

# **THE ESSENCE OF PHILOSOPHY**

**INTRODUCTION INTO PHILOSOPHY**

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## THE RIGHT TIME

*To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:*

*A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;*

*A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;*

Ecclesiastes 3:1-3

The 20<sup>th</sup> century was a rather tumultuous period; Zbigniew Brzezinski called it “*the century of megadeath*” in his seminal work ‘*Out of Control*’, when the politics of organized insanity took over, focusing on demagoguery in order to control the politically awakened masses. It produced two great political myths, namely the Leninist variant of Marxism and Nazism. Both aimed at the total control of society, including the human spirit.

Thanks to the nature of the human spirit, which is per definition free, against the background of organized insanity and destruction, countless intellectual and cultural jewels were created. The Hungarian-Transylvanian philosopher *György Bartók de Málnás* belonged to that select group of people, who were following their own course, their own destiny and were not deterred by the siren calls of the day. Bartók was a pure philosopher, university professor, publisher of a philosophical journal, who never yielded an inch to gain cheap popularity. As a university professor during the 1930s and 1940s he looked down at the Nazi movements, which gained popularity in that period. And after the end of World War II, when the occupying Soviet troops installed a communist system in Eastern and Central Europe, including Hungary, he endured with stoic calm his purge from the Hungarian academic life, including his exclusion from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

His œuvre, however, though officially purged by Communist zealots, survived in the hearts and minds of his students, who saved many copies of his work. And after the fall of Communism, thanks to the Internet, it is widely available, as the Mikes International Foundation released most of it in digital form. We are very pleased that we can commence publishing his core works in English, too. The real time for György Bartók de Málnás has finally come. His work is here now to serve us in a period when it is *time to build up*.

Flórián Farkas

Editor-in-chief, Mikes International

The Hague (Holland), March 15, 2013

## THE KOLOZSVÁR SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY

The Board of Mikes International Foundation in The Hague, the Netherlands, considers it the executing of its historic task and the fulfilling of its duty to start to publish in English some of the most important works of the *Kolozsvár School of Philosophy* (or *Klausenberger Schule* in German), also called the *Transylvanian School of Philosophy*. The founder of this school of philosophy was *Károly Böhm* (1846 - 1911), professor of philosophy at the Ferenc József University of Kolozsvár from 1891 to his death, who left posterity a unique philosophical system. A group of outstanding disciples gathered around him, of whom the one most deserving a special mention was *György Bartók* (1882 - 1970), author of the work to be published now. He accepted *Károly Böhm's* chair of philosophy in 1915, and continued his master's philosophical programme, although in an entirely independent spirit. When the University of Kolozsvár had to move from Transylvania, which had been annexed by Rumania owing to the Versailles Peace Treaties (Trianon Peace Dictate, 1920), the University moved to Szeged, Hungary; but when part of Transylvania was returned to Hungary for a few years during the war, the University moved back to Kolozsvár, and so did Bartók. In 1944 however he had to flee the city, and thereafter he lived in Budapest until his death. From 1946 to 1949 he taught at the Budapest Reformed Theological Academy, but as from 1949, due to the communist regime imposed upon Hungary by the Soviet Union he withdrew from publications. Besides his university lectures he read at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Bartók's philosophical works, which are still partly unpublished, include the history of philosophy from ancient Indian and Chinese philosophers to the philosophy of the West in the 1930's, all of which we have published in Hungarian. The short book to be published now in English translation, entitled *The Essence of Philosophy - An Introduction to Philosophy*, provides an inside view of not only Bartók's thinking, but also that of the Kolozsvár School. That is one reason why we think it important to have the book published in English. Together with it we are now also publishing an English translation of a review of Bartók's philosophy written by *Zoltán Mariska*, former university lecturer of philosophy at the University of Miskolc (1954), the most eminent expert on György Bartók's life work, who was honoured for this review in 2008 by the *Böhm - Bartók Society* in The Hague.

Some other outstanding members of the Kolozsvár School were *Károly Böhm's* following disciples: *László Ravasz* (1882 - 1975), professor of theology in Kolozsvár and later bishop of the Reformed Church of Hungary in Budapest; *Béla Tankó* (1876 - 1946), professor of philosophy in Debrecen; *Sándor Makkai* (1890 - 1951), bishop of the Hungarian Reformed Church in Transylvania (Rumania) and later professor of theology in Debrecen; *Sándor Tavaszy* (1888 - 1952) professor of theology in Kolozsvár/Cluj; *Béla Varga* (1886 - 1942), bishop of the Unitarian Church and professor of pedagogy in Kolozsvár. Also disciples of György Bartók's were *Sándor Varga von Kibéd* (1902 - 1986), professor of philosophy in Budapest and later in Munich, and *László Vatai* (1914-1993), professor of philosophy in Budapest and later reformed pastor in Canada.

Knowledge of the philosophers of the Kolozsvár School is just as important for an understanding of Hungarian thought as knowledge of Descartes is to understand French

thought, knowledge of Locke and Hume to understand English thought or knowledge of Kant and Hegel to understand German thought. Here it is not our job to examine this phenomenon, but we think it necessary to accentuate this idea very emphatically. After the Compromise with Austria in 1867, all fields of cultural life began flourishing vigorously in Hungary. This flourishing also gave a start among others to the boom of the economy towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>, but it was also the context in which the musical *oeuvres* of Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály were born. The spiritual culmination thereof and its expression in philosophy presented themselves in the works of the Kolozsvár School. They are essential components of universal human thought, even if they got only sporadically into the international currents of philosophy in the past century. Some reasons of that reside in the exclusivity of the Hungarian language. We think however that there are also some other non-erudite reasons for it. In Hungary, during the communist regime, for ideological reasons it became a habitual approach to treat the achievements of the Kolozsvár School as insignificant. Not seldom does one come upon pronouncements in certain international publications by Marxist authors of Hungarian origin that say that the Hungarians are unfit for doing philosophy. Károly Böhm, György Bartók, and their companions have given clear proof of the untenability of such pronouncements.

It is one of the objectives of the Mikes International Foundation to show such universal values of Hungarian culture that any organisations of power have attempted to eliminate for some reason. That is why we have published in *Bibliotheca Mikes International* as well as in our periodical *Mikes International* the most important works of Károly Böhm and György Bartók that in the recent past have hardly been available in the Hungarian language sphere. They are now available to anybody all over the world. We are very pleased that the present writings, hopefully together with some others, will now be able to radiate the spirit and the universal outlook of the Kolozsvár School and produce its effects on the throbbing totality of *Philosophia Perennis*.

Miklós Tóth

Chairman, Mikes International Foundation

The Hague (Holland), March 15, 2013

## ZOLTÁN MARISKA:

### GYÖRGY BARTÓK DE MÁLNÁS — THE PHILOSOPHER

It was said at a recent learned conference that György Bartók can be understood only through Bartók.<sup>1</sup> The statement was certainly said on a resigned note, though if considered from no exterior viewpoint it is actually the highest praise that can be won by a philosopher, on the understanding that not everybody who does philosophy is automatically a philosopher. It would be rather difficult to find any other reason for the resignation but that in both cultural history and the history of philosophy there are still a number of prejudices and commonplace remarks alive concerning not only Bartók but also the whole of Hungarian philosophy.

The introduction to this text edition of an essay by Bartók is intended to be about the philosopher, and its author has made himself a solemn promise to be focusing on interpreting Bartók's philosophic thoughts only. It is however in the nature of things that at least *in the introduction to the introduction* it is not harmful at all to make some remarks extraneous to philosophy, which are definitely necessary for an understanding of him.

The beginning of Bartók's carrier is not typical. It has been common knowledge that he was a sort of second generation philosopher, whose actual merits were in continuing the philosophy of Károly Böhm by developing the latent potentials of that philosophy further. Bartók's first really noteworthy publication, entitled *The Philosophy of Moral Value (Az erkölcsi érték filosofiája)*, came out in 1911. At first reading it seems to be nothing else but a further elaboration of moral value that is one of the three self-values developed by Károly Böhm in his *Axiology*. So the task Bartók took on at the beginning of his carrier was developing an essentially ready-made theory further. But the Transylvanian learned community had looked forward to his commencing that task with great expectations; they regarded him as a follower not only of Böhm, but also of his own father, the Reformed Church bishop and philosopher Gyögy Bartók senior. He himself was very willing to fulfill those expectations. We have no reason to doubt the honesty of his commitment to the job, but it must be pointed out that too much was expected of him. He, who as a theoretician was building on the two thousand year old traditions of philosophy and the continuity of Hungarian, and, in a more narrow sense Transylvanian, culture, was all the time a firm believer in the culture-building power of the spirit of Transylvania and the development of Hungarian philosophy, the growth of the spiritual assets of his nation. However, the price of that attitude was that he was silent when he had occasion for criticism, especially regarding the philosophy of Böhm. He simply did not want to chance causing any harm to

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<sup>1</sup> *The Relation Between Philosophy and Theology in the History of Hungarian Thinking*. An international conference, Miskolc - Kolozsvár, 27 -31 October 2000.

Hungarian philosophy, and never put to paper his theoretically so well founded criticism of Böhm. He never said, “*I am fond of Böhm, but I am more fond of the truth.*”

**Since he treated his theoretical objections as his own personal business**, he left it to posterity to decide whether Böhm’s basic ideas by themselves allow for being developed further, or basic and essential changes must be effected in critical points in order for them to be developed. Our answer is that the latter is exactly the case. In the course of his developing them further some latent contradictions of the Böhmian ideas had come to the surface, and Bartók made prudent but definite corrections at essential points of the spiritual legacy he had taken in hand. The corrections resulted in new philosophical foundations. His study called *The Essence of Philosophy (A philosophia lényege)* of 1924 is just about this new conception. When reading it one should not be misled by the numerous references to Böhm! Bartók always had a propensity to make a reference to his beloved master whenever he could. But if the careful reader also takes it into consideration *when* Bartók does *not* make references to Böhm, then he can easily realize the basic difference (differences) between the two theories of philosophy. The conceptual lack of Böhmian thoughts can be very telling. Also, the evolving new theory is an implicit, though unambiguously identifiable, critique of Böhm’s thinking.

Some more remarks should concern Bartók’s personal fate. From among the members of the Kolozsvár School he is the only one who remained a philosopher all his life, not only in his theoretic work but also in public life. As a philosopher he professed *philosophia perennis*, and his public commitments followed unmistakably from his status as a university professor. The turning points of his life-course coincided with the turning points of the history of Hungary (Hungary having to cede Transylvania and Partium to Rumania after the Peace Dictates of Versaille in 1920, reannexation of Northern Transylvania and Partium after the Second Vienna Agreement of 1940, Soviet occupation of Hungary and loss of Transylvania and Partium again in 1945). Although he spent the most productive twenty years of his life in Szeged from 1920 to 1940, still it was Kolozsvár, “the treasure city”, that meant to him the natural medium of living and working. As president of the renewed University of Kolozsvár he was to greet the Hungarian regent Miklós Horthy when he marched into the city in 1940.

Bartók has been forgotten not only because of having been a philosopher of the spirit, but also for *ad hominem* ideological and political reasons, even though he never was one of the collaborating intellectuals. His vehement displays of anti-Hitlerian feelings are well remembered by his contemporaries even today. (It is said that whenever Hitler was mentioned at the dinner table, his wife started collecting the knives jestingly to prevent him from causing any accident.) At the 1949 reorganization of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences by the communists he lost his membership; he, too, was demoted to contributing associate. His academic membership was restored after his death in the 1990s.

## On the Philosophy of Morals (*Philosophy of Moral Value*, 1911)

Bartók did not write on ethics but on the philosophy of morals, as his conception does not contain any sort of *imperativus*, since the task of philosophy cannot be the forming of commands or directions. Indeed its task is to ascertain the axiological importance of moral facts, which means that the aim is to clarify the essence of universalities grown over concrete situations.

The general philosophical foundations of the philosophy of morals can be found in Böhm's work, - he says. But Kant's ethical transcendentalism is at least as important to him as Böhm's doctrine of projection and general axiology. (Let us now disregard from considering the differences between self-positing and projection.) The doctrine of projection did not make any influence on the philosophy of morals but axiology did. A certain number of important key terms in Böhm's *Axiology* (the third volume of his *Man and His World [Ember és világa]*) can be adequately worked out only in a philosophy of morals, as the so obtained content elements let their cosmic origins be forgotten and get indeed close to the world of man. Some such key terms are freedom of will, autonomy, intelligence, value, etc. On the other hand the basic thesis of axiology, i.e. that *ought* is independent from *is*, becomes more forceful, since this conception of *ought* lacks any normative elements dictated by reality.

In addition to working out the self-value of the *good*, another aim of Bartók's book was that Kantian ethics, which is held to be formal, should be completed with content. Bartók's book was published two years before Scheler's similar undertaking. The first and perhaps just the greatest problem of a Bartók hermeneutics to be clarified can be formulated right away from this point of view, namely how the gothic cathedral, to use the name Schopenhauer gave to Kant's life-work, was seen by Bartók, and how it was seen by Böhm. Bartók would simply ignore both Böhm's "correction of Kant," which had resulted in the formulation of the philosophy of self-positing, and self-positing itself. The most he did was to make references to projection, but in an essentially wider context, and giving it no basic philosophical importance by any means. Bartók wrote a very reliable Kant monograph<sup>2</sup> that attests to his having had an essentially more authentic knowledge of Kant than his master had. In any case he did not intend to correct Kant but to develop his ideas further along the lines of Neo-Kantian traditions. It was also a key issue to make a judgment about the epistemological role of transcendentalism, since a third aim Bartók acknowledged was to reconcile Böhm's thoughts with those of Kant's. And it is a great question how Böhm's basic philosophy, born from correcting the transcendentalism of the critique of knowledge, can be reconciled with ethical transcendentalism. Böhm's thesis of the basic contradiction of realism<sup>3</sup> entails important consequences, and in the course of the attempt at reconciliation it was just these consequences that become explicit.

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<sup>2</sup> Bartók: *Kant*. Kolozsvár - Torda, 1925

<sup>3</sup> Böhm: *A realizmus alapellentmondása (The Basic Contradiction of Realism)*, Magyar Philosophiai Szemle (Hungarian Review of Philosophy), 1882. 81-94.

Beside *The Philosophy of Moral Value*, another book by Bartók to be considered is *Kant's Ethics and the Moral Philosophy of German Idealism (Kant etikája és a német idealizmus erkölcsbölcselete)*, which was only published in 1930, though it had already been awarded the Gorove prize in 1917. The two books sufficiently establish the implicit thesis that first Böhm's philosophy ought to be made to approach transcendentalism, since the critical elements of Böhm's immoderately subjectivist philosophy exclude even transcendentalism from the philosophical traditions that can be taken into consideration. The best known attempt at reconciliation was made by Béla Tankó,<sup>4</sup> which however paradoxically resulted in bringing the indifferent features of the two philosophies into prominence.<sup>5</sup> It must be noted in this respect that the first rather important publication by Bartók's best known disciple, Sándor Kibédi Varga, was an elaboration of Kantian transcendental deduction expressly from the viewpoint of the criticism of knowledge. This endeavour was of course in line with the neo-Kantian trend of the period, but at the same time it could be a kind of homework for a disciple: Bartók himself was already working on his anthropology and philosophy of spirit, having left transcendentalism behind. There could be a lesson also drawn from Scheler's crushing criticism concerning the presuppositions of Kant's transcendental deduction, which Bartók could get acquainted with in the 1910's after the publication of his book, but still "in time". Scheler's "a priorism of sentiments" explicitly belongs in the conception of philosophical anthropology.

According to the basic tenet of Bartók's moral philosophy, it had been forgotten since Kant that practical reason also does the setting of aims, in addition to collecting empirical data. It is the job of ethics to bring the two quite different activities into harmony with each other, and it is the competency of ethics to give an answer to the question, "What ought I to do?", as Bartók interpreted the ideas of Kant. *Ought* however is endowed with a special meaning in Böhm's philosophy (vide: projection), so it will do no harm if we consider this question a little more thoroughly.

