

# KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

## A TYPOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE IN HERMENEUTICAL PERSPECTIVE



University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

**G.A. RAUCHE**



FORT HARE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE



A TYPOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE IN  
HERMENEUTICAL PERSPECTIVE

University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

GA RAICHE

Executive Professor, University of Fort Hare  
Department of Theology, University of Fort Hare

# KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

## A TYPOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE IN HERMENEUTICAL PERSPECTIVE



University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

by

**GA RAUCHE**

Emeritus Professor, University of Durban-Westville  
At present : Professor of Philosophy, University of Fort Hare

ISBN No. 1 86810 012 X



*Published by*

The Fort Hare University Press  
Monograph Series of the Publications Committee

University of Fort Hare  
PUBLICATION NO. 1  
*Together in Excellence*

University of Fort Hare  
Private Bag X1314  
Alice  
Republic of Ciskei  
1990

## INTRODUCTION

Our century has surely added more to the sum total of human knowledge and insight into the world we live in than any other in history. We have proceeded farther over the earth and under its surface, have explored more of our oceans and, in them, have penetrated deeper into space and upper space and have penetrated into and dissected ourselves more than ever before. We are wrestling with vast accumulations of new ideas and fighting about them. Above all, we are wondering how to use the new bits of knowledge of our universe and ourselves and its implications for a better understanding of it and of ourselves.

We may also say, I think, that perhaps never before has the knowledge of the external world of fact and process influenced the deeper thinking in our spontaneous search for a general, all-developing view of the earth and our individual identities in it. Increasingly, the popular mind tends to interpret itself in the terms and categories of the sciences — either natural or in the form of historicism. And good results have been achieved by this interplay of the fields of experience, inner and outer, for all aspects of progress and the advance of civilization.

However, with all this has come an engulfing wave of problems of so serious a nature that our basic all-human values, which have come to us through the centuries of experience and thought, are threatened at the roots, as philosophers will know. We have not yet had time to think through the nature, the implications and the limitations of the results that have been achieved and of the methods we are using so trustingly for our human society. As yet, we are moving slowly on this level.

Professor Rauche's book is involved at this level of our work and thinking to-day. He is concerned with our non-comprehension of the implications and issues of our immediate search for knowledge and the *Truth*. He is concerned with what political scientists call the "pluralism" of our independent outlook and results and the numerous

claims to universality which they bring in separate fields. He believes rightly that we suffer from a tendency to come to absolutistic conclusions on the basis of the partial bearing of the views of a few independent fields of knowledge — not understanding the different implications of the various methods used nor the new insights which are constantly appearing over this vast field of accumulated knowledge at the many levels of our experience, in nature and human. He refers to this prevailing phenomenon in our thinking world as the factor of “Contingency” in our experience of reality.

Much of Professor Rauche’s argument has to do with the analysis of Method in scientific studies. He rightly gives his own method the traditional title of Hermeneutics, an anciently recognized method in scholarship. In his *Vocabulaire de Philosophie* Lalande describes Hermeneutics as follows: “Interpretation des textes philosophiques ou religieux. . . Ce mot s’applique surtout à l’interprétation de ce qui est symbolique”. The Oxford Smaller says of Hermeneutics: “The art or science of interpretation, especially of Scriptures. Commonly distinct from exegesis or practical exposition”.

The tendency in to-day’s thinking to absolutize the outlook, theories and conclusions of the physical sciences and technology Professor Rauche calls “functionalism”. It is also called naturalism and refers to the current way of extending the method of the natural sciences indiscriminately to the various types of man’s contingent experience of reality. Professor Rauche argues, rightly one believes, that a person is multi-dimensional in his experience of reality, and that no scientific conclusions based on a functional approach can really be conclusive, and much less absolute.

Professor Rauche meets the present situation of the confluence of the sciences in Epistemology with the conception of Contingency, referring not only to the new and unexpected nature of the facts that appear but also to the new and deeper insights that are required and to those which we have achieved. The Oxford Smaller mentions about a dozen instances in which the word Epistemology has been used in the English language during the past four hundred years. Professor Rauche gives the doubts, questionings and uncertainties a recognised place and status for themselves in our world of learning as admission

on our part that we may achieve ever new insights and knowledge not identified or even closely related (excepting possibly in space and time) with our present knowledge. Contingency has status in both the physical and spiritual spheres of our experience of reality. In fact our present knowledge is carried not by the finality of the experience of facts we have established, but is made up essentially of Truth-Perspectives. We go beyond our contingent experience of reality in our expectations and in the process change our accepted positions, thus entering into a critical relationship with other truth-perspectives, in terms of which the scientific argument in the various fields of knowledge continues. With the recognition of the principle of contingency the moral dimension of scientific theories of whatever type is realized, so that the quest for knowledge and truth in the various fields of knowledge continues in the form of an open-minded critical debate between man and his fellow-man. This argument is conducted in the spirit of mutual self-control, tolerance, respect, goodwill and responsibility.



We may, I think, safely apply the term pluralism to the new emphasis which Professor Rauche puts on aspects of our epistemological problems and the conclusions to which we are brought. Professor Rauche maintains the status and rights of each of the stages of insight we may achieve in specific historical situations, physical or mental, by the application of sound method. His merit is that he does not destroy or outargue the fact of pluralism in experience or reality. He meets the problem by his conception of Truth-Perspectives. The fact is that, in human nature, our hurried argument for the absolute truth of our belief so often is little more than a psychological demand for the maintenance and protection of our identity and for domination by this belief.

The ideas of our knowledge coming through our Truth-Perspectives and not emanating from absolute principles holds implications which Professor Rauche demonstrates in terms of his concept of *docta ignorantia*. The fact remains that we still seek for some form of unity, of recognizable identity underlying our knowledge. This leads Professor Rauche to the morality of science, that each scientific theory, of whatever type, must understand itself in terms of its method and its limitations. This means that each science, in constituting its theories from the specific field of human experience with which it seeks to cope,

must be true to its own method, so as to achieve its own meaningful truth-perspective. No such truth-perspective is conclusive, so that the scientific argument on truth and knowledge continues. This implies a society of open, free and fruitful discussion. All forms of shared intelligent appreciation on experience and reality will survive and flourish. The concept of Truth-Perspective reopens a vast vista for the process of continued dialogue between man and his fellow-man.

In all this, the task of philosophy is to guard the freedom of critique and self-critique in the achievement of knowledge and to reveal the epistemological limitations of our thinking at any stage. Professor Rauche's informed analysis of Science and Method goes a long way to clarify our problems and to promote understanding of the overall position of and claims to our knowledge.


AH MURRAY  
EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN



University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

# CONTENTS

PREFACE .....	1
CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD .....	3
CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD .....	10
1. The Conception of Hypothesis .....	10
2. The Constitution of Scientific Theory and the Question of Evidence .....	26
3. Method as the Truth-Function of Knowledge and the Problem of Verification .....	41
METHODOLOGY AND TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE .....	59
1. The Transcendental Character of Scientific Theory .....	59
2. The Natural Sciences .....	61
(a) The Hermeneutics of their Functional Method .....	61
(b) Logical Atomism and Dialectical Materialism — Two Opposite Approaches to the Natural Sciences .....	66
3. History .....	75
(a) The Meaning of History and its Interrelationship with the Natural Sciences .....	75
(b) From <b>Historia</b> to <b>Geschichte</b> .....	83
(i) <i>The Definition of <b>Historia</b> in terms of Natural Events</i> .....	83
(ii) <i><b>Historia</b> in terms of Religious Events</i> .....	84
(iii) <i>The Meaning of <b>Geschichte</b></i> .....	85
(iv) <i>Vico, Comte, Hume and <b>Geschichte</b> as Progress</i> .....	87
(v) <i>Kant and <b>Geschichte</b> as Hypothesis</i> .....	88
(vi) <i>Hegel and <b>Geschichte</b> as the Cyclic Movement of the World Spirit</i> .....	91
(vii) <i>The Historical School — Man as an Individual and a Member of a Nation</i> .....	93

(viii) <i>Marx and Engels — Geschichte as the Changing of the World through Labour</i> .....	94
(ix) <i>Neo Marxism — Geschichte as Critical Reflection</i> .....	95
(x) <i>Neo-Positivism — Geschichte has no Meaning</i> .....	99
<b>4. The Socio-Political Sciences</b> .....	108
(a) The Beginnings .....	108
(b) Socio-Political Thought of the Enlightenment Era .....	112
(c) The Further Development of Socio-Political Thought in terms of Theory and Practice .....	118
<b>5. Art — Its Philosophy and Theory</b> .....	138
(a) The Aesthetic Experience .....	138
(b) Examples of the Philosophy and Theory of Art .....	145
(i) <i>Plato's Kalokagathia</i> .....	145
(ii) <i>The Enlightenment</i> .....	147
(iii) <i>Romanticism</i> .....	150
(iv) <i>Existential Aspect of Aesthetics</i> .....	155
(v) <i>Contemporary Aesthetics</i> .....	168
 <p>University of Fort Hare <i>Together in Excellence</i></p>	
<b>THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCIENCE (THEORY) AND MORALITY (PRACTICE)</b> .....	188
.	
1. <b>The Possibility of their Reconciliation</b> .....	188
2. <b>The Dissonance of Science and Morality in our Time</b> .....	190
3. <b>The Common Root of Science and Morality</b> .....	192
4. <b>Emancipation from the Science Dogma</b> .....	195
<b>THE REALM OF FREEDOM</b> .....	201
1. <b>The Critical Nature of Theory as a Catalyst of Practice — Epistemological Aspect of Theory</b> .....	201
2. <b>The Contingent Nature of Human Existence — Ethical Aspect of Theory</b> .....	207
3. <b>The Self-Realization of Man from Freedom as the Authentic Ground of Utopia — Metaphysical Aspect of Theory</b> .....	212

<b>THE HERMENEUTICS OF THE PHILOSOPHY – THEOLOGY RELATIONSHIP .....</b>	<b>217</b>
<b>1. The Problem of Theological Truth .....</b>	<b>217</b>
<b>2. Philosophy and Theology — Differences and Similarities .....</b>	<b>225</b>
(a) The Religious Phenomenon as Part of the Philosophical Argument.....	225
(b) The Critical Relationship of the Philosophical Argument as the Epistemological Limit of Human Truth .....	227
(c) The Epistemological Limit in Theological Argument and the Interrelationship of Philosophy and Theology .....	229
(d) Anthropological Aspects of the Philosophy-Theology Relationship.....	232
<b>THE HERMENEUTICS OF THE TRUTH OF NOT-KNOWING THE TRUTH.....</b>	<b>235</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>262</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>263</b>



University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

## PREFACE

This hermeneutical approach to the methodology of human knowledge in terms of the continuing argument on the basic questions about knowledge and truth in the individual sciences and in philosophy seeks to show man the way out of his present existential dilemma and guide him towards his self-emancipation from the current science dogma and technology cult. Its purpose is to make him become aware of his being dominated by a one-dimensional functionalistic way of thinking and the dire consequences springing from it. He is reminded that he is not a one-dimensional but a multi-dimensional being.



In terms of the methodology of knowledge, this means that there is not only one type of knowledge but that there are various types, which are methodologically constituted as theories from man's basic contingent (variable, changing) experience of reality. It follows that scientific theories, from whatever type of experience they are constituted, cannot give conclusive answers to the question of knowledge and truth, as is evidenced by man's continued quest for them. Methodologically constituted theories remain problematic and controversial. They enter into a critical relationship with one another, which is experienced by man and his fellow-man as natural conflict. In terms of this relationship, the critical argument on knowledge and truth continues. This relationship is man's mirror in the sense that it reflects his needs, interests and aspirations. It is evident that it demarcates man's epistemological limit and mirrors the *moral ought*, in terms of which meaningful dialogue between man and the other takes place.

The chief purpose of this work is to point the way to a more authentic way of human existence and a truly open (in this sense democratic) society. The following points elucidate the interplay between theory and practice, science and morality:

1. Science is more than natural science. It comprises various kinds of

human experience, which are methodologically constituted as theories, so that various types of knowledge are distinguishable.

2. Scientific theories, of whatever type, are human truth-perspectives. They are, at the same time, human self-projections by which man seeks to realize himself. They form so many cycles of the human self, in terms of which man humanizes the world, thus getting to know it. It follows that knowledge of *the Truth* is inaccessible to human understanding.

3. No scientific theory, constituted from whatever type of human experience, is conclusive. Thus, scientific theories enter into a critical relationship with each other. This relationship indicates the limit of human knowledge and a *moral ought*, in terms of which the scientific argument continues. It is experienced as natural conflict between man and his fellow-man. It is this basic natural conflict experience which is the common root between science and morality.

4. In other words, the critical relationship reflects the basic human experience from which scientific theories, of whatever type, are constituted and reconstituted: *the contingent (variable, changing) experience of reality*, which generates the dynamics of open, critical argument. In their own turn, scientific theories contribute to the changing conditions of human existence and man's changing outlook on life. Hence, the interplay between theory and practice

5. If science were defined as the methodological constitution and reconstitution of various types of knowledge from various types of experience under constantly changing conditions of life or historical conditions — from man's *contingent experience of reality*, therefore — the present one-dimensional science and technology dogma would be overcome. Man would be released from their totalitarian grip and from being their computerized slave would be restored as their master.

If science were defined in this way and the argument on knowledge and truth in the natural sciences, in the human sciences and in philosophy were seen to continue on the grounds of man's basic contingent experience of reality, then meaningful dialogue between man and the other in the mutual spirit of self-restraint, modesty, tolerance, open-mindedness, respect and goodwill becomes possible. It is then that an open (democratic) society will come into existence.

## CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD

It may be stated with impunity that the search for truth is central to man's manifold activities. Both Plato and Aristotle pointed out that it was the sense of wonderment that made man strive for the knowledge of truth. The question was: What was the principle underlying the world, determining its structure and governing its processes? So, from the very start, there is a belief in truth without which man would not be searching for it in the various fields of his cultural activities, the existence of which is evidence of his quest. That he has not found it is proved by the fact that his researches continue, nor is it likely that he will ever find it. Would he succeed in accomplishing this, he would be like God, who alone is credited with knowing the Truth. But then man would cease to be man. It is, however, precisely when we take man as man, with all his inspirations, needs, shortcomings, weaknesses and failures — in brief with his imperfections and limitations — that we begin to understand the importance of his striving for the knowledge of truth. Such striving is of vital importance to him. It is of existential significance in that the knowledge of truth would set him free from his basic experience of conflict as a *contingent* (changing, variable) experience, due to his changing experience of reality and conditions of life.

Because of this, his basic experience, which he shares with the other and which is universal, man constitutes his contingent experience of the world in an ever new methodological form as a theory. He does so in the sciences, the humanities, the fine arts and religion. These theories are *truth-perspectives*, in so far as they represent man's view of the world in terms of his conflict experience of it under specific circumstances of life or historical conditions. They are *truth-perspectives* in that they reflect the specific conflicts and needs arising from the conflict experience with which man seeks to cope in a particular historical situation. *In theory*, not in practice, they overcome conflict and gratify man's needs that emerge from it in a particular situation. Since they do so in theory as against other theories, these *truth-perspectives* remain controversial and problematic. They thus

prove to be contingent themselves. By entering into a critical relation with each other, on the grounds of which the argument on truth conducted between man and his fellow-man goes on, they show their practical significance. The latter consists in the fact that they are at the same time self-projections through which man realizes and fulfils himself, even if theoretically. By projecting himself into the world, he humanizes it and gets acquainted with it. It becomes *his own world*; therefore he knows it. It gives him a feeling of certainty, security and peace of mind (happiness), which sets him free from the feeling of uncertainty, insecurity and unease, due to the conflict experience, which he seeks to overcome.

In accordance with this, all theories from whatever type of human experience they are methodologically constituted, thus yielding whatever type of knowledge, represent so many cycles of the human self. In constituting them, man starts from himself and ends with himself. Making use of a certain method, he constitutes his theory from his conflict experience under changing historical conditions and then proceeds to explain the world, himself and his position in the world as well as his relationship with the other (society and the state) according to the principle of identity. Man's conception of the world determines his image of himself, which in turn conditions his relationship with the other in society and the state.

All these types of projection of the human self into man's environment, which present the scale of human cultural activity and from which the purposefulness and value of human action are derived, are not only constantly changing, but occur in such divergent forms that they remain controversial and problematic. If we take the field of the physical sciences, for example, we shall observe that their present general approach and method are the result of a long controversial process of debate and discussion, of positing and repositing conflicting scientific theories, which, on changing premises and assumptions, were put forward only to be challenged by others. This process is still in full swing today. Problems such as the wave-particle aspect of the electron or the photon, determinism and indeterminism in atomic events, the finiteness and infinity of the universe or the question of matter, the controversy of mechanism and vitalism or the body-mind (brain-consciousness) problem in the biological sciences are still being

hotly debated today. In the philosophical disciplines, there is the controversy over the origin and extent of knowledge in epistemology, the debate on the meaning and validity of metaphysics, the dispute on the validity of moral judgement in ethics and the discussion on the validity of rational judgement and the meaning of logical propositions in logic.

It would thus appear that knowledge of *the Truth*, in the sense of something that is what it is by itself and through itself and cannot be otherwise, is inaccessible to human understanding. Man knows only truth-perspectives that are methodologically constituted from various types of his contingent experience. This includes mathematical and logical truths, which are method-bound and derive their validity from a specific framework of reference, from certain self-conceived norms and premises, without which they are meaningless. The perspectival and problematic character of human truths, also in non-empirical disciplines such as mathematics and logic, can be seen by comparing Euclid's geometry with that of Riemann or traditional syllogistic logic with propositional logic. The controversial nature of Russell's and Whitehead's attempt to establish certain fundamental logical axioms is well known. Apart from Russell's and Whitehead's logicism, the controversy over the foundation of mathematics produced Brouwer's "intuitionism" and Hilbert's formalism. The former holds that the "fundamental assumptions of mathematics cannot be formulated in a definitely fixed and complete form, but are subject to continual examination and possible supplementation by intuition".<sup>1)</sup> The latter tries to show that the fundamental axioms are contained in mathematics itself and that

certain aggregates of symbols are assumed as premises; these are the axioms, and from them further groups of signs are derived according to fixed rules and in a purely mechanical manner, i.e., without the use of conclusions drawn from their interpretation; the new groups are then the provable theorems.<sup>2)</sup>

It needs pointing out that "non-empirical" disciplines such as logic

---

<sup>1</sup>Richard von Mises, "Mathematical Postulates and Human Understanding" in: JR Newman, *The World of Mathematics*, Vol. III, pp. 1747-1748.

<sup>2</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 1751.

are empirical in the sense that their models are conceived from man's contingent experience of reality (historical conditions) as well. In that respect they are of existential significance. While traditional syllogistic logic, which lasted throughout the Middle Ages until the 19th century, complied with man's religious experience and theocentric outlook and was instrumental in deriving the rational structure of the cosmos from God (Christian cosmos), modern propositional logic complies with contemporary man's functionalistic (technological) experience and interest. The world is no longer a well-ordered cosmos but consists of functional processes and interactions, both in nature and in society. Man's question is no longer: What is a thing?; What is its essence?, but: How do things function?; How do they interact? Propositional logic traces the functional relations of either scientific language or natural language. This piecemeal approach corresponds to a piecemeal world.

Among the thinkers tracing the relations of scientific language, we find Frege, Russell, the early Wittgenstein and Carnap. Among those who trace the relations of natural language, there are the later Wittgenstein, Ryle, Austin, etc.

A prototype of the piecemeal world experience is Karl Popper.<sup>1)</sup> Together with Kuhn, Lakatos and Quine, who substituted new theories in the philosophy of science and in logic, he criticizes the verification principle of the logical positivists (Wittgenstein, Carnap, Ayer). He applies his functionalistic method to both the sciences and history (historical and social events). In doing so, he arrives at what Marcuse has called a one-dimensional man. By absolutizing the functionalistic method, he arrives at the opposite of an open society, the latter being his declared aim.

The question of the truth-value of scientific propositions emerges from Popper's principle of falsification: in order to be scientific, a theory must be falsifiable.<sup>2)</sup> To Popper no scientific theory is conclusive but liable to modification by the discovery of new facts. It is in this way that our scientific knowledge expands. Popper's observation that no

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*.

<sup>2</sup> CF. *Op. cit.*

scientific theory is conclusive but open to change all the time is true enough, but his assertion of the increase of knowledge is questionable. This would mean merely an increase of one type of knowledge, namely, the functional processes of the sciences and technology. However useful when kept within their own limits and appropriate field of investigation, science and technology become destructive when absolutized. They assume control of man and extinguish him as an individual and as a personality. They render him one-dimensional. In no way does such knowledge constitute the whole truth about man, who, besides functional aspirations, has also other desires, such as moral, aesthetic and religious ones. Man lives not on bread alone.

This totalitarian functionalism proves particularly pernicious when applied to history and the social sciences. In terms of his "critical rationalism" Popper rejects historical theories that conceive historical laws and trends,<sup>1</sup>) uncritically ignoring the question under what particular socio-political conditions such theories were developed and with which problems they sought to cope. Hence his arbitrary misrepresentation of thinkers such as Plato, Hegel, Marx and Nietzsche in *The Open Society and its Enemies* (1945). In spite of his idea that history consists of problem situations, he fails to see that Hegel attempted to cope with the problems that had emerged as a result of the French Revolution, Marx struggled with the problems as they emerged in the wake of the Industrial Revolution and Nietzsche experienced the problems in a period of cultural decline. Popper proposes to deal with the historical problem situations in a functionalistic way: in terms of a *social technology*, which is the task of social engineers to construct the open society on a scientific basis.

In narrowing down the concept of science to the natural sciences, the functional method of which he also applies to history and the social sciences, Popper overlooks the mind's constitutive factor: that scientific knowledge is methodologically constituted by the mind from a specific type of human experience in the same way that historical, moral, aesthetic, metaphysical and religious knowledge is constituted, each type from a specific type of human experience, which differs in *quality* from another type. Just as there are different types of human

---

<sup>1</sup>CF. *The Poverty of Historicism*.

experience, so there are different types of knowledge, each methodologically constituted from the respective type of experience. Science comprises types of knowledge, which are methodologically constituted from a specific type of human experience. In this sense, then, scientific knowledge is just as man-made as are other types of knowledge.

In the light of the previous observations, it should have become clear that the absolutization of the functionalist method in our time glosses over the problem of knowledge and truth. In fact, the absolutization of any method to obtain knowledge — for example the dialectical one in the various brands of Marxism — and the absolutization of any human truth by such a method is unscientific, in the sense that it leads to the loss of critical insight into the limits of any method and the controversial nature of its content; the theory constituted by it. Such critical and self-critical insight is however the very hallmark of true science. The absolutization of the methods of the natural sciences and technology, as it is experienced today, leads to an uncritical cult of scientism and technologism. This results in the development of a false consciousness, an alienation from reality as a contingent experience. Man becomes estranged from himself and his fellow-man. He himself becomes a mere social function and is related to the other by social functions. Accordingly, the social sciences make every effort to apply the functional method to their own field of enquiry, replacing the tracing of human relations in society by functional relations of social roles and interactions. This is evident from the writings of contemporary sociologists, such as Radcliffe-Brown, Manilowski, Thurnwald and Parsons. The functionalistic approach in the social sciences means that society is seen to consist not of individuals and persons but of social interactions. Such an approach results in the loss of the philosophical content of science, which, according to the eminent physicist, Werner Heisenberg,

is retained only if it (science) becomes aware of its limits.<sup>1)</sup>

From the above, it should have become clear that, in our search for the knowledge of truth, we are confronted not only with one type of

---

<sup>1</sup> Das Naturbild der heutigen Physik, p. 132.

knowledge but with several types. These types are methodologically constituted and reconstituted in the form of varying theories and in terms of man's contingent experience of reality. Without such methodological constitution, no scientific knowledge is possible. It is the interplay of theory and practice in the act of constituting and reconstituting knowledge under changed conditions of life which sets in motion scientific argument in the wider sense of the word. When Max Born says,

Physics is only one science among many and all science only one activity of the human intellect among many,<sup>1)</sup>

we move a step further, pointing out that science is any kind of knowledge constituted in methodological form from man's variegated experience of reality: physical experience, historical experience, moral experience, aesthetic experience and religious experience. The theories constituted from these types of experience change along with the changing circumstances of life

If science were defined as the methodological constitution of various types of knowledge from various types of experience under constantly changing conditions of life (historical conditions) and the needs and interests arising from the conflict experience in the wake of such change, the present one-dimensional science dogma would be overcome and man would be emancipated from it. This clearly points to the interrelation between science and morality, theory and practice.

---

<sup>1</sup> "Die Grenzen des physikalischen Weltbildes", in: *Von der Verantwortung des Naturwissenschaftlers*, p. 87 (translated from German).

## CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD

### 1. The Conception of Hypothesis

It may be said that one modern conception of hypothesis is a modern variation of the Greek word hypothesis. There may be a difference of accent in so far as the Greek word plays an important part in dialectics and mathematics. Literally speaking, hypothesis means that which underlies something, which constitutes the foundation of something else. In mathematics, hypothesis meant unproven underlying principles. The same could be said for dialectics, e.g. Heraclitus' concealed *Logos* as an underlying principle of the world or Aristotle's concept of Being, which, as a reflection on Being qua Being, formed his *philosophia prima*: his ontology which was at the same time of logical significance. Thereupon rested the principle of identity: the identity of thinking and being. In Proclus' commentary on Euclid's geometry <sup>1)</sup> we read that the author of a geometrical handbook must teach the principles of science separately from the conclusions drawn from these principles. He need not account for the underlying principles in such a way as if they had perfect clarity about them. From these fundamental principles, he then proceeded and, in agreement with those principles, found that which was the object of his investigations. <sup>2)</sup>

From this, the theoretical and practical significance of hypotheses is clearly visible. From the theoretical point of view, the hypothesis is the indispensable presupposition for the argument: the thesis. It is a necessary prerequisite for the methodological constitutions of scientific theories as various types of knowledge from various types of human-experience. It must be borne in mind that these various types of experience comprise man as a whole: as a multi-dimensional being. Thus, by science is meant not only the natural sciences but the various

---

<sup>1)</sup> *In primum Euclidis elementorum lib. comm.*, ed. by Friedlein, 75, 6 ff, quoted in: Ritter (ed.), article on "Hypothese", in: *Historisches Wörterbuch*, Vol. 3, pp. 1260-1261.

<sup>2)</sup> Plato, *Resp.* VI, 510c-d, quoted in: *Op. cit.*, *ibid.*

types of human experience methodologically constituted as theory: thus as various types of knowledge. It has already been shown that, on account of its rational form, theory is a truth-perspective.

This brings us to the practical significance of hypothesis as the necessary presupposition for scientific theory, thus for knowledge. It should be clearly understood that presupposing such a hypothesis is an integral part of man's scientific activity in the previously mentioned sense, which has its origin in his limited, imperfect, historical and contingent character. If it is true that, for this reason, knowledge of the Truth is inaccessible to man but that, at the same time, he cannot help striving for it, he has no other choice but to resort to believing in it. It is believing in it that causes him to presuppose and assume it. This is demonstrated by his constitution of theories — thus truth-perspectives — in the various fields of his cultural activities: in the natural sciences, the social sciences, the humanities, the arts and religion. The theories constituted in these fields furnish proof of man's belief in truth and its various aspects. It is by the very methodological constitution of his experience as theory that he seeks to grasp the truth. From the particular concept of truth formed by him under specific historical conditions — the specific conflicts experienced by him under these conditions and the concrete needs and interests emerging from them — he, in turn, determines his position in the world, his own image and his relationship with the other (society and the state). In other words, he describes a cycle of the self by which he realizes himself in fulfilling the principle of identity: the identity between thinking and being, which, on closer analysis, emerges from all methodologically conceived — in this sense scientific — theories. For in terms of man's specific concept of truth reflected by these theories (truth-perspectives), world, man and his fellow-man (society and the state) form an identity.

Especially in philosophical world theories, which comprise all aspects of truth: epistemological, metaphysical, ethical, aesthetic and logical, the cycle of the self is evident. As instruments of human self-realization, philosophical world theories are human self-projections, through which the world is humanized, thus becoming meaningful for man's existence under specific historical conditions. Closer analysis will show that this holds true for all philosophical world theories, no matter whether they are of a constitutive or reductionist nature:

whether they construct a system of truth by conceiving a *real ground* of and *sufficient reason* for the world, or whether they find it by reduction to some underlying truth. As a theory based on assumption —hypothesis— the latter is as constitutive as the former.

Examples of the former are: Plato's *Agathon*, Aristotle's Unmoved Mover, Thomas Aquinas' *Lumen Supernaturale* (God), Descartes' *Cogito, ergo sum*, Kant's Categories and Noumena, Hegel's Absolute Spirit, Nietzsche's Will-To-Power. Examples of the latter are Husserl's Intentional Act of Consciousness (phenomenology), Wittgenstein's pictorial relationship between facts (atomic facts) and propositions in the *Tractatus* and his concept of Language Games in the *Philosophical Investigations* (analytical philosophy), Sartre's act of Self-Creation in Nothingness, in Good Faith (existentialism)<sup>1</sup> and Marx's and the Marxists' act of self-emancipation (social emancipation) by changing the world through Labour, in whatever way the latter is conceived in the various brands of Marxism and neo-Marxism.<sup>2</sup> All these hypotheses are world formulae by which the world is structured and in which it is reflected. As concepts of the mind, these world formulae show that all theories are transcendental and methodologically constituted from one hypothesis or another.

University of Fort Hare  
Together in Excellence

Before philosophical hypotheses are discussed in greater detail, a look at hypotheses in the natural sciences would not be amiss. The hypothetical character of the premises underlying the truth-perspectives of the natural sciences emerges from the different kind of questions asked there. Aristotle had asked the what-question, which was aimed at exploring the world's first cause and the essences of things. This led to the classification of the world's natural phenomena into particulars, species, genera and Being as such. This was achieved by the conception of cause and effect as the motion of potential matter being actualized as form. From the latter, then, the universal is abstracted. In other words, general conclusions about the behaviour and mo-

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. *Being and Nothingness*, especially Part I, Chapter 2 (Bad Faith), Part III, Chapter 3 (Concrete Relations with Others), Part IV, Chapter 1 (Being and Doing: Freedom) and the Conclusion (Metaphysical Implications and Ethical Implications).

<sup>2</sup>CF. GA Rauche, "The Metaphysics of Labour in Marxist World Theories", in: *Proceedings of the Seventh Congress of the Philosophical Society of Southern Africa*, pp. 88-107.

tion of matter were based on logical subject-predicate judgements with a view to establishing the essence of natural phenomena. The question: What is the essence of a thing? was answered by abstracting the universal from an individual thing's particular form.

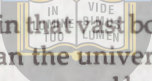
With the changing historical conditions and circumstances of life towards the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the Renaissance, the discovery of new continents (America), the invention of gun powder, the printing press, the microscope, the expansion of trade and commerce, the growth of towns and cities, the rise of a middle-class in the cities and its growing independence, the rise of the universities, the mediaeval theocentric way of thinking, scholasticism, collapsed. The latter still asked the what-question, the question of the essences of things and was based on Aristotle's syllogistic logic. By this logic's subject-predicate judgement, the world, man's position in the world and society (the feudal state) were structured in terms of a hierarchy of essences, which culminated in either God's will (Augustine) or God's wisdom (Thomas Aquinas). It was from these *real grounds* and *sufficient reasons* respectively that the world's structure was explained. At the beginning of the Renaissance period, the theocentric way of thinking of scholasticism yielded to the more anthropocentric way of thinking of Renaissance man, which meant a revival of man's interest in the world and in himself.

This new outlook, which, among others, found expression in the Copernican Revolution, led to an attempt to explain the world in functional terms, in the spirit of the up and coming natural sciences. The what-question came to be superseded by the how-question. General conclusions about a thing's behaviour were no longer based on subject-predicate judgements with a view to establishing its essence, but on observation and the description of the thing's behaviour and motion (causality) through mathematics. The how-question asked: How does a thing function? How is it causally related to some other thing? The question is no longer: What is fire, the answer being: heat, but: How does fire occur?, one possible answer being, among others: through friction.

The hypothetical character of the how-question emerges from the fact that it abandons the attempts to know what a thing is in favour of

the question: How does a thing function or operate? It moves from one aspect of truth to another, at the expense of the former. The new question leads to a change of method. This in itself represents an inevitable subjective factor, which is present at the conception of any type of theory and the constitution of any type of knowledge. From the start, therefore, this inevitable subjective element detracts from the "objectivity" of the new functional approach to knowledge. It at once poses the question whether the new functional knowledge represents the world as it really is.

The new method is the result of changed circumstances of life in terms of which it seeks to comprehend the world. It follows that the new scientific theories of thinkers such as Kepler, Galileo and Newton are as man-made as are the theories of their predecessors, which answered to the historical conditions prevailing then. When Galileo writes in *Il Saggiatore*:



Philosophy is written in that vast book which stands forever open before our eyes, I mean the universe; but it cannot be read until we have learnt the language and become familiar with the characters in which it is written. It is written in mathematical language, and the letters are triangles, circles and other geometrical figures, without which means it is humanly impossible to comprehend a single word,<sup>1</sup>)

the fact remains that the belief in mathematics as truly recording the world's structure is a metaphysical assumption, which in itself cannot be demonstrated or verified. Moreover, in recording the world through mathematics, its reality, meaningfulness (truth), harmony and homogeneity (identity) are presupposed. All these concepts are metaphysical terms and, as such, hypothetical presuppositions.

Again, it is shown that, in the field of the natural sciences, too, the constitution of scientific theories represents a cycle of the human self, in terms of which the world is comprehended and the human truth-perspective is projected. The specific answer man gives to the question about truth is always determined by certain underlying beliefs,

---

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from James R Newman, *The World of Mathematics*, Vol. 2, p. 731.

presuppositions and principles, on which the theory is built and which forms a truth-perspective by which man seeks to cope with his contingent experience and the concrete needs and interests emerging from it. Generally speaking, the projection of theory is always an attempt at self-emancipation from the conflict experience in a particular historical situation. The truth of this is confirmed by the contemporary crisis of knowledge in general and by the crisis in the natural sciences in particular, due to the development of contemporary atomic physics as a result of Max Planck's quantum theory, which may be said to have culminated in Werner Heisenberg's quantum mechanics. The principle of uncertainty, which he formulated for it, clearly reflects this crisis. This principle states the impossibility of measuring accurately the position and velocity of an atomic particle at the same time. It reflects a crisis of knowledge, which is also reflected in Erwin Schrödinger's wave-particle theory. The problems arising from matter's double aspect cause him to remark on the unknowability of matter, as will be shown later in a different context. Thinking the world from Heisenberg's principle of uncertainty, reverses the situation with regard to knowledge of causality, matter, mass and energy. By proclaiming the basic contingency of atomic events *in principle*, Heisenberg declares that the world cannot be explained in terms of unimpeachable laws as conceived in Newtonian mechanical physics.

On account of the pulverization and atomization of the world, which led to the collapse of the homogeneous world picture of mechanical physics, the old hypotheses on which the world theory of mechanical physics rested, had to be replaced by new ones. The basic hypothesis that the world was a homogeneous whole, which operated according to static mechanical principles of causality and rested on indivisible, solid atoms as its building blocks, had to be abandoned. According to Albert Einstein's special theory of relativity, the laws of classical mechanics apply to moving bodies with low velocities, but not to entities moving with extremely high velocities. Einstein converted Newton's reified space and time into functional space-time, through which moving bodies are related and welded into a four-dimensional continuum of the velocity of light.

In view of the world's atomization in terms of contingent, even unpredictable, functional relations of atomic events, a new world for-

mula becomes necessary, one that covers observations such as: mass and energy are interconvertible, so that mass appears as concentrated energy, and concepts such as atom, matter and mass lose their solid (ontological) character and assume functional meaning. This new functionalistic world formula is Einstein's equation:  $E = mc^2$ . It covers all eventualities of functional relations being established between moving bodies and establishes an analogy between the motion of atomic particles and celestial bodies.

This man-made equation reflects the piecemeal world of functionalistic relations. Its hypothetical character becomes evident from the fact that some constant has to be assumed, against which all possible functional relations between bodies can be measured and recorded in terms of mathematical equations. This constant is the velocity of light, by which a certain degree of continuity is established throughout the universe. Again, in establishing the new functionalistic truth-perspective, new functionalistic methods of measuring and experimenting were required and a new hypothesis, the velocity of light, had to be assumed as both a limit and a constant, which afforded an explanation of the universe in functionalistic terms.

In his book, *Mein Weltbild*,<sup>1</sup> Einstein stated the hypothetical character of the natural sciences and their underlying axiom as follows:

Der Glaube an eine vom wahrnehmenden Subjekt unabhängige Aussenwelt liegt aller Naturwissenschaft zugrunde. Da die Sinneswahrnehmungen jedoch nur indirekte Kunde von dieser Aussenwelt bzw. vom Physikalisch-Realen geben, so kann dieses nur auf spekulativem Weg von uns erfasst werden. Daraus geht hervor, dass unsere Auffassungen vom Physikalisch-Realen niemals endgültige sein können. Wir müssen stets bereit sein, diese Auffassungen, d.h. das axiomatische Fundament der Physik, zu verändern, um den Tatsachen der Wahrnehmungen auf eine logisch möglichst vollkommene Weise gerecht zu werden. In der Tat zeigt ein Blick auf die Entwicklung der Physik, dass dieses axiomatische Fundament im Lauf der Zeit tiefgreifende Veränderung erfahren hat.

---

<sup>1</sup> p. 159.

That our conceptions of the physical-real world cannot be final and that the axiomatic fundamentals of the natural sciences underlie constant change in order to do justice to perceptions in the greatest possible way emerged from the sessions on cosmology and physiology at the 16th World Congress of Philosophy held in Düsseldorf, West-Germany, from 27 August to 2 September, 1978. In both disciplines, cosmology and physiology, the *apriori* factor of the mind was emphasized. For example, Professor Karl Hübner, University of Kiel, pointed out that, in cosmology, the Ptolemaic and Copernican world-views had been left behind for the anthropogenic world-view of the modern age. These world-views are not false, but different views of the cosmos with different systems of reference. They are views from different premises and starting-points (hypotheses). The new anthropogenic world-view makes possible many perspectives of the world. The *apriori* factor in the acquisition of knowledge was shown by the physiologist Sir John Eccles, who is known for his book: *The Self and its Brain*. He stressed the mind's autonomy vis à vis the brain. Consciousness forms the world concept and has a creative effect on the environment. The dualism and interaction between mind and environment are of a spontaneous and creative nature.

As far as the atomistic and functionalistic world view of contemporary physics is concerned, the same is true. Newton's truth-perspective of the world is not false, but constitutes a different view from different premises. It may be stated with impunity that, without his mechanical laws of motion and theory of gravitation based on the hypothesis of a static causal law operating in a homogeneous world, Einstein's theory of relativity based on functional space-time relations holding between moving bodies as the metrical field of four-dimensional multiplicity, space and time being welded into a continuum by the velocity of light, would not have been possible. Newton's concepts, as it were, form the collateral hypotheses for Planck's, Einstein's and Heisenberg's operational hypotheses, by way of other hypotheses in between of course. While Newton's concept of static mechanical causality still holds true in the world of macro-physics, a different indeterministic view of causality based on Planck's energy quanta prevails in micro-physics.

Whether Newton's or Einstein's perspective is true is in itself a matter of relativity and depends on the respective point of view as well

as the respective hypotheses underlying it. It depends on whether the world is viewed with Newton as a homogeneous mechanism operating in infinite space and time and governed by unimpeachable natural laws recordable in terms of mathematics; or, with Einstein, as a constellation of moving bodies that, through their motions, stand in space-time relations to one another, which, by the velocity of light, form a four-dimensional continuum. Einstein's view has since been challenged by the English astro-physicist and astronomer Fred Hoyle, who put against it his view of matter's eternal self-creation.<sup>1)</sup>

It is evident that the functional relations between natural events have become the substance of the world and, as such, are of ontological significance. In the mathematical equation, through which these relations are recorded, mind and matter, subject and object, appear to be merged. In his work, *The Analysis of Matter*, therefore, Bertrand Russell was able to designate as *neutral monism* the concurrence between natural events and perceptual processes. The ontological problem arising from Russell's concept consists in whether the mathematical equations and logistic propositions recording the functional relations between natural events record reality as it is or as it appears to be through being constituted by the mind. It should be borne in mind that neutral monism is, after all, only a convenient term by which this question is begged. It is a hypothesis on the grounds of which sense-perceptions and processes of the mind are merged. But this merger is itself a construction of the mind, its objective truth being unproven.

Aforegoing reflections on the meaning and importance of hypothesis for the constitution of knowledge bring us to the question of philosophy as the mother science, from which the individual sciences may be said to have evolved. If science is taken as a wider concept, the methodological constitution of various types of human experience: physical, metaphysical (ontological), axiological (aesthetic and ethical) and religious experience, philosophy emerges as the fundamental science. It may be and has been defined as the pursuit of knowledge (Pythagoras) and the pursuit of truth (Socrates). The relationship between these two concepts will be discussed at a later stage. For the time being, let it suffice to say that, taken as a whole, philosophy comprises

---

<sup>1</sup>CF. *The Nature of the Universe*.

the previously mentioned types of human experience. These types of experience are methodologically constituted as theories or truth-perspectives, thus yielding philosophy's principal branches: epistemology, metaphysics (ontology), ethics, aesthetics and logic. For it is in terms of concepts that the truth-perspectives in these principal fields of philosophical activity are constituted, the specific meaning of these concepts being derived from the particular methodological context within which a specific theory or truth-perspective is conceived.

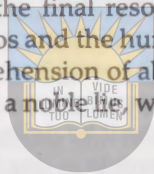
This makes it clear why philosophy has been seen as the science of totality, which, as an umbrella of the individual sciences, deals with second order concepts rather than first order concepts, as do the individual sciences. A typical example of philosophy's total character is Hegel's idealistic system based on the hypothesis of the Absolute Spirit, in terms of which the world, and thus the knowledge of the Truth, are constituted by the dialectical method. But even he, at least by implication, realizes the hypothetical character of his philosophy if, within the context of his own system, he declares that "philosophy defines all else but cannot itself be defined". The hypothetical character of truth regarded as absolute is clearly realized in one of the early writings of the German-Swiss philosopher Eberhard Grisebach.<sup>1</sup>) There, the historical philosophical systems are regarded as relative, absolute truth being beyond man's ken. As a hypothesis, it remains a constituent factor that is infinitely remote from us. Nevertheless, by striving for it, all systems and methods form part of the life in truth, the *Wahrheitsleben*. The purpose and meaning of history have thus been explained. They consist in working towards absolute truth or universality, which, as a living unit (the act as such), constitutes the general world and precludes all arbitrariness in its construction. Universality thus brings about the unity of life, which is more than logical presupposition and less than metaphysical substance, as it reveals itself as a real unit in the syntheses of interpretation. In other words, it represents the universal method, which constitutes the synthesis of all historical methods.

That *the* Truth represents a hypothetical idea, which is inaccessible

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Kulturphilosophische Arbeit der Gegenwart*, "Beschiessender Teil: Ergebnis für die eigene Einstellung", pp. 127-135.

to human knowledge and understanding, is clearly seen by Immanuel Kant, who designates the *noumena* as *practical* purposes. In the *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, the transcendental idea of World Reason is seen as a *Leitvorstellung*, a guiding idea, which gives direction to man's rational striving for truth. It is thus in the idea of World Reason that the unity of reason manifests itself. The teleological character of works of art points to the realm of ideal purposes, the striving for which is imposed upon man as a permanent task. The practical significance of the hypothetical idea of God (Kant's rational God) is shown by the fact that Kant refers to faith in God as being co-operative with human reason in the performance of the moral act. For only God measures up to an existence by pure reason; only God is free from all passion. Therefore, says Kant, developing the idea of a moral ruler of the world, is a task for our practical reason. <sup>1)</sup> Also Plato<sup>2)</sup> realizes that the attempt to comprehend the Absolute is in the final resort futile. He is aware that rational insight into the cosmos and the human soul might afford man apprehension but not comprehension of absolute truth. He therefore postulates his *theos* concept as a noble lie, which is necessary for meaningful existence.



Philosophy's very failure to arrive at a definition of itself, which is assented to by all philosophers, points to its hypothetical character. Each philosopher may be said to have his own definition based on certain underlying premises or hypotheses. An example of such definition is Wittgenstein's conception of philosophy as an analytical activity or Heidegger's fundamental ontology, which he later discarded again. A philosopher's specific definition answers the conditions of his own time. Therefore, by asking the question: What is philosophy?, man is already philosophizing, that is, he is already arguing with his fellow-man. This state of affairs has been referred to by some as the *Scandal of Philosophy*. No less a thinker than Karl Jaspers has pointed out that such a pejorative judgement is absolutely unjustifiable and based on a total misconception of philosophy. Philosophy is the philosopher's personal involvement in the problems of his own age. He cannot escape from the web of his own time. By methodologically constituting man's specific experience in a particular historical situation —

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. "Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft", *Akademie Ausgabe*, Vol. VI, p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> CF. *The Republic*, translated by F M Cornford, pp. 211-212.

for example, Karl Marx's and Friedrich Engels's basic experience of the class-struggle as a result of the Industrial Revolution — philosophical theories have both rational and existential aspects. Since he is a limited and an imperfect being, surrounded by a world of change and becoming, man's rational insight cannot be but critical and self-critical, his answers to the question of truth being controversial, so that the critical argument about truth continues as historical conditions change.

The reasons for the problem of definition in philosophy are that the meaning of the discipline's concepts change as a result of man's changing experience of reality. This, in turn, results in man's changing historical consciousness. For this reason, then, ever new hypothetical premises are conceived at the methodological constitution of philosophical truth-perspectives. In other words, on account of man's changing historical consciousness, philosophical world theories — the conception of the world, man's position in the world and his relationship with his fellow-man (society and the state) — change as well. Because man is an imperfect being, the principal questions that were asked by Plato, those about: knowledge, reality, beauty, harmony, justice, freedom and meaning (validity), will continue to be asked as historical conditions change. As long as there is man, so long will there be philosophy. The latter is man's mirror, which shows him as a being striving for the knowledge of truth under changing conditions of life.

It follows that the abdication of philosophy would be equivalent to the abdication of man. Since philosophical theories or truth-perspectives are at the same time human self-projections, man would be nothing without philosophy. He would lead a meaningless life, ceasing to be an individual and a person. The truth of this manifests itself in the present-day one-dimensional, functionalistic world of the monopolistic technological society in the West and the monopolistic ideological society in the East, where man is both computerized and ideologized.

Man's striving for *the* Truth is discernible not only from his philosophical activity but from his cultural activities in general. That he has always believed in *the* Truth, finds expression by his continued yearning for the Golden Age or the Paradise Lost. His being thrown into the world of becoming and opposites, which arouses in him the experi-

ence of conflict, suffering, uncertainty and insecurity, makes him strive for something, which, he felt, he had been an integral part of and which he had lost: a world of being, harmony, stability and certainty (truth). There, he experienced security and happiness, thus peace of mind. To recover this world, he postulates truth as a hypothesis, which, for Plato, was also goodness or *agathon*. By no means is this yearning for the good life an event of the past. It is one of man's universal characteristics, which stimulates his cultural activities. It is discernible from the present, in whatever sophisticated form it might present itself.

It may be said with impunity that mythology, theology, poetry, philosophy, science and technology vie with each other in attempting to restore the Golden Age or to recover Paradise. Names such as Homer and Hesiod in the Greek myth, Alighieri Dante and John Milton in poetry, the Christian theologians and mystics (Master Eckhart, Seuse, Tauler, Ruysbroek and Jakob Böhme), the scientific-positivist thinkers of the 19th century such as Auguste Comte, and the utopian socialists, such as St. Simon, Fourier and Proudhon spring to mind. Karl Marx and contemporary Marxisms pursue the same aims in materialistic terms. The German neo-Marxist philosopher, Ernst Bloch, writes:

Utopisch Gewolltes leitet sämtliche Freiheitsbewegungen, und auch alle Christen kennen es in ihrer Art, mit schlafendem Gewissen oder mit Betroffenheit, aus den Exodus- und messianischen Partien der Bibel. Auch hat das Ineinander von Haben und Nicht-Haben, wie es die Sehnsucht, die Hoffnung ausmacht und den Trieb, nach Hause zu gelangen, in grosser Philosophie immerhin gewöhlt.<sup>1)</sup>

The hypothetical character of human striving for truth continued to manifest itself in the wake of the changing historical conditions and circumstances of life. As a result of man's changing experience of reality and world consciousness, metaphysics, in the 19th century, began to lose its credibility. Due to the rapid development of the nat-

---

<sup>1</sup> *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, Vol. I, p. 6.

ural sciences, industry and economy as well as the changing socio-political conditions closely connected with it, metaphysics ceded its emancipatory role, trying to lead man to happiness, to the natural sciences. This led to the emergence of the uncritical scientism and the monopolistic technological society of our age — in brief, to contemporary one-dimensional functionalism. This development went hand in hand with another hypothesis: the unconditional faith in progress, whereby progress gradually changed its meaning. Its original humanistic meaning — man's and mankind's evolution towards greater dignity and perfection — was changed into a functionalistic meaning: the technological evolution of the tools themselves, which were to have been the means for the humanistic end of progress.

In the same way, practice also assumed a functionalistic meaning, no longer denoting full human practice, in the sense of man's self-realization, but designating the functional relations in the natural sciences and technology as well as the social sciences. Examples are certain neo-Marxist schools of thought, where a marked *rapprochement* between positivism and dialectics happens at the expense of dialectics, especially the historical dialectics of historical materialism. The virtual reduction of philosophy to a positivistic functionalism occurs not only in logical positivism (the early Wittgenstein, Carnap, Ayer) and analytical linguistic philosophy (the later Wittgenstein, Ryle, Austin) but also in the positive social science school of the Yugoslav thinkers Mihailo Marcović and his pupil Svetozar Stajanović.

The famous dispute on positivism between Adorno and Popper, and, later, between Habermas and Albert, revealed Critical Theory's (the Frankfurt School's) proximity to the positivistic approach of thinkers such as Popper and Albert. In Critical Theory, practice means the scientific and rational utilization of the means of production (labour) for the purpose of liberating society from the sciences and technology becoming the ultimate yardstick for social change: in this sense a technocracy. A good example of this is Herbert Marcuse's argument that social liberation and man's emancipation take place through the transposition of ideal values into technological tasks, in this sense through labour. In Habermas's pragmatic model of society, <sup>1</sup>) the con-

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. *Technik und Wissenschaft als 'Ideologie'*.

flict between science and politics is overcome by seeing them as a dialectical unit. Labour is instrumental action on the one hand and, on the other, rational selection of strategies for the purpose of achieving the envisaged aim. On the one hand, labour concerns itself with rules on the grounds of empirical insight and, on the other, with strategies on the grounds of analytical insight.

By applying the laws of achieving definite goals under given conditions, as these laws have been explored by the sciences, for the purpose of satisfying social needs, labour becomes an interaction between science and history, science and morality, science and politics. Labour is thus the dialectical link between science and society, theory and practice. Through it, science and history, science and morality, science and politics merge as a dialectical unit. Science refers to politics, while politics is subject to scientific insight.

The hypothetical aspect of Habermas's model consists in its being directed towards ideal social conditions. Rohrmoser<sup>1</sup>) points out that it is a teleological philosophy of history, which is subject to empirical control. He draws attention to the contradiction that Habermas regards Marxism as outdated, but seeks to apply it to conditions of the present. He demonstrates that, in spite of his criticism of positivism in the light of dialectics, Habermas, in the so-called dispute on positivism, makes far-reaching concessions to this approach and that he does so by conceding that the decision whether objective conditions for a revolution are given rests with the analytical social sciences. Habermas does thus not replace the empirico-analytical method by the dialectical one.

The social sciences of the West apply, to a large extent, the functionalistic method in their field of enquiry, replacing the tracing of human relations in society by an analysis of functional relations of roles and interactions. This applies to both the social anthropologists (A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, B. Malinowski, R. Thurnwald), who formed theories of functional structures, and the biologic-cybernetic system theory of T. Parsons.<sup>2</sup>) Since the functionalistic approach of these thinkers in the

---

<sup>1</sup> *Das Elend der kritischen Theorie.*

<sup>2</sup> *CF. Parsons, T and Bales, R F, Family, Socialisation and Interaction Process.*

social sciences seeks to overcome the dichotomy of individual and collective by standardized, integrated roles and functions, society no longer consists of individuals but of social interactions.

From these observations the conclusion is drawn that man is not a one-dimensional but a multi-dimensional being, a utopian as well as a rational one. It may even be argued that the natural sciences and technology presuppose man's utopian character, from which the hypothetical character of all the sciences — natural sciences, social sciences and human sciences — explains itself: the fact, namely, that the methodological constitution of scientific theory, of whatever type, starts from certain basic assumptions or hypothetical premises, the most basic of which being the belief in truth, which man strives to get to know. Many a scientific discovery is the result of hypothetical speculation and vivid imagination.



In the natural sciences and technology, too, man's utopian urge is largely responsible for the stupendous developments that have taken place there. In order to establish this truth, a beginning can be made with a striking example from the Greek myth. The skilful Athenian craftsman Daedalus made wings for himself and his son Icarus and took winged flight from Crete. The father escaped successfully, but Icarus flew too near the sun, and the heat melted the wax by which the wings were fastened. He fell into the sea and drowned. It would be well to heed the warning given in this legend, so that Icarus' fate will not become that of mankind in the future. The *hubris* of power by which it is at present afflicted and which manifests itself in a totalitarian functionalism in the West and an equally totalitarian ideologism in the East could well lead to its downfall. Apart from this utopian urge (Bloch), sense of wonder (Plato, Aristotle, Kant) and spirit of adventure (Columbus), it is his life-struggle and urge for freedom from conflict, doubt, insecurity and suffering that whet man's appetite for the knowledge of absolute truth. The Spanish thinker J. Ortega y Gasset sees man as a utopian being *par excellence*. he writes:

Unsere Individualität ist eine Persönlichkeit, die sich nie ganz verwirklicht, eine lebende Utopie, ein geheimer Text, den jeder in der Tiefe seiner Brust bewahrt. Man versteht daher sehr wohl, dass Pindar seine heroische Ethik in den bekannten Imperativ

zusammenfasste: 'Werde der du bist'!<sup>1</sup>)

## 2. The Constitution of Scientific Theory and the Question of Evidence

If the methodological constitution of scientific theory — in the wider sense of including the various types of human experience from which it is conceived — takes place under changing historical conditions, thus from man's *contingent experience of reality*, it follows that all scientific theory is man-made and constituted from hypothetical premises. Therefore, the text of the theory must always be read in methodological context. For it is the latter that lends theory its specific meaning. Since, however, a theory is constituted from the concrete conflict experience of a certain thinker at a particular period, it is this experience that provides evidence for the theory. Method is a wider concept than theory in so far as it can be applied to several theories. In philosophy a case in point would be Hegel's and Marx's theories. Both are constituted by the dialectical method. However both differ in content because they are derived from a different conflict experience, which lends evidence to the respective theory.

University of Port Hare  
Together in Excellence

Hegel's basic experience is that of the conflicts and problems emerging as a result of the French Revolution. Roughly speaking, this is the conflict between the progressive rational ideas of the French Revolution and the conservative ideas of the monarchical and religious tradition (legitimism). This basic conflict experience, in turn, yielded problems such as knowledge and faith, science and religion, will and reason, contingency and necessity, freedom and authority, religion and state. In view of these problems, Hegel felt that the French Revolution had failed, although, as a first attempt to build society from the idea, it was welcomed by him. He considered this attempt to have become stuck in outward subjective reason: the application of subjective human reason for the purpose of emancipating society from oppression by feudalism. This oppression largely occurred as a result of the material privileges enjoyed by the aristocracy. Therefore, the attempt at emancipation from it was largely a matter of material (outer) mo-

---

<sup>1</sup> *Vom Menschen als utopischem Wesen*, p. 75.

tives. It appeared to Hegel that this kind of motives was not conducive to achieving true freedom and true happiness. To reach this aim, the substitution of objective reason for subjective reason became necessary. From this, Hegel conceived the hypothesis of Absolute Reason or World Reason for the purpose of overcoming the previously mentioned conflicts and reconciling the liberal ideas of the French Revolution with the conservative ideas of legitimism. By Absolute Reason the world of truth and freedom is constituted.

Marx's evidence from which he constitutes his theory is his basic experience of the class-struggle, this conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat emerging as a result of the Industrial Revolution. Marx applied Hegel's dialectics to the "economic laws" of the process of production (labour). With Hegel, it had been the Absolute Spirit by which World History was set in motion. By externalizing and alienating itself from itself, it returned to itself in self-fulfilment, self-consciousness and freedom. With Marx, World History was set in motion by the struggle of the proletariat, whose weapon in this revolutionary struggle was labour. For it was by productive labour as a social act that the historical class of the proletariat changed the world, man's consciousness of the world and himself, and his relationship with his fellow-man (society). The growing proletarian world consciousness in terms of the principle of identity (the harmony of world, man and society) led to social revolution, through which the class-struggle was overcome and the free, just, harmonious classless society — the communist society — had come true.

Developments show the hypothetical nature of Marx's conception of the proletariat as *the* historical, revolutionary class, which is destined to emancipate mankind. In the light of what can be termed the present-day Technological Revolution, Marcuse<sup>1</sup>) claims that, having been absorbed, to a large extent, into the technological establishments of West and East, respectively, the workers have lost their revolutionary *élan*. The proletariat, no longer, can be said to have developed a class-consciousness. It does not constitute the subject of history, this role having fallen to the young generation, the socially ostracized and the people of the Third World. It is they that now constitute the forces

---

<sup>1</sup> *Der eindimensionale Mensch.*

of history. In view of the Technological Revolution, Marcuse experiences the basic conflict between the monopolistic societies (syndicalistic monopolism in the West, state monopolism in the East) as a world conflict between technologically developed and technologically underdeveloped countries. It is on this evidence that his theory rests. This conflict transcends that between Soviet bloc and Western countries and shows itself as one between haves and have-nots. By widening Marx's class-struggle into a struggle between generations (students versus the older generation of the establishment) and races (the Coloured people of the Third World against the Whites of the technological world), he arrives at a different theory of emancipatory labour, culminating in the utopian idea of what may be termed aesthetic man; as will be shown later on.

Since Critical Theory is a reaction to present-day monopolistic technological society on the one hand and total ideologization on the other, it is not surprising that other representatives of this school of thought regard Marx's concept of the class-struggle as defunct. Horkheimer and Adorno therefore experience the conflict between nature and reason in monopolistic technological society and constitute their theory of *Dialektik der Aufklärung* upon this evidence.<sup>1</sup>) For Habermas, on the other hand, the basic conflict experience is that between science and politics. It is from this evidence that he conceives his pragmatic model of the *herrschaftsfreie Gesellschaft*. Nothing than that shows better that man's experience of reality is *contingent*. The hypothetical and utopian character of the theories of Critical Theory will be discussed further on in greater detail.

These examples should have given a clear picture of the relationship between evidence, method, theory and hypothesis. It is in terms of method, by which it is constituted as theory from a specific experience under certain historical conditions, that the man-madness of any type of scientific knowledge can be demonstrated. Evidence for the truth of such knowledge is provided by such an experience. In terms of it, a particular hypothesis is conceived for the purpose of overcoming conflict. It is this hypothesis that renders theory a truth-perspective. The specific experience provides the theory methodologically es-

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. *Dialektik der Aufklärung*.

established on it with a factual content (evidence). By the methodological constitution of this content knowledge is obtained, the method being a framework or system of reference within the context of which rational judgement takes place.

The man-madeness of scientific theories, in the wide sense of the word, has already crystallized in the section dealing with the concept of hypothesis. In the natural sciences, the constitution of knowledge within the context of a certain method from contingent experience, so that a truth-perspective becomes possible, can be well demonstrated by Newton's theory of gravitation. It is by this concept, which afforded a strictly mechanical, causal and mathematical explanation of nature that Newton dealt with the vicissitude of natural phenomena and tried to overcome all conflicting views on it. He did so in the scientific-mathematical spirit of the age. He concentrated on the phenomena of motion in nature and suggested that all such phenomena might be derived mathematically from mechanical principles. For Newton, the object of natural philosophical studies is "from the phenomena of motions to investigate the forces of nature, and then from these forces to demonstrate the other phenomena"<sup>1</sup>) It is from this evidence that, by the inductive method, he proceeds to the mechanical laws. As Copleston points out, these forces of nature, which are defined as the causes of changes in motion, are the mechanical laws themselves. Says Copleston<sup>2</sup>): "These descriptive laws are not, of course, physical agents; they do not exercise efficient causality. They are 'mechanical principles'". In other words, Newton's theoretical physics, which he calls philosophy of nature, formulates the general laws of motion, which are applicable to the diverse systems of bodies as well as any possible continua, independently of their quantities and qualities. This culminates in the conception of the law of gravitation.

By and large, it may be said that Newton's truth-perspective is constituted from facts (observations and experiments), which supply the evidence for his theory by the inductive method. But these facts are confined to the phenomena of motion which lend themselves to the mathematical constitution of mechanical principles. Newton's theory

---

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from F Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, Vol. 5, p. 159.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 159.

is a truth-perspective in so far as it is judged as true by the deductive method: the explanation of the world processes from the inductively conceived law of gravitation. In the light of this law, the motion of celestial and terrestrial bodies can be explained in terms of static mechanical causal relations. This makes possible scientific predictions and represents the world as a homogeneous mechanism, within which, to speak with Leibniz, nature makes no jumps. However, this functional mechanization of the world led to the constitution of a world of cold abstract principles, which had little to do with multi-dimensional reality: the multi-coloured and variegated world of quantitative and qualitative differences, which is in a process of constant change and becoming, and is experienced as natural conflict. By this abstraction the gap between theory and reality is apparent. Reality is not a one-dimensional mechanism, but is experienced as a variegated, multi-dimensional, dynamic process of change and becoming, which makes man's experience of it contingent. While Newton's mechanistic conception of reality has indeed been valuable from the functional point of view: the further development of the natural sciences and technology as *one specific* aspect of reality, it certainly has not covered reality as such. It was the great German author Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who waged a life-long struggle against Newton as the representative of the mechanical explanation of nature. According to Goethe, such a conception could not comprehend reality as the concrete form of life. However, Newton has certainly made a valuable contribution to one aspect of multi-dimensional reality as a particular field of human experience, namely, the functional one.

