki reprezentira dejanska stanja. Ta navidezna enakost dveh ilokucijskih vrednosti z različno ilokucijsko silo in različno referenco omogoča predstaviti govorčevo subjektivno stališče kot del dejanskih stanj.

Stavki enake strukture v znanstvenem govoru pa na drugi strani omogočajo spoznavanje nelingvistične bitnosti z lingvističnimi sredstvi. Tako jezikovna zgradba zadovoljuje obe

temeljni človekovi nameri in mu omogoča ubežati iz stanja nedejavnosti in ne-spoznavnosti.

Olga Kunst-Gnamuš, Reference and the true value of clauses NPr be NPp

The analysis of declarative sentences containing the underlying proposition NPr equals NPp is performed. In sentences of this type the discourse value NPp, which expresses the subject of utterance and contains performative illocutionary potential, is presented as being equivalent to the value NPr, which represents the actual state of affairs. Due to apparent equivalence of two discourse values with a different kind of illocutionary force and different reference the speaker's subjective point of view is presented as part of the actual state of affairs.

Clauses with the same structure in scientific discourse, on the other hand, allows us to perceive a non-linguistic antity with the linguistic means. Thus the linguistic structure of NPr be NPp clauses meets both fundamental human intentions and makes it possible for us to escape from the state of unperceptiveness and passivity.

Igor Ž. Žagar, »Pa«, sprevračevalec argumentativnega pričakovanja

Veznik *pa* spada med oblikovno (kontekstualno) najbolj razčlenjene in najbolj uporab-ljane lekseme slovenskega jezika, iz istega razloga *pa* verjetno tudi med najbolj brezob-lične, samoumevne in zato najmanj raziskane.

Namen tega članka je izpostaviti neko specifično, argumentativno obliko veznika pa, obliko, ki ne povezuje le dveh delov stavka kot abstraktne strukture (ki je stvar jazika), temveč dve govorni dejanji kot segmenta diskurza (ki je stvar govora).

Pokazati želimo, da predstavlja argumentativni *pa* izjavljalno anaforični element, ki s sklicevanjem na neko skupno, občo, ali vsaj poprejšnjo vednost, diskurzivni segment, kate-rega del je, šele zameji kot interpretativno in argumentativno relativno avtonomen.

Igor Ž. Žagar, »Pa«, the reverser of argumentative expectation

The conjunction *pa* is one of the formally (contextually) most diversified and most used lexemes of the Slovene language and by the same token also one of the most self-ef-facing, self-evident and thus least researched lexical units.

The purpose of this paper is to point out a specific, argumentative form of the con-junction pa, a form which does not connect only two parts of the sentence as an abstract structure (which is the domain of the language), but also two speech acts as two seg-ments of the discourse (which is the domain of the speech).

We wish to demonstrate that the argumentative *pa* presents an enunciatory anaphoric element, which only with reference to some other, common, general, or at least pre-ceding knowledge, delimits the discursive segment, whose part it is, as an interpretatively and argumentively relatively autonomous unit.

UDK 930.1

Oto Luthar, Kaliban in Ariel

Eno temeljnih vprašanj sodobne teorije zgodovinopisja v preteklem desetletju je bilo prav gotovo vprašanje oblike predstavitve pretekle realnosti. Zgodovinarji, ki so nekoč o historični pripovedi razmišljali zgolj kot obliki historične predstavitve, sedaj nanjo gledajo tudi kot na konstitucijski pricip. Pri tem ugotavljajo, da se je do relevantnega predstavitvenega (beri pripovednega) izraza mogoče prebiti le v primerih, ko v svojo pripovedno diskusijo pritegnemo tudi poslušalca, njegov relevančni sistem in pripovedno okolje. Le tako je ob problemih predstavitve mogoče razreševati tudi zadrege posredovanja. Historične pripovedi, kot oblike historične predstavitve torej ne gre več pojmovati le kot temporalne strukture teksta in argumentacije temveč kot iz človeške osnovne eksistencialne potrebe izhajajočo, temeljno obliko predstavitve pretekle realnosti.