"Bartók therefore never denies the existence of moral facts, the search for and collecting of which may be done by a "phenomenology", but it is essential that these facts (the world of *is*) have no value-producing function. The normative character of acts does not originate in its relation to goods and material values, but is allowed to become manifest by transcendental freedom. *Sitten*, or morality, does not produce value, it just makes value proper appear, makes it become an *is*. So the "first person singular" in the question "What ought I to do?" can be anyone who has become aware of his own transcendental freedom and knows the answer to the question. And that answer may not be a guide of how to behave, because we do not want to find our way in the world of *is*, but to clarify the essence of the universality grown over the concrete situation. The universality of *ought* taken in this sense is not at all the same as the abstract and cosmic character of general axiology, but exists at the level of ethical particularity and is significantly more tolerant

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<sup>4</sup> Béla Tankó: *Böhm és Kant. Adalékok a transzcendentális philosophia kiépítéséhez (Böhm and Kant. Contribution to the Development of Transcendental Philosophy)*, Böhm Károly élete és munkássága, I-III (Károly Böhm's Life-Work, I-III), ed. József (Keller) Kajlós, Besztercebánya, 1913

<sup>5</sup> A demonstration of this statement is the subject of my candidate's degree thesis, *Potentialities of a Philosophical Synthesis in the thinking of Böhm and Bartók (Filozófiai szintézis lehetőségei Böhm és Bartók gondolatvilágában)*

towards *is*. Self-values in Böhm's philosophy are independent not only from *is*, but also from one another, and evaluation cannot be restricted to the field of morality. (Today this would be expressed by saying that it is not put forward as practical activity). Consequently in the field of ethics the world of *is* gradually loses importance and the world of *ought* acquires a more and more dominant role, and at the same time in moral philosophy the method of induction gets replaced with that of deduction. In the order of Bartók's train of thought: one can indeed collect facts, but if one wants to understand them, then having realised the insufficiency of empirism one realizes their axiological significance; their collecting is at most a preparatory job. Understanding moral facts is therefore the same as recognizing their axiological significance, which can be achieved with the deductive method."<sup>6</sup>

The second great topic in Bartók's moral philosophy is the hierarchic analysis of values. With the analyses of hedonism and utilitarianism (the values of pleasure and usefulness) he actually introduces his discussion of self-value. The progress towards self-value is at the same time gradual liberation or gaining independence from exterior things. With regard to the length of this article just two short remarks must be made in this connection. Firstly, Scheler in his own similar undertaking did not set the values he named in a hierarchical order but just classified them according to types. Secondly, Bartók's hierarchy of values repeats, willy-nilly, the social criticism of general axiology: the social world, *socialitas*, is indeed the world of hedonism and utilitarianism.

"The whole discussion so far has been about the individual taken in an abstract sense, who has seemed to be hidden under the universality of being human, but the universal sense of man also includes human society. The "rehabilitation" of transcendentalism was actually due to the circumstance that no absolute can get assembled from the mental activities of the individual person, there leads no way towards unity and universality. This unity is not ensured by projection, either, although the essence of self-value is unity, since even though the realization of value is individual, value is still objective. A most obvious example is that a beautiful work of art may allow different individuals to justify that it is beautiful in very different ways. It is the objectivity of value that allows for very similar evaluations or the same one, and also shows how a deviant evaluation is possible, namely as compared to what it is deviant. So when we take the step to get to the third value on top of the hierarchy, it must be kept in mind that the self-value of good does not correspond to any value that is cherished by any group of people, since as a group they remain in the world of usefulness. If self-value is autonomous, then heteronomy has a relative element, and so it cannot be absolute. Consequently no group of people has the ability that a certain individual may have, namely that of relegating interest into the background, though not giving it up: self-value cannot be made up of inter-subjectivity. This however causes a huge gap, since we can never get from individual persons to the concept of society or that of human community, just as we cannot get from individual evaluations to the concept of value. The dispute between *is* and *ought* is entirely ill-matched as long as we do not know

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<sup>6</sup> The text between quotation marks is part of my study that elaborates this topic in more detail. It is entitled *The Philosopher of Moral Value. On the Philosophy of György Málnási Bartók (Az erkölcsi érték filozófusa. Málnási Bartók György filozófiájáról)*, in *The Worlds of Is and Ought to. Chapters in the History of Ethics in Hungary*. Budapest, 1990, 136-153

how the two worlds amalgamate. Only in our “world-concept”? Then the inter-subjectivist solution must be applied, which however means giving up transcendentalism. Or in factuality? Then *not* we have endowed things with values, but things have them in themselves; or rather an objective sphere of values, brought into being through having been constituted by previous generations, is *a priori* given to the individual.”<sup>7</sup>

Evidently this is what Bartók’s interest in anthropology and the philosophy of spirit is rooted in. In his moral philosophy he still avoided this problem and he got from the world of heteronomy to the self-value of intelligence. He carried out the interpretation of the form and content of intelligence solely in terms of correlating transcendental freedom with moral freedom, and made little reference to the other “foundation”, namely projection. To cite an example, he very aptly says about the hedonist person that “he decides on the ought on the basis of is”, and he does not put the emphasis on a forced adaptation of projection, but on a subtle differentiation between a person under the yoke of sensuality and one that intelligently understands sensuality to be the basic level of the world which he properly controls. This differentiation can be understood in terms of the anthropological unity of humans, and not in terms of their being set apart by projection.

Intelligence, having elements of content, has been placed in one group with hedonism and utilitarianism, and this conception harmonizes the realization of moral freedom (i.e. the fulfillment of transcendental freedom) with intelligent, i.e. free, activity at the “phenomenological” level of moral activity. What is then the origin of sin? What is its source? Hedonism or utilitarianism cannot be sin itself, because then the whole of humanity is found sinful in all respects, and that thesis is contrary to the notion of pure philosophy. They can at most be the sources of sin. That is how intelligence obtains the function it fulfills so willingly: it promises freedom to man suffering in the captivity of heteronomy by emphasizing the autonomy of man. It is a very important question on whose behalf all that is done. Even ethical teachings built upon the self do not renounce connecting the essence of man to sociability in some way. If that half of the split human world is relied on which is the intelligible part, then the unity of humans is not achieved. If however the world of *socialitas* is our frame of reference, then what is the role of projection (self-positing)? Transcendentalism on the other hand also objects to the tradition of religious metaphysics, finding it dangerous to have God’s closeness as the framework of reference. The only unsatisfactory solution in the book is easily perceptible. The explanation for sin may be found in the inability to recognize transcendental freedom that is given to everybody. But already Kant saw it very well how unsatisfactory that solution is. (Let us just think of the so-called “anthropological turn” of Kant.)

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

## ***The Essence of Philosophy Reformulated***

Bartók's study *The Essence of Philosophy (A philosophia lényege)*, which was published in 1924, has definitively preserved its importance in his life-work, similarly to *The Philosophy of Moral Value*. One who is acquainted with all his life work will find its significance so great in the first place because it was in that study that he first put his own conception about philosophy into words, and then he remained faithful to the program in it all his life. Pál Sándor rightly thought there was exceptional consequentiality in his life work. After *The Essence of Philosophy* Bartók worked as the system of the program set down in it dictated. His writings in the 1920's and the 1930's, when he was already an academician, were actually studies of special problems in preparation for his book on philosophical anthropology called *Man and Life (Ember és élet)* published in 1939. His philosophical anthropology was meant to lay the foundations of an organized philosophical system of four parts, the first of which was probably finished by him and got the title *Picture-Making and Knowledge (Képkötés és ismeret)*, but it has either been destroyed after his second stay in Kolozsvár, or it is still in hiding somewhere. Anyway he published no work that cannot be fitted into a conception assessing the whole of his life-work, if the assessment places the emphasis on philosophical anthropology, and treats the products of his working from *The Essence of Philosophy* to *Man and Life* as a systematic whole. In this way not only his theoretical writings, but also his monographs on the history of philosophy and his journalistic writings take their due places marked out by their significance.

The number one question of importance about *The Essence of Philosophy* is the following, "What was Bartók's motivation for rethinking the essence, tasks, and methods of philosophy, when he had the ready-made Böhmian answers, the Böhmian basic philosophy? Well, his 1911 book on moral philosophy was as yet founded on Böhm's philosophy, as the careful reader will remember it. What was the reason for his re-interpreting it? Neither in the 1911 book, nor anywhere else did he criticize Böhm; on the contrary, he made references to him whenever he could. However the mere fact of his writing *The Essence of Philosophy* was implicit criticism of Böhm, the details of which can be identified by the careful reader.

According to Böhm reality itself is projection, it is projected reality that is a given to the Self, to the subject of projection. So it reads with some surprise in *The Essence of Philosophy* that philosophy will not tell us what reality is, but presupposing the existence of reality, philosophy finds its job in working out a theoretical model of reality. The paradigmatic importance of this opening thesis is rather complex, we shall now point out some of the significant elements. Firstly, philosophy can put its relations to the branches of science in order, since just as a branch of science models the segment of reality it defines, so philosophy models the whole of reality. The sometimes so affronting Böhmian criticism of the branches of science becomes unnecessary: according to Böhm the branches that contradict self-positing and projection are pseudo-sciences, and those that do not are "phenomenological", i.e. do not touch upon the essential things. Bartók however takes the achievements of sciences into consideration, even though philosophy is autonomous thinking according to him. Secondly the relation to the traditions of the history of philosophy can be put in order, since by presupposing reality it becomes unnecessary to accept the extremist concept of the thesis called "the basic contradiction of realism", which

Böhm applied to nearly the whole of the history of philosophy. This opening thesis makes the legacy of the history of philosophy an organic part of the process of development and self-realisation of spirit. This is the common ground where the theoretician philosopher, who endeavors to develop new theories, and the historian of philosophy find each other. Bartók “re-thought” the history of philosophy just like e.g. Heidegger, to whom it was also obvious that the classic philosophers had a “modern” character. No longer did Bartók have a problem with the relation between philosophy and specialized branches of science, he regarded this all along as a question of the relation between the whole and its parts. Furthermore it is just a trivial thesis that philosophy, at the beginning of its workings, is in a disadvantageous position in comparison with the specialized sciences, since it is only able to define its own aim, essence and method in the course of its actual working. This disadvantage has however easily become an advantage, since philosophy is permanent discourse with spirit, a never ending process, never immanently scientific, and always retains its character *in sensu cosmopolitico* understood in the Kantian sense. (Looking a little forward we can say that the relation between philosophy and science is not quite harmonious in Bartók’s case, either; he received immediate criticism from the field of psychology when he analyzed the anthropological status of the human soul and its pertinent mechanism. Contemporary psychologists were talking of the incompetence of philosophy in matters of psychology.) Bartók did not argue with anybody but starting out from a certain practical aspect of the workings of the spirit and idea, he only studied those scientific and philosophical accounts that were relevant to him, since he had got his own definite view of philosophy as theory and as a life program. He found actual support in the classics, first of all Aristotle and Kant, and later Hegel.

Thanks to the classics cited, Bartók conceived of philosophy in its most widely used sense. First of all it is scientific and systematic theory about the Whole, which Whole is the whole of reality. Secondly it is part of the process through which spirit realizes itself, and as such it has a tradition of more than two thousand years. It follows from its character that it is the adequate subject of self-realisation. What is momentarily a really productive perception is that philosophy is as much science as it is also a life program, a mission in life if you like. The philosophic content formulated in doctrinal propositions is made complete with the life program, becoming manifest, of philosophizing *in sensu cosmopolitico*, so that doctrinal philosophy does not lose any of its significance for a moment. And yet the really important thing for a philosopher’s existence is to be fully pervaded by universal affinity for human life problems, of which the most important ones are the permanent need for theoretically interpreting reality and philosophizing permanently, being aware of the need for philosophy cultivated as a life-program in service of the self-realisation of spirit and getting the vision across. Much more is at stake than the question of why philosophy, at the start of its undertaking, cannot satisfy certain requirements of the theory of science.

As to the requirements of the theory of science, probably it is also due to many factors of social psychology that Husserlian phenomenology, having started to develop in the 1910’s and clearing up rather similar problems, did not leave its mark on Bartók’s new conception. Husserl, in his study called *Philosophy as Strict Science*, similarly to Bartók, re-interpreted both the relation between science and philosophy and the lessons to be drawn from the two thousand years old traditions of philosophy. The two philosophers can

be placed together not just because of their radical restarts performed at about the same time, but also because they both gave expression to rather similar methodical problems. Their solutions, however, tended consistently in very different directions; so that a few superficial social-psychological observations would not be sufficient to dispose of the recognition that phenomenology definitely did not make any influence on Bartók's new philosophy. Husserl declared that philosophy is not science, and that all of its problems during its history have grown from its having intended to conform in its own manner to the requirements of the theory of science, which is actually foreign to its own spirit. Consequently the requirements of the theory of science must simply be given up by philosophy.

Phenomenology is self-reflection of thinking, radical abandonment of the traditional problems of philosophy. Bartók, through his philosophy of spirit, stayed tolerant towards traditions, and conceived of philosophizing as continuous and patient (sometimes however impatient) dialogue with spirit. He did not counter-pose to each other the historical-philosophical traditions of the representatives of scientific philosophy (Aristotle, Bacon, Hegel) and world-view philosophy (stoics, Pascal, Schopenhauer). The idea of continuity is significant from the point of view of content; it is not preservation of traditions in accordance with an exterior point of view. Bartók interpreted the scope of the validity of philosophy in the widest possible way; from his viewpoint Böhman self-positing and projection definitely limit that scope. We may add that thinking about thinking also has a methodologically limiting effect. In Böhm, reality is forced to fit a theoretical reconstruction, and in Husserl it ought to be decided what reality is at all. In addition both theories as novelties validated the reasons of their own radicalism by dismissing the traditions of the history of philosophy.

Bartók preserved throughout the methodically important duality of reality and thinking that models it, as well as the widest possible validity of philosophizing. Concerning this point some more relevance can be perceived. We use the word "reality", but what can be its ontological relevance in this context? At this point Bartók adhered to the Kantian tradition. Granting the existence of reality is related to the study of the feasibility of knowledge, and admittedly that is a very relevant foundation of ontology. For Bartók it was not necessary to deal with the problem of the reality of beings, i.e. with fundamental ontology. He studied the possibility of knowledge. There is being only as what we know of, raising the problem of being preliminarily is bad tradition. The problem of being itself can only be raised when the status of knowledge has been cleared up, since being itself is only given to us as some knowledge. At this point Bartók does indeed turn to the theory of picture making, since clearing up the status of knowledge is impossible without the help of the picture theory. Knowledge itself is indeed pictures. (Let us remember that the title of the first volume of the four volume system I have referred to was going to be *Picture-Making and Knowledge!*) We do not know the conception itself, so one ought to be very careful about making a statement concerning it. It can however be established that Bartók clearly saw the theoretical significance of picture making and knowledge, and in *The Essence of Philosophy* he wrote a passage about it, but he thought that in accordance with his own program the problem formulated in *The Essence of Philosophy* could be cleared up only after philosophical anthropology had been worked out, which was going to serve as the foundations of his organized system. In connection with pictures it must also be

noted that he did not say that reality is the result of projection, but only that reality is given to us in the form of pictures. He does not treat projected reality as the same as reality in itself. The Kantian interpretation of knowledge does not make ontology itself questionable, but only the fundamental role attributed to the problem of being. (Moving somewhat forward in time, we can note that Bartók was among the first to appreciate and react to *Being and Time* by Heidegger, though for conceptual reasons he, understandably, directed appropriate criticism at Heidegger raising the problem of being.)

Turning back to *The Essence of Philosophy*, one will realize that another great topic of a Bartók hermeneutics is a number of concepts used by both Böhm and Bartók. The latter did not make things simple for his readers at all. Perhaps he did not want to, for he used the same expressions as Böhm in completely different senses, so that superficial reading will miss essential differences in their usages. Philosophy is not some medicine intended for affected intellectualists, says Bartók somewhere, and anyone deterred from it by unexpected difficulties deserves being deterred. At this point the review-writer, not letting himself be scared off by the job, needs to illustrate with examples his thesis that the same philosophical concepts are used in different senses by Bartók than by Böhm. A simple example is this: to Böhm the word “dialectic” means a destructive method of criticism to destroy semblances, the result of which is the basic concept of his philosophy, namely “self-positing” (compare it with the subtitle and the train of thoughts in the first volume of his *Man And His World*). To Bartók dialectic is the form itself of doing philosophy, a synonym of “continuous dialogue with spirit”, the name of a non-destructive but constructive theoretical process. And now let us take a more difficult example, “spirit” is certainly one. Regarding the complexity and gravity of the problems given in this case, let it be enough to say that anyone who is acquainted with the conception of self-positing = sperm in Böhm’s *The Life of Spirit* (volume 2 of *Man And His World*) on the one hand, and Bartók’s philosophical anthropology in *Man and Life* on the other, will not think that the two uses of spirit are of equal sense, but will strongly oppose all kinds of equalizing them.

Hopefully no-one will think that Husserl’s name is cited with no real reason in what is forthcoming. Both Bartók and Husserl ascertained a vital lesson of the history of philosophy, namely it being a well discernible guiding principle in the history of philosophy that a scientific character has been permanently aspired to and that the achievements have been received with dissatisfaction again and again on account of the confusing multiplicity of theories that contradict one another. Husserl, feeling frustration come again, looked for a radically new mode of philosophizing (see phenomenology), and broke with tradition. Bartók looked for unity in diversity in the history of philosophy, and did not want to and could give up neither the idea of it being scientific, nor the problem of part and the whole, nor the two trends in philosophic traditions, that is, philosophical doctrines and life-centered philosophizing (philosophy as a mode of human existence). The two latter make up one harmonious unit according to him, or at least ought to do so. Thereby the pronounced help of tradition is emphatically needed. That is what the history of philosophy was about for Bartók, but two new concepts must be added that he used in characteristically Bartókian senses: philosophizing is existing in the world in a way that is psychologically motivated, i.e. it is a predestined life-situation on the one hand, and on the other it is adequate discourse with spirit (which latter term he did not yet define explicitly).

The Kantian idea of permanent ideological demand for philosophy as a science, stemming from man's natural propensity for metaphysics, can also be rightly mentioned. It is a properly radical statement that though many sorts of answers have been produced to satisfy the permanent demand, still one and the same philosophical message is to face the multiplicity of existing answers. Philosophy, as a cultural value manifesting itself in its history, is a given in the unity of its content and form, whereby the same content gets manifest in many forms indeed, conforming to the obviously extremely different cultural-historical circumstances and requirements. Psychological factors guarantee the unity of the very same content. As to philosophers, they are subjects, whose minds are motivated for the cultivation of philosophy by one and the same "ethos", the same spiritual eagerness, i.e. a germ of the same substantiality of universal philosophical mentality makes the cultural value called philosophy come into being.

If the gentle reader is reading these comments with some reservation, he is asked not to make a hasty judgment about the outcome, but to think over what is forthcoming. Bartók ascertained, in the same way as Kant or Husserl did, that one may perhaps be confused about the chaos experienced in the history of philosophy. His explanation of the multiplicity of theories was however also motivated by his viewpoint as a historian, since from that point of view he could not stick to just one theory or another, the correct thing for him to do was to view the whole of the history of philosophy. And Bartók was both a philosopher and a historian at the same time; there was no question of his separating the two functions from each other. His message was more serious than just getting over the methodical difficulties of history writing by the thesis of a uniform philosophical content that manifests itself in different forms motivated by psychological factors. The author of the present review was caused to reflect seriously upon realizing that Bartók's above thesis is very much in line with certain passages in both Plato and Nietzsche. According to Nietzsche the tendency in doing philosophy directs one from the text towards the personality of the philosopher, so that in the end in order to understand the philosophy one must understand its morality, i.e. the morality of the philosopher, the background of his statements, his soul. This is a puzzling statement, still it is true, but I am afraid we have no time for it, and anyway hermeneutics focuses upon the text, and the presence of psychological factors on the horizon of understanding motivating the philosophical content is a very questionable matter. Let us take for example phenomenology fostering hostility toward psychology! Actually the example of Nietzsche, however, well illustrates the point that a person looking into the human soul is not a psychologist under all circumstances; instead, he may also be a philosopher. Nietzsche did not look into his own soul only, he tried to find the psychological factors in other philosophies, too, and his criticism was not very complimentary on either official philosophers or the great heroes of philosophy.

For the moment we have done nothing else but given an illustration of what it means to take psychological factors into consideration in the course of our philosophical investigation, but we have still no explanation for the supposed substantial uniformity. We must turn to Plato for some further explanation. In his arguments Bartók himself also used Greek words in quotation marks, philosophic concepts referring to the Greeks (e.g. "ethos", "eros") as mental motivations. It would probably give an extremely interesting and new dimension to philosophy to be able to re-produce, as it were to build up again, the philosopher himself, the value producing personality. Not in individual cases, but

tendentiously. Ammonias Saccas has things in his philosophy in common with Marcus Aurelius, still it is not the same to be a sack-bearer slave as to be a Roman emperor. Plato and Aristotle, Bruno and Bacon, Spinoza and Leibnitz, Hegel and Schopenhauer were philosophers of the same epochs but of different fates. Bartók would say that they, just as all others, were motivated for philosophy by the same ethos. The concept of self-assertion, borrowed from Plato's psychology, may support Bartók's thesis. "Thymos" is a substantial component of the soul in Plato, "megalothymia" as self-assertion is a psychological motivating force (something like what we call professionalism now): he who is confidently self-aware of his own wisdom and truth will want to earn reputation for them. As a matter of fact Bartók also holds that that is why a philosopher does philosophy and puts his ideas down on paper, even if only for posterity. The psyche of a philosopher is not different from that of a non-philosopher, which conception of the psyche is based on the presupposition of the unity of humans endorsed by philosophical anthropology, although the thesis of some substantial element revealing itself in the mental frame of a philosopher remains rather unclear. By now it was natural to Bartók that everyone, in whose utterances the mental factor motivating them to do philosophy could be identified, could be called a philosopher, from Pál Sipos to Kant, or from Széchenyi to Plato. Incidentally, Böhm naturally belonged in this group, being one of the philosophers of all times who could always be quoted, but it was not necessary to continue where he had left off.

According to *The Essence of Philosophy*, philosophy is nothing else but universal rationalism, even if it emerges from the deepest regions of the soul and perhaps concerns a mystic topic, or is directed towards the transcendent. In any way it is rationalism motivated by the ethos, which is grounded in the utmost depths of the soul, so that the most characteristic feature of philosophy itself is reason's right to eternal primacy.

Theoretical knowledge is contemplative, free from interests. A philosopher naturally lives in his own age. Interest is a notion used in an explicitly practical sense. Contemplating free from interest is actually a need that is a condition of pursuing true philosophy; it is transcending permanently the world of practice that is motivated by interests. Here one can have in mind Nietzsche's critique of the activities of official philosophers, and the story about Thales and the olive harvest is also a good illustration of Bartók's viewpoint: *philosophia practica* is grossly self-contradictory. And the Aristotelian idea of knowledge for its own sake can also be rightly referred to.

Philosophy as a cultural value is heritage. It has kept changing, too, according to the evidence of cultural history. Originally knowledge had been complex, but the two basic ideas defining philosophy, that is universality and freedom from interests had suffered damage, then the branches of science became independent and the subject-matter of philosophy became poor. Still it did not come off as badly as King Lear did, because at the same time the notion of *scientia univesialis* gained strength. Is there yet a crisis imminent over philosophy, the legacy we have inherited? May we give up philosophy itself? These questions are actually being asked by the interpreter, not by Bartók. Our reason for bringing up the questions is simply that Bartók himself thought it important to spread awareness of the situation as a contemporary task, to make the spontaneous habit of philosophizing conscious. The continuity of philosophy in cultural history has kept on until the present, but as to the future, we can only give expression of our needs. However much

we are confident about the future of philosophy, we must do something about it, too, the responsibility is ours. With reference to Nietzsche again: if it is so that man's sense of history, and consequently the pertinent values, too, are themselves historical, and the man of the 19<sup>th</sup> century shows some interest in the history that can be described according to his own taste, then whence is the confidence that things will so continue? In other words, as long as man is man, will the cultural values given in history keep their importance and worth for the man of every age? For whatever reason might man himself not get out of the habit of history, if he has not sought real history since the beginning, but has created his own history to make it conform with his own taste, and has come to appreciate that? Does it really belong in a world of negative utopia that in the future the values of cultural history will have lost their worth because the people of newer modernity will have lost their sense of and affinity for the values of humanity? To put it differently, the man of newer modernity will have a different notion of humanity from the one we have here and now. The point in question is responsibility, not relativization of values. Bartók said that in the given state of affairs it could not provide a perspective for philosophy either insisting on the principle that *'all science must become philosophy again'*, or re-interpreting it again as the synthesis of the results of the branches of science. Such claims must be simply given up, without giving up the great Whole and the idea of contemplation. Where can Böhm be found here? Was he not one of the philosophers who were trying to make philosophy again out of the already independent branches of science that had broken free from philosophy, to recast them in order to conform to one single principle? (And to reject what did not conform to the principle?) Bartók would probably protest against taking the next quotation from him as hostile to Böhm, though he might not be able to justify his protest. *"Neither has true philosophy ever aimed at extracting a new Wholeness from the special fields of knowledge with the help of some sort of methodology. About such a Wholeness it must have been known in advance that it would not contain anything new, but a certain kind of summing up of the collected pieces of knowledge."* (*The Essence of Philosophy*, Section 5) The counterpoint endorsed by Böhm is, "Science is a comprehended Whole", and what ensures comprehension is self-positing, or his later basic notion, namely projection.

Bartók's steadfast belief in the continuity of culture was accompanied by responsibly considering the current tasks, and the latter attitude made the greater impact on his conception. Philosophy can learn from the ancients that its wisdom is not *polymathia*, manifold knowledge is a real enemy of philosophy. Understanding the particular from the universal, the Part from the Whole, that is the true task of philosophy even in the future. We have dwelt on Bartók's conception for relatively long, and we have done so because we are witnessing the moment of the birth of his teleological thinking. From this moment on the above principle was binding for Bartók. Whatever he understood by the Whole (man, spirit, idea, etc.), whatever elements a given Whole is composed of, the Whole is functionally, in its activities, determined by the Whole, i.e. it is teleological. The functional principles of the Whole imbue the mechanisms of the parts. That is the reason he said later in *Man and Life* that the spirit is partially instinct, which may seem eclectic to readers skimming his theory.

First time strict vindication of teleology in *The Essence of Philosophy* is where he defines the ontological status of teleology. Philosophy studies knowledge which is required by rationality, organized philosophy is the study of knowledge; it is organized scientific-

philosophical thinking about knowledge. Philosophy with its two thousand years old historical past can be understood in its functioning, in the teleology of the part and the whole. At the same time it alludes to some specific genealogical principles, since not everybody can be a philosopher, a person possessing some knowledge will not necessarily philosophize, knowledge is an anthropological notion. Philosophy is born when the knowledge produced by our minds becomes problematic, indeed the moment of the birth of philosophy may perhaps be deduced in a way that is psychological-genealogical. The embedment of philosophy in the history of culture is also genealogical in a certain sense, since the examples pointed out are illustrations of how the piece of knowledge that has become problematic relates to the history of philosophy and culture. Teleology becomes relevant as soon as it is asked what really the Whole is towards which the problematic piece of knowledge is directed, or in other words, how knowledge as such can become problematic at all. The two questions are synonymous as it were, one relates to teleology, the other to genealogy. The developing solution seems to be Böhmanian, as the use of the two words 'Self and Non-Self' can be traced back to Böhm, or perhaps indirectly to Fichte, (and that is momentarily enough). But perhaps it is at this point that the absence of Böhmanian thinking from the concept is most conspicuous. The relation between the two is actually a logical frame, and the mutual effect on each other of the two logically assumed poles is a process, during whose detailed analysis the basic frame disappears, since it has only been set up because of a methodological necessity, - some theses expounded later about the system make the confrontation between the Self and the Non-Self unnecessary. The Self as a logical subject is such an entity of the philosophy of subjectivity about which it must be acknowledged that it is the only true subject. Concerning this Bartók makes reference to a number of authors except Böhm and Böhmanian projection. He directly borrowed from Fichte the thesis of the existential relationship stretching between the Self and the Non-Self, similarly to that of the act of putting, and turned to Kant for the contention that creating the object and getting to know it are one and the same process. He refers to Plato with the statement that subjectivity ends where objectivity begins, and that the Non-Self is not necessarily identical with the external world. His conception also draws upon Aristotle in a very remarkable manner. The reference that makes ontological interpretation of the process of knowledge possible is this: getting to know is actualizing that which was given as potentiality in the object of knowledge at the beginning of the process; also knowledge as positing in the Fichtean sense cannot be arbitrary. It must be made clear that this is not epistemology at all, but the study of knowledge that is preparatory to ontology and axiology, and which has some anthropological and logical presuppositions, as well as some considerable historical antecedents regarding the role of subjectivity in ontology. The Self need not be made an object, since it has already become one: philosophy is in existence. The Self is a result of the awakening of consciousness, as an object it is part of the world of the Non-Self, it has passed across the world of the Non-Self, and having been fed back it is taken as an object by itself. Hereby the interesting moment of the birth of anthropology can be identified.

Bartók brings the viewpoints of both teleology and genealogy into operation at the same time. However condensed is the argumentation in *The Essence of Philosophy*, noticeably it is also about the inter-relationship between a person and his environment, about the system of dimensional connections that are operative in a complex process along a thousand lines that connect the Self (or it may be called the person or individual or logical

subject) with his environment. Knowledge, the study of knowledge, and their philosophical disciplines can genealogically be derived from this system of connections. The anthropological-genealogical explanation of value as potentiality is especially worthwhile. Bartók's axiology is much nearer to Nietzsche's principle "*Everything happens through the human mind,*" than to Böhm's rather stretched conception of projection. Bartók's philosophical anthropology is rather close to Nietzsche's, even if not in any other respects. And what if all philosophy is anthropology? The interpreter risks making the remark that the conscious Self, the Self taken as an object, carries with it the element of evaluation, since the Self has now become "problematic" for the true subject, the philosophizing subject in this case. It is as far as this point that the teleology of value might reach back, or at least having got acquainted with Bartók's works we can rightly say that the semantics of the "problematic Self" also contains an element of value, as much as it is possible to disclose elements of value through the semantics of words.

Teleology is needed for going along the way from knowledge to the study of knowledge. The first part is about the relationship between the Self and the Non-Self, with emphasis on grounding it in the history of philosophy. But the principles of teleology are present in the discussion as the problems of how to view the part and the whole as well as the quality of being free from interests. The first part can be summed up in the dictum by Leibnitz, "*relatio est fundamentum veritatis*". The second part takes one from the moment of the birth of philosophy to when organized philosophy can be put into words. The moment of the birth of philosophy springs from the human experience of having inner conflicts formulated in a Hegelian manner. The knowledge of the Self about itself becomes problematic and undergoes the process of becoming conscious, hence its knowledge about itself becomes stable, the importance of the philosophizing subject increases. Böhm's name and the notion of projection come up in the discussion, but two short remarks are not out of place here. Projection is here not a subjective positing to legitimize the creation of reality, but as the act of projecting it is simply positing one's knowledge about one's self, taking it as an object, and thereby ensuring the feasibility of philosophizing. Indeed reality need not be created, since it *is*. Within the philosophical tradition of the history of the philosophizing Self the names that can hereby be much more evidently referred to are Hume, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche; the philosophizing Self is anthropologically established, at least the basic theses of some anthropology awaiting to be worked out are there. Such principles as "everything exists as givens for the Self", or "everything happens through the human mind" present questions like "who is the subject?", or "what is a human?" that are in urgent need of answers. At the end of the second part philosophy is defined by the conception as the knowledge of knowledge.

The key word of the third phase of the discussion is spirit. Bartók rightly sensed that in order to straighten out the notion of spirit it was an important task to draw the lines of delimitation against certain traditions in the philosophy of spirit. Spirit is one of the notions in philosophy that are most easily misconstrued. Therefore he tried to show already here what spirit was not according to him. In a paper on this matter he presented at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences the method of delimitation is much more consistent. In *A Philosophical Examination of Spirit*, the dominant method is delimitation together with summing up. Spirit is not equivalent to a mere aggregate of its parts, still it consists of

parts that can be explained theoretically. The matter with the different notions of spirit is not that they are false but that they tell too little about spirit.

We must repeatedly point out the framework-like character of his discussion. To understand his notion of spirit it is not *The Essence of Philosophy* that we must read in the first place, but his Academic papers as a complete and coherent series, and also his *Man and His Life*. It is when fully worked out, or if you like in their all-out teleology, that the interpretative principles of spirit are meant to dissipate some suspicions caused by certain misunderstandings to the effect that spirit is an eclectic notion, or not more than a metaphysical entity, or that it retains anything of the already disavowed metaphysical tradition. His presenting the philosophical make-up of the philosopher especially gives cause for the suspicion that he interprets spirit as a substance. One thing is certain, the notion of spirit is not really worked out in *The Essence of Philosophy*, but Bartók himself knew that well, as shown by the relevant statements in *The Essence of Philosophy* and the contents of his Academic papers. The concluding denouement of the third part is stating that systematic philosophy is possible. Systematic philosophy is based on the theory of understanding as *prima philosophia*, and consists of two great units, ontology and axiology. Both units have their own theoretical problems, and especially in the elaboration of axiology Bartók's references to Böhm are not just of formal but pronouncedly substantial importance. But even this phase of the discussion is imbued with the basic anthropological-philosophical principles formulated earlier that can now be indelibly interpreted as some latent critique of Böhmism. Treating Bartók's axiology needs further studies, and would not be accomplishable without analyzing his notion of spirit adequately. We can only have a clear picture of the actual content of Böhm's influence on Bartók if we do not absolutely want to regard him, and have him be regarded, as one of Böhm's followers.

Analyzing and interpreting the sections on ontology (§ 15 to § 17) give us arguments for proving the actuality of a new start. The theory of understanding ends where the thesis about knowledge having turned problematic is formulated. We have an anthropologically definable subject that is connected with the environment through a thousand pieces of thread, and for whom reality is given in the form of images, and who transforms pictorial reality into knowledge with the mechanism of certain primordial functions. The subject has been defined in the history of culture, receives a legacy of the philosophy of spirit, and is psychologically motivated to know. For a logically expressible basic relation it is life itself, life that can be made plenteous and known, - or a plenitude of the philosophy of spirit. Philosophy is a consequence of the process of cognition, because knowledge is object and the Self can also become an object. The Self turned into object is self-knowledge, therefore the moment of the birth of philosophy is when self-knowledge turns problematic. The lesson that can be drawn from the history of culture and philosophy is that the continually growing idea of the Self turned problematic shows itself, in the most diverse forms, as some philosophical knowledge that is understandable only rationally. The rear of systematic philosophy is psychologically motivated, and the psyche is a sort of spirituality. Philosophy is a value of cultural history, and similarly to other inherited values it is explicable in anthropology and the philosophy of spirit. So, from this moment on, ontology is a system of theses that form a whole, and which, together with axiology, is part of systematic philosophy and itself consists of parts motivated by the whole. A further

important element of philosophy is the creative person, the character and the life-program of the philosopher, since philosophy itself is an organic system of adequate pieces of knowledge and the canon of how to live a special life.

Philosophy's attention is turned towards the whole of reality, the world of nature and culture interspersed with values, in the center of which is the real human that is definable anthropologically. Although ontology and axiology can be separated in theory, the philosophical model that should be adopted is such in character and content that it strives to unite the viewpoints of ontology and axiology and manages to make them valid. But then reality itself is a world interspersed with values, whose theoretical interpretation must start from the principle of totality, since life itself, the world interspersed with values, is teleological in its own mechanism. That is why systematic philosophy can in the first place be nothing but an organic system, a world continuously unfolding and getting richer and richer with the problems formulated in the beginning in conformity with the principles of teleology. Much as spirit is a notion very difficult to explain, both in the anthropological model of man and in the history of culture and philosophy, the philosophy of spirit gives help with method and content to ensure powerful connection and cohesion between reality and the philosophical and non-philosophical thinking modeling reality. The Bartókian variety of ontology is to be placed into this context!

The sections on ontology referred to naturally discuss internal, professional matters, ones belonging in the theory of knowledge. Earlier sections already differed definitely from the Böhman program of how to do philosophy, but I expect my thesis of the latent critique of Self-positing and projection to be effectively verified by a detailed analysis of the sections on ontology and axiology. (The analysis of axiology however is omitted for the reasons already mentioned). Böhman Self-positing results in a special correction of Kant that can be found at the beginning of *Man and His World*, on the first pages of the first volume. It must be noticed that Bartók's ontology is a discipline derived from the theory of knowledge, which latter clears up not only knowledge, but also the anthropological subject of knowledge. Observe for comparison that Self-positing, obtained by Böhm when he corrected Kant, is the fundamental subject of the world, a representative individual not defined anthropologically at all, in whose positing himself is the real world (ontology) and the world as it ought to be (deontology).

The only important thing for us in this context is the correction of Kant. Böhm's correction can be summed up in two thrusts: it demonstrates the *a priori* status of the law of causality instead of construing it as a problem of reason, and places it before the intuitive categories of space and time in the mechanism of existence. This correction has consequences that cannot be described in detail here and now, it entails explicitly anti-Kantian tendencies, e.g. it repudiates both the schematics of the ideas of pure reason as a unit of understanding posited basically unnecessarily, and also transcendentalism of the critique of reason itself.<sup>8</sup> Such interpretation of the law of causality results in some specific pan-logicality, rendering rationality absolute.

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<sup>8</sup> I have written in more detail about the points and consequences of the Kant correction in my candidate's degree thesis.

In *The Essence of Philosophy* Bartók does not say a word of the Kant correction. According to him space and time are subjective-spiritual functions, while causality is an *a priori* condition of understanding. But knowledge is understanding the already arisen world of images, and raising it does not require the law of causality, since the world of images arises with unconscious necessity from the relation connecting the Self and the Non-Self to each other: from the reciprocity. Causality and law as such are categories of subjectivity, although as far as cause is defined as anything that ever brings about the effect, then Exteriority, which is given in the form of images, is also a factor for us bringing about effects. Böhm repudiated all philosophical traditions that respect the Exterior in any way. According to him even Berkeley had been a spiritualist, Kant had “vacillated”, and realist tendencies ought to have been eliminated. Indeed Bartók’s interest in modern philosophy was not accidental, there were found after his death a lot of works by Berkeley and Hume among his books. Hume, too, spoke of living, functioning reciprocity. He did not doubt the existence of reality, but said that what we call “objective” is a world of images in the mind, presented in conformity with the mind’s own principles. It can be safely said that Bartók returned to Kant, and he did so in opposition to Böhm. The law of causality is a subjective category of understanding, which we introduce into the world of arisen images in the name of understanding and knowing. In as much as that which causes an effect is regarded schematically as the cause, then indeed it must be extended over the world of plain *physis*, plain *physis* is also a cause of our world of images as a result of reciprocity. The real world however is only given to us in the world of images, so it is no use to speak of “reality in itself “. Böhm would in all probability reject his disciple’s statements, including them as startling examples in the critical passages of his discussions entitled *The Basic Contradiction of Realism*.

To sum up, in *The Essence of Philosophy* great new perspectives of pursuing philosophy are put into words. We could easily get embarrassed if we were asked which philosophical tradition Bartók followed. Either he was a follower of none, or of the entire history of philosophy. It is especially difficult to understand why his whole life work is classified as Hungarian neo-Kantian value philosophy. Where is neo-Kantianism in the program of *The Essence of Philosophy*, and consequently in the development of this program? Though Bartók made reference to Rickert’s notion of cultural value, but he made reference to Pál Sipos as well. The program he outlined is anything but a neo-Kantian one. Neither Böhm nor Kant appear in *The Essence of Philosophy* as program-giving theoreticians, and hopefully I have managed to illustrate some elements of the latent critique of Böhm adequately. Neither is value the most important subject to Bartók, nor is spirit. He delineated the limits of philosophizing for himself that could serve like a guide. Although certain problems could be cited as having been elaborated by him on his own, but then they are left to get back into the great whole they are parts of. It is especially important to keep this principle in mind in connection with the problems we have just touched upon, including his view on spirit and axiology. It would be mistaken to think that a life’s works of this amount and such conceptuality can be reviewed easily. This is the true message of *The Essence of Philosophy*.

## Exclamation Marks and Question Marks

In the following I shall attempt to present Bartók's life work and to adumbrate their essential tendencies. First of all it will be expedient to differentiate three periods for a working hypothesis, since at about the turning points of his life his way of thinking also changed radically. In the period from the start of his career till the Peace Dictates of Versailles in 1920 he was engaged in developing Böhm's ideas further and came to be wrestling with Böhmian thinking in his own specific way, as illustrated with my sentences on *The Philosophy of Moral Value* and *The Essence of Philosophy*. In the 1920's and 30's Bartók wrote very much, his theoretical writings point in the direction of philosophical anthropology. The years of the Second World War were not very favorable to the Muse of creative work; still the first volume of the mentioned philosophy system could only be worked on in the war years and subsequent years. (He informed the secretary-general of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences informally about the ready-made text in a letter, however the text itself cannot be found anywhere). Little can be said about the third period, he lived in Budapest as an outcast until his death in 1949. His learning and expertise were not needed, and he himself could not produce any complete work. (In the 1966 Hungarian edition of Kant's *Critique of Judgement* his name was indicated as an editor.) His serious eye disease prevented him from working, even in the street he had to be accompanied.

The writer of these sentences is deeply convinced that Bartók's most important contribution to philosophy was his philosophical anthropology. Anthropology is a difficult subject, because its job is to synthesize many partial problems of philosophy and also to lay the fundamentals. It cannot have been the result of a sudden decision. Anthropology could only be written after some adequate preparation. The ramifications of his theoretical writings have been shortly alluded to in this study, but neither his anthropology, nor his essays for the Academy can be appreciated so easily. Bartok can only be understood through Bartók. Let us not expect 'isms', nor search for mistakes, nor compare theories unfoundedly, but let Bartók himself speak! Among the subjects of his discussions worth considering in themselves are moral philosophy, spirit, system, metaphysics, existence, the soul, instinct, the mind, and consciousness, and together they are the core notions of anthropology. Value, too, has its place and role in his developing theories, but it is not so important as certain reviews make it out to be. Such interpretation shows unwillingness to give up the too simple position that "a disciple is also an epigone". The great question is how the four volume system would have looked, if we knew only the title of the first volume? Given our knowledge of *The Essence of Philosophy* and his anthropology, it is even questionable to us if he had kept himself to the Böhmian rules of axiology in the volumes of the system, by working out the three self-values one by one. Though a re-interpreted general axiology may not be out of the question, probably a general axiology analyzing the ontological status of values from the start along different lines than those marked out by Böhm.

To be quite frank, my aim is sketching the possible directions of further development tentatively rather than finding out what his ideas were. On the basis of *The Essence of Philosophy* it is possible to speculate that the second volume was on the theory of understanding, the third on ontology, and the fourth on axiology including not only a general part but also special axiologies, too. His philosophical anthropology that has so

often been referred to is worth reading also from this point of view. And since the character of the philosopher, that is philosophy cultivated as a life program was also one of his theoretical subjects, let me ask the question whether it is possible to fulfill a program so assumed? Is a man's life enough to find room for the adequate solutions of problems arising from the program? Even the asking of that question needs an explanation. "I started to write my true works when I was seventy," said a Hungarian theoretician of a completely different character. György Lukács's confession, given the knowledge of his life's works, ought to be taken seriously, since it should not be forgotten that even his *Ontology* survived in manuscript! A life's work left unfinished characterizes the problem itself the work was on: maybe philosophy concerns such high dimensions of life whose adequate theoretical elaboration surpasses the possibilities of a man's life? There is no finished philosophy, but a life's work left unfinished. Why else should we read the classics of the history of philosophy again and again? Their re-reading cannot make up for the necessity of solving the problems arisen recently, but is it possible to answer the current questions of philosophy concerning the problems of the Whole, - even if not the same things are thought to belong in the Whole by different theoreticians? An answer in the negative is also justified by the two examples above, and then the need for continuation emerges immediately. It must not be allowed either in Bartók's case or in Lukács's that the need for continuation should be satisfied as directed by different ideologies. Bartók's philosophy is said to be out-of-date by today's critics, but indeed it is rather difficult to define up-to-datedness in philosophy unequivocally, and it is especially so when used as a criterion. In what way is Aristotle "up-to-date"? Does such a classification belong here at all? It can easily happen that a philosophical conception is classified as out-of-date in the name of some ideologically motivated ideal of progressiveness. But the real question is this: is philosophical anthropology itself out-of-date? Is it possible to pursue a new philosophical anthropology? If it is, then how much is it helped by a given concrete and already elaborated anthropology (namely Bartók's anthropology)? Or is it worth venturing to have the already existing theoretical prospects unfold?

Bartók was an outstanding historian of philosophy. He wrote monographs on the history of philosophy that are worth publishing any day. *A History of the Idea of Moral Value I - II* would pass for a work filling a gap existing even today, if it were published again. His monographs used to serve as textbooks that several generations learned philosophy from. There are plans for publishing his history of philosophy that is still in manuscript form. His monographs on Kant and Böhm are usually referred to together, although they are only similar to each other in giving a very reliable picture of the lives and works of the philosophers treated. Kant is naturally presented as the philosopher of criticism, while Böhm's philosophy is reviewed in its entirety. At the same time the monograph on Böhm is also a proof of his alienation from his master, as Böhm's work is regarded as closed, and placed in a perspective of cultural history. In the Introduction to the Böhm monograph there is a sentence that says that the author of the monograph will refrain from any polemics with Böhm. This is perhaps the only locus that reveals some reservations Bartók had about Böhm's philosophy with regard to the feasibility of developing it further. In other words he would have been polemical, but the genre of monograph writing gave him an excuse for avoiding a polemic, which would have certainly been detrimental for certain exterior viewpoints. An especially important one of his historical monographs is his book called *Kant's Ethics and the Moral Philosophy of German Idealism* (1930). The subject

matter is what the title promises, it gives an outline of the ethical ideas of classical German philosophy up to Schleiermacher. At the same time, in its peculiar way it lets the spiritual struggle get through that Bartók had with Böhm's legacy in the 1910's, and which I have already mentioned in connection with *The Philosophy of Moral Value*. What he says about transcendentalism is also informative theoretically, and especially the part discussing the relation between the transcendental critique of knowledge and that of ethics has furnished us with a basis for our discussion.

In this connection it should be mentioned that *The Essence of Philosophy* was probably written towards the end of the 1910's, although it was first published in 1924. He made reference to Scheler's work of 1921 subsequently only in a footnote. The 1942 edition of *The Philosophy of Moral Value* is much better known than the first one of 1911 that the already cited Pál Sándor knew nothing of. Bartók's writings from the start of his career should not be mistaken for the publications of his father who was still alive at that time, to close the number of philological problems together with this presentation of the monographs.

There is a very close connection between his writings furthering theoretical work and his historical monographs. In his theoretical writings Bartók likes to make references to the classics of the history of philosophy just as much as to some contemporary philosophers. He explicates his own conception starting out from a passage by one or the other of them. The pieces so integrated into a whole make the impression, as if the cited authors said the same but with different words, and perhaps needing some amendment. The historical monographs were written in the name of the same perspective, the subject of the history of the idea of moral value, for example, was elaborated by him in terms of a unique idea that had been historically and thematically the same, but formulated in different ways. It must not be forgotten that Idea is at the same time one of the central terms of the philosophy of Spirit, and the latter is organic part of philosophical anthropology. From another point of view, Idea is also significant methodically, as it establishes connections among different theories of the same subject matter, without letting any fanciful interpretations to disturb the clarity of discussion. Is there need for some such kind of help for the sake of studying philosophy? If we say "no", then we reject history of philosophy as a discipline. If we say "yes", then there is just one question to be cleared up: how much do Bartók's historical monographs meet his own requirements of the genre?

In the bibliography of his works his papers and longer treatises form a special group. These writings have the common characteristics that their subject matter fit his conception, his own philosophical theory. (For example: *Democritus' Teaching on Moral Value*, *The Fate of Descartes in Hungary*, etc.) We classify under this group his essays on the history of Hungarian philosophy and his writings to keep Böhm's memory alive. Bartók put a lot of effort into cultivating Hungarian philosophy, and in this spirit he dedicated important papers not only to Böhm, but for example to János Erdélyi, Sámuel Köteles or Károly Mihályi also. He treated Hungarian philosophy as organic part of philosophical culture itself, even if there was still much to be done for legitimize it, - and there still is. The explicitly practical tasks are theoretically also justified, since theories have been and are conceived in the same spirit in both the Hungarian and the European spheres of culture, the Idea is the same. Ought we not to take his example seriously? To be earnest, in Hungarian public life

it is not usual to give respect to the achievements of a Hungarian author! It counts as much more “scientific” to study a twentieth grade foreign neo-Kantian philosopher, than a Hungarian one. This has actually been a tendency since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. An understandable affinity for prevailing modish trends has associated with an inexplicable contempt for the achievements of Hungarian authors. Bartók, a pleasing exception, always took scrupulous care to refer to the Hungarian aspects of the theory he was expounding, and also to point out the substantial and conceptual importance of those aspects if possible.

His journalistic writings were, naturally, closely connected with his public activities. An outstanding review by György Gaál<sup>9</sup> gives plenty of information on the erudite professor of philosophy at the Theological Seminary and the Faculty of Arts, who was also an outstanding academician with good international connections, a magazine editor, and a committed supporter of the spiritual movement of the Reformed Church, and scholarly public affairs. Our present text edition however presents the philosopher, and the duty of the writer of this introduction only allows to mention a few theoretical aspects of his public activities. Miklós Szabolcsi attributes “fideist” views to him in a book on Attila József,<sup>10</sup> but Bartók’s high respect for tradition ought not to be mistaken for fideism. As an admirer of traditions he was highly tolerant of most different peoples, religions, ideologies, and trends, but he did not for a moment have any doubt whatsoever about the principle that *the truth is the whole*, and consequently that everything new falls in line with the old. What is new, being part of the great Whole, can only bring another shade of color into the overall picture. Bartók firmly believed that he was right (who does not?), but he would not impose what he thought to be right on anybody, and it is certainly not true that he taught his own religious belief at the university. According to his students the opposite was true, the small seminary group was often invited to dinner at his home, and the talk at the table would actually resume the seminary-class subject-matter, with Bartók being pleased at patiently assisting the birth of one or another new idea. Philosophy was an autonomous way of thinking for him, he would always mark theology definitely off from philosophy. He taught “pure” philosophy at the seminary, too. It is another matter that late in life, when he had been banished from education and public life, he worked half blind also on an essay on the philosophy of religion, as witnessed by his notes found after his death. The notes and records made late in life are mostly précis and synopses from the books he was reading, recorded in a diary order. Philosophy of religion does not very well fit in his overall life work, in principle it would only have a place in his system of doctrines as the last motif, otherwise the self-organizing force of the organic system has no sense.

A Bartók work was last published in Hungary in 1947. A philosopher can only be understood through his own texts. In whatever way we evaluate his philosophy, the spirit he represents, and his role and significance in cultural history, his adequate appreciation

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<sup>9</sup>György GAÁL: *Málnási Bartók György (1882 - 1970)* in: *Akik jó tanúbizonyságot nyertek. A Kolozsvári Református Teológia tanárai 1895-1948* (Those who bore true witness. The Professors at the Reformed Church Theological Seminary in Kolozsvár, 1895 - 1948) Kolozsvár, 1996, pp. 137-179.

<sup>10</sup>Miklós SZABOLCSI: *Érik a fény. József Attila élete és pályája 1923-27* (The Light is Getting Bright. The Life and Calling of Attila József 1923 - 27), Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1977, p. 61. It seems to me a mystery why Szabolcsi says Bartók was a fideist and Böhm a Hegelian.

can only be effected through his works. At the same time it is indisputable that the entirety of Hungarian philosophy would deserve more varying evaluations, that is what Bartók's example is a warning of. For a closing thought this introduction may perhaps endure a personal note: the author of the introduction should like to express his thankfulness to Éva Hegyi for her very appreciative, affectionate, empathic attitude towards Bartók's philosophy, and expects her to give significant help with tasks to be tackled concerning the hermeneutics of Bartók.



## GYÖRGY BARTÓK DE MÁLNÁS

(1882-1970)

Philosopher, philosophy historian, university professor. Born in Nagyenyed (Aiud), completed his academic studies in Kolozsvár (Cluj/Klausenburg), Leipzig and Heidelberg. In 1912, he was qualified as a lecturer at the University of Kolozsvár. After the Trianon peace treaty he was forced to leave Transylvania, and he moved to Szeged, then back to Kolozsvár, which was followed, in 1944, by a move to Budapest. In the Hungarian capital he taught at the Technical University and at the Reformed Academy of Theology. Mr. Bartók was member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and he received the Baumgarten Prize and the Gorove Prize.

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This picture was taken in 1960 in Budapest. [Ed. Mikes International]

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## § 1. THE CONCEPT AND FUNCTION OF PHILOSOPHY

Aristotle, who intended to bring together all the knowledge of his age within the framework of an admirably built system, considered it a general and characteristic feature of philosophy that a philosopher should be able to contemplate and meditate about everything. Aristotle recognised the essence of philosophy clearly. Indeed philosophy identifies its own special function in every field of knowledge: no branch of scientific knowledge can do, at a certain level of its development, without the contribution provided by philosophy. This universal feature of philosophy, however, is largely responsible for the fact that establishing the essence and function of philosophy belongs among its most difficult problems that have constantly recurred during its history, demanding a solution. No philosopher ever has avoided trying to find an answer to this problem. Beginning with Plato himself all philosophers found themselves in an awkward and necessitating situation when trying to answer this question. While students of each branch of science can define the concept and function of their own branch clearly and simply right at the start of their research, the philosopher has to resort to all sorts of explanations and comments even about this first problem. This is because those other branches of science, whether they belong to the so called natural sciences or the humane and historical studies, by concentrating on a segment of the infinite reality surrounding us, study just one well defined and delimited class of things and events, and that makes it unnecessary for them to dwell long over what their subject and task is. For philosophy, however, the task of establishing its own function and concept almost *takes a central place* among its countless problems. Each of the sciences can clearly and definitely set its own target already at the beginning of its analysis, supposing it to be familiar to all. These sciences, being engaged in definite segments of reality, do not need to justify either the necessity of the subject studied by them, or the aim of their analysis, and are well aware of the method to be applied to achieve their aim. The respective sciences, e.g. mathematics, jurisprudence, religious studies, linguistics, biology, physics, medicine, economics, politics, etc., presuppose, as given realities, the existence of numbers, law, religion, language, life, nature, health and illness, economies, states. Their existence is not doubted by anyone, and no one in his senses would think of demanding that the existence of these phenomena ought to be proven first, before the sciences engaged in them might start their analysis.

In contrast with such a convenient situation of the sciences, philosophy always has to cope with the difficult problem of *justifying its subject, defending the authoritativeness of its research, pointing out its essence and making it evident*. So while the subject matter of each science is already given from the outset, and neither its existence nor the legitimacy of its research needs any kind of justification, for philosophers since Plato it has been one of the most difficult and most important problems to explicate the function and the objective of philosophy. Plato himself devoted a whole dialogue to discuss this matter, and it is a recurrent problem in all of his other dialogues as well. There is nothing to wonder about that. *Just because of its special nature, philosophy can only make its essence, its concept and its objective clearly evident while performing its own task and through performing its own task*. The problem of the essence itself of philosophy becomes clear

and visible, to all those who obtain the ability of such vision through the power of spirit, just in the enlivening process of philosophising. The essence of philosophy is made manifest for us in the work of the philosopher, in which his whole philosophical ethos and personality develops. It follows from that that the essence of philosophy can only fully reveal itself when the philosophising mind *investigates, inquires, meditates*, while patiently conversing with itself all the time. One is able to do philosophy only if one is engaged in a continuous and profound dialogue with the spirit dwelling in one. This conversation, this quiet and patient dialogue with oneself is *dialectics*, i.e. the examination of things through logical conversation.

If such is the state of affairs, then clearly it is only possible to get immersed in the essence of philosophy through philosophical activity: the essence is getting clear to us in the course of this activity until eventually it shines up in all its clarity. Defining the essence does not precede the work of philosophy but *succeeds* it. It is this fact that gives meaning to and explicates *Kant's* announcement that what he wanted to teach was not philosophy but *philosophising*. Everyone ought to find out the essence of philosophy during one's own philosophical meditations and on account of them. We can only encourage one in this work. Those who do not have the energy to set out on it by themselves, must give up enjoying the delicious fruits that philosophy presents its devoted and humble adepts with.

Now however the question justly emerges whether some people are right in unhesitatingly blaming philosophy for not deserving to be called science because it is unable even to point out what is its essence, subject matter, or function? This question leads us on to the second issue of our discussions.

## § 2. THE ESSENCE OF PHILOSOPHY AND THE PHILOSOPHICAL SPIRIT

It is said that the above mentioned inability of philosophy is best highlighted by the fact that each philosopher gives a different definition of philosophy, and the definitions are often fully contrary to one another, so that there are as many definitions of the essence and concept of philosophy as there are philosophers. It is indeed undeniable that formally, that is from the point of view of wording, definitions concerning the essence and subject matter of philosophy are very different from one another. But when one has a more searching look at these definitions *through the teachings of the relevant philosophers*, then it will be realised that under these forms are hidden the same essentialities of the *philosophical spirit*, of this spirit's activities. The same essentialities urge, drive and guide the work of different philosophers even when their work, setting off from different starting points and going on in different directions, leads to completely different destinations. Different philosophers, professing different teachings and going along different roads in different directions, are driven by the same *ethos of philosophy*, led and driven by the same 'eros' of philosophy, their souls are urged by the same longing towards a higher unity. The same sort of spiritual organicism makes them philosophers and their teachings philosophy, even when grown in Hindu or Chinese soil. *The inner constitution of the philosophical spirit has always been and will always be the same.* Lao-Tse and Yajnavalkya, Plato and Aristotle, Bacon and Descartes, Kant and Hegel, Nietzsche and Bergson, Szécheny and Böhm, Kölcsey and Pál Sipos, were all made philosophers by the same 'eros' of philosophy. The teachings and philosophies, and even the lives of all of them, are manifestations of the same philosophical spirit, even though this spirit appeared and was reflected in different ages, in different peoples, and in different persons. *There is only one philosophy because there is only one spirit of philosophy.*

It is *universal* spirit guiding the mind of the philosopher that makes philosophy universal in the most noble and finest meaning of the word.<sup>1</sup> The work of this spirit begins where the activities of the senses, i.e. seeing, feeling hearing, tasting, etc., which are fixed upon individual objects, ends. So it must be noted already now that the work of this universal spirit always and exclusively targets *the universal* in order to grasp it at a glance and make it understandable to us. What follows from that? It follows that identifying the essence of philosophy is not achieved by realising a monotonous correspondence among the definitions of philosophy but by the revealing itself of the philosophical spirit in the different philosophical teachings and by the philosophical *ethos* living in the soul of each philosopher.<sup>2</sup> This philosophical spirit, appearing in Plato's philosophy as longing 'eros',

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Varga János: *Bölcsészettan*, (János Varga: *Philosophy*.) I. kötet: *Tapasztalati lélektan*. 2. kiadás, Pest, 1861. (Vol. I.: *Experimental Psychology*. 2nd edition, Pest, 1861) „For in philosophy we try to bring together the individual and detailed phenomena of the world of nature and of humanity under a *single principle*; we try to find *the permanent, the essential* in the transient and contingent phenomena of the world of nature and humanity; we try to reach back to *the final or ultimate fundamentals* of our natural and human world.” Page 1.

<sup>2</sup> “*Ethos*” is a genial, tranquil, creative state of the soul; its opposite is “*pathos*”, an affective, passionate, distressed agitation of the soul

pulsates in the whole history of philosophy, and Hegel taught about it with everlasting validity that through the different philosophies it reveals the “One Philosophy” at its different developmental stages, and makes it evident that the different principles serving as the fundamentals of the different systems are only branches of the one and same Whole. We can also add that in our days we long for and are fond of the Whole and the Universal the more, because darkness has rushed in and is preying on us again, when the meanings of ideas are turning insignificant and their values getting unstable, when we can no more distinguish the light from the shadow, and the chances in the future are not even dimly suspected. The bird of Minerva (philosophy) is just taking off again for a vigorous flight.

If we approach the different philosophical teachings and systems in this manner and are able to behold the universal philosophical spirit in them, then perhaps we shall not endeavour in vain to see and understand the essence of philosophy as clearly as possible. But we must not forget even for a moment that it is the same activities of universal spirit and of the organised state of spirit, the *eros* and the *ethos*, which appear everywhere that real philosophy can be found, just as much in a fully developed closed system as in an individual thesis or deep-rooted theorem. The same substantial germ of philosophy grows everywhere to display, when developed enough, what is called the essence of philosophy. This essence may be very different formally, for it may get very different sorts of colouring to agree with the composition of the ethos of each philosopher, but the same substantial germ comes to life in it to produce the cultural value that was called *philosophia* by the Greeks.

### § 3. PHILOSOPHY IS KNOWLEDGE

If philosophy is considered to be the developments that have occurred in the course of the history of philosophy, then in opposition to any views to the contrary, which like to style philosophy poetry or even daydreaming, we must declare that *philosophy is a product of reason in every respect*, and has not got anything to do with subjective fantasies or imitative and reproductive arts. Actually the word 'philosophy' itself generally meant 'knowledge' even in the works of Thucydides for example. And in languages that the word 'philosophy' is missing from (e.g. Chinese), the spiritual attitude characteristic of philosophy is indicated as 'learning,' or 'knowledge'. All philosophies are therefore products of reason, even when on closer examination the nature of some reasoning is controlled by mysticism leading upwards into transcendent regions, where the logical work of reason stops to give way to presentiments, longings, or reveries of the heart. Although in the philosophical products of reason the whole personality of the philosopher and the deepest ethos of his soul get expressed, as we shall see it later, still the job of philosophising is always governed by reason and understanding. In this sense rationalism, which champions the rights of reason, will be everlasting, whatever turns may be taken by fashions of thinking.

For ancient Greeks philosophy, as general knowledge, comprised all branches of science including the natural sciences and mathematics. It took a long course of development for the individual branches of science to break away from the trunk of philosophy and become independent disciplines. For the Greeks it was unquestionable that philosophy was knowledge.

When it is inquired what characterised that knowledge in opposition to all other types of knowledge, it shall be answered that philosophy for the Greeks had a main characteristic that first came to the foreground in their time: philosophy was always meant to be theoretical knowledge merely and exclusively, i.e. *disinterested contemplation*, which did not regard enjoyment, profitability, or gains, but *regarded knowledge as valuable for its own sake*, and found the value of knowledge in knowledge itself. In a story by Herodotus Croesus received Solon, who was paying him a visit, with these words, "I've heard it said that you had visited many countries *for the sake of contemplation*," *'theories heneke'*. That is to say the only aim of Solon's travels was to contemplate countries, landscapes, peoples and their customs, religions, cultures. He did not travel in order to bring in a profit from it and learn useful methods like ways of building or improving the calendar. He travelled in order to contemplate and to become wiser through this contemplation. This contemplative or theoretical character of philosophy was very rightly emphasised by Herodotus because it has remained a main feature of philosophy until our own days: all philosophies are theories, so the expression '*philosophia practica*' is a big self-contradiction. Philosophy will be theoretical even when it meditates about questions of practical life. Meditation even about such matters is a fruit of contemplation and theory.

So philosophy inherited two root characteristics from the Greeks: *universality* and the character of disinterested *theory*. There used to be times when both characteristics

seemed to have been lost, and philosophy was meant to be limited to a narrow field of solving practical problems. Those times, thank heavens, were a transitional period in history, and philosophy has held strongly on, especially in the systems of its great representatives, to these two valuable inherited characteristics, knowing that neither of them could be given up without the fall of philosophy. These two characteristics are conspicuous in the philosophies of Bacon and Descartes, two great founders of modern philosophy. They also shine through the teaching of Kant, whose philosophy brings *all* human knowledge in relation with the essential objectives of the human mind.

## § 4. THE ROOT CHARACTERISTICS OF PHILOSOPHY: No. 1: UNIVERSALITY

Philosophy's holding strongly on to the two above mentioned characteristics is a proof that these two are not only valuable inheritance that are both proper and worthwhile to keep safe, but also calls attention to universality and theory, i.e. disinterested contemplation, being *inseparably connected with the essence of philosophy*. This connection is manifestly present in the changes that first of all affected the characteristic of universality and have resulted in a transformation of this characteristic.

We have seen that to the Greeks, in the beginning, philosophy meant knowledge and understanding in general. It included physics, mathematics, astronomy, etc., and even in modern times physics and some of the natural sciences were for a long time regarded as parts of philosophy.<sup>3</sup> So for example in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century *István Teőke of Marosvásárhely*, professor of physics at Bethlen College, gave lectures in physics grounded in the teachings of Descartes as part of the philosophy course, although he was well versed in Newtonian physics. Universality in this sense, however, was disappearing more and more; the more branches of science got disentangled and grew independent, the more the scope of philosophical investigations grew limited. The freshly independent branches of science cut off more and more problems of philosophy for themselves, leaving contemplation for contemplation's sake to their thinner and thinner procreator as its permanent activity, but unmercifully insisting on taking from it what they deemed to be their legitimate spheres of investigation. In this way philosophy lost a considerable part of its subject matter without however actually becoming impoverished.

After this inevitable and fatal partitioning, however, the characteristic of universality seemed to be going to cease completely. In the beginning the universality of philosophy had been considered immutable by the Greeks because it had comprised the whole kingdom of knowledge. So when each discipline that had laid claim on a part of knowledge had left its old dwelling place ungratefully and had grown strongly independent in its new life, it seemed clear that universality became a mere word, a sort of *epiteton ornans*, that still remained the due of good old philosophy for considerations of respect and habitude, but was actually an ornament that philosophy did not deserve.

Nevertheless the separation of the different disciplines from philosophy did not affect the universal character of philosophy at all, it remained what it had been since the beginning, i.e. '*scientia universalis*' in the truest sense of the phrase. Aspiration for universality had been natural in Greek philosophy already before Socrates, in the so-called Pre-Socratic age, when all philosophers tried to find the basis and beginning – *arkhe* – of the universe, in order to understand and explain *everything* by means of it. Aspiration for

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<sup>3</sup> Conf. Cicero, who says, 'Omnis rerum optimarum cognitio atque in iis exercitatio philosophia nominata est', that is 'all knowledge of the best things and being practiced in them is called philosophy'. – Locke himself writes in his chief work in the 17<sup>th</sup> century "...philosophy, which is nothing but true knowledge of things" (in: Letter to the Reader).

universality is indeed alive in the minds of philosophers in our days, too, when they would like to grasp the whole world in one view, and comprehend the eternal meaning of human life in it, or when they want to weave all reality together with the adamant network of intelligence, the *Logos*. Thus throughout all ages and in spite of all changes, philosophy reserves for itself the indisputable right, and unavoidable duty, of being '*universalis scientia*': it shall never deny its universal character without also denying itself.

All of the above said shows that philosophy has always been a universal science and it must always remain so. If, however, this universality has been lost because of the separation of the special branches of science, is there still a way for it to preserve universality? When we try to answer that question, it must be noted right away that philosophy cannot ensure its universal character by forcing the separated problems back in order to cover *the whole region of knowledge* again, and, ignoring the special method of each discipline, to handle each question in philosophy's own way. Such arbitrary and arrogant measures are contrary to the nature of philosophy, and would not be successful anyway. Philosophy cannot take on the task of solving the problems of any other branch of science, still less may it monopolize that task. And it would be even more mistaken to suppose that the universal nature of philosophy can be regained by regarding and pursuing that aim as a concise and easily manageable summary of the well sifted results of each and every discipline. If we insist on the universality of philosophy, as we ought to, then we have to start on a different road to find its universality somewhere else.

We must get immersed more in the inner make-up of philosophy in order to understand its universality fully, as it belongs to its essence. Incomplete solutions and compromises are just as dangerous to philosophy as taking things easy. If we concentrate on the essence of philosophy, then we must change the direction of our progress: "universality" itself must be our guidance in the direction of the essence of philosophy, because our continuing efforts to understand universality will take us closer and closer to grasping the essence of philosophy.

So let us continue in this direction, on the road of explaining universality, even if it proves to be hard. The greater difficulties you can tackle, the more you ought to rejoice, if you want to become a good philosopher. When examining the different developments of philosophy from those of India or China to the teachings of the philosophers of our own days, we must realise again and again that philosophy has never endeavoured to *obtain partial* knowledge, in its wondering over reality it has never got stuck at particular details of this reality in order to analyse, describe, or scrutinize them fully in themselves. It has always turned its attention to the undivided *Whole*. The main objective of all kinds of true philosophy is to understand this big and solid *Whole* through principles of universal validity and with the help of primordial truths originating from the *Whole*. *The thinking of a philosopher is governed by the Whole over the details, and his mind is turned away from isolated particularities towards all-encompassing universality.*

It is this turning of philosophy towards the great *Whole* that brings about what is to be understood as the character of universality. Aristotle was right to say that philosophy can cogitate about everything, but it cogitates about anything from the point of view of the *Whole*, the *Universal*, connecting each particular to the universal *Whole* with the threads of thinking. Each particularity acquires its sense and meaning only through this connection.

All that however does not mean that the philosopher may hold in contempt the results that the particular branches of science offer to him for the understanding of details. The value of the details and of their knowledge is obvious to the philosopher, and for that reason it is with gratitude that he turns to the particular disciplines and receives the results they offer to him. The philosophical ethos is however shown by the philosopher not stopping as a passive receiver at these details of the results of scientific knowledge. On the contrary, he tries to understand these specific pieces of knowledge from the viewpoint of the universal and all-encompassing Whole, knowing that every such detail is valuable only as *part of the universal Whole*, when our thinking has found the detail's place in it.

But what is this Whole in which every meaning originates and on which all validity depends? We shall endeavour to answer this important question in some later expositions of this essay. Now let us be content with establishing that it is this incessant focusing on the Whole that makes philosophy the "royal science" that Plato spoke about; also the "perpetuity" of philosophy is ensured by this incessant focusing, and not by the content that is forever liable to change. It is the *attitude* that defines the special inner make-up of philosophy. Only universal philosophy concentrating on the Whole deserves the name 'philosophia perennis' (as Leibniz called it). Universality manifesting itself in the concentration on the Whole is a feature of philosophy only. Other disciplines do not share this quality, since they are directed towards details and are confined within the limits of the *type*, the *special*, the *particular*. The dignity that has made philosophy so much respected by the best people in all times originates in its "universality" surpassing all that is "special".

## § 5. THE ROOT CHARACTERISTICS OF PHILOSOPHY: No. 2: DISINTERESTED CONTEMPLATION

Closely and essentially related to the characteristic of universality is another root characteristic of philosophy, that is *disinterested contemplation*, disinterested meditation, or *theory for the sake of theory*, about which Herodotus wrote, as we have seen above. This characteristic is so deeply rooted in the essence of philosophy, that all philosophy is essentially mere theory; or to put it more clearly, all philosophy is *only and exclusively* theory, giving no rules, no norms, no laws, no advice to practical living. Any philosophy that serves practical life or the maintenance of life, and engages in some sort of “praxis”, has ceased to be philosophy and has lost the respect due to philosophy, and only usurps the name of philosophy.

Universality cannot be separated from theory, neither can theory from universality: to anyone contemplating freely of interest, the All, the Whole, constitutes the object of his contemplation and meditation. Universality, which results from concentrating on the Whole, not only forces philosophy to avoid stopping at isolated details, but also compels it to pass by details to go on towards the Whole, striving to understand it. Only those who are able to strive incessantly after the Whole will achieve their final aim, which is nothing else but the scattered details finding their eternal meanings. Should philosophers settle down to details for devoting their attention to them, this *interest* in details would destroy the quality of being free from interest, and they would lose sight of the desired Whole, whose contemplation and the meditation over which gives birth to ‘theory’ in the original Greek sense of that word. Accordingly the philosopher is not bound by any interest to any detail, examining details does not hold out promises of any profit, and so he has a clear conscience in leaving their study and research to the different branches of science.

Being disinterested is the only thing that makes it possible for philosophy to turn its attention to the Whole. There is not and cannot be any kind of interest that could force the philosopher to get stuck by details for long and get absorbed in their examination for some outside objective. It follows from that that philosophy cannot develop where such freedom from interests has not developed or has been pushed into the background for any reason, because there the researcher’s attention is kept captive by a rush of details, preventing him from devoting his time, energy, and all his attention to the all-embracing Whole. Philosophy has therefore been created by a full freedom from interests, which also ensures its being universal. This disinterestedness liberates spirit, to make full use of the energies inherent in it and the character of universality implied in it, so that peacefully hovering over all details, it can yield the sweet fruit of its activities, philosophy, the universal science.

It would be misleading to believe that the universal character of philosophy can only be saved, if, with the help of certain formulas and viewpoints, the most general and certain results of the special braches of science are fixed into a stable system, and, making certain concessions here and there of course, it is regarded as an interesting spiritual

conglomerate. Such a manoeuvre, which yields no new knowledge, nor any new results, does not need philosophy, as shown by Spencer's great system, which gives up just at those points where philosophy could begin. For one to make such a spiritual conglomerate it is certainly enough to be slightly versed in the special sciences and to have a certain sense of generalities. The universal character of philosophy, however, does not express itself in such an architectonic and formal way, but as a thoroughly essential feature, *one of the components of the inner constitution of philosophy*, which is due to its freedom from interests.

The character of universality must be clearly seen and understood. It must be realised that however diligently we intend to arrange whatever great results of the special branches of science within the framework of a general system; such an attempt *will never yield philosophy*, even if it were successful. Neither has true philosophy ever aimed at extracting a new Wholeness from the special fields of knowledge with the help of some sort of methodology. About such a Wholeness it must have been known in advance that it would not contain anything new, but a certain kind of summing up of the collected pieces of knowledge. The Greek philosophers did not only love wisdom, but also behaved wisely by expressing contempt for and disapproval of 'knowledge of many things' – *polymathia* -, as the enemy of true philosophy. Philosophy has always aimed at understanding the particular from the general, the Part from the Whole, and it must continue doing so both *today* and in the future, if it wants to perform its duty. By striving to understand the Part from the Whole in order to clear up the meanings of both, and so appraise the values of both, one will find the connecting links without which any piece of knowledge, whatever its magnitude may be, is nothing more than a separate piece of dead material.

## § 6. THE PHILOSOPHER'S SPIRITUAL CONSTITUTION AND THE ROOT CHARACTERISTICS OF PHILOSOPHY

From where do universality and disinterestedness *get into* philosophy? After the preceding expositions we may be able to answer that question without much difficulty. The fact itself that philosophy is universal contemplation indicates that the above discussed characteristics of philosophy, as true *root characteristics*, may not have any other source than *the philosopher's inner constitution* itself, which is the ethos naturally determining the philosopher's mind with its peculiarities. The philosophical spirit is universal contemplation, equally turning all questions and problems of reality and knowledge into its examined objects. All philosophical doctrines and constructed systems are *projections* of this universal contemplation, in which the universality and disinterested contemplativeness of spirit are every bit clearly formulated. The spirit animating the mind of the philosopher develops through the act of contemplation itself, and takes a visible shape in the teachings of his philosophy. In other words, the *substantial germ* that dwells in the mind of the philosopher will give birth to each doctrine and system, so that it will not have been born separately for the sake of a book or books that are to be written. Instead it is organically connected by ideal threads to the central thought of a system that as yet exists only ideally, that is potentially, in the mind of the philosopher.<sup>4</sup> The central thought of this ideal system is actually an expression of the ideal gem, and so if the special sub-doctrines, whether or not they are about logic, epistemology, ethics, aesthetics, etc., cannot connect to the central thought of the system that exists perhaps only ideally, then in vain shall we expect philosophy from them. Philosophy will not be born of independent mosaic particles arranged together. Accordingly the question is not whether our attention is turned towards the entirety of some things or pieces of knowledge, but whether the respective thing or piece of knowledge has fallen into the perspective of disinterested and universal view or contemplation that is the animating spirit of philosophical ethos. This is the critical question of the fate and value of all philosophical doctrines.

There follows however another very important and characteristic fact of philosophy from all the above said. The essential feature of universality must not be looked for in the *content* of a philosophy, it being completely indifferent from this point of view, but only in the *form* of the philosophy, which form does not make a contribution to the philosophical system or doctrine from outside. On the contrary, it is a necessary function of the philosophical ethos. The form, in which the content develops, mirrors the ethos. The content may be wide-ranging or select, very varied or uniform in many respects, about science, ethics, arts, religion, social and political life, culture and history, economics and technology. The *form* however that this content has and makes it philosophy is always universal. All contents without exception share this universality as soon as they are brought into the sphere of activity of the philosophical ethos, and consequently become objects of disinterested meditation. This universal meditation and theory makes

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. my dissertation, *A „Rendszer” filozófiai vizsgálata (An Examination of the Philosophical System)*, Magyar Tudományos Akadémia (the Hungarian Academy of Sciences), Budapest, 1928

judgements, *sine ira et studio*, on everything that is a work of humans or part of nature, and this judgement making, which interweaves the diamond network of the great Whole with the particular things, lets philosophy become the consciousness as it were of humanity, conscious of their own spirit and its works.

If the two root characteristics of philosophy get into a system or the special fields of philosophy from a philosophizing person's ethos, from his inner spiritual constitution, then obviously the *personality* of a philosopher is much more important for philosophy than it is for sciences analysing special segments of reality. Undoubtedly there are moments of the special sciences when certain personality traits of the scientist in question *may come* to the fore, usually however the personalities of scientists fall into the background, hiding as it were behind the studied objects, generally not getting across, even if occasionally it may flash through during research-work. In the rare moments of success, however, it appears all the more remarkably: elegance of exposition, conciseness of form, dry or expressive enumeration of facts, geniality of judgements and remarks are all traits emerging from the deep layers of a researcher's personality and revealing it to us.

In philosophy however the personality of the philosopher and his spiritual constitution gets revealed in all bits of his work, and the profile of a noble and massive personality shines through the philosophical system. '*Pectus est quod facit philosophum*' was often heard from the great Hungarian philosopher Károly Böhm, whose personality and spiritual constitution are better revealed in his philosophical system published under the title '*Man And His World*' (*Ember és Világa*) than it would be by any statue. Each philosophical system is connected to its author's spiritual constitution by pieces of some invisible thread of logic, as if pointing it out and representing it in the outer visible world for those who can find their way in the world of spirit. For that reason philosophical work is a *possibility of life* for the philosopher, indeed the only possibility of life, just like artistic work and art itself are the only possibility of life for an artist. For the philosopher philosophy is a *way of life*, without whose emergence the personality of the philosopher gets lost. That is why the philosopher's spirit *must* take shape in the philosophical work in accordance with its own essence. The verdict by Fichte will always remain true, "Was für eine Philosophie man wähle, hängt. . . davon ab, was man für ein Mensch ist, denn ein philosophisches System ist nicht ein totes Hausrat, den man ablegen oder annehmen könnte, wie er uns beliebte, sondern er ist beseelt durch die Seele des Menschen, der es hat." ("What philosophy one chooses depends on what sort of man one is, since a philosophical system is not a dead fitting that can be picked up or thrown down again as one likes, but something that gets animated by the soul of one it belongs to.") It is not one's arbitrary choice whether one is an idealist or a realist, a pessimist or an optimist, a critic or a dogmatic, as these depend on the soul that dwells in one, and on one's spiritual constitution.

## § 7. REVISION: KNOWLEDGE, THE SELF, AND THE NON-SELF

In the preceding expositions we have pointed out that philosophy has two special and outstanding characteristics, i.e. universality and disinterested contemplation. Since they originate in the root of philosophy, which is the spiritual constitution of a philosopher, we have called them root characteristics. Universality and freedom from interests are not merely some heritage from our ancestors, but things that germinate in the essence of philosophy, and both reveal the essence of philosophy to us. Through examining these root characteristics we have attempted to penetrate into the essence of philosophy and we have stated and made it clear that these two characteristics get into a philosophical system from the ethos of the philosopher. This ethos of a philosopher deploys the substantial germ latent in it through universal and disinterested contemplation, and so gives birth to philosophy as its own objectivization. We have seen and explained that this universal and disinterested contemplation is directed at the all-embracing Whole, which gives meaning to each particle. It follows from that that a part that cannot fit or find its place in this Whole will only linger without meaning and value. A further question now is *what this Whole is*, at which philosophy as theory is directed? The answer to that question will take us even further in understanding the essence of philosophy.

To be able to answer that important question satisfactorily, we must recall what we have said about the activity of the philosophical ethos: the activity of the philosophical ethos, which causes philosophy to be, is pure contemplation, i.e. meditation, the result of which is philosophy as *knowledge*. Philosophy can only be created by our minds: understanding is the *instrumentum instrumentorum*, the main instrument (Descartes) that only makes us able to know reality and to make it our consciously owned possession through knowing it. *The only justification for the existence of philosophy is that it is knowledge.*

Philosophy as knowledge requires us to examine more closely the activity that we usually call “knowledge”: the problem of *knowledge* is one of the basic problems of philosophy. As soon as we start examining the problem of knowledge, we find ourselves swept away by the philosophical ethos, and the work of philosophy is beginning. Indeed self-conscious philosophy starts where knowledge *becomes a problem* to us.

One engaged in the activity of gathering knowledge faces, just at the start of this activity, two factors that are constantly and incessantly in interaction with each other, namely the “Self” and the “Non-Self”. Whatever our philosophical standpoint is and however we regard knowledge, neither of these two factors can be denied or got rid of in the process of knowing. Without a constant and incessant interaction between the *Self* and the *Non-Self* no knowledge can develop, therefore they can be safely called the *basic factors* of knowledge. Between these two basic or primary factors the connection is a tissue of invisible threads originating in both and reaching the other in the course of understanding, and which become intertwined into knots of *meaning*. There are no functioning meanings that have not come about by the interaction of these two factors. As

philosophical thinking progresses step by step and develops stronger and stronger, the spheres and extensions of these two primary factors also change constantly. At the lowest level of thinking the sphere of the *Self* also includes the whole body of the thinker, while the *Non-Self* includes everything occurring outside this body, that is the whole universe with its objects and phenomena. At the highest level then the sphere of the *Self* gets reduced very much, the *Self* itself becomes extremely fine and sublime and 'thins up' as it were: it takes on a *logical* character and means the entirety of logical functions. In opposition to this sublime *Self* everything that is an object or content outside the *Self* is called *Non-Self*.<sup>5</sup> The destination of the sublime *Self* is to get to know the infinite *Non-Self* and to subjugate it by knowing it.

The *Self* is the everlasting subject, which, getting into relation with the *Non-Self*, makes it its object in order to know it. *The Self* gets to know the *Non-Self* by making it its object. *The creation of the object and getting to know it are therefore one and the same activity.* This is the meaning of Kant's following thesis: the conditions of the existence of the object and the conditions of getting to know it are the same.

Undoubtedly the *Non-Self* is already a given when I perceive it through my different senses and through the activity of my soul. It may indeed be said that through this perception it is *given* as an object to me so that through my thinking I can make it an object of my understanding, objectivize it so to say, and get to know it in this way. As long as the activity of my soul remains in the sphere of perception, I only have to do with mere subjectivity, as *Plato* stated it clearly and conclusively in his dialogue called *Theaitetos*. The wind that I feel cool can be felt warm at the same moment by somebody else. Subjectivity ends and objectivity begins when the logical activity of the *Self* establishes regularities about and between things. These regularities are in the *Self* itself and the *Self* employs them to really know things by their means. The self actualizes as it were the regularities in itself, employing them about the objects that are given to it by the senses: in the course of cognition, the objects that have been imposed upon the *Self* with *unconscious* compulsion, that is to say without the consent of its consciousness, are made

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<sup>5</sup>It is remarkable what the famous German neurologist *Kretschmer*, an outstanding representative of modern medicine, says about the *Self*. In his view within the entirety of lived reality we meet a certain irresistible tendency that makes us divide reality into spheres of two polar opposites, those of the 'self' and the 'outside world'. The self is perceived as the strongest focus of our experiences, and is also felt to be an indivisible unit and individuality, as well as the relatedness to one another of all the parts of the *Self*. This consciousness about the *Self* tends to retire into itself more and more: "This is not me, it is just my finger;" "This is not me, it is just a bad thought occurring to me." "If we follow this retiring of the *Self* into itself, in the end there remains nothing more than an imaginary point, hidden *behind* all experiences. Indeed the *Self* is the most imaginary thing among all, but at the same time the object of the most direct certainty." We call 'outside world' all the experienced reality that we do not perceive within ourselves. (*This 'outside world' mainly coincides in certain respects with what we have called 'Non-Self'.*) *Kretschmer* however asks the question whether this outside world does exist without our experiencing it? His answer is the following, "We do not know and cannot ever know it," because everything we examine in the natural sciences is experiences of our souls and not "the things themselves" – Vide *Kretschmer: Orvosi pszichológia, (Medical Psychology)*, translated into Hungarian by Endre Gerő, Budapest, pp.12 ff. – Cf. what the Transylvanian philosopher *Pál Sipos*, a friend of *Kazinczy's*, says about the 'empirical *Self*' ('empíriai én') and the 'transcendental *Self*' ('transzcendentális én'). According to *Sipos* the transcendental *Self* does not exist in time, it is everlasting, unchanging, free reality maintaining itself on its own. Vide *Erdélyi Fenixs*, Vol. 1., Minerva, Kolozsvár, 1944.

its conscious possession by re-moulding and re-presenting them. In this resides the human and cosmic importance of knowledge.

It would be however misleading to regard this cognitive activity of the *Self* to be arbitrary and merely subjective. Although knowledge is *free* creation, it is not *arbitrary* and in no way does it depend only on the *Self*. It is true that all the functions necessary for knowledge are without exception functions of the *Self*, but all these functions actualise themselves without exception upon the *Non-Self*, which has enforced itself upon the *Self*. This being the case, Aristotle may be very right in saying that cognizance is an actualising process that actualises what has only been latent as a possibility, potentiality, until then. The process of knowing is set off by the *Non-Self*. Knowledge that is not started by the *Not-Self* is just wishful day-dreaming, or, what is worse, sickly phantasm of the mind.

## § 8. FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS OF THE RELATION BETWEEN THE SELF AND THE NON-SELF

In consequence of the above said knowledge is permanent relating of the *Self* and the *Non-Self* to each other, a permanent actualisation of the functions that are latent in the *Self*. It is never ending interdependence: the two primary factors cannot exist without each other in the process of knowing. The *Self* may not be without the *Non-Self*, no thinking is without being, - and *vice versa*, the *Non-Self* may not be without the *Self*, no being is without thinking. The threads of logic originating in the *Self* reach the threads originating in the *Non-Self*, which provide the material of reality for the *productive* objectivising work of the *Self*. Cognition is the coalescing with each other of the two kinds of thread from these two sources. The *Self* actually sets up the *Non-Self* for itself, "*das ich setzt das Nicht-ich*," as Fichte put this basic fact of cognition into words. It sets the *Non-Self* for itself in order to realise itself upon it, so that it can actualise and make effective its functions existing so far as potentialities only. The *Self* indeed claims the *Non-Self* for itself because it could never assert itself without it. Therefore the two primary factors stand against each another in a permanent state of existential tension. This tension establishes a permanent relation which is visible in each judgment. This relation is the basis of *truth*, "*relatio est fundamentum veritatis*," as Leibnitz said.

According to our analysis so far, knowledge may only develop where there is a permanent and mutual relationship established and kept between the two primary factors of knowledge. It is when the understanding *Self*, as if completely forgetting about itself, directs its activity at the *Non-Self*, which is waiting for its unfolding set in front of and against the *Self*, that different fields of partial knowledge develop presented by special branches of science such as physics, biology, chemistry, mathematics, history, etc. In these fields of partial knowledge the *Self* puts its own conscious activity fully at the disposal of the *Non-Self*, and wants to learn what constitutes reality outside it. In acquiring these pieces of knowledge and in these particular branches of science, being is revealed to us in its infinite richness. In the course of acquiring such knowledge the *Self* deals with all details of the *Non-Self* fully abstracting them from itself, whether it is a psychological phenomenon or an element of the physical world, or a point treated in the natural sciences or in history. While acquiring these pieces of partial knowledge, the understanding *Self* progresses from detail to detail, studying separate parts of reality by themselves, and searching for regularities everywhere in the parts and among the parts.

The way of partial knowledge is pure *discursio*, that is to say patient and thoughtful research progressing from detail to detail. The aim of such patient work by the *Self* is to understand more and more of the reality lying opposite it, so as to conquer larger and larger territories of being for human knowledge. The pieces of partial knowledge acquired in the course of this slow and comfortable advancement get assembled, in the course of a regular progress, into a Whole that is never closed nor finished. To cite just one example from the accomplishments of scientific research in our own days: it is clear that our scientific world concept has undergone an essential and thorough change as a result of

the findings of modern atomic theory. Physicists have divided the so far indivisible atom into components, and by virtue of quantum theory the concepts of space, time and causation have acquired new meanings. We are facing similar changes in the fields of biology and psychology, where learning, progressing step by step, discovers and validates new and fertile regularities and principles.

## § 9. THE SELF AS ITS OWN OBJECT: CONSCIOUSNESS AND PHILOSOPHY

The understanding *Self*, willing to conquer particular parts of reality in order to know them and to identify new regularities, principles and relations, is solely concerned during this exploring activity with grasping and intertwining the threads of meanings reaching it from the *Non-Self*. It endeavours to stitch more and more of these threads onto the logical sphere of validity, and so to make the empire of knowledge larger and larger, and to get the kingdom of being understood more and more extensively, exactly, and thoroughly. The more such threads come under the power of the *Self* and get intertwined with the logical and validating threads reaching out from the *Self*, the larger the kingdom of being becomes and the more successfully the *Self* reigns over the *Non-Self* with its own might. But there is an even more important point. The more power the *Self* gains over the *Non-Self*, the more it deploys its own essence, because the potential functions latent in it will become effective in more and more fields. Indeed the *degree of freedom of the Self* increases in proportion to the degree that the functions latent in the *Self* become more effective. Knowledge is the sole power that can make the *Self* free.<sup>6</sup>

During the development of human spirit, the understanding *Self* has to do, for very long, this self-denying work of only grasping the *Non-Self*, because if it has not managed to gain power over the *Non-Self* through this patient and long lasting activity, then it will have to condemn itself to everlasting rest, if not to destruction. So this work is an unavoidable, but fertile and beneficial phase of the development of the *Self*. Indeed the *Self*, in virtue of its essence, cannot be anything else but permanent activity, whose constant object is the *Non-Self*. The time however comes when the *Self* has acquired plenty of partial knowledge and is no longer satisfied with gaining the power of understanding merely over the surrounding and irresistibly self-asserting reality, but using the work done so far as a stepping stone, also ventures to descend into its own depths. Thus it puts the question to itself, “Who am I, and what is the work that I have done and which I have to do all the time?”

Arriving at this point and having grown strong in freedom, the *Self* reaches the highest point of its development: it *becomes conscious of itself*. This becoming conscious of itself

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<sup>6</sup>Here I must emphasize it again that the *Self* in question is not a metaphysical entity whose real existence is above and around man, neither is it the subjective *Self* of the individual person. Undoubtedly in the concept we use there is some antinomic tendency that is unavoidable. That was realised by the Greeks already, especially by Plotinus. The *Self* obviously has a metaphysical feature: it is one and indivisible; but it also has a psychological, i.e. ontological character: it is individual and manifold, divisible and changing. It is one and indivisible, since it is a solid unity of all logical functions and laws; it is manifold and divisible, since these functions and laws ensuring the objectivity of being and knowledge, and validating validity, get revealed and are expressed in the particular psychological – or as Sipos calls them, ‘empirical’ – Selves. This dualism and contradictoriness within the concept of the *Self* has caused a lot of misunderstandings and confusion. Indeed, that must never be lost out of sight. *Pál Sipos* saw the difference between the two aspects of the *Self* very well and put it into words splendidly, and as for *Károly Böhm*, he brought it very much to the fore in his system without falling into mystic exaggerations like *Fichte* and his followers.

means that the *Self* now directs its view and its contemplation at itself, and *makes itself the object of its own activity*. This becoming conscious of itself is the greatest and crucial moment in the life of spirit. *The moment the Self becomes aware of its own power is the time of the birth of philosophy.*

From the solemn moment of becoming conscious of itself, the *Self* no longer deals with or is interested only in the phenomena of the *Non-Self*, but turning its eyes towards itself and looking into itself, it retires into itself, gets immersed in itself, contemplating itself freely from interest in, and regard for, any other phenomenon. The *Self* so far has had no other choice than to get to know, for the sake of its own development, the phenomena of the *Non-Self* through discursively progressing research, and to make itself more powerful and richer through this learning. Now however it is powerful enough to make itself the object of its contemplation and reflection. *The Self, when contemplating itself, is the philosophical Self, and the result of its activity is philosophy.*

The philosophising *Self*, which has become conscious of itself, cannot help but realise right at the beginning of this activity that the *Non-Self*, which it has examined so far detail by detail and in detail, *is every bit its own creation*. The *Non-Self*, as its creation, is completely dependent upon it, and its dependence indeed concerns its existence, because in respect of the *Self* the *Non-Self* becomes existent as a result of being known and being validated by this knowledge. However we muse over it, it must be admitted that we can get across to the *Non-Self* only by means of the *Self*, through the subject to the object created by the subject, as it has been definitely established by critical philosophy. This is the first and most important claim of the *Self* getting conscious and starting philosophising.

If the relationship between the *Self* and the *Non-Self* is well understood, then it is clear that the *Non-Self* virtually intrudes upon the *Self*. When my eyes are open, I cannot but see the trees in the garden, the blooms on the branches, the people walking up and down the street, the houses along the two sides; my ears cannot but hear the songs of birds, the noise from the street, the gay song of the marching soldiers; if my smelling ability is unimpaired I cannot but enjoy the splendid odour of the acacia trees in full bloom, but I cannot help feeling the offensive bad smell of ammonia, either. If the *Non-Self* could not intrude upon me, it would not exist for me. Indeed I become aware of the great universe surrounding me, which is the *Non-Self*, only with the help of the images emerging in me involuntarily and irresistibly, so that I should *project them* outside and assert their existence as objects.

A central role was first given to the concept of *projection* by *Károly Böhm* in his explanation of the concept of being, and since then the number of scientists and psychologists who attribute central importance to this concept has constantly grown. *Kretschmer*, the outstanding German neurologist, whom we referred to above, teaches that colours, noises, temperature, movement, and similarly plants, animals, stones, etc., are only given to us in the impressions of our senses. Experience does not provide us with anything else of these things but optical, acoustical and tactile sensations. Every single experience takes place merely in the *Self*, and the *Self* then projects part of this experience in such a way as if the projected part were taking place outside the *Self* in the

outside world.<sup>7</sup> Without the understanding and explanatory activity of the *Self*, the *Non-Self* were to remain unintelligible and meaningless. If the relevant understanding and interpretative functions of the *Self* were missing, then the invisible threads from the *Non-Self* were reaching for it in vain, because then the *Non-Self* phenomena would not receive any meaning or significance.

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<sup>7</sup> Op. cit. p. 13.

## § 10. PHILOSOPHY IS THE SELF-KNOWLEDGE OF SPIRIT

The *Self*, as soon as it directs its attention at itself, realises that the object facing it and offering itself for perception is “its own” object, which it has placed opposite itself, and which, just for the reason of being created with its own senses, it can understand with its logical functions. It is actually this realisation that makes the *Self* become conscious of itself: reacting to its own creative activity, it makes this activity, which is thinking, the object of examination. In the wake of this examination its ‘self-perception’ and ‘self-consciousness’ come to life and get strong. The activity of the ‘self-perceiving’ or ‘self-consciousness’ of the *Self* is signalled and characterised just by this return to, and immersing in, itself. Its attention is now turned away from the *Non-Self* that it has endeavoured to understand in detail. At the highest level of reflection, however, it does not only contemplate itself, it also contemplates the *Non-Self*: its object becomes the Whole twined together with its own regularities.

The activity that has started from the *Self* to get to know the *Non-Self*, turns back via the *Non-Self* and through the mediation of the *Non-Self* to the *Self*, in order to look back at itself, acknowledge its own achievements, and rest satisfied with them. The *Self*, turning back to itself, freely reacting to its own activities, and philosophizing, now knows that *this world is its own world*, which it has created and which it has made its own object, and has also made it problematic by positing it as something to be known. (The Greek word ‘*problem*’ expresses this confronting activity!) But the reacting and philosophizing *Self* must also realise that when it contemplates its own activity, it does nothing else but *gets to know itself*. So far the object of its understanding activity has been the ‘world’, now however this understanding activity itself is the object. Since philosophy is actually the result of this self-reflecting activity of the *Self*, it is indeed *the understanding of understanding*, or, since the source of this knowledge is the spirit, *philosophy is but the knowledge of spirit*.

It is this knowledge about knowledge that the dialogue called *Charmides* by Plato analyses, and in the course of developing the concept of ‘*sophrosyne*’ it is said there that ‘*sophrosyne*’, which is nothing else but self-knowledge, differs from other types of knowledge, because “all other knowledge is the knowledge of something else but not itself. This alone however is knowledge of all other kinds of knowledge *and also of itself*”.<sup>8</sup> This knowledge about knowing, as understood by Plato, does not inform us about *who knows, or does not know, what*; with the help of this knowledge we shall never learn *what I know*, but that *I do know something*, that is this knowing about knowledge undoubtedly means a theory of knowledge here, and as the science or theory of knowledge, it is in opposition to *the other* sciences that are concerned with some details of being, and so it is clearly separate from them. If this knowing about knowledge is identified as philosophy, then no objection can be raised against tracing the origin of philosophy, as the doctrine of

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. *Charmides*, 166 b-c

knowledge, back to Plato, for whom philosophy was primarily concerned with knowledge, and for that reason, as the *king of sciences*, it is above all other sciences.

## § 11. EXPLANATION OF THE CONCEPT OF SPIRIT – SPIRIT IN THE MIRROR OF PHILOSOPHY

We have reached the point where the essence of philosophy has been revealed enough for us to be able to endeavour to give a more detailed explication of the concept of spirit, which brings philosophy into existence.

Philosophy is the self-knowledge of spirit, as we have seen in the previous discussions. By this self-knowledge spirit makes its own essence conscious when it contemplates its own activity and gets immersed in it. It must however be noted that when we speak of spirit, we do not use it in its metaphysical sense, as it has already been pointed out, and do not consider it to be a separate supernatural entity of reality, acting mystically, and existing fully independently of us. Such an explanation of spirit is now perhaps no longer in use among those who are serious adepts of philosophy. So here we must definitely give up the concept, popular and cherished in many different ways, according to which spirit is a sort of superhuman and mysterious power that can become known by dubious mediums, even more dubious possessed or inspired revelations, and similar sources. We are not mediums (although perhaps we should be much more respected if we were!), nor can we turn tables at séances, nor are we inspired, nor have we experienced the state of being possessed. In brief, we can make no contact with this mysterious being. So we must endeavour a different description of spirit.

One can also often come across a notion which does not know about intimate meetings with spirits, like the idea just referred to above, still it is content to speak of some spirit hanging somewhere over or around people and having a special substance of its own. Such is for example “folk spirit”, or “spirit of the age”, etc. We shall with good reason disregard criticizing these notions of spirit, it must however be noted that philosophy cannot get anywhere, in the course of its conscious activity, with notions of such unclear and obscure meanings, and even more unclear uses.

*The only sort of spirit we can make use of* is that which does not exist *outside us*, but works and gives evidence of itself *inside us*. Indeed we can get to know spirit with our cognitive functions, only if it is available to them either in its sphere substantial reality or in its activity. Our cognitive functions are not effective outside the sphere of experience or beyond it. Therefore everything that is from spirit, is born in the depths of man, and anyone who cannot descend into these depths, will never be able to grasp and understand this spirit with its true meaning.

Getting still closer to the essence of spirit, it can be stated that spirit is actually nothing else but the *Self* in an objective sense, on account of which it can manifest itself immanently in psychical acts and through them, to each psychophysical *Self*. It is only in our souls that spirit can give evidence of its existence. Spirit, and its functions and laws, can only be known by its own creations and through them, with their mediation. Indeed it can be said that that the *Self*, as the perfect and conscious unit of the *a priori* functions of

cognition, is nothing else but this spirit. Since these *a priori* functions and conditions, being universal, do not vary from person to person, spirit itself is also *universal*, not being dependent upon the limits of space or time, and is above personal or national characteristics. It does not view things as temporal or spatial, transcends even causation, and everything it views and understands is *sub specie aeternitatis*, that is it is from the perspective of eternity that it views and understands.

It is through the mediation of the acts and work of an individual *Self* that universal spirit, the source of universal validity and eternal values, expresses itself, takes shape, and becomes manifest to some other spirit manifesting itself in another *Self*. Spirit severed, separated, and distinguished from individual *Selves* (i.e. pure spirit or *Self*, transcendental ego, etc.), the variation of words is unimportant, they just emphasise different features of spirit) is unknowable and unavailable to man. Perhaps some specially endowed people may have “sentiments” that grasp it, but unfortunately such sentiments are hardly expressible in words. Therefore it is through persons that universal spirit presents itself and gives evidence of itself. That is the reason that all true human creations have some individual colouring, whether or not they are works of art, great moral deeds, religious testimonies, or scientific work and research. Each philosophical work has an individual colouring, too, reflecting the spirit of its creator and of the age.<sup>9</sup> There is no philosophical work without marks of the era in which it was born, and without reflecting the individual ethos of its philosopher author.

In accordance with the character of spirit, not only Greek philosophy is different from Chinese philosophy or that of India, but the philosophy of the Middle Ages is also different from that in the Renaissance or the Modern Age, because the spirit that animates different ages and generations varies. Spiritual history must be based on this point in order to do its job conscientiously. Continuing along this line, the doctrine of Heraclitus is essentially different in spirit from that of Plato or Aristotle, even though all three of them originate in the same national ethos. Kant’s thinking differs from the thinking of German idealism, although the birth of the latter was directly due to Kant’s philosophy. In brief, the undivided and homogeneous essence of spirit manifests and shapes itself in different ways in different ages, peoples, and persons, during the course of centuries and millennia. This variety indicates the infinite richness of spirit, which is inexhaustible and never-ending.

All this of course does not mean at all that each era, people or person proposes problems and finds answers arbitrarily, as the fancy takes each, that is to say that one does philosophy directed by one’s own whims and wishes, as is often heard from circles, classes, or segments of society that do not sympathize with philosophy. This conviction – though perhaps the word is too honourable for such an attitude – is and can be professed only by people who are not aware of the meaning and worth of spirit, of philosophy, or of life of a higher quality. Philosophy, as self-knowledge, is the self-knowledge of *uniform and self-consistent* spirit, from whose depths this self-knowledge arises freely, and for that reason contentedly, and in it, for that reason again, the eternal and always uniform *logos* finds expression. Therefore differences will only be found in form, colouring, and manner

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<sup>9</sup> This specifically individualistic character of philosophical works is pointed out by Hegel, “Die Philosophie ist ihre Zeit in Gedanken erfasst.” *Rechtsphilosophie - Vorwort*

of expression, conforming to and through the spiritual constitution of the given era, people, or person.

These differences go together with *another* remarkable difference, which also arises from the ethos of the philosophising person and the age, which is that certain works of philosophy are conspicuously directed at those spiritual manifestations that take place at the practical level, and their central problematics concern the examination of practical *behaviour*. These works, too, stay within the bounds of theory, but primarily concentrate upon the questions of actions and ways of living, in contrast with systems that, keeping the Whole of spirit in view, first of all endeavour to understand the theoretic and cognitive activities of spirit, so that then, on the basis of results so received, they may study all questions of *value* in the field of the practical pursuits of life. Here it is sufficient to refer to all the philosophy of the Hellenistic era, in which time only viewpoints of practical living were kept in sight, while theoretic understanding was only valued as much as it could contribute useful support to practical course-of-life activities. Also, the aesthetic bent of renaissance philosophy is explicable in terms of the unrestrained enjoyment of the freedom of the age, which stimulated an attempt to appreciate and understand knowledge from the point of view of the arts.

## § 12. PHILOSOPHY AND SYSTEM

While the special branches of science, without exception, examine certain details of reality; philosophy, as conscious contemplation arising from the Whole of spirit, turns its attention towards the all-embracing Whole by subjecting to scrutiny the functions and activities of the knowledge-acquiring *Self*. Since philosophy is the self-knowledge of spirit, the understanding of understanding, in it the Whole of the self-perceiving and conscious *Self* is realised. In other words, philosophy is a most complete *projection* of the *Self*, reflecting a theoretic picture of the world and life created by the *Self*, and showing up the spirit that has affectionately created this disinterested theoretic picture. It must also be definitely noted that not only the “world” but also “life” is reflected in this picture. Indeed to live a real life is possible only for one who has created his own world himself: creating a picture of the world goes together with creating a picture of life. In this sense philosophy can indeed be considered the theory of creating a world concept, or the “science of world-views”, as it was actually called by *Rickert*, the great late German philosopher.<sup>10</sup>

Spirit, if it wants to understand itself consciously, it cannot do in any other way than setting before itself its own activity and the result of the activity, i.e. the picture made of the *Non-Self*, and examining which *functions* are needed to create this picture, and at the same time examining the infinitely fine tissue of laws and regularities that make up this picture, which it created of what it has understood about the *Non-Self*. Since when this picture is looked at more closely, it will be found that it, too, is a *perfect* and *finished* Whole, each part of which bears constant, unbreakable and permanent relation to the others, and also to the Whole itself. If these relationships and objective connections ceased between the parts and between the parts and the Whole, then not only the Whole would get destroyed as a whole, but the parts would also fall apart and continue existing as unappreciated and insignificant debris.<sup>11</sup>

Therefore only as part of this Whole can each part have sense and meaning: a Part only as considered to be an element of the Whole possesses meaning. Using *Hegel's* technical terms it can be said that a Part only “becomes true” as an element of the Whole. As soon as some part stops being an element of the Whole, it will only have subjective certainty

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<sup>10</sup>Cf. the discussion on pp. 24ff. in his *Allgemeine Grundlegung der Philosophie*, which is Part One of his *System der Philosophie*, published in 1921. Here Rickert points out very clearly that philosophy is very different from a world view. Indeed it is not the job of philosophy to provide a world view, because the latter must be worked out by everybody for themselves. Nobody can be presented with a ready-made world view, nor is it possible to copy one from someone else's. The only thing philosophy can do is showing how a stable and confidently made world view can be achieved, leaving it to each person to fight for developing his own world and way of life.

<sup>11</sup> I tried to get it understood and explained what the dialectical structure of a 'system' in its entirety is, in my academic dissertation entitled *Examining Philosophical Systems*, published by The Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1928. – A thorough examination of the relationship between spirit and a system and the dialectical structure of spirit is presented in the discussions in the third volume of my essay *Man And Life*, published by Franklin Társulat, 1939.

without any objective meaning. Meaning only flashes forth from a Part if it has been fitted into the Whole it belongs in.

A Whole in which there is permanent and mutual relationship among the Parts and between the Parts and the Whole, is called an *organism*. Since the picture created by philosophy is such a well arranged Whole, it can be stated that the Whole that is the subject-matter of philosophical examination, just as well as the Whole that is the result of the examination, is an *organic* Whole. And indeed an organic Whole cannot be anything else but a *system* in which the Parts obtain meaning from the Whole and the Whole obtains meaning from the Parts.

It is however obvious that the parts can only obtain meaning from the Whole and the Whole from the Parts if the Whole is not just the sum total of the Parts. However honestly and correctly the Parts are totalled up, they will not become a Whole (whose meaning differs from that of 'the sum total'), unless they are organised by some inner force. Without the work of such inner organising force the Parts are just disconnected dead bones, *disiecta membra*. The Parts that are in place in the Whole constituting and animating it are arranged in such a way that they mutually support one another, one Part exists by and for another and also by and for the Whole. And the organising force that so arranges the Parts, turning into a system the Whole that has only now been closed and finished, is *spirit itself*, by whose organising and creating power the Parts get into inner objective necessary relationships with one another, by which they become indispensable constituting Parts of the Whole.

Our discussions so far may be summed up in the following: *the theoretic, universal and disinterested world concept created by philosophy is an organic system, because spirit, which creates it, is an organic system*. Spirit is system, and the Whole developed with projection by spirit, i.e. philosophy, is system. The essence not only of philosophy but also of spirit is misunderstood by those who want to forbid philosophy to "build" systems and to "cram", as they say, the rich, lively, and infinite content of reality into such unnatural Procrustean frameworks. It is held by these worrisome critics that the rigid and artificial frames of a system would completely waste life, soul, and the pulsating liveliness of reality, which itself is a permanently surging stream, constantly changing content, and developing, forming, becoming, uncontrollable Being. The truth is just the opposite: this constantly becoming, changing and restless Being that tries taking shapes can only be modelled, be given shape, and made stable, and consequently made understandable, within the framework of an organised Whole. A concept itself is but a system in which the substantial attributes of the thing it denotes are fitted in the framework of an organic Whole to establish and state forever the meaning of the thing itself. A judgement is also a system, and so is reasoning. A system is the highest, and at the same time deepest basic concept of knowledge, which makes all other logical formula meaningful. Anyone rejecting systems rejects the understanding of reality.

Philosophy, as all kinds of knowledge in general, is system, and system it must be. But distinctions must be made between kinds of system. It is true that a system that has been arbitrarily built, very often forcibly, from the outside, cannot be a true system just for the reason of having been "built", even if it has a pleasing form. A true system resists all outside tendencies and all "building" ones. The constituting parts of a true system grow

organically and from inside, as members and organs that a central force has endowed with meaning and sense full of life. *Only that which grows from an inner substantial germ* and develops naturally, so that the power, meaning and invigorating sense of life of the Whole pulsates in each particle, *can be a system*. Scattered bones cannot be fitted together in a system of some sort, unless spirit breathes into it its own life, meaning, and value, so as to make the scattered data develop into a system. It is only in such a system, a system grown from an inner substantial germ, that the creating power of life pulsates.

It can be safely stated that in each particle and each problem of philosophy (as e.g. the problem of freedom of will, the general concept of value, the concept of being, the question of space and time, etc.), also in each solution to these problems or in the attempt at solutions, there is already a latent tendency for a system, if the problem or the endeavour to solve it gushes forth from the lap of spirit, from the depth of philosophical ethos. Wherever the single problems and the endeavours to solve them are not stitched with invisibly fine, almost ethereal threads of logical indication to the central thoughts of philosophy, to the philosophical ethos, there it is a mistake to speak of philosophy. There one can only speak of clever imitations or imitations of cleverness, which however only have value for the exoteric. *A system of philosophy, in which the all-embracing spirit appears, develops from the substantial structure of spirit itself, conforming to inner everlasting laws*. System is not only the intrinsic form of philosophy, but also the everlasting, indestructible, engraved structure of spirit. Spirit is a universal theoretical system, and philosophy, as the most adequate expression of spirit, is also system.

## § 13. PHILOSOPHY IS THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE ALL ROUND

The theoretic picture, to create which the Self is driven disinterestedly and without any practical ends by its unquenchable yearning for knowledge, is, as we have seen, an organic Whole, a well-developed system. Philosophy, which has developed every bit of this theoretic picture, is but a theory about this theoretic picture, i.e. a unified and organic Whole. It is within the framework of this Whole as an organically developing system that each constituting part, namely each problem presenting itself with logical necessity and developing organically, and its solution, or rather attempt at a solution, take shape and find their places.

All partial problems presenting themselves in their proper places within the framework of a philosophical system, are exclusively about our *knowledge* concerning our picture and our views we have created of the world and of life, since *it is in our knowledge that all being and reality, and the infinite richness of life, are given to us*. The ideas of being, world and life are merely empty concepts, or actually not concepts but empty, meaningless words, to a person who is unable to gain any knowledge