Newton's mechanical homogeneous world view, which is based on a number of hypotheses listed by Copleston<sup>1)</sup> as those of absolute space and time, the atomistic theory, namely, that there are extended, hard, impenetrable, indestructible, mobile particles, endowed with the *vis inertiae*, the theory of ether, postulated primarily to account for the propagation of light, was shaken by Max Planck's quantum theory, which he developed in 1900 A.D. This led to Heisenberg's quantum mechanics and to Einstein's theory of relativity. It has already been pointed out that this development showed Newton's concept of gravitation based on the static mechanical laws of causality operating in a

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. F Copleston, *op. cit.*, pp.161-167.

homogeneous world as a collateral hypothesis for Planck's, Einstein's and Heisenberg's operational hypotheses.

The piecemeal approach of quantum mechanics yields the functionalistic method: the constitution of the functional relations between atomic events of a fleeting nature in terms of mathematical equations. The establishment of these relations by mathematical equations is also man-made, thus subjective, in the sense that they are constituted under man-made experimental conditions and with the aid of man-made experimental apparatus.<sup>1</sup>) These mathematical equations have the value of probability, not of certainty. Thus, the static laws of mechanical physics were replaced by Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, by which the scientific predictability of causal relations was rendered uncertain and the homogeneous perspective of the world yielded to a piecemeal world of functional relations between atomic events.

To be sure, by the principle of uncertainty the validity of the causal law is not as such called in question, but the inadequacy of human insight into the nature of causality is illustrated. This does lead Heisenberg to a positive answer in the manner of a new hypothesis consisting in the *mathematical form*, by which functional relations between atomic events are recorded. Heisenberg believes that the mathematical form constitutes the possible new ontological foundation of causality and of certainty with respect to knowledge. It constitutes a point of departure from which the world can be explained. Because he sees in the mathematical form a firm world ground and basic world structure, by which causal events in atomic physics receive stability and universal meaning, so that certain knowledge becomes possible again, Heisenberg points to Plato's *Timaeus* rather than to the atomists: Democritus and Leucippus. He writes:

Regardless of the ultimate decision (concerning the discrete and uncertain nature of atomic events), it can even now be said that the final answer will be nearer to the philosophical concepts expressed for example in the *Timaeus* of Plato than those of the ancient materialists . . . Like the regular elementary bodies of Plato's philosophy, the elementary particles of modern physics are de-

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. M Born, *Von der Verantwortung des Naturwissenschaftlers*, pp. 105-107.

fin'd by the mathematical conditions of symmetry; they are not eternal and invariable and are therefore hardly what can be called 'real' in the true sense of the word. Rather, they are simple representations of those fundamental mathematical structures that are arrived at in the attempts to keep subdividing matter; they represent the content of fundamental laws of nature. For modern natural science there is no longer in the beginning the material object, but form, mathematical symmetry.<sup>1)</sup>

In the discussion of his lecture, Heisenberg says:

In fact, what is thus found as a result of an interaction, of any action, is not always objects but forms — forms of that energy which is the fundamental basic material of modern physics, capable of taking different forms in which we recognize objects.<sup>2)</sup>

It is by the conception of the mathematical form as the underlying structure of the world that the latter's homogeneous character is restored. The mathematical form fulfils a constitutive function in terms of which the causal relations of functional events are bound into a rational whole. In this way, the mathematical form bestows truth-character on the empirical evidence. By the act of constituting the empirical evidence through the mathematical form, the certainty of knowledge has been restored, which, in the light of the uncertainty principle, had assumed the character of probability.

Viewing the world from the uncertainty principle had reversed the situation in regard to matters such as knowledge, causality, matter, mass and energy, as these terms had been conceived in mechanical physics. It had rendered impossible the conception of a homogeneous cosmos as well as explaining the world from unimpeachable mechanical laws. It had proclaimed the utter contingency and unpredictability of atomic events *in principle*. This concept reflected the fleeting nature of functional relations in general. The mathematical relations which recorded the possible functional relations of atomic events were themselves of probable character. In the light of the princi-

---

<sup>1</sup> "Planck's Discovery and the Philosophical Problems of Atomic Physics", in: *On Modern Physics*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>2</sup> "Discussion of the Lecture of Werner Heisenberg", in: *Op. cit.*, p. 31.

ple of uncertainty, concepts such as atom, matter and mass lost their solid thing-like nature and assumed an operationalistic character. Mass and energy became interconvertible as summarized by Einstein's equation  $E = mc^2$ . This equation represented the new functionalistic world formula. In terms of causality, the principle of uncertainty indicates the limit of the determinability and applicability of causality. The last equations at which physicists arrived are equations of probability. They do not represent averages of empirical magnitudes calculated by statistical means, but equations which themselves have only the value of probability. Hence, only probable knowledge is possible.

By conceiving the mathematical form as the underlying structure of the world in terms of rational necessity in the spirit of Plato, Heisenberg conceives the mathematical form as the truth-function of certain knowledge, thus once more reversing the situation. The utter contingency of the world has been overcome and the homogeneity of the world has been restored in a new way: by lending rational stability and continuity to the functional relations of atomic events. In this way, the certainty value of knowledge has been restored. In a manner of speaking a miracle occurred. Out of the ashes of the pulverized, fragmentary world rose — as a phoenix — Plato. For just as in Plato's philosophy the *doxa* world of imperfect, finite, periodical and contingent things reflects the rational world of mathematical objects and perfect forms, which are known by the mind *apriori*, so modern atomic physics reflects the world of mathematical forms and mathematical symmetry. All in all, Heisenberg's conception of the mathematical form, as the constitutive element of the world, made a new theory and a new truth-perspective possible.

That it can be no more than a hypothetical theory emerges from the fact that this is Heisenberg's methodological constitution of the evidence: the contingent functional relations of atomic events, in a new way. What remains unanswered is the problem of co-ordination between the *apriori* and the *aposteriori*: the reconciliation of our mind with our experience. How it is possible that, from our perception and experience of the world of contingency, we are able to move on to rational theory and mathematical conception is a mystery. Einstein writes in this respect:<sup>1)</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *Mein Weltbild*, p. 109.

Keiner, der sich in den Gegenstand wirklich vertieft hat, wird leugnen, dass, obwohl die Welt der Wahrnehmungen das theoretische System praktisch eindeutig bestimmt, trotzdem kein logischer Weg von den Wahrnehmungen zu den Grundsätzen der Theorie führt.

But that Einstein, too, believes in the possibility of establishing — or rather re-establishing — a homogeneous world-view in the face of the crisis of knowledge reflected in Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, emerges from the following:

Höchste Aufgabe der Physiker ist also das Aufsuchen jener allgemeinsten elementaren Gesetze, aus denen durch reine Deduktion das Weltbild zu gewinnen ist. Zu diesen elementaren Gesetzen führt kein logischer Weg, sondern nur die auf Einfühlung in die Ehrfahrung sich stützende Intuition.<sup>1)</sup>

It is thus, according to Einstein, intuition that is the link between sense-data and theoretical construction and that guides us towards the highest principles from which the structure of the universe may be deduced. Accordingly, it stands to reason that Einstein's world view rests on two irrational elements: belief and intuition. Both concepts stand for the unexplored, the mysterious, the unknown. They arouse in Einstein a deep religious feeling:

Das Schönste, was wir erleben können, ist das Geheimnisvolle. Es ist das Grundgefühl, das an der Wiege von wahrer Kunst und Wissenschaft steht . . . Das Wissen um die Existenz des für uns Undurchdringlichen, der Manifestationen tiefster Vernunft und leuchtendster Schönheit, die unserer Vernunft nur in ihren primitivsten Formen zugänglich sind, dies Wissen und Fühlen macht wahre Religiosität aus.<sup>2)</sup>

At their attempt to reconstitute a homogeneous and stable world-view on the basis of fixed laws and principles, which would set man free from his present sense of unease, insecurity and uncertainty, the great modern scientists often point to the ancient Greek philosophers

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> *Mein Weltbild*, pp. 9-10

as their masters in methodology. Giving expression to his belief, confidence and hope concerning the retrieval of a deeper and more certain knowledge of the universe, Einstein says:

Nach unserer bisherigen Erfahrung sind wir nämlich zum Vertrauen berechtigt, dass die Natur die Realisierung des mathematisch denkbar Einfachsten ist . . . In der Beschränktheit der mathematisch existierenden einfachen Feldarten und einfachen Gleichungen, die zwischen ihnen möglich sind, liegt die Hoffnung des Theoretikers begründet, das Wirkliche in seiner Tiefe zu erfassen . . . *In einem gewissen Sinn halte ich es für wahr, dass dem reinen Denken das Erfassen des Wirklichen möglich sei, wie es die Alten geträumt haben.*<sup>1)</sup>

Thus Einstein, in a certain sense, has restored those components in the process of acquiring knowledge, which positivistic analytical philosophy had thrown overboard as useless cargo and misleading in epistemological enquiry, namely, intuition, speculation, imagination and the mysterious as the basic feeling, which signifies true religiosity. The importance of speculation and imagination has already been pointed out in the section on "The Conception of Hypothesis". Einstein links up with the ancient Greek philosophers, who, like Einstein, were realists, in the sense that they never doubted the existence of the outside world, the true structure of which they proposed from the evidence supplied by their fundamental experience: the strife of the opposites, which they conceived as a natural rhythm steered by some underlying world principle. They realized the uncertain character of sense-perceptions and found truth in speculative concepts such as Anaximander's *apeiron*, Heraclitus' *logos*, Parmenides' *truth or being*, Anaxagoras' *nous*, Plato's *agathon*, and Aristotle's first cause, the *unmoved mover*. From these concepts, they deduced the cosmos, even as Einstein proposes to deduce the structure of the universe from the universal elementary principles at which the physicist arrives by means of mathematical formulae and equations; but there is no logical link between contingent experience and mathematical construction. Einstein says:

---

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 116-118.

Erfahrung bleibt natürlich das einzige Kriterium der Brauchbarkeit einer mathematischen Konstruktion für die Physik. Das eigentliche schöpferische Prinzip liegt aber in der Mathematik.<sup>1)</sup>

This clearly illustrates that knowledge is man-made (subjective), in the sense that it is acquired by the constitution of human experience (of whatever type) by some method or another. In Einstein's case it is the mathematical method by which the functional relations in physics are constituted as a world theory. Mathematics is seen as the constructive — thus creative — component in the acquisition of knowledge. Einstein *believes* that the mathematical constitution of our experience as understood by him affords us a glimpse of reality. It is the uncertain character of our sense-perception and the fact that no logical way leads to those general basic laws from which, by pure deduction, the world structure must be evolved — the realization, therefore, of the gulf that exists between experience and mathematical construction — that causes Einstein to consider belief and intuition indispensable components in the acquisition of knowledge.

This clearly points to the hypothetical character of Einstein's truth-perspective, which is thereby rendered as problematic and controversial as any other, as is shown by the fact that it has been called in question by other scientists, for example, by the British physicist and astronomer Fred Hoyle. But this does not detract from the importance of Einstein's contribution to the problem of knowledge in physics and the comprehension of the real (truth). This is the aim of all the great scientists and philosophers.

Although Einstein realizes that the logical gap between experience (evidence) and mathematical construction results in an uncertainty of method, which facilitates the construction of any number of equivalent systems in theoretical physics, he holds that developments have shown that among all possible constructions one has, at a particular time, proved itself superior.<sup>2)</sup> This may be correct, if we consider those theoretical world constructions that have exercised more influence than others, those of Newton, Planck, Heisenberg and Einstein, for example. But that none of these theories or truth-perspectives com-


---

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 109.

prehends *the Truth* emerges from the fact that they call each other in question and enter into a critical relationship with one another. This is most striking by the relationship between Newton's and Einstein's truth-perspectives. Although they stand in a critical relationship with each other — or because of that — they are supplementary to each other. In addition, the argument on truth in physics continues, as is shown by the fact that Einstein's truth-perspective has been called in question by others.

Another eminent physicist who, in the face of the present crisis of knowledge and truth, points back to the ancient Greeks, is Erwin Schrödinger. With regard to the problem of empirical evidence, he struggles with the problem of the double aspect of matter, the wave-particle character of electrons. He regards electrons as:



more or less temporary creations within the wave field, whose structure and structural variety, in the widest sense of the word, are so clearly and sharply determined by means of wave laws as they recur always in the same manner, that much takes place as if they were a permanent material reality. The very exactly specifiable mass and charge of the particles we must thus consider as Gestalt elements determined by the wave laws. The conservation of charge and mass on a large scale must be considered as a statistical effect, based on the "law of the large number."<sup>1</sup>)

Schrödinger must have been keenly aware of the hypothetical character of his mathematically constituted "wave laws". In a lecture "On our Image of Matter" he concludes: "If you ask me: Now really, what *are* these particles, these atoms and molecules? I should have to admit that I know as little about it as where Sancho Panza's second donkey came from". This modesty and critical and self-critical insight, the admission of our ignorance as far as our knowledge of *the Truth* is concerned, we find often among leading scientists such as Max Born, Werner Heisenberg and Albert Einstein. These things add to their greatness, both as scientists and as men. Being keenly aware of the present crisis of knowledge, they seek a way out of it by developing new approaches, both in scientific and moral respect.

---

<sup>1</sup> "Our Image of Matter", in: W Heisenberg *et al*, *On Modern Physics*, p. 56.

According to Schrödinger, the unendurable uncertainty which the quantum theory has introduced to our beliefs should be dealt with by studying the ancient Greeks' principles of thought. In "The Motives for returning to Ancient Thought"<sup>1</sup>), he points out that, by examining the ideas of the ancient Greeks, we may recognize our relationship with them, realize the continuity between our ways of thinking and theirs, and learn from their mistakes, which may have been perpetuated as unconscious presuppositions in ourselves. In this way, Schrödinger hopes that we might be able to liberate ourselves from an unrealized tyranny.

With Gerhard Krüger<sup>2</sup>) the question arises whether science is in a position to find the whole truth beyond individual perception. In terms of the hermeneutical approach that is applied in this work, Krüger's question could be reformulated as follows: Can physics, as the science of one specific human experience — the experience of physical objects and events — constitute a comprehensive world-view? Is this particular experience sufficient evidence for such an undertaking or is evidence on a wider scale required? It stands to reason that the constitution of such a world-view requires the inclusion of other types of experience: biological, metaphysical, religious, ethical, aesthetic and historical experience. It would appear that the constitution of a world-view based on one specific human experience — thus on unilateral evidence — leads to a one-dimensional conception of the world, man and man's relationship with the other. It results in a physicalism, biologism, mysticism, religionism, moralism, aestheticism, historicism, etc. This does not do justice to man as a multi-dimensional being of many types of experience. A tendency towards physicalism is discernible in the modern philosophical school designated as neo-positivism (Carnap, Reichenbach). A particular type of biologism is Darwinism — the constitution of a biological world-view from a certain conception of the evolution of life. A consistent biologism is propagated in H.G. Holle's *Allgemeine Biologie als Grundlage für Weltanschauung, Lebensführung und Politik*.

It therefore stands to reason whether the construction of a comprehensive world-view is not the task of philosophy. For the latter asks

---

<sup>1</sup> In: E Schrödinger, *The Nature of the Greeks*, pp. 1-19.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Grundfragen der Philosophie — Geschichte, Wahrheit, Wissenschaft*.

the question about truth not from a specific data field as do the individual sciences, but it asks this question in general, under changing historical conditions. In doing so, it comprises the various types of experience, such as the physical, biological, metaphysical, religious, ethical, aesthetic and historical type. Thus, the evidence for the philosophical world-view (theory), of which these types of experience are constituents, is supplied by man's contingent experience of reality: the specific conflicts experienced in a particular historical situation as well as the concrete needs and interests arising from these conflicts. What the individual sciences and philosophy have in common is logic. For the latter, like the former, constitutes its respective theories or truth-perspectives in terms of method, thus of reasoning. Further details in this respect will be discussed later on. Here we are mainly concerned with the problem of evidence.

What has emerged in this regard is that any scientific theory is man-made and being the outcome of the methodological constitution of human experience as evidence is really transcendental, in so far as such constitution represents conceptual theory. The method by which it is constituted lends theory intelligible form, so that it is a truth-perspective. In the light of changing, variable historical conditions (contingency), theory remains controversial and invites the postulation of new theories, which, in turn, help to change conditions. This results in an interplay of theory and practice. The specific human needs and interests emerging from a particular historical situation produce theory, while theory, in turn, tends to change those needs, so that they comply with the whole, although, on account of reality's contingency, no theory will achieve this. It can never cover the whole. All the same, theory is always practice-directed.

From the contingent experience of reality as man's basic experience, the conclusion must be drawn that it is not method or theory that determines reality, but that it is man's contingent experience of reality from which method and theory flow. For it has been shown that the man-madness of theory renders it controversial and perspectival, so that it enters into a critical relationship with other theories. This critical relationship, in terms of which the argument about truth continues, points, in turn, to man's contingent experience of reality. In the light of this experience, as it is reflected by the critical relationship, all human

theories remain controversial and call each other in question. As an outflow of contingent experience, they are themselves contingent.

The definition of science as: *methodologically constituted types of knowledge under man's contingent experience of reality, yielding various theories, which enter into a critical relationship with each other, thus generating the dynamics of scientific argument*, makes it evident that knowledge of the truth is perspectival. Knowledge is not something that is received from facts (evidence) alone. Philosophy asks the question: What are facts? This, in turn, raises the problem of perception, with all accompanying problems, such as appearance and reality, the validity of the sense-data and their relationship to the things, subjectivity and objectivity.

But in order to avoid meaningless, interminable controversy on these matters and to facilitate the conception of meaningful theory by which we can cope with our conflict experience and our needs arising from it, it is reasonable that, as limited, imperfect beings, we accept as meaningful evidence (facts) the *totality* of human experience: physical, biological, historical, moral, aesthetic and religious experience. Facts *per se* do not yield knowledge in the scientific sense of the word. Only the constitution of these facts into a meaningful, structural whole by the application of the method does. Facts furnish the evidence for the construction of such an intelligible whole, which illuminates the truth of the theory thus constituted, in the sense that it is universally understood. All scientific knowledge — including philosophical theories — is man-made, and the human mind is the critical denominator of human truth. It emerges that knowledge is achieved through a constitutive methodological act. Since the methodological constitution and reconstitution of knowledge from experience takes place under changing historical conditions, it follows that theories yielded by this act are changing truth-perspectives, reflecting changed circumstances of life. Hence, the question about truth will have to be asked again and again. Theories entering into a critical relationship with each other, philosophical argument on truth will continue as long as there are men.

### 3. Method as the Truth-Function of Knowledge and the Problem of Verification

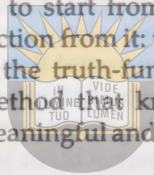
That method is the truth-function of knowledge has emerged from our discussion in the preceding section. In this section, the intention is to investigate this matter in closer detail in connection with the problem of verification. It has already been shown that in achieving scientific knowledge of whatever kind, from whatever kind of human experience it is constituted in the form of theory, method is required. In the structuring of facts — man's contingent experience of reality — method is the truth-function of knowledge. Facts *per se* do not represent scientific knowledge, but provide — as has been shown — evidence. They become knowledge through methodological structuring or constitution. The philosophical problem of perception in this regard has already been mentioned. It may be stated by the following question: When there is perception what is it that is perceived: material things; sense impressions of material things and their copies (ideas); sense-impressions and their associations as substance and causality; sense data; things as the construction of sense-perception by the mind as universals? Roughly speaking, it is the old epistemological problem of the subjectivity and objectivity of perception.

University of Fort Hare  
Together in Excellence

There is, however, one fact that can hardly be disputed: the fact, namely, that man's basic experience is that of conflict in nature, conflict in man himself and conflict in society. Hence the attempts of the various sciences and of philosophy to cope with this conflict experience by the constitution and reconstitution of theories, the sciences doing so in terms of first order concepts and philosophy in terms of second order concepts. This is so, because the sciences take their respective data (facts) for granted, thus constituting them as theory directly. Philosophy on the other hand, questions their validity, thus asking the epistemological questions: What is perception?, and closely connected with it: What is knowledge?, What is its origin, nature and extent?, What are its subjective and objective components?, How can our ideas be verified?.

A good illustration of the various answers that have been provided in this respect is the dispute on knowledge in the 17th and 18th centuries, between the rationalists (Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz,

Wolff) on the one hand and, on the other, the empiricists (Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume). This dispute arose under the changed historical conditions of this period, which is often called the period of Enlightenment or the Age of Reason. These changed conditions had developed as a result of the collapse of the mediaeval way of life and the mediaeval way of thinking. Roughly speaking, what had happened was that the theocentric point of view of the Middle Ages — the acceptance of faith in the revealed truth as a presupposition for all knowledge — had yielded to an anthropocentric outlook: the view that the sources of knowledge were situated in man himself, either in his mind (reason) or his experience. The question arose: What method should be followed to obtain knowledge? The rationalists argued that the correct method was to start from the mind, evolving the world's rational structure from it: the deductive method. The empiricists held that the best method was to start from experience, developing the world's structure by abstraction from it: the inductive method. In both cases the method used is the truth-function of knowledge; for it is through the respective method that knowledge is constituted as a theory, thus becoming a meaningful and intelligible truth-perspective.



University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

From the methodological point of view, the dispute on knowledge between rationalists and empiricists revolved about the question of the best method of overcoming the conflict between reason and experience. This conflict experience seems to be basic, for it constitutes a problem with which every philosopher has had to struggle. While the rationalists sought to overcome this problem by subordinating experience to analytical judgement, e.g., Descartes' self-evident ideas of the mind or Wolff's principle of sufficient reason, thus evolving the world's structure by the deductive method, the empiricists moved in the opposite direction. Locke, for instance, abstracted his concepts from experience, developing them from simple ideas, which, by the process of compounding, were synthesized into simple modes, complex ideas and mixed modes. It was in terms of the synthetical judgement that he moved from probable to demonstrative (in this sense rationally certain) knowledge. With Hume, the synthesis of ideas (sense-impressions) was based not on reason (except in mathematics) but on the association of sense-impressions by habit and belief, in accordance with man's natural disposition. Kant combined the method of the rationalists and that of the empiricists by his transcendental

method: the construction of the phenomena and the categories through space and time in terms of the synthetical judgement *a priori*. By subjecting experience to rational judgement, it received a rational structure. This restored to knowledge the character of rational necessity, at the same time confining it to the world of space and time (experience).

In all those attempts to cope with the conflict of reason and experience, the constitution of knowledge represented a methodological act, which started from different premises: reason, experience and the synthesis of reason and experience. By this methodological act, various theories of knowledge were developed, which entered into a critical relationship, thus into dispute, with one another. The method by which the respective theory was constituted lent it intelligible form, thus rendering it meaningful and representing it as a truth-perspective. It was its intelligibility and meaningfulness that made intelligent and meaningful argument on knowledge possible.

Although controversial and contingent, a theory, on account of its intelligible and meaningful character, has a universal dimension. For whether there is agreement or disagreement on it, in both cases understanding the theory is a prerequisite. Otherwise, no meaningful argument is possible. Such argument presupposes the mutual understanding of one another's truth-perspective. Although the various truth-perspectives reflect different *logoi*, the *Logos* emerges in the critical relationship holding between *logoi* (truth-perspectives) as the truth of not-knowing *the Truth*. In rational terms, therefore, we arrive at a *docta ingorantia*, while, in empirical terms, the critical relationship forms the epistemological limit of our truth-perspectives. This means that their controversial character prevents them from comprehending *the Truth* and refers them to one another in continuing argument about the knowledge of truth.

In rational (logical) terms, the *Logos* transcends man's grasp, who can only conceive multiple *logoi*. But the fact that scientific theories, which reflect the respective *logoi*, are universally understood points to the *Logos*, that is *the Truth*, the existence of which is presupposed, as is proved by man's continuing quest for it, as a result of which the various truth-perspectives in the individual sciences are constituted and

reconstituted in the face of changing historical conditions. There are thus in the continuing scientific argument of truth features that make intelligent and meaningful argument possible. On the other hand, it is precisely the critical relation obtaining between truth-perspectives, that keeps the scientific argument on the knowledge of truth going.

In epistemological terms, the critical relationship, which is experienced as conflict by man and his fellow-man, points to the polemical and controversial character of scientific theories, to the fact that they call each other in question. In view of this state of affairs, the knowledge of absolute truth is impossible. The world can be known only in the form of changing truth-perspectives, through critical insight and argument. These truth-perspectives are further related to the historical conditions of the time, under which they are conceived. The particular conflict experience and specific needs arising from it in a certain historical situation are an incentive and furnish evidence for the constitution of a scientific theory, in terms of which the specific conflicts and problems are overcome. The scientific theory reflects, in a definite form, these conflicts and the need for overcoming them.

The epistemological limit that emerges from the critical relationship holding between truth-perspectives means that this relationship reflects man's basic conflict experience and his need for overcoming it, which forms the epistemological incentive: the striving for knowledge. The realization of the epistemological limit of human knowledge, the insight that the world can be known only in the mode of changing truth-perspectives, means that the concept of knowledge changes with the times. Therefore, the epistemological argument continues, preventing a particular human truth-perspective from being regarded as absolute and its specific hypotheses as *the Truth*. As has already been pointed out, the absolutization of any truth-perspective, of whatever nature, would terminate scientific argument as well as the gaining of fresh insights and the conception of new ideas as a result of it. The absolutization of a particular truth-perspective would turn the open critical epistemological process, which moves with the changing circumstances of life, into a hard and fast ideology that freezes the dynamics of life (reality) and is foreign to it.

It is precisely because man is involved in this dynamics of life and is an integral part of it, so that his experience of reality is contingent,

that scientific knowledge is man-made that, in the face of contingent experience, it has to be constituted and re-constituted in methodological form, for the purpose of rendering the world meaningful, thus true, for him. It is in this sense that method is the truth-function of knowledge. The leading of a meaningless existence is unbearable to man; hence the methodological constitution of knowledge as an intelligible theory, thus truth-perspective, is vital to him. It is this methodological man-madness of knowledge that raises the question of its objectivity and verifiability. With reference to this question, it emerges from the discussion on method as the truth-function of knowledge that the man-madness of knowledge does not mean that human knowledge has no objective aspects which can be verified within the methodological concept. On the contrary, this is precisely what happens. The statement that man constitutes and reconstitutes his scientific theories from his contingent experience of reality points towards such an objective reality that exists outside his mind, in the sense that it cannot be conceptualized, but in the light of which all conceptualizations are called in question. The subjective factor then, enters by the act of methodological constitution of knowledge from man's basic experience of reality as theory: as a truth-perspective. The methodological constitution of such intelligible form as an act of rationalization of man's contingent experience always takes place from a certain situation, which determines his consciousness of existence. In the process of cognition, the first and basic situation is the perceptive relation in which he stands to his particular surroundings. Impressions of moving and changing bodies, events, colours, sounds, touches and tastes fill his mind, which is, in the first instance, receptive to this objective material. These various sense-impressions cause him to become aware of himself as a self, as a being existing apart from the world that exists outside his mind. For these sense-impressions suggest a world, which, in this sense, is transcendent, as such objective. But it is precisely his becoming conscious of existing apart from the objective world that he feels himself a subject that is confronted with an object. In other words, man becomes conscious of the subject-object relation after the impressions invading his mind have been arranged by man's rational disposition into meaningful spatial and temporal fields of order. Such rational ordering, arranging and constituting, even on individual, private level, take place from a particular position, yielding a particular point of view or truth-perspective.

By rationally ordering the world, making it meaningful to himself, man projects himself into it and humanizes it. In so doing, he adjusts his surroundings to himself, in accordance with his particular needs, interests, inclinations, aspirations, hopes, expectations and imaginations. Every child, every individual moulds for himself such a private world, which, even as a dream-world, affords him the gratification of his wishes and desires, at least to a certain extent, thus giving him the feeling of selfhood as well as a certain degree of comfort and peace of mind (happiness). This clearly illustrates the existential (practical) significance of man's self-projection into the world. Apart from this self-projection on an individual private level, man projects himself into his environment on the public level of his various cultural activities. This happens by means of a rationally conceived method in the natural sciences, the humanities, the arts and theology. The term *discipline*, by which these fields of order are often designated, implies that they are purposeful, rationally controlled creations of the mind.

For the constitution of knowledge in the various cultural fields, the meaningful constitution of the world on individual level is a presupposition. By an act of apperception, man weaves into a meaningful pattern the objects by which he is surrounded, such as mountains, streams, plants, animals, buildings, or events such as rain and thunderstorms, as well as historical, cultural, social and political events. His way of thinking and outlook on the world is further moulded by his upbringing, the education he received, the world of cultural, social and political norms and values he was born into, etc. This adds to the subjective component in the constitution of truth-perspectives on a more public level. It also brings into play the historical perspective, namely, the changing historical conditions from which truth-perspectives, of whatever nature, in whatever field of cultural activity: the natural sciences or the humanities, are constituted.

All these various aspects in the constitution of knowledge being taken into account, the crystallization of objective and subjective factors becomes evident in this process. It has already been shown how, in the natural sciences, under changing historical conditions, the attempt is made to trace the causal relations between natural phenomena and to constitute them as "laws" stated as scientific formulae or, especially in contemporary physics, as mathematical equations. In

this way, the attempt is made to deepen our insight into atomic events and relations in the hope of striking firm ground again, from which the world can be explained. It would appear, however, that, in the process of this attempt, we are stopped by unresolvable *aporias*, which become manifest by the various controversial theories or truth-perspectives that are postulated with regard to a certain matter, e.g., the wave-particle aspect of the electron in contemporary physics, the question about the world's first cause in metaphysics, the problem of the universal validity of truth in logic, etc. It is Plato,<sup>1</sup>) who, in his *Parmenides*, makes Socrates show the inevitability of *aporias* in philosophical reflection.

In the various philosophical branches the riddle of the universe, of man and the meaning of human existence are explored. From various types of human experience truth-perspectives are constituted for this purpose, under changing historical conditions. In epistemology, the origin, extent and degree of certainty of human knowledge are investigated. In metaphysics, an attempt is made to grasp the *real ground* of and *sufficient reason* for the world and to solve the problem of the relationship between the finite world of becoming and the infinite world of Being. In axiology, the nature and grounds of human valuation and judgement are explored, either in the ethical or aesthetic field, the two being closely connected with each other. In logic, the truth and falsehood and the logical validity of our statements are enquired into, as well as the problem of their verification, often with reference to epistemological statements. Apart from being regarded in a scientific or philosophical perspective, the world may also be viewed in terms of theological categories, such as God's relationship to man and world, God's revelation in the world, faith in God's word as revealed in the scriptures or in terms of the interpretation of the world and man's existence in the world by taking one's point of departure either from God as the world's creator or from the intelligibility, purposefulness and goodness of the world as evidence for the existence of such a creator or architect. The various truth-perspectives that are constituted under changing historical conditions will be discussed in the chapter entitled "The Hermeneutics of the Philosophy-Theology Relationship".

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. F M Cornford, *Plato and Parmenides*.

That there are both objective and subjective aspects in the methodological constitutions of knowledge emerges from the fact that scientific theories or truth-perspectives are conceived from man's contingent experience of reality and the critical relationship into which scientific theories or truth-perspectives enter as a result of this experience, which they reflect. The objective aspect of man's contingent experience consists in the fact that it is the basic common experience of man and the other. In this sense it is universal. On rational level, the same holds true in that scientific truth-perspectives constituted from that experience enter into a critical relationship with each other, which is experienced by man and his fellow-man as natural conflict. It is on the grounds of the critical relationship as an experience of natural conflict that the critical argument on truth continues, this continuity showing philosophy as a *philosophia perennis*.

The subjective aspect in the methodological constitution of knowledge from man's basic contingent experience of reality consists in the fact that such constitution takes place under changing historical conditions, experienced by man as specific conflicts and needs arising from them. As the experience of conflict in a specific historical situation gives rise to various interpretations and ideas of overcoming it, it follows that it yields the postulation of various theories or truth-perspectives. The critical relationship these various theories or truth-perspectives enter into highlights their problematic and controversial character. It is the latter that illustrates their subjective character. The subjective character is emphasized by the fact that the critical relationship between truth-perspectives engenders a continuing argument about truth, which constitutes the history of human thinking and the world as a multiversum of human truth-perspectives in a state of continuous becoming. The very concepts of method, theory and truth-perspective imply the subjective character of human knowledge.

Closely linked with the question of the objectivity and subjectivity of human knowledge is the problem of the verifiability of human experience. The question of verifiable propositions represents the main problem of neo-positivistic approaches such as logical positivism and Popper's critical rationalism. The principle of verification, which in logical positivism reads: *The meaning of a proposition is the method of its verification*, is modified by Popper's principle of *falsifiability* of scientific

theory: that a theory is scientific only if it is open to falsification by the discovery of new scientific data. Finally, the argument about the calculus of logical truth leads to Quine's argument that it is not the subject which determines the ontological status of a statement but the variables. This approach yields a new form of nominalism, which is the opposite to that of Hume. Quine's argument seeks to refute the attempts made by logical positivism to arrive at a neutral (objective) version of language. It can thus be seen that the age-old argument on universals, which had its point of departure in Plato's and Aristotle's philosophy, respectively, found expression in the realism of Anselm of Canterbury and the nominalism of Roscellin of Compiègne in the Middle Ages, with various conceptualist versions in between (as those of Abelard and Thomas Aquinas), and continued in the conceptualism of Duns Scotus and the nominalism of William Occam (Occam's razor), is still in full swing today, if in a different form. Logical positivism followed Hume's lead in distinguishing between statements of fact and statements of reason (relations between sense-impressions and relations between ideas). Following Wittgenstein's logical atomism in the *Tractatus*, it adopted a more logically orientated version of the same view. Experience can be resolved in its ultimate constituents: immediate, incorrigible sensory observations of which the observer's language consists. Therefore propositions expressing knowledge are similarly reducible to elementary propositions, corresponding one-to-one to actual or possible events of sense-experience. The relation between elementary and complex propositions is truth-functional and not a matter of adding something more. In logic and mathematics, the same holds true. There, the propositions merely regulate formal relationships between symbols. They have no content and say nothing about the world. It is interesting to note what Hans Reichenbach has to say with reference to Russell about the ultimately controversial (subjective) character of symbolic logic:<sup>1</sup> "But symbolic logic has not always bestowed success on the logician. It has also led into difficulties which were discovered by Russell and formulated in the antinomies of the theories of classes".

It is not surprising that Russell's and Whitehead's attempt in *Principia Mathematica* to solve the problem of the truth-calculus (veri-

---

<sup>1</sup> *The Rise of Scientific Philosophy*, p. 224.

fication) and objectivity not in terms of experience but in terms of logical reasoning has failed. This attempt consists in the investigation of the *à priori* and generally valid conditions for all possible worlds. Its conclusions are therefore valid for our actual world as for any other, which we can possibly think of. It is a new attempt at establishing the world's logical conditions, the first being that of R. Lull's *Ars Generalis* (1289).<sup>1</sup> Lull knows practically all laws of a general combinatoric: permutation, substitution, repetition, elimination. If Lull's 9 elected absolute principles are stated in terms of the capitals B-K, which as attributes of God are identical with God's essence (A), Leibniz's *Ars Combinatoria*<sup>2</sup>) emphasizes the concept of number for metaphysics. Still in his later life he pursues the idea of a *mathesis universalis*, according to the equation: *cogitare = calculare*.<sup>3</sup>) Leibniz's *Ars Combinatoria* was based on his conception of logic, which he shared with Aristotle, namely that all propositions are of a subject-predicate form.

To Russell and Whitehead, mathematical and logical propositions are relational judgments. The *Principia Mathematica* enquires into the basic axioms of formal logic, from which all mathematics can be deduced. The new logic is directed against Kant's synthetical judgements *apriori*, which were derived from his conception of mathematics as synthetical in a pure form, as the pure science of space and time. According to Russell and Whitehead, mathematics is not synthetical but analytical.

The subjective character of Russell's and Whitehead's approach manifests itself in various ways. It reveals itself in the failure, acknowledged by Russell himself, of arriving at objective logical axioms from which the world, and all possible worlds for that matter, can be constituted. It becomes evident from the various views of logic, that of Leibniz, Kant, Russel and Whitehead, within the context of which the various world theories and truth-perspectives are constituted. Last but not least, the subjective character of Russell's and Whitehead's approach consists in the fact that symbolic logic or metalogik, in terms of

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. E W Platzek, *Forschung der letzten 15 Jahre zum Lesen und zur Deutung der Lehren R. Lulls*.

<sup>2</sup> CF. "Dissertatio de arte combinatoria" (1666) in: *Fragmente zur Logik*.

<sup>3</sup> CF. *Fragmente zur Logik*.

which logical paradoxes between mathematical propositions are to be overcome, is itself controversial. As an investigation of human reason by human reason, it remains a critique of reason and, as such, is of transcendental character. We are thus back at Kant. Moreover, the constitution of a metalogic as a product of human rational thinking cannot escape the "laws" of logical reasoning. In order to be valid it requires a certain frame of reference, certain basic norms or axioms from which its validity is derived.

So far, as Reichenbach has also pointed out, no neutral symbolic metalanguage and, as Quine has shown, no universally valid analytical judgements have been achieved. All the attempts to do so are themselves subject to various methods of human reasoning. Thereby, the methodological constitutive character of logical truth is clearly manifest. The man-made, in this sense subjective, character of logic is shown by the fact that all logical systems are controversial, as is any other truth-perspective. As in all other cases, man is capable of conceiving logical theories only in accordance with the prevailing *Zeitgeist*. In doing so, he starts from different premises, which, on closer analysis, originate from his particular experience of conflict under specific historical conditions. Man is therefore incapable of comprehending a universal *Logos* asserted to be by all. The *Logos* is out of his reach. He can only constitute *logoi*: logical theories, thus truth-perspectives. This thesis is confirmed by the fact that the argument on logical truth, just like the argument on other types of human truth, continues under changing historical conditions.

With reference to modern logic, it must be pointed out that it is true that the necessary relationship of propositions can be demonstrated, but their independent existence cannot be demonstrated. What the mind conceives are processes of reasoning. Symbolic language may reflect this reasoning, may, to some extent, even objectivize it, so that we can look at it as in a mirror, in this sense perceive it. But even then it remains doubtful whether an accurate picture of it is obtained, if it is considered that even symbolic logic is problematic. It stands to reason that the investigation of our reason by our reason in terms of symbolic language derived from our processes of reasoning constitutes a cycle of the self. This becomes clear when it is realized that logistics is nothing but a logic of logic, a metalogic. There is nothing that can verify

reason but reason itself, so that we are back at square one. A logic of logic remains subject to the "laws" of logic. In order to be valid, it requires a framework of reference, as do all man-made theories. Therefore, it cannot but remain problematic and controversial, in this sense subjective.

A new framework of reference for the constitution of logical truth has been worked out by Willard Quine with regard to his new theory of nominalism. He rejects the verification principle of the logical positivists and denies the possibility of a neutral common language based on it. Not only does he challenge the validity of Kant's famous distinction, in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, between analytical judgement and synthetical judgement, but he also rejects the attempts of the logical positivists (Carnap)<sup>1</sup> to arrive at a more precise definition of "analytic" by the introduction of artificial languages and semantic rules.<sup>2</sup> He does so by pointing to the problems arising from the attempts at defining logical truth in terms of the formula: *The meaning of a proposition is the method of its verification*. In conformity with his belief that formal logic is not ontologically neutral, since a system of logic commits us to accepting the existence of some distinctive sorts of entities (concrete individuals or abstract entities such as classes and attributes), the criteria for determining the ontological status of a proposition consists not in proper names but rather in the types of variables (properties contained in a proposition). For these variables substitutes can be posited. It is this reversal of the criterion for the ontological status of propositions which makes Quine a new kind of nominalist. This reversal of the criterion means that the truth or falsehood of propositions are determined by open, changeable systems of ontologically significant variables.

By changing the ontological status of truth from the logical positivists' principle: *The meaning of a proposition is the method of its verification*, to the new principle: *To be is the value of a variable*, Quine seeks to avoid the difficulties that emerge from a theory such as Russell's Theory of Definite Descriptions, which has, in turn, been criticized by P.F. Strawson. By his new approach to establishing logical truth, Quine has demonstrated the latter's variable and contingent character.

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. *Der logische Aufbau der Welt*, Weltkreisverlag, Berlin, 1928.

<sup>2</sup> CF. "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", in: H D Lewis, *Clarity Is Not Enough*, ch. IV, pp. 110-132.

Arguing that the meaning of a proposition is derived from open, variable systems of different ontological status, he reverses the position in such a way that the attempt to reach neutral and universally valid logical truth is abandoned and that logical argument revolves about the constitution and reconstitution of logical truth from these open, variable systems. Quine's new method means that the relative character of logical reasoning and the tendency of logical truth to change are acknowledged. However, in the face of the hypothesis that logical truth is unchangeable and non-contradictory and given the fact of man's striving and searching for such a truth, his nominalistic method of constituting and reconstituting logical truth from open systems of variables cannot escape being called in question. This is so, because the conception of universal principles in logic as well as in other scientific fields, from which principle the world's structure can be derived, is of existential significance to man. If anything can be described as objective in a certain sense of the word, it is the universal observation of man's incessant efforts to grasp the Truth. The paradox is that the method by which he constitutes it yields only truth-perspectives, which are of both subjective and objective significance. The critical relationship into which they enter spells out the truth of man's not-knowing the Truth.

University of Fort Hare

*Together in Excellence*

As far as the logical positivists' principle of verification is concerned, it must be pointed out that this principle is itself a hypothesis which cannot be proved. It cannot itself be verified and its truth and falsehood cannot be established. In terms of the logical positivists' own theory, it is no proposition at all, therefore meaningless. Since the logical positivists realized that general propositions, such as "natural laws", are in principle unverifiable, they declared them not propositions but directions for making observations or hypotheses capable of confirmation as a thesis and, to that extent, legitimate for science. In view of the difficulty of establishing exhaustively the validity of a proposition, Alfred Ayer proposed a distinction between strong and weak forms of the verification principle.<sup>1</sup>) This proposal proved a failure because it led to endorsing the validity of metaphysical statements, which, according to the doctrine of the logical positivists, were meaningless.

---

<sup>1</sup> *CF. Language, Truth and Logic.*

From the above, it again emerges that absolute truth, in the sense of universal validity, objectivity and immutability, truth that is what it is through itself and cannot be otherwise, in brief: everlasting and infinite truth, is beyond man's ken. The conclusion must be drawn that, from various types of human experience, theories of knowledge or truth-perspectives of empirical or rational nature are methodologically constituted. They are controversial, thus causing the argument on truth to continue in the various scientific fields. This results in the continued exploration of the respective types of experience for the purpose of acquiring knowledge. In the light of the historical dimension of this argument, the verification of human experience happens through method as the truth-function of knowledge, as that which leads to theory intelligible form. The theory is subjective, in the sense that it is constituted from a certain type of human experience, in a specific historical situation, assuming a controversial nature as a result of it. It is objective, in the sense that, as a whole, all theories are constituted under changeable historical conditions or circumstances of life: they are constituted from man's contingent experience of reality as the basic experience that is common to all men. The critical relationship into which theories enter and which points to contingent experience is experienced as natural conflict between man and his fellow-man.

University of Fort Hare  
Together in Excellence

As has already been pointed out, scientific theory of whatever type is also objective in that it is universally understood. It is through the very critical relationship holding between theories and through which they call each other in question that meaningful argument of truth becomes possible. Such argument, however, presupposes mutual understanding of each other's differentiated truth-perspectives. As has been stated before, from the critical relationship obtaining between scientific theories, which represent individual (subjective) *logoi*, the universal objective *Logos* emerges. *In summa*, it may be said that the dynamics of the argument on truth as a process of human thinking on the grounds of man's contingent experience of reality reflects both subjective and objective features.

In the light of this process, the problem of true and false cannot be treated in the ordinary sense of the word. For the question of true and false can be conclusively answered only within the context of a methodologically constituted theory or truth-perspective. From what has

been said before, it should have become evident that, for the purpose of answering this question, a specific framework of reference is required. For example, the answer of truth and falsehood in logical positivism can be given only within the context of its analytical method and if the hypothetical principle of the ontological subject's verification is accepted. That verification in this sense is not accepted by all logicians has been shown with reference to Quine. The controversial nature of the analytical method of establishing the calculus of logical truth from "meaningful" propositions, in terms of a reductionistic procedure: the conversion of philosophy as a reflective, transcendental discipline — as theory — into an analytical activity of tracing the functional relations between words, emerges from the realization that it is itself historical and contingent — thus questionable.

It should be borne in mind that the critical outlook on (transcendental) philosophical theories by analytical philosophy is itself inspired by life's changing conditions. In taking a critical stance vis à vis constitutive philosophy, analytical philosophy is proved a child of the times. Like other philosophical theories, therefore, it has a historical dimension in that it enters with explanatory reflective and constitutive theories into a critical relationship. It is the offspring of the functionalistic climate of the age, which has been created by the rapid growth and expansion of the natural sciences and technology — the technological revolution in the present age and man's functional needs and interests emerging from it. The claim, therefore, of a number of its representatives that it is the only valid, scientific philosophy<sup>1</sup>) results in an uncritical — therefore unscientific — functionalism and scientism, the totalitarian stance of which springing from the absolutization of one particular human experience, need and method: the scientific one, and its daughter: the technological (functional) one.

The controversial subjective character of its truth-perspectives consists in the fact that analytical philosophy is itself split into a number of language theories, which call each other in question. Noam Chomsky, as one, has designated analytical philosophy's functionalistic approach to language as the mere tip of an iceberg. He has pointed out the multi-dimensional character of language. Linking up

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. H Reichenbach, *the Rise of Scientific Philosophy*.

with thinkers such as René Descartes and Wilhelm von Humboldt — thus with philosophical idealism — he criticizes the one-sidedness of both logical positivism with its artificial metalanguage and linguistic analysis with its intuitive approach to natural speech. Chomsky's approach to language consists in working out the structure of natural language, distinguishing between "deep and surface structure".<sup>1)</sup>

It stands to reason that the various language theories of analytical philosophy render it itself reflective, transcendental and explanatory. For these theories constitute so many truth-perspectives, which are as problematic, critical and controversial as are any other philosophical theories, past and present. It is interesting to note that Walter Schulz<sup>2)</sup> points out the dubiousness of Wittgenstein's "language games" in the latter's *Philosophical Investigations*. He argues that Wittgenstein uses an extreme definition of language, by the criterion of which he judges the meaningfulness of all communication. Schulz draws attention to the primitive nature of Wittgenstein's conception of language and his utter failure to understand phenomena such as mind, reason, etc.

From what has been said, the thesis that true and false can conclusively be answered only within the context of a methodologically constituted theory or truth perspective is fully confirmed. In the light of the argument on truth as a continuing process of human thinking and dialogue, therefore, there can be no philosophical method that is more scientific than another. This can only be asserted if — as it is done by the logical positivists — "scientific" is understood in the narrow sense of the natural sciences rather than in the sense of the methodological constitution as theory of the various types of human experience. If, however, "scientific" is understood in the latter way — this being the meaning of the German word *Wissenschaft* and the adjective *wissenschaftlich* — then all theories methodologically conceived from a particular type of human experience in a specific historical situation are not equal — for they differ in quality and are controversial — but equivalent. That is so, because they are human self-projections into the world from man's contingent experience of reality, his basic conflict experience as a result of it and the human needs and interests arising

---

<sup>1)</sup> *Cartesian Linguistics*, pp. 31-51.

<sup>2)</sup> *Wittgenstein — Die Negation der Philosophie*, p. 70 ff.

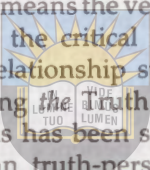
from it, which latter may be summed up by the human need for freedom, justice, authentic existence and peace of mind (happiness). Thus, the analytical philosophical method can claim to be more scientific than other philosophical theories only if by scientific is meant the uncritical and universal application of one particular method: that of the natural sciences and their offsprings: the statistics of functional relations (even between men) and technology. The experience of functional relations both in natural and social events is certainly one important experience of reality, one important aspect of it and vital for human existence, but its one-dimensionality cannot do justice to reality as a multi-dimensional experience. Its absolutization is one form of total self-transcendence, which harbours the danger of man's self-destruction, as shall be shown in detail later on.

In the light of the historical process of the argument on truth as a whole, all scientific truth-perspectives are true, as the very term "truth-perspective" suggests. They are true in the sense that they derive their meaning and validity from the verification of a particular type of methodologically constituted experience in a concrete historical situation. As links in a chain of the historical process of human thinking, they are constitutive components of the multiversum of truth-perspectives. By the critical relationship into which they enter with other truth-perspectives they contribute to the continuing argument on truth and facilitate the gaining of fresh insights. The critical relationship obtaining between truth-perspectives reflects critical and self-critical insight, the result of man's basic conflict experience, which he shares with his fellow-man and in terms of which he is referred to him in the argument on truth. This contingent experience is the source of the constitution of new truth-perspectives.

On the other hand, the very term "truth-perspective" implies a limit as well as the existence of other divergent truth-perspectives. The critical relation holding between truth-perspectives suggests, at the same time, an aspect of falsification as a necessary supplement to verification, without which no argument on truth would be possible. This is so, because the verification of a particular human experience under specific historical conditions by a methodologically constituted theory as a truth-perspective implies the negation — in this sense, falsification — of another theory or truth-perspective, reflecting an experience

under different historical conditions. In addition, the particular experience in a particular historical situation, such as the experience of cultural decadence in the 19th century, might be interpreted in various ways, so that different conclusions are drawn from it, as is shown by the divergent theories of Kierkegaard, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche.

In the 20th century, it would be the existentialist thinkers (Jaspers, Heidegger, Sartre), but also the advocates of Critical Theory (Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse, Habermas), who would develop divergent truth-perspectives from this experience. From the continuing argument on truth as a process of becoming, the paradox emerges that, in the light of man's contingent experience of reality and the interplay of theory and practice as a result of it, the verification of a certain truth-perspective means the falsification of another, while the falsification of a certain truth-perspective means the verification of another. This process is clearly reflected in the critical relationship holding between truth-perspectives. This relationship suggests a *docta ignorantia*: the truth of man's not-knowing the truth. At the same time the Logos emerges from it, which, as has been shown, is discernible from the universal aspect of human truth-perspectives, which affords their being universally understood, without which meaningful argument on truth would not be possible.



University of Fort Hare  
Together in Excellence

## METHODOLOGY AND TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE

### 1. The Transcendental Character of Scientific Theory

It has emerged from previous discussions that the various types of knowledge as they are methodologically constituted as theories from the various types of human experience are historical truth-perspectives, which change on the grounds of man's contingent experience of reality. In this chapter, some of these types of knowledge will be discussed in greater detail for the purpose of reaffirming the truth of this statement. The attempt will be made to show differences and similarities of these human constitutions and conceptualizations. Fundamentally, they differ from each other, because they are conceived from different types of experience and under changing historical conditions. However, as theories that are constituted by some method or another, they are all transcendental, in so far as they are products of human reasoning and conceptualization. To this, the contemporary philosophical alternatives, despite protestations to the contrary, are no exception, as will be shown presently.

It has been established that, as truth-perspectives of their respective field of investigation, theories of knowledge are the result of man's continual question about truth, which he posits under changing historical conditions. As soon, however, as we ask the question: What is truth?, the controversial nature of this concept is realized and we become aware of the problems that emerge. For it is evident that truth has many aspects. Even in more general terms, scientific truth can be distinguished from historical truth, to quote an example. How are the two types of truth usually distinguished from each other? The answer is: by the different kinds of material or data investigated in each of these two disciplines and the different methods employed in exploring these data and rationally constituting them. For it does make a difference, whether, at such rational constitution, we deal with physical phenomena, as do the natural sciences, or with the human affairs of past and present, as does history. In order to gain rational insight into those two

different kinds of data, we must start from different questions, if we wish to obtain a rational answer in each respective field of enquiry. In other words, to obtain a meaningful answer, we must ask a meaningful question. But the meaningfulness of our question is conditioned by our specific experience of the historical situation in which we find ourselves; and as historical conditions are changeable, it follows that the meaningfulness or sense of our question is changeable as well. This holds true for both scientific truth and historical truth.

The gaining of rational insight into the data of the respective field of enquiry as well as the constitution and reconstitution of these respective data as theories under changing historical conditions and changing underlying questions and assumptions are what all scientific theories of whatever type have in common: be it those of the natural sciences, of history or theology. In this sense, it may be said that all knowledge originates in man's own rational nature. As methodologically constituted theory it is *perspectival*. In that it depends on the field of enquiry selected by him, the questions asked and assumptions made by him with reference to his particular field of enquiry and the method employed by him in order to arrive at certain conclusions: certain conceptualizations of the data investigated, a theory constituted by the mind or a truth-perspective, which renders all human knowledge conceptual, thus transcendental. In this sense, truth of whatever kind is always man-made; for it is man who constructs it methodologically. In other words, in so doing, he keeps moving within the cycle of his own self. He starts from himself, he projects his self into his surroundings or into the past and he adjusts those surroundings, or the past, to himself. It is in this way that he grasps them and, by so doing, disposes of them and humanizes them, at least to some extent.

From this, the general conclusion can be drawn that the knowledge of *the Truth* is inaccessible to man and that the truth-perspectives which he conceives under changing historical conditions and circumstances of life — in brief, from his contingent experience of reality — are the outcome of a certain constitutional act motivated by this experience. In this sense, the relationship between man and the world, subject and object is a functional one. The world becomes a human world, a world of the human mind, thus transcendental. Through the rational constitution of the human surroundings in whatever field of human

experience: in the natural sciences, technology, history, philosophy and theology, in terms of a definite method, subject and object become merged or, to state it differently, man's environment reflects his own self, i.e., his interests, needs and aspirations. It is the impression upon the world of man's own stamp which we call civilization, and it is only so far as he is able to do this that he controls the world and disposes of it. In other words, man knows and can demonstrate only that which he has rationally constituted himself as that which he has "grasped" in terms of concepts: that which is transcendental. Anything else is beyond his ken. Thus, all human knowledge represents a functional cycle of the human self, in the sense that he projects his own self into his surroundings under particular circumstances and, then, looking at himself as in a mirror, explains his authentic existence. It follows that man can actually only prove himself.

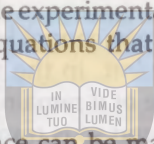
This is the reason why man cannot know the outside world as it is in itself. It remains *transcendent*, in the sense that it evades his final grasp, so that his knowledge of it remains restricted to methodologically conceived perspectives and so is transcendental, i.e., conceptual. Whatever new methods man may develop and whatever new concepts he may form, which yield new results, they remain *his* methods, experiments and concepts. Nothing shows more clearly the limitation and problematic nature of man's knowledge than the fact that he is obliged to constitute it methodologically and experimentally. Since the methodological constitution of knowledge proceeds in terms of reflective concepts of the mind, scientific theory is transcendental.

## 2. The Natural Sciences

### a) The Hermeneutics of their Functional Method

The modern natural sciences, especially physics, chemistry, physiology, but even botany and zoology, apply, to a large extent, the functional method. They enquire into the functions of inorganic and organic bodies. They investigate the functional relations between things and seek to establish causal laws by the standardization of these functions in statistical and mathematical terms. They thus call that true knowledge, which, under certain man-made experimental conditions, has been made to function and, in this way, has been brought under

the control of human reason. The truth of the natural sciences may thus, by a greater perfection of their functional (experimental) methods, afford us greater insight into how atoms function. They may do so by standardizing the functional relations of atomic events in terms of mathematical equations, which have only the value of probability, not of certainty. But they fail to tell us what an atom really is, whether it is material or immaterial, whether its energy is a vital force or an electrical force, whether it is an intelligent force or a blind force, in brief, whether it is spiritual or material. Physicists tell us *how* the atom, or its components, *probably* behaves under certain man-made conditions. Under these, they measure mathematically emissions of energy called electron, proton, neutron, positron. These concepts as well as the concept of the atom itself, do not stand for real things as things-in-themselves, but for functional processes or events, measured under certain man-made experimental conditions and constituted in terms of mathematical equations that possess the value of probability.<sup>1)</sup>



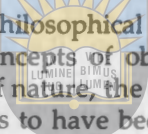
As an example, reference can be made to the electron's double nature, which also applies to the photons of light, as Einstein has shown. This means that it may be regarded as corpuscular or as a wave packet, which two natures become one by the mathematical equation, i.e., their unity is constituted by the mind. The problematic, subjective and man-made character of the electron's corpuscle-wave aspects discovered by L.-V de Broglie is described by Max Born with reference to Niels Bohr. Born<sup>2)</sup> elaborates on Bohr's teaching that two powers of a conjugated pair, such as time and energy, position and velocity, require, according to their respective definition, entirely different man-made apparatus, thereby emphasizing the importance of the knower (subject) for the known (object). Bohr calls the two respective concepts, and their respective metrical apparatus, complementary, not contradictory. Max Born's commentary on Bohr's view (for that is what it is) is that physics teaches the lesson that we must cease representing all aspects of a phenomenon by one type of observation and one system of concepts (theory). There are always at least two aspects of an event and we have to choose which of the two we prefer in each case. Here, Born

<sup>1</sup> Cf. W Heisenberg, "Planck's Discovery and the Philosophical Problems of Atomic Physics" as well as the discussion of his lecture, in: *On Modern Physics*, pp. 3-35.

<sup>2</sup> *Von der Verantwortung des Naturwissenschaftlers*, pp. 105-107.

points out, emerges clearly the subjective aspect of contemporary physics, and this leads to objections by many who are educated in the classical school of the natural sciences.

The importance of Bohr's idea of complementarity is seen by Born to consist in the possibility of explaining many things outside physics, for instance, in philosophy. It concerns pairs of concepts, such as matter and life, body and soul, necessity and freedom. It is about these apparently contradictory concepts that philosophical and theological controversy revolves. The reason for this is, according to Born, that the attempt is made to force everything into one system. If it is shown that this is impossible even in the "strictest" and "most simple" science, physics, that even there complementary reflections of different aspects are necessary, then the same is to be expected everywhere.



However from the philosophical point of view, there exist, as has been shown, several concepts of objectivity, apart from the direct knowledge of the laws of nature, the old ideal of the natural sciences, which, at present, seems to have become even more remote. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that philosophy is no exception to the other sciences as far as the constitution of its theories and truth-perspectives is concerned. It stands to reason that Niels Bohr's constitution of the electron's corpuscle-wave aspects and the conjugated pairs of concepts flowing from it in terms of complementarity, as well as the extension of this theory into the field of philosophy by Max Born, is another controversial truth-perspective. The solution of the wave-particle problem by the welding together into a unit of the contradictory concepts arising from it in terms of the theory of complementarity is thus as transcendental as is any other theory or truth-perspective.

From the previous discussions the contingent man-made character of human knowledge in the form of theories or truth-perspectives should have clearly emerged. It is evident from current atomic physics, as it is from any other natural or human science. In physics it emerges from the experience of the atom's dynamic nature. Everything appears to be in constant flux, so that the physical forms constituted from this experience are blurred and blended into each other. The same holds true for the other contradictory truths man constitutes in the various fields of his contingent experience of reality. By this process, an old

truth is negated and replaced by a new one. Contemporary atomic physics reveals the unpredictable character of events, in the light of which human truth must be reconstituted over and over again. Heisenberg writes:

When a simple hydrogen atom is considered and its collision with an electron is studied, a disturbance in the hydrogen atom is observed. The classical physicists believed this collision occurred in a completely analogous manner to that which would have been produced between planet and comet. In more modern physics the result of this collision is nevertheless not completely predictable, even though it depends on initial conditions. There exists one probability of finding an electron in the excited hydrogen atom, another of finding the nucleus deprived of its electron. And these probabilities are fixed and cannot be modified. The hydrogen atom that is found after the collision is, however, no longer exactly what it was before. It is in fact known that, when an interaction contains enough energy, there exists the probability that the hydrogen is not found again, but instead something completely different is found.<sup>1)</sup>

University of Fort Hare

Together in Excellence

That is why Heisenberg comes to the conclusion that what is found "as a result of an interaction, of any action, is not always objects, but forms — forms of that energy which is the fundamental basic material of modern physics, capable of taking different forms in which we recognize objects".

Erwin Schrödinger has demonstrated both the constitutional, therefore man-made, character of these forms as well as the problems arising from them. He has demonstrated their perspectival character. As each energy quantum can be viewed as a wave within other waves but each wave also as a particle, the question of identity of a particle or wave is raised. Schrödinger<sup>2)</sup> does not believe in considering single particles a well-defined permanent reality, because from the "fleeting picture of the 'wave packet' it is easily possible to infer the famous Heisenberg uncertainty principle. . . Even if this uncertainty is small —

---

<sup>1</sup> "Discussion of the Lecture of Werner Heisenberg", entitled: "Planck's Discovery and the Philosophical Problems of Atomic Physics", in: *On Modern Physics*, pp. 30-31.

<sup>2</sup> "Our Image of Matter", in: *On Modern Physics*, pp. 51-52.

and it certainly is not — it follows from it that it is never possible to observe the same principle twice with apodictic certainty”.

Another reason for this belief is this:

When *we* are dealing *theoretically* with two or more particles of the same type, for example, with the two electrons of a helium atom, we must *efface their identity*, otherwise the results will simply be untrue and not agree with experience. We must count two situations which differ only by an exchange of roles by the electrons not only as equal — that would be obvious — but we must count them as one and the same. If we count them as two equals, it becomes nonsensical.<sup>1)</sup>

But Schrödinger has conditioned his argument by saying “When *we* are dealing *theoretically* with two or more particles of the same type. . .”. Here the man-made methodological character of his “solution” of the corpuscle-wave problem becomes apparent. For this is nothing but the constitution of man’s contingent experience as an immanent (transcendental) truth. It is *we* who must efface the identity of the two electrons of a helium atom, so that *our* mathematical constructions agree with *our* experience which, in the light of the same mathematical results, is *regarded* as the same experience. It is then by mathematical construction that two situations become one and we arrive at the truth. But is it so in reality?.

Schrödinger himself speaks of *two* electrons. And he himself admits that the single particle still plays a part in the “representation, deliberations, discussions and writings of most theoreticians”<sup>2)</sup> and that we cannot do without individuality from the linguistic point of view. In order to do justice to a certain individuality that is experienced in the dynamics of atomic events, Schrödinger regards electrons as temporary creations within the wave field, whose structure and structural variety are so clearly and sharply determined by means of *wave laws* as they recur always in the same manner, that much takes place *as if they* were permanent material reality. The hypothetical character of

---

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 51-52.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

Schrödinger's concept of "wave laws" as the constituent factor of his truth-perspective on the corpuscle-wave problem has already been pointed out previously.

The conclusion that can be drawn from this discussion of various theories in contemporary atomic physics is that these controversial views or truth-perspectives are constituted from a common conflict experience with regard to this scientific field. These representations of atomic events are therefore methodological constitutions of man's contingent experience of reality. They are immanent (transcendental) truths, the contradictory character of which sheds more light on man's controversial nature. The critical relationship into which these truth-perspectives enter with each other and which relationship is experienced as conflict by man and his fellow-man causes the argument about scientific truth to be carried on. It prevents them from regarding one particular theory or truth-perspective as *the Truth*, which would terminate all critical and self-critical insight — the hallmark of all true science — as the prerequisite of meaningful discussion, the conception of new ideas and the perception of new vistas of truth.

b) Logical Atomism and Dialectical Materialism — Two Opposite Approaches to the Natural Sciences.

The hermeneutics of the natural sciences becomes very clear by the various problems emerging from their various theoretical perspectives. There are the problems of reality, perception and knowledge, which can all be ranged under the problem of subjectivity and objectivity. That as theoretical constitution all knowledge is man-made and, in this sense, subjective has already been established. This truth is again confirmed by the two opposite methods of logical analytical atomism on the one hand and dialectical materialism on the other, which both strive for objectivity. However, their controversial nature reveals their subjective character.

(i) *Logical Atomism*

The problem of reality, with which Russell's logical atomism sought to cope, could be stated in terms of Moore's dualism of the objects of perception and the sense-data as described by means of everyday propositions. By clinging to the latter's truth, at least in

principle, Moore arrives at a mere nominalism especially as the concept of sense-datum is not clear either. If this result is applied to the natural sciences, which take objects of perception for granted, the problematic character of its statements becomes apparent. It is the objective character of scientific statements that Russel seeks to establish.

Russell<sup>1)</sup> tries to overcome the dualism of objects of perception and sense-data by declaring that the physical world — the world dealt with in physics — is given as real in the sense-datum. He argues that the *sensibilia* (physical objects) become *sense-data* in the mode of their givenness. It is as sense-data that the mind is aware of them. They do, however, not depend on being perceived by the mind or consciousness, but are only causally dependent on the body, brain and nerves of the percipient. All physical functions are thus transformed into a real, and the thing-in-itself has no real existence. It becomes a logical construction of the mind, a kind of universal which enables us to group together our perceptions under a name and so to economize. It serves as Occam's razor.

It is obvious, however, that the identity between physical objects, sense data and universal is constituted in terms of the method of logical atomism. This method begs the question of what the physical object really is by converting physical and mental processes into concurrent events. This is what Russel designates as *neutral monism*. This concept denotes the fleeting nature of reality, in the sense that event and perception become concurrent processes and the functional relation of events becomes the substance of the world. Space and time become space-time, and mind becomes matter and matter becomes mind. By the method of logical atomism, the world of microphysics has been projected into the world at large. The logistic proposition and the mathematical equation, which record the functional relations of events, constitute the meaningful world. They provide a world-view. However, the atomization of the world occurred at man's expense, in that his mind was itself dissected into a set of functional relations, so that he was effaced as an individual and as a person. The British astrophysicist, Sir Arthur Stanley Eddington, makes the following observation with regard to physics, whose atomistic picture had been pro-

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. *An Analysis of Matter*.

jected into the world by Russell's logical atomism:

We are clearly to realize that the world of ordinary experience or of daily life is *toto coelo* different from the world within which the investigations of the physicist proceed. The latter presents us with things utterly desubstantialized and dematerialized, a radical transmutation of their sensory qualitative content into purely quantitative measurements and derivatives of these. The physical world of electrons, atoms, quanta, events, movements, spatio-temporal continua, etc. is a mere realm of shadows or a skeleton of reality, divested of all the variegated manifoldness of life and under the domination of the grey formulas and symbols of mathematics. Here the disenchantment of the world has reached its culmination. If we translate some object of our environment into the language of physics, we are left with nothing but a 'set of pointer readings'. Where everything is measured, reckoned, counted, and weighed, there is no longer a place for the individual and the concrete.

This quotation implies that man is not a one-dimensional but a multi-dimensional being and that physics gives expression to one particular type of human experience constituted as theory by a certain method. The realization of man's multi-dimensionality is one of the cardinal points in our methodology of knowledge. In the face of present-day functionalism, it is of utmost importance. In view of this, we beg not to be misunderstood in our critical evaluation of the natural sciences. By no means is it this work's purpose to belittle their great accomplishments. I wish to make it very clear and place on record: in no way is this work to cast doubt upon the importance of the natural sciences and technology for our existence today. It is fully appreciated that modern society could not possibly do without them. Being multi-dimensional, man gives expression to his experience of the physical world in the same way as to other types of experience, so that the natural sciences in general and physics in particular are specific fields of his various cultural activities.

What this work is concerned about is not the natural sciences and technology as specific fields of human experience and enquiry but the

---

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from Rudolf Metz, *A Hundred Years of British Philosophy*, p. 732.

uncritical, thus unscientific, *cult* of the sciences and technology: scientism and technologism, which, fed by the *hubris* of economic and material progress, invites man's self-destruction, for which there is abundant evidence in western countries. One of the purposes of this methodology of knowledge is to put the individual sciences into perspective, thus restoring man's balance as a multi-dimensional being, so that the dire consequences of a totalitarian functionalism can be avoided and a break-through to reality can be achieved.

The previously quoted passage from Eddington made it clear that, with regard to physics, there is a gap between the world of functional relations constituted in quantitative terms and the qualitative variety of multi-dimensional reality. This same gap also exists in Russell's *neutral monism*. The method of logical atomism applied in his theory also concerns itself with functional relations between events under the control of logistic propositions and mathematical formulae. But even within the context of *neutral monism*, the gap between perception and reality, subject and object is bridged only in theory: by the constitution of the functional relations through logistic propositions and mathematical equations. The question still is whether the logistic propositions and mathematical equations constituting the functional relations between natural events represent reality as it is or as it appears to be in its being constituted by the mind.

Matters are aggravated if it is borne in mind that both logic and mathematics are also method-bound. Just as there are theories and systems of logic, so there are theories and models of mathematics. Thus, with regard to the natural sciences, too, the methodology of knowledge shows the constitutive character of knowledge and, in this sense, its man-madness. It once more demonstrates the controversial nature of all theory, to which the theories of the natural sciences are no exception. Therefore, in this particular field of human cultural activities, the argument on knowledge and truth continues just as it does in any other field of human cultural activity.

## (ii) *Dialectical Materialism*

Dialectical materialism concerns itself with the laws of the motion of matter from its lowest stages to its highest stage, the human mind.

This objective movement of matter is studied by the various sciences, both natural and social sciences. It allows therefore a classification of the sciences under the umbrella of the dialectical method, the principles of which are studied by Marxist-Leninist philosophy. Since dialectics means the interaction between subject (the human mind) and object (the various forms of matter) so that, again according to objective dialectical laws, the world can be explored and changed, thus being knowable in principle, science is both productive force and social force. Even if it is true that, in the German Democratic Republic, for example, the works published by Günter Kröber and Hubert Laitko on the methodological aspects of the theory and history of science are of the standard of the scientifico-theoretical and scientifico-historical debates conducted throughout the world, the methodological instrumentarium of dialectics is still the determining factor in these works. In his essay on the relationship of the forms of motion of matter B.M. Kedrow of the Soviet Union<sup>1</sup> links up with Friedrich Engels, to whose work, *Herrn Eugen Dührings Umwälzungen der Wissenschaft*, generally known as *Anti-Dühring*, dialectical materialism may be traced back. In this work, Engels defined dialectics as the science of the general laws of motion and development of nature, in history (society) and in human thinking. Lenin, then, in *Materialismus und Empiriokritizismus*, attempts to show that scientific laws are the reflection in our mind of the objective motion of matter, of its quantitative changes, which result in different qualitative structures and properties. From this premise, Lenin seeks to demonstrate that only dialectical materialism draws the correct philosophical conclusion from the modern developments in the natural sciences and that "empiriocriticism" (positivism and neo-Kantianism) fail to do so on account of their idealistic and subjective starting-point.

Thus, the problems of reality, perception and knowledge, which can be ranged under the problem of subjectivity and objectivity, are sought to be solved by the dialectical method. These problems as they emerge from the double aspect of the electron — the wave-particle aspect — are ascribed by the Marxist-Leninists to the "idealistic" approach of tracing the functional relations of the electron in an abstract

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. "Über das Verhältnis der Bewegungsformen der Materie in der Natur" in: *Philosophische Probleme der Modernen Naturwissenschaft*, pp. 120-188.

way. The importance of the dialectical method for the corpuscle-wave dichotomy — whereby these problems are overcome — is stated by W.A. Fock as follows:

Die in der Quantenphysik erreichte Lösung der Widersprüche zwischen der Wellen- und Korpuskelnatur des Elektrons, zwischen Wahrscheinlichkeit und Kausalität, zwischen der quantenmechanischen Beschreibung des atomaren Objekts und der klassischen Beschreibung des Messinstrumentes und schliesslich zwischen den Eigenschaften des individuellen Objekts und ihren statistischen Erscheinungen liefert eine Reihe anschaulicher Beispiele einer praktischen Anwendung der Dialektik auf Fragen der Naturwissenschaft. Das steht als Tatsache fest, unabhängig davon, ob die dialektische Methode bewusst oder unbewusst angewandt wurde. Die Errungenschaften der Quantenmechanik sind ein mächtiger Hebel für die Weiterentwicklung des dialektischen Materialismus. Die Einbeziehung der neuen Ideen in seine Schatzkammer erscheint uns als allerwichtigste Aufgabe der materialistischen Philosophie.<sup>1)</sup>

That Fock, in this passage, can show that quantum physics leads inevitably to the application of the dialectical method as the only one by which its contradictions can be reconciled must be attributed to the fact that he himself interprets quantum physics by the dialectical method. It is thus one perspective among other possible perspectives and rests on the unprovable assumption of objective, self-propelling matter, which moves from lower to higher stages, according to objective dialectical laws, in terms of which we perceive, think and act.

Thus the advocates of dialectical materialism hold that the crisis in modern physics must be traced to the abstraction of concrete experience from its objective source by the mathematical and operational description of atomic events. Already Lenin categorically rejects the claim of the positivists (Avenarius, Mach, Poincaré) to neutrality and objectivity and ridicules their belief that, by the concept of experience, they have overcome the contradiction between materialism and idealism, matter and mind. This attempt at objectivity and neutrality was

---

<sup>1</sup> "Über die Interpretation der Quantenmechanik", in: *Philosophische Probleme der Modernen Naturwissenschaft*, p. 206.

made by Russell later on, which became evident from his *neutral monism*, which was discussed earlier on. Lenin claims that the approach of the neo-Kantians and the positivists gets stuck in idealism. He writes:

Zu bedauern sind nur die Leute, die Avenarius und Co. geglaubt haben, dass man durch 'Erfahrung' die 'veraltete' Unterscheidung von Materialismus und Idealismus überwinden könne . . . Das Wort 'Erfahrung', auf dem die Machisten ihre Systeme aufbauen, diene schon seit langem zur Verhüllung der idealistischen Systeme und dient jetzt bei Avenarius und Co. dazu, den eklektischen Übergang vom idealistischen Standpunkt zum Materialismus zu ermöglichen und umgekehrt. Die verschiedenen 'Definitionen' dieses Begriffs drücken nur die beiden Grundlinien in der Philosophie aus (idealism and materialism), die Engels so glänzend aufgedeckt hat.<sup>1)</sup>

In the paragraph entitled "Die Krise der Physik",<sup>2)</sup> Lenin traces this crisis to the disappearance of matter as a result of the idealistic starting-point of the empiricists. That, basically, is still the position of the modern Marxist-Leninist thinkers, in terms of which they explain the contradictions arising from the corpuscle-wave aspect of the electron. Contrasting the positions of the positivists with that of the dialectical materialists concerning the problem of objectivity in general, we may say that the positivists strive to achieve their aim of gaining objective knowledge by the most economical description of man's experience, thus making use of William Occam's famous razor. The dialectical materialists, on the other hand, try to reach this aim by getting to know the objective laws of the motion of matter, as they are reflected in human consciousness. The dialectical interplay between changing nature and changing consciousness will eventually result in their convergence. Whereas the dialectical materialists accuse the positivists of subjectivism and idealism, which means that they are unscientific, the neo-positivists reply that the idea of objective, self-propelling matter is a metaphysical concept and an unverifiable assumption.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Materialismus und Empiriokritizismus*, pp. 144-146.

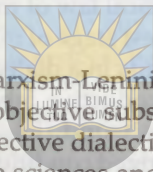
<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 251-257.

According to the Marxist-Leninist epistemologists, the mechanical piecemeal description of atomic events results in a stagnant confrontation of two aspects of one and the same event. They argue that the wave-particle aspects of the electron denote in reality two different states or properties of the same dynamics of self-propelling matter. The permanent motion of matter produces different states or properties of matter, which are dialectically related to one another. Were the independent existence of such objective, self-propelling matter admitted, the dialectical relationship between wave and particle would be comprehended, and the one phenomenon would no longer logically exclude the other. Thesis and antithesis would have their synthesis in the dialectical law of motion as such. The Marxist-Leninists insist on the scientific nature of this law, which becomes manifest in the natural sciences and in history, i.e., the changing economic, social and political structures. Since the dialectical law of motion is reflected in man's mind,<sup>1</sup>) which is itself the highest stage of matter, having evolved from its dialectical motion, man stands in a dialectical relationship with the world. Through the act of productive labour, he, according to the dialectical law, transforms the world, i.e., its economic, social and political conditions. These changed conditions, in turn, change him, or his consciousness, till, finally, the contradiction between man and nature, man and his fellow-man (society) has been overcome. Science and technology are seen as part of the productive process. They are instruments of bringing about social and political change to end all social conflict and to establish a just society. It emerges that the dialectical law of the motion of matter in Marxism-Leninism is both a law of nature and a law of history. Just as, on the one hand, the sciences develop historically, so, on the other, history — the process of man's changing his environment through labour, thus changing himself (his consciousness) — is scientific. It reflects the dialectical law of motion as a basic natural law. This explains the socio-historical aspect of the sciences as well as the scientific nature of history. It points to the dialectical relationship in which dialectical materialism and historical materialism stand to each other.

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. Lenin's Theory of Reflection, which is found in the various chapters (I,II,III), entitled: "Die Erkenntnistheorie des Empiriokritizismus und des Dialektischen Materialismus", in: *Materialismus und Empiriokritizismus*, pp. 31-190. Of special interest are Lenin's observations on the reflection in the human consciousness of the developing world, pp. 132, 262, 267, and the objective laws in cognition, pp. 150, 164-165.

If the dynamic motion of matter were accepted as an objective process, which is reflected in our mind as the dialectical laws of nature (which laws science is able to explore), problems such as the subject-object relationship, determinism and indeterminism, the thing-in-itself, matter, mass and energy would disappear. The problems of the absolute and the relative, the infinite and the finite, continuity and discontinuity would no longer be a puzzle to philosophers. Since, according to dialectical materialism, man's consciousness and action are subject to the dialectical laws of nature, it is only a question of time till the last riddles of the universe are resolved. By changing nature in correspondence with the laws of nature, man changes his consciousness accordingly. In changing nature, therefore, the laws of nature reveal themselves to man, so that he cannot fail to know them. Hence the optimistic character of Marxist-Leninist epistemology and its claim to infallibility.



The cosmic view of Marxism-Leninism is physicalistic in the sense that matter is seen as an objective substratum that, in the process of self-propulsion, obeys objective dialectical laws, which become manifest in the evolution of the sciences and history. From the theoretical point of view, all contradiction has been resolved by the ultimate identity of nature, man and society. The logic of dialectical materialism (diamat) and historical materialism (histomat) is of ontological significance. When the principle of identity is fulfilled, man leads an authentic existence, one in agreement with nature and his fellow-man (society).

It would, however, appear that an objective self-propelling matter is inaccessible to man's perception, that it is a speculative concept and, as such, a mere assumption (hypothesis). To say that it manifests itself as a dialectical law in the sciences and in history raises the question whether the conception of this law is not the result of methodological constitution, thus a subjective conception of the human mind. In other words, the question is whether the dialectical and historical materialists do not know the structure of the world and of history, because they have themselves constituted the world and history by the dialectical method. It stands to reason that the Marxist-Leninist conception of the world's and history's motion in terms of objective dialectical laws is another controversial theory or world-view.

### 3. History

#### a) The Meaning of History and its Interrelationship with the Natural Sciences

The science of history is founded on man's historical experience as one particular type of experience. This means that man has a historical consciousness, i.e., an awareness of his current socio-political position being conditioned by a string of historical events of the past — events of a cultural, social and political nature. The contingent nature of man's historical experience is demonstrated by the fact that it is variable and changes along with changing historical conditions. It is the product of what Hegel has designated as *Zeitgeist* — the spirit of the age. Whereas the natural scientists, again and again, come forth with new scientific theories or truth-perspectives on nature and even cosmologies, which include man and explain human culture and civilization in terms of natural or cosmological laws (Darwin's "law of natural selection" or Haeckel's "law of substance" as the "universal law of evolution"), the historian proper continues to explore systematically the events of the past, interprets them within the context of the respective *Zeitgeist* (his specific historical consciousness) and constitutes them methodologically as a theory or truth-perspective. It is the *Zeitgeist* or spirit of the age which determines the prevailing interests, the kind of questioning and the assumptions of historians. No matter how objective a historian strives to be, he can never perfectly comply with Leopold von Ranke's dictum that historical events must be treated as they happened at the time: *Wie es einmal gewesen ist*.

The historian — and this includes Ranke himself — cannot step outside his own epoch. He cannot ignore the influence of his own environment as well as his own historicity. He cannot overlook the cultural tradition and value system in which he is steeped, the particular interests he pursues and values to which he subscribes. And even the methods which he applies in his investigations are the product of his own age. The mediaeval Christian historian, for example, judged history and culture in terms of God's acts of creation and salvation. The historian of the Enlightenment era, or Age of Reason, judged history in the light of human progress. In our contemporary age, there is a glaring difference between western and eastern historians.

While the former, in whatever way their theories or truth-perspectives may differ, read history in the light of liberal and humanitarian values to which they themselves subscribe, the latter are committed to interpret history according to the dialectical laws of historical materialism. In each case of the specific experience of particular historical conditions — which is always a specific conflict experience, as will become evident at a later stage — the verification of the respective historical theory as a truth-perspective occurs in terms of a specific hypothesis. Within the wide scope of our examples cited above, the hypotheses developed from the respective historical conditions are: God's acts of creation and salvation, human progress, the freedom of the individual, the dialectical socio-economic laws of history.

The varying *Zeitgeist*, which conditions the historical consciousness, is of course also the reason for the different interpretations of the meaning of history as they have been conceived in the philosophy of history. Polybius, Cicero, Augustine, Voltaire, Hume, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Burckhardt, Collingwood, Toynbee, Popper, to mention a few philosophers of history, put forward doctrines that breathe the spirit of their own age. Kurt Breysig,<sup>1</sup> who sees the meaning of all historical enquiry in untwining the rope of history, i.e., unravelling the web of time that is woven by historical events, emphasizes the point that historical research does not stand above or outside history, but is itself interwoven in the web of the time. History is experienced and made by man, he both acts and constitutes it. Giving an account of history, is giving an account of himself.

Here lies the existential, in this sense *practical*, significance of historical theories. Since the historian is never able to dissociate himself from his own time, in spite of all his efforts to do so, his vision or truth-perspective always somehow reflects the problems, conflicts, socio-political values and aspirations of his own epoch no matter by what method he might seek to cope with them. His truth-perspective has in common with that of the natural scientist or that of any other cultural field that it, too, is a mirror of his own self. It is the systematic nature or the constitutive character of the historical method that renders historical knowledge as functional as scientific knowledge, which is also

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. *Die Meister der entwickelnden Geschichtsforschung.*

methodologically constituted. The fact that both types of knowledge are constituted and reconstituted as theories or truth-perspectives under changing historical conditions, so that they are both in a state of becoming, renders scientific truth historical and historical truth scientific.

A philosopher of history who realized the interrelationship between the natural sciences and history and formulated it in a definite way was Giovanni Battista Vico. According to the exigencies of his time, he established history as a science.<sup>1)</sup> He did so by subordinating the sciences to certain historical laws, which caused the sciences to become historical, while these historical laws rendered history scientific. He introduced the comparative science of history. As a representative of his age, the age of reason, which believed in progress, he assumed the parallel development of all peoples in the succession of a divine, heroic and human age. With Plato, he recognizes the idea as a yardstick. With Tacitus, he describes reality in terms of the limited purposes of human self-interest. With Bacon, he is aware of the unity of the scientific world. Finally, with Grotius he incorporates all philosophy and theology into the system of a general law, an overarching philosophy, a new science that comprehends both the pure idea and historical change towards truth. In our present age, the tables have been turned. Karl Popper subordinated history to the functionalistic method of the natural sciences and technology. As a *functionalistic* method, tracing the functional relationship between natural events, it could be said to be historical.

The problem of the relationship between history and the natural sciences, which had been raised by Vico's approach, was, at a later stage, discussed in neo-Kantianism (Windelband, Rickert) and in hermeneutics (Dilthey, Gadamer). Windelband distinguished between the *nomothetic* method in the natural sciences and the *ideographic* method in the historical sciences. Rickert distinguished between the natural sciences and the cultural sciences. Dilthey taught that, while in the natural sciences the descriptive method is applied, the cultural sciences require the application of the hermeneutical method. In whatever way the problem is formulated, what emerges is the man-made-

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. "Principi di una scienza nuova intorno alla comune natura delle nazioni", in: *Tutte le opere di Giambattista Vico*.

ness of both the natural sciences and of history, in the sense that the natural sciences form a component of the historical cultural process as a whole and the different *Weltanschauungen* that are constituted in its course.

That the natural sciences and history have their roots in human experience as a meaningful experience is the view of Georg Gadamer. He developed his hermeneutical method from Dilthey, but criticizes Dilthey's conception of the natural sciences as being an alienation from life and reality. According to Dilthey, the weaving of *Weltanschauungen* from man's life experience constitutes history. G. Misch writes:

Dilthey regarded 'life' as the starting-point of philosophy: life as actually lived and embodied or 'objectified' in the spiritual world we live in. Life, according to Dilthey, is a subject for scientific investigation in so far as history and 'moral philosophy' or the 'human sciences' deal with it; but our knowledge of life is, above all, contained in certain cultural or personal views of the world — *Weltanschauungen* — which play a prominent part in philosophy as well as in religion and poetry.<sup>1)</sup>

University of Fort Hare

According to Dilthey, man, in his environment, determinism, habit, action and reaction, weaves the structure of life, the components of which are "self, persons and things". It is their interrelationship that makes up "empirical consciousness", from which history is constituted. By making the individual an "ideal fact," who "has roots that reach down below the lowest substratum of human history into the realm of organic nature", Dilthey has merged the particular with the universal, as the individuals are the essential categories of life. Another objective category is the objective spirit, which Dilthey — in his later writings — discovers as emerging in history as a unifying factor. Although history grows organically, there is no aim, no purpose.

In the light of his objective categories of history, Dilthey regards the hermeneutical method of understanding man — thus understanding the process of life and the gaining of knowledge — as standing in contrast to the natural sciences. The latter check their methods not by

---

<sup>1</sup> *The Dawn of Philosophy*, p. 4.

"empirical consciousness" but by logical propositions and rigid formulae, which alienates them from life. This negative judgement of the natural science method invites criticism on two counts. In the first place, however faulty their methods may be, the natural sciences, too, are grounded in man's experience, hence in Dilthey's ideal fact: the individual. By considering the methods of the natural sciences faulty, Dilthey acknowledges their man-madness. Secondly, his "objective" categories of history are conceived from man's "empirical consciousness", which is itself a concept formed in terms of his version of the hermeneutical method. These "objective" categories are thus man-made, in this sense subjective.

Realizing the constitutive character of Dilthey's "empirical consciousness", which does not actually penetrate reality, Gadamer criticizes the "objective" aspect of Dilthey's hermeneutics.<sup>1)</sup> He points out that, in the light of these "objective" categories, the difference between subject and object, I and thou, human sciences and natural sciences cannot be bridged. He draws attention to the fact that, although historical understanding claims to be non-prejudiced, no historian can escape his subjective perspective of it. Heidegger describes this hermeneutical cycle as follows: "We understand only that which we know already, hear only from it what we read into it".<sup>2)</sup> In the light of the knowledge explored by the natural sciences, this state of affairs seems to be unbearable.

Accordingly, Gadamer<sup>3)</sup> points out that meaning does not emerge by the "distance of understanding" but by our being situated within the context of historical events. Historical existence (Dasein) has always a situation, a perspective and a horizon. From this, Gadamer draws the conclusion that nothing obstructs more an understanding between I and thou than someone's claim (e.g. Dilthey's) to understand the other in his being and opinion. Such a person would then speak for the other, which prevents dialogue. He who studies history is always determined by his experiencing history. The reason why history is always written anew is because we are determined by the pres-

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. *Wahrheit und Methode*.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted from E Zahn "Gadamer's Hermeneutik des geschichtlichen Menschen, in: *Die letzte Epoche der Philosophie*, p.119.

<sup>3</sup> CF. *Op. cit.*, pp. 117-123.

ent. It is thus not a mere reconstruction of the past. Understanding each other means to understand each other in something: to hear the past in that which it will show us as valid. The priority of the question to the answer (statement) means for hermeneutics that each question one understands one asks oneself. Fusion between the horizon of the present with that of the past is the task of the humanities. They do, however, only that which we have always been doing.

It is, then, in terms of the question or, more accurately, the relatedness to the question that meaning and understanding emerge. This holds also true for the natural sciences, which, like the aesthetical and historical consciousness, are based on inner experience. Just as in aesthetic consciousness it is already predetermined which from the multitude of art works are judged classical (lasting), so in historical consciousness the research results important for our own time will be distinguished from those historical researches, which have no relevance to it. What cannot be doubted is that the great horizon of the past, from which our culture and the present live, has an effect on all that we want, hope and dread in the future.

Finally, Gadamer asks the question how the hermeneutical conditionedness of our existence can be justified vis à vis the modern natural sciences and their principle of non-prejudice. While he does not believe in telling the natural sciences to limit themselves, he does express concern that the application of their findings could lead to destruction, if their possibilities of knowledge remain in the twilight. This problem is universal. It applies to all research, which all starts from a meaningful question as the starting-point, and this includes our present culture and science as well as their technological application. The hermeneutical prime phenomenon is: Which answers and questions are really contained in the facts? (example: statistics). Who will learn a science must learn to master its methodology. Gadamer draws the conclusion that the effectiveness of the hermeneutical consciousness rests on the ability to see the questionable (problematic). If this is seen as our life experience, then we shall be able to reinclude also the natural sciences in our own, general and human life experience.

It is by this conclusion drawn by him that Gadamer comes nearest to our own starting-point. We agree with a number of his insights, es-

pecially when he warns against the dangers of a misconception (thus abuse) of the natural sciences and when he points out that the awareness of the questionable and the problematic as our life experience would reinclude the natural sciences in our cultural and scientific activities as a whole. Unfortunately, he stops there and fails to penetrate deeper into the why of the questionable and the problematic in those activities. By linking up with Heidegger's statement: "We understand only that which we know already" and pointing out that, for hermeneutics, this means that each question one understands one asks oneself, that all research starts from such a meaningful question, so that the hermeneutical phenomenon is: Which answers and questions are really contained in the facts, he gets stuck in the cycle of the human self, which he abstracts from reality, leaving no opening to it. In his attempt to explain man's cultural and scientific activity, therefore history, from a meaningful something, the hypothesis of the meaningful question, he fails to ask the question why man's research results are the yield of the cycle of the human self. Had he done so, he would have found that it is man's contingent experience of reality — the basic conflict experience shared by man and his fellow-man — on the grounds of which the question is asked, the search for knowledge continues and ever new theories and truth-perspectives are constituted, which enter into a critical relationship with one another, so that these truth-perspectives are rendered problematic and questionable. This critical relationship is the motor of the continuing critical argument about truth in the various fields of human experience. It is in the course of this argument that man's various cultural and scientific activities — including history— are constituted.

Since the critical relationship holding between cultural and scientific truth-perspectives points to man's contingent experience of reality as the basic universal life experience from which all human truths are constituted, it follows that Gadamer's meaningful question cannot be the basic ground of such constitution and that the latter lies deeper, in an experience that defies all conceptualization and in the light of which all human conceptualizations are called in question and all theories constituted from this experience remain controversial, entering into a critical relationship with each other. The latter, which points to man's contingent experience of reality, is the motor of the continuing argument about truth.

Being constituted from man's contingent experience of reality, thereby entering into a critical relationship with each other by which man is referred to his fellow-man in the continuing quest for and argument on truth, human theories, or truth-perspectives, are themselves contingent. They are components of reality as a dynamic process of change. Since the argument on truth is carried on under changing historical conditions in the various fields of human experience, that of the natural sciences, history, the arts and religion, it follows that, although they differ in their application of method, cultural and scientific activities are all historical in character. Thus, as the methodological constitution of theory or truth-perspective, as such giving expression to a specific type of experience under changing conditions of life, history is scientific. As far as the natural sciences are concerned, their man-made character has already been pointed out. As theories or truth-perspectives methodologically constituted and reconstituted under changing historical conditions from another specific type of human experience — that of natural phenomena—they form part of the spectrum of cultural and scientific activities.

The weakness in the constitution of a truth-perspective from a meaningful concept or question of whatever type is not only its abstraction from the dynamics of the life process and from the contingent experience of it, in the light of which all human conceptions remain questionable, but also the absence of an awareness of the interplay of practice and theory. It fails to show that theory is always the outcome of practice in the sense that it seeks to cope with man's conflict experience in a specific historical situation and that, on the other hand, the postulation of such a theory contributes to changing practice.

The practice-directedness of theory has already been alluded to, and will be more fully discussed later on. This practice-directedness also emerges in the critical relationship holding between truth-perspectives. This relationship, by which all human truths are called in question, and none can lay claim to absoluteness and exclusiveness, points to a *moral ought*, in terms of which man and his fellow-man *ought* to conduct their dispute on truth in a spirit of mutual self-restraint, self-restriction, modesty, open-mindedness, tolerance, respect and goodwill. Generally speaking, the historical, contingent character of all human truth-perspectives points to man as a finite, historical and contingent being.

That historical truth-perspectives are theoretical attempts to cope with certain basic problems, such as the problem of historical facts, historical knowledge, historiography and historical thinking, can be seen from the following examples. They all reflect the specific *Zeitgeist* from which they derive their meaning and validity, and in terms of which they have been conceived. The attempt is made to show this by tracing, in a wide scope, the development from *Historia* to *Geschichte* (the dynamics of human action).

## b) From **Historia** to **Geschichte**

### (i) *The Definition of **Historia** in terms of Natural Events*

*Historia* means exploration. It is connected with *istor* (the knower, the witness, the arbiter). According to Plato and Theophrastus, it means the deduction of the world from a hylozoistic *arché* and the exploration of remote and puzzling world-phenomena, such as magnetism, deluges (the flooding of its banks by the river Nile), eclipses of the sun. Such kind of knowledge was depreciated as *polymathia* by Heraclitus and Parmenides, who claimed that Homer, Hesiod as well as the Milesian philosophers, Thales, Anaximander and Anaximenes, got stuck in the knowledge of many things, but failed to comprehend the One: the concealed *Logos* behind the world of flux, the *panta rhei* of Heraclitus, or the Truth of Parmenides, according to whom thinking and being are identical.

For the Greek historian Herodotus *historia* meant *Histories Apodexis* (representation of the explored): reports, connections and relations which he had himself explored. Thucydides, on the other hand, emphasizes the result of the explored. Ephorus, the author of the first Greek universal history, entitles his work: *Istoriai*. The *Zeitgeist* that determined Greek cosmological thinking, of which human affairs formed an integral part, clearly manifests itself in the fact that, since Aristotle, *historia* is a fixed concept in the sense of *polyhistory*, the diverse learning of cosmic events. Man forming an integral part of the cosmos, this included human affairs. Polyhistory was distinguished from poetry.

In Rome *historia* meant history recounted in the form of annals. An example is Cicero's interpretation of history in terms of human quali-

ties, "by inquiry into the motives and intentions of the prominent individuals whose actions had shaped its outcome, whether by 'chance, wisdom or rashness' — human conduct, and beyond it fate and the gods, were predicted as the only forces of causation".<sup>1</sup>) Livy, according to A.D. Botha,<sup>2</sup>) "adopted Cicero's historiographical theory, which embodied the innermost elements of Roman history-writing, by undertaking to compose a literary history of Rome which would be worthy of her greatness. He refined the traditional schematic framework of *annales*, elaborating the anthropocentric and providential view of Roman historical development which Cicero had associated with full-scale *historia*, the purpose of which was to interpret history in its inner relations." However, in keeping with the pragmatic, political and legal mind of the Romans, *historia* also assumed the meaning of historical events.

(ii) *Historia in terms of Religious Events*

In the Middle Ages, no special position is assigned to *historia* in the *artes liberales*. Augustine and Isidor add it to grammar, in the sense, however, that grammar is the instrument for the understanding of the sources. Augustine teaches that the scriptures must first be understood historically and then spiritually (allegorically). The Bible must be read as *narratio rerum proprie gestarum*, and it is imperative to abide by its *veritas historiae*. Augustine's view of history, i.e., of man advancing from the *civitas terrena* to the *civitas dei*,<sup>3</sup>) is developed further by Hugo St. Victor in terms of Christology: the act of salvation by the *Logos*, who operates in the Old Testament and appears in Christ. Finally, there is Martin von Troppau's *Chronicle* and Vincent of Beauvais' *Speculum Historiale*, a collection of historical materials integrated in a system of the sciences.

By and large, however, human events were, in the Middle Ages, enveloped in the process of salvation, just as in Greek thinking they formed part of cosmic events. Thomas Aquinas, in the 13th century,

<sup>1</sup> A D Botha, "The Position of a Major Speech in the *Ab Urbe Condita*", in: *The Journal of the University of Durban-Westville*, New Series 2, 1985, p. 38.

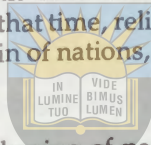
<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *The City of God*, transl. by J. Healey, ed. by R. Tasker.

constitutes a Christian cosmos with the help of Aristotelian philosophy. God's word (revelation) forms the apex of this cosmos, the purpose of which is man's salvation. Man's position in it — hence also in society — is determined by God. While it is the state's task to educate man in a Christian spirit so as to enable him to act for the common good, the purpose of the Church is to prepare him for salvation, for the highest bliss experienced in his contemplation of God.

### (iii) *The Meaning of Geschichte*

**Geschichte**, which may be rendered as the dynamics of human action, is that what *geschieht* or comes to pass. In contrast to learned *historia* based on knowledge, it has the flavour of blind events. It describes the accidental event of the moment. In this meaning, the word appears in the 8th and 9th centuries. In the times of *humanism*, it appears beside *historia*. At that time, religious aspects are excluded and history deals with the origin of nations, the history of cities and of dynasties.



In Germany, the awakening of national consciousness finds expression in the historical writings of Konrad Celtes, who edited Tacitus' *Germania*, and Jakob Wimpfling, who wrote a German history entitled: *Epitome rerum Germanicarum*. Johannes Sleidanus, in 1555, wrote the classical history of the Reformation, entitled: *De statu religionis et reipublicae Carlo V. Imperatore commentarii*. All these writings sought to come to grips with the strife-ridden age of the Renaissance period, the political and religious struggles of the German mosaic of territories and principalities: the wars of religion, the revolts of the peasants and imperial knights, which were sometimes connected with the national spirit directed against the rule of the Roman Church and the Pope. One of the representatives of the German national idea is the imperial knight Ulrich von Hutten, a staunch supporter of Martin Luther's reformation and struggle against Rome.

In Italy, which was equally torn into many smaller or larger political units, it was Niccolò Machiavelli who pleaded for the country's unity under the leadership of a strong prince. For this purpose, he laid the foundation for a historiography which, not from the moral but from the pragmatic point of view, wants to show statesmen "the causes of

enmity and strife in the cities" and legislators "the maliciousness of all people and the distortion of their soul". In his *Il Principe* (1513), the guiding principle is: the state is not a means to an end but an end in itself.

Generally speaking, it may be said that, during the Renaissance period, a new *Zeitgeist* emerged. The new way of thinking was the result of changed conditions of life. The controversy over universals in the Middle Ages (realists, nominalists, conceptualists), as well as the dispute on the relationship between reason and faith, knowledge (science) and religion, philosophy and theology, theory and practice, led to the gradual dissolution of the mediaeval world-view and its theocentric outlook. Discoveries such as that of the American continents, inventions like gun powder, the printing press, the telescope and the microscope widened the scope of human thinking geographically, intellectually and scientifically. They brought about a new world experience and led to a new world-view. From a theocentric position in the Middle Ages, human thinking moved to an anthropocentric position in the Renaissance, as emerges from the term humanism, which characterizes this epoch.

In philosophy, the new anthropocentric view is reflected in the neo-Platonic philosophy, which may be said to be the forerunner of the new epistemology emerging in the 17th and 18th centuries. A prominent example of the anthropocentric way of thinking is Giordano Bruno's pantheistic world-view. According to him, the human soul is the mirror of the infinite cosmos. In this microcosm are reflected not only the infinity and eternity of the cosmos, but also the ideas of truth, harmony, beauty and goodness. Not only his understanding, but his aesthetic feeling as well, enable man to merge with the cosmos. His intellect and feeling expanding into infinity and eternity, cause man, as it were, to flow into the universe. That the accent had been shifted to man and his affairs was clearly demonstrated by the historical writings of this period mentioned above.

The anthropocentric way of thinking was continued in the Age of Reason, which succeeded the Renaissance period, with this difference that the hallmark of history writing became progress. This was due to the impact of rationalistic and empirical philosophy, which went hand in hand with a deployment of mathematical and scientific thinking.

Rationalistic philosophers, such as Descartes and Leibniz, for example, were also eminent mathematicians. The same holds true for the empirical philosopher and scientist, Isaac Newton.

This tempestuous development explains man's growing confidence in his own powers: experience on the hand and, on the other, reason. He came to feel that he was capable of obtaining knowledge by his own natural capacities, that he had come of age. This accounts for his strong belief in progress, which originally means: the process of mankind's and society's moral improvement and eventual perfection. Since this is a historical process, the problem of the relationship between history and the sciences emerges. It was in the Age of Reason or Enlightenment that *historia* really became *Geschichte*. By his *Essai sur les moeurs et l'esprit des nations*, Francois Marie Arouet de Voltaire began a new era of history writing. He did so by including the history of culture and ideas. The spirit of the new age was characterized by Jean le Rond d' Alembert as the era of the natural sciences in the *Discours préliminaire* of the *Encyclopédie ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*. Thus, theologically oriented universal history was superseded by the history of mankind: the process of improving civilization and cultural development. Not the history of cultures was important, as taught by Machiavelli, but what mattered was the history of progress.

Together in Excellence

#### (iv) Vico, Comte, Hume and **Geschichte** as Progress

Since Giovanni Battista Vico's concept of history has been dealt with previously, only brief mention of his historical perspective needs to be made in this connection. It has already been pointed out that, in his *La Scienza Nuova Prima*, he sought to raise history to the status of a science. By conceiving of historical laws as in their own right, in contrast to the laws of nature, he raised the methodological problem of history and the natural sciences, which was discussed previously. Vico believed that history repeated itself in regular *corsi* and *recorsi*. He distinguishes three ages characterized by their own law systems and language forms: the ages of gods, heroes and men. Divine providence guarantees an even change of barbarism, ascendancy and downfall. History's final goal consists in humanity being mediated by the Christian religion. Theoreticians succeeding Vico, who propagate a more secularized version of progress, are Turgot, Condorcet and Comte in France and Hume in Britain.

Comte's conception of progress consists in the *Law of the Three Stages*. The "positive" natural and social sciences form the highest stage, so that historical progress is scientific (operating under the *Law of the Three Stages*) and science, as the outcome of this law, is historical. The *Law of the Three Stages* may thus be said to be both historical and scientific at the same time.

Hume's version of progress may be designated as *natural progress*. To him, the purpose of studying history is to understand the sociopolitical conflicts of one's own time, with the view to curing them. E.W.F. Tomlin writes about him:

The difficulties and disturbances of his own age needed, in his view, first to be understood in order to be cured. When and how did these troubles begin? Hume realized that the key to the understanding of present social stress lay in history, in the chain of events that have led up to the present.<sup>1</sup>)

It was with this purpose in mind that, in 1756, he published a history of Great Britain from the accession of James I to the death of Charles I. This was followed by a second volume in 1756, which continued the history of Great Britain up to the Glorious Revolution (1688).

BRITAIN  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
Together in Excellence

Hume considers the desire for understanding in history to be as much lodged in the human "disposition for consistency" in the face of conflict and contradiction as the desire for understanding in nature. In both, as well as in ethics and religion, understanding depends on the understanding of man's natural dispositions, in this sense, the science of man. In the introduction to his *Treatise of Nature*, Hume writes: "There is no question of importance, whose decision is not comprised in the science of man".

#### (v) *Kant and Geschichte as Hypothesis*

In Kant's conception of history, it is man's rational striving from the *is* to the *ought*, from the imperfect world of natural and sociopolitical conflict to the perfect world of moral reason, that constitutes

---

<sup>1</sup> *The Western Philosophers*, p. 186.

progress. This transcendental act of rational striving takes place on both an individual (private) level as well as a socio-political (public) level, that of *mankind*. The conflict between senses and reason, nature and history, is overcome by the act of rational striving, which unites thinking and acting (theory and practice). The experience of conflict in nature as well as in history (society) sets the dynamics of rational striving in motion, which constitutes a transcendental movement from the world as it is to the world as it *ought to be*, according to the dictates of reason.

It follows that the conflicts involved in this movement are an integral part of the process of man's liberation from a selfish nature. These conflicts are preordained, forming part of nature's concealed plan to guide man towards rational autonomy, thus to freedom. Kant writes:



Man kann die Geschichte der Menschengattung im Grossen als die Vollziehung eines verborgenen Plans der Natur ansehen, um eine innerlich — und zu diesem Zwecke auch äusserlich — vollkommene Staatsverfassung zu Stande zu bringen, als den einzigen Zustand, in welchem sie alle ihre Anlagen in der Menschheit völlig entwickeln kann.<sup>1)</sup>

The rational act of human striving may therefore be said to encompass Kant's transcendental method as a whole. This transcendental act articulates itself in three stages: the theoretical stage of knowledge (phenomena and categories), the practical stage of morality (noumena), and the emancipatory stage of politics (the state of freedom and perpetual peace). Through his conflict experience in nature and history (society), man aims his thinking (theory) at a higher level of existence, an existence by the moral (rational) will — thus in freedom (practice).

In Kant's *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht*,<sup>2)</sup> the process of historico-political evolution — mankind's cultural and political development — is discussed. It is the conflict be-

<sup>1</sup> Eighth proposition in Kant's "Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht", *Akademie-Ausgabe*, Vol. VIII, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Akademie-Ausgabe*, Vol. VIII.

tween nature and reason that sets the scene in motion, showing mankind's development from the state of nature to the state of reason — a league of nations whose individual wills have been united by a rational contract, so that they no longer clash with each other. In this context Hans Saner<sup>1</sup>) points out that with Kant — as with Plato and Aristotle — “politics is based on reason. It begins with the use of reason, not with the political act”.

According to Kant, *Geschichte* is a hypothesis, which may be a mere utopia, but historical (socio-political) events show the tendency towards a perfect republican constitution. Evidence for this concept Kant derives from the conflict experience of his own time — the stage of civilization reached in the development of mankind from the stage of savages. He regards the stage of civilization in his own time, at which reason is used for the attainment of selfish purposes: the acquisition of property — in this sense happiness — as a transitory stage, which might be developed further into the highest stage of reason and morality. At this final stage, a republican mode of government is established, under which perpetual peace reigns.

In order to achieve this aim, John Locke's hypothetical imperative, his selfish concept of happiness, which, to a large extent, articulates the needs and interests of the property owners, the new up and coming social class in Locke's time, must be replaced by the categorical imperative: action according to the dictates of pure reason, which constitutes the moral law, the observance of which brings true happiness.

All in all, the conflict between natural causality and human reason is bridged through human rational striving by the subordination of the will to reason, the will in this way becoming a practical (moral) category. It is through the individual's and humanity's continual rational striving that nature's concealed plan might eventually be realized. According to this plan, man is required to work his way out of paradise (the realm of primitivity, animalism and instinct) and through reason as a guide — *Leitfaden der Vernunft* — advance to rational autonomy (freedom). *Geschichte*, as an *apriori* construction is a hypothesis, which might be a mere utopia. However, it is events such as the French Revolution

---

<sup>1</sup> “Foreword” to *Kant's Political Thought*.

(with which Kant sympathized, although he condemned its outrages, such as the King's execution and rejected revolution as an illegal, therefore non-rational, way of action) that show the tendency in man towards a perfect republican constitution. It is on such evidence that the assumption of such a hypothesis is justified. An assumption like that is useful (practical). It supports the merely empirical *historia* and provides it with a guide — a *Leitfaden*.

(vi) Hegel and *Geschichte* as the Cyclic Movement of the World Spirit

To Hegel *Geschichte* meant the emancipatory act of the World Spirit — the dynamic rational principle by which World History is set in motion. Hegel's theory of history was conditioned by the conflicts and needs that arose as a result of the French Revolution, which prevailed during his life time. The basic conflict was the one between liberalism, constitutionalism and nationalism on the one hand and, on the other, conservatism, autocratic monarchy and dynastic legitimism. According to Hegel's idealistic conception of history,<sup>1</sup>) the task of philosophy is to grasp the historical significance of the French Revolution as a first attempt to construct reality from the idea. Hegel argued that this attempt had to be rendered objective in this way reconciling the possibility of human freedom with World Reason, which was subject and object at the same time. As the World Spirit, this dynamic principle was the motor of World History. The latter was the concrete phenomenon of the World Spirit, which manifested itself in nature (the sciences) and in history (society, the arts and religion) as it moved towards self-consciousness and self-emancipation.

The dialectical process of the Spirit's self-emancipation from the senses, into which process man is blended as a rational individual as well as a member of the state — the rational will of the people become visible in the law, thus an ethical idea of the Spirit — constitutes history's revolutions. Taken in its widest scope, history moves from the East, where one (the despotic monarch or priest-king) is free, to the Greeks, where some (the free citizens of the *polis*) are free, and from

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. "Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte", in: *Werke*, Vol 12, as well as "Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts", in: *Werke*, Vol. 7. The latter deals with the concept of the state.

there to the Christian stage — the state of rational necessity of which the modern monarch is the symbol — where all are free.

In contradistinction to Kant's rational striving as an expression of subjective human reason, Hegel's Absolute Spirit is both substance (potentiality) and subject of World History. In the latter, it manifests itself as the *principium individuationis* in the succeeding stages of the natural sciences, society and politics, fine arts and religion. As a result of the tension between subject (thesis) and object (antithesis), this tension manifesting itself in its drive towards self-emancipation, during which it externalizes itself as an object in the scientific and historical world of individuals, the Spirit moves, in a dialectical cycle, from substantial freedom to concrete self-consciousness (freedom). This movement constitutes World History as a synthesis, when the Spirit has returned to itself and fulfilled itself. At the final stage of the Spirit's self-emancipation, the *principium individuationis* has been superseded by the *principium universalis*, and all contradictions have been resolved by the principle of identity: the identity between thinking (reason) and being (reality).

According to Hegel, therefore, what is rational is real and what is real is rational. As it is the same Spirit that manifests itself in the different stages of World History, it follows that each stage is both rational and real. Reason and freedom are synonyma which determine political thought and the purpose of the state. The divine character of the Spirit enabled Hegel to reconcile the enlightening rational features of the French Revolution with the conservative and restorative features of his time, as well as to demonstrate the unity between throne (the state) and pulpit (religion). The synthesis of the French Revolution and Napoleon was Prussia, the embodiment of the Spirit, which had liberated mankind from Napoleon's tyranny, in whose monarch Hegel saw the impersonation of reason and the synthesis of the throne (the state) and pulpit (religion).

*In summa*, Hegel bridges the conflict between nature and history — contingency and necessity, freedom and necessity — by the dialectical method. History is the mirror of reason, in which reason recognizes itself. In: *Die Vernunft in der Geschichte* Hegel writes:

Ich will über den vorläufigen Begriff der Philosophie der Weltge-

schichte zunächst dies bemerken, dass, wie ich gesagt habe, man in erster Linie der Philosophie den Vorwurf macht, dass sie mit Gedanken an die Geschichte gehe und diese mit Gedanken betrachte. Der einzige Gedanke, den sie mitbringt, ist aber der einfache Gedanke der Vernunft, dass die Vernunft die Welt beherrscht, dass es also auch in der Weltgeschichte vernünftig zugegangen ist.<sup>1)</sup>

Because history is the mirror of reason, in which reason recognizes itself, Hegel can speak about das *Gedoppelte* (the double). He is able to point out the equivocality, which lies in the dictum: The historical (as in the empirical) must be truly conceived, for reason cannot deny that it is present in the act of conception and so recognizes itself in history as the Absolute Spirit. Through self-emancipation and becoming conscious of itself in nature and in history, it fulfils itself in absolute freedom. Through the Spirit's (history's) cyclic movement, the law of identity is fulfilled. This is, however, the case only theoretically, not practically, as the ensuing criticism of Hegel's philosophy will demonstrate. But this does not mean that Hegel's theory or truth-perspective was not of practical consequence.

(vii) *The Historical School – Man as an Individual and a Member of a Nation*  
Together in Excellence

As a result of the Wars of Liberation against Napoleon and the national risings throughout Europe and South America in the 19th century, the historical school (Savigny, von Sybel, v. Treitschke, Ranke) developed. It did so by applying Hegel's theory of history to the growing national consciousness in Germany, in the 19th century. Under these conditions and in this spiritual atmosphere, intensive historical research began. Fundamentally, these thinkers have in common that they, theoretically, point to the continuous growth of state and people and seek to promote this growth, as it manifested itself in Prussia and, after 1871, in the German Empire, by historical description. Not what the philosophy of natural right and the rational philosophy of the *Enlightenment* era say about man as a rational being is interesting, but what man is as a member of a people, nation, state. "History is the only way to the true recognition of our condition" says Savigny, who is the leading mind of the historical school of law that developed out of

---

<sup>1</sup> Hegel, "Die Vernunft in der Geschichte", in: F Heer, *Hegel*, p. 70.

Hegel's philosophy. History had moved nearer to actuality, to the living generation. According to von Sybel, political action was not the policy of the cabinet, but the affair of the living generation. *Geschichte* had moved nearer to *Historia* again, in the sense that it reported about the common past and development of the present.

(viii) *Marx and Engels — Geschichte as the Changing of the World through Labour*

On account of changing socio-political conditions in the 19th century — chiefly due to the conflicts and needs arising from the Industrial Revolution — a new approach to history in economic (materialist) terms was made by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. This reductionist approach, reducing philosophy to the proletariat's act of changing the world, man's consciousness of the world and his relationship with his fellow-man (society) through productive labour, by which act history was set in motion, resulted in an operationalistic, in this sense functionalistic, concept of history. As a social act, labour changed man from an individual into a social being, whose relationship with other human beings was an operational, in this sense functional, one. This led to man's *Vergeschichtlichung* or functionalization.

University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

In the case of Marx and Engels, the theory-practice relationship is determined by the class-struggle, which, for them, is the basic experience of reality. In Marx's and Engels' operationalistic way of thinking, the world and conscious-forming process of labour and production can be seen as the real ground of the world. This is shown when Marx designates World History "as nothing but the production of man through human labour".<sup>1</sup>) The concept of labour may change in the various Marxist theories, but always the unity of nature and society, science and history, theory and practice, necessity and freedom is mediated through labour.

It is through the process of labour and production that the contradiction between theory and practice is gradually overcome and that man is moved from the state of alienation to the state of authentic existence as a free creative being. Through labour, he is merged with his

---

<sup>1</sup> "Nichts anders als die Erschaffung des Menschen durch menschliche Arbeit", "Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte", in: MEW, Suppl. Vol., Part 1, p. 546.

torical reason, of which the classless communist society is the highest expression. In the foreword to *Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*,<sup>1)</sup> Marx expounds the principle of Historical Materialism by seeking to show society's evolutionary and revolutionary development in terms of the development of the means and ways of production (labour) under certain economic laws. On this economic basis, Marx applies Hegel's dialectics to historical social development from the stage of primitive communism to the stage of self-conscious, fulfilled communism and the just free society created by it. This development leads via the slaveholder society, the feudal society and the capitalist society.

As the class of productive labour, it is the proletariat that accomplishes the deed of liberation from the yoke of the capitalist class, capitalist society being the last repressive form of society. The proletariat is thus for Marx the historical class that stands for the liberation of all mankind. As the working class, it proves itself as the class of change, as the subject of history, which is, at the same time, its own object. As an expression of historical reason in a concrete form — in terms of creative labour — it supersedes Hegel's Absolute Spirit, thus merging theory with practice. The dialectical laws that are inherent in the labour process are shown by Marx in nearly all his works. A striking example is the following passage:

Mit der Entwicklung der grossen Industrie wird also unter den Füssen der Bourgeoisie die Grundlage selbst weggezogen, worauf sie produziert und die Produkte sich aneignet. Sie produziert vor allem ihre eigenen Totengräber. Ihr Untergang und der Sieg des Proletariats sind gleich unvermeidlich.<sup>2)</sup>

(ix) *Neo-Marxism — Geschichte as Critical Reflection*

In view of the problems and conflicts that have emerged in the wake of the contemporary Technological Revolution, which produced the "repressive" monopolistic society of our age, the neo-Marxist School of Critical Theory, also referred to as the Frankfurt School, discards Marx's and Engels's Historical Materialism as well as Marx's con-

---

<sup>1</sup> "Einleitung", in: MEW XXIII.

<sup>2</sup> Marx/Engels: "Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei", I, 'Bourgeois und Proletarier', MEW, IV.

cept of the class-struggle. As Herbert Marcuse points out: Having been absorbed, to a large extent, into the technological and ideological establishments of West and East, respectively, the workers have lost their revolutionary *élan*. The working class no longer constitutes the subject of history, this role having fallen to the young, the socially ostracized and the people of the Third World. It is they who now represent the revolutionary forces of liberation.<sup>1</sup>)

In Habermas's pragmatic model,<sup>2</sup>) the conflict between science and politics (theory and practice) is overcome by welding them into a dialectical unit. Labour is instrumental action on the one hand and, on the other, rational selection of the strategies to be pursued. As such, it is busy with empirical rules as well as analytical insight. It shows itself as interaction between science and history, science and morality, science and politics — theory and practice. In applying the insights of science to the attainment of certain goals that crystallize from social needs under given conditions, labour shows itself as "communicative interaction" between science and history, science and morality, science and politics. On the other hand, these given historical conditions and social needs arising from them can be established scientifically. By this pragmatic model, Habermas hopes to have arrived at a non-repressive — *herrschaftsfreie* — society, where any form of predominance — of political ideology (decisionist model) or of science and technology (technocratic model) — as well as any conflicts arising from such predominance, have been eliminated. In other words — as Günther Rohrmoser points out <sup>3</sup>) — Habermas's pragmatic model is directed at an ideal state of society. As such, it represents another teleological philosophy of history, based on labour as history's generator. Another point of criticism by Rohrmoser, mentioned previously, is that — in spite of his criticism during his controversy with the positivist thinker Hans Albert — Habermas makes far-reaching concessions to positivism. This leads to the question: How much dialectics is left in Habermas's philosophy? This becomes particularly evident when he concedes that the decision as to the presence of objective revolutionary conditions is left to analytical social science. It would appear that man's, or rather society's, liberation is in the end the work of science and technology. This might

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. *One-Dimensional Man, Negations and An Essay on Liberation*.

<sup>2</sup> *Technik und Wissenschaft als 'Ideologie'*.

<sup>3</sup> *Das Elend der kritischen Theorie*.

easily result in the very technocracy, Habermas intended to avoid, so that the circle is closed.

The controversy between Critical Theory and positivism is itself a basic conflict being experienced in contemporary technological society. The experience of this conflict is symptomatic, in so far as it points to the wider conflict between the ideological historicism of Marx and Soviet Marxism on the one hand and, on the other, functionalistic scientism, such as Popper's. In taking a stand against the conception of history as the progress of mankind towards civilization and the exclusion of the historical dimension in positivism, Critical Theory has made a few notable and valuable contributions towards an understanding of man in the present situation. It has pointed out that, so far, history is the growing rule of man over man. This led to an ingrained feeling of power. Therefore, an analysis of history reveals dread and suffering among the new generation. What is required is the use of critical insight for the purpose of the uncovering of authority as an inveterate urge for power, not only from the economic but also from the psychological point of view. In the light of this uncovering as well as the experienced catastrophes and those to come . . . "the thesis of a historical world plan for improvement appears cynical".<sup>1</sup>) The logicity ascribed to history by Hegel and Marx and as it is being ascribed to history by Marxism-Leninism, is *index falsi*. Especially Adorno's and Horkheimer's negative dialectics represents some kind of counter-history in this respect. In the *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*,<sup>2</sup>) we find the following passage:

Für die *Frankfurter Schule* ist Geschichtsphilosophie (bes. die Hegelsche) wesentlich Gegenstand der Kritik, und Th. W. Adorno and M. Horkheimer üben sie so, dass auch Marx und Engels getroffen werden: Die Geschichtsphilosophie — mit Einschluss des historischen Materialismus — ist 'Vergottung' von Vernunft und Geschichte auf Kosten der leidenden Natur, die Glorifizierung des Allgemeinen zuungunsten des Besonderen; die Geschichtsphilosophie sieht in der Geschichte lediglich die Ausfaltung des im Ursprung vorhandenen, und sie sanktioniert und feiert das wirkliche Leid und Unrecht in der Geschichte als

<sup>1</sup> Th. W. Adorno, *Negative Dialektik*, pp. 297, 312.

<sup>2</sup> Vol., 3, p. 436 (U. Dierse/G. Scholtz).

historisch notwendig . . . Dennoch ist die Kritische Theorie selbst Geschichtsphilosophie, eine Gegen-Geschichtsphilosophie gleichsam, gemäss dem Programm Horkheimers und Adorns: 'Eine philosophische Konstruktion der Weltgeschichte hätte zu zeigen, wie sich trotz aller Umwege und Widerstände die konsequente Naturherrschaft immer entschiedener durchsetzt und alles Innermenschliche integriert'.

That this cannot mean a departure from history emerges from the fact that Critical Theory is in itself a philosophy of history, which holds that nature, too, is supposed to be conceived by history. Especially Habermas continues to conceive history as a totality from which civilization must be understood. Integrating analytical and hermeneutical methods, Critical Theory's task is to uncover this totality as relations of work and power. The impact, therefore, of the technological experience on Habermas's thought cannot be overlooked. A combination of positivistic functionalism with Marxian dialectical materialism appears to emerge from the following quotation:

Gegenwärtig hat J. Habermas die Marxsche Ökonomiekritik in den Zusammenhang der klassischen Geschichtsphilosophie hineingestellt und von Marx ausgehend die Notwendigkeit einer 'materialistischen Geschichtsphilosophie', 'einer empirischen Geschichtsphilosophie in praktischer Absicht' behauptet (*Theorie und Praxis*, 1971, 244ff., 271ff); denn da die zwei Voraussetzungen der Geschichtsphilosophie, Einheit der Menschheit und Machbarkeit der Geschichte, jetzt faktisch gegeben sind, bedarf es einer Theorie, welche die universale gesellschaftliche Entwicklung in ihrem Mechanismus durchschaut und sie in die Verantwortung und den Willen der Menschen überzuführen intendiert.<sup>1)</sup>

Not only bears the language of this passage an unmistakably functionalistic character, but the given possibility of the *Machbarkeit der Geschichte* (obviously by means of the modern sciences and technology) might not bring about society's self-emancipation, but might end in a totalitarian technocracy.

<sup>1</sup> *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, Vol. 3, p. 436 (U. Dierse/G. Scholtz).

However, the critical concern of Critical Theory about the suppression of history in contemporary technological society is of great existential significance. For without a historical consciousness, self-understanding is hardly possible and leads to an identity crisis and a personality crisis, which phenomena manifest themselves in an appalling way by the disorientation that reigns among the young generation and the rudderless course pursued by them. The materialistic selfishness and inner emptiness, the frustration, loss of balance and despair, as a result of the suppression of history by established society, are especially noticeable in the Germany of today. This "bourgeois" society, which is governed by the ideal of rationality and whose ideal philosopher would be a man like Karl Popper with his idea of history as self-emancipation through (rational) knowledge and his concept of social engineering, liquidates historical knowledge as the memory of an "irrational remainder". In doing so, it glosses over the (historical) tendencies, so constituting a danger to itself. The conclusion drawn by Critical Theory is that critical historical thinking should not merely be contemplative, nor should it, like positivism' exhaust itself in the exploration of the facts. But it should locate in the facts the preponderancy to trends. However, the danger exists that the application of modern technological means, at the attempt to achieve this purpose, leads to the computerization of history, thus functionalizing and structuralizing it, so that man is swallowed up by it as an individual and a personality.

(x) *Neo-Positivism — Geschichte has no Meaning*

The argument advanced by contemporary positivists that *Geschichte* has no meaning has been justifiably criticized by Critical Theory. The latter pointed out that positivism exhausted itself in the exploration of facts. Especially in the neo-positivistic way of thinking, which is characterized by its functionalistic piecemeal method, facts mean, in the first instance, the natural events explored by the natural sciences rather than historical events. Although, in some cases, coming dangerously close to positivism, Critical Theory, especially Habermas, realizes the importance of historical knowledge for both theory and practice. To Habermas it was labour as instrumental action on the one hand and, on the other, rational selection of strategies to be pursued, which revealed itself as dialectical interaction between sci-

ence and history, science and morality, science and politics — theory and practice. By welding science and history into a dialectical unit through labour as communicative action, Habermas sought to change the repressive role these two disciplines performed in the contemporary technological society of the West (scientism) and the contemporary ideologist society of the East (historicism), respectively. He attempted to convert this role into an emancipatory role: the emancipation of society from scientific technocracy on the one hand and ideological historicism on the other. Although his methodologically constituted truth-perspective, as any other, is problematic and controversial, it is a meaningful theory, which derives its validity from seeking to cope with the socio-political conflicts that emerged as a result of the scientifico-technological revolution.

The conception of neo-positivism that only the natural sciences — especially physics — yield objective knowledge, while history's approach to its field of enquiry is subjective, is highly controversial. It has already been shown that leading scientists (e.g. Max Born) point to the subjective factor in the natural sciences: their existential role, social accountability and moral responsibility. Their practical significance is thus not confined to the functionalistically practical, in the sense of scientifico-technological processes, but includes the existential and moral questions that emerge from their findings, which doubtless affect human existence and social relations. It is, however, the very functionalistic aspect of their practical role that is absolutized by neo-positivistic thinkers such as Karl Popper, so that the sciences — including the humanities and social sciences — become one-dimensional. As a matter of fact, contemporary man's mind is largely dominated by the functionalistic one-dimensional way of thinking, the fetish and god-like symbol of which is, at present, the computer.

It is ironic that it is the great natural scientists who, as has been shown, pointed to man's and the sciences' multi-dimensional character, and to man's multi-cultural activities, who warned that physics must not try to be philosophy. But in view of the neo-positivists' claim that the analysis of scientific language is the only meaningful philosophy, it would be justifiable to ask whether philosophy should try to be physics. It stands to reason that the recognition by the great scientists of the existential and moral aspects of the natural sciences as well as

man's multi-dimensional character and multi-cultural activities points to the interrelationship between the sciences and history, the sciences and politics, the sciences and morality and the sciences and religion. Since the natural sciences, like all other disciplines, are man-made in that they are methodologically constituted as theory from man's contingent experience of reality as well, it follows that all human theories or truth-perspectives are scientific and historical at the same time. All human theories, from whatever type of human experience they have been conceived, are postulated from changing historical conditions.

This makes it impossible to decide the truth or falsehood of theories in terms of one particular theory or method, such as Popper's one-dimensional functionalistic method and his concept of falsifiability, for example. His theory of science is true only in the sense that it is an expression of the functionalistic *Zeitgeist*. As such, it is itself historical, although, methodologically, it alienates man from his multi-dimensional experience of reality and himself as a multi-dimensional personality. It is also historical in that, like other theories or truth-perspectives, it has been called in question by other theories of science such as those of Kuhn or Feyerabend, for example. It becomes clear that no theory can shed its historical dimension. This also applies to the theories of history proper. Their truth-value derives from the historical circumstances under which they are postulated. It is this fact that brings the past into the present and catapults us towards the future. It is that which affords us self-understanding and which renders history meaningful. If the neo-positivists claim that history is meaningless, then a theory such as Popper's is meaningless as well, for it is, as has been shown, historical.

The thesis advanced here reads: Any theory or truth-perspective is meaningful because it is conceived from a specific type of human experience under changing historical conditions, with which it seeks to cope in a rational manner. It becomes meaningless if it is abstracted from man's contingent experience of reality by being paraded as *the* Truth. Thus, however useful the functionalistic way of thinking may be when kept within its own limits and confined to its appropriate field of investigation, that of technology, so pernicious it proves itself when applied to history and the social sciences. That is however what Popper does when he says that it is social technology's task, or the task

of social engineers, to develop the open society on a scientific basis. It stands to reason that this approach will result in a one-dimensional, functionalistic, therefore in a closed, society.

It is true that Popper sees the historical world in terms of problem situations and in his essay *Selbstbefreiung durch das Wissen*<sup>1</sup>) defines history as self-emancipation through knowledge. But since this appears to mean knowledge of the natural sciences and technology, unless he contradicts himself, it stands to reason that, in the act of self-emancipation through the functionalist forces, man will turn himself into a mere function himself, as he appears to be doing at this stage anyway, at least to a large extent. We are therefore back at square one; for man has become enslaved in a new way, in that his way of thinking is dominated by one-dimensional functional processes. The possibility of the cybernetic computer society looms large.

Popper's rejection of history as an object of science<sup>2</sup>) must be understood by his judging history in terms of the natural sciences. He thus fails to see that the methodological constitution of theories in history occurs from a specific type of human experience, which differs in quality from the experience of natural events and phenomena. He fails to understand that the methodological constitution as theory or truth-perspective of historical events represents history as a science in its own right. Popper's rejection of history as an objective science has both practical and epistemological motives.

According to him, all theories which conceive history in terms of principles or laws (holism) promote totalitarianism and the destruction of the open (democratic) society. They postulate a principle of generalization for a field in which it has no, or only limited, validity. To be able to arrive at general laws by induction (hypotheses), sufficient evidence from sources is required. History offers too little material from sources, which have already been interpreted and changed. For this reason, Popper — in the light of the concept of the sciences — defends the

---

<sup>1</sup> In: L. Reinisch (ed.), *Der Sinn der Geschichte*, pp. 100-116.

<sup>2</sup> Popper's rejection of history as an objective science is contained in his essay "Selbstbefreiung durch das Wissen", in: *Der Sinn der Geschichte* as well as *The Poverty of Historicism*. Also cf. "Has History Any Meaning?", in: *The Open Society and its Enemies*, Vol. 2, pp. 259-280.

traditional dualism: the theoretical (nomological) or generalizing sciences (physics, biology, sociology) and the historical disciplines. While, however, in neo-Kantianism (Windelband, Rickert) and hermeneutics (Dilthey), it is history that shows man reality and reflects his life-experience, while the mere explanatory natural sciences are an abstraction and alienation from reality and life, with Popper it is the natural sciences through which knowledge of objective reality is obtained. While the natural sciences are interested in the establishment of general laws and the possibility of their temporary confirmation and falsification by specific facts, history is interested in specific events and their causal explanation.

This shows that Popper regards history through the goggles of the natural science method. He measures it in terms of the functionalistic piecemeal approach of the contemporary natural sciences, in the light of which history must of course appear inadequate as a science. Here the question arises, whether history is only interested in the functional aspects of historical events, as Popper seems to believe. Is history not equally interested in the cultural, moral, political, religious and especially existential aspects. Is it not, for instance, interested in the burning question of man's self-understanding in a specific cultural, moral and socio-political situation, as it has been conditioned by history? Is not the argument about the meaning of history continuing in history in the same way as is the argument about knowledge and truth — in this sense meaning — in the natural sciences? Is Popper's theory of science not proof of this? Is it not itself part of the argument or does he claim that he has provided the conclusive answer? This is, however, disproved by the fact that his theory is controversial and has been called in question by others. It has already been pointed out that Popper fails to understand the qualitative difference between the experience of natural events and of historical events, from which theories in the natural sciences and in history have been conceived, respectively. He thus fails to see that history is a science in its own right.

In the light of his functional piecemeal method, Popper views history as assuming certain inceptive conditions (such as interests and surroundings), which it connects with the *explicandum* (the event to be explained) according to general laws. According to him, these laws are, as a rule, trivial and merely assumed by the logic of a certain situ-

ation, by which an action is tacitly considered rational for a certain situation.<sup>1</sup>) In this regard, he fails to ask the question whether this does not hold basically true for the "laws" in physics or biology as well, even if they may have a longer life than those of history. The man-madness of these laws has been shown in a preceding chapter. Their controversial character has been discussed not only with reference to the natural sciences only, but to logic and mathematics as well. In logical positivism, for instance, the problem of the verification of these laws emerged.

Generally speaking, the trouble with Popper is that he does not, as do the great leading scientists, realize the man-madness, thus subjective character, of scientific theories, his own included. It is because history is measured and judged by his functionalistic piecemeal method that Popper regards history as having no laws, trends or tendencies. There are, in his view, no obligatory stand-points in history, according to which criteria can be established. There are no provable or testable hypotheses as in the natural sciences. There are merely attitudes: historical or general interpretations: quasi-theories. Which theory is to be chosen depends on the fertility of the approach. Popper's functional piecemeal approach to history makes him say that, because of the principle of fertile plurality of possible interpretations of history, the unity of the concept of history disintegrates: "There is no history of mankind, there is only an indefinite number of histories of all kinds of aspects of human life."<sup>2</sup>) In this sense Popper states categorically: "History has no meaning."<sup>3</sup>)

But is it not Popper himself who *established* this principle of fertile plurality? It stands to reason that, in view of man's contingent experience of reality, from which all theories, in whatever field of human experience, are constituted, there is plurality in both the natural and human sciences. But it is a different matter to talk about a *principle* of fertile plurality. This is in itself a human theoretical constitution performed under specific historical circumstances, which assumes a specific meaning, from which then certain general conclusions are

<sup>1</sup> Cf. G. Scholtz, Article on "Geschichte", in: J Ritter (ed), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, Vol. 3, pp. 394-395.

<sup>2</sup> "Has History Any Meaning?", in: *The Open Society and its Enemies*, Vol. 2, p. 270.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p.269.

drawn. What Popper fails to take into account is the contingent root of his self-constituted principle, on the grounds of which it has, like any other theoretical constitution, a controversial character.

Moreover, the question arises whether the "principle of fertile plurality" is not valid for the contemporary natural sciences as well. It reminds us greatly of Heisenberg's principle of uncertainty in atomic physics. It has already been demonstrated that this principle led to a *docta ignorantia* in the science of physics, of which leading physicists, such as Heisenberg, Born and Schrödinger, took due note. From the various interpretations of physics as they have been discussed in the sections "The Constitution of Scientific Theory and the Question of Evidence" and "The Natural Sciences", for example, the conclusion may be drawn that, in physics, the same principle of fertile plurality operates. Just as according to this principle, as applied by Popper to the historical field of human experience, there would be no more history but a number of histories, so there would be no more physics but a number of physics, if this principle were applied to this specific type of human experience. But in each case we can speak of a specific type of experience, which is contingent and from which controversial theories or truth-perspectives in history and physics are constituted under changing historical conditions. It is precisely this specific type of experience, which determines the content of the theories conceived from it and which demarcates a specific field of scientific activity, that enables us to speak about history and physics respectively.

The great scientists are much more critical than Popper's "critical" rationalism. As became manifest from our discussion of their views, they readily admit their ignorance as to the ultimate causes of physical events and the basic structure of the world (e.g. Schrödinger with regard to matter). Realizing the multi-dimensionality of human experience, they are more modest and more circumspect than Popper. Recognizing the man-made-ness of the natural sciences as one human intellectual activity among others, Max Born says:

Die Physik ist nur *eine* Wissenschaft unter vielen und alle Wissenschaften nur *eine* Betätigung des menschlichen Geistes unter vielen<sup>1)</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> "Die Grenzen des physikalischen Weltbildes", in: *Von der Verantwortung des Naturwissenschaftlers*, pp. 87-113.

Werner Heisenberg writes:

Die moderne Naturwissenschaft zeichnet sich in ihren Anfängen durch bewusste Bescheidenheit aus, sie macht über streng begrenzte Zusammenhänge Aussagen, die *nur im Rahmen dieser Grenzen Gültigkeit haben. Im 19. Jahrhundert geht diese Bescheidenheit weitgehend verloren.* Die Erkenntnisse der Physik werden als Aussagen über die Natur als Ganzes betrachtet. Die Physik will Philosophie sein und verschiedentlich wird gefordert, dass jede wahre Philosophie Naturwissenschaft sein müsse. Heute macht die Physik einen grundsätzlichen Wandel durch, als dessen hervorstechendster Zug die Rückkehr zu ihrer ursprünglichen Selbstbescheidung erscheint.<sup>1)</sup>

It would appear that the basic change the science of physics has been undergoing, the most prominent feature of which is designated by Heisenberg as the return to its original self-restraint, has gone unnoticed by Popper. It may be stated with impunity that, under the impact of the immense expansion of the natural sciences and technology as well as the functional application of their findings, the critical and self-critical insights of the great scientists, their warnings against the abuse of the natural sciences by unscrupulous politicians and their concern about mankind's destiny are studiously ignored.

The spirit of one-dimensional functionalism, which has penetrated all the sciences — natural sciences and human sciences — led to man's own functionalization. It led to his *Vergesellschaftlichung*<sup>2)</sup> in the sense that, from an individual and a person, he turned himself into a functional event in society. As such, he was also a historical event. In the wake of the functionalistic way of thinking that began to dominate man's mind, the original purpose of the natural sciences was largely forgotten, which had consisted in the pursuit of knowledge for the sake of knowledge — the attempt to explain the world from basic principles, basic laws and basic forms, such an attempt being made by leading physicists such as Heisenberg and Schrödinger. It has been replaced by a pragmatic concern about functional knowledge: the striving

---

<sup>1</sup> *Das Naturbild der heutigen Physik*, p. 132.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. G. Krüger, *Grundfragen der Philosophie — Geschichte, Wahrheit, Wissenschaft*.

for the functional control of nature for material ends and closely linked to it, political power. It is this exploitation of science, its perversion into an instrument of power by politicians, which today is commonly called "progress".

As far as Popper's neo-positivistic way of thinking — a specimen of one-dimensional functionalistic thinking — is concerned, history has no meaning because, in terms of the principle of fertile plurality, there is no history, there are only histories. Nevertheless, says Popper, we are able to give it meaning. We can fight for self-emancipation through knowledge, because our ideas are powers that influence history. We have already pointed out the consequences of this argument, in view of the fact that by knowledge is meant knowledge of the natural sciences.

In view of the above argument, it is plausible that Popper distinguishes between the existence of the physico-organical world in terms of basic structural properties (important for the testing of a scientific theory as "true" and "false") and the existence of a historical world in terms of problem situations, to which scientific knowledge can be applied for the purpose of self-emancipation. It is in this way that the transition from the closed to the open society, "the greatest revolution in history", will be accomplished. The realization of this goal is the functional task of *social technology* developed by *social engineers* on a scientific basis.<sup>1)</sup>

It has already been pointed out that Popper's total functionalism is especially pernicious when applied to history and the social sciences. His one-dimensional piecemeal approach is foreign to man's very nature as a reflecting human being, who cannot help projecting himself into the world in various ways, from various types of experience, under changing historical conditions and, in so doing, make the world meaningful for himself. In brief, Popper's one-dimensionality does no justice to man's multi-dimensionality. Popper's view of the natural sciences and history must be seen as a particular truth-perspective among others, which reflects the contemporary functionalistic *Zeitgeist*. Since it enters into a critical relationship with other truth-

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Open Society and its Enemies*, Vol. 1, Chapter 3, IV, especially, pp. 22-24.

perspectives, it must be seen as forming part of the continuing argument about knowledge and truth under changing historical conditions. As a controversial theory, it enters into argument with the truth-perspectives of Critical Theory, for example. If Popper had realized that his own theory was no more than a specific controversial truth-perspective, he could hardly have claimed that it would be conducive to establishing an open society. It stands to reason that such a society can be achieved only if the critical and self-critical character of the continuing argument on knowledge and truth, as it is being conducted between man and his fellow-man under changing historical conditions, is acknowledged as a vehicle of vital need and existential significance. In an open society this argument will be carried on in a mutual spirit of self-restraint, self-restriction, modesty, tolerance, open-mindedness, respect and goodwill.

#### 4. The Socio-Political Sciences



##### a) The Beginnings

The socio-political sciences have in common with the other sciences that they constitute their theories or truth-perspectives from a basic conflict experience shared by all men: the experience of socio-political conflict, which they seek to neutralize. It is this experience that sets in motion the socio-political argument about truth, which crystallizes as the continuous argument of freedom (from socio-political conflict) and justice (the greatest possible neutralization of socio-political conflict). The socio-political conflict experience — as it manifests itself at a particular historical stage — is reflected by the respective social and governmental structure. In more recent political thought, for example in the political views of Marx and Engels, the question whether a society was free or a repressive society was answered in terms of the man-citizen conflict. A free society was one where this conflict had been resolved, where man was a fully-fledged citizen and *vice versa*. The man-citizen conflict was first articulated by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. It should however be borne in mind that this dichotomy is itself a theoretical constitution and that socio-political theories have always attempted to neutralize socio-political conflict and, in so doing, appease the needs arising from the conflict experience of their own

age. Hence, socio-political argument continues under changing historical conditions, on the grounds of man's contingent experience of reality. The common experience of socio-political conflict, which sets the argument in motion, raises the questions of power, justice and freedom. For, obviously, for the purpose of enabling people to live together in security, peace and the greatest possible happiness, there must be some authority lending stability to the whole. There must be a law by which these social values are protected and which guarantees the greatest possible freedom and the greatest possible peace of mind, the experience of which could be called happiness.

It was the realization of man's imperfection as the source of socio-political conflict as it existed in the *polis* of their time, which induced Plato and Aristotle to regard the state as a necessary educational institution, the task of which was to guide man to justice and freedom from socio-political conflict and to self-realization, according to his natural capacities and purpose. From Plato's "Allegory of the Cave" in the seventh book of the *Republic*, it emerges that man's highest natural gift is the philosopher's capacity for rational insight into truth as reflected in the rational structure of the cosmos, and the leading of a life in accordance with the knowledge of truth and goodness gained by that insight. That is the reason why philosophers should be kings. If philosopher-kings ruled, reason would rule, so that justice and freedom would prevail. For Aristotle<sup>1</sup>), man should live a life of moderation and, in all his actions, should follow the *golden mean*. Just as nature was doing around him, namely fulfilling its purpose in the various forms that emerged and that were controlled by their natural function, so man, as a rational animal, should control his natural appetites by reason and perform his natural social function. In doing so, he would blend himself into the cosmos and experience happiness. According to Aristotle, the greatest happiness was experienced in the pursuit of intellectual tasks, reason being man's greatest natural gift.

Both philosophers, Plato and Aristotle, may be said to conceive moderate aristocratic states, the virtue of *arètè* not being derived from the accident of birth but from performance according to a man's natural capacity and function. It is these that divide men into social classes;

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Nicomachean Ethics*.

and only if nature is obeyed and natural destiny — *moira* — is accepted, harmony, justice, freedom and happiness prevail. The difference between the two philosophers is that Plato's state operates on the principle of human striving for reason for the sake of justice, while Aristotle's state is governed by the principle of happiness, for the attainment of which reason is an instrument. Aristotle's state is *eudaimonistic*, seeking happiness by judging man's actions in terms of the common good.

What can hardly be denied is the fact that, in his thinking and acting, man is referred to his fellow-man, who both negates and affirms him, limits and expands him. Indeed, without him, he would hardly be conscious of himself as an individual. From his contradictory nature rises the conflict with the other — a basic experience which he shares with the other and by which they are referred to each other in trying to cope with their socio-political problems. It is on account of his imperfection that Aristotle calls man a social animal. Both Plato and Aristotle realize that it is only through the other — thus through society — that man can know himself as an individual and realize himself as a human being. He does so by subjecting his will to reason and, in so doing, fuses with the cosmos. In this way, social conflict is overcome, justice (natural balance and harmony) is established and the common good realized. In view of this, the educational function and ethical character of organized society — the state — clearly emerges. In a certain sense, Hegel's conception of the state as an ethical idea of the Absolute Spirit is anticipated by Plato and Aristotle. It could be argued that, in view of its educational function and ethical character, Plato's and Aristotle's state is the ethical idea of the cosmos as seen by each thinker, respectively, the state reflecting the hierarchical order of the cosmos (harmony and justice), of which it is an integral part.

The goal of overcoming social conflict, establishing social justice and realizing the common good can however not be attained without knowledge, i.e., without rational insight into the structure of the cosmos, the human soul and society. Plato recognizes the essentially rational structure of the cosmos — nature, soul and society — and views the conflicts within the components of the cosmos in the light of reason. When each of these components is governed by reason, natural, individual and social justice prevails and, under the principle of

identity, freedom from conflict is attained. Nature, man and society are in harmony with one another.

In Aristotle's case, knowledge of the essences of things (their forms) is required in order to arrive at a just, good and free society. On the grounds of the principles of potentiality (matter) and actuality (form), substances realize themselves in accordance with their inherent idea (purpose). Since man's true form is reason (rational soul), he realizes himself as a moral being through self-control. In following the path of the *golden mean*, he enjoys happiness, the highest degree of which is experienced at the pursuit of intellectual activity. Exercising moderation, man blends himself harmoniously into society, which, as we have seen, means the performance of his social task in accordance with his natural capacity, function and assignation, thus contributing to the common good. In striving for the realization of his own natural form, man is in line with nature, his own nature and society: the *polis*.

From the above, it is shown that science, in the wider sense of knowledge methodologically constituted from man's concrete socio-political conflict experience, has always been indispensable for the conception of socio-political theories, with the aim of overcoming social conflict and establishing a just society. This process continued, and is still continuing, under changing historical conditions, so that the socio-political argument on the question of justice and freedom, which may be said to have been started by Plato, is still in full swing today. The various theories conceived during this process highlight the specific nature of social conflict in particular historical situations and reflect the specific human needs for overcoming them. In their own turn, these socio-political theories contribute to social change and are so of practical significance. Indeed, they rise from practice — the need for overcoming conflict — and are practice-directed, in that they contribute to the changing of socio-political conditions. The socio-political argument started by Plato arose from the socio-political conflicts in the *polis* of his own time, those between democrats and aristocrats, which, in Plato's time, had largely developed into the conflict between rich and poor, typical for the oligarchic society of the Athenian *polis*. H.J. de Vleeschauer<sup>1</sup>) sees the realism of Plato's political theory in the fact

---

<sup>1</sup> *Geskiedenis van die Wysbegeerte in die Weste*. Vol. I, p. 145.

that it was modelled on the constitution of Sparta. He points to the sympathy the Athenian aristocrats evinced for Sparta. Their attitude was ridiculed by Aristophanes in his comedy, *The Birds*.

## b) Socio-Political Thought of the Enlightenment Era

The German philosopher, Immanuel Kant, is aware of the practice-directedness of his own transcendental theory when he says:

Alles läuft zuletzt auf das Praktische hinaus; und in dieser Tendenz alles Theoretischen und aller Spekulation in Ansehung ihres Gebrauchs besteht der praktische Wert unseres Erkenntnisses.<sup>1)</sup>

His three great *Critiques* are linked together by the transcendental act of rational striving: the act of striving for freedom from sensual conflict and for rational autonomy, so as to perform the moral act according to the dictates of reason: the categorical imperative. The transcendental act of rational striving constitutes all theory, epistemological, ethical and political. Theory, in turn, leads to practice on a higher level. The practical purpose of constituting the world by the transcendental method is clearly indicated by Kant's three questions. As he puts it:<sup>2)</sup> "Vereinigt sich alles Interesse meiner Vernunft".

- (i) Was kann ich wissen?
- (ii) Was soll ich tun?
- (iii) Was darf ich hoffen?

To these, he adds a fourth question: "Was ist der Mensch?"<sup>3)</sup>

From this methodological construction, it becomes clear that, for Kant, as for Plato and Aristotle, knowledge is the prerequisite for human freedom. It follows that theory is a guide for practice and that, without such a guide, practice becomes not only meaningless but also

---

<sup>1</sup> "Immanuel Kants Logik", *Akademie-Ausgabe*, Vol. IX, p. 87.

<sup>2</sup> *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*, B833.

<sup>3</sup> "Immanuel Kants Logik", *Akademie-Ausgabe*, Vol. IX, p. 25.

chaotic. The natural conflict that arises between men on the grounds of their paradoxical nature, which conflict is — as should have become clear — the motor of all theory-building, yielding the various historical truth-perspectives, would degenerate into violent confrontation with destructive consequences, as will be shown at a later stage.

The relationship between theory and practice in the act of rational striving, which encompasses Kant's transcendental method as a whole and by which his world of theory is constituted, presents itself as follows: The first epistemological stage may be described as the stage of theoretical world orientation; the second ethical stage may be designated as the stage of practical world orientation; the third historical-political stage may be called the stage of teleological world orientation. Already from our discussion on Kant's contribution to the philosophy of history, it emerged that the latter stage, which illustrates man's striving for freedom in particular, denotes the eventual merging of nature and history, nature and morality in the state of Kant's republican constitution. In more concrete terms, Kant states the practical intent of his theoretical critique as follows:

[By this critique] kann nun allein dem Materialism, Fatalism, Atheism, dem freigeistlichen Unglauben, der Schwärmerei und Aberglauben, die allgemein schädlich werden können, zuletzt auch dem Idealism und Scepticism, die mehr den Schulen gefährlich sind und schwerlich ins Publicum übergehen können, selbst die Wurzel abgeschnitten werden. <sup>1)</sup>

That especially Kant's socio-political philosophy flows from the experience of socio-political conflict and the needs arising from it — in this sense from practice — becomes evident from the fourth proposition of his *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht*. <sup>2)</sup> There, he describes man's paradox or contradictory nature as "unsociable sociableness": the observation that he strives for self-assertion as an individual on the one hand and, on the other, seeks his fellow-man's companionship. The antagonisms of society, which result from man's contradictory nature, require the establishment of a political order, based on the moral law, the categorical imperative, which reads:

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*, BXXXIV.

<sup>2</sup> *Akademie-Ausgabe*, Vol. VIII.

“Handle nur nach derjenigen Maxime, durch die du zugleich wollen kannst, dass sie allgemeines Gesetz werde”.<sup>1)</sup>

These antagonisms are a task assigned to man by nature; they are a means for a purpose: developing society into a moral whole, thus achieving freedom, justice, and happiness — *perpetual peace*. It is on the grounds of the experience of antagonisms as a result of the human propensity to isolating individualism on the one hand and, on the other, to socialization that the general development of mankind from the state of the savage to that of the civilized being of Kant's own time — a time of socio-political conflict — has taken place. This development will be completed when mankind's striving has reached the state of pure reason, the moral state, when all men act according to the dictates of reason and from duty for duty's sake. It is then that freedom, justice and peace — true happiness — will prevail. In making man realize his ideal purpose, Kant is fully aware of man's inadequacy and fallibility. He points out that man's egoism, vanity and unbridled individualism are not only obstacles in this teleological process but might even cause man to relapse into the state of a civilized barbarian, a warning that is perhaps even more relevant to the present-day technological civilization.

University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

It is in view of the socio-political conflict experience of his own time that Kant regards what he calls Locke's "hypothetical imperative" not as the final answer. This moral imperative conceived by Locke a century before Kant is a selfish device, in so far as it justifies man's striving for happiness in materialistic terms. In other words, with Locke, reason is used for the purpose of gaining material ends rather than being directed towards ideal purposes, this holding still true in the society of Kant's own time. While, for Locke, happiness is utilitarian in nature, it results for Kant from the moral law of pure reason, from the *moral ought* contained in it. Kant's concept of happiness is deontic, in the sense that man performs his duty as dictated to him by pure reason. Locke's subsumption of reason under happiness produces the competitive successful man of modern civilization: the gentleman of the rising middle-class. For him, the acquisition of property is a virtue that affords true pleasure, not only in the sense of

---

<sup>1</sup> "Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten," *Akademie-Ausgabe*, Vol. IV, p. 421.

personal gratification, but also in the sense that the acquisition of property agrees with the divine law, the positive law of the land and public opinion.

For Locke, it is through knowledge that the body politic must be built, in agreement with the exigencies of the time: the liberal state of the rising middle class, the state of the property owners. For Locke, all knowledge rests on an empirical foundation, on man's outer and inner experience: sensation and reflection. It is from this foundation that the various levels of knowledge, probable and demonstrative knowledge, are established by the inductive method, while, deductively, all ideas, simple ideas, simple modes, complex ideas and mixed modes, the latter including moral ideas, can be reduced to experience. The development of an *eudaimonistic* ethics as a kind of demonstrative knowledge<sup>1</sup>) is conducive to bridging the clash of interests among competitive property owners. True pleasure — happiness — is obtained by the *rational stand-still-of-the-will*, the subjection of willing to rational insight. Rational insight causes man to perform the moral act in self-control. It will make him act in such a way that his fellow-man's needs and interests are taken into account. On this rational basis the social contract is concluded for the purpose of self-preservation, security, the enjoyment of one's property (the acquisition of which is a virtue) and happiness. According to Locke,<sup>2</sup>) it is by the means of a social contract that men pass out of a state of nature into a political state. By this contract, the constitutional democratic state is established, whose chief function is the protection of the individual's freedom, his "Life, Liberty and Estate".

From the economic point of view, the right to the acquisition of property may be summed up by the formula: *laissez faire, laissez passer*. Even though Locke's essay *On the Value of Money* was still written in the spirit of mercantilism, it already bore the features of free trade as conceived in Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*. In his treatise *Some Thoughts on Education*, Locke develops his concept of modern civilized man: the gentleman, who is the ideal type of man of the rising middle class, whose chief virtue is self-control through rational insight into his willing. Locke calls this the *rational stand-still-of-the-will*. Finally, in his two

<sup>1</sup> CF. *Essay on the Human Understanding*, Book II, Chap. XXI.

<sup>2</sup> CF. *Of Civil Government*, VII, pp. 87-89.

*Treatises of Government* — the first being directed against Robert Filmer's concept of the divine right of kings — Locke puts forward his model of the modern constitutional state on the basis of man's inalienable right to happiness as against the absolute monarchy founded on the divine right of kings.

That Locke's political theory has had tremendous practical consequences needs hardly pointing out. It was conceived in view of the conflict between the Stewart kings and Parliament. It may be said that it justifies the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and finds expression by the Bill of Rights (1689). Without it, the American Revolution would have had no theoretical guide; and though the American constitution is modelled on Montesquieu's ideas (who is influenced by Locke), the Declaration of Independence (1776) is "largely the work of Jefferson, who drew heavily from the natural rights doctrine of the English philosopher, John Locke".<sup>1)</sup> It is a fact that the Declaration of Independence is still the *Credo* of American society and the American way of life today.

Locke's political ideas and his concept of the gentleman were criticized by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In his *Discours sur l'inégalité*,<sup>2)</sup> he argues that the ideas of property and the division of labour alienated man from nature, from himself and from his fellow-man and divided society into estates, thus causing it to become repressive. For this reason he states the purpose of the *Contrat Social* as follows:

Trouver une forme d'association qui défende et protège de toute la force commune la personne et les biens de chaque associé, et par laquelle chacun, s'unissant à tous, n'obéisse pourtant qu'à lui-même, et reste aussi libre qu'auparavant. Tel est le problème fondamental dont le *Contrat Social* donne la solution.<sup>3)</sup>

The solution of this problem is given by Rousseau's ethics of *natural intuition*, in terms of two basic concepts: the *volonté générale* and the *conscience divine*. The former, which is more than the *volonté de tous*, is

<sup>1)</sup> J C Plano and M Greenberg, *The American Political Dictionary*, p. 21.

<sup>2)</sup> Cf. E A Crosby, *Les Meilleurs Pages de Rousseau*, pp. 26-32.

<sup>3)</sup> *Op. Cit.*, p. 82.

the expression by each individual of natural goodness, through which the individual transcends his individuality and blends himself into society. The latter is the rational touch-stone of moral behaviour. *Volonté générale* and *conscience divine* correspond to each other. The former constitutes the social contract (the social structure and the state), the latter enables man to judge between good and evil. It is by the intuition of natural goodness that Rousseau proposes to overcome civilized man's alienation from nature, his own nature and society.

Kant appreciates Rousseau's rejection of modern civilization on the grounds of the suffering, misery and injustice it has brought upon man through the ideas of property and the division of labour. But he adds that Rousseau's rejection of civilization is justifiable only if the civilization of his time is regarded as the final stage of mankind's development. Rousseau is wrong, however, if it is taken into account that the stage of civilization in which he finds himself is a transitory stage in mankind's evolution towards a fully-fledged moral species.<sup>1</sup>) Kant argues that the evils existing in the civilized society of his time, its unjust, repressive and contradictory nature, point beyond the modern states, to a state where all states are leagued together in a free association of states, so that mankind will be able to live in freedom, justice and peace. With this purpose in mind he can say that the evils of the modern state — including wars — work towards the good. Wars represent a means to end war, thus working towards *perpetual peace*. Kant's idea of a world government finds expression in the seventh proposition of his philosophy of history: *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht* as well as in his fragment *Vom Völkerrecht*.

All in all, it may be said that Kant regarded the conflict-ridden society of his time, which was motivated by material interests, as a necessary transitory stage in the development of mankind from the stage of mere civilization and legality to that of true culture and morality. At the latter stage, social relations would be formed on the principle of pure reason (the moral law). There would be a republican *mode* of government, which could be any form of government, provided it was founded on and guided by reason. When the government of

---

<sup>1</sup> Seventh Proposition of Kant's "Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht", *Akademie-Ausgabe*, Vol. VIII, pp. 24-26.

states will be founded upon and guided by reason (the moral law), nations would be leagued to each other through pure reason. It is then that perpetual peace would reign. As a member of such a commonwealth, man would be a world citizen. On the level of pure reason, man would be in step with nature (reality), himself (as a rational and moral being) and society (the rational state). At the stage of pure reason, therefore, the principle of identity would be fulfilled.

### c) The Further Development of Socio-Political Thought in terms of Theory and Practice

Locke's philosophical ideas were spread throughout France by thinkers such as Voltaire, the French materialists (Holbach, la Mettrie, d'Alembert, Diderot) and Rousseau, for all the latter's opposition to Locke's ideas. It is a truism that, without the impact of modern science (Newton) and philosophy, the French Revolution would have lacked theoretical guidance. Modern science and philosophy had an enlightening and revolutionary effect. Science and reason superseded faith and religion as the foundation of the new society. The new philosophy became a weapon for political emancipation and freedom when socio-political conflict assumed an explosive character as a result of the system's bankruptcy, which forced it to resort to ever harsher measures of economic exploitation and political oppression. The new philosophy turned the third estate, the middle class and its intellectual leaders, into revolutionaries, whose aim was to replace the despotic monarchy and the parasitic aristocracy by a constitutional system of government. Generally speaking, the French Revolution, especially in its first phase, could be regarded as the practical application of Enlightenment philosophy to socio-political conflict for the purpose of founding society on rational principles and virtue. This is why the French Revolution was welcomed by thinkers such as Kant and Hegel. When it failed and new problems and conflicts emerged, new political theories, like those of Hegel and Marx, had to be designed, for the purpose of coping with the new situation.

Hegel saw in the French Revolution an attempt of subjective reason to achieve a break-through to concrete reality. It was not surprising to Hegel that this attempt got stuck in an abstract subjectivity, which prevented a reconciliation between subject and substance. The

realization of freedom on an objective basis was thus thwarted. As Hegel put it, freedom was guillotined by an abstract rational principle. In the name of the subjective principle of one man — Robespierre's principle of virtue — anyone who deviated from this principle or was suspected, even denounced, of doing so was guillotined. Hegel writes:

Die Tugend hat jetzt zu regieren gegen die Vielen, welche mit ihrer Verdorbenheit und ihren alten Interessen oder auch durch Exzesse der Freiheit und Leidenschaften der Tugend ungetreu sind . . . Von Robespierre wurde das Prinzip der Tugend als das Höchste aufgestellt . . . Es herrschen jetzt die *Tugend* und der *Schrecken*; denn die subjektive Tugend, die bloss von der Gesinnung aus regiert, bringt fürchterlichste Tyranney mit sich.<sup>1)</sup>

Hegel compares this state of affairs, when opinion as such was punished, with the rule of terror of the Roman emperors, the witch hunts and the inquisition.



In Hegel's eyes the failure of the French Revolution to achieve freedom on the basis of subjective human reason refuted the idea of the autonomy of human reason proclaimed by Kant. The absolutization of this idea had not resulted in freedom but in the Reign of Terror. It proved a mere abstract idea or, as Kant would say, an ideal purpose. It could never be realized. The attempt of the French Revolution to found society on subjective reason having been abortive and ended in a gruesome bloodbath, there was great relief when — after the short-lived period of the Directorate (1795-1799) — order was restored by Napoleon "that world soul on horseback", as Hegel called him. He saw in Napoleon the catalyst of the Spirit, in the sense that he freed Europe from the corrupt feudal order. But when he revealed himself as a conqueror and became himself oppressive, the Absolute Spirit moved away from him to the nations oppressed by him. Especially in Prussia, which played a major part in the Wars of Liberation against Napoleon, Hegel saw the instrument of the Spirit. In his *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, he says that in the Prussian monarchy the Spirit's

<sup>1</sup> "Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte", *Werke*, Vol. 12, pp. 532-533.

movement towards self-emancipation has reached its final stage, so that Prussia stands for the self-emancipation of mankind. It should however be pointed out that Hegel leaves open other possibilities as well.

It may however be said with impunity that the German idealists, especially Fichte<sup>1</sup>) and Hegel, regarded Prussia as the protagonist for human freedom. Hegel saw in it the Spirit as the synthesis of all opposites, the *coincidentia oppositorum*. It was there, that the reconciliation between substance and subject, the general and the particular, the inward and the outward had taken place. It was the principle of inwardness that had been missing in the French Revolution and that had caused its failure. Although it was France where the first attempt had been made to build a society and a state on reason, this had been done for external (functional and material) reasons, not from internal (purely rational) motives. In fact, argues Hegel, this applies to western democratic countries as a whole. It is now the task of philosophy to understand the lesson of the French Revolution and to reconcile the external principle with the German internal principle on the basis of objective universal reason: World Reason. It is in this way that the conflict between progressive (liberal, constitutional, nationalist) and conventional (conservative, autocratic, Hegelianist) forces was to be overcome. This conflict, which had arisen in the wake of the French Revolution, was one of the dominant factors in the 19th century.

In founding the state on universal reason rather than on happiness, Hegel attempted to lift it from a selfish, subjective plane to an unselfish objective level. Accordingly, he regards aristocratic and democratic forms of government as changing subjective stages of the Spirit on its way to objectivity, self-consciousness and freedom. He celebrates the monarchy of his time as a symbol of reason, as an objective principle. It is from reason that the monarch derives his authority. He is no despot but, in his decisions, adheres strictly to the nation's charter, law and government. His function consists in nothing more than formally appending his signature to documents.

Since the state is the expression of the Spirit as an Ethical Idea, it

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. J.G. Fichte's *Reden an die deutsche Nation* (1807/1808), where an appeal to the German nation is made to rise against Napoleon and, in the name of mankind, shake off his oppressive rule.

follows that Hegel's citizen owes his freedom to the state. "The state", says Windelband with reference to Hegel, "is the realization of the ethical Idea; it is the spirit of the people become visible".<sup>1</sup>) Man is a citizen by the state's rational necessity. By subordinating his will to reason, man affirms the law, the expression of the people's will. The act of subordinating his will to reason and his individual consciousness to the common consciousness (the state) is a moral act by which he blends himself into the state. As the common consciousness of the people, the state is designated by Hegel as *Sittlichkeit* (social morality) and constitutes the realization of the Ethical Idea. Through the state, which, as social morality, forms the synthesis of morality and right, man blends himself into universal history: the historical *Logos* or World Reason. At this final stage, all conflict is terminated and the principle of identity fulfilled.

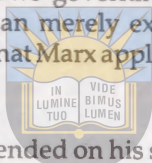
In Hegel's system, which claims to represent *the Truth*, all problems that puzzled man, the problems of knowledge, reality (being), ethics, politics, aesthetics and logic, seemed to have been resolved. This had been accomplished by a gigantic epistemology of reason, which comprised all aspects of truth. But the resolution of these problems had occurred in theory, not in practice, although, like any other, Hegel's theory was of practical significance. As a specific truth-perspective developed under certain historical conditions, the conflicts of which it sought to overcome, it contributed a great deal to the dynamics of philosophical argument on truth in general and to the socio-political argument on justice and freedom in particular. It forms an important link in the chain of this argument. But its abstraction from contingent reality, by which it was overtaken, rendered it controversial. It was, however, its very controversial character that induced the conception of new theories, which, under its influence, sought to cope with the changed conditions. One of these new theories was the philosophy of Karl Marx.

In view of the totality of Hegel's philosophy, Marx asked the pertinent question: What next? Now that everything has been explained (in theory) what is left? Is that the end of philosophy or a new beginning? Testing Hegel's philosophy by the prevailing historical conditions and

---

<sup>1</sup> *A History of Philosophy*, Vol. 2, pp. 613-614.

socio-political problems as he experienced them, Marx came to the conclusion that this was a new beginning for philosophy. In the light of the problems raised by Hegel's philosophy in view of the discrepancy between Hegel's truth-perspective and reality as experienced by Marx, the latter — in his doctor's dissertation, entitled: *Differenz der demokratischen und epikureischen Naturphilosophie*<sup>1</sup>) — pointed out that the having-become-philosophical-of-the-world had to be changed into the becoming-worldly-of-philosophy. More and more, Marx, in the course of his studies, realized that Hegel's total philosophy had bypassed reality and had missed the factors that, according to Marx, really generated the dialectical motion of history. He argued that, in order to reconcile it with practice, philosophy would have to be rescued from itself (as a mere theory). Because it was standing on its head, explaining the world from the idea, it had to be placed on its feet: it had to merge with the economic laws governing history. It had to change world and society rather than merely explaining it. It was with this socio-political goal in mind that Marx applied Hegel's dialectics to practice, as he saw it.



His idea of practice depended on his specific experience of an incisive event that took place in the 19th century: the Industrial Revolution. This event, which was to be of immense consequence for the further development of society and socio-political thinking, was the result of an expansion of the natural sciences and the growth of industry. Two main schools of thought may be discerned to emerge from this event: Marxism and positivism. Both schools of thought attempted to cope with the socio-political conflicts that sprang from this event. They did so by making use of science, industry and technology in various ways.

The basic experience that conditioned Marx's and Engels's way of thinking was that of the *class-struggle*. It was thus a socio-political way of thinking from the beginning. It was this experience that determined the theory-practice relationship. As long as labour was preformed within a society of classes, theory and practice formed irreconcilable contradictions. Labour was alienated labour and reflected an inverted world, where there was a clash between the ruling and the ruled class.

---

<sup>1</sup> MEGA, Vol. 1.

This, in turn, pointed to a conflict of needs and interests. Capitalist and worker (termed by Marx "hostile brothers"), bourgeoisie and proletariat, man and citizen are irreconcilable opposites. Therefore, the political revolution of the third estate (French Revolution) must be supplemented by a humanistic revolution: that of the proletariat. Marx holds that the human rights proclaimed by thinkers such as Locke, Voltaire and Rousseau are no longer human rights but bourgeois privileges. For the man as distinguished from the citizen is the bourgeois, the proletarian being denied human rights. The privileges of the bourgeois are called human rights because they are still governed by the idea of the bourgeois struggle against feudalism. But the bourgeois individuals are no social animals either, the only bond to keep them together being constituted by their private interests. The true man is the proletarian. He alone is free from private interests, for his interests coincide with those of the whole. Through the revolution the proletarian also becomes a full citizen.

The self-alienation of the bourgeoisie on the one hand — its false world consciousness and value consciousness (the profit principle and the accumulation of capital) — and, on the other, the alienation and dehumanization of the proletariat — the worker's transformation as man into a marketable commodity and productive force — cause a conflict that generates world history. According to certain dialectical economic laws, history moves in the direction of the classless society. The operation of these "objective" laws, on the grounds of which Marx and Engels claim that their socio-political theory is scientific, brings about a reconciliation of the theory-practice conflict as well as the contradictions emerging from it. In other words, these "objective" laws are operative in such a way that, by productive labour, man overcomes his alienation from himself and reality and arrives at authentic existence as a free creative being. As the productive class, it is the proletariat that accomplishes this feat of social emancipation. The working class emerges as the progressive torch-bearer of history, giving expression to historical reason.

One of the differences that exist between Marx's and Engels's theory on the one hand and, on the other, Marxism-Leninism appears to be the concept of the *dictatorship of the proletariat* — the transitory stage between socialism and communism — under which the process

of social emancipation is completed. It would appear that, according to Marx and Engels, the act of social emancipation happens more spontaneously than in Marxism-Leninism and is performed by the proletariat directly. According to Marxism-Leninism, it is the communist party, seen by Lenin as party of a new type, which directs the act of social emancipation. It is directed from above rather than from below.

Unfortunately, Marx did not say much about the dictatorship of the proletariat and what he does say is rather vague. In *Der Bürgerkrieg in Frankreich*, Marx describes the dictatorship of the proletariat as:

Wesentlich eine Regierung der Arbeiterklasse, das Resultat eines Kampfes der hervorbringenden gegen die aneignende Klasse, die endlich entdeckte politische Form, unter der die ökonomische Befreiung der Arbeit sich vollziehen konnte.<sup>1)</sup>

When Marx quotes as an example the Paris Commune of 1871, it stands to reason that he has in mind a council system of work corporations which supervise the transitional process to the communist society. According to this diction, the process of transition would be steered by the proletariat directly.

University of Fort Hare

Together in Excellence

In contradistinction to this, Lenin, with reference to Marx's and Engels's *Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei* and other writings, interpreted the dictatorship of the proletariat in a different way. What led him to this particular interpretation was not only the text of the *Manifesto*, but also the experience that the working class would develop a revolutionary proletarian class-consciousness only if it was afforded purposeful guidance. Otherwise, it would not become aware of itself as a revolutionary class and sink to the level of opportunism, reformism and revisionism. In view of capitalism's rapid expansion into imperialism — which development went against Marx's expectation that capitalism would perish at its own contradictions — Lenin rejected any idea of evolutionary socialism as advocated by men such as Karl Kautsky, Eduard Bernstein, Rudolf Hilferding and the social democrats (or the Mensheviks in Russia) in general. According to him, evolutionary socialism could not but lead to compromise and opportunism, which played into the hands of the bourgeoisie.

---

<sup>1</sup> B Goldenberg, *Karl Marx, Ausgewählte Schriften*, p. 1157. Also in: MEW, XVII.

Lenin applied Marx's and Engels's teaching to conditions in Russia; then a predominantly agrarian country with a less developed industrial proletariat, the process of industrialization and foreign investment having only begun at the beginning of the 20th century. In writings such as *Was tun?*<sup>1</sup>); *Der Imperialismus als höchstes Stadium des Kapitalismus*<sup>2</sup>); and *Staat und Revolution*,<sup>3</sup>) Lenin expostulated his revolutionary strategy. For the purpose of bringing about the proletarian revolution, he founded a party of a new type as an *avantgarde*, or spearhead, of the working class. This vanguard was to awaken the proletarian consciousness of the working class and strengthen its revolutionary will. It is thus understandable that, after the Bolshevik October Revolution in 1917, the dictatorship of the proletariat was exercised by the Communist Party and its functionaries. In the face of a powerful capitalist camp and an internal class enemy, which led to a stepping-up of the class struggle, the socialist state (contrary to Marx's teachings) was considerably strengthened.



This led to the dictatorship of one party and of an *élite*. It led — especially under Stalin — to the dictatorship of one person, a development which is immanent in the system. Lenin's theory of revolution consistently induced the attempt to develop the communist society by the revolutionary action of the Communist Party as the bearer of the socialist state. In the face of a powerful capitalist camp, this attempt could not but result in the formula of socialism in one land, as proclaimed by Stalin. In view of this development, Goldenberg comments as follows on Lenin's definition of socialism as "electrification plus Soviet power:"

Die Elektrifizierung verschlang die Sowjets . . . Der Stalinismus proklamierte das Primat des Politischen über das Ökonomische, des Willens über die Wirklichkeit. Das Bewusstsein, der sozialistische Wille der Führung, wurde von aussen in die Wirklichkeit getragen, um sie im Sinne totalitärer Gestaltung zu ändern.<sup>4</sup>)

---

<sup>1</sup> *Werke*, Vol. 5

<sup>2</sup> *Werke*, Vol. 22

<sup>3</sup> *Werke*, Vol. 25.

<sup>4</sup> *Karl Marx, Ausgewählte Schriften, "Einleitung"*, pp. 54-55.

This formulation is still valid today, despite Krushev's stigmatization of Stalin's cult of the person at the XX Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in February, 1956, and Gorbachev's current policy of *glasnost* (honesty, righteousness, open-mindedness) and attempts at reform — *perestroika*.

In terms of the theory-practice relationship, the shifting of the accent in revolutionary practice from the proletariat to its *avantgarde*, the communist party, means that human consciousness must be changed by the party and its functionaries. As a product of an objective historical process, the party stands in a dialectical relationship with the working class and acts in accordance with objective dialectical laws. Following these laws known by it, it determines the relationship between nature and society, science and history, necessity and freedom, in brief: theory and practice. It does so within the context of dialectical and historical materialism. Dialectical materialism studies the dialectical motion of self-propelling matter which motion is reflected in the natural sciences. Historical materialism studies the dialectical motion of society, which motion takes place by objective economic laws of production. The two types of materialism are dialectically related to each other. Accordingly, the whole world process takes place by a dialectics which is reflected in the human mind, so that the world is knowable in principle. As highest developed matter, the mind actively promotes the historical process of social emancipation by changing the world and human consciousness in observance of the dialectical laws, so that world, man and society are in harmony with one another and the principle of identity is fulfilled.

The Marxist-Leninist doctrine holds that only the communist party has a clear conception of the dialectical world process. Hence, it is the party that is able to determine strategy and tactics of the revolutionary process. As the director of this process, it also determines the quality of the production process: the proportion between heavy industry and the production of consumer goods. The steering function of the party requires its being structured on the principle of *democratic centralism*. It is thus structured as a hierarchy of party organs and committees ranging from the district office up to the Central Committee and Polit Bureau. These party organs are linked with government organs up to the Supreme Soviet. The greatest power is concentrated in

the secretary of the party. The principle of democratic centralism enables the political leadership of the Soviet Union to direct the process of world revolution for the purpose of "liberating mankind from capitalist oppression and exploitation".

Only after the total victory of the socialist world revolution over monopolistic capitalism and imperialism, when all contradictions between man and nature, man and himself, man and the other have been eliminated, when every form of oppression and exploitation of man by man has been abolished, will it be possible to dispense with the party, the state and its organs. The prerequisite is that, in all men, a communist consciousness has developed. In contradistinction to those of capitalists, actions of communists are not motivated by selfish, irrational purposes, such as making profit, but are guided by rational goals, such as the welfare of the whole. In contradistinction to capitalist man, private and public interests coincide in communist man. As long as the socialist camp is threatened by a hostile capitalist world, a strengthening of the state's power is necessary. Seen dialectically, it is argued that the very strengthening of the state's power eventually leads to victory over capitalism when the state can be dispensed with.

University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

By assuming an objective self-propelling matter operating independently of human consciousness, Marxist-Leninist theory tries to give itself an objective and scientific character. It claims knowledge of the dialectical laws governing the motion of matter, these laws being assumed to be reflected in the sciences and in history. It stands to reason that the objective existence of a self-propelling matter cannot be demonstrated and is a mere hypothesis. It would seem that the concept of a universal matter — just as the concept of a universal mind — is a metaphysical concept. Both function as hypothetical "real grounds" from which a world theory is constituted. The speculative character of the concept of matter shows the perspectival character of the Marxist-Leninist world theory. Its utopian nature manifests itself by its claim that, in the light of its dialectics, all conflicts in nature and society are overcome. In terms of this dialectics, man is capable of obtaining universal knowledge and changing himself into a type of superman. Such a self-sufficient, well rounded-off world view, such a total fulfilment of history, such a conception of perfect man, inevitably renews the question Marx put to Hegel: Is this absolute fulfilment *in theory* an end or a

new beginning? Has reality been bypassed again? It should be realized that, measured by Hegel, the philosophies of both Marx and Soviet Marxism, in spite of all their differences, bear the same total character. With Hegel, man's self-creation takes place through the Absolute Spirit (cf. Hegel's concept of labour in: *Phänomenologie des Geistes*), with Marx and Soviet Marxism it is arrived at by productive labour, in this sense on a material basis.

The rapid growth and expansion of the natural sciences and their daughter technology led to the development of a functionalistic technological society in the West. The positivistic way of thinking that gives expression to functionalistic society calls in question the dialectics of Marxian and Marxist-Leninist philosophy. As a result, Marxian philosophy lost credibility and, in the light of changed socio-political conditions, had to be revised. Marxism-Leninism turned Marx's and Engels's philosophy into a repressive ideology, which clashed with the positivistic ideology of western technological functionalism. In view of these developments, the neo-Marxist school of Critical Theory (the Frankfurt School) took up the cudgel for society's liberation from both repressive technological monopolism in the West on the one hand and, on the other, repressive ideological monopolism in the East. For Critical Theory, therefore, practice means the scientific and rational utilization of the means of production for society's liberation from the two repressive social and political establishments.

By its practical criticism of contemporary technological society and its repressive monopolistic structure, Critical Theory aims at man's self-emancipation. It seeks to free man from his "false" consciousness, which he developed under the impact of the totalitarian functionalistic and ideologicistic forces of West and East, respectively, and to restore his sense of freedom and revolutionary *élan* for the purpose of self-emancipation. Since, according to Marcuse, the worker had lost his revolutionary *élan* and, to a great extent, had been absorbed into the monopolistic establishment, the class-struggle was no longer experienced as the basic social conflict, but had been superseded by the experience of the conflict between nature and reason (Horkheimer, Adorno); monopolistic establishment and outsiders, such as students and people of the Third World (Marcuse); science and politics (Habermas).

In Critical Theory, science and technology become instruments of revolutionary social change and the creation of a new type of man. According to Marcuse,<sup>1)</sup> social emancipation and man's liberation take place through the material transposition of values: their transposition into technological tasks. In Habermas's pragmatic model,<sup>2)</sup> science and politics form a dialectical unit in terms of labour. Labour or action for rational purposes constitutes interaction between science and history, science and morality, science and politics — theory and practice. Science is used for the purpose of reaching definite goals under given historical conditions, with the aim of gratifying social needs. On the other hand, these conditions can be established scientifically. This means that the ultimate decision rests with science as to when social conditions are ripe for revolution. The dialectical union of science and history, science and morality, science and politics illustrates an attempt to reconcile positivistic with dialectical thinking. Habermas's pragmatic model betrays the influence of positivism. As an operationalistic way of thinking — society's liberation through labour for rational purposes — it could also be labelled functionalistic. Generally speaking, it needs pointing out that Marxism as a whole may be characterized by the reduction of philosophy to labour as constituting the world, and through which man creates himself in freedom, no matter how the labour process is conceived by the various Marxisms.

Another reduction of Marxist philosophy to a more or less empirico-analytical approach takes place in the Social Science school of thought. This reduction of Marxist philosophy to a positive social science — in this sense to a positivistic way of thinking — finds expression especially in the thought of the Yugoslav philosopher Mihailo Marčević, his pupil Svetozar Stojanović and the Polish philosopher Leszek Kolakowski. Unlike the orthodox Marxist thinkers, these philosophers omitted "die Einbeziehung dieser sozialwissenschaftlichen Erkenntnisse in eine umfassende philosophische Konzeption".<sup>3)</sup> By this omis-

---

<sup>1</sup> *Der eindimensionale Mensch*, p. 243.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Technik und Wissenschaft als 'Ideologie' and Theorie und Praxis*.

<sup>3</sup> I Fetscher "Zur gegenwärtigen Philosophie-Diskussion im Ostblock", in: D Geyer, *Wissenschaft in kommunistischen Ländern*, p. 46.

sion, the Marxist positivists eliminated Marxian dialectics. Practice becomes social theory.

A neo-Marxist school of thought, the teachings of which are partly responsible for the various liberation attempts in East Germany (1953); Poland (the Polish October 1956 and the Solidarity movement in the early 1980s); Hungary (1956); and Czechoslovakia (the Prague Spring, 1968) and which sought to give socialism a human face, is *praxis*-philosophy. There, philosophy becomes theory of practice. Orthodox Marxism's concept of economic practice is changed into a concept of human practice. According to the Yugoslav philosopher Gajo Petrović, practice comprehends much more than the practice of the production process that takes place by fixed dialectical economic laws. Practice means man's self-creation as a free, creative being. For Ernst Bloch practice has ontological meaning. It concerns man's being-in-the-world. It means his self-projection in the world, generated by a dialectics of despair and hope, realism and utopia, hunger (want) and fulfillment. It is the hope for utopia to become reality one day, which promises an authentic existence in freedom in the future.<sup>1</sup>) Other thinkers that may be counted among the *praxis*-philosophers are the young Georg Lukács, Karl Korsch, Erich Fromm and Karel Kosik.

*Together in Excellence*

The controversy between positivism and dialectics may be said to have arisen as a result of the Technological Revolution and society's development into a monopolistic functionalistic (technological) society in the West and an operationalistic (in this sense functionalistic) ideological society of the East: the manipulation of science and technology, according to the principles of Marxist-Leninist ideology. This dispute, e.g., between Popper and Adorno, Albert and Habermas, has already been referred to in the discussion on historical knowledge. The Technological Revolution is the result of the tremendous changes that have taken place in the natural sciences. Our discussion on knowledge in the natural sciences has shown that the splitting of the atom effected by Ernest Rutherford and Niels Bohr, who applied the principles of Max Planck's quantum theory to the atom, removed the firm ground from under man's feet. It destroyed the homogeneous mechanistic world view of the 19th century, which rested on Newtonian mechanic-

---

<sup>1</sup> *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, Vol. 3, p. 1628.

al physics. It transformed atoms as the solid building blocks of the world into fleeting events, which induced causal relations to assume the character of probability.<sup>1)</sup>

The collapse of the world's homogeneous structure undermined Leibniz's principle: *natura non fuit saltus*. Not only atomic events, but mathematical equations recording those events as well, had the character of probability, not of certainty. The world was dissolved into a functional set of relations, "a set of pointer readings" as Sir Arthur Stanley Eddington said.<sup>2)</sup> Thus knowledge assumed a functionalistic character. It consisted in recording in piecemeal fashion the functional relations between fleeting events. It became metrical and statistical. The former classical laws of nature, e.g., Lavoisier's law of the conservation of energy, lost their thing-like (ontological) meaning. They assumed a functional character. Mass and energy became interconvertible, as is shown by Einstein's formula:  $E = mc^2$ .

It has already been shown that the functionalistic method and way of thinking invaded the social and human sciences as well. Functionalism became universal in the sense that knowledge assumed a quantitative, statistical and functional character, which was technologically calculated by the computer. By this quantitative one-dimensionality, the qualitative multi-dimensionality of variegated human experience as well as the various types of knowledge constituted from it are wiped out. There is only one type of knowledge, which is absolutized: functionalistic knowledge. The functionalistic way of thinking also determines the meaning of research. The latter is no longer so much basic research — the development of new theories and new concepts developed from a specific type of human experience that qualitatively differs from another — but computerization of the functional relations between natural events, social events, linguistic processes, etc.

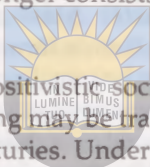
The atomized and pulverized world of functional events and processes as it emerges in the natural, social and human sciences, yielded a positivistic piecemeal approach like that of Karl Popper. His func-

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. H Reichenbach, *Theory of Probability*, also *The Rise of Scientific Philosophy*.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted from R Metz, *A Hundred Years of British Philosophy*, p. 732.

tionalistic concepts of "social technology" developed by "social engineers" as a "scientific basis of politics" has already been discussed. The functionalistic method in the social sciences applied by sociologists such as A R Radcliffe-Brown, B. Manilowski, R Thurnwald and T Parsons has also been mentioned. The first three theoreticians are usually classified as social anthropologists, while T Parsons has conceived a biogenetic-cybernetic theory.<sup>1)</sup> Even though these functionalistic sociologists are criticized by R Dahrendorf's theory of social conflict,<sup>2)</sup> his thesis that man is an agent of socially preconditioned roles smacks of functionalism. All these theories have in common that the dichotomy of individuals and collective is sought to be overcome by standardized, integrated social roles and functions, in which science and morality, science and politics — theory and practice — are merged. This means that society no longer consists of individuals and persons but of *functional interactions*.



The development of positivistic socio-political theories and the functionalistic way of thinking may be traced to the Industrial Revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries. Under its impact, a number of such theories were postulated, offering solutions for the socio-political conflicts experienced as a result of it. A striking contradiction was the accumulation of wealth and capital on the one hand and, on the other, growing misery and impoverishment. While Marx and orthodox Marxism approached this conflict in terms of the class-struggle and the economic laws of production with their revolutionary effect, positivism attempted to resolve it by means of the natural sciences, in which positivists saw an instrument of social progress. The utopian socialists, Owen, St. Simon, Fourier and Proudhon, designed theories that were to ensure the happiness of all men. They were criticized by Marx in his work *Das Elend der Philosophie* (1874),<sup>3)</sup> a vituperative reply to Pierre-Joseph Proudhon's *Système des Contradictions Économiques ou La Philosophie de la Misère* (1846). The latter was one of the fathers of the anarchist movement and coined the slogan: Poverty is theft.

The utopian socialists combined socialist ideas with an ardent faith in the sciences, technology and the Golden Age. The latter would

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. T Parsons and R F Bales, *Family, Socialisation and Interaction Process*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society*.

<sup>3</sup> MEW, Vol. 4.

arrive as a result of the expansion of industry and the increase of wealth by the scientific control of nature in a socialist society, where property would be evenly distributed. It was St. Simon who first pointed out that the period in which he lived was one of chaos, in contradistinction to the Middle Ages, which was an organic period of construction, of spiritual and social organization. He insisted that society must recover stability. What was required was a *positive*, not a critical, philosophy, one that was based on science.

Auguste Comte<sup>1</sup>) took up St. Simon's ideas and systematized them in a *Philosophy of Positivism*, the key concept of which was the *Law of the Tree Stages*. It comprises three stages of social development: the theological, metaphysical and positive stages. The latter stage is the era of science, the social sciences forming the apex of the pyramid. The positive era of science is the final stage of history. As a law, history is scientific, while science is historical, for it is the outcome of historical evolution. This accounts for progress. In the final stage of social evolution, political conflicts are overcome and superseded by industrial, social and economic problems. In terms of the formula: *Voir pour prévoir, prévoir pour pouvoir*, Comte hopes to secure progress through the application of the scientific method, not only to nature but to society as well. It was when both nature and society were brought under the control of science — when social problems were solved by the scientific method — that man had entered the Golden Age.

It is evident that in 19th century teleological positivism social relations were seen in terms of the causal law, as it was conceived to operate according to Newton's mechanical causality, which made scientific prediction possible. The conflict between the individual and society was resolved by the subordination of personality to sociability and the individual to mankind. Indeed, the individual was conceived by Comte as an abstraction. It was mankind that was the real entity, and it was the causal principles governing social development that had to be studied and that yielded knowledge.

This view of social causality could however be retained only as long as the natural sciences could provide a homogeneous world based

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. *Cours de Philosophie Positive*.

on atoms as basic solid building blocks of the world. This was still the case in the 19th century. This view lasted as late as 1870, when Maxwell still declared that atoms were solid, indivisible building blocks of the world. But when, with the conception of Max Planck's *quantum theory*, things drastically changed, when with the splitting of the atom "Die Krisis der mechanistisch-materialistischen Auffassung"<sup>1</sup>) ensued, positivistic thinking also changed. It discarded all teleological features, which rendered the sciences historical and history scientific, and turned functionalistic. Its piecemeal approach corresponded to the atomized and fragmentary world, as it has already been described.

Already the German national economist and sociologist Max Weber attempted to elevate the social sciences to the rank of a strict science. He did so, by examining their methods and conceiving them as purely descriptive. In contradistinction to Wilhelm Dilthey's intuitive theory of understanding, he declared that a sociology of understanding, which wants to interpret social action and thus explain the latter's causes from its process and effects, must enquire rationally into the purposes and means of social action. Only then understanding would obtain an especially high degree of evidence.

University of Fort Hare  
Together in Excellence

Jürgen Habermas, in "Verwissenschaftlichte Politik und öffentliche Meinung",<sup>2</sup>) distinguishes three models with regard to the relationship between science and politics: the decisionist model, the technocratic model and his own pragmatic model. The latter has already been discussed, and it was found that it represented a compromise between positivism and Marxist dialectics. In the decisionist model, science is subordinated to politics. It is of merely instrumental importance for politics. It can only indicate means for the purpose of attaining certain given goals. It is the politician, who decides on these goals.

In the technocratic model, politics is subordinated to the sciences. According to this vision, it is the scientific and technological means that virtually determine political purposes. In contemporary society, state and technology are interrelated to such a degree that the poli-

---

<sup>1</sup> W Heisenberg, *Das Naturbild der heutigen Physik*, pp 111-132.

<sup>2</sup> In: *Technik und Wissenschaft als 'Ideologie'*.

tician has only to make technical decisions and to execute instructions by the technological intelligentsia.

Habermas's commentary as to the meaning of these models for the functioning of contemporary western society is rendered by B van Steenbergen as follows:<sup>1)</sup> In the case of the decisionist model decisions are not subjected to discussions. However, those who make decisions must render account to the citizens. They have their say by elections and plebiscites. We find these ideas on democracy in the thought of Max Weber and more recently in that of J.A. Schumpeter. For the latter, democracy is a definite political method. It is a structure of institutions for the purpose of reaching political decisions, whereby some individuals obtain the right of decision-making by means of competing for the votes of the people. Thereby, says Habermas, democracy is formalized as a body of rules of a game. As a result, the original idea of democracy as "rule of the people" is completely lost.

According to Franz Neuman, affirmatively quoted by Habermas, democracy is not a form of government as all others "its essential task consists rather in bringing about the enriching social changes, which are conducive to human freedom, so that, ultimately, self-realization can take place. Democracy works on human self-determination and only if this has been realized is there true democracy. Politics is then identical with self-determination". "In other words", comments van Steenbergen, "democracy can only come to full fruition in a society of people who are of age".<sup>2)</sup>

In the technocratic model, the full realization of which seems to be merely a matter of time in contemporary functionalistic society, every democratic opinion-forming has become meaningless. This is aptly shown in H. Schelky's technical state, where the process of depoliticization goes hand in hand with the process of deideologization, so that political purposes are really determined by technological means. "The technological state, without being anti-democratic, deprives democracy of its substance".<sup>3)</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. "Jürgen Habermas", in: C P Bertels and E Petersma, *Filosofen van de 20e eeuw*, p. 182.

<sup>2</sup> B van Steenbergen "Jürgen Habermas", in: *Filosofen van de 20e eeuw*, pp. 182-183.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 183. Quotation from H Schelky, *Der Mensch in der wissenschaftlichen Zivilisation* (1961).

The levelling of man's critical consciousness by the totalitarian functionalistic and ideological forces and the suppression of his freedom as an individual and self-realization as a person as a result of it has dire consequences. There is, on the one hand, the protest of the young generation against established society. Its search for new values may be seen in the radicalization of the demand for freedom as it manifests itself in terror organizations, total permissiveness in the sexual domain, in the field of drugs, in the religious sphere (violence preached by the theology of revolution and liberation), etc. Especially the demand for total permissiveness leads to licentiousness and the destruction of the family, the cell of a sound and stable society, consisting of well-balanced individuals, in harmony with themselves and with each other. It stands to reason that total permissiveness destroys all sound moral relations between men, so that no stable society is possible. Sound moral relations can be forged only if the dignity of the person is left intact and is mutually respected. This can however hardly be the case if total permissiveness would become the order (or rather chaos) of the day.

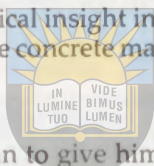


The gross materialistic and functionalistic way of thinking, which prevails in contemporary technological society, has considerably undermined the traditional norms and values. The latter ring false in the ears of the young generation. The question arises, however, whether — by their radical reaction — the young people have not substituted one total way of thinking for another. Do not the many acts of violence and terror that are performed throughout the world, not infrequently in the name of freedom, bear witness to this?

On the other hand, the levelling of his critical consciousness by the totalitarian functionalistic and ideological forces renders man incapable of saying *no* to a social and political system that destroys him as a free individual and self-fulfilled person; that turns him into a faceless robot. Man can regain his balance as an individual and his dignity as a person only if he stops thinking in terms of technological, economic and ideological superlatives, if he abandons the cult of scientism and technicism and equates knowledge with it, thus giving it a one-dimensional functionalistic character. The call of the hour is that, in the face of a continually sharpening conflict experience, which from an incentive for fruitful dialogue is turned into total destructive confronta-

tion accompanied on each side (West and East) by a dogmatic monologue, man accepts himself as what he really is: a finite, contingent and historical being.

Man should, by regaining his critical and self-critical consciousness, realize that his needs are not only of a functional and material nature, but also of the intellectual, moral, aesthetic and spiritual kind. He should become aware that he lives not on bread alone and that a materialistic functionalism will not solve his problems. On the contrary, the possibility exists that, if not checked in time and brought under human control, rather than the other way around, it will destroy him. This is mankind's greatest dilemma, with which philosophy is confronted today. Its eminently practical task is to rouse man's critical and self-critical consciousness and to develop his capacity for critical judgement as well as for critical insight into the nature of present-day socio-political conflict and the concrete material, intellectual and spiritual needs arising from it.



There is no need for man to give himself up as man by trying to turn himself into a kind of superman, as would for instance appear from Ernst Bloch's utopian philosophy of hope or the utopian "solutions" of Critical Theory. A case in point is Marcuse's representation of man as *homo ludens* in: *Eros and Civilization*, which will have our attention later on. It is philosophy's task to refer man to his fellow-man as his indispensable partner in the continuing dialogue concerning a *fully human*, not merely a functional, relationship, upon which a sound, well-balanced society can be built.

Critical and self-critical insight would make man realize that he is not a one-dimensional but a multi-dimensional being. It would allow him to see the natural sciences and technology in perspective: in relationship with other types of knowledge, based on different kinds of experience, thus differing in quality. Seen in perspective, the natural sciences and technology would play a positive role for the benefit of mankind; they would no longer be an existential threat to him. By viewing the sciences — natural sciences, human sciences and religious sciences — in perspective, man's critical and self-critical insight would open the door for a balanced person and society. In such a society, functional relations would no longer prevail and man would no more

feel an unperson, the victim of inexorable functional processes. The primacy of fully-fledged human relations would enable him to enjoy once more the freedom of the individual and the dignity of the person.

*In summa*, in terms of a critical and self-critical (in this sense, free) mind, a dialogue between man and his fellow-man can be initiated in a genuinely humanistic spirit, the spirit of mutual self-restraint, tolerance, open-mindedness, respect and goodwill. In the spirit of a *critical and self-critical humanism*, men are free from any kind of dogma, be it a science dogma or any kind of ideological dogma. Freedom on the grounds of critical and self-critical insight makes the *open society* possible.

## 5. Art — Its Philosophy and Theory

### a) The Aesthetic Experience

The word "aesthetics" is usually taken to mean a branch of philosophy, which concerns itself with the concepts of the beautiful and the sublime. It falls within the axiological disciplines, in so far as, together with ethics, it investigates the nature of a particular kind of value judgements. Hence, the close relationship between ethics and aesthetics. A typical example of an axiological ethics is Plato, for whom the good and the beautiful are the highest forms of rational contemplation. *Kalokagathia* becomes thus the ultimate goal of education.

Within the context of this investigation of the aesthetic experience, we shall have to confine ourselves to a few selected philosophies and theories. As in other fields of human experience, philosophies and theories of art, as they have been postulated throughout the centuries in ancient Chinese and Indian culture as well as in the West by Plato, Plotinus, Bonaventura, Shaftesbury, Kant, Schelling, Hegel, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, represent so many truth-perspectives. Again, as in other fields of human experience and types of cultural activity, these truth-perspectives have been methodologically constituted from man's contingent experience of reality, under changing historical conditions.

It was A G Baumgarten who, in the *Meditationes philosophicae de*

*nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus* (1735), pleads for aesthetics to be developed as a science in its own right. A Beaumler<sup>1</sup>) sees the development of the new science in connection with "einer der wichtigen Umwälzungen innerhalb des europäischen Selbstbewusstseins überhaupt" and calls it "ein Ereignis von umfassender geschichtlicher Bedeutung." According to Baumgarten, with the new science philosophy — as a rational science with the aim of obtaining the clearest possible knowledge — takes up the problem of truth, which literature, painting, sculpture, architecture and music impose on it as a task. By studying the aesthetic aspect of truth in its own right, Baumgarten incorporates into philosophy a kind of experience, which yields a knowledge of the senses and which is no longer reducible to logic.<sup>2</sup>)

That the whole truth, comprising senses and reason, aesthetic experience and moral sense, is reflected in a work of art is perhaps most clearly formulated in Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (1790). Linking up with Plato's concept of *kalokagathia*, the highest concept of truth at which the philosopher arrives by rational insight, Kant sees aesthetics as a sphere that is situated between knowledge and morality and comprises both. According to Kant, man's striving for rational autonomy, for truth and freedom, is mirrored in a work of art. It manifests the teleological movement from the senses to reason, nature to morality, not only on the individual level of the artist but on that of mankind as well. In fact, it symbolizes nature's and society's striving from the sensual to the rational, the merely legal to the truly moral. Works of art best illustrate the comprehensive character of the act of rational striving for freedom, this striving being set in motion by the experience of conflict between senses and reason, nature and morality, necessity and freedom. The idea of World Reason forms a *Leitvorstellung*, a guiding idea, which gives direction to man's rational striving.

It is thus in the idea of World Reason that the unity of reason manifests itself. The teleological character of works of art points to the realm of ideal purposes — the *noumena*, the central *noumenon* being God —

---

<sup>1</sup> *Das Irrationalitätsproblem in der Ästhetik und Logik des 18. Jahrhunderts bis zur Kritik der Urteilskraft*. C F. J. Ritter "Ästhetik", in: J. Ritter (ed.), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, Vol. 1, pp. 555-556.

<sup>2</sup> C F. J. Ritter's Article on "Ästhetik", in: *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, Vol. 1; pp. 555-559.

the striving for which, through reason, is imposed upon man by reason as a permanent task.

Kant's conception of aesthetic experience, as the sense of the beautiful and the sublime<sup>1</sup>), although subjected to rational judgement — in this sense to truth — points the way to a conception of aesthetic truth beyond and above reason. Such a conception is encountered in the philosophies of Schelling, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, but also in Adorno's *autonomy of art*. These various conceptions of art are each founded on an aesthetic experience emanating from the prevailing historical conditions and socio-political conflict of a particular epoch, as will be shown further on. Each breathes the particular *Zeitgeist* in which it is rooted. Kant's conception of the aesthetic gives expression to the spirit of rationality of the *Aufklärung*, Schelling's aesthetic is rooted in the feeling of romanticism, Schopenhauer's and Nietzsche's views on art are drawn from a widespread existential dilemma in the 19th century: a growing experience of decadence, from which the two thinkers draw different conclusions. Adorno's philosophy of art, which constitutes the core of his and Max Horkheimer's *Dialektik der Aufklärung*, reflects the socio-political conflicts of his own time, especially those of contemporary technological society.

Even in the art conception of two contemporaries such as Schelling and Hegel, a marked difference of the aesthetic sentiment manifests itself. This must be ascribed to the fact that, although contemporaries, their way of thinking has been conditioned by a different experience of the world. Although both philosophers are idealists, Schelling's idealism is rooted in a romantic experience of the world, whereas Hegel's idealism is founded on a rational experience: the experience of the world as a manifestation of World Reason — a phenomenology of the Spirit. The two different art conceptions of Schelling and Hegel are aptly described in an article on "Ästhetik" by J. Ritter, in: *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*.<sup>2</sup>) The following observations in this regard are based on this article:

For Schelling, art becomes philosophy's general organ. The

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen and Erhabenen*.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. 1, pp. 569, 574, 575.

Absolute, which philosophy comprehends as the primeval symbol of truth, is, for art, the primeval symbol of beauty. For philosophers, it is the highest truth because it opens to them the Holiest of the Holy. At the same time, philosophy reopens to reflection the dried up primeval sources of art. Philosophy is the true science of art, in so far as it comprehends it as the representation of things as they are in themselves or in the Absolute.

For Hegel, it is philosophy alone which has to comprehend what is beautiful and how it manifests itself in works of art. In conformity with his conception of the historical *Zeitgeist* and his own particular experience of the *Zeitgeist*, Hegel regards the idea that art is the highest instrument of becoming conscious of the Absolute as a thing of the past. The genius of philosophy moves past any abstract reflection of aesthetic feeling. For Hegel, only philosophy, being itself split in half, in a sensual and rational, outward and inward part as far as culture as a whole is concerned, is able by the very experience of this split, to comprehend art in its truth. Kant, Schiller and Schelling have found art's concept and scientific position, according to which art and its beauty as Spirit, and created by the Spirit, are higher than natural beauty. By art, then, inner and outer beauty are — as in religion and philosophy — lifted into consciousness.

The difference between this conception of art and that of Hegel is that, according to the latter, art is distinguished from religion and philosophy in that, in its contents, it confines itself to beauty as *sensual* appearance of the idea. In contradistinction to Schelling's view, therefore, it is merely the sensual (outward) appearance of the Absolute Spirit. In its cyclic movement away from itself and back to itself on a higher stage: that of self-consciousness, self-realization and freedom, the Spirit comprehends the scientific, aesthetic and religious aspects of this movement by the pure philosophical concept: truth.

The historical character of aesthetic experience is not only noticeable in theoretical form in the various historical philosophies and theories of the beautiful and the sublime, but it is also visible in practical form in the various artistic styles that have been developed throughout history. These various historical styles of art give not only expression to man's changing aesthetic feeling, the artist's changing aesthetic ex-

perience about the world, but they also point to various modes of human existence. In some way or another they reflect the specific conflict experience, from which they are evolved as well as man's hope and expectations to overcome these conflicts. This will be shown presently.

The artistic styles that were developed in western civilization throughout the centuries in conformity with the changing *Zeitgeist* are in the main: ancient Classicism; the Romanesque style of the earlier Middle Ages; the Gothic style in the later Middle Ages; the Renaissance style; the Baroque style and its miniature version: Rococo; Romanticism; Realism; Naturalism; Impressionism; Expressionism; Surrealism; Cubism. We only have to read the biographies of artists such as Michelangelo (Renaissance), Schubert, Liszt, Wagner (Romanticism), Zola (Naturalism), van Gogh (Impressionism), Picasso (Expressionism) and many others in order to realize the particular conflict, tension and suffering under which they developed their specific forms of beauty. They often did so in opposition to recognized traditional and entrenched forms and they had to fight for the recognition of their own. The latter, in their own turn, yielded new forms, developed under changed conditions of life.

University of Fort Hare  
Together in Excellence

In the present age, the functional task of the arts has again changed. Generally speaking, it consists, less than in the past, in giving expression to man's feeling of the beautiful and the sublime, as we find it for instance in ancient classical art, but also later during the Renaissance period and in Kant's philosophy of art. In his *Vorlesungen über Ästhetik*, K.W.F. Solger defined the task of art as having to reveal the idea as unity of the concept and of the particular in the beautiful and to represent the real world as the revelation of divine life.<sup>1</sup>) In ancient classical art, the beautiful and sublime, as personified by Apollo, find expression in symmetrical and serene Greek sculpture and architecture. The sublime (in this sense the beautiful) is given vent to in the Homeric epic and the Greek tragedies of Aeschylus and Sophocles. But it is also the dominant sensation in more modern tragedies, those of Shakespeare and Goethe, for example.

In our contemporary age, the arts, especially painting and litera-

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. J Ritter (ed.) *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, Vol. I, p. 573.

ture, give expression to man's feeling of fear and terror rather than the beautiful and the sublime. They do so in a world that has lost its balance and its middle and a life that has lost all meaning and the old values of which have been destroyed.<sup>1</sup>) Expressionism is a good example of this school of art. The surrealist symbolists, such as Franz Kafka (*Die Verwandlung, der Prozess*), stress the anonymous irrational forces by which man is ruled today. Another phenomenon of contemporary art concurrent with the process of the pulverization and atomization of the world in the natural, social and human sciences is what may be termed functionalistic atomism in the arts. A case in point is James Joyce. In his works *Ulysses* and *Finnegan's Wake*, the coherent stream of consciousness has been atomized. There is no more historical as well as spatial and temporal continuity and the causal connection of consciousness has been broken up.

In works of this nature, it is especially the skill of the poet or author that matters. This gives the work of art the look of functionalistic craftsmanship rather than that of an organic whole, as was the case in works of the past. The progressing functionalization of the arts by our modern media of communication, such as television, and the revolutionary effect the experiencing together of many events has had, which adds further to our inability to conceive cultural form in its former meaning, are vividly described by Marshal McLuhan, the prophet of a global technological strategy. As he puts it: "With the omnipresent ear and the roving eye we have abolished writing." By this is meant that the technical impact of the modern media of mass-communication (telephone, radio, record player, tape recorder, camera, television and computer) has revolutionized our experience of the world to such an extent that we are incapable of thinking any longer in terms of cause and effect, temporal and historical continuity. Space and time lose their significance as forms of order and continuity. Man is everywhere at once, now in this part, now in that part of the world, or in both, or several parts at the same time. The concentration of his experience is so dense and the various impressions received by him at the same time are so many that he experiences all the events, different in space and time, at once, so that, as McLuhan puts it, he reverts to the experience of primitive man. The latter did not yet think

<sup>1</sup> Cf. H Sedlmayr, *Verlust der Mitte*.

in terms of cause and effect or historical continuity, but in the form of consolidated pictures and symbols. This reveals the paradox of the cult of technological functionalism or its *hubris*: it flings man back into a state of primitiveness, which reminds us of prehistoric times. It turns man into a technological barbarian. In this respect, it is interesting to compare Herbert Marcuse's point of the degeneration of eroticism into brutal sex.<sup>1</sup>)

Marcuse describes the psychological totality of the functionalistic establishment in terms of repressive desublimation in the arts and the conquest of the unhappy consciousness by technological pacification. He shows that, by their functionalistic manipulation, the true role of the arts as opposing the establishment and moving in the dimension of freedom as against unfreedom is lost. It is in this socio-political role that he sees the practical significance of the arts. The latter, he considers, had always been an indictment against established society, which they had always transcended. Even the law-abiding citizen was free in the arts and, in his imagination, took part in what was forbidden. In this connection the great literary works such as Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* or Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* as well as the paintings of the great impressionist painters refer. By the functionalization of the arts, the erotic atmosphere in Racine's *Phedre*, Goethe's *Wahlverwandtschaften* or Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du Mal* was superseded by a desublimated sexuality, encountered in O'Neill's alcoholics and Faulkner's savages, in Tennessee William's *A Streetcar Named Desire* and in all the stories of Hollywood and the New York orgies and adventures of suburban housewives. In the light of the technological *rationale* and the functionalistic climate in which our life is steeped, the great philosophical, literary and musical classics have lost their contradictory and sublimating power. As cheap paperbacks, they have become part of wholesale consumption. It is another "achievement" of established society that these classics are easily accessible to all in chain- and department stores, lying side by side with other commodities.

Another example of a practical approach to the arts is the philosophy of Ernst Bloch. In the face of both the functionalistic monopolistic society in the West and the ideological monopolistic society of the East, he sees the practical role of the arts as an emancipatory — in

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. *Der eindimensionale Mensch*, p. 96ff.

this sense, existential — one. Arts is seen by Bloch as giving expression to man's utopian urge, the motivating nature of which he discusses in his three volume work: *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*. There, he paints a vivid and colourful picture of the many ways in which man evinces his undying hope for authentic existence, for *Heimat* (his authentic home).

Torn between despair and hope, hunger (want) and surfeit, man always visualizes the possibility of a better world, a better life in the future and even final fulfilment. Although A = not-yet A, the not-yet implies that, some day, A will be A and social conflicts would be resolved and harmony and happiness would govern the world. In the spirit of utopia, therefore, Bloch sees the expression of man's undying hope for self-realization in the future, when he would have arrived in the *Heimat*, something "das allen in die Kindheit scheint und worin noch niemand war."<sup>1</sup>) Bloch finds the spirit of utopia in the last predicate of every great declaration:

Im Strassburger Münster und der göttlichen Komödie, in der Erwartungsmusik Beethovens und in den Latenzen der h-Moll Messe. Er (the spirit of utopia) ist in der Verzweiflung, die ein Unum necessarium noch als Verlorenes innehat, und im Hymnus an die Freude.<sup>2</sup>

## b) Examples of the Philosophy and Theory of Art

### (i) Plato's *Kalokagathia*

If Plato, in *Ion*, disputed poetry's claim to being an expression of divine reason, if he rejected the enthusiastic (divine inspiration) origin of the arts and, with reference to Homer, pointed out that, in any of the arts, no performance dealing with reality could be shown, this must be seen with reference to his doctrine of ideas in his cosmology (cf. *Phaedrus*). It is true that, in the light of his dualism — the *doxa* world of appearances on the one hand and, on the other, the real world of ideas or forms — Plato rejects works of art as an imitation of the imitation. However, his assessment of poetry and works of art in general must be distinguished from his conception of the harmonious and the beautiful

<sup>1</sup> *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, Vol. III, p. 1628.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 180.

as an aspect of the highest truth: *agathon*. It is by rational insight into the cosmos — into its representation of natural balance and harmony — that this highest truth is conceived by the philosopher, who incessantly strives for it, this striving manifesting the idea of *eros*. The identification of truth and goodness renders Plato's ethics axiological. Our desire for truth makes it the highest good. This explains the value judgement: Truth (reason) is good.

The practical dimension of Plato's moral theory emerges from man's striving for truth as the greatest goodness. Through his rational striving, man aims at realizing the ideas of justice, harmony and beauty, which he conceives by the cosmos. It may be said that it is the cosmos itself that constitutes a work of beauty: truth and goodness — *agathon*. Through his love and desire for truth — *eros* — man aims at realizing himself, thus attaining authentic existence: an existence through and by reason.



The practical dimension of Plato's moral theory also emerges from the fact that it is postulated as a result of his experience of social conflict in the *polis*. It is on the grounds of this experience, which can be designated as the moral ground or moral incentive, that Plato strives for justice. Since the *polis* forms part of the cosmos, justice means balance in the sense of the harmonious-cosmos governed by reason. Through reason, man and the state are harmoniously blended into the cosmos. Since this concept of the *polis* corresponds to the symmetry and beautiful form of a work of art, the aim of education is *kalokagathia*: to guide the citizen to live the good life — the life of beauty (harmony) and justice. Since this aim can be attained only through rational insight into the cosmos, the obtaining of rational insight enables man to perform the moral act. The concept of *kalokagathia* as the aim of education turns the entire process of education and teaching itself into an art. Education is *technè*, the art of guiding man from childhood to adulthood in his striving for *kalokagathia*. It does so by arousing his desire for it and, by promoting his rational insight into it, getting him to contemplate it.

In Plato's concept of *kalokagathia*, both the practical and the theoretical are interwoven; for both desire and intellect are involved. Through the love of truth — *eros* — or man's striving for it, harmony is discovered in the structure of the cosmos, the structure of the soul and

the structure of society (the state). The contemplation of this harmony makes ethical and aesthetic judgements possible; for this harmony is judged as good and beautiful at the same time. This judgement is objective knowledge in the sense that rational insight into the structure of the cosmos is universal. In the hierarchy of natural forms, the particular and the general, the subjective will and the objective moral order are reconciled. The contemplation of the harmony of the cosmos arouses in us true pleasure and infinite elation. The same aesthetic feelings are experienced at the contemplation of logic and mathematics. Their inner harmony and symmetry are judged good and beautiful as well.

*Kalokagathia* is the central idea of Greek culture *per se*. It finds expression in the Ancient Greek works of art: in literature, painting, architecture and sculpture. It constitutes the ancient Greeks' ideal of education. As such, *kalokagathia* became the canon of the classical philologists in the 18th century. Johann Joachim Winckelmann<sup>1</sup>) conceived the ancient Greek as ideal man and ancient Greek art as the expression of the harmonious soul. This was still the view of Wilhelm von Humboldt, one of the founders of the University of Berlin in 1810. It was Friedrich Nietzsche who, in his *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music* (1869-1871), showed the ancient Greek as a suffering and guilty man, who was in constant conflict with the world and himself. According to Nietzsche, this finds expression in Dionysiac art.

## (ii) *The Enlightenment*

That aesthetics is closely related to ethics was evident from Plato's concept of *kalokagathia*. It was especially the conflict between experience and reason, which conflict could, in some specific way, already be discerned in Plato's philosophy, that became an issue in Enlightenment philosophy, especially with regard to knowledge. The controversy between empiricism and rationalism, which was resolved by Kant's transcendentalism, also manifested itself in ethics and aesthetics. As far as the latter is concerned, the issue arose whether aesthetic judgement was based on feelings such as approval and disapproval,

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. Winckelmann's *Gedanken der Nachahmung der griechischen Werke der Malerei und der Bildhauerkunst* (1755) and *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums* (1762).

attraction and revulsion, pleasure and pain, or whether aesthetic judgement was a rational *apriori* type of judgement.

That aesthetic judgement was derived from taste, feeling or sensations and, in this sense, was subjective, was the opinion of David Hume, who says:

Pleasure and pain, therefore, are only necessary attendants of beauty and deformity, but constitute their very essence. And, indeed, if we consider that a great part of the beauty which we admire either in animals or in other objects is derived from the idea of convenience and utility, we shall make no scruple to assent to this opinion.<sup>1)</sup>

The empirical aesthetics that developed in Britain in the 17th and 18th centuries has its main representative in the Third Earl of Shaftesbury, the pupil of John Locke. His psychology of aesthetics linked up with John Locke's ethics, which was based on the pleasure-pain principle.

Shaftesbury's aesthetics revolves around Plato's *kalokagathia* and the Greek concept of the beautiful soul from the empirical point of view. According to Shaftesbury, the propensities — instincts, passions and affects — constitute the object of both moral and aesthetic judgement. Applying Locke's pleasure-pain principle, he teaches that moral pleasure is experienced when unnatural urges are repressed and egoistical inclinations are subordinated to social ones. It is in the latter case that the harmony and beauty of the soul are experienced. A. Messer<sup>3)</sup> points out that Shaftesbury has vividly described the inner harmony of the beautiful soul, thereby anticipating Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. In Shaftesbury's ideal man, the Greek ideal of beautiful humanity is fused with the elegant courtier: the *homme galant* of the 17th century. This ideal man is the *virtuoso*, the tasteful dilettante, who is an adept in both scholarship and the fine arts.

On the continent, it was rationalism in philosophy and classicism in literature and music that dominated the scene till the 18th century.

---

<sup>1</sup> *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Vol. II, Section VIII, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> *CF. Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions.*

<sup>3</sup> *Geschichte der Philosophie*, Vol. II, pp. 72-74.

France in particular set the example for Germany. The strict rules governing classicist arts corresponded to the absolutism of the monarch, a case in point being the reign of Louis XIV of France, with whose taste the arts had to comply. Thus Boileau, in his *art poetique*, attempted to establish fixed rules for poetry. The great dramatists Corneille and Racine strictly heeded the principle of the unity of place, time and action in their tragedies and used the *alexandrine* as normal verse. In doing so, they referred to the antique: to Horace's *de arte poetica* and Aristotle's *poetica*.

In Germany, it was especially Johann Cristoph Gottsched, who clung to the doctrine of the teachability of poetry and the fixed rules of French classicism. The Swiss theoreticians Bodmer and Breitinger, on the other hand, opposed Gottsched and propagated Milton. This paved the path for Klopstock, who indulged in feeling and sought to arouse the latent religious and patriotic sensations of the people. In music, it was especially Johann Sebastian Bach, who separated instrumental music from popular music, thus making the former become independent. At the same time, his rationally structural, in this sense classical, music is the expression of a deep protestant feeling and faith. In contradistinction to the psychological aesthetics in Britain, rational aesthetics developed in 18th century Germany. It included the already mentioned conceptual aesthetics of the beautiful form.

It has already been pointed out that Plato's *kalokagathia* forms the core of Kant's ethics and education. Since, according to Kant, the whole truth — the teleological movement of nature and history in terms of man's striving from the sensual to the rational, from the mere legal to the truly moral — is reflected in the work of art (whereby he differs from Plato), the idea of *kalokagathia* is manifested by it. It has already been pointed out that, for Kant, the fine arts do not achieve knowledge, but represent an area of their own, which is situated between knowledge and morality. The contemplation of the forms of their various creations evokes aesthetic judgement. Pleasure experienced at the contemplation of the beautiful and ecstasy at the contemplation of the sublime are universal reactions. The beautiful (the natural) being the symbol of goodness (the moral), the tension between the *is* and the *ought*, between the naturally given order and the moral obligatory order, is suspended in the idea of freedom. The trans-

cidental act of rational striving is a purposeful act. Just as in a work of art the goal of striving is beauty, so in human striving as a whole it is moral autonomy (freedom). The two are closely linked. Art shows that the transcendental act of rational striving is both beautiful and good. *Kalokagathia* is therefore the goal of education. Ideally, the work of art establishes the balance between nature and morality, harmony among men and the equilibrium of their socio-political institutions. In both Kant's work of art and Plato's concept of *kalokagathia*, desire and intellect, practice and theory are involved.

### (iii) Romanticism

In the era of Enlightenment, a distinction may be made between empirical aesthetics based on the pleasure-pain principle and transcendental aesthetics based on the transcendental act of rational striving for freedom from the senses, a purposeful act reflected in a work of art. A prominent representative of the first type is the Third Earl of Shaftesbury and of the second type Kant. In both cases aesthetic judgement of the good and the beautiful involves reason. In Shaftesbury's case, the propensities — instincts, passions and affects — are an object of both moral and aesthetic judgement. The harmony of the beautiful soul is experienced, when unnatural urges are distinguished from natural ones, so that egoistical inclinations can be subordinated to social ones. In Kant's case, it is the contemplation of the forms of the various art creations that arouses pleasure and invokes aesthetic judgement.

In Romanticism, the aesthetic feeling about nature, man or history is of a more or less mystic character. Romanticism has many aspects and many themes, such as nature, the genius, history, folklore and the yearning for the infinite, for the miraculous, for the lost original world of reality, which is recovered as a dream world. On the whole, the new life experience, the change from reason to a more emotional experience of nature appears to have its origin in a number of influences, such as Shakespeare's works, Rousseau's challenge: *Revenons à la nature*, Kant's aesthetics: his teaching that the world of phenomena and the world of moral ideas are linked by the aesthetic world of taste. Romanticism is a concept that emerged in England about the middle of the 17th century. Via France, it spread to Germany. At first, it meant popular poetry in contradistinction to Latin educational poetry. Already

Bodmer, the critic of Gottsched's rational concept of poetry, in: *Von dem Wunderbaren in der Poesie* (1740), gave to Romanticism the meaning of the inventive and imaginary.

The overture to Romanticism, which latter reached far into the 19th century, was a literary movement called *Sturm und Drang* (storm and stress). It received its name from a romantic drama about the American War of Independence, entitled *Sturm und Drang* by Friedrich Maximilian Klingler, which appeared in 1775. The movement flourished at about 1760-1780. Influenced by religious pietism, sensualism and Rousseau's naturalism, it opposes the fixed rigid rules of the rationalistic *Enlightenment* spirit. An inner restlessness of its members caused it to battle for creative freedom. It developed in its ranks a passionate, boundless cult of the genius. Prominent representatives of this movement are: Hamann, Herder, Lenz, Schiller and the young Goethe. It is not difficult to understand that the very spirit of the *Sturm und Drang* movement, with its emphasis on the unlimited creative freedom of the genius, stands in opposition to the repressive princely authority in the great number of German principalities and the servile attitude of the subjects at that time. Friedrich Schiller's youth drama *Die Räuber* is a typical example of this. It is as though the *Sturm und Drang* movement were a reaction to the political, intellectual and spiritual fetters to which the society of that time was subjected as well as the many geographical borders and limits of free movement in the Germany of that era. It seeks to break through these physical, intellectual and spiritual restrictions. One of the English romanticists, Lord Byron, who is usually not counted among the *Sturm und Drang* writers shows nevertheless trends that are reminiscent of this movement. Not only was Byron immensely popular at home, but also exerted great influence on the Romantic movement. He owed his popularity to his persistent attacks on political, religious and moral cant, to his exotic oriental scenery and to the romantic character of the Byronic hero.

The variety of themes in *Sturm und Drang* and Romanticism may be said to derive from the multi-coloured tapestry of Shakespeare's literary works. It is, for example, discernible in Herder's *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern*. There, the attempt is made to fathom the soul of various nations through their folk-songs. Not to the weighing by rational judgement but to the deep emotions must poetry address itself. The

revival of religious feeling in religious pietism finds expression in Klopstock's *Messias*, the first poem that was received with enthusiasm in a politically torn Germany of many dialects. Under Rousseau's influence, nature is opened to feeling. The flirtatious love of the rococo period, which succeeds the more voluptuous neo-classical style of the baroque era, yields to passion. All social barriers break down. Only moral barriers are heeded, as is manifest in Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*.

This novel makes such an impression that *Wertherism* becomes a creed, a fashion and a style of life. The individual is the measure of all things. The genius is not bound by social norms. He is a law unto himself. Society and political order are despicable tyrannies. They must be combated in freedom's name, as is done in Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen* or in Schiller's *Die Räuber* or other early tragedies, which all bear the motto: *in tyrannos*. Conflicts between consanguineous persons are given preferential treatment. *Sturm und Drang* conquers the world. The phrase finds entrance into the English vocabulary. Walter Scott translates *Werther* and *Götz* into English. Napoleon succumbs to the *Werther* cult. The Germans become a nation of poets and thinkers. They achieve freedom in the arts and philosophy. In contradistinction to their socio-political reality, their great artistic and intellectual minds regard themselves as *Weltbürger* (citizens of the world). In view of the repressive socio-political conditions that prevail in Germany at that time, the great composer Ludwig van Beethoven dedicates his *Eroica* to General Bonaparte, in whom he sees the hero of freedom, who acts in the service of mankind. He tears this dedication to pieces, however, when he learns that Napoleon has crowned himself emperor. To him this is a betrayal of the human rights upheld by the French Revolution. Beethoven's humanitarian spirit also manifests itself in the 9th symphony, which includes Schiller's hymn of mankind's brotherly love, *Freude schöner Götterfunken*. His love for freedom is also clearly evidenced in the music that he composed for Goethe's *Egmont*, the Dutch hero who, because of his love for freedom, is executed by the Spaniards.

The Romanticists' conception of truth derives from their idea of the creative genius. The creative artist feels himself free of all rules and regulations. In creating beauty — Kant's third realm, which bridges

the gulf between the world of understanding and the world of morality — thus creating true being, the artist, solely and exclusively, follows his creative urge. In creating the organic work of art, he creates the unity of idea and form. But he often overestimates himself, and believing himself a genius, who breaks the rigid forms of art and is above bourgeois customs, norms and laws, he takes his feelings and fantasies for objective world pictures. He imagines that he can overcome his individual limitation through a rapturous enthusiasm or a hairsplitting dialectics and so arrive at ultimate general truths. There are often mystical notes audible in the genius's yearning for ultimate truth, for example when Novalis (Hardenberg) muses: "The world becomes a dream and the dream becomes the world."

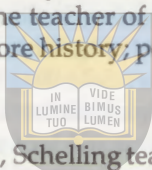
The desire for the ultimate finds vivid expression by the inner revival of religion and the growing inclination towards the Roman Catholic religion. The revival of religion is discernible in Fichte's later works and Schelling's *Weltalter*. Schelling's aestheticism and deification of nature stimulated the imagination of the poets. In the Roman Catholic Church, Schelling saw a work of art. The criticism of the *Enlightenment* philosophers he regarded as stupid. If they were given, he opined, free rein to toil for a century, they would only complete an ant hill. Everything organic, he pointed out, is vastly superior to analytical understanding. In Berlin, it was Friedrich Schleiermacher, minister at the *Dreifaltigkeitskirche* who, in religion, saw the sense and taste for the infinite, which aroused in man a feeling of unconditional dependence on God, of *schlechthinniger Abhängigkeit*. The true essence of Christianity is separated from its dogmatic shell and historical development. Theology is free to subject to criticism the outer forms of Christian consciousness.

The philosophical spirit of Romanticism has been clearly articulated by Friedrich Schlegel, brother of August Wilhelm Schlegel, who, together with Ludwig Tieck, translated into German Shakespeare's great tragedies. Shortly before his death, Friedrich Schlegel describes the stages of his philosophical development as follows:

- (i) A dark yearning and searching (1788-1798).
- (ii) An artistic and philosophical creative urge, which results in a philosophy of the all-encompassing self (1798-1808).

- (iii) Conversion to Roman Catholicism (1808); obedience and subordination of reason to the truth of the Church (1808-1818).
- (iv) A mystical life of my own in obedience to the Church (1818-1820).

The most prominent philosopher of Romanticism is Friedrich Wilhelm Schelling.<sup>1</sup>) His philosophy can be succinctly summarized by Goethe's pantheistic formula: Nature is mind and mind is nature. He believes in the absolute freedom of all spirits, who bear in themselves the intellectual world and who may not, like Kant, seek God or immortality outside themselves. God and immortality are the idea of beauty in the Platonic sense. Schelling is therefore convinced that the highest act is an aesthetic act and that goodness and truth are merged in beauty. The philosopher should possess as much aesthetic strength as does the poet. Thereby poetry would become more dignified and be again what it was before: the teacher of mankind. There would be no more philosophy and no more history; poetry alone would survive the sciences and the arts.



In accordance with this, Schelling teaches that the creative mind of the artist reflects the creative power of the Absolute — the creator of the world consciousness — in its rational and irrational aspects. The source of the work of art is the genius of the artist: a higher demoniacal power, which drives him on, which is his destiny, an intelligence which works in nature. The genuine work of art is the creation of free activity. It is produced from inner necessity, not from arbitrariness. More is expressed in it than was intended in the artist's reflection. Its basic feature is an unconscious infinity. The infinite is represented in finite form as beauty. The idea is present as a sensual phenomenon. A work of art exists for its own sake. Therein consists the purity and holiness of art, which is the highest value and most perfect appearance of the absolute self. The task of art is not to copy nature or idealize it, but art has its origin in the same energy from which springs nature.

It is the most perfect representation of creative energy. Since the universe is God's work of art, Schelling's philosophy can be called an aesthetic metaphysics.

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. Schelling, F W J, "Philosophie der Kunst", in: *Gesamtausgabe*.

(iv) *Existential Aspect of Aesthetics*

There is another aspect of aesthetic experience besides the rational one, i.e., experiencing pleasure at the contemplation of the beautiful form, namely the existential aspect. By and large, the latter aspect may be defined as the experience of the sublime in tragedy, in this sense, the beauty of the tragic. It may be said that his striving for truth for the sake of truth, which Plato called *eros*, confronts man with a double aspect of truth. There is, on the one hand, harmony, which appears to reign in the universe. It is reflected in the human mind, finding expression in mathematics and logic and arousing in man a feeling of the beautiful. On the other hand, there is the experience of conflict, doubt and insecurity, which makes man strive for truth in order to gain certainty and piece of mind. It is the experience of the tragic as a result of the failure of human striving and the suffering and guilt incurred thereby that gives birth to the feeling of the sublime, in this sense, the beautiful. The tragedy is a mirror which reflects our continual striving for truth, our failure to reach it, our suffering and feeling of guilt incurred in the process and our final defeat in death. It is the tragic hero's fate that arouses in us the feeling of the sublime and the beautiful. To the conflict between appearance (illusion) and truth, agony and elation, debasement and sublimity — but also the perseverance of striving in the face of these antagonisms — any tragic hero bears witness.

From this, the problematic character of the beautiful and the sublime is evident. On the one hand, there are symmetry, rational proportion, the balanced serene mind, on the other, man's irresistible urge and striving, his desire to reach the Absolute or deity through ecstasy, i.e., the standing out of the self into the Absolute. The former contemplative aspect of the aesthetic has been termed by Schelling and Nietzsche the Apollonian, the second irrational aspect the Dionysiac component.

The phenomenon of the split truth has been treated by Karl Jaspers in his work *Über das Tragische* (extract from: *Von der Wahrheit*). Jaspers<sup>1</sup>) describes the tragic as follows:

---

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 17-18.

Das Tragische steht vor der Anschauung als ein Geschehen, das das Grauerregende des Daseins zeigt, aber des menschlichen Daseins und dieses in den Verstrickungen aus dem Umgreifenden des Menschseins. Die Anschauung des Tragischen aber vollzieht sich durch die Befreiung vom Tragischen, eine Weise der Reinigung und Erlösung.

And if Jaspers adds: "Das Sein erscheint im *Scheitern*. Im Scheitern ist das Sein nicht verloren, sondern gerade ganz und entschieden fühlbar. *Es gibt keine transzendenzlose Tragik*", then the foundering of man, as it is experienced today, is, at the same time, a transcending to Being and, as such, salvation.

Jaspers<sup>1</sup>) has pointed to the split truth just as it is experienced by us today. Thereby is meant that man lives in truth as it appears to him and not as it really is. By the experience of foundering he is impelled to strive for the real truth, thereby incurring moral guilt, which he expiates. Jaspers has shown this tension between apparent truth and real truth in the tragic hero of the Greek, Shakespearean and Goethean tragedy. The three tragic heroes, Oepidus, Hamlet and Faust, expiate their guilt in the process of searching for truth. Today, it would appear that these heroes, who founder in their search for truth as it really is and expiate their guilt being incurred in the act of seeking to pierce the veil of Maya, would be those great minds who, in the face of powerful technological, economic and ideological forces, attempt a breakthrough to reality, which is concealed behind our self-created artificial, egalitarian and functionalistic world. It is in this transcending act that man's salvation consists and that the split of truth has been overcome.

Jaspers makes it clear that the tragic hero — man who has transcended himself — is man as such, man in goodness and in evil, who, fulfilling himself in goodness and destroying himself in evil, founders each time in his being-there as a result of the Absolute's *no* to man's attempt to comprehend it. The Absolute remains transcendent, and only by a leap into the transcendent by faith could man reach it. This explains why foundering is man's destiny. It is by this human expe-

---

<sup>1</sup> "Die Wahrheitsfrage", *op cit.*, pp. 29-42.

rience that the absolute reveals itself and that the leap into the transcendent in faith becomes possible. Hence: *Das Scheitern ist das Letzte.*<sup>1</sup>)

There are of course, as has been shown, both a contemplative and existential aspect of any epoch. It is a matter of the shifting of accent. During the era of Enlightenment it is the rational and contemplative aspect that is emphasized. But even that is of existential significance since man's existential problems are sought to be resolved by reason. On the other hand, as is shown in Schopenhauer's and Nietzsche's aesthetics, the existential aspect of art is supplemented by a contemplative one. This is not surprising when it is borne in mind that both thinkers give expression to their aesthetic experience in theoretical form.

Both Schopenhauer's and Nietzsche's aesthetic views are developed from their experience of cultural decadence in the 19th century, although they drew different conclusions from this experience. The cultural *malaise* or *Untergangsstimmung* was not only reflected in the philosophy of the time but also in literature (Dostoevsky, Tolstoy) and in music (Gustav Mahler). In view of the growing impact of positivistic philosophy that went hand in hand with the rapid extension of science and technology, the feeling of *Untergangsstimmung*, which permeated Oswald Spengler's cultural history, was strengthened in the first half of the 20th century, as will be evident from the postulation of aesthetic theories in that period. It was felt that the forces of a growing totalitarian technological functionalism and political ideologism had plunged man into an existential dilemma, which had manifested itself in a very concrete form by the two World Wars. It was those traumatic experiences that rendered the traditional cultural values questionable and that led to the emergence of a philosophical school commonly referred to as existentialism.

Although there exist marked differences between the thinkers that are usually counted among the existentialists, against which label some of them protest, they have in common that they ask the central question of the nature of authentic human existence and explore ways and means to rehouse unhoused man. The contemporary German lit-

---

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophie*, Vol. III, p. 220.

erary critic, Hans Egon Holthusen, points out that unhoused man is not altogether a curse but rather a blessing.<sup>1</sup>) After the old rubble has been cleared out of the way, a new beginning can be made; for now man was free and unburdened and therefore receptive to and impressionable by new literary genres and contents. In his poems *Hier in der Zeit*, he bears vivid testimony to man's existential dilemma after the war, his desperate, tormented questioning, his being affected by a gruesome war experience and the excesses of human guilt and his having to make a new start from a new existential situation or being there. All this is reminiscent of the lyrical existentialist poet Rainer Maria Rilke, whose destiny was: *Keine Heimat haben in der Zeit*. A vivid document of this feeling is his lyrical ballad: *Weise von Liebe und Tod des Cornets Christoph Rilke* (1899).

Already Schopenhauer, in the face of cultural decadence in the 19th century, was conscious of man's existential dilemma. In Schopenhauer's philosophy of the will to live, which he posits against the philosophy of idealism, the existential role of the arts consists in their being a means of man's deliverance from the blind urge of the will, the source of all evil and suffering. Unlike Schelling, Schopenhauer sees in the will no teleological principle which, by becoming conscious of itself, becomes free, but he regards the will as a meaningless cycle, with death as its inevitable end. Schopenhauer took a pessimistic view of the culture of his own time. Its degeneration showed that man's life constituted a chase after mock-values.

There are two possibilities of deliverance from the will's bondage: the contemplation of Platonic ideas in philosophy, in this way overcoming the *principium individuationis* (the conscious, concrete expression of the will); or the plunging into nirvana, thus overcoming the selfish principle in a negative way.<sup>2</sup>) The philosophical and aesthetic contemplation of ideas is a higher form of cognition, not subject to the causal law. Only a few elect minds are capable of throwing off the yoke of the causal will and of contemplating these ideas directly. Art is a

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Holthusen's volume of essays, entitled: *Der unbehauste Mensch, Motive und Probleme der modernen Literatur*.

<sup>2</sup> In this respect, cf. Book 3 and Book 4 of Schopenhauer's *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, entitled: "Die Platonische Idee", "Das Objekt der Kunst" and "Bejahung und Verneinung des Willens zum Leben", respectively.

field that represents pure ideas. The lowest form of such expression is architecture followed by sculpture and painting, which are higher forms of the expression of these ideas. In the delight experienced at their contemplation, the will's striving is temporarily stilled.

It is music, however, that transcends the will's struggle. It is the highest form of the arts. It is not merely a copy of ideas, but a copy of the will itself. It reflects the rhythm and pulsation of the roaming will as it returns to itself and resumes its striving. The effect of music is therefore so much mightier than that of the other arts. While these speak only about shadows, music talks about essence. It affects our feelings directly, not merely indirectly, as do the other arts. It appeals to a higher truth than that of the intellect. What is symmetry in the other arts is rhythm in music. But in spite of its powerful impact on our emotions, not even music affords man permanent deliverance from the passions and the suffering caused by the restless will. Only immersing oneself into *nirvana* will accomplish this. Only then will lasting peace, tranquillity and happiness come to man.

Friedrich Nietzsche links up with Schopenhauer, but draws a different conclusion from man's existential dilemma as a result of cultural decay. He transforms Schopenhauer's negative will-to-live into a positive will-to-power. Generally speaking, Nietzsche understood man's existential crisis of being unhoused as a result of the death of God: his being replaced by other cults, such as reason, the sciences, humanism, socialism and economism. From *Morgenröte* and *Fröhliche Wissenschaft* it becomes evident that he takes a stand against the same nihilistic powers as does Kierkegaard.

In *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*,<sup>1</sup>) Nietzsche speaks about "Wir Heimatlosen" (we, without a home, the unhoused ones):

Es fehlt unter den Europäern von heute nicht an solchen, die ein Recht haben, sich in einem abhebenden und ehrenden Sinne Heimatlose zu nennen — ihnen gerade sei meine geheime Weisheit und *gaya scienza* ausdrücklich ans Herz gelegt.

---

<sup>1</sup> In: A Messer (ed.), *Friedrich Nietzsche, Werke in zwei Bänden*, Vol. I, p. 281.

In the will-to-power, the will to start on the path of becoming, uncertainty, perishability and periodicity, lies the moral act. It is by this act that I become free and that I am saved from the debasing spirit of revenge, which disparages everything that is perishable, the world and everything belonging to it. In following the will-to-power, I am master of the situation. The will-to-power calls for a *revaluation of values*. Ideas such as humanity, modesty, love, forgiveness are out of place. They represent the morality of the weak and timorous, who, by the common observance of these values, enjoy undue protection. These moral values are in conflict with nature. They prevent man from throwing himself wholeheartedly into the battle of becoming, in order to become master of himself and the world. The man that is prepared to take a risk and is ready to follow Zarathustra on his perilous journey, needs manliness, courage, valour, spirit of enterprise and fortitude of mind. He is entering the tight rope that is suspended over the gulf separating him from the new man: *superman*. The latter manages to live in the shadow of the mysterious, the eternal riddle. This illustrates that Nietzsche's ethics is inextricably interwoven with his metaphysics, as is also manifested by Zarathustra's symbol: an eagle around whose neck a snake rings itself.

University of Fort Hare

*Together in Excellence*

In the aesthetic field, the shift from an unauthentic rational and empirical world to an authentic mysterious world of actual striving is accomplished in Nietzsche's *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik*, the foreword to which is dedicated to the German composer Richard Wagner, whom Nietzsche considered, for some time, his closest friend. This work may be said to contain, in the budding stage, Nietzsche's basic concepts, as they appear in his *Also sprach Zarathustra* as well as his other works. These basic concepts are: the will-to-power, superman, the revaluation of values and the recurrence of the equal in the process of becoming. In the *Geburt der Tragödie*, the existential rôle of Greek art, especially with reference to Greek lyrical poetry (Archilochus, 7th century B.C.) and to Greek tragedy (Aeschylus and Sophocles), is clearly spelled out. Thereby, Nietzsche links up with Schopenhauer's philosophy of the will-to-live in general and the idea of music in particular, as well as Schelling's dichotomy of the Apollonian and the Dionysiac in Greek art.

According to Nietzsche, the Apollonian and Dionysiac com-

ponents of Greek culture are supplementary and stand in a dialectical relationship to each other. For Nietzsche, the empirical world is mere appearance, so that Apollonian culture, which is a reflection of it, is an appearance of the appearance, thus a beautiful illusion. It can be compared with a dream, the analysis of which reveals man's primeval desire for relief from suffering, pain conflict and uncertainty. It is in this regard that Nietzsche may be said to become the forerunner of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis. This holds particularly true for the latter's analysis of dreams<sup>1)</sup> and doctrine that the *Kern des Unbewussten* (the core of the subconscious) must be seen in the *Triebrepräsentanten* (representatives of subconscious drive). Freud regards the core of the subconscious as consisting of the following: *libido* or sexual drive,<sup>2)</sup> *Ich- or Selbsterhaltungstrieb* (desire for self-preservation)<sup>3)</sup> and *eros* and *thanatos* or vital drive and death-wish.<sup>4)</sup>

By Nietzsche's conception of "dream", man has moved from becoming to Being, from mortality to immortality, from suffering to happiness, from want (desire) to fulfilment. In man's dream, reality (Freud would say the *id* or subconscious in contradistinction to the conscious self) reveals itself. The greater the pleasure man experiences at the contemplation of the society of the gods, the greater his want and misery and the more his primeval urge and striving for relief manifest themselves.

From this interpretation of Apollonian culture as an expression of a form of human existence, it becomes clear that it is an unauthentic form. Nietzsche nevertheless reckons that the Apollonian form of culture is necessary — even indispensable — in order to realize the power of the real in the world and in man, although the depth of the real can be fathomed neither by aesthetic contemplation nor by rational insight, as was taught by Plato.

The powerful cultural drive as it appears in the Homeric epic, its manifestation of an ardent desire for the beautiful illusion, causes man to become conscious of the true nature of the real. It induces him to draw the metaphysical conclusion that the primeval *One*, as eternal

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. *Die Traumdeutung*, 1900.

<sup>2</sup> CF. *Drei Abhandlungen zur Sexualtheorie*, 1905.

<sup>3</sup> CF. *Zur Einführung des Narzissmus*, 1914.

<sup>4</sup> CF. *Jenseits des Lustprinzips*, 1920.

contradiction and suffering, needs the pleasant and the beautiful illusion for its own relief. Being completely involved in this illusion and being himself appearance, man is compelled to experience this illusion as true not-being: as permanent-becoming in space, time and causality. Man experiences this illusion as empirical reality. Thereby the dialectical relationship holding between Apollo and Dionysus is given. Just as Apollo presupposes Dionysus for the artistic creation of the world of appearance (the empirical world), so Dionysus needs appearance as constituted by Apollonian art for the sake of its own relief. Through being opposite forces, Apollo and Dionysus are really one. They reflect the conflict that forever motivates man, who is an empirical being on the one hand and a metaphysical being on the other.

As a counterpart to Homer, Nietzsche sees Archilochus, the real creator of the elegy and the iambic metre. Nietzsche regards him as the poet of the Dionysiac. He points out that, on pictures and gems of ancient Greece, Homer and Archilochus are shown side by side, indicating the relationship between epic (Apollonian) and lyric (Dionysiac) art. This relationship is also manifest in the tragedy and the dithyramb, the Greek choric hymn of wild character.

#### University of Fort Hare

In contrast to Homer, the objective artist of disinterested contemplation, Archilochus is the subjective engaged artist, who, through his very subjective feeling and intention, brings to light by means of hatred, satire, ridicule and sadness, the real: conflict, suffering, pain and contradiction. The metaphysical nature of Archilochus' poetry explains the reverence shown to him by the Oracle of Delphi, the home of objective art. Through lyric art, man has lost all subjectivity. He has overcome the *principium individuationis*, thus the empirical world of space, time and causality. Within the context of his own approach, Heidegger would say that man's existence is now seen as ek-sistence: the standing out of the self as the *Lichtung des Seins* (the manifestation of Being in the world). In lyrical Dionysiac art, the healing process (in the sense of making whole) of nature is experienced. As Heidegger has shown with reference to Hölderlin's lyrical poetry, the lyrical artist is metaphysical in the sense that he pronounces *das Heile und Das Heilige des Seins* (the whole and the holy of Being).

For Nietzsche, as is reiterated later by Karl Jaspers, man is the

tragic being *par excellence*. Jaspers would say that, due to the split truth — *Gespaltensein der Wahrheit* — man is always in a border-situation. It makes him strive for insight into truth and, in so doing, become guilty, as did Oedipus, Hamlet and Faust. The Absolute remains concealed. It cannot be grasped by intellectual and aesthetic contemplation. It is experienced by man's very failure to grasp it. In a certain sense, this view of Jaspers is anticipated by Nietzsche when he shows how the world of appearance — in which man is inevitably involved and which causes him to lead an existence he seeks to justify by the creation of epic dream worlds, an appearance of the appearance — requires the real world as a presupposition for its own existence.

According to Nietzsche, it is the failure to grasp the real nature of the world and man through epic art that refers us to lyric art. The latter presents the One as primeval conflict and suffering, by these experiences causing man to strive for it. By lyric art, therefore, the tragic character of human existence is exposed.

Analogous to his conception of music as the tragic art *par excellence* is Nietzsche's view that the Greek tragedy takes its origin in the tragic chorus, thus in music. It is significant that, originally, there was only the chorus and no actor. Nietzsche rejects A W Schlegel's view that the chorus was an ideal spectator, i.e., represented the spectator in a pure way, lost in aesthetic contemplation of the world. He pointed out that, while the spectator was conscious of having to do with a work of art, the tragic chorus saw the figures on the stage as empirical realities. It sensed itself as real as it experienced the suffering god of the scene, whom it would seek to deliver from his suffering. Nietzsche shows more sympathy with Schiller's conception of the chorus in the *Braut von Messina*, according to which conception the chorus is a living wall that the chorus drew around itself in order to seclude itself from the empirical world so as to be able to keep on ideal ground and retain its poetic freedom.

At the beginning of the Greek tragedy, says Nietzsche, there was only the purely Dionysiac chorus of satyrs. Just as music was the spontaneous expression of reality as permanent becoming, striving and suffering — the becoming god — the chorus represented the absurd and contradictory nature of Being. It represented reality as the

suffering god Dionysus, who, at first, did not appear on the stage as a tragic hero. The power of the chorus consisted in the magic spell that its tragic hymns and songs cast upon the spectator. The latter was transformed from empirical man to Dionysiac man. As such, he identified himself with the satyr, in whom he saw the suffering god.

In this connection, Nietzsche points to the difference between the Greek satyr and the idyllic shepherd plays or pastoral plays of the 18th century in the style of Rousseau. Both have in common that they give expression to the human desire for the real and the natural. The soft, effeminate, playful, dressed up shepherd of the man of civilization, however, is a mere caricature of nature in comparison with the rough, wild, sublime and divine satyr, who rejoices in his god. He is primeval man by whom the illusion of culture and civilization has been wiped out.



It is thus borne home to us that the satyr chorus gives birth to the Greek tragedy, which, again and again, objectivizes the sufferings of the god in the Apollonian form of pictures. The Apollonian consists thus in the objectivization of the Dionysiac conditions of life and human existence. The chorus is however the ground of the dialogue taking place between the actors on the stage: it is the real foundation of the drama. From the chorus, the original ground of the tragedy, emanates the Apollonian vision of the drama, which, as a vision, is of epic character. It constitutes an objectivization of Dionysiac conditions. This vision is however not the Apollonian relief of the individual from suffering and conflict in illusion. It means, on the contrary, the annihilation of the individual who is enmeshed in the empirical — in this sense subjective — world of space, time and causality. It means his becoming one with primeval Being in ecstasy. The drama is thus the Apollonian incarnation of Dionysiac insight and impacts. As such, it is distinguished from the epic (Homer). Its existential function consists in dispelling the illusion by which man is held the captive of the empirical world, his own culture and civilization. By rending the veil of Maya, the drama guides man in finding his way to reality and exchanging his existence in empirical illusion for a Dionysiac authentic existence.

The Dionysiac and Apollonian aspects of the Greek tragedy become very distinct when the god is no longer merely represented by

the dithyramb of the chorus, but is actually shown on the stage. It is then that the drama proper takes its beginning. When this happens, it becomes the task of the dithyrambic chorus to create among the audience a Dionysiac mood, in order to make them see the hero on the stage as a vision born from their own ecstasy. We have thus the language, colour and dynamic power of speech in the Dionysiac lyric of the chorus on the one hand and, on the other, the distinct, solid form of the hero on the stage. In this Apollonian form, Dionysus speaks to the audience as the epic hero, almost in the language of Homer. But if the Apollonian appearance or mask of the hero is subjected to closer scrutiny, the underlying Dionysiac myth is discovered.

The Apollonian mask of the hero is the reaction of Dionysiac man to the terrible insight gained by him into the destructive nature of primeval life. This mask has a healing effect and is, in this sense, of existential significance. It makes it possible for man to bear his Dionysiac existence. It is in this sense that the widely discussed concept of *Heiterkeit*, the gay equanimity of the Greek tragic hero, must be understood, which is shown by Nietzsche in the person of Aeschylus' *Prometheus* and Sophocles' *Oedipus*. The *Heiterkeit* of these tragic heroes is not of an unchallenged happiness and security but rather of an equanimity at the sight and experience of suffering. The self-satisfied kind of *Heiterkeit* is seen by Nietzsche to be incepted at a later stage, when the original Dionysiac culture had degenerated into a Socratic civilization. He saw this happening in the tragedies of Euripides, where he recognized the Socratic *daimonion*. Euripides' attempt to found the tragedy on a naturalist principle — the lust of everyday existence — rather than the Dionysiac principle, as had been the case with Aeschylus and Sophocles, rings the death knell for the true tragedy. Without its Dionysiac ground of music, without its mythical satyr chorus, says Nietzsche, the real tragedy becomes impossible. He points out that, with Euripides, the chorus merely fills out intermissions. It has no meaning for the action itself. Its songs lack the lyric power of the old chorus. They are now mere descriptions of epic scenes and stand only in a loose relationship with the action.

Nietzsche appears to observe in Greek cultural history a dialectical movement from the Dionysiac to Socratic man (the rational man of the empirical world). This movement seems to have repeated itself after

the collapse of the Graeco-Roman civilization. Nietzsche considers that the Dionysiac principle, which had dominated the culture of the pre-Christian Teutonic world, had gradually been superseded by the Socratic principle, which he recognizes in Christian ethics, especially the ethics of the Protestant faith. While, in the Roman Church, he still sees an aristocratic *élite*, he regards the Reformation as a *Bauernaufstand des Geistes*.<sup>1</sup>) He further recognizes the Socratic principle in science. He considers the predominance of the Socratic principle in the culture of his own time the cause of its decadence. The dialectical movement in the history of culture from the Dionysiac principle to the Socratic principle and *vice versa* suggests the *eternal recurrence of the equal*, which Nietzsche also recognizes in nature and human existence: the striving of opposites, the eternal cycle of rise and decay, birth and death.

The history of Greek culture taught Nietzsche the lesson of the decline of the culture of his own time. The reason was the attempt to overcome the world of conflict and suffering by embracing the Socratic principle rather than facing it. This route of escape caused man to lead an unauthentic existence in an artificially constituted world of civilization, an abstract world that rendered man incapable of creating noble and sublime works of art and a culture giving expression to the real world in Apollonian form, thereby being able to face and to bear it. Only Dionysiac man was capable of creating a genuine culture. He was a man balanced by the Dionysiac and the Apollonian. He was *superman*. Real epic art depended on the balance between the Dionysiac and the Apollonian. The former required the latter as a mask of nature and the latter presupposed the former for the creation of its beautiful illusion. That Nietzsche regarded the dialectical relation holding between the Dionysiac and the Apollonian as an existential relation and art as a medium leading to an authentic existence transpires from the following:

Könnten wir uns eine Menschwerdung der Dissonanz denken — und was ist sonst der Mensch? — so würde diese Dissonanz, um leben zu können, eine herrliche Illusion brauchen, die ihr einen

---

<sup>1</sup>CF. "Der Bauernaufstand des Geistes", in: "Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft", Par. 93. in: Friedrich Nietzsche, *Werke in zwei Bänden*, ed. by A Messer, Vol. I, pp. 278-280.

Schönheitsschleier über ihr geeignetes Wesen decke. Dies ist die wahre Kunstabsicht des Apollo.<sup>1)</sup>

In the midst of the decline of culture in his own time, Nietzsche recognized signs that pointed to a swinging back of the pendulum in the direction of a new creative culture, in accordance with the law of the eternal recurrence of the equal. He hoped for the regeneration of German culture when he looked at the mighty rise of German music from Bach to Beethoven and from Beethoven to Wagner. In the latter's music, Nietzsche saw the very embodiment of the Dionysiac. A close bond of friendship existed between the two men. It came to an end when Wagner composed his *Parzival*. Nietzsche saw this as a betrayal of Wagner's original cultural mission. He accused him of having broken down before the Cross, which, for Nietzsche, was the symbol of declining culture and degenerate man. It represented the moral values of the weak and the mob, which prevented the strong creative personalities from establishing a new authentic culture. To make this possible would require the *regeneration of values*.

In the field of philosophy, it was Kant and Schopenhauer whom Nietzsche regarded as thinkers who had shown scientific Socratism (the sciences as well as German idealist metaphysics) its limits. Especially Schopenhauer's philosophy of the will-to-live, of which music was a direct expression, was conceived by him as Dionysiac wisdom articulated in the form of concepts. By his conception of music Nietzsche gives his philosophy of art a Dionysiac bent. It becomes evident that it seeks to demonstrate the existential character of art. It is through art that the real nature of human existence is revealed. It is the mirror of man's authentic existence. Nietzsche writes:

Wohin weist uns das Mysterium dieser Einheit zwischen der deutschen Musik und der deutschen Philosophie, wenn nicht auf eine neue Daseinsform über deren Inhalt wir uns nur aus helle-nischen Analogien ahnend unterrichten können.<sup>2)</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Die Geburt der Tragödie — Aus dem Nachlass 1869-1873", in: *Friedrich Nietzsche's Werke*, Vol. I, p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. Cit.*, p. 172.

(v) *Contemporary Aesthetics*

In the face of growing scientifico - technological functionalism and the development of deadly nuclear weapons as well as the deepening apocalyptic feeling as a result of it, Nietzsche's philosophy, especially on the European continent, continued to exercise great influence. This influence is traceable in Existentialist thought, especially in the philosophy of Martin Heidegger; it is flourishing at this very moment, so that there is talk of a Nietzsche Renaissance in Germany and in France. In the latter country, it is thinkers of the so-called post-structuralist school of thought, such as Foucault and Derrida, whose writings are influenced by both Nietzsche and Heidegger. In Germany, especially, Heidegger's influence is discernible in the works of Eugen Fink<sup>1</sup>) and the hermeneutical approach of Hans-Georg Gadamer. It is interesting to note that, under the impact of positivistic analytical philosophy on the one hand and Heidegger's philosophy of Being on the other, the problem of the truth-function of language has moved into focus. Finally, it has already been pointed out with reference to Critical Theory, especially Adorno, that the regeneration of culture was deemed possible no longer by philosophy but by art.

University of Fort Hare

*Together in Excellence*

Under the impact of the functionalistic way of thinking, most philosophers of linguistic analysis would object to the idea that there is a uniform concept of art. Such a concept, they would argue, is the result of a specific theory of art, constituted on the grounds of certain art-making features of a "one-sided diet"<sup>2</sup>), which have been generalized. The idealistic conception that there is an essence of art, according to them, rests on the *essential fallacy*, a concept which obviously links up with the concept of *natural fallacy* in G.E. Moore's ethics: the confusion of the concept of goodness with concepts such as pleasure, happiness, reason, truth, etc. It is interesting to note that Moore's ethics culminates in Plato's *kalokagathia*, when he answers the question: "What things are good?", by saying that there is an "immense variety" of such things, including "the pleasure of human intercourse and the enjoyment of beautiful objects".<sup>3</sup>) In Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Invest-*

<sup>1</sup> CF. *Sein, Wahrheit, Welt — Vor-Fragen zum Problem des Phänomen-Begriffs and Alles und Nichts — Ein Umweg zur Philosophie.*

<sup>2</sup> CF. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, Par. 593.

<sup>3</sup> *Principia Ethica*, p. 16

tigations, the problem of art would be solved by the concept of *language games*, which, under the impact of the functionalistic climate of the time in general and the functionalistic approach to language in particular, is *one particular* theoretical constitution of language relations among many others. The German philosopher Walter Schulz refers to the dubiousness of Wittgenstein's *language games*.<sup>4</sup>) He points out that Wittgenstein uses an extreme definition of language, which we should call the functional aspect of language, as the criterion by which he judges the meaningfulness of all communication. Schulz draws attention to the primitive nature of Wittgenstein's arguments and his utter failure to understand phenomena such as mind, reason, etc. According to Schulz, the *Philosophical Investigations* do not really constitute a new advance, but keep moving on the level of vague ambiguity.

In brief, Wittgenstein's concept of language in the *Philosophical Investigations* rests on the generalization and absolutization of one specific aspect of language. It is, however, precisely to generalizations of that nature that analytical linguistic philosophy objects, e.g., in the case of idealism. According to Wittgenstein's *language games*, which reflect the various human activities in the world, aesthetic talk becomes meaningful within the context of the particular game aesthetic theorists play in the same way as do scientists, historians, metaphysicians, logicians, theologians, etc. In following Wittgenstein, then, linguistic analysts such as Macdonald, Weitz, Kennick and Danto can characterize art as a family resemblance concept.

Basing the concept of art on the generalization of only one specific aspect of language, is highly questionable, because it amounts to an abstraction from actual life. The very concepts of natural fallacy and essential fallacy are such abstractions. In view of the existential (practical) significance of the human striving for truth — as a striving for freedom from conflict — the axiological character of truth is obvious. In actual life, truth (reason), goodness and beauty are interwoven with one another, as was known to Plato. Their logical distinction by the analysts in purely functionalistic terms, by a specific functionalistic method, is a cold abstraction from life and, as such, an arbitrary act of the mind. The analytical approach makes sense only as an abstraction

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Wittgenstein — *Die Negation der Philosophie*, p. 70 ff.

from actual life, from the actual needs and interests that spring from the dynamics of life. It conveniently ignores man's multi-dimensionality as well as the multi-dimensionality of language as man's mirror. This multi-dimensionality was shown by Chomsky, Katz and Fodor.<sup>1</sup>) They pointed out that language is not only passive and receptive, a mere pictorial recording of facts and atomic facts as Wittgenstein would have it in the *Tractatus*, but that it is rather an active and forming organ. According to them, the functional relations of language recording the world in a meaningful way in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* are merely the tip of an iceberg. A closer analysis of the depth structure of language suggests that it is through its comprehending, organizing and moulding activity, rather than a mere functional recording, that language constitutes the world in a meaningful way.

It stands to reason that this ontological aspect of language, which shows it as being more than a functional instrument of description and as possessing a concrete content, is the essential structure of language. Among others, language gives expression to man's variegated life experience, his various moods, inner experiences of anguish, fear, guilt, revulsion, despair, envy, hatred, joy, confidence, gaiety, gratitude, composure, tranquility, sympathy and love. These inner experiences, sometimes called moods, are more aptly articulated in the hermeneutical approach to language, the approach of thinkers such as Gabriel Marcel, Otto Friedrich Bollnow and the integrated logic of Hans Lipps, B. Liebrucks and Leo Gabriel, than by the functionalistic method of the linguistic analysts.

The linguistic analysts conveniently oust the historical dimension, which is reinstated by structuralists such as Foucault and hermeneutical thinkers such as Gadamer. The view put forward there is that all theories, including aesthetic ones, gain meaning and validity from the historical situation in which they are conceived and if man's concrete experience in this situation is taken into account. Theory cannot be divorced from practice and practice would be meaningless and purposeless without theory. It should further be considered that the method of the linguistic analysts, which has itself produced many conflicting theories of language in general and aesthetic talk in particular, is itself

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. N Chomsky "Deep and Surface Structure", in: *Cartesian Linguistics*, pp. 31-51.

historical and contingent. It arose as a reaction to philosophical world theories and reflects the functionalistic aspect of human experience at the present age. Hence the functionalistic manner of its aesthetic talk. Like any other theory it is problematic and controversial. Its answers to the question of knowledge are true only within its methodological framework of reference and if their underlying assumptions are accepted. If those are called in question, its answers are false.

The existentialist conception of art, as it emerges from Heidegger's philosophy of Being, has in common with the one of positivistic linguistic analysis that it is also reflected in language. There is, however, a marked difference between the two language theories. While the language concept of linguistic analysis is functionalistic, reflecting the functional relations of language, that of Heidegger is ontological. For Heidegger, language is the abode of Being. It is as such that it reflects Heidegger's conception of art.

Although Heidegger's concept of language is the opposite to that of linguistic analysis, a comparison between Wittgenstein's and Heidegger's philosophies as such reveals common features. They have in common that they both refrain from constituting the world as a metaphysical subject and they both wish to record their immediate experience. Wittgenstein fuses language — thus man — with natural events. Propositions record facts and atomic facts. In this way, they become the truth-functions of the world; and the functional relations that hold between them represent, as it were, the substance of the world. Wittgenstein seeks to set man free by trying to cure him of his pathology of asking metaphysical questions. It is precisely this approach that is reflected in the linguistic analysis conception of art: the argument that the idea of an essence of art rests on the *essential fallacy* and that — as is suggested by Wittgenstein's conception of art as a specific human activity reflected in a particular language game — art can be characterized as a family resemblance concept.

Heidegger does the opposite. By bracketing the world, he leads man out of his self-estrangement and alienation from reality into which science, technology and positivistic philosophy had driven him by their abstract, functionalistic piece-meal approach, which, in regard to language, Chomsky calls the tip of an iceberg that does not reveal the

depth dimension of language. In bracketing the world, Heidegger reduces philosophy to man's *Dasein* in the world as a stranger, his being-there in a specific historical situation. It is in the facticity of his *Dasein* that he experiences the mystery of Being, in this sense the metaphysical, and is enabled to lead an authentic life: living up to his real nature as a being-to-nothing or a being-to-death. This requires an *Entschlossenheit*, an opening oneself to Being by taking the resolution to be in the face of nothing and death. Taking this action is what Heidegger calls the "Freiheit zum Tode."<sup>1</sup>)

According to Heidegger, Being is insistent in man's very existence. That is why man is able to come to understand himself as *ek-sistence*: the standing out of Being through his consciousness, thus illuminating the world. Man's consciousness is therefore die *Lichtung des Seins*. Thus man dwells in Being and is fused with it. As the ek-sistence of Being he is the torch-bearer of Being. He is an event of Being. It is not man who disposes of Being but it is Being that disposes of man. In being aware of himself as the ek-sistence of Being, man performs the *Kehre des Denkens*, which Heidegger describes most clearly in his work: *Über den Humanismus* (1947).

University of Fort Hare

Heidegger's aesthetic views, which emerge from his conception of language, are found in "Was heisst Denken?"<sup>2</sup>) and *Erläuterungen zu Hölderlin's Dichtungen*. According to Heidegger, language is the abode of Being. Through language, man says *Das Diktat der Wahrheit des Seins* (the dictation of the truth of Being). That is what Heidegger understands by thinking, in which Being communicates itself to man as an event. This communication of Being in thinking is thus historical. Its history is already told when thinkers express it.<sup>3</sup>) It becomes clear that it is not man who, through language and thinking, communicates with man. It is by taking up the right attitude, i.e., accepting himself as what he is, his finiteness, temporality, historicity and becoming — thus being in anticipation of Being or the *Aufbruch zum Sein* — that man should get Being to talk to him. Together with Nietzsche, Heidegger says: "Destiny, I follow you willingly; for if I would not do so, I should have to do so all the same, but in tears".

---

<sup>1</sup> *Sein und Zeit*, p. 266.

<sup>2</sup> In: *Vorträge und Aufsätze*.

<sup>3</sup> Also cf. *Über den Humanismus*.

The new attitude will make man abandon all attempts to overcome his finiteness, periodicity and change by the metaphysical constitution of Being, which fizzles out into nothing, or to fuse man with the world by dissolving his consciousness into a set of functional relations, as is done by the linguistic analysts. By setting him free from the world and referring him to his own being-there as a projection of Being, Heidegger gives man the idea that he should always be on the move to Being, rather than evading the issue by escaping into *das Man*: his own self-conceived world, be it the world of metaphysics, the world of science and technology or the everyday world of small talk and gossip.

It is obvious that Heidegger attempts to overcome the acute crisis of truth which man is at present experiencing in the face of two totalitarian entities that confront each other: the total technological functionalization of life and reality on the one hand and, on the other, their total ideologization. His purpose is to get unhoused man rehoused in Being through language as the abode of Being. This is why his philosophy stands in opposition to Wittgenstein's attempt to overcome the truth-crisis by the therapeutic method in regard to language: letting language merely state the facts of the world in the *Tractatus* or conceiving common language as describing man's various activities in the world in terms of language games in the *Philosophical Investigations*.

Heidegger attempted to settle the crisis by letting language say the truth of Being. It needs little reflection to realize that, in contradistinction to Wittgenstein, it is not functionalistic language in which Heidegger is interested but rather the metaphoric language of poetry. He holds that the discrete language of logic and the sciences is but one dimension of language. He believes that full-blooded multi-dimensional language, which records variegated real life in full, is the compact metaphoric language of the poet. It is from this point of view that he treats Friedrich Hölderlin's poetry. His argument is that the nature of poetry consists in thinking. He distinguishes between that which is said by poetry and that which is said by the ordinary way of thinking. He comes to the conclusion that both kinds of thinking may express the same thing.

In his essay "Der Ursprung der Kunst", Heidegger determines the nature of art by the work of art. "Im Werk ist . . . ein Geschehen der

Wahrheit am Werk". The essence of art is "das Sich-ins-Werk-Setzen der Wahrheit des Seinden."<sup>1</sup>) Truth reveals itself in a work of art in that, in it, a world is illuminated to which the work pertains. The strife of the work is that which keeps open the openness of the world and as that where natural historical reality conceals itself, thus limiting the open world — the opposition of world and earth, form and matter — makes truth happen. It becomes an event, lifting Being into the open, its unconcealedness. Being is revealed, just as it is revealed through language, the abode of Being.

The essence of truth reveals itself in a work of art, because truth, by its very essence, has the propensity for work. The blending of truth into the work results in the creation of a being that had not yet been and will never be again. According to Heidegger, art reveals the truth of Being as a whole. The existential character of art becomes evident from Heidegger's view that the essence of art in the happening of the work of art consists in placing man, to whom art talks, in the unconcealedness of Being. Through the work of art, he is merged with the truth that is happening in the work of art. Therefore, *art is the creative conservation of truth in the work of art*. This is what art has in common with language. That is why the work of language takes a prominent position among the arts. Since language is the abode of Being, the essence of poetry is the establishment of truth.

The hermeneutics of Hans Georg Gadamer links up with Heidegger's conception of the relationship between art and truth.<sup>2</sup>) It may be said that he stresses much more than Heidegger the subjective dogmatic character of aesthetic consciousness as it is reflected in the work of art itself, as well as the concrete ontological character of the work of art: the direct relationship between aesthetic consciousness and the work of art. Gadamer revises the aesthetic concepts, especially those of German idealism. He argues that, by aesthetic distinctions, idealism endeavoured to think the pure work of art, thereby severing its relationship with the world. Rather than the separation of aesthetic con-

---

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from C von Bormann, in: J Ritter and K Gründer (eds.) *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, Vol. IV, p. 1422. The following observations are based on his discussion of Heidegger's conception of art, covering pp. 1422/1423.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. C von Bormann's discussion of Gadamer's conception of art, in: J Ritter and K Gründer (eds.), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, Vol. IV, p. 1424.

sciousness from the world, he stresses its "totale Vermittlung" with the world. The representation of the work of art occurs not so much from aesthetic experience as from occasional circumstances of life. The representation of a work of art is "ein universelles ontologisches Strukturmoment des Ästhetischen, ein Seinsvorgang und nicht etwa ein Erlebnisvorgang. . . die spezifische Präsenz des Kunstwerks [ist] ein Zur-Darstellung-Kommen des Seins". With the experience of art, a claim to truth is lodged "der (the claim) von der Wissenschaft gewiss verschieden, aber der ebenso gewiss ihm nicht unterlegen ist." For Gadamer, the work of art is man's mirror. Everyone recognizes that the world represented by it is so in reality. This yields "eine Art Selbst-erkenntnis des Zuschauers".<sup>1)</sup>

The merit of Gadamer's hermeneutical method consists in criticizing the "objective" aspects of truth in German idealism and in Dilthey's hermeneutics of *Weltanschauung*.<sup>2)</sup> As has already been pointed out, he argues that the differences between subject and object, I and thou, humanities and natural sciences, which were seen by Dilthey as alienation, cannot be bridged by "objective" categories. Gadamer asks the hermeneutical question, whether, in gaining distance from our understanding through "objective" categories such as self, persons and things (which, according to Dilthey, form the structure of life), the individual as an ideal fact combining the particular and the universal, and the objective spirit of history as it emerges from life's forward movement and organic growth, the bridging between the I and thou, subject and object, humanities and natural sciences becomes possible. He realizes that the various types of knowledge and truth are constituted under various and varying historical conditions. In other words, he realizes the subjective aspect of the various human truths, including that of the natural sciences, as they are constituted from our life experience. He does so by understanding their methodological character. He also recognizes the questionable character of all human truths. But he does not realize that they are constituted from a basic experience that renders them questionable: man's contingent experience of reality, so that the argument on truth between man and his

---

<sup>1</sup> Quotations from *op cit*.

<sup>2</sup> CF. "Gadamer's Hermeneutik des geschichtlichen Menschen", in: L. Zahn (ed.), *Die letzte Epoche der Philosophie — Texte von Hegel bis Habermas*.

fellow-man continues. He fails to see that the truth of our not-knowing *the Truth* emerges from the critical relationship into which our truth-perspectives enter and by which man and his fellow-man are referred to each other in their dialogue about truth. In other words, ultimately, the definition and redefinition of truth is a matter between man and the other under changing circumstances of life, from their contingent experience of reality, which basic experience they share and from which they think and act.

The conception of a work of art as reflecting man's contingent experience of reality in the sense of his changing aesthetic consciousness throughout history, as it finds expression in the various styles of art as they have been discussed in this section, refutes Gadamer's claim that a work of art is "ein universelles ontologisches Strukturmoment des Ästhetischen, ein Seinsvorgang und nicht ein Erlebnisvorgang . . . die spezifische Präsenz des Kunstwerks [ist] ein Zur-Darstellung-Kommen des Seins."<sup>1</sup>) This is another "objective" construction from multi-dimensional reality and man's contingent experience of it. It is from this experience that artists, throughout the centuries, sought to give expression to man's changing aesthetic feeling, thus trying to reconcile him with the circumstances of life (reality) as they were experienced by an artist in a specific historical situation. And it was within this context that the questions of the beautiful and the sublime, which gave rise to aesthetic theory, were continued to be asked and will be asked again as conditions of life change. Works of art give expression to the aesthetic dimension of this experience. They do so in a subjective and concrete form.

Gadamer still attempts something which, in the light of man's contingent experience of reality, is impossible. He conceives truth not as human truth-perspectives that are methodologically constituted from man's contingent experience of reality and that, on these grounds, call each other in question, so that *the Truth* is inaccessible to human understanding. He regards *the Truth* as underlying man's meaningful questions, as the starting point which includes our present culture and science as well as their technological application. He affirms Heidegger's hermeneutical cycle: "We understand only that

---

<sup>1</sup> *Wahrheit und Methode*, p. 152.

what we know already, hear only what we read into it." In other words, the asking of meaningful questions means that we understand already. An underlying Truth or Being make meaningful questions possible.

It would appear, however, that the Truth and Being which are said to underly our enquiries in the humanities, the natural sciences and the arts are bare assumptions. It does not occur to Gadamer that it could be the rational power of the human mind itself which, by the methodological constitution of theories from our contingent experience of reality (by which experience all theories are called in question), lends a rational structure to this experience and conceives meaningful truth-perspectives. By and large it would appear that Gadamer fails to realize sufficiently the constitutive power of the human mind in the sense that it is the mind which, by the methodological conception of theories from contingent experience as an experience of basic conflict, renders the world meaningful. It is the method that is the truth-function of theory (knowledge, no matter what type of knowledge, based on whatever type of experience). This means that aesthetic knowledge is one specific type among other types of knowledge. As any type of knowledge, it is methodologically constituted and reconstituted as theories or truth-perspectives from man's contingent experience. The historical dimension of aesthetic knowledge has been demonstrated by the examples of the philosophy and theory of art that have so far been discussed. The concepts of art that have been analysed reflect the historical conditions and the *Zeitgeist* from which they are conceived. That makes aesthetic theories particular (subjective). Yet, they form a link in the chain of the continuing aesthetic argument.

In a different way, the historical dimension of meaning and truth is recognized by the idea of the historically woven structure of French structuralism; although the concept of structure would suggest another methodologically constituted truth-perspective, born from man's contingent experience of reality and reflecting the spirit of the age. In French structuralism, as represented by J Derrida and M Foucault, sometimes labelled post-structuralists,<sup>1</sup>) the constitutive power of

---

<sup>1</sup> The well-known structuralist, Roland Barthes, welcomed Foucault's thesis: *Folie et déraison; histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* (1961), as a first attempt to apply structuralism to the science of history. Foucault regarded himself as related to structuralism.

the mind in the conception of truth-perspectives is even less realized than in the hermeneutic approach of Gadamer. The reason appears to be the idea of the "objective" nature of the textual structure, the deciphering of which yields the text's concealed meaning and truth. Hence the failure of the structuralists, to realize the subjective nature of their structure concept as a methodological constitution of the mind; thus as a theory or truth-perspective. The construction of such a theory gives the lie to the concept of deconstruction, which is sometimes applied to certain post-structuralist thinkers, such as Derrida.

Linking up with Nietzsche and Heidegger, the structuralists do not see knowledge as being constituted by the mind from man's changing experience of the world. With reference to a certain text, they recognize a historically woven structure of many events that are interwoven and that are signs and coded messages of reality. In order to penetrate this reality, the analyst's task is to decode or decipher these messages. One could thus say that the text of some science or humanity is a historical web woven throughout the times, constituting a structural whole. The text speaks to man and, through its messages, enables him to gain insight into the reality underlying the historical structure of the web. Since the events of his own time form part of the historical structure as a whole, man, by an analysis of the signs and codes of present events, is able to gain an understanding of his present position. It is in this way that the practical and existential character of structuralist thinking becomes evident.

J. Derrida links up with the structuralism of C Levi-Strauss. For the latter, art has the function of a paradigm for ethnological studies.<sup>1</sup>) He adopted a semiological approach to art by saying that its function consists of designating an object by the creation of a sign. The specificity of this sign hails from the idea that it combines linguistic structures with material components.

Although Levi-Strauss' structuralism proved an incentive for research in literature, it was heavily criticized by the group of literary critics named *Tel Quel* and by Derrida. The latter saw in Levi-Strauss' structuralism an epistemological construction, which still regarded

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. *Das wilde Denken*.

structure in terms of a pre-existent being that determines the various systems of thought as forms of representation. In contradistinction to this, Derrida<sup>1</sup>) advocates a practice of art, which brings into play formations of meaningful signs and symbols, which no longer represent a pre-existent being, but which communicate directly the reality of some event in a concrete historical situation.

In a similar way Foucault, by his *méthode de la discours*, seeks to uncover the meanings of events as they are communicated by the signs of the text. As to the influence of other thinkers upon him Paul Rabinow writes:<sup>2</sup>) "Foucault seems to be identifying with the critique of theory initiated in modern times by Nietzsche and pursued by Heidegger. Yet Foucault's situating himself within this lineage does not entail the rejection of reason. He is not — as Jürgen Habermas, among others, charged — an 'irrationalist'." Other thinkers that have made an impact on his thinking are Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud and Max Weber. The practical, social and existential significance of his philosophy is brought out well by Michael Ignatieff in the *Times Literary Supplement*.

It has been the particular achievement of Michel Foucault to show how seemingly neutral descriptive terms used by doctors and judges, teachers and sexologists, are in fact weapons in the never-ending conflict between *desire* and *power*. For as soon as an action is declared 'unnatural' or 'sick' it becomes legitimate to use force on 'deviants' or even imprison them, in order to try and make them 'normal'. We need to *unmask* terms like 'justice' and 'labour' and even 'human nature'. . . . No earlier writer has investigated so thoroughly the role of institutions in our society, from schools and factories to hospitals, prisons, asylums and clinics. Foucault makes us look again at all the social sciences — and almost every aspect of our lives.<sup>3</sup>)

Especially in his earlier archeological period, Foucault attempts to uncover the meaning of events, as they are communicated by the signs

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. *Die Schrift und die Differenz*.

<sup>2</sup> "Introduction" to *The Foucault Reader — An Introduction to Foucault's Thought*, with major new unpublished material, ed. by Paul Rabinow, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> See back cover of *op. cit.*

of the text, by giving a clear description of discursive events. But as C P Bertels<sup>1</sup>) points out *discours* is a very vague answer. Yet, the concept of *discours* plays a key role in Foucault's philosophy. The nuances of meaning are legio. Bertels<sup>2</sup>) points out, however, that, in some places, Foucault gives closer information about *discours*. He lists the following components:

- (i) Un ensemble de performances verbales.
- (ii) Ce qui avait été produit . . en fait d'ensembles de signes.
- (iii) Le discours est constitué par un ensemble de séquences de signes . . en tant qu'on peut leur assigner des modalités d'existence particulières.

The *archéologie du savoir*, Foucault regards as a sub-division of a comprehensive *théorie de la production*, which explains the whole of human creativity from one structural analysis.

It follows that Foucault rejects the "myth" of progress. There is no continuity in western history. Rather are there great ruptures and discontinuities. These must be shown in the various fundamental sciences. In his work, Foucault tries to expose these ruptures in various histories of science, in psychiatry, medicine, language, biology and economy.

In view of this, Foucault rejected the possibility of understanding literary works as the representation of given sensual structures. Since the beginning of the 19th century, he saw in literature a counter-discourse to the prevailing general notion of language having the purpose of the reduplication of meaning and significance.<sup>3</sup>)

It would appear that, in French structuralism, man becomes the prisoner of the text's woven fabric into which he is interwoven and which determines meaning and significance of events in the various sciences. There is little understanding for the conception that texts, too, reflect the views, theories and ideas of the authors in certain exis-

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. Bertel's essay "Michel Foucault", in: *Filosofen van de 20e eeuw*, edited by C P Bertels and E Petersma and with an introduction by C A van Peursen, p. 215.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> CF. *Les mots et les choses; une archéologie des sciences humaines*.

tential situations of human history, that, in this sense, they breathe a specific *Zeitgeist* or spirit of the age. Seen in this way, a text should be read in a certain historical context, within which it is conceived. What stands to reason is whether the structure of the text determines its meaning or whether its meaning is determined by the author's epochal consciousness trying to cope, in a symbolic, metaphorical or rational manner, with the aspirations, needs and conflicts of man in a certain historical situation, in this way structuring his experience.

Through prose as well as through poetry, man, in various forms, gives expression to his experience under changing historical conditions, the climate of which his writings breathe. Like the scientist or the historian, the poet cannot escape the spirit of the age. As far as French structuralism is concerned, it must be borne in mind that it is itself a methodological constitution of man's experience in our modern age. Seeking to cope with the problems of modern life and society, it certainly makes a valuable contribution. But it does so as any other theory, namely, as a truth-perspective. It has been conceived under the impact of modern functionalism as practised by linguistic analysis on the one hand and, on the other, by Nietzsche, Heidegger and others. French structuralism, like any other methodologically constituted theory, is based on certain self-conceived principles such as Foucault's *methode de la discours* or *archeologie du savoir*. As C P Bertels points out, the concept of *discours* is very vague. The conclusion that is drawn from all this is that the method of French structuralism is one method among others and that its various theories are as controversial and enter into a critical relationship with one another as do all others. Hence the argument on meaning and truth continues.

A philosophy of art that sees in art the only possibility of overcoming the excesses of present-day totalitarian functionalism on the one hand and totalitarian ideologism on the other, is that of Critical Theory. The argument of Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno is that, in order to restore the balance between nature and reason, contemporary positivistic analytical philosophy on the one hand and dialectical philosophy on the other must be overcome by a negative *Dialektik der Aufklärung*, which highlights the present-day socio-political conflict and by negating it arrives at a reconciliation of nature and reason. It is the work of art that, most drastically and effectively, re-

flects this conflict, the experience of which is the presupposition for overcoming it.

The central thesis of Horkheimer's and Adorno's Critical Theory is that reason is different from nature, yet part of it. It is natural as a psychological power branched off for the purpose of self-preservation. As such, it is however split off from nature and becomes the other of nature. The more reason is intent on self-assertion and moves into total contradiction to nature, the more it retrogresses to nature as a wild, uninhibited and barbaric force.

This central thesis of Horkheimer's and Adorno's implies a strict warning to the closed doctrine of scientism and blind faith in technologism, both of which have developed into the cult of our age. They have become a fetish. At the same time, however, the central thesis of the two thinkers points to the social and practical role the sciences and technology could play in society's liberation, if they were subordinated to natural reason. In the course of history, the sciences, more and more, superseded philosophy in man's effort of taming nature. In the course of this process, they become his new instrument of liberating himself from crude nature and asserting himself against it. But the dialectical relationship between nature and man's own nature is such that, when the auxiliary role of the sciences in the process of man's self-emancipation from nature was absolutized as totalitarian scientism (e.g., in functionalist positivism), this action resulted in the repression of man's own nature. As an individual he was swallowed up by the natural sciences and technology and became dominated by the functionalistic way of thinking. He was alienated from himself and, as a result of his one-dimensional, totalitarian functionalistic consciousness led an unauthentic existence.

Obviously, themes from Franz Kafka, Sigmund Freud and Martin Heidegger ring through in Horkheimer's and Adorno's thought. The struggle had to be waged against the alienating effect of totalitarian functionalistic forces. For it was these forces that, as extreme forms of absolute self-assertion against nature, turned man's reason, which was supposed to be instrumental in controlling nature, into complete unreason. The erroneous interpretation of progress as meaning scientific and technological progress kindled man's lust for power also over

other men. This led to conflict, anxiety, suffering, unease and repression. It produced the repressive society. It had been forgotten that the natural sciences and technology were to have been instrumental in bringing about the progress of man and society as a result of improving human relations of the moral order. What happened was that functionalistic relations were absolutized at the expense of moral relations between individuals and nations.

The repression of man's nature as an individual and a person, which stands in a moral human relationship with other individuals and persons, as a result of the cult of science and technology, led to man's dehumanization and, ultimately, to Auschwitz and the despotic state. According to Horkheimer and Adorno, it is the Auschwitz syndrome, the abuse of the natural sciences and technology from unnatural motives and for irrational selfish purposes, that has expanded and threatens to take over the world as a whole. It appears so that man's and society's liberation would depend on the reconciliation of nature and civilization (theory and practice), the two having become totally estranged from each other. The scientist lives not in a vacuum, but has a moral responsibility to the other man in terms of freedom.<sup>1</sup>) Man's repressed nature must be set free and his *libido* must be given free expression again by the use of the natural sciences and technology, not for the purpose of total self-assertion, which leads to alienation and perversion, but for creating a better world and a better society. Not on conquering space should our energy and resources be wasted in the spirit of scientific and technological *hubris*, but should be applied to the pacification of our immediate needs: the elimination of starvation and suffering in the world, the improvement of educational and recreational facilities, etc. Horkheimer and Adorno find that this would be the way of realizing Marx's aim of setting man free from want, hunger repression and war.

According to Adorno, the future free society is seen to be realized by a *Gewaltlose Vergeistigung* (a spiritualization without violence). In order to achieve this aim, all things would have to be viewed in the light of deliverance. Cognition has no other light than that of deliverance, by which light the world is illuminated. It is this utopia that

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. Max Born, *Von der Verantwortung des Naturwissenschaftlers*.

lends to thinking the imaginary fixed point, which it needs to divorce itself from the present positive reality. Such utopian imagination is possible by art. Even though Adorno sees art as degenerating more and more into a commodity, he continues to believe in its autonomy. Horkheimer observes that only as far as art becomes autonomous, can it adopt religion's utopian function. In this way, it stands in contradiction to society, the contradictory nature of which it reflects. Arts, says Adorno, through its inner mood, offers a foretaste of future society. It does so however only if it fully portrays the objective contradictions, thus giving only negative expression to the idea of harmony.<sup>1)</sup>

Another writer, whose writings, especially those on aesthetic themes such as *Eros and Civilization*, show the influence of Sigmund Freud and Martin Heidegger, is Herbert Marcuse. His works have in common with those of Horkheimer, Adorno and Habermas that they, too, seek to liberate man's consciousness and society from the totalitarian functionalism of the monopolistic technological society in the West on the one hand and, on the other, from the monopolistic ideologism of the East. As far as the latter is concerned, his book *Soviet Marxism* will be enlightening.

### University of Fort Hare

According to Marcuse's historical dialectical method, the conflicts inherent in the two forms of technologism in the West and in the East, controlled by monopolistic syndicates and the monopolistic ideological state respectively, point beyond these two extremes. By showing that the sciences and technology are used for irrational ends, for the benefit of a few rather than the interests of all, the repressive character of both systems is illustrated. In order to liberate society, the sciences and technology must be liberated from the monopolists of both the West and the East. The monopolists in the West and in the East, each in their own way, use the apparatus of the state in their own interest. To achieve liberation from these monopolies, man must be made aware that, in spite of appearances to the contrary, he is oppressed and exploited by those who are in control of the technological forces in the West and in the East. He must be made to realize that, by a vigorous propaganda campaign, sustained by the media, he is being made to

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. The article on "Adorno", in: *Philosophenlexikon*, ed. by E Lange und D Alexander. Adorno's deliberations on the liberating function of art are discussed, among others, in his *Minima moralia. Reflexionen aus dem beschädigten Leben*.

believe that he is a fully-fledged partner of the establishment and as such very happy, whilst, at closer scrutiny, he would discover his unhappy consciousness.

Marcuse believes that contemporary science and technology are sufficiently advanced to satisfy the need of all if they were used for this natural end, instead of the unnatural end of profit-making and the acquisition of power. Not over-production and the production of luxury goods should be the aim, but production that satisfies people's natural needs, thereby setting them free from toil and moil as a result of the competitive way of production from the profit motive. In order to achieve this aim, the motive for production must be changed by demythologizing the sciences and technology. This means that the old Platonic metaphysical values of truth, reality, goodness, justice, harmony and beauty must be translated into technological tasks. The conception of technological tasks shows the influence on Marcuse of contemporary functionalism and operationalism. This "quantification of values" gives them a material character. Being applied in terms of quantified values, the sciences and technology have a liberating effect. They facilitate the fulfilment of man's desire for authentic existence: an existence in accordance with nature, man's own nature and that of his fellowman (society).

They thus answer man's striving for freedom from want, suffering, and repression. By the overcoming of conflict in this way — which conflict reflects the untruth, unreality, evil and injustice, in short, the repressive character of society and man's unauthentic existence — and by the reconciliation of theory and practice through the quantification of values, the principle of identity would have been realized. Man would now be in step with nature, his own nature and his fellow-man (society), thus leading an authentic existence. Truth, reality, goodness, justice and harmony (the old Platonic values) would have been realized by the use of science and technology for rational ends — the end of freedom in particular.

The idea of harmony among the quantified values points to the aesthetic aspect of Marcuse's philosophy. From the aesthetic point of view, the individual would be more free for cultural pursuits and the pursuit of pleasure as automation advances. In fact, from Marcuse's

book *Eros and Civilization*, it would appear that *homo ludens* is the self-fulfilled man, who is free and leads an authentic existence. In this work, Marcuse aims at nothing less than the reconciliation of the Freudian conflict between civilization and the human *libido*. Freud regards civilization as the result of libidinous repression or as sublimated *libido*. There is thus inevitable tension between man's libidinous drive for self-expression and repressive civilization. Marcuse believes that this tension can be resolved if man is freed from the bondage of labour in the monopolistic technological society. With the attainment of a free society, which is no longer repressive in any way and where man is in harmony with nature, himself and his fellow-man, man's *libido* is set free as well. Especially with the further development of automation will man dispose of sufficient leisure time for enjoyment. Play, pleasure and joyful amusement will be the keywords for the post-technological era of *homo ludens*. They will replace labour, skill and production. At that time, the body will be fully explored and exploited as an instrument of pleasure. This aesthetic picture of man's freedom conjures up myriads of problems of which merely the principal ones can be mentioned here. It stands to reason that the freeing of man's *libido* in this manner would unleash formidable irrational powers that had been harnessed to and channelled by the *rationale* of productive civilization. The unleashing of these powers might have devastating and destructive consequences. It might lead to man's relapse into a primitive barbarism as the counterpart to the functionalistic barbarism of contemporary technological society. It might result in a return to the jungle law or in such perversions and unnatural excesses that man destroys himself.

Marcuse thinks of a man who is no longer man in the ordinary sense of the word but a kind of superman who, by changing his environment, has changed himself. It stands to reason, however, that such transformation in whatever form, as we have repeatedly come across it in our discussions, is a mere utopia. It remains a wishful dream, necessary perhaps as a dream, but unrealizable. As the finite, historical, contingent — in brief, imperfect — being that he is today, man could not cope with the immense volume of power that would be suddenly released at man's aesthetic stage as conceived by Marcuse. Moreover, developing automation for Marcuse's aesthetic purpose would raise acute economic, social and political problems. Instead of

being confronted with problems of production, the future hedonistic automatic society would be faced with the problem of organizing man's leisure time in such a way that the wild irrational forces can be kept under control. It would appear that these considerations alone show up Marcuse's attempt at solving man's existential dilemma as a mere utopia. Marcuse's attempt to achieve man's authentic existence by the reduction of philosophy to labour in the sense of the material transposition of values into technological tasks, thus liberating him from the bondage of monopolistic technological society, results in a mere aesthetic dream. His merging theory and practice in this way is itself a theoretical construction in terms of the dialectical method.



University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCIENCE (THEORY) AND MORALITY (PRACTICE)

### 1. The Possibility of their Reconciliation

The critical nature of truth as the aim of man's epistemological striving finds expression in the critical nature of theory. It has been shown that knowledge of *the Truth* is not possible for man, that it is inaccessible to human comprehension. What man achieves in this striving for truth are truth-perspectives, theories that reflect the variety of man's contingent experience of reality. These theories are constituted by some method or another. They are truth-perspectives, because the method by which they constitute human experience into a meaningful whole is the truth-function of knowledge, the type of knowledge expressed by the theory. In other words, the method bestows upon theory an intelligible form, enabling it to be universally understood. At the same time, the theory remains problematic and controversial, thus entering into a critical relationship with other theories. It is because, thanks to method, theories are universally understood that meaningful dialogue and argument on truth become possible. The critical relationship into which theories enter points to the contingent character of the human experience of reality, in terms of which all theories are called in question and on the grounds of which critical argument on truth continues. In order to be meaningful, however, such argument should be conducted in full awareness of the critical relationship holding between theories, by which man is referred to the other as his norm, which *ought* to be heeded, unless meaningful dialogue is to deteriorate into meaningless monologue. In other words, the critical relationship between theories indicates man's *epistemological limit* and implies a *moral ought* the common ground of which is man's contingent experience of reality, to which the critical relationship points.

Taking our point of departure from the basic facts of variety and mutability of human world experience, we shall attempt to demonstrate that this contingent experience is the common root of science

and morality. It will be shown that man's consciousness of this common root is blocked by the absolutization of the functionalistic method applied in the natural sciences and technology. The reception of the cult of scientism and technologism resulted in the exclusion of morality from the sciences and the dire consequences thereof. By the very experience of the present-day science crisis, we shall become aware that the contingent experience of reality is the ground of freedom, from which man projects himself into the world and from which the interplay of theory and practice is set in motion. It is on the grounds of this basic experience that the reconciliation between science and morality becomes possible.

The problematic character of the individual sciences as well as the crisis situation in which they appear to find themselves and which is reflected in the contemporary theory of science constituting our point of departure, the attempt shall be made to demonstrate the moral character of all the various sciences on the one hand and, on the other, the scientific character of morality. This will be done by showing that science and morality are conditioned by man's contingent experience of reality. In other words, a reconciliation is to be brought about between the empirical and the moral, *Intereims of Post-Heidegger*, theory and practice on the grounds of contingent experience. *Ergebnis: Excellence*

That science and morality have not always been separated but were components of the same science system, is especially evidenced by the philosophy of the Greeks. There, man was an integral component of the cosmos. It was rational insight into the cosmos, which illustrated the harmony of nature, man and society, in this sense, justice and freedom. The harmonious unity of man and cosmos, as they have been described by Gerhard Krüger and Karl Löwith, was destroyed by man's increasing historicization and functionalization. This process, which seems to have reached its culmination point today, led to the confrontation of subject and object and to the gradual dissolution of universal science into a number of individual sciences. It resulted in the contrast of natural sciences and humanities. Finally, as a result of the rapid expansion of the natural sciences in modern times, the positivistic functionalistic spirit of the natural sciences and their daughter technology penetrated the humanities to such an extent that one can speak today of a functionalistic, actionalistic and operationalistic way

of thinking. The cult of scientism and technologism resulted, to a large extent, in the destruction of the human personality and freedom, whereupon rests the moral act. It led to the blocking of the source of a genuine scientific attitude and morality, to a crisis of science, which is, at the same time, an existential crisis of man.

## 2. The Dissonance of Science and Morality in our Time

The concatenation of science and morality is illustrated by the contemporary science crisis. There has always been a close connection between science and morality. The human urge for cognition and knowledge grows from man's primeval experience of being exposed to the cosmic powers and the feelings of fear, insecurity and uncertainty. One of the important functions of knowledge is to help man liberate himself from his feeling of unease and to live a happy life together with his fellow-man. It is thus not surprising that Plato equated the true and the good, knowledge and morality. He was concerned about authentic existence — the leading of a life by rational insight into truth and goodness.

In spite of all the talk about value-free science and objectivity, we still value knowledge and science as true and good and prefer them to ignorance and mere opinion. At least, knowledge and science are valued as useful and, in this sense, something good. Francis Bacon's *scientia potentia est* is even more valid today in our functionalistic age than it was in the past. In this connection, the concatenation of science and history becomes clear as well. As an acting being, the scientist remains responsible and obliged to society. Through the scientific method, he changes the world — man's concrete conditions of life — which in turn affects society. In this historical process, the interrelationship of science and morality becomes evident.

The question: What is science?, could be answered by: Science is the methodological systematization of man's world experience under continually changing conditions of life. By this definition, science is more than the natural sciences and includes moral theory: ethics. Moreover, the dynamics of human experience means that the concept of science undergoes continual change and remains questionable. It is in this sense that science is always in a crisis, that its changing theories

raise ever new problems, the debate on which opens up new vistas of knowledge or truth-perspectives.

The interaction of science and the constantly changing conditions of life, which in antiquity, the Middle Ages, modern times and the contemporary age yielded ever new concepts of science (e.g., with Aristotle, John of Salisbury, Albertus Magnus, Descartes, Leibniz, Newton, Kant, Wittgenstein, Popper, Habermas, Feyerabend), eventually, led to the exclusion of morality from the sphere of the sciences. Or else, it led to the functionalization of ethics under the influence of scientism, with all consequences of alienation from life.

The trend of analysing "moral talk" with reference to its functional meaning is, among others, evident from G E Moore's *Principia Ethica*. This trend was continued by analysts such as C L Stevenson's emotivist model and R M Hare's prescriptivist model.<sup>1</sup>) These models were in conflict with Moore's intuitive theory of morality. Finally, P Feyerabend, in his work *Against Method*, turned against the concept of scientific method, little realizing that his "refutation" is itself articulated in terms of method. For it is from his criticism of various forms of rationalism, including Popper's critical rationalism, as well as his polemic against the overpowering impact of the scientific way of thinking, that he postulated his own truth-perspective. The latter tried to avoid the problematic of scientific methodological thinking and to represent thinking and life in a more simple way and so as pleasant. But Feyerabend's *way of thinking and representation* cannot help being methodological and conceptual, otherwise the kind of ethics and aesthetics that he propagates would not be meaningful and so understood. Feyerabend could be said to advocate a practical ethics and aesthetics. As a theory among other theories, it represents another truth-perspective.<sup>2</sup>)

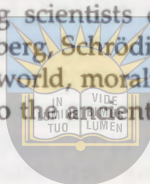
The separation of science and morality, theory and practice, in the present stage, resulted in irreconcilable contradiction, such as between positivism and existentialism, existentialism and historical materialism, positivism and hermeneutics. In brief, man tore himself to

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. R M Hare, *The Language of Morals* and C L Stevenson, *Ethics and Language*.

<sup>2</sup> In this regard, cf. H Meynell, "Feyerabend's Method", in: *Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 28, 1978.

pieces, by tearing asunder knowledge and action, meaning and feeling, head and heart. The victorious progress of the natural sciences, as one specific type of science established on the empirico-descriptive method, began in the 19th century. With the principle of mechanic causality, physics believed to possess the key to knowledge. However, the discovery of the quantum theory by Max Planck, from which Werner Heisenberg developed his quantum mechanics in physics ( a procedure of calculation which he developed together with Jordan, Born and Dirac, and for which he formulated his uncertainty principle), called in question the science concept of classical physics. Newton's mechanical causality was superseded by Einstein's theory of relativity. By this development, physics landed in a crisis.<sup>1)</sup> The experience of this crisis, which is reflected in Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, caused leading scientists of our time (Planck, Einstein, Eddington, Born, Heisenberg, Schrödinger) to ask, in all modesty, the question about man and world, morality and science. Some scientists refer in this connection to the ancient Greeks.<sup>2)</sup>



### 3. The Common Root of Science and Morality

University of Fort Hare  
Together in Excellence

The vast expansion of the natural sciences in the wake of the discoveries in nuclear physics and their functional applicability changed the scientific climate in such a way that we can speak of a credo, which is of moral consequence. The cult of scientism and technologism growing from it results in man's overestimating himself. It leads to a *hubris* which, on closer analysis, highlights the unscientific nature of scientism. The latter lacks the Socratic spirit of critical questioning, the hallmark of true scientific thinking. Scientism ignores man's historical and contingent being, which calls in question all human knowledge and renders problematic all scientific theory, with the result that absolute knowledge and conclusive answers to human questioning are impossible. It becomes so evident that, by seeking to force all knowledge into the functionalistic method of the natural sciences and technology and reduce it to a value-free neutral level, scientism betrays its arbitrary and dogmatic character. Such an approach causes man to

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. Heisenberg, "Die Krisis der Mechanistisch-Materialistischen Auffassung", in: *Das Naturbild der Heutigen Physik*, pp. 111-115.

<sup>2</sup> CF. E Schrödinger, *Nature and the Greeks*.

alienate himself from the dynamics of contingent reality and destroys his freedom, which, on account of his contingent experience of multi-dimensional reality, issues from his critical and self-critical insight into his theoretical and practical activities. From this, it is already evident that man's contingent experience of reality emerges as the common root of science and morality.

As has already been pointed out, scientism affects fundamentally the contemporary way of thinking, in spite of all the differences as far as the current philosophical alternatives are concerned. In a certain sense, all prominent contemporary philosophical alternatives have in common the functionalistic approach of scientism. It is discernible in the functionalism of analytical philosophy, the actionalism of existentialist philosophy and the operationalism of Marxist philosophy. All three philosophical alternatives are reductionist, which also holds true for phenomenology. All these philosophical alternatives are reductionist in the sense that they reject constitutive philosophical theory. They are all functionalistic in the sense that they reduce philosophy to an analytical activity (philosophical analysis), an intentional act of consciousness (phenomenology), an existential act of self-realization in nothingness (existentialism), and an operational act of labour as an act of changing the world (Marxism). Yet, on closer analysis, these philosophical alternatives turn out to be themselves theories and, as such, constitutive. They contain world formulae through which the world is constituted, as is the case in all philosophical theories.

The world formulae that emerge from their reductionist method have already been mentioned. They are: the functional relations of language, which reflect the world in analytical philosophy; the intentional act of consciousness in phenomenology, through which the meaningful world is constituted; the existential act of self-realization in nothingness, which reflects man's relationship with the world in existentialism; and the various concepts of labour in the various schools of Marxism and neo-Marxism, by the functional operation of which the world is changed in such a way that man is freed from his conflict with the world, himself and society. It is by the merging of theory and practice through labour, in whatever way it is conceived in the various brands of Marxism, that society is emancipated from repression.

As far as the relationship between science and morality is concerned, it may be said that, whereas the contradiction between analytical philosophy and existentialism indicates an unbridgeable gulf between science and morality, theory and practice, the Marxist models attempt to unite these contradictories under the umbrella of dialectics. If it is however true that, as has been shown, all theories — whether scientific or moral — are always called in question by man's contingent experience of reality and are thus inconclusive, then the root of both science and morality must be found outside all theory: in man's contingent experience of reality. This thesis is confirmed by the crisis of contemporary science. Caused by a totalitarian scientism, this crisis reflects a functionalistic science concept, which not only negates all knowledge of the essence of things, but also rejects all transcendental reflection. Thereby, it pronounces a value judgement. The moral consequences of such a one-dimensional way of thinking are evident. The therapeutic motive stated by Wittgenstein with regard to his analytical method points itself to a metaphysical and moral dimension in his way of thinking.



Man's traumatic experience of the science crisis manifests itself in man's thinking in various ways. In analytical philosophy, it shows itself in the argument from impotence. In other words, it shows itself in the self-negation of philosophy, whereby the analysts hope to expose the "pathology" of philosophical language. According to Gellner, thought is not bound by the kind of language game it employs, but it is precisely in what analysts call the "pathology of language" — the continual reassessing of our terms and norms which are built into language as a presupposition for intellectual advancement — that genuine thought consists. In existentialist philosophy, the traumatic experience of the science crisis finds expression in feelings of dread, anguish, guilt and nausea. It stands to reason that this traumatic experience may initiate a change in human thinking and so be the turning-point that causes man to become aware again of the true nature of scientific thinking and thereby true freedom. For it is the very hallmark of true science: critical and self-critical insight into man's multifarious theoretical and practical activities, that is also the hallmark of true freedom.

Ultimately, true freedom is grounded in man's authentic existence. This means that the traumatic experience of the science crisis directs

man's consciousness towards the real ground of all knowledge and theory, namely, his contingent experience of reality. It is from this basic experience that all questioning about knowledge and the meaning of life originates and on the grounds of which all human knowledge remains questionable and problematic. In other words, his contingent experience of reality indicates to man his natural limits as a finite, historical and contingent being. In the light of life's kinematics, where all human thinking remains questionable, the claim of scientism to universal validity vanishes and, from its unscientific dogma, man gropes his way to a critical questioning, issuing from the existential situation in which he finds himself: a critical enquiry that also calls in question the philosophical alternatives originating from scientism on the one hand and, on the other, from the experience of the science crisis. To put it differently, authentic scientific thinking originates from the experience of man's natural limitation, changeability and variability. It is grounded in the natural conflict between man and the other, which is reflected in the controversial and problematic character of all theories.



#### 4. Emancipation from the Science Dogma

*University of Fort Hare  
Together in Excellence*

With reference to this heading, it is imperative to place on record that in no way is its argument intended to cast doubt upon the importance of the natural sciences and technology. It is by no means the purpose of this section to belittle their doubtless valuable accomplishments and the achievements of the great pioneers in science and technology. They deserve unreserved praise and command respect and admiration. It is fully appreciated that, without the natural sciences and technology, modern society could not possibly exist. Moreover, they are just as much an outflow of man's natural striving for knowledge and truth from his experience of the physical world as are the other sciences that originate from various other types of human experience. In this connection, the theory-practice relationship and the interdependence of the natural sciences and philosophy, science and morality is again evident.

What this section is really concerned about is the uncritical cult of the sciences and technology — scientism and technologism — which,

fed by the *hubris* of economic and material progress, invites man's self-destruction, for which peril there is abundant evidence throughout the world. What matters, therefore, is looking for a way out of an impasse, into which man is being led by an untrammelled, totalitarian functionalism, which lays claim to universal validity and which has, to a large extent, penetrated the social sciences and humanities, thus leveling man's consciousness in such a way that he succumbs to a one-dimensional way of thinking. In view of the crisis experience in contemporary science — the natural sciences and the human sciences — as a whole, therefore, the attempt is made to demonstrate the moral character of science (theory) as a whole, on the one hand, and, on the other, the empirical character of morality. In view of this, science as a whole is defined as various types of knowledge obtained through the methodological rationalization of various types of human experience under changing conditions of life (historical conditions) and man's specific needs and interests arising from them.

An example of the true scientific outlook is Werner Heisenberg's comment on the return of contemporary physics to the virtues of modesty and self-restraint,<sup>1)</sup> obviously in view of the science crisis experienced by the great contemporary scientists, this experience being articulated in Heisenberg's uncertainty relation. It is this very experience that points to the relationship between science and morality.

Max Born was quoted as follows: "Physics is only *one* science among many and all science only *one* activity of the human intellect among many." Unfortunately, this critical insight of the great scientists and the moral consequences drawn from it have been lost by equating knowledge with one aspect of it, which is absolutized: functionalistic knowledge. That, as an acting being, the scientist remains responsible to society, that through the scientific method he changes the world and the human experience of it, so that, in this historical process, the inter-relationship between science and morality is manifest, is seen by Max Born. Realizing the turning-point that science has reached, he writes:

There is no (scientific) research which is separated from life. Even the most passionate researcher is a man at the same time. He

---

<sup>1</sup> This comment was quoted previously.

would like to be right, to have his intuitions confirmed, to make a name for himself, to be successful. Such hopes are equally incentives to his acting as is his desire for knowledge. During the last decades the possibility of a clean separation between objective knowledge and cognizing subject has been destroyed by science itself. Also in scientific activity and its ethics a turning point has been reached, which makes it impossible to maintain the old pure, knowledge-oriented research. This was a beautiful dream from which we were roused by world events. Even the most profound sleeper arose, when, in August, 1945, the first atom bomb fell on Japanese cities. Since then it has become clear that we, through the results of our work, are inextricably interwoven with economy and politics, the social strife within nations and the power struggle among states, thus bearing a great responsibility.<sup>1)</sup>

The turning-point towards a genuine scientific way of thinking is simultaneously the turning-point towards freedom. True scientific thinking, as outlined above, emancipates man from the autarchy, the dogmatism and the rigidity of totalitarian ideologies and reintegrates his thinking into the dynamic process of actuality. On the level of his basic contingent experience of reality, man rediscovers himself as an individual who critically examines and is critically examined, who questions and is being called in question. Emancipated from the leveling and alienating scientific functionalism on the one hand and, on the other, from totalitarian ideologism, he, in experiencing natural conflict with the other, knows himself to be referred to him in his cultural and civilizing activities. Impelled by the contingent experience of reality, in terms of the question-answer dichotomy, human thinking progresses from theory to theory in the natural sciences and the humanities by a process of interaction with the changing conditions of life as well as the concrete needs and interests arising from them.

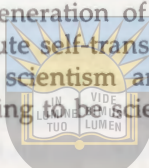
It becomes so obvious that the turning-point to genuine scientific thinking leads to freedom of critical and self-critical thinking, which is appropriate to man and facilitates his authentic existence in freedom.

---

<sup>1</sup> "Die Hoffnung auf Einsicht aller Menschen in die Grösse der atomaren Bewaffnung", in: *Von der Verantwortung des Naturwissenschaftlers*, pp. 191-192 (translation from German).

Critical thinking on the grounds of the contingent experience of reality — the natural conflict with the other — occurs in mutual open-mindedness, self-restraint, modesty, tolerance, respect and goodwill. For critical thinking implies self-critical thinking. Reference to man's contingent experience of reality prevents the degeneration of the natural conflict between man and his fellow-man, which conflict is no separating wall but a connecting bridge on the grounds of which meaningful dialogue is conducted, into an unnatural destructive confrontation. The experience of natural conflict, as the common experience of all men, should be regarded as the driving force of all cultural and civilizing activities, thus of history. Through the experience of this conflict, man and the other, in their permanent questioning about knowledge and meaning (truth), are referred to one another in freedom.

A distortion and degeneration of the positive natural conflict occurs as a result of absolute self-transcendence, as is the case with contemporary totalitarian **scientism** and dialectical ideologism respectively, the latter claiming to be scientific as well.



By this degeneration, which is a move away from reality, the positive natural conflict is converted into a negative unnatural confrontation. Insistence on the exclusiveness, universality and absoluteness of one's own truth (truth-perspective) converts the above-mentioned natural virtues into unnatural vices. Open-mindedness becomes one-track mindedness, self-restraint turns into absolute self-transcendence, modesty changes into arrogant self-righteousness, tolerance is replaced by dogmatism, respect for the other as an individual and a person is superseded by contempt for his views, needs, interests and aspirations, goodwill towards the other as a person yields to anonymous welfare functions conducted by government - operated social services or to an ideological fanaticism purporting to promote the common good. The dialogue between man and his fellow-man as a result of natural dialogue is converted into an isolated, monotone monologue.

Unnatural confrontation results in mutual violence and threatens mutual annihilation. Given the development of present-day technology, the self-extinction of mankind is a real possibility. Emancipation from the science dogma by turning towards genuine scientific thinking, the hallmark of which is critical and self-critical insight into

its limits and the qualitative difference of scientific variety, would eliminate this menace. The ideology of scientism as well as other totalitarian ideologies such as dialectical and historical materialism, which (really in vain) seek to force real life into the straitjacket of their respective system, are thereby rendered impotent. The sciences, whether natural or human sciences, are demythologized. They now perform their tasks within their natural field of enquiry and by methods that are appropriate to their respective research field. They are now able, under the specific historical conditions that prevail at a given period, to disclose to man a meaningful world, and so deal with his concrete needs and interests, as they emerge from these conditions. In this way, the sciences remain subject to human control and man is no longer the slave of a certain cult or ideology such as scientism.

The above observations illustrate the truth that science and morality are fed from the same source: man's contingent experience of reality. The rediscovery of this source and acting from it resolves the science crisis with all its phenomena of intellectual rigidity, dogmatism, self-righteousness and violence. This rediscovery sets man free. As a critical and self-critical personality he attains authentic existence. Instead of getting lost in one specific theory, the man of critical thinking is aware of the historical relatedness and problematic character of all theories in view of the other's critical questioning. He realizes that the realm of freedom cannot be reached by an act of absolute self-transcendence, which plunges man into an unauthentic existence of unfreedom, but is given in his contingent experience of reality. This fundamental experience makes it possible for him to order and reorder world and environment in a meaningful way, according to the changing historical conditions and circumstances of life. Last but not least, man, by his contingent experience of reality, knows himself responsible to his fellow-man. He realizes that what matters is to guard, together with the other, in wise self-restraint and critical dialogue, the treasure of freedom. If anything, this is man's and his fellow-man's common destiny.

It is clear that, in the light of man's contingent experience of reality, science and morality are interdependent and have a common root. It is equally evident that true science (the critical theory of multi-

dimensional experience) has a moral character and that true morality has a scientific character, since both are empirical in the sense that their common ground is man's contingent experience of reality. A specific moral theory is, like any other theory, a truth-perspective of historical relevance. Its specific moral norms and values are related to a given historical situation. The universal validity of morality, however, is grounded in man's contingent experience of reality. This is illustrated by the history of philosophy. In a critical dispute with existing philosophical theories, philosophy, again and again, makes the attempt to articulate, by the application of different methods, human world experience under continually changing conditions of life. Philosophy's critical historical character renders impossible the monopolization of knowledge and truth by one particular system or approach. At the same time philosophy's scientific (critical and self-critical) character protects human dignity and freedom.

As an open critical discipline, the continuing critical and self-critical argument on knowledge and truth under changing historical conditions, philosophy is instrumental in bringing about the emancipation from the science dogma, which appears to govern the contemporary monopolistic technological society in the West and, in dialectical form, the ideological society in the East. Philosophy is called upon to reveal the science crisis that has been glossed over by a totalitarian one-dimensional functionalism and operationalism. By the experience of the repressive nature of the technological and ideological societies in the West and East respectively, philosophy's task is clearly outlined. It consists in making man aware that freedom and authentic existence cannot be achieved by the methodological constitution of any particular theory from any type of human experience, but that the realm of freedom is that from which all theories of whatever kind issue: the basic contingent experience of reality, which man shares with his fellow-man and by which they are referred to each other in their thinking and acting. The emancipation from the science dogma will be effected by man becoming conscious of his multi-dimensional experience of reality.

## THE REALM OF FREEDOM

### 1. The Critical Nature of Theory as a Catalyst of Practice — Epistemological Aspect of Theory

From the epistemological point of view, all knowledge of reality is perspectival. From the basic experience of the questionability of all theories of reality emerges the critical character of theories in a dual aspect: theories call in question other theories on the one hand and, on the other, they are called in question by theories postulated in reaction to them. The historical aspect of theories of reality and their critical relationship was moved into focus in the previous discussions. It was driven home that theories are truth-perspectives in so far as they seek to cope in a rational manner with the concrete conflicts and problems of a specific historical period. Under the given *Zeitgeist* or the given intellectual climate of the epoch and as an expression of the world experience of a great number of contemporaries, they are methodological constitutions of reality. They are truth-perspectives in that, in terms of the specific method by which they are constituted, a definite *logos* is manifest in them.

This means that the given world experience is rationalized by a specific method, such as the inductive, deductive, dialectical, phenomenological and analytical method. Thereby, a perspectival insight into reality, a conception of the given conditions of life becomes possible, which, under the prevailing circumstances, enables man to lead a meaningful life. This task was performed equally well by the truth-perspectives of Greek philosophy, mediaeval philosophy and modern philosophy. It is performed equally well by the reductionist philosophical alternatives of our time. At this juncture the practical character of the historical truth-perspectives is already discernible. Their practical concern consists in enabling man to lead a meaningful life, in accordance with his historically conditioned needs and interests. Greek philosophy corresponds to the man of natural reason in the same way as mediaeval philosophy to the man of faith, modern philosophy

to the man of reason and experience and contemporary philosophy to the man of functionalistic thinking and acting.

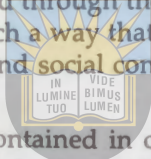
This practical aspect of the historical cognition of reality renders judgement by logical categories such as "true" or "false", "meaningful" or "meaningless" impossible. As far as value-judgement is concerned, the same applies to truth-perspectives qua truth-perspectives. It is only in the case of a particular truth-perspective laying claim to absoluteness and exclusiveness, thus becoming a closed ideology and, as such, alienating itself from the dynamics of reality as it is mirrored in the continuing argument on knowledge and truth, that the truth-perspective in question invites negative value-judgement. Otherwise, what might perhaps be said about truth-perspectives is that one, in a more effective way than another, represents the given conditions of life and that, for this reason, it affords us greater insight into the given situation of reality. Truth-perspectives of prominent thinkers such as Plato, Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Descartes, Locke, Hegel, Marx, Wittgenstein and Heidegger make a greater impact and elicit a more fundamental and extensive dispute than truth-perspectives of less prominent thinkers.

#### University of Fort Hare

As historical truth-perspectives philosophical theories of reality — no matter by what method they may have been constituted — cannot, by their very nature, be but problematic, polemical and critical (calling in question other theories and being called in question by them). In whatever way they manifest the human striving for comprehending the real ground of the world by some method or another, always their controversial character shows that this attempt fails. It fails because the real ground of this striving lies outside all theory, in the contingent experience of reality as the realm of freedom. This explains why the passing beyond contingency by the transcendental consciousness always terminates in utopia. This is the case not only with the so-called metaphysical theories of the past but also with the "anti-metaphysical" theories of the present, the latter being equally metaphysical, even if, due to their reductionist methods, the metaphysical is experienced in a different way.

The reductionist methods of the contemporary philosophical alternatives often let the metaphysical emerge in a negative way: by the

negation of philosophy in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* and *Philosophical Investigations*. In the former, the metaphysical emerges as the mysterious in the realm of the ineffable. In the latter, it emerges in the language games, which reflect man's activities in the world. Those language games, as it were, constitute the world. In Heidegger's negation of philosophy, the metaphysical is experienced as the mysterious in the human *Dasein*. It reveals itself through man's consciousness of being an event of Being. Through his consciousness, Being illuminates the world in the form of his various cultural activities, which constitute the world. In the various brands of Marxism, it is to labour that philosophy is reduced. Labour reflects the world and man's striving for freedom. Through labour, as it is conceived in the various Marxisms, the world is changed in such a way that nature, man and society are emancipated from exploitation and repressive society moves on to justice and freedom. By changing the world through the dialectical method, man reconstitutes the world in such a way that he frees himself and society from conflict with nature and social conflict.



The world formulae contained in contemporary world theories render the latter as metaphysical as are those of their predecessors. By constituting the world through new methods, contemporary world theories prove as transcendental as any other philosophical theories. In fact, it should have become sufficiently clear throughout this discussion on theory that the methodological constitution of any theory makes it transcendental. For such constitution proceeds in terms of concepts in the mind. Therefore, theory is transcendental by definition.

Containing specific world formulae, philosophical world theories, no matter by what method they are constituted, include a utopian dimension, as clearly emerged from the metaphysical character of the world formulae of the contemporary philosophical alternatives. The transcendental nature of these world formulae, which reflect the world structure, causes philosophical theories to move from man's contingent experience of reality to utopia. Utopia appears so as a necessary dimension of transcendental consciousness and, in this sense, as a necessary dimension of the cognitive act. As such, the utopian dimension consists in the conception of a real ground of the world by the transcendental consciousness, from which the structure of reality is

deduced. The world formulae contained in philosophical theories of the past and the present confirm the truth of this. This procedure causes a specific theory of reality to represent a well rounded-off whole. Therein, however, lies the danger of an uncritical dogmatism, which transforms the critical contingent theory of reality into a closed ideology, alienated from contingent reality.

Such transformation signifies the absolutization of the historical perspectival act of cognition. There, the self-conceived real ground is regarded not as transcendental (an immanent concept of transcendental consciousness), but as transcendent (the emanent real ground of and sufficient reason for the world, thus as reality *par excellence*). This confusion can be eliminated only by a clear distinction between utopia and reality. Only if it is realized that utopia is not reality but issues from the contingent experience of reality, if utopia is understood as a dimension of contingent world theories or truth-perspectives, will utopia remain utopia. Only then will it not be confused with reality. It is then that it remains open for change, for which, in the face of changing conditions of life, we hope, and for which, urged on by changing needs and interests, we strive. May man come to realize that total reality cannot be comprehended theoretically but that, *vice versa*, theories of reality or truth-perspectives issue from contingent experience. May he realize that, for this reason, they are always critical, polemical and controversial. Becoming aware of this, man will liberate himself from the dogmatism of any kind of theory that parades as absolute. He will shake off the chains that tie him to the rigidity of any totalitarian doctrine, however "scientific" it may present itself; for he will be conscious of its being foreign to the dynamics of life and contingent reality.

Again, contingent reality, as it is reflected by the critical character of philosophical theories of reality, shows itself as the realm of freedom, freedom of thought and of action (theory and practice). The full consciousness of this freedom makes man realize that the real ground of the world, from which all world theories issue and all human action takes place — the real ground of the interplay of theory and practice — lies outside all theory, in man's contingent experience of reality. The latter calls in question all theory and bends the utopian hope expressed by theory — the hope for the realization of ideal man and ideal society,

as they are conceived under given historical conditions — into an empirical hope of practice: the hope for balancing out man's and his fellow-man's mutual needs and interests for the purpose of minimizing the natural conflict between them, in the interest of promoting, in the given historical situation, the common good.

The practical tendency of the transcendental critical theories of reality is clearly discernible from their historical character. All human thinking and acting are themselves processes directed towards change. Therefore, human theories always call in question other human theories and, in turn, are themselves called in question, opening new ways for new truth-perspectives which, at the same time, contribute to changing practice. The interplay of theory and practice weaves a *multiversum* of changing theories of reality or truth-perspectives which, by their critical nature, are referred to one another. This critical relation reflects the real openness of all human thinking and acting. Experienced as the conflict between man and the other, this critical relation refers man to his contingent experience of reality as the real ground of knowledge and, at the same time, confines him to his epistemological limit of knowing reality. It frees him from the illusion of having grasped by his theory, reality in its totality or the real ground of the world. It makes him become aware that reality, in its totality, cannot be comprehended, but only experienced as a process of contingent events and that it is this very experience that facilitates the act of cognition.

His full consciousness of the real ground of the world process restrains man from any longer labouring under the illusion that the cognitive act is an absolute act, as this was the case in classical metaphysics, but is even more so in the radicalism and totalitarianism of the contemporary "anti-metaphysical" alternatives of thinking, be they of the functionalistic, actionalistic or operationalistic kind. Man is now aware that the cognitive act is a critical act, which, by its critical character, refers man's truth to the truth of the other. This critical relation induces them to break through the walls of their own truth-perspectives and so enter into dialogue on truth and reality. In critical and self-critical thinking, they will recognize that their truth-perspectives are related to one another by rational necessity. By an act of mutual critical and self-critical self-restraint, they will gain new in-

sights, which serve the needs and interests of both partners and facilitate meaningful co-operation.

The rational necessity of the critical relation between truth-perspectives does not exclude freedom of thought. On the contrary, it makes it possible. The fact that truth-perspectives have always a critical effect and find themselves in a position of being criticized bans the danger of absolutizing one's own cognitive perspective. It precludes the inclination of regarding one's own truth-perspective as *the* Truth and acting accordingly. The critical relationship holding between truth-perspectives indicates that, *in reality*, all human knowledge and truth are always questionable, so that the question about these two concepts must be asked in an ever new way and a new dispute ensues concerning the answer to this question. The critical relationship obtaining between truth-perspectives reflects the contingent character of reality. From the spontaneous character of the historical theories of reality, this contingency is discernible. The inner necessity from which they are projected is an act of spontaneity, in this sense an act of freedom. For without the human urge for freedom, there would be no rational projection of historical theories or truth-perspectives.

University of Port Harcourt  
Together in Excellence

*In summa*, from the epistemological point of view, contingency is the realm of freedom, in so far as it facilitates man's and the other's freedom of thought and, through critical argument, enables both to gain new insights into reality, which, in turn, help to change practice: man's various cultural and civilizing activities as well as social relations. If it is true that all theories of reality or truth-perspectives are critical by nature, it stands to reason that a critical stance vis à vis all truth-perspectives, including one's own, is a reasonable way of thinking, corresponding to the natural limitation of human insight. Critical reasoning permits man to say *no* to a theory — including his own — which is no longer, or not at all, relevant to changed reality. This can especially be the case with a theory that has been absolutized, so that it has degenerated into a closed totalitarian ideology, when the open critical dialogue about truth has been turned into a dogmatic repressive monologue. Critical reason is always practical reason. It points the way to practice, in so far as it conditions human action and man's relationship to the other.

Critical reason shows truth as historically conditioned truths (theories) and reality as contingent processes (practice), from which all truths (theories) issue and which they, in turn, influence. In the light of contingency, the utopian dimension of theory remains *really* utopian, thus open. As conceptions of transcendental consciousness, utopian ideas are in fact regarded as utopian and are not taken for reality, as is for example the case in certain theories of our own time, which, on account of this, become closed ideologies. As real utopia, theory transcends a specific situation of reality, thereby sustaining man's hope for and expectation of improved human relations: the lessening of natural conflict and greater adjustment of conflicting needs and interests as they are reflected in the respective theories and *Weltanschauungen*. In the utopian dimension of the various historical theories of reality, the hope of all men for truth, justice, harmony and freedom is reflected. On the level of the contingent experience of reality, this hope becomes an empirical hope for practice. It is manifest in man's and his fellow-man's continuous attempt, as well as that of various groups of men (of different political, cultural and religious organization), to attune each other's various needs and interests in such a way that improved co-existence becomes possible. This insight into utopia as an outflow of contingency, therefore part of reality, leads to the cognition of utopia's practical tendency.

University of Fort Hare  
Together in Excellence

## 2. The Contingent Nature of Human Existence — Ethical Aspect of Theory

In the epistemological reflections on historical world theories, we recognized, in their critical character and relationship, the catalyst of practice and the indicator of contingent experience as the source of practice-directed cognition. In so far as all theories of reality reflect the conflicts, problems, needs and interests of man in a specific historical epoch, they point to the contingent character of human existence. Especially in their historical context and critical relatedness, this contingent character becomes manifest. From the view-point of human existence, the critical relationship holding between world theories reflects their ethical aspect. Being experienced by man and the other as mutual limitation, thus having an ethical character, this critical relationship, which reflects the contingent character of human existence, shows

itself not only as the real ground of human knowledge (theory) but also as the real ground of human action (practice), thus as the moral ground. It follows that man's contingent experience of reality is the common root of human knowledge and morality.

Just as contingent reality facilitates freedom of thought, so freedom of action is given by it. By their very critical relatedness to one another, man and his fellow-man are referred to contingent experience as the realm of freedom, from which they, as interdependent partners, mould and remould the world according to given circumstances. On the level of contingent experience, they avoid the traps and entanglements of total self-transcendence, which, as has been shown, results in alienation from reality and the conversion of the natural conflict given in contingent experience — the motor of human thinking and acting — into a destructive confrontation. Being really free and acting in accordance with their true nature as finite, historical and contingent beings, man and the other forfeit their natural freedom by the act of total self-transcendence. Not only is by this total act the utopian dimension of the theory of reality regarded as reality as such, so that it degenerates into a closed and rigid ideology, but man's will and striving are exclusively concentrated on the enforcement and imposition of one's own theory and interest. This renders impossible an exchange of ideas and interests between man and the other. While the critical relationship holding between theories of reality points to the voluntary act of self-restraint of man and the other as well as the virtues of modesty, tolerance, open-mindedness, respect and goodwill, the act of total self-transcendence points to the very opposite. In this act becomes manifest what the ancient Greeks called *hubris*, namely: self-conceit, self-righteousness, dogmatism, a closed mind, contempt for the other's truth-perspective and the attempt to suppress by force and violence the other's ideas, needs and interests.

If the moral act (practice) issues from the critical relationship holding between theories of reality, which reflects man's contingent experience of reality, the question arises: What about ethics as such — the specific moral theories that were conceived throughout the centuries to answer the vital question of good and evil, right and wrong? If ethics is defined as the theory of moral action, then a distinction between ethics (theory) and morality (practice) is implied, which, simultaneously, in-

dicates their relatedness to one another. An analysis of moral action yields that the moral act always issues from a moral ground: a conflict experienced by man, which he seeks to overcome and which is the moral incentive for his attempt. For this reason, man strives for a moral norm, whereby a human action is judged good or evil, just or unjust, right or wrong. The moral norm by which moral judgement is made, is often identical with the world formula contained in a theory of reality. In this case, a philosopher's ethics or moral theory is identical with his theory of reality or forms part of it.

Since, on the grounds of changing historical conditions, man's concrete needs and interests also change, the character of the moral ground, the moral norm and the moral act changes as well. Accordingly, the validity of moral theories — in terms of which moral action takes place — derives from the specific historical situation and conditions of life from and under which these theories are conceived. In view of their pointer to practice — thus to their contingent historicity — the meaning of moral theories cannot be derived from logical principles and propositions. They cannot be judged by logical categories of true and false; meaningful and meaningless; their *rationale* derives from the specific historical conditions under which they are constituted. For from these historical conditions man's concrete needs arise, which lend the respective moral theory meaning and validity. From the following formula, the nature and function of morality become clear: The way a specific thinker conceives the world conditions his conception of man, which, in turn, conditions his relationship with his fellow-man (society and the state), thus his moral action. In other words, the theoretical fulfilment of the principle of identity enables man, *theoretically*, to lead an authentic way of life, thus a life in freedom. This means: the man living in harmony with nature — as conceived by the respective thinker — lives in harmony with his own nature and in harmony with his fellow-man (society). Being free from conflict and contradiction, he leads an authentic existence.

It is the existential significance of moral theories (ethics), as it emerges from man's contingent existence as a finite, historical being, that is studiously ignored by neo-positivistic analytical philosophy. The reduction of philosophical theories — in this sense of transcendental philosophy — to an analysis of functional language relations

(either of empirical or scientific language by logical positivists or of natural language by linguistic analysts) causes analytical philosophers such as Wittgenstein, Carnap, Ayer, Ryle, Austin to reject moral theories as meaningless. It has already been pointed out in a different context that such judgement can be passed only within the framework of the analytical method, which is applied to "resolve" ethical problems as well. If, however, the premises of this particular method are themselves called in question, their metaphysical presuppositions, such as meaning, truth, verification, experience, reality, etc. — which they share with other methods and without which they would make no sense — would be shown to be just as controversial as those of any other theory. That these particular language theories — for that is what they really are, whereby their explanatory transcendental character is exposed — are indeed controversial, is shown by the fact that, even within the analytical school itself, they call each other in question. We only have to look at Wittgenstein himself, who refutes his own *Tactatus* by his *Philosophical Investigations*. The fact is that, as has already been shown, the analytical method has produced a number of theories on the meaning and function of moral concepts as well, which theories call each other in question.


University of Fort Hare

*Together in Excellence*

The analytical method is one method among others. It is itself historical and contingent, in so far as it evolved from the atomistic and logistic climate, which, at present, dominates western Europe's way of thinking. Its moral and practical meaning lies in its attempt to liberate man from "confusing" and "meaningless" ethical and metaphysical statements. However, the purely logistic approach of the analytical method overlooks man's need for moral theory as a guide for moral action under changing historical conditions and circumstances of life. By ignoring the existential historical dimension from which moral theories issue, the analysts bypass contingent reality, which causes analytical treatment of ethical problems to peter out in utopia.

The inevitably problematic, polemical and critical character of moral theories — thus of ethics — makes them point to a moral ground that is outside these theories and conditions them. This ground is the contingent experience of reality, by which all moral theories — for that matter all theories — are called in question. This basic experience of man elucidates the contingent character of his existence, which is

reflected by the critical relationship obtaining between theories. This basic experience should not be regarded as negative but as positive, since, without it, human thinking would stagnate. Without this experience, there would be no more action, thus no more history. Since, however, on the grounds of this experience, man enters into continual dialogue with his fellow-man on the questions of authentic existence and freedom, history continues to crystallize in new forms of human existence and new social structures. It follows that, in the last resort, the moral judgment of good and evil, right or wrong, is no longer derived from the moral norms of a specific theory or a theory of reality of which the latter is a part, but that it is really grounded in the critical relationship holding between moral theories or theories of reality. For it is this relationship that reflects the contingent character of reality, which latter is experienced as natural conflict between man and the other and is the motor of all thinking and acting.



The critical relationship indicates that man and the other are referred to one another in critical thought and moral action, a way of acting that corresponds to critical thought and is performed in the spirit of mutual self-restraint, modesty, tolerance, open-mindedness, respect and goodwill. The universally valid moral act issues from man's contingent experience of reality or natural freedom. For by this basic experience all men are referred to each other in their dispute on authentic existence, this dispute taking place under changing circumstances of life. It is this state of affairs that causes a specific society to observe the previously mentioned virtues by working out a moral code that, under given historical conditions, is valid for all. Moreover, these virtues of contingent experience are valid for the relationship of social and cultural systems that are conditioned by different moral values and ethical norms.

The observation of the virtues issuing from contingent experience safeguards the freedom of the individual within a specific social or cultural system as well as the freedom of cultural self-determination of the various cultural groups. It precludes the danger of an individual's totalitarian rule over a specific society — as it is found in certain dictatorships today — or the domination of a specific society or cultural system by a particular nation or state by means of a totalitarian ideology, as is the case in certain countries at present. The repressive and

destructive consequences of such totalitarian acts of self-transcendence as well as their alienating effect have already been discussed. On the level of man's contingent experience of reality, such kind of act is not possible. As the realm of freedom, this basic experience safeguards the freedom of the individual as well as the freedom of social or cultural systems: the right of their members to a way of life, according to specific conventional norms and values within the system, thus the right to self-determination.

### 3. The Self-Realization of Man from Freedom as the Authentic Ground of Utopia — Metaphysical Aspect of Theory

Just as the problematic, polemical and critical relationship between moral theories refers to a *moral ground* outside these theories, so this same relation between theories of reality refers to a *real ground* outside these theories. This *real ground* consists in contingent reality, which is experienced as a natural conflict between man and the other and is reflected in the critical relationship between theories of reality. The critical relationship holding between the historical theories of reality indicates the being called in question of these theories by the practice of contingent reality, so that they are always in a critical condition. Their critical character identifies them as truth-perspectives or methodologically constituted models of reality, seeking to cope with the experience of the contemporaries of a specific historical epoch. They wrestle with the concrete conflicts and problems experienced by them, which dominate their consciousness at that time. Attempting to master these conflicts and problems in a rational way, they endeavour to provide contemporaries with a meaningful existence, one free from conflict to the greatest possible degree, and to gratify, to the greatest possible extent, their need for certainty, security, shelter and freedom. Always, the methodological constitution of theories of reality occurs from the question about man's authentic existence and the problem of blending man into reality in such a way that he is as free as possible from inner contradictions and conflict, which create for him a life of suffering. As has been shown, this holds true for all methodologically constituted theories of reality, including the contemporary ones, which adopt an "anti-metaphysical" stance.

As truth-perspectives that stand in a critical relation to each other,

theories of reality mirror the *Logos* of the world in fragmented form. Broken by man's contingent experience of reality, the *Logos* represents the universe as a *multiversum* of historical *logoi*. This *multiversum* is in a continual process of change and becoming. The *Logos* of the world, which can also be designated as the *Logos* of Being, emerges from the critical relationship obtaining between the historical truth-perspectives, thus identifying these truth-perspectives as components of an unbroken *Logos*. It becomes so clear how — despite the distinct variety of the historically conditioned *logoi* — meaningful argument and communication between man and the other become possible.

The variety and variability of the historical *logoi* — their contingent character, therefore — is explained by the dynamics of contingent reality: the changing conditions of life (historical conditions) and man's practice (way of acting) and way of existence connected with it. However, the rationalization of this practice by the methodological constitution of the respective circumstances of life in the form of a new theory of reality happens by one and the same *Logos*. Thus a theory is a truth-perspective, which is understood by all men, no matter whether, in view of their own existential situation, they are able to agree with it or not. Since all truth-perspectives are components of one and the same *Logos*, they cannot be judged "true" or "false" from a purely logical, or logistic, point of view, but can only be regarded as being more or less relevant to reality.

In the critical relationship obtaining between truth-perspectives man's incapacity to comprehend *the Truth* becomes manifest. The assumption of such a capacity, as is the case with totally conceived truth-perspectives, yields an untruth, which contradicts the truth of not-knowing *the Truth*. This results, as should have become clear, in man's alienation from reality, thus in total utopia, which turns man into an imaginary superman. In the critical relationship between truth-perspectives, we recognize reason as critical reason, which makes us become aware of truth-perspectives being related to contingent reality. Critical reason refers us to contingent experience as the *real ground* of the world, as the realm of freedom from which the historical theories of reality are methodologically projected as truth-perspectives. This projection is, at the same time, self-projection to freedom. For in a historical situation, man has the choice of projecting himself into and mould-

ing the world for the purpose of coping with it in one way or another. Examples are the principal theories of empiricism and rationalism in the era of Enlightenment; idealism, positivism, materialism and voluntarism in the 19th century; phenomenology, analytical linguistic philosophy, existentialism and Marxism in the present. Always, the projection of theories in a particular epoch, despite their contradictoriness, happens on the grounds of a definite experience of reality, which conditions the *Zeitgeist*.

Theories of reality represent man's self-realization from freedom; as they are a manifestation of his own concrete needs and interests emerging from a specific historical and existential situation. It is his striving for overcoming the conflicts in his contingent experience of reality, from which those needs and interests arise, that directs man towards self-realization through theory. This very natural urge for self-realization through theory, which urge grows from his contingent experience of reality, enables man to build his world in such a way that it corresponds to his natural desire. In so far as this natural urge for self-realization is the manifestation of his inner urge for freedom, it is a spontaneous act and, in this sense, an act of freedom.

#### University of Fort Hare

That man's self-realization from freedom is the real ground of utopia becomes clear from the fact that man moulds the world according to his desires and imagination, as he imagines man's authentic existence in the world as an existence in harmony. However, thereby he enters into conflict with the other's world view. This indicates the contingent character of utopia. Thereby the problematic and controversial nature of utopia becomes manifest. It, too, remains part of contingent reality and of history. In it, the world's real ground has been only theoretically comprehended. It exists in the respective thinker's imagination, not in reality. Utopia's contingent character illustrates man's natural conflict with the other as the real ground of the world. This conflict is reflected in the critical relationship holding between theories of reality as the contingent experience whereby all truth-perspectives are called in question.

In the light of the critical relationship obtaining between all theories of reality, which indicates their contingent nature, the so-called transcendent real ground imagined by these theories proves not to be

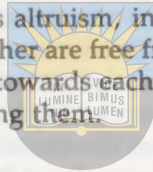
transcendent at all, but transcendental: a component of the respective theory of reality methodologically constituted from man's contingent experience of reality. As such rational constitution, under certain historical conditions, it is an immanent concept of the mind and, as such, utopian. Since man's contingent experience of reality also renders utopia questionable, the danger of confusing utopia with reality is eliminated. In the light of contingent experience, utopia remains open to reality.

Thereby the degeneration of the open critical theory of reality into an uncritical closed dogmatic ideology is avoided and man's and the other's freedom secured. As a real utopia, the theory's utopian dimension gives expression to man's inherent need for freedom from conflict, for harmony and peace of mind, a condition that cannot be fully realized. Yet, man's striving for it is of eminently practical significance, in so far as all human cultural and civilizing activities in the sciences, philosophy, the arts and religion are phenomena of this striving. The utopian component of his theories of reality in particular shows man as a metaphysical being. This fact was demonstrated not only by the constitutive metaphysics of the past but is shown by the "anti-metaphysical" alternatives of the present as well. The latter could not overcome the metaphysical either. It is clearly reflected in their world theories, more accurately in the world formulae contained in these theories.

If the really transcendent is not comprehended by the theories of reality, of whatever type, where is it in reality? The real transcendent for man is his fellow-man. On the grounds of his own experience of reality and the projection of his own theory of reality, he calls in question that of man. He is man's constant stumbling block. By his critical insight, he makes man become aware of his limitations during the act of self-realization and draws man's attention away from himself, from utopia to reality, from theory to practice. He causes man to become conscious of the fact that, in all his thinking (theory) and acting (practice), he is referred to him. By his critical questioning, the other is man's real limit which is suspended only in death or nothingness. Death is the final limit between reality and nothing. This limit cannot be removed by any utopia, for the latter is man-made and man is destined to death. Any speculations about death are therefore futile. Ideas of an after-life, resurrection, reincarnation, metempsychosis are an

outflow of man's desire to live and to overcome death. This desire is real enough. However, the various ideas of overcoming death are a result of faith, the strength of which corresponds to man's powerful drive to live.

The limit between man and the other is experienced as mutual limitation, which elucidates both the differential of each other's theory of reality — thus each other's individuality — and the *equivalence* of each others theory of reality. Critical reason, as it manifests itself in the critical relationship holding between theories of reality and points to participation in a common *Logos*, demands mutual recognition as truth-perspectives of unequal, but *equivalent*, theories of reality, in the spirit of mutual self-restraint, modesty, tolerance, open-mindedness, respect and goodwill. Critical reason bends the egoism of the act of self-realization towards *altruism*, in so far as, in the light of critical reason, man and the other *are free* from the chains of their own truth and, in being directed towards each other, can tackle in common the practical problems facing *them*.



University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

## THE HERMENEUTICS OF THE PHILOSOPHY - THEOLOGY RELATIONSHIP

### 1. The Problem of Theological Truth

This relationship is investigated in terms of the hermeneutical approach. This means that the attempt is made to understand man as a *homo religiosus*. The enquiry takes its point of departure from man's religious experience and religious consciousness. It is this field of investigation that is commonly called philosophy of religion. That there is indeed the religious type of experience is proved by the various world religions, although, in this brief chapter, we shall have to confine ourselves to one type of religion in particular, namely, the Christian religion. For it is the latter that is more or less related to western philosophy. And since this work concerns itself with the methodology of knowledge within the western context, the relationship between western philosophy and theology is chosen as a case study.

Within the framework of this study, this chapter takes its departure from the observation that the phenomenon of religion is a universal phenomenon, which points to religious experience as one of man's basic experiences. Giving expression to this experience in the form of various historically grown religions and religious denominations that represent a specific kind of faith and worship closely connected with the specificity of human existence and way of life, religion represents a component of the scale of human creative cultural activities. Being methodologically constituted as a theory from the data of revelation as they are given in the various holy scriptures, the Vedes, the Thora, the Bible and the Qu'ran, for example, this experience assumes scientific character in the discipline of theology. On account of their methodological constitution, theological theories or *theologoumena* are truth-perspectives that are, like any other theories, conceived under changing historical conditions. The critical relationship into which they enter with one another results in a continual critical argument about theological truth in the same way as do those theories

constituted from different types of experience, yielding different types of knowledge.

The chief problems that are being discussed in Christian theology are those of the God-man or God-world relationship, faith and the meaning of the event of the Cross. The controversy over these problems yields the various historical *theologoumena*: the historical theological truth-perspectives, the critical relationship into which they enter with each other reflecting man's basic contingent experience of reality from which they issue and on the grounds of which they call each other in question. The critical relationship obtaining between theological theories is experienced as conflict, which experience is an incentive for the theological argument to continue as actual circumstances of life change, so that, again, there is an interplay of theory and practice. Just as other types of theory, so theological theories, too, reflect the specific historical conditions, the conflicts experienced in a particular historical situation and the concrete needs and interests emerging from it. It is under these historical conditions that the problems of the God-man or God-world relationship, faith and the meaning of the event of the Cross are discussed. It follows that all theological truth-perspectives are man-made, as are any other types of truth-perspective, and that no one particular truth-perspective can lay claim to having embraced *the Truth*.

It stands to reason that this is largely the case today, when, in certain theological approaches, the historical situation — the context — is absolutized at the expense of the text, so when it is stated in the *Kairos Document* with reference to what is called there "State Theology": "What has been overlooked here is one of the most fundamental of all principles of biblical interpretation: every text must be interpreted *in its context*".<sup>1</sup>) It would appear then that *the Truth* emerges from one particular context, past and present. It emerges from a particular truth-perspective: the specific historical conditions, the absolutization of which is not only a contradiction in the light of the concept of universal truth, but which, in addition, leads to a polarization of socio-political conflict. It turns positive natural conflict, which yields meaningful dialogue, into negative, mutually destructive confrontation. The latter is

---

<sup>1</sup> *Challenge to the Church — A Theological Comment on the Political Crisis in South Africa (The Kairos Document)*, p.4.

stated in the *Kairos Document* in the form of a number of polarizing dichotomies, in which this document abounds and which is the result of a totalitarian way of thinking. This leads to the following inescapable impasse and the commitment of theology to violence and revolution: "This is our situation of civil war or revolution. The one side is committed to maintaining the system at all costs and the other side is committed to changing it at all costs. There are two conflicting projects here and no compromise is possible. Either we have full and equal justice for all or we don't.<sup>1</sup>) But who decides what is full and equal justice are the authors of the *Kairos Document*. They do so in terms of their contextual method. From Plato to Rawls,<sup>2</sup>) the problem has been and is still being disputed. The question is: Can there be equal justice in terms of one particular truth-perspective that has been absolutized?

The trouble with the *Kairos Document* is that its authors know the Truth, when it is stated with reference to the South African socio-political situation that "The moment of truth has arrived." That is to say, they know the truth as they have methodologically constructed it from current South African socio-political conditions as one particular truth-perspective. Methodologically speaking, they have done so by selecting from the scriptural text those passages which, according to their theological point of view, fit South African conditions, conveniently omitting those passages that lend themselves to different interpretations. In other words, by absolutizing the context as they see it, they have destroyed the open-ended interaction between text and context. By rendering the text's multi-dimensional character, which yields various possibilities of interpretation, one-dimensional and declaring their own theological truth-perspective the only valid one, they have closed the door for meaningful dialogue with other theological truth-perspectives. They have turned open dialogue into dogmatic monologue.

The radical language used in the Document shows the latter's one-dimensionalism, which must be traced to the reductionist method applied by its authors: the reduction of the South African socio-political conflict to a string of fixed dichotomies, such as: oppressors and op-

---

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 16

<sup>2</sup> Cf. J Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*.

pressed; exploiters (rich) and exploited (poor); evil (unjust) and good (just); law and order on the one hand and, on the other, civil disobedience; reform and revolution; non-violence (evolution) and violence (revolution); state theology (anti-Christ) and prophetic theology (Christ). The latter is, of course, the theology of liberation as propounded in the Document, where God is pronounced to be on the side of the oppressed. In terms of their theology, they claim to know God, thus disposing of him for their socio-political aims. It stands to reason whether this is not in conflict with the concept of faith, as it will emerge from the following discussions in this chapter.

The theology of liberation is obviously represented in terms of Marxist dialectics, which emphasizes its socio-political character: society's liberation from an oppressive and repressive state ideology and state theology. It is because of its revolutionary aims that the theology of liberation can be designated as functionalistic and operationalistic. This holds true in a similar way for Black Theology, which is stated in terms of the Black Power ideology. J H Cone writes:<sup>1)</sup> "Black Theology seeks to interpret Black Power religiously. Black Power endeavours to reorder the Christian tradition in view of the black predicament and to destroy the influence of heretical white Christianity. In this sense it is nationalistic." The polarization between black and white as two antagonistic concepts assumes radical proportions in the Black Power movement. This radicalism is clearly outlined by the following statement of Cone's:

Black theology believes that, in order to be meaningful and productive, black people must have room to do their thing. The black community itself must lay down the rules of the game. White oppressors are incompetent to dictate the terms of reconciliation because they are enslaved by their own racism and will inevitably seek to base the terms on their right to play God in human relationships.<sup>2)</sup>

Thus Cone makes it clear that he considers the "right to play God" now to have been transferred from whites to blacks. A. Cleage is even

---

<sup>1</sup> *Black Theology and Black Power*, p. 131.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

more outspoken when he says: "There is no such thing as good white people and bad white people. . . white people make up one system of brutality . . . First and inescapable is the fact that the white man is our enemy."<sup>1</sup>)

That the revolutionary theory of Black Theology is also influenced by Marxist-Leninist ideas issues from the ideology of Black Power, which, according to Cone, it "seeks to interpret religiously." The Marxist-Leninist influence on the Black power ideology manifests itself by the principle of the negation of the negation: the negation of black impotency (as the result of white oppression) by the restoration of black power on a higher level. Theologically speaking, the influence of German dialectical ideology: Karl Barth, Rudolf Bultman, Jürgen Moltmann and others, is acknowledged by Cone. Especially Jürgen Moltmann's emphasis on revolutionary practice — the liberation of oppressed man in contemporary monopolistic society — exercised an influence on the Theology of Liberation and Revolution.

The practical revolutionary significance of the Cross, as it has been spelled out by Moltmann, holds out hope for oppressed man, a free society and ultimate salvation. The influence of Ernst Bloch's philosophy, especially his eschatological ideas towards the conclusion of his work *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, is obvious. Moltmann's emphasis on revolutionary practice, both in the religious and socio-political sense, reminds us of the existential practice concept of the early Christian apologists, such as Justin Martyr, Irenaeus and Tertullian. Under the impact of the socio-political conditions of their time, practice meant to them the solution of man's existential problems: of sin, suffering, oppression and death. To them, the practical significance of the event of the Cross consisted in the resolution of these problems through Christ's passion. Through Christ's vicarious suffering and death, God revealed himself and his purpose. The Christian apologists were anti-philosophical. Justin Martyr said: "Christianity is our philosophy", and Irenaeus told the gnostics: "Christianity is our gnosis." This anti-philosophical position they share with the representatives of contemporary *praxis* - philosophy, with this difference that the latter proposes to achieve truth and justice in this world rather than in the next.

---

<sup>1</sup> "The Black Messiah and the Black Revolution" in: *Quest for Black Theology*.

As to the problems of secularization and eschatology, it is interesting to note that some modern theologies of revolution and liberation have moved closer to modern *praxis* - philosophy and so have become secularized. On the other hand, there are Marxist thinkers such as Ernst Bloch, whose philosophy of hope shows eschatological features, thus reflecting the resurrection of contemporary man's religious need. Bloch is very conscious of this need, the core of all religions being *utopia*, that which is not yet reality. Utopia is seen as an expression of human expectation, of hope for the realm of freedom — *Heimat* — which formerly was called God, then the kingdom of God. Bloch puts it as follows:

Das höchste Gut ist selber dieses noch nicht gebildete, in der Tendenz des Prozesses letzthin bedeutete, in der Latenz des Prozesses letzthin realmögliche Ziel. So erscheint eine utopisch - kosmische Perspektive mitten in der subjektiv — und intensiv — existentiellen, wenn statuiert werden kann: Das unter dem höchsten Gut Gedachte, das früher Gott hiess, dann Reich Gottes, und schliesslich das Reich der Freiheit ist, macht nicht nur das Zweckideal der menschlichen Geschichte aus, sondern auch das metaphysische Latenzproblem der Natur.<sup>1)</sup>

*University of North-Holland  
Together in Excellence*

Within the context of this chapter, only brief reference to the theological argument can be made as it proceeded, especially on the European continent, after the collapse of the old culture as the result of the two World Wars, when utter frustration and naked fear were stalking the European scene. The new religious need that had grown from this experience caused man to turn again to the century-old problem of faith. It was the dialectical theologians, Barth, Gogarten, Brunner, Bultman and others who laboured hard to satisfy the new need and to hammer out a new meaning of faith, which was more in conformity with the existing conditions of life than the old orthodox, fundamentalist approach. The latter, they felt, had given man the illusion of too much security. He had become smug in his belief. He had come to seek God in an illusory heaven, which caused him to lead a dual existence as a habitual church-going Christian on a Sunday and a materialistic, competitive being on a Monday, whose sole purpose was to

<sup>1</sup> *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, Vol. III, p. 1566.

achieve material success. Thus Christianity, more and more, came to be identified with a smug belief in what the preacher said on a Sunday, which was forgotten on a Monday. All in all, Christianity came to be regarded as identical with Christian culture. The liberal theologian Adolf Harnack<sup>1</sup>) regarded the Christian religion as the heart of culture and the theological dogma as a work of the Greek spirit on the basis of the gospel. Already in Hegel's philosophy, the Christian religion was identified with Christian culture. It was against this aspect of Hegel's philosophy that Kierkegaard protested so vehemently and against which he posited a real Christian existence: the individual having to face God as the inscrutable Thou, who could be embraced only through faith as a subjective truth.<sup>2</sup>)

Following the lead of Kierkegaard, the dialectical theologians sought to get man to lead a real existence in the light of the event of the Cross. They pointed out that faith was not a smug belief in a better world to come. It did not consist in the beatific vision of God (Thomas Aquinas) or in mystical ecstatic union as taught by other mediaeval theologians and mystics (Bonaventura, Tauler, Seuse), nor did it consist in forming an intellectual concept of God as the world's architect (Leibniz) or Absolute Spirit (Hegel). But it consisted in man's accepting in faith God's justice as it emerged in the hardships of life, the suffering and misery of human existence, which flowed from God's inscrutability and unfathomableness. Already the German reformer Martin Luther had taught the doctrine of justification by faith and the dialectical theologians followed in his footsteps. For them God's inscrutability was due to his *otherworldliness*, in short his *No*, which he posits against man and the world. It is by the revelatory nature of the event of the Cross that God had fulfilled his promise.

According to Bultmann,<sup>3</sup>) man had *already* been saved by Christ's sacrifice on the Cross. In the light of this perception what mattered was

---

<sup>1</sup> *Das Wesen des Christentums*, cf. "Das Evangelium und die Arbeit, oder die Frage der Kultur", pp. 74-78, and "Die christliche Religion im griechischen Katholizismus", pp. 135-141, respectively.

<sup>2</sup> In this regard, cf. *Concluding Uncientific Postscript*, where the relationship between philosophy and theology is discussed.

<sup>3</sup> As to the question of demythologization, cf. R Bultmann "Entmythologisierung oder Entkerygmatisierung der Theologie", in: H W Bartsch (ed.), *Kerygma und Mythos*, Vol. II.

faith in Christ. The dialectical theologians, indefatigably, pointed out the practical significance of the event of the Cross for man in his present situation. They, therefore, did not think any longer of God as essence or substance, whose real being was derived from his very name by definition (Descartes' ontological proof), but they thought of him as an act outside the human mind: as an *opus externum*. As an act of salvation, it was reflected in the event of the Cross. Thus God entered into a functional relation with the world and with man, which manifested itself in the dialectical nature of the event of the Cross.

It is obvious that, by grasping the contradictory relation between God and man as a dialectical principle, the dialectical theologians have constituted another immanent truth. They have done so by the methodological conception of various *theologoumena* or theological truth-perspectives, which differ in accordance with the self-conceived premiss as the respective theologian's point of departure. As such truth-perspectives they represent so many cycles of the self. They comprehend the God-world relationship, which so forms an immanent truth. By constituting the God-world relationship as a dialectical principle by which they systematically and logically, derive faith from man's not-knowing, the dialectical theologians ground faith again in human reason and so posit various *theologoumena*. Again, the God-man relationship is logically developed from God's *No* to man's *Yes* and vice-versa.

It is thus constituted in rational terms, so that man really disposes of God rather than God disposing of him. By the rational comprehension of the dialectical God-man relationship and the interpretation of revelation in rational terms, this relationship is no longer a conflict experience and as such contingent. Through its rationalization and methodological constitution, it is no longer the experience of a *real* crisis in which faith *might* occur to man from the outside, from a real transcendent or *opus externum*. It is now an immanent human truth constituted by the dialectical method.

In other words, it is the theologian himself and not God, who, by his rational comprehension of the revealed truth as a functional event reflecting the dialectical God-man relationship, terminates all real conflict and contradiction and converts faith into a rational truth again. It is

he who rationally and methodologically disposes of God rather than God irrationally disposing of him. It thus stands to reason that, like any other human truths, the theological truth-perspectives of the dialectical theologians emerge again as so many human self-projections, by which man seeks to satisfy his religious need and to realize himself as a religious being.

## 2. Philosophy and Theology — Differences and Similarities

### a) The Religious Phenomenon as Part of the Philosophical Argument

Although the difference between religion and philosophy emerges from the mere translation of the two words, they have much in common. The Latin word *religio* means reverence, obligation, bond, the Greek word *philosophia* denotes love of wisdom. The former word implies total commitment, the latter word implies quest for knowledge and truth. It is now precisely when philosophy is defined as the pursuit of knowledge or of truth, as it was defined by Pythagoras and Socrates respectively, that religion, as a phenomenon of human experience, becomes a field of enquiry for philosophy. For philosophy's field of enquiry can be circumscribed by the methodological constitution of various types of human experience, the religious type of experience being one of them. This is demonstrated by the fact that there is a branch of philosophy called philosophy of religion. Moreover, religion is an object of investigation in the science of religion and in theology. Although there exists some degree of overlapping, it may be said that philosophy investigates religion in terms of the concept of truth, science of religion in terms of the concept of culture and theology in terms of religious dogma.

On account of man's contingent (changing, variable) experience of reality (circumstances of life or historical conditions) as well as his finiteness, historicity and contingency, knowledge of *the* Truth is denied man. Therefore, the concepts of knowledge and truth remain controversial, so that the question of knowledge and truth has to be asked again and again as life's conditions are caused to change by philosophy's answers given to this question. There is thus a continuous interplay of theory and practice, in view of which the meaning of knowl-

edge and truth changes. This already points to a *docta ignorantia*: the truth of man's not-knowing the Truth.

It should be borne in mind that man is not a one-dimensional but a multi-dimensional being. He has not only one type of experience but a variety of types, such as physical, historical, ethical, aesthetic and religious experience, none of which should be absolutized, unless man become alienated from himself and reality. Unfortunately, this seems to be the case today when man's functionalistic material experience appears to have assumed total dimensions, thus unbalancing man and threatening his existence as an individual and a person.

The constitution of these various types of experience in methodological form yield various types of knowledge. These methodologically constituted types of knowledge are theories, which are *truth-perspectives* in view of the fact that these theories are universally understood. Since method bestows on theory truth-perspectives, theories enter into a critical relationship with one another, which points to man's basic contingent experience, from which they have been methodologically constituted.

University of Fort Hare

As a result of the critical relationship holding between truth-perspectives, man and his fellow-man enter into dialogue with one another, which constitutes a continuing critical argument on the question about knowledge and truth. The question about the origin, nature and scope of human knowledge and truth — hence the question about to what extent we know the truth — has been answered differently, with reference to the specific historical conditions of a particular period and in terms of the *Zeitgeist* that prevailed at this particular historical epoch. Viewed in a wide scope, the history of philosophy shows that the religious phenomenon has always played an important role in the argument about knowledge and truth, no matter whether this phenomenon was seen in a positive, or negative way.

Already in the thought of the ancient Greeks, where it was equated with the beauty and harmony (justice) — hence the *agathon* — of the cosmos, truth had a divine aspect. In the Middle Ages, the problem of knowledge and truth revolved about the relationship between reason and faith, reason and will, knowledge (science) and religion —

philosophy and theology. It was Thomas Aquinas who sought to reconcile the two by declaring faith a higher form of knowledge, transcending reason but not contradicting it. In 19th century idealism, the divine was seen as an aspect of the World Spirit. In contradistinction to Thomas Aquinas' view, it was seen by Hegel as an aspect of philosophical truth. The philosophical concept of truth comprehended all other aspects: the scientific, the historical, the ethical, the aesthetic and the theological one. It is noteworthy that agnostic and atheistic philosophers, such as Marx, Nietzsche, Sartre, Wittgenstein, Ayer, all concern themselves with the religious experience, either as a hermeneutical experience or linguistic utterance. From this it follows that man is, among others, a *homo religiosus*. As such he has to be discussed in the field of philosophical anthropology. Examples of the discussion of man's religious experience are Spinoza's pantheism or psychophysical parallelism; Hume's religious faith as it emerged from his agnosticism; Schleiermacher's feeling of unconditional dependence on God; Feuerbach's idea of religion as a form of self-alienation and his anthropological concept of religion. The latter influenced Marx in this respect, who taught that man's alienation by religion must be overcome through replacing the latter by politics.

University of Fort Hare

#### b) The Critical Relationship of the Philosophical Argument as the Epistemological Limit of Human Truth

In the light of the observation that philosophy is a continuing argument on certain basic questions from man's contingent experience of reality, questions about the problem of knowledge and truth, the epistemological limit clearly emerges. It consists in the critical relationship that holds between philosophical truth-perspectives as they are constituted and reconstituted under changing historical conditions. There is thus a continuous interplay of theory and practice. The fact that philosophy is a permanent quest for truth testifies to man's belief in its existence. Were it not presupposed, it would not be enquired into. From this, the conclusion must be drawn that, ultimately, all human knowledge of the truth rests on *belief*. The critical relationship that holds between truth-perspectives is always questioned by another. From the philosophical point of view, therefore, the critical relationship obtaining between truth-perspectives forms man's epistemological limit in the sense that, in his quest for truth, he is referred

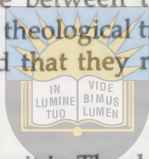
to his fellow-man, who is his real transcendent and as such his indispensable partner in his pursuit of truth. Any absolutization on anyone's part of some specific truth-perspective or another leads to alienation from man's contingent experience of reality as well as from his fellow-man. It leads to what the ancient Greeks called *hubris*.

The matter looks different if man's contingent experience of reality is accepted as the *real ground* of and *sufficient reason* for the methodological constitution of his truth-perspectives. It is then that the critical relationship obtaining between truth-perspectives would be recognized as man's epistemological limit in the continuing argument about truth. It is then that the moral ought implied by this relationship would be realized: the moral imperative of self-restraint, moderation, tolerance, open-mindedness, respect and goodwill as a prerequisite of meaningful dialogue between man and the other. On the grounds of the contingent experience of reality, which basic experience man and the other have in common, the moral ought is realized not by some or other theory, but *in practice*.

From this it follows that the experience of *natural* conflict, to which the critical relationship between human truth-perspectives points and which is shared by man and his fellow-man alike, thus referring them to each other in their common quest for truth, must not be turned into an *unnatural* confrontation. This would happen by an egocentric act of total self-transcendence: the abasolutization of one's particular truth-perspective. By the acceptance of the critical relationship holding between human truth-perspectives as the epistemological limit as well as the permanent truth-crisis as man's and his fellow-man's basic existential experience by which they are referred to one another in their search for truth, philosophy opens the door to *faith*; man's faith in his fellow-man and, as a result, in something that cannot be conceptualized or methodologically constituted.

Accordingly, philosophy as a critical and self-critical discipline is itself subject to the *moral ought*, in this sense to practice. By a voluntary act of self-restraint, it ought to confine itself to the field of human truth-perspectives and becoming. Since man's fellow-man has been shown as the real transcendent, who calls man's truth in question, philosophy would leave the field of the Absolute to theology, which is qualified to

speak about it, not in terms of knowledge, but in terms of faith. As another form of human truth, however — truth methodologically constituted from Revelation for the purpose of gaining the greatest possible rational insight into God's nature, his relationship to man and world, and the nature of religious faith — theology, too, constitutes a continuous argument on these matters. In other words, the process of the rationalization of faith under changing historical conditions yields historical *theologoumena* (theological truth-perspectives) which, as theories, enter into a critical relationship with one another as well. Thus, the continuous philosophical argument on knowledge and truth has its counterpart in the theological argument on faith. This argument yields the different concepts of faith and different forms of confession (denominations) within the scope of the Christian religion. Since these denominations emerge as a result of changing historical conditions, a distinction must be made between the textual and contextual dimensions of religious and theological truth-perspectives. At the same time, it should be realized that they refer to each other in an intertextual manner.



c) The Epistemological Limit in Theological Argument and the Inter-relationship of Philosophy and Theology

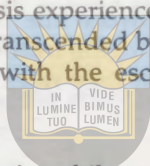
Joseph A. Hare  
Together in Excellence

On the grounds of their basic conflict experience resulting from the theological argument on faith, theologians should concede that their various historical *theologoumena* have in common with philosophical truths a critical, polemical and controversial character. By their broken, perspectival character, they reveal man's inability to exhaust revealed truth by rational insight. Like philosophical theories, they are part of the *multiversum* of human *logoi*. They, too, are the result of methodological constitution. It becomes thus clear that, in the final resort, the Logos remains inaccessible to human understanding. Absolute truth, therefore, remains concealed from man and shrouded in mystery.

The critical relationship holding between *theologoumena* makes it clear that these methodologically constituted truth-perspectives are subject to both the *epistemological limit* and the *moral ought* that govern the relationship between philosophical truth-perspectives. This obliges theologians to observe towards each other the same self-restraint,

moderation, tolerance, open-mindedness, respect and goodwill as in the case of philosophers, scientists, historians, politicians and artists — indeed, as these virtues ought to be observed by all men towards each other. It should be borne in mind that theology, too, is the outcome of man's contingent experience of reality and of man's particular needs emerging from it: his religious need, which impels him to seek means and ways of communication with God.

It emerges that, in view of the truth-crisis situation experienced by both philosophical and theological truth-perspectives, the field of the theologian is, ultimately, not that of theoretical faith but that of *practical faith*, which corresponds to the philosopher's field of the *practical ought*. In the field of practical faith — the kind of faith which is contingent and emerges from the very crisis experience — all theoretical truth, theological truth included, is transcended by an *opus externum*. There, the theologian is confronted with the eschatological, which is beyond human comprehension.



It was the German-Swiss philosopher Eberhard Grisebach who warned against the danger of absolutization of anyone's *theologoumenon*, be it that of Emil Brunner's *theologia naturalis*, Rudolf Bultmann's *theologia verbalis*, Karl Barth's *analogia spiritus* theology or Erich Przywara's *analogia entis* theology. He did so on the grounds that, however the relationship between God and man, God and the world is methodologically constituted as one *theologoumenon* against another, this relationship is understood and so becomes an immanent concept — a controversial human truth. In the essay "Zwei Vorkämpfer kirchlicher Theologie" in his book *Freiheit und Zucht*, Grisebach contrasts Karl Barth's *analogia spiritus* concept with Erich Przywara's *analogia entis* concept. He comes to the conclusion that, in spite of the different principles or *theologoumena* and in spite of all paradox as regards the relationship between man and God, they have in common that they structuralize this relationship, which so becomes an immanent truth of which man disposes. It stands to reason that this holds true for all *theologoumena*, which are constituted under changing historical conditions. They are linked to one another by the critical relationship holding between them, which results in a continuous theological argument on the God-man and God-world relationship, thus on faith. The impact of changing historical conditions on theological thought in modern times

is evident from Rudolf Bultmann's concept of demythologization. It is this concept as well as the dialectical theologies of thinkers such as Barth, Moltmann and others that can be seen as the intellectual fountain of the theology of liberation with its emphasis on the socio-political dimension of the Christian faith.

In order to prevent the one-sided self-transcendence or absolutization of one particular *theologoumenon*, which by such absolute self-transcendence claims to know the absolute truth, thus disposing of God, the textual meaning of the contextual theological truth-perspectives should be borne in mind. Most important, however, is the recognition and acceptance of the intertextual critical relationship that holds between theological truth-perspectives and that forms the epistemological limit of theological argument.

It has already been mentioned that, in view of the truth-crisis as a result of the critical relationship between philosophical and theological truth-perspectives, the field of the theologian is, ultimately, that of practical faith. This means that, ultimately, the theologian's task is to prepare man for real faith. The experience of the latter is contingent and the result of God's grace. It might or might not happen to man in times of adversity in an existential crisis or in the hour of his death: "Wann es in das Treffen geht", says Martin Luther.

In view of this state of affairs, philosophy and theology are separate from each other. Philosophy deals with the field of knowledge and truth in terms of human experience, including religious experience. Theology refers man to revealed truth in the scriptures and to the event of the Cross as an event of real faith. It is concerned with the practical significance of this event and prepares man for the possible experience of real faith in the midst of an existential crisis. This task in the face of the ultimate distinguishes theology from philosophy and the rest of human truths. In the practical field of real faith all denominational differences — the result of conflicting historical *theologoumena* — have been transcended and are united in the task of preparing men for the possible event of real faith. Thereby the Church emerges as the *Una Sancta*.

Although theology, by its practical task, has been set apart from philosophy, they are one in performing an act of moral self-restraint

and moderation on the grounds of the controversial character of their respective truth-perspectives experienced as conflict.

It has been shown that the moral act of self-restraint and self-restriction enables philosophy to guide man towards leading an authentic and moral existence by accepting the natural basic conflict experienced in common by him and his fellow-man. In doing so, it opens the door for theology to perform its practical task of preparing man for the possible experience of real faith as revealed by the event of the Cross. In the event of such experience, the historical dynamics of philosophical and theological argument would be transcended. Man would live in perfect peace and be one with perfectly integrated truth — which is beyond human understanding. As long as this is not the case, philosophy's practical task will consist in referring man to his epistemological limit as it emerges from philosophical and theological argument. In so doing, it will point out the way to authentic existence; one in accordance with man's contingent experience of reality — thus an existence in freedom.



#### d) Anthropological Aspects of the Philosophy-Theology Relationship

University of Fort Hare

*Together in Excellence*

From the previous discussion it emerges that, by the restriction of philosophy to the field of knowledge and of theology to the realm of faith, a separation has been effected between the two disciplines in the sense that they are no longer dialectically referred to one another. The voluntary act of self-restraint and self-restriction represents a moral act which implies the voluntary acceptance of the epistemological limit drawn to man by his fellow-man. In the case of philosophy, the act of confining itself to the sphere of actuality and becoming with regard to knowledge removes the danger of mixing faith with knowledge by an act of self-transcendence. In the case of theology the act of confining itself to the field of revealed truth as the ground of real or practical faith would prevent theological self-transcendence. By these acts of humility on the part of philosophy and theology respectively, each of these disciplines becomes free from and independent of the other.

There are however not two truths, one of philosophy and one of theology. On the contrary, the very separation of knowledge and faith by an act of self-restraint and self-restriction, thus of freedom, makes

the truth of knowledge and the truth of faith one. What man *ought* to do every day and at every hour in the field of becoming, namely, to heed and respect the epistemological limit as he experiences it by his fellow-man's critical response, the believer is commanded to do by Christ, who taught: Love thy neighbour as thyself. Just because man does not presume a knowledge of the Absolute, but seeks it in the realm of faith, he finds that, in faith, he is one with his fellow-man in love and humility. By the voluntary act of self-restraint and self-restriction, philosophy and theology have freed man from the danger of absolutizing his own self at the expense of his fellow-man. By freeing themselves from each other, philosophy and theology have set man free also. Both disciplines are now of an equally sober and practical nature and both have been demythologized. Philosophy is seen to be much more than a mere academic subject, an exercise in logical acrobatics. It no longer structures reality from a self-constituted real ground or Absolute, but takes its departure from man's contingent experience of reality, in the light of which all philosophical truth-perspectives are called in question. Analogous to that, theology will no longer constitute a dialectical relationship between man and God and convert *pistis* into *gnosis*, thus adulterating real faith. From now on, philosophy and theology are one only in their humility and modesty manifesting themselves in their mutual act of self-control and in the practical nature of their function: to refer man to his fellow-man.

It follows that neither in philosophy nor in theology the knowledge of absolute truth can be achieved by methodological self-transcendence. Such absolute self-transcendence results in an attitude of *hubris*, which alienates man from his contingent experience of reality and from his fellow-man, and thus prevents him from experiencing real faith. Neither in philosophy nor in theology can absolute truth be comprehended by methodological constitution. The theories resulting from this act are merely truth-perspectives, which remain controversial and in terms of which man is referred to his fellow-man in the permanent argument about truth. Only on the grounds of revelation can truth be absolute as a matter of faith.

It is of course evident that man's variegated cultural activity as manifested by the sciences, the humanities, the fine arts and technology is an existential necessity, which establishes order and meaning in

man's changing historical situations. It is through this activity, which is an essential part of the world, that man is referred to his fellow-man. In the face of the natural conflict experienced by himself and his fellow-man, there ought to be close co-operation in the spirit of mutual regard, tolerance, open-mindedness and goodwill. Philosophy, as the discipline of actuality, clearly stakes out man's limits and, by the voluntary act of self-restriction to the field of human experience and knowledge as delineated by these limits, refers him to the region of human action in the interest of a free human community. Through this voluntary act of self-restriction, it remains itself free from a self-constituted absolute and its alienating effects.

Theology, by a similar act of self-restriction to the realm of faith, co-operates with philosophy by referring man to the region of conflict. It does so on the basis of faith. It does so in the light of God's word and the event of the Cross. The life of the Christian believer is a trial, which he should bear willingly and obediently. It is a life of practical co-operation with his fellow-man, consisting in the common task of producing the various cultural components, which are vital and necessary for a fulfilled life. If he acquits himself well of this trial, the result of the conflict he experiences at this task together with his fellow-man, he may hope — on the grounds of faith — for the fulfilment of God's promise: the promise of salvation from suffering and conflict. It stands to reason that this promise, as it has been revealed by the event of the Cross, is the principal purpose of revealed truth. This purpose distinguishes the latter from philosophical truth and renders it final and absolute.

## THE HERMENEUTICS OF THE TRUTH OF NOT-KNOWING THE TRUTH

From the discussion of the hermeneutical principles of knowledge, i.e., the methodological character of knowledge, which, as theories, represents truth-perspectives, the man-made nature of all types of knowledge became manifest. All knowledge is rooted in human life experience, the human *Lebenswelt*, which is a basic contingent experience, rendering all knowledge problematic. If all theories have their origin in contingent experience, or issue from it, and are critically related to one another, man's authentic existence cannot be derived from one particular theory or truth-perspective. The historical theories have relative significance. They constitute attempts to cope, in a rational or methodological manner, with the conflicts and problems with which man wrestles in a specific field of human experience, in a specific epoch or situation. In reflecting man's concrete needs under particular historical conditions they are, as it were, man's mirror. The critical relationship into which they enter with other theories and which illuminates their contingent nature points to their relative character and to contingent experience as the realm of authentic human existence and freedom. The critical relationship among theories points to man's being referred to his fellow-man in theory (knowledge) and practice (morality). The fact that we cannot — through theory — know *the Truth* does, however, not mean that a rigorous relativism is propounded. It does not mean that *the Truth* or the Absolute does not exist. This is not denied. What is held is that absolute truth is beyond human comprehension. It is the truth of not knowing *the Truth* that is reflected in the critical relation holding between theories of knowledge or truth-perspectives.

That knowledge of *the Truth* is denied man, is a hard fact, which can be established by reasoning from observation. What I observe is that man presupposes *the Truth*, i.e., he believes in it. This is proved by the fact that he continues searching for it, thus has not found it. It is from this continuing quest that the various fields of cultural activity are constituted: the natural sciences, the humanities, the arts and religion.

What I further observe is that man knows only truth-perspectives, the theories he constitutes from his changing experience of life and which change along with the changing historical conditions. Absolute truth, which exists in itself and through itself, which is what it is and cannot be otherwise, is beyond man's ken. Human truths are perspectival. This includes mathematical and logical truths, which are method-bound and derive their validity from a specific framework of reference, from certain self-conceived norms and premises, without which they would be meaningless.

From observation I know that man presupposes absolute truth, which is proved by the fact that he searches for it in the sciences, the humanities, the arts and religion. Without belief in truth, such search would be meaningless. There is no intellectual enquiry which, in the final resort, is not based on belief. That the latter is man's natural disposition is shown by no less a thinker than David Hume. It is this human disposition that may be said to form the cornerstone in his principal work: *A Treatise of Human Nature*. The trichotomy of this work: "Of the Understanding", "Of the Passions" and "Of Morals", points to his purpose of establishing a relationship between knowledge and morality, theory and practice. In the introduction to his work, Hume writes: "There is no question of importance, whose decision is not comprised in the science of man." Since, according to Hume, neither the existence of the outside world, nor moral principles, nor God's existence can be demonstrated as true, and so be known — this being Locke's doctrine — the comprising bonds of his philosophy are belief and faith.

It is the desire for the knowledge of truth that makes man search for it and causes him to speak about it. But he has not found it. Had he found it, he would stop searching for it. He would then be like God, who alone is credited with knowing absolute truth. Man, on the other hand, can only believe in it. Unfortunately, only all too often, this belief is declared to be knowledge. It is then that all meaningful dialogue between man and the other stops, the natural conflict as the motor of such dialogue is converted into a mutually destructive confrontation and the dialogue becomes a dogmatic monologue. It is then that man plays God, and so, because he is only man, wreaks havoc. It is in the continuation of the open critical and self-critical argument on truth,

therefore, as it is generated by the critical relationship holding between truth-perspectives, that *the Logos* dawns. It is by this relationship that a *philosophia perennis* is indicated and that all relativity is overcome.

The truth that should have been clearly established from the preceding chapters is the fact that, by the truth-perspectives posited by him, man projects himself into the world on specific existential grounds and that he is impelled to do so by definite existential needs. It should have become clear that these various truth-perspectives represent the methodological constitution by man of his environment from his particular standpoint or the position he happens to occupy in the changing circumstances of life. Man's truth is therefore a historical act of self-projection, in the sense that this act occurs on the basis of becoming, namely, life's changing conditions, which renders such projections controversial and arouses in man the need to posit his truth afresh. It is thus obvious that man's truth is the result of becoming, has itself become as an act of self-projection on the part of man and engenders fresh becoming by challenging other men to posit their own truth-perspectives. We may also formulate it in this way: The particular situation in which man finds himself in the process of becoming causes him to project himself into the world in a particular way, which, in turn, creates a fresh situation, obliging others to cope with the new situation by projecting their truth into the world in their own peculiar way, from their own peculiar position or view-point. In other words, history is no teleological process. It moves not in terms of some evolutionary or dialectical law, but is the result of the positing and repositing of human truth under changing historical conditions. In this process, man's position is determined by the truths posited by his predecessors. By the positing of his own truth, he, in turn, helps to determine the position of his contemporaries and successors, in so far as he thereby creates for them fresh conflicts, which they seek to overcome, and new problems, which they attempt to solve. In doing so, they posit their own truth as against his. In this sense, man may be said to be determined by history, but determines history on his own part.

Although it is argued that all human truths are historical events, this is not holding a brief for historicism, as certain of our critics say we do. It escapes their notice that historicism is a specific truth-perspective that regards history as being propelled by a certain historical law to

wards a defined historical goal. Examples of historicism are Hegel, who conceives of the Absolute Spirit as the generator of World History, and Marx, who considers the proletariat's class-struggle history's driving force. In terms of our metaphilosophical approach, human truths are historical events, in the sense that they get posited by man's self-projection in response to other truths posited before them and, in their turn, provoke other responses. It is in this way, that the components of culture and civilization are being created and recreated, which means that they are in a process of permanent change and becoming as well — thus are historical.

It should have emerged that human truth-perspectives are referred to each other by the critical relationship they bear each other. That this relationship constitutes our epistemological limit emerges from the fact that it reflects the positing and repositing of human truths through challenge and response in accordance with life's changing conditions, as these are experienced by man. It follows that being challenged all the time, human truth is in a permanent state of crisis and becoming. The permanent crisis of human truth causes its postulation and repostulation to be a historical process with clearly circumscribed boundaries, which clearly indicate the limits of our knowledge. The fact of the permanent truth-crisis, caused by man's truth-perspective being called in question by that of the other, clearly points to the problematic state of our knowledge, which prevents us from knowing the Truth or the Absolute and brings to the fore the truth of man's not-knowing the Truth.

The controversial character of theories or truth-perspectives, no matter in what field of human constitutive activity, allows us to recognize a multiple or broken *Logos* only. Theories or truth-perspectives represent so many different *logoi*, the *Logos* remaining beyond man's ken. Yet there is a truth that is common to all human *logoi*: the critical relationship holding between them, for this relation reflects the truth of man's not-knowing the Truth. It is in this negative form that the *Logos* emerges. The mutual understanding of each other's truth-perspective points to a common *Logos* in the argument on truth between man and his fellow-man. Disagreement leading to meaningful argument presupposes such mutual understanding. There emerges thus in meaningful argument on truth a universal *Logos*, which ex-

plains the rationality of our various ways of thinking, as it emerges in the *logoi* of our various theories or truth-perspectives methodologically (rationally) constituted from our contingent experience of reality.

Thus, the critical relationship obtaining between truth-perspectives does not merely possess negative but also positive significance. Its negative significance lies in the separation of the various individual truths as distinct relative truth-perspectives. Since these truth-perspectives are at the same time human self-projections, the critical relationship they bear each other also causes man to be aware of his selfhood. For it is through the experience of the limitation of his truth by the other as the *really* transcendent that man becomes aware of himself as an individual and distinct from his fellow-man. As the *really* transcendent, the latter is man's permanent stumbling block. Unlike the world of physical things and the historical past, which are explored by the natural sciences and history respectively, he reacts to man's truth by pronouncing his *halt and no* against it. He defies his being subjected to man's control by methodological means and rational constitution. He calls man's truth in question by positing his truth against man's from his own situation. He remains to man the *foreign other*, who lives in a world of his own, constituted from his own peculiar position. All in all, man remains the sphinx that he has always been and will always be, a riddle unto the other and himself.

But the positive element of the critical relationship between the truth of man and his fellow-man is situated in the very crisis that is thereby created, which, as has been shown, renders man's and the other's knowledge problematic, so that knowledge of *the Truth* as Reality-in-itself becomes impossible. If such knowledge is impossible and both man and the other posit their own truth in the light of *the Truth*, which they believe in and so presuppose, it follows that, in this very light, their respective truth-perspectives are referred to one another. In the light of the absolute truth as the highest value, by which man and his fellow-man project their own perspectives into the world, the critical relation assumes a positive character, as a relation of meaningful reference; for the very idea of truth requires both truth-perspectives to be considered and heeded. In earnestly striving towards the truth, man and his fellow-man must, in its very spirit, accept each other's truths as being complementary. As a result of the broken

*Logos*, they will realize the truth of their not-knowing *the Truth* and thus be led to a *docta ignorantia*.

Once the truth of their not-knowing *the Truth* has been clearly established and is accepted as an indisputable verity, the rational nature of the critical relation obtaining between human *logoi* will become clear to both: man and the other. They will now be conscious of the fact that, in all their thinking (theory) and acting (practice), in all their civilizing and cultural activities, they are referred to one another, that no human action of whatever nature takes place in isolation. They will become aware of and heed the boundaries of their knowledge and their rational capacities. For this reason, they will restrict themselves to the field of controversy or the crisis in which they find each other *in common* and the experience of which *they share*. Man and his fellow-man will now clearly realize that it is on the very basis of the truth of not-knowing *the Truth* that, in continuing **controversy**, debate and argument, man and the other become the common creators of the various components of culture and civilization. It is the continued creation of these *goods* by man and his fellow-man on the grounds of their common experience of the truth-crisis, in which they are referred to one another, which is meant by the term *actuality*. For in these acts experience and reason, contingency and necessity, in brief, truth and reality are merged.

From the above, it follows that only if man and his fellow-man really accept the truth-crisis as the very foundation of their constitutive activity rather than vainly trying to overcome it by the constitution of some principle or another regarded as absolute, which amounts to nothing more than total self-transcendence, do they lead an existence in truth and reality, thus an existence in freedom. The actual experience of the limitation of their own truth by that of the other (the common crisis or conflict experience) refers them to a *real* emanent or transcendent, which, by its contradiction, keeps questioning their respective truth. This *real* emanent or transcendent is the other. The awareness of his contradiction causes them to become orientated towards each other, rather than focusing their attention on some self-constituted principle or concept regarded as absolute. Such total self-transcendence results in the confusion of utopia with reality, whereby they are led astray. It makes them derive real existence from some self-

constituted immanent truth, instead of being conscious of actually experiencing it together with the other in the truth-crisis.

Real existence cannot be rationally derived from a theoretically conceived principle regarded as absolute. It can only be experienced by a *real* emanent or transcendent. The only *real* emanent or transcendent that we encounter, however, is not a self-conceived immanent, thus transcendental, principle regarded as absolute. It is our fellow-man, who, as our permanent stumbling block, cannot be subjected to our theoretical control, unlike the physical world, which in being so subjected, does not answer back.

For this reason, we cannot know our fellow-man in the same theoretical way that we can know the physical world; for by positing his own truth as against ours, he limits our truth and puts it in question. In accepting this inevitable fact, thereby restricting ourselves to the field of actual experience in the mutual spirit of self-restraint, open-mindedness, tolerance, respect and goodwill, we may be said to lead a real existence: an ethical existence in freedom. And as in real existence the truth of our not-knowing the Truth dawns, namely, the not-knowing of the Absolute, it follows that real existence is simultaneously an existence *in truth*.

Wherever we look, the historical character of our truth as permanent becoming as a result of the permanent truth-crisis shows itself in everyday life, in the natural sciences, the social sciences, the humanities, the arts, in philosophy and theology. In the family, for example, we encounter it between husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters. The controversy that is going on must not be confused with a quarrel that might well erupt if one particular party insists on the exclusive validity of its own truth, thus preventing meaningful dialogue. What is meant by controversy is not a quarrel, though it may be an extreme form of it, but the turning against each other of man's and his fellow-man's truths. Any discussion, debate, dispute, exchange of ideas, even in the most friendly manner, is some form of controversy. It somehow rests upon the difference of views or opinions. If there were no such difference, controversy would be impossible. There is no way of one person, say a husband, completely possessing another, his wife, in the sense of completely merging his wife's

world, her ideas, opinions, feelings, experiences and outlook on life with his own.

Even if the other is forced to submit to outward pressure, he is still himself, in that his oppressor can never force him to see the world as he does. In fact, history has abundantly shown that, by the very experience of oppression, the oppressed will develop new perspectives and will look at the world and man from the position of the oppressed, even if he appears to conform to the oppressor's views outwardly. It is of course not denied that persons, such as husband and wife, can draw very near together in genuine mutual love, share certain interests and adopt each other's ideas up to a certain point, but never can they completely merge with one another. Nor would this be desirable, for the giving up of their individuality would stop the fountain of life, from which all human creative activity flows, namely *controversy*, in the sense of argument and exchange of ideas, based on different views, a different outlook on life and the world. When controversy degenerates into a quarrel, this is the result of the unrealistic attitude of two parties, each insisting that its truth only, its opinion, point of view, outlook, theory, etc., is the only right one, which leads to dogmatism, intolerance, self-righteousness and an unjustifiable disregard of each other. Such an attitude of *hubris* is in fact nothing less than a demand of one party for total submission on the part of the other, which, naturally, leads to bitterness, resentment and enmity: to rebellion on the part of the party that is sought to be bludgeoned into submission.

What holds true with regard to individuals and the family applies to other groups of interest as well, i.e., groups that, on the grounds of a common experience, find themselves in the same situation, such as political parties, which posit their truth in the form of political ideologies, or nations, which project themselves into the world by a common law code and form of government. There is therefore, as is the case with the family, such a thing as a collective self. By this concept is not meant some metaphysical body or organism as Rousseau conceived the state in his *Contrat Social*. Nor is meant by it a mysterious substance such as the people's soul as Herder would call it. What is meant by collective self is, as in the case of the individual self, the historical projection of some truth, in the case of the collective self a common truth adhered to by a group of people sharing certain exis-

tential needs and interests. Sometimes, but not always, the projection of a national truth or a national self is identical with the projection of a cultural truth or self, which finds expression in the acknowledgement of common values, in a national art and in a national language. Some of the great European nations, France, Germany, England and Spain, are examples of this kind.

When it comes to the cultural fields, as they are constituted by the sciences, the humanities, the arts and religion, it may be said that the controversial character of all human truths causes these fields to be historical in the sense that, on account of their respective theories being existentially grounded in man's contingent experience of reality, they are in a state of permanent becoming. As, however, on the other hand, all human truths are functional in the sense that they are methodological constitutions of our surroundings in accordance with certain questions asked and assumptions made, all human truths may be called scientific. For the methodological constitution and reconstitution of our surroundings in whatever field on the grounds of changing historical conditions represents the extent of knowledge. What conclusions must be drawn from this?

University of Fort Hare

*Together in Excellence*

- (i) The historical character of all our cultural achievements, whether scientific, historical, philosophical, artistic or theological, has been established.
- (ii) All theories in these various fields of human cultural activities are methodologically constituted truth-perspectives and, as such, projections of human selves into the world on the basis of varying, distinct existential situations.
- (iii) In these truth-perspectives, the Logos emerges in a multiple or broken form.
- (iv) It follows that none of the theories postulated in whatever cultural field represents the Truth or *Reality-in-itself*. The opposite is true. All human truths, in whatever cultural field, emerge from man's contingent experience of reality.
- (v) From this, the conclusion must be drawn that no type of human experience yielding a specific type of knowledge represents total

knowledge, thus representing *the Truth*. On the contrary, the absolutization of one particular type of knowledge causes the totalization of a specific world-perspective, a lopsided picture of the world, and yields an unbalanced man, who no longer sees himself in true perspective. The various isms: scientism, historicism, aestheticism and religionism are examples of such a totalitarian transcendental act.

The realization of the dire consequences of the totalization of one specific world experience is of great importance in our age, when man and society are, to a great extent, dominated by the cult of scientism and technological functionalism. In order to avoid these consequences, it is necessary that the natural sciences and technology be seen in proper perspective, so that they can play their originally intended rôle as man's servants. In view of the cult of scientism and technologism, they are about to become his master, and the truly democratic society based on free individuals and persons is increasingly turned into a technocratic society based no longer on free individuals but on the interaction of functional social rôles that are subject to the cybernetic function of the computer, where people are moved like pawns in a chess game. In the technocratic society, technology constitutes the highest value system, it so becomes an ideology in its own right.

If scientific truth is however in a permanent state of becoming and, like any other human truth, consists of continually changing controversial theories, which are the result of the methodological constitution of natural phenomena from experiment under changing circumstances, it follows that this type of knowledge and truth is, just like any other, in a state of permanent crisis. That this is so is borne out by the argument on atomic theory in contemporary physics and the theory of evolution in contemporary biology. This invalidates the claim advanced by certain people that only the natural sciences and their daughter technology make us get acquainted with reality and can truthfully constitute and describe it. This leads to the fallacious idea that only they yield knowledge and truth universally assented to. This may to a certain extent be the case in the functional application of their findings, but even there is controversy. It is, however, not the case at all when it comes to theory, as has been vividly shown in our discussion of knowledge and truth in connection with the theories of the great scientists.

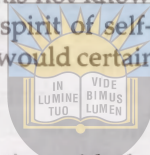
There is no consensus in atomic theory, nor in evolutionary theory, nor in astronomical theory. None of the theories developed in these areas is conclusive, all are controversial. Often, they create more problems than they can solve.

The fact that the natural sciences and technology have gained in importance must be ascribed to the fact that we have improved our methodological skill and thereby our functional control over nature. In the functional sense therefore our knowledge has increased. This does however not mean that our knowledge about the essence of nature has increased, nor does it mean that our scientific debate has stopped. It is one thing to describe the functioning of atomic particles in terms of man-made experiments and another to answer the question what such an atomic particle really is. If on the one hand, our functional knowledge may be said to have increased, the deeper penetration of the atomic structure as well as of space by experiment heightened our puzzlement, sense of mystery and wonder on the other. Instead of having diminished, therefore, the scientific debate has, on the contrary, been stepped up. No matter how far we extend our functional knowledge by ever fresh experiments, we shall always arrive at perspectival views. The argument will continue, fresh problems will turn up and new puzzles emerge. In the interest of his own survival, this is the lesson man will have to learn in his present existential dilemma, a lesson that is being glossed over by the cult of scientism and fetish of technologism.

While the achievements of the great scientists are greatly respected and their critical and self-critical insight is fully appreciated, the widely spread *cult of scientism*, which is apt to mislead man and has already caused much damage, is regarded with concern. Science cannot solve man's problems for good, be they of the epistemological or socio-political kind. It will not bring about the Golden Age for which man keeps yearning, because, as a man-made discipline, it will itself create fresh problems for man. At least since the two World Wars, the natural sciences and technology have revealed their Janus face and destructive potential, which today has developed into an acute danger to human existence as a whole. The cult of scientism causes man to forget his natural limitation and the truth of his not-knowing *the Truth* as a result of the multiple and broken *Logos*. It induces man to posit one

aspect of truth in an absolute form and transcend the bounds of reality, which, we observed, consists in actuality as the field of human experience and the interplay of theory and practice emerging from it.

The cult of scientism tempts man to entertain megalomaniac ideas. It breeds in him an insolent pride and false security, which the ancient Greeks called *hubris* and which their sages already recognized as the root of human trouble in the world. From our experience and observation and from a keen analysis of the history of philosophy as man's mirror reflecting a continuing argument on knowledge and truth born from man's contingent experience of reality as the basic experience from which all human truth-perspectives issue, it would appear that man's true greatness lies in accepting the situation as it *really* is. In other words, it lies in pursuing his scientific enquiries in the realization of the truth of his not-knowing *the* Truth, such realization causing him to act in the spirit of self-restraint and humility. If this were to happen, mankind would certainly be a great deal happier than it is today.



But not only in connection with the natural sciences and technology has man virtually ignored the fact of the multiple or broken *logos*, but in other cultural disciplines as well. Hence the many isms that are being bandied about. Take for instance the case of historicism. In the field of history, man believed that he had discovered the continuity of one homogeneous *Logos* throughout historical events, which, by necessity, would lead him to a final goal, where all his troubles, sufferings and anxiety would come to an end, where the highest reason would reign and the greatest happiness be experienced. Such a teleological perspective of history is commonly developed by the dialectical method. It does not matter whether the historical process is seen to move according to God's word or promise as Christian historicism would have it, or whether the *Logos* is conceived as Absolute Reason as in idealism, where it is of divine character, where it externalizes or explicates itself, thus lending the world a rational structure, and where, in the process of self-emancipation and returning to itself, it passes through various historical stages. Nor does it make any difference whether the historical process unravels itself in terms of the law of three stages, the dialectical movement of matter or whether, in the end, a transfiguration of the world or mankind takes place. In each

instance, man grasps rationally the principle by which the historical process is determined and, by its rational conception, merges with it. As such, it is an immanent, transcendental principle.

By the act of the rational comprehension of the historical process or, to put it differently, by being conscious of the law or principle governing the historical process, man is harmoniously blended into the stream of historical events. Past, present and future form one rational continuum, and man is carried along the road towards the Absolute, i.e., the stage of perfection where the *Logos* has returned to its pure self. As it is however man who has methodologically constituted the historical *Logos*, in whatever form, it follows that its movement to its absolute or final stage, in whatever way, is nothing but total self-transcendence or, which is the same, the positing as absolute of the human self. In other words, it is man who reads a teleological meaning into history. But as he can only do so from a certain assumption or self-conceived premise, these various attempts at constituting the historical process in a meaningful way are perspectival, and, again, the truth of our not-knowing the Truth as a result of the multiple or broken *Logos* becomes evident.

University of Fort Hare

*Together in Excellence*

The idea of the dialectical continuity of the *Logos* has another consequence. It establishes the metaphysical character of *time*. One of man's greatest aspirations has always been to achieve immortality in one way or another. The various perspectives of the historical process developed by man from different premises are, as it were, secularized versions of divine immortality. While in the Christian religion immortality is achieved through faith, it is reached in teleological historicism through the methodological (rational) constitution of the historical process, into which man is rationally blended, in so far as the methodological (rational) constitution of the historical process means at the same time its rational comprehension by man. In this way, the constituting historian, e.g., Hegel, Marx, Comte, Berdyaev, Toynbee, really disposes of history. He knows the meaning of history, because he has methodologically constituted the historical process and rationally conceived it. By the rational comprehension of the historical process, the contingent character of historical events has been overcome and the contingent historical process has been subordinated to a timeless universal principle. In cyclic conceptions of the historical process

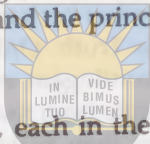
(as the one of Hegel, for example, where the unfolding of the Spirit in the world and return of the Spirit to itself goes on forever) time assumes the character of an *eternal now*.

Another result of the idea of the dialectical continuity of the *Logos* in the historical process is the idea of *progress*. If the historical process or historical reason moves continually towards a final stage where the *Logos* is entirely with itself again, it follows that mankind is becoming increasingly rational and human. Kant sought to demonstrate that mankind from the stage of primitive barbarism moves to a final stage of perfect reason and humanity. By the law of the three stages, Comte saw social development pass through the theological, metaphysical and positive stages. The latter — the highest stage — is the era of science, the social sciences forming the highest level of the sciences. The positive era of science is the final stage of history. As a law, history is scientific, while science is historical: the result of historical evolution. This accounts for progress.

In this way, man keeps his gaze fixed upon the stars, and each new generation feels superior to the preceding one. It feels that it is a step nearer to the goal, and, imbued with an abounding spirit of self-confidence and expectation, takes up the torch of culture and civilization where the preceding generation had left it, just like in a relay race. Each generation hopes it will be the one that carries history to its rational conclusion, and, in this way, bring about the Golden Age for mankind. Thus, to state one example, during the period of Enlightenment, Voltaire, in his historical work, *Essai sur les moeurs et l'esprit des nations*, conceived the evolution of world history as the struggle of man for progress and education. It is he who coined the phrase *Philosophie de l'histoire*. Reason is the aim of history. The *French Revolution* put it up as a deity and worshipped it. It hoped to establish a society governed by reason, only to be refuted by the contingent character of historical events themselves.

Thus the torch was taken up by the positivists, who, in the scientific era (their own era) saw the aim of historical progress. It has already been stated that, according to Comte, the highest science was sociology. The application of the scientific method to the study of society in the hope of establishing fixed social laws was an attempt to solve man's

existential problems and bring about happiness. Comte regarded mankind as the Great Being, which merited to be worshipped. In idealism, it was Hegel who regarded his own era as the return of the Spirit to itself in freedom. The world had been circumnavigated by the Spirit, and the idealistic or philosophical period had begun, where science (reality), history (truth), politics (the state as an ethical idea of the Spirit), the arts (the beautiful) and religion (the divine) had been fully realized by the philosophical concept. It was the age of a perfect Christian culture, whose bearer was the Prussian state. In Marx's historical materialism, Hegel's Absolute Spirit as the driving factor of World History was replaced by the industrial proletariat, the historical class. According to definite economic laws inherent in the process of production, it would, through labour, so change the world, that it thereby changed itself (its own consciousness) and his relationship with the other (society). By this change, nature, man and society, were now in harmony with one another and the principle of identity had been fulfilled.



Berdyaev and Toynbee, each in their own way and from a different premiss of course, expect the historical process to merge into a Christian transfiguration to be effected, in the case of Berdyaev, by a vital Russian religious spirit, which breaks through and leaves behind institutionalized Christianity. Berdyaev submits that the Messianic spirit of Russian religiosity has never died and has even been strengthened by communist oppression. His flirtation with Marxism, into whose ideology he probed from his concern about freedom, was of short-lived duration. Toynbee, who conceives the historical process in terms of challenge and response by which cultures emerge and vanish, sees the materialistic socialist stage, through which mankind is passing at present, as a preparatory stage of genuine Christian socialism.

The conclusion can thus be drawn that, just as is the case with the cult of scientism, the conception of a specific historical *Logos*, in whatever form, represents the projection into an absolute dimension of a specific perspective of history and that, for this reason, it harbours the danger of man's being deflected from the field of his actual contingent experience, of losing himself in a utopian dream-world and, what is worse, of grossly overestimating himself, of becoming dogmatic, intolerant and playing God. In fact, it may be stated with impunity that it is

by overestimating his rational capacity, by reading self-conceived "Absolutes" into his various constitutive activities, be they of the scientific, historical, artistic, philosophical or theological kind, that man has brought disaster upon himself. For if his self-constituted "Absolutes", his total self-transcendence in the various fields of his cultural activity, are *in reality* merely controversial perspectives considered Absolutes, it follows that their collision is total. In this case, co-operation on the level of natural conflict or the natural truth-crisis is no longer possible. The crisis becomes malign and ends in catastrophe. Is it not true that, throughout history, men fought and killed each other in the name of scientific theories: historical, political and philosophical concepts as well as religious dogmas and *theologoumena*? And is this lesson not being taught us right at this very moment? Do we learn from it? The conclusion that must be drawn from this is that a tolerable life is possible only if the natural crisis, or the natural conflict, obtaining between man and the other, is accepted, if both act from the awareness of the truth of their not-knowing *the Truth*. Only if they confine themselves to the field of their actual contingent experience of reality as their common experience and operate from there in their common quest for knowledge and truth, rather than making their escape into a self-constituted dream-world, do they lead an existence in reality and in truth.

University of Fort Hare  
Together in Excellence

The truth of the multiple or broken *Logos* can best be demonstrated through philosophy, because it asks the questions about knowledge and truth in general and not with regard to a circumscribed field, as is done by the individual sciences. In addition, the latter truth is a first order concept rather than a second order concept. The truth of the multiple or broken *Logos* has found expression in negative form by the phrase *scandal of philosophy*. This denotes the fact that there is no philosophical theory that is assented to by all philosophers. Whether that is equally the case in the natural sciences, which are often presented as a paragon in this regard for the purpose of discrediting philosophy, should have emerged clearly from our discussion on the controversial nature of any theory, in the natural sciences, in the humanities, in the arts and in theology. By the scandal of philosophy is meant the failure of philosophy to arrive at knowledge, the evidence of which is acknowledged by all philosophers. It has already been pointed out that obtaining such evidence is more likely in the natural sciences, especially with

regard to the functional application of their findings. But the same controversy as in philosophy is carried on there when it comes to the question of the validity of the various theories expounded in a particular field of the natural sciences. This is so because we have here to do with controversial truth-perspectives.

With reference to the scandal of philosophy, the question arises: How should consensus on the evidence of knowledge be possible, if it is the very function of philosophy to enquire into the nature, function and extent of our knowledge? Questions of that nature are not commonly asked in the natural sciences. Because of the restricted nature of their fields of enquiry, a far greater homogeneity is possible, although, in this particular field of human truth, no perfect homogeneity is achieved either. Philosophy, however, may be defined as the science of totality, in the sense that it investigates things in general and, in contradistinction to the sciences, takes nothing for granted. It is its very questioning stance that is its true essence. This makes its answers less important, for they are again called in question by it. Thus, in accordance with the insight of the truth of not-knowing the Truth, true philosophy is a question unto itself. Hence the definition of philosophy as an open critical science, the science of man's contingent experience of reality, in this sense: the science of actuality.

If this is the case, then the arrival at knowledge, the evidence of which is acknowledged by all philosophers, would mean to deprive philosophy of its very *raison d'être*. For the very concepts of knowledge and evidence are problematic to it. Karl Jaspers writes: "Was aus zwingenden Gründen von jedermann anerkannt wird, das ist damit eine wissenschaftliche Erkenntnis (a cognition of the natural sciences) geworden, ist nicht mehr Philosophie, sondern bezieht sich auf ein besonderes Gebiet des Erkennbaren."<sup>1</sup>) In fact, if philosophy were ever to arrive at knowledge the evidence of which would be admitted by everyone, man would be like God. He would simply know and thus cease to philosophize, in fact, cease to think. For in the state of total knowledge, the individual sciences would have become redundant as well.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Einführung in die Philosophie*, p. 9.

It is the truth of man's own truth being called in question by the truth of the other, which keeps him wondering and pondering, that gives philosophy its meaning and *raison d'être*. That is the reason why, *as long as there is man, so long will there be philosophy*. Never can it be replaced by any of the individual sciences, natural or human sciences. Although it links up with them, it starts where they stop. Its feeding sources are doubt, wonder and the experience of being in a permanent crisis of truth. Although Jaspers derives these feeding sources from grounds that differ from ours, we can accept the following statement made by him: "Der Ursprung des Philosophierens liegt im Verwundern, im Zweifel, im Bewusstsein von Verlorenheit. In jedem Falle beginnt es mit einer den Menschen ergreifenden Erschütterung, und immer sucht es aus der Betroffenheit heraus sein Ziel."<sup>1</sup>)

Whether we turn to epistemology, to metaphysics, to axiology or to logic, everywhere we encounter theories referred to each other in a critical relationship. They are truth-perspectives in answer to specific questions such as: What is knowledge? What are its source, nature and extent? (epistemology). In metaphysics, we marvel as to: What is reality? What is the relationship between appearance and reality, becoming and being? In axiology, the basic question is: What is the foundation of our value judgements in ethics and aesthetics? In logic, the meaning and validity of propositions is enquired into. To all these questions no conclusive answer has been given and the argument is continuing as circumstances change.

Another striking example of the multiple or broken *Logos* is provided by the various philosophical theories or truth-perspectives that emerge in the course of the *History of Philosophy*. These theories, which are linked to one another by the critical relationship holding between them, serve as man's mirror, reflecting the experience of his conflicts, his problems, needs, desires, aspirations, successes and failures. The whole gamut of human *existentialia* is revealed through them. They reflect the empirical and rational character of human truth as well as aspects in human existence of the contingent and the essential, the emotional and the reflective, the subjective and the objective, the individual and the communal. They reflect the spirit of the specific epoch

---

<sup>1</sup> *Einführung in die Philosophie*, p. 24.

in which they are postulated, its conflicts and problems, which they seek to overcome, at the same time pointing beyond it, thus contributing to change, both in theory and in practice. Examples are the theories of all great philosophers in ancient Greece, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the 19th and 20th centuries. Without Greek philosophy, the emergence of a feudalistic Christian society in the Middle Ages would not have been possible. Without the great scholastic thinkers in the Middle Ages, no Renaissance and no Reformation would have occurred and no Enlightenment would have ensued. Enlightenment philosophy was, in its turn, the indispensable spark for the French Revolution, while its emphasis on human reason and experience promoted the natural sciences, which promoted the development of industry and technology and culminated in the Industrial Revolution.

It was this development that gave rise to philosophical alternatives such as positivism, materialism and Christian existentialism. All three alternatives, however they might differ in approach, could be said to have emerged in reaction to the powerful school of idealism in the 19th century. The same holds true for the irrational philosophy of the will as against the philosophy of reason. It was the positivistic way of thinking that helped to bring about the Technological Revolution in the present age, while Marxist historical and dialectical materialism was the intellectual guiding force for the political October Revolution of the Bolsheviks in 1917. While thus positivism led to the functionalistic way of thinking in one part of the world, Marxism-Leninism led to an ideological way of thinking in another.

This brief sketch, indicating the interplay of theory and practice in terms of changing historical conditions, shows that individual philosophers argue from their basic contingent experience of reality. Theorizing under specific historical conditions, they contribute to their change, thus to practice. This clearly emerges from the disputes between eminent philosophers. To state a few examples, Aristotle questions Plato and is, in turn, questioned by Stoicists, neo-Platonists, Realists (in the Middle Ages) and others. Thomas Aquinas finds himself in a new situation by the new economic, socio-political and intellectual challenges, which usher in the second half of the Middle Ages. At the emergence of the Aristotelian doctrine promulgated by Arab

thinkers at that time, which threatened to split truth into two halves, he, in order to save the unity of truth, turns against the orthodox Augustinian approach, the fideism of which was the ruling spirit of the first half of the Middle Ages. Thomas Aquinas' rational concept of faith is, in turn, attacked by William Occam's and Duns Scotus' voluntaristic concept of faith. Both must be counted as early forerunners of the Reformation. Descartes, who lives in a more secularized world, turns against scholasticism and constitutes the world afresh from rational consciousness. He thereby opens the door for the criticism of Locke, Berkeley and Hume, who, by their new intellectual outlook, trying to explain the world from sense-experience and reason, represent the spirit of Enlightenment.

On the continent, Kant, who posits his transcendentalism against both rational dogmatism (Descartes, Leibniz, Wolff) and empiricism (Locke, Hume), seeking to combine the two, paves the way for idealism, but is challenged by the idealists, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel and others. In their turn, the latter, under the impact of scientific, industrial, economic and socio-political developments in the 19th century, are challenged by positivists, materialists, neo-Kantians and voluntarists. In the present age, under the influence of a scientificotechnological revolution and the emergence of totalitarian ideologies, the growth of philosophical alternatives having their roots in the 19th century, such as neo-positivism, various brands of Marxism, neo-Marxism and existentialism, took place, which alternatives as well as their individual representatives entered into heated controversy with one another.

In reaction to the functionalistic and ideologistic way of thinking that came to dominate the scene in West and East respectively, new approaches arose, grappling with the current problems that have emerged in contemporary functionalistic and ideologistic societies, approaches which attempt to analyse the new *Lebenswelt* and decipher the text of these societies. Examples are the post-structural school of thinking in France, represented by thinkers such as Foucault and Derrida or the hermeneutical school, an outstanding contemporary thinker of which is Hans-Georg Gadamer, who has developed his own way of thinking under the influence of Martin Heidegger and from his criticism of the father of the hermeneutical school,

Wilhelm Dilthey. Especially in French post-structuralism, we find a combination of elements from Marxism, Freudian psycho-analysis, analytical philosophy and existentialism, especially that of Nietzsche and Heidegger. Naturally, there is vehement controversy within these various schools of thought and, as should have clearly emerged from this brief sketch, between individual philosophers. The individual representatives of these alternatives might agree on certain essential points, but disagree on others. They differ most with regard to their respective fundamental premiss or starting-point.

These examples should suffice to show how each thinker starts from a problematic situation created by his predecessor or contemporary, who, by positing his truth from his own particular situation, seeks to overcome the conflicts and solve the problems of his own time, but, on account of the perspectival nature of his truth, creates new problems, thus creating a new situation, a new experience for his successor. It is of course true that some philosophers were vain enough to claim that their theory represented *the* Truth. This confusion of utopia with reality by the taking for an Absolute what is in reality a controversial transcendental concept of the mind has already been dealt with. The fact that not one philosophical view-point remained without criticism and, in this sense, without contradiction reveals a multiple or broken *Logos*. This clearly establishes the truth of man's not-knowing *the* Truth. To establish this truth as well as demonstrating its practical, existential meaning for man, who experiences a dire need for breaking free from the thralls of a totalitarian functionalism and ideologism, as is shown, among others, by the radicalism of his reaction to it: the acts of violence throughout the world, is the purpose of this chapter.

Once the truth of man's not-knowing *the* Truth has been established, man should no longer make the attempt to overcome finite time and his own perishability and historicity by the constitution of an eternal *Logos*, into which he is rationally merged by the dialectical method. Actually experienced time does not allow itself to be deceived in this way. Already Nietzsche has spoken of man's counter-will to time, which manifests itself in the attempt to grasp the Absolute and, doing so, merge with it. This, Nietzsche contends, will always bring about the *Geist der Rache* (spirit of revenge). By this is meant that actu-

ally experienced time, in the sense of perishability, is the stumbling block by which the will suffers, so that the suffering will desires its own passing away and of all that is worth perishing.<sup>1)</sup>

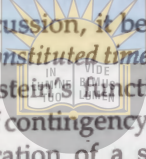
But in spite of his criticism of the attempt of metaphysics to overcome actually experienced time, rather than facing it and living up to it, thus refusing to accept man's perishability and historicity, Nietzsche, too, through his idea of the *eternal recurrence of the equal*, constitutes becoming as a rational concept, thereby creating another *eternal now* towards which superman should direct his will, in this way merging with it. In other words, with Nietzsche, too, as with the metaphysics preceding him, *real time* is derived from the continuity of some self-constituted *Logos* in the natural or historical process or continued functioning of a specific dialectical principle, according to which all natural and historical events are conceived to take place. If *real time* is however actually experienced time, it cannot be derived from some self-constituted "universal" *Logos* by which man hopes to overcome finiteness, historicity and perishability.

In other words, the experience of *real time* is marked by the actual experience of the historical process as man's continual self-projection under changing circumstances of life and from a particular situation, which causes his truth-perspectives to be contradictory and controversial and his knowledge problematic and questionable. *Real time*, therefore, is marked by man's contingent experience of change and perishability, both of natural phenomena and his own truth-perspectives. Through the experience of natural conflict, in which man finds himself with his fellow-man on account of the controversial nature of his and his fellow-man's truth-perspective, he experiences historical becoming directly, in so far as, by being put in question, his own truth is modified by that of the other, so that, by the act of questioning, the past is moved into the future. If, as has been shown, human truths are critically related to each other, the one being the critical response to the other, it stands to reason that, without the existence of a particular truth preceding it, no new truth would ever have been conceived in the particular way it has been formulated. Therefore,

---

<sup>1</sup> CF. Martin Heidegger's essay "Wer ist Nietzsche's Zarathustra?" in: *Vorträge und Aufsätze*.

without Plato no Aristotle, without Plato no Augustine, without Aristotle no Thomas Aquinas. Without the scholastic thinkers no Descartes, without Descartes no Locke, without Locke no Hume, without Locke and Hume no Kant, without Kant no Hegel, without Hegel no Marx, without Kant and Hegel no Schopenhauer, without Schopenhauer no Nietzsche, without Marx no Marxism-Leninism and no neo-Marxism. This critical relationship or response also applies to philosophical disciplines or schools of thought, e.g., without classical formal logic no modern propositional logic or without classical metaphysics no analytical philosophy such as logical atomism, logical positivism and linguistic analysis. One truth (and that holds good not only for philosophical truth, but for others as well) stands on the shoulders of its predecessor by the very act of questioning it.

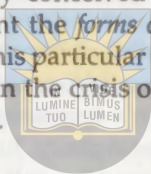


From the above discussion, it becomes evident that a distinction must be made between *constituted time* such as Kant's space and time as perceptual forms or Einstein's functional space-time, and *real time*, man's basic experience of contingency. Just as man constitutes a particular truth by the application of a self-conceived method, he constitutes time in accordance with this particular method. Hence, the various time perspectives: as a measure of motion (Aristotle), as absolute time (Newton), as states of consciousness (Locke), space and time as perceptual forms (Kant), as a stream of consciousness or duration opposed to space (Bergson), as space-time (Einstein), as historicity or periodicity (Heidegger). By constituted time is meant *functional time*, as it is known by us in accordance with the methodological constitution of our truths. In general, the constitution of time may be said to consist of the following division: *Causal time*, i.e., the various ways in which the causal relation between natural phenomena has been constituted; *psychological time*, i.e., the various ways in which our mental processes have been constituted; *historical time*, i.e., the rational constitution of historical continuity.

Since all these types of time or continuity depend upon the methodological constitution of a specific scientific, psychological or historical theory, it follows that time too, so far as it is rationally conceived and thus known by man, is perspectival and represents a cycle of the human self.

If our self-constituted time is however perspectival and thus controversial, it stands to reason that we do not know *real time*, but only experience it in the very crisis of our truth and our self as a result of the multiple or broken *Logos*, which is the very foundation of all becoming, time and continuity. It is on this *existential ground* experienced as conflict that man keeps constituting his world, and it is in this continual act of self-constitution that man's cultural effort consists. It is in this sense that truth and reality are merged in actuality.

If we recognized rationally conceived perspectives of time as so many cycles of the human self, we must say the same about space. It, too, consists of methodologically constituted perspectives that correspond to a specific theory, as it is posited by some thinker from a particular premiss. Rationally conceived perspectives of space and time may be said to represent the *forms of order* by which man constitutes the world and posits his particular truth-perspective as a result of his experience of *real time* in the crisis of his truth that ensues from the multiple or broken *Logos*.



What is now, to draw the final conclusion from our discussion on the methodology of knowledge, philosophy's task in the present situation? Its task must be derived from the critical relationship holding between theories of knowledge or truth-perspectives. It has been shown before that this relationship constitutes the *epistemological limit* as it outlines itself through the controversial nature of all human constitutive activity. If philosophy wishes to retain its scientific character, it, too, like all individual sciences, natural and human sciences, is obliged to heed the epistemological limit. This means it is obliged to restrict itself to the field of actual experience rather than overstepping the epistemological limit by self-conceived "Absolutes", in terms of which the "real" structure of the world and man's "essence" are explained. It is, on the contrary, the field of actual experience that should be the proper field of philosophical investigation and interpretation, if it really intends to be of concrete service to man. In this sense, philosophy must be the *Science of Actuality*. It must really mean something to man in the actual situation that he happens to find himself. By deciphering or reading the text of this situation for him, it must provide guidance and orientation for him rather than quibbling about mere academic niceties with hardly any bearing upon actual life.

Philosophy's function may be regarded as twofold, as *critical* and *constitutive*. As far as its critical function is concerned, it must, in the first place, clearly point out the perspectival, controversial and questionable character of the human *logoi*, including its own *Logos*, and therefore of all human knowledge. In reading scientific and philosophical texts that way, philosophy assumes a metaphilosophical position, which comprises all human truth, in the past, the present and the future. By exposing the problematic character of all human knowledge, it exposes the latter's functional character, the human attempt to comprehend and control the world in methodological form. It must make it clear that all these attempts really represent so many *Cycles of the Human Self*, in the sciences, the humanities, the arts and in theology. It is thus shown that man knows truth only in so far as he is able to constitute the particular experience of his environment in a rational form and methodological manner, from a particular point of view. It will be realized that reality is experienced through the controversial nature of these various world conceptions. By clearly outlining the epistemological limit in each field of human knowledge, philosophy guides man to his proper field of action (practice) as a field that he shares with his fellow-man, that gives him a new sense of direction and his life a new meaning, particularly in the situation that he finds himself at present, which is one of utter confusion. This brings us to philosophy's constitutive function.

It consists in the positive conception and interpretation of the epistemological limit. Philosophy must point out the positive significance of this limit, its theoretical and practical (existential) importance. It must emphasize that the fact of our not-knowing *the Truth* need not plunge us into feelings of anxiety, frustration and despair, that this fact is the very motor of our continued thinking and acting. It must make it clear that our common experience of the crisis-situation is the very field of a *real* encounter and *real* communication with our fellow-man, that, by this experience, man's continued *existence in freedom* is ensured, by which experience this existence assumes a new meaning as an existence for the other or the *thou*. In other words, philosophy must clearly show the ethical character of the crisis-situation, the *moral ought* that emerges from its experience. It must make man realize that it is from this experience that the moral act issues. Philosophy must further show, that, by the acceptance of the epistemological limit and the ob-

servation of the moral command implied by it, man and the other will be able to perform their common creative task of building their world of culture and civilization in closest co-operation and the spirit of mutual self-control, tolerance, open-mindedness, respect and goodwill. In brief, it is precisely the common experience of conflict, of common distress in the crisis that draw man and his fellow-man together in their common effort to deal with it and turn it to positive account. It is this experience that creates between them a genuine feeling of fellowship and establishes a real community. It is on such a community of individuals, who feel drawn together by the common experience of natural conflict on account of the critical relationship obtaining between their truth-perspectives and indicating the epistemological limit, that a true democracy should be built.

By the act of restricting itself to the field of actual experience in its investigations and interpretations, philosophy itself heeds the epistemological limit. But it is precisely by this act that philosophy is placed in the position of making certain general statements concerning man's continued self-projection into the world in the face of particular circumstances of life or, to put it otherwise, man's continued creative efforts in the fields of culture and civilization, efforts that are vital for human existence. It becomes thus clear that the continued positing and repositing of human truth is a necessary prerequisite for man's self-preservation in a continually changing world. But it becomes also evident that the suffering and passion, which all men experience in common in the course of their continual existential struggle, are the presupposition for the real bond of love by which they are tied together in an actual life situation.

It is thus one of philosophy's chief tasks to make a minute study and close analysis of the actual situation in which man happens to be and of the way this situation manifests itself in the very cultural fields in which man realizes himself. Bearing in mind the epistemological limit of all human truth, philosophy must make a close investigation of the questions asked, the premises assumed and methods applied in the sciences and the humanites, and must test their validity in terms of this limit. It must show from what particular situation (which in man arouses specific existential needs) the various scientific or humanistic premises are developed and how they are-referred to each other. Such

critical analysis would destroy any claim, on anyone's part, to offer his theory, system, view, etc. as absolute. In this manner, philosophy will prevent any attempt at total self-transcendence. It will strive to make all men conscious of their being referred to one another in all acts of self-projection through their common experience of the truth-crisis as a result of this act. It will make them realize that it is by the observation of the epistemological limit and the *moral ought* implied by this experience that all men are bound together in a real community, in which they are *really* free of any force and coercion, by which they would be oppressed if one truth or another were imposed upon them as absolute.

The current experience of terror and the apocalyptic fear that accompany the current cult of scientism and fetish of technologism, prevailing at present as a result of an overemphasis of one particular truth-dimension, namely, scientific truth, would melt away if philosophy were to succeed in showing scientific truth in proper perspective.

Man's and society's balance would be restored, if the natural sciences and technology could be seen as dealing with one specific field of human experience and type of knowledge theoretically constituted from it; if their truth-perspectives could be seen as one particular aspect of the world, which is as controversial as any other human truth and, therefore, in a constant process of change and becoming.

If philosophy succeeded in accomplishing this, it would greatly assist man in gaining a new coherent and meaningful picture of the world. It would supersede the present state of affairs, when, as a result of a total functionalistic way of thinking, the world has been taken to pieces and has become pulverized and atomized to such an extent that we can say, together with Johann Wolfgang von Goethe:

Dann hat sie (science) die Theile in ihrer Hand, fehlt leider nur das geistige Band.

Philosophy would help man restore his inner balance, if it exposed the true nature of the natural sciences as only one way of human self-realization in one specific field, namely, the functionalistic attempt to bring the material world under human control as far as possible. It would assist in freeing man from his functionalistic shackles if it re-

minded him of the fact that his experience of reality is multi-dimensional and that there are other types of self-realization in the humanities, the arts and religion, which differ in quality, but which, together, form the whole man. Being fully conscious of the truth of his not-knowing *the Truth*, the whole man would marvel at the world as a whole, at its inexhaustible multi-dimensionality, the mystery of which fills him with awe and a deep feeling of religiosity. As Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor points out in the *Brothers Karamazov*, the experience of the mysterious is one of man's essential experiences, which is of great existential importance to him. It enables him to gratify a vital need, the need to worship, worship not a man-made idol, in whatever form, but the unknown as an experience of the mysterious, thus the ineffable. In this sense, Wittgenstein's statement: "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must keep silent"<sup>1</sup>) becomes meaningful.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

University of Fort Hare

*Together in Excellence*  
I should like to take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation to the Fort Hare Publications Committee for publishing my book in their new Monograph Series.

Because writers of philosophical books in South Africa have difficulty in finding a publisher due to the limited market in this country for works of this nature, I am indebted to the University of Fort Hare for defraying the cost of this publication.

G.A. Rauche

---

<sup>1</sup> *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 7.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ADORNO, Th. W. and HORKHEIMER, M.: *Dialektik der Aufklärung*, Philosophische Fragmente, Amsterdam, 1947.
- ADORNO, Th. W.: *Negative Dialektik*, Frankfurt/M., 1966.
- ADORNO, Th. W.: *Minima moralia. Reflexionen aus dem beschädigten Leben*, Frankfurt/M., 1969.
- ARISTOTLE: *Nichomachean Ethics*, ed. by J. Burnet, text and commentary, London, 1904.
- AUGUSTINE: *The City of God*, (Everyman) Dent, London and Dutton, New York, 1957.
- AYER, A.: *Language, Truth and Logic*, Gollancz, London, 1946.
- BARTSCH, H.W.: *Kerygma und Mythos*, 5 vols., Evangelischer Verlag, Hamburg, 1952.
- BERTELS, C.P. and PETERSMA, E.: *Filosofen van de 20e eeuw*, van Gorcum, Assen/Amsterdam Intermediair, Amsterdam/Brussel, 1972.
- BLOCH, E.: *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, 3 vols., Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/M., 1967.
- BORN, M.: *Von der Verantwortung des Naturwissenschaftlers*, Nymphenburger Verlagsbuchhandlung, Munich, 1965.
- BOTHA, A.D.: "The Position of a Major speech in the *Ab Urbe Condita*", in: *The Journal of the*



University of Fort Hare  
Together in Faith

University of Durban-Westville, New Series 2, Durban, 1985.

- BREYSIG, K.: *Die Meister der entwickelnden Geschichtsforschung*, de Gruyter, Berlin, 1936.
- BRUNO, G.: *Opere italiane*, Göttingen, 1888-1889.
- CARNAP, R.: *Der logische Aufbau der Welt*, Weltkreisverlag, Berlin, 1928.
- CHOMSKY, N.: *Cartesian Linguistics*, Harper and Row, New York/London, 1966.
- COMTE, A.: *Cours de Philosophie Positive*, 6 vols., Garnier, Paris, 1830-1842.
- CONE, J.H.: *Black Theology and Black Power*, Seabury Press, New York, 1969.
- COPLESTON, F.: *A History of Philosophy*, Image Books Edition, 1964.
- CORNFORD, F.M.: *Plato and Parmenides*, Fragments of Parmenides and Plato's dialogue "Parmenides", translation with running commentary, Cambridge, 1939.
- CORNFORD, F.M.: *Plato's Cosmology, "Timaeus"*, translation with running commentary, Cambridge, 1937.
- CROSBY, E.A.: *Les Meilleurs pages de Rousseau*, University of London Press, London, 1933.
- DAHRENDORF, R.: *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society*, London, 1957.



University of Fort Hare

Together in Excellence

- DERRIDA, J.: *Die Schrift und die Differenz*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/M., 1972.
- DE VLEESCHAUWER, H.J.: *Geskiedenis van die Wysbegeerte in die Weste*, 4 vols., Nasou Beperk, Cape Town/Bloemfontein/Johannesburg/Port Elizabeth/Pietermaritzburg, 1964. So far vols. 1 (1964) and 3 (1967) have been published.
- DIDEROT, D.: *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, 28 vols., 1752-72, supplement and index, extending to 1780. Introduction by Jean le Rond D'Alembert.
- EINSTEIN, A.: *Mein Weltbild*, Ullstein West-Berlin, 1959.
- ENGELS, F.: *Herrn Eugen Dühring's Umwälzung der Wissenschaft (Anti-Dühring)*, Dietz, Berlin, 1960.
- EUCLID: *In primum Euclidis elementorum lib. comm.*, ed. by Friedlein, Leipzig, 1873.
- FINK, E.: *Sein, Wahrheit, Welt — Vor-Fragen zum Problem des Phänomen-Begriffs*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1958.
- FINK, E.: *Alles und Nichts — Ein Umweg zur Philosophie*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1959.
- FOUCAULT, M.: *Les mots et les choses: une archéologie des sciences humaines*, Gallimard, Paris, 1966.
- FREUD, S.: *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. by Marie Bonaparte, Princess George of Greece,

Anna Freud, E. Bibring, W. Hoffer, E. Kris, O. Isakower, Imago Publishing Co., Ltd., London, 1950.

GADAMER, H.G.: *Wahrheit und Methode, Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik*, Siebeck, Tübingen, 1960.

GARDINER, J.J. and ROBERTS, J.D.: *Quest for a Black Theology*, Pilgrim Press, Philadelphia, 1971.

GELLNER, E.: *Words and Things*. Introduction by B. Russell, Pelican Books, 1968.

GEYER, D.: *Wissenschaft in kommunistischen Ländern*, Rainer Wunderlich, Tübingen, 1966.



GOLDENBERG, B.: *Karl Marx, Ausgewählte Schriften*, Kinder, Munich, 1962.

University of Fort Hare  
Together in Excellence

GRISEBACH, E.: *Kulturphilosophische Arbeit der Gegenwart*, Weida, i. Th., 1913.

GRISEBACH, E.: *Freiheit und Zucht*, Rascher, Zürich/Leipzig, 1936.

HABERMAS, J.: *Student und Politik*, Luchterhand, Neuwied, 1961.

HABERMAS, J.: *Theorie und Praxis*, Luchterhand, Neuwied, 1963.

HABERMAS, J.: *Technik und Wissenschaft als 'Ideologie'*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/M., 1968.

HARE, R.M.: *The Language of Morals*, Oxford University Press, Oxford/New York, 1952.

- HARNACK, A.: *Das Wesen des Christentums*, J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, Leipzig, 1908.
- HEER, F.: *Hegel*, Fischer, Frankfurt/M., 1955.
- HEGEL, G.W.F.: *Werke*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/M, 1970.
- HEIDEGGER, M.: *Sein und Zeit*, Niemeyer, Tübingen, 1927.
- HEIDEGGER, M.: *Über den Humanismus*, Klostermann, Frankfurt/M., 1947.
- HEIDEGGER, M.: *Erläuterungen zu Hölderlins Dichtungen*, Klostermann, Frankfurt/M., 1951.
- HEIDEGGER, M.: *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, Pfullingen, 1959.
- HEISENBERG, W.: *Das Naturbild der heutigen Physik*, Rowohlt, Hamburg, 1955.
- HEISENBERG, W. et al: *On Modern Physics*, Orion Press, London, 1961.
- HOLLE, H.G.: *Allgemeine Biologie als Grundlage für Weltanschauung, Lebensführung und Politik*, 1925.
- HOLTHUSEN, H.E.: *Der unbehauste Mensch; Motive und Probleme der modernen Literatur*, Piper, München, 1951.
- HOYLE, F.: *The Nature of the Universe*, Penguin, 1963.
- HULL, R.F.C.: *A Philosophical Primer*, London, 1950.



University of Fort Hare  
Together in Excellence

HUME, D.: *A Treatise of Human Nature*. Introduction by A.D. Lindsay, Dent and Sons, London/New York, 1911.

JASPERS, K.: *Von der Wahrheit*, Piper, Munich, 1948.

JASPERS, K.: *Einführung in die Philosophie*, Piper, Munich, 1953.

JASPERS, K.: *Philosophie*, 3 vols., Springer, Berlin/Göttingen/Heidelberg, 1956.

KANT, I.: *Werke*, Textausgabe, Walter Gruyter, Berlin, 1968.

KANT, I.: *Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen*, Xenien-Bücher 4, Leipzig, n.d.

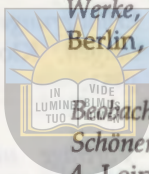
KIERKEGAARD, S.: *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, Princeton, 1941.

KRÜGER, G.: *Grundfragen der Philosophie — Geschichte, Wahrheit, Wissenschaft*, Klostermann, Frankfurt/M., 1958.

LANGE, E. and ALEXANDER, D.: *Philosophenlexikon*, Dietz, Berlin, 1982.

LEHRSTUHL "PHILOSOPHISCHE FRAGEN DER NATURWISSENSCHAFT" HUMBOLDT-UNIVERSITÄT, BERLIN: *Philosophische Probleme der modernen Naturwissenschaft.*, Akademie Verlag, Berlin, 1962.

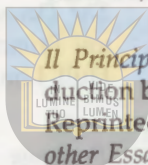
LEIBNIZ, G.W.: *Fragmente zur Logik*, selected and translated by F. Schmidt, Berlin, 1960.




University of Fort Hare

Together in Excellence

- LENIN, V.I.: *Materialismus und Empiriokritizismus*, Dietz, Berlin, 1964.
- LEVI-STRAUSS, C.: *Das wilde Denken*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/M., 1968.
- LEWIS, H.D.: *Clarity is not enough*, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1963.
- LOCKE, J.: *The Works of John Locke*, Ward, Lock and Co., London, n.d.
- LOCKE, J.: *Works*, 3rd edition, 3 vols., Churchill, London, 1727.
- MACHIAVELLI, N.: *Il Principe*, ed. by L.A. Burd. Introduction by Lord Acton, Oxford, 1891. Reprinted in *History of Freedom and other Essays*, London, 1907.
- MARCUSE, H.: *Der Eindimensionale Mensch*, Luchterhand, Neuwied, 1967. In English: *One-Dimensional Man*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1968.
- MARCUSE, H.: *Negations*, Allan Lane, The Penguin Press, London, 1968.
- MARCUSE, H.: *Eros and Civilization*, Sphere Books, London, 1969.
- MARCUSE, H.: *An Essay on Liberation*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1969.
- MARX, K. and ENGELS, F.: *MEW*, Dietz, Berlin, 1956-1974.
- MARX, K. and ENGELS, F.: *MEGA*, Frankfurt/M./Berlin/Moscow, 1927-1935.



University of Fort Hare  
Together in Excellence

- MESSER, A.: *Geschichte der Philosophie*, 4 vols., Quelle und Meyer, Leipzig, 1920.
- MESSER, A.: *Friedrich Nietzsche, Werke in zwei Bänden*, Kröner, Leipzig, 1930.
- METZ, R.: *A Hundred Years of British Philosophy*, Allen and Unwin, London, 1938.
- MEYNELL, H.: "Feyerabend's Method", in: *Philosophical Quarterly*, 1978.
- MISCH, G.:  *The Dawn of Philosophy, A Philosophical Primer*, ed. in English by R.F.C. Hull, London, 1950.
- MOORE, G.E.: *Principia Ethica*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge/New York, 1954.
- NEWMAN, J.R.: *The World of Mathematics*, 4 vols., George Allen and Unwin, London, 1956.
- NIETZSCHE, F.: *Friedrich Nietzsche's Werke*, Kröner, Leipzig, n.d.
- ORTEGA Y GASSET, J.: *Vom Menschen als utopischem Wesen*, Gustav Klipper, Stuttgart, 1951.
- PARSONS, T., AND BALES, R.F.: *Family, Socialisation and Interaction Process*, The Free Press, New York, 1955.
- PLANO, J., AND GREENBERG, M.: *The American Political Dictionary*, Holt, New York, 1966.

- PLATO: *Republic*, translated by F.M. Cornford, with introduction and notes, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1941.
- PALTZEK, E.W.: *Forschung der letzten 15 Jahre zum Lesen und zur Deutung der Lehren R. Lulls*, Antonianum, Rome, 1980.
- POPPER, K.: *The Open Society and its Enemies* Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1945.
- POPPER, K.: *The Poverty of Historicism*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1961.
- PROUDHON, P.-J.: *Systeme des Contradictions Économiques ou La Philosophie de la Misère*, ed. by T. Ramm, Stuttgart, 1963.
- RABINOW, P.: *The Foucault Reader — An Introduction to Foucault's thought with major new unpublished material*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1984.
- RAUCHE, G.A.: "The Metaphysics of Labour in Marxist World Theories" in: *The Proceedings of the Seventh Congress of the Philosophical Society of Southern Africa*, University of Zululand, 1980.
- RAUCHE, G.A.: *Theory and Practice in Philosophical Argument*, Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of Durban-Westville, Durban, 1986.
- RAWLS, J.: *A Theory of Justice*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1972.



University of Fort Hare  
Together in Excellence

- REICHENBACH, H.: *The Theory of Probability*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1949.
- REICHENBACH, H.: *The Rise of Scientific Philosophy*, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, 1958.
- REINISCH, L.: *Der Sinn der Geschichte*, Beck, München, 1961.
- RITTER, J. and GRÜNDER, K.: *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, 6 vols. Schwabe and Co., Basel/Stuttgart, 1971-1984.
- ROHRMOSER, G.: *Das Elend der Kritischen Theorie*, Rombach, Freiburg, 1970.
- RUSSELL, B. and WHITEHEAD, A. N.: *Principia Mathematica*, 3 vols., Cambridge, 1910 - 1913.
- RUSSELL, B.: *An Inquiry Into Meaning and Truth*, London, 1940, Dover, New York, 1954.
- SANER, H.: *Kant's Political Thought*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1973.
- SARTRE, J.-P.: *Being and Nothingness*, Methuen, London, 1969.
- SHAFTESBURY, THIRD EARL OF.: *Characteristics of Men. Manners, Opinions, Times*, ed. by J. M. Robertson 2 vols., London, 1963.
- SHELLING, F W.: *Gesamtausgabe*, ed. by Fritz Schelling, Cotta, 1850 ff.
- SCHLECHTA, K.: *Friedrich Nietzsche: Werke in drei Bänden*, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt, 1958.



University of Fort Hare  
Together in Excellence

- SCHOPENHAUER, A.: *Sämtliche Werke*, 5 vols., Insel-Verlag, Leipzig, 1859.
- SCHRÖDINGER, E.: *Nature and the Greeks*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1954.
- SCHULZ, W.: *Wittgenstein — Die Negation der Philosophie*, Neske, Pfullingen, 1967.
- SEDLMAYR, H.: *Verlust der Mitte*, Ullstein, West-Berlin, 1958.
- STEVENSON, C.L.: *Ethics and Language*, Yale University Press, New Haven Conn., 1944.
- THE KAIROS THEOLOGIANS: *Challenge to the Church — A Theological Comment on the Political Crisis in South Africa — The Kairos Document*, Kairos Theologians, P.O. Box 32047, Braamfontein, Johannesburg, 1985.
- TOMLIN, E.W.F.: *The Western Philosophers — An Introduction*, Radius Books, Hutchinson, London, 1950.
- VICO, G.B.: *Tutte le opere di Giambattista Vico*, Milano, 1957.
- VOLTAIRE, F.M.A. de: *Oeuvres complètes*, Paris, 1843.
- WINDELBAND, W.: *A History of Philosophy*, 2 vols., Harper Torch Books, New York, 1958.
- WITTGENSTEIN, L.: *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1922.
- WITTGENSTEIN, L.: *Philosophical Investigations*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1958.

ZAHN, L.:

*Die letzte Epoche der Philosophie —  
Texte von Hegel bis Habermas, Klett,  
Stuttgart, 1974.*



University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

The author holds the degrees of Doctor of Philosophy (University of South Africa) and Doctor of Literature (University of Cape Town). From 1960-1969 he taught Philosophy at the University of Fort Hare (since 1962 as a Professor). From 1969-1986 he was Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy and Political Science at the University of Durban-Westville. After his retirement from the latter University as Professor Emeritus, he returned to Fort Hare where he is currently holding the Chair of Philosophy.