UDC 930.1

Oto Luthar, Kaliban and Ariel

One of the basic questions of contemporary theory of historiography in the past decade has undoubtedly been the question of representational forms of past reality. Historians who once considered historical narration only as a form of historical representation, now see it also as a constitutional principle . They have come to the conclusion that a relevant representational (read. narrative) expression can be reached only in casses when we draw into our narrative discussion also the listener himself, his own relevance system and narrative environment. Only in this way it is possible to solve not only the problems of representation but also the difficulties of mediation. Historical narration as a form of historical representation should therefore no longer be treated merely as temporal structure of text and argumentation but as a basic form of representing the past reality, proceeding form a basic human existential need.

UDK 111.1

Bojan Borstner, O strukturnih univerzalijah

Članek se ukvarja z ontologijo. Trdi se, da so lastnosti (relacije) osnovni gradniki realnosti. Poznane so vsaj tri različne teorije o naravi lastnosti: lastnosti kot popolne partikularije – Bergmann; lastnosti kot abstraktne partikularije – teorija tropov; lastnosti kot univerzalije. Avtor brani teoriji univerzalij pred različnimi ugovori. Rezultati te obrambe se uporabljajo v primeru strukturnih univerzalij proti dvema trditvama: (a) strukturne univerzalije so le mereološka vsota posameznih sestavljajočih univerzalij; (b) strukturne univerzalije so enostavne (nestrukturirane) lastnosti posameznih stvari – magija kot alternativa. Kot rešitev problema 'niti magija niti mereologija' je predlagana relacijska teorija strukturnih univerzalij, ki vključuje tri metafizične nivoje (materialne posamezne stvari; lastnosti in relacije teh stvari; lastnosti in relacije drugega reda – z notranjimi relacijami razmerja (proportion), ki so med lastnostmi in relacijami univerzalij).

UDC 111.1

Bojan Borstner, On Structural Universals

This article is about ontology. It was stated that properties (relation) are fundamental constituents of reality. There are at least three different theories about the nature of properties: properties as perfect particulars – Bergmann, properties as abstract particulars – trope theory, and properties as universals. The universal theory was defended

against different objections. The results of this procedure was used in the case of structural universals against theses: (a) they are just a mereological composition of theirs constituent universals (parts); (b) they are simple (unstructured) properties of individuals – magic as an alternative. Relational theory of structural universals with three metaphysical levels (material individuals; properties and relations of these individuals; properties and relations which hold between properties or relations of individuals – with internal relations of proportion holding between properties and relations of universals) was proposed as the solution of the neither magic nor mereology problem.

UDK 161/162(091)

Andrej Ule, Razvoj logične forme

Avtor v sestavku je obravnava zgodovinski razvoj logične forme stavkov in sklepanja. Pokaže odvisnost koncepta logične forme od filozofskih predpostavk določenega logičnega sistema (Aristotelska terminska logika, stoiška logika, Boolova logika, Fregejeva in moderna logika). Dalje pokaže na sistematsko odvisnost logične forme stavkov od deduktivnega konteksta stavkov.

UDC 161/162(091)

Andrej Ule, Development of logical form

This paper discusses the historical development of the logical form of sentences and deductions. The dependence of the concept of logical on the philosophical presuppositions of a certain logical system (Aristotle's term logic, stoic logic, Boole's logic, Frege's logic and modern logic) is shown. Further, the systematic dependence of the logical form of sentences from deductive contexts, where they appear, is shown.

UDK 165.9
    1(091) Bachelard G.

Vojislav Likar, Deformacija forme

Avtor obravnava Bachelardovo teorijo znanstvene konceptualizacije in ugotavlja, da odkriva epistemologija ključ za racionalno razlago tako napredka znanosti kot tudi njihove zgodovine v analizi in deskripciji tistih zgodovinskih momentov, ko se bolj ali manj radikalno spreminja in transformira vsebina znanstvenih konceptov. Bolj kot analiza znanstvenega koncepta v njegovi izolirani brezčasni logični formi in strukturi je torej osvetlitev aspektov in momentov deformacije te forme tista pot, ki omogoča pojasniti inherentno in neomejeno progresivnost znanstvene resnice.

UDC 165.9
    1(091) Bachelard G.

Vojislav Likar, Deformation of form

The author treats Bachelard's theory of scientific conceptualisation, and claims that epistemology reveals the key to the explanation of the progress of sciences as well as of the history in the analysis and descriptions of those historical moments when the content of scientific concepts gets more or less radically changed and transformed. So the way that makes possible the rational explanation of the inherent and unlimited progressiveness of scientific truth is not the analysis of scientific concept in its isolated timeless logical form and structure but the elucidation of the aspects and moments of the deformation of this form.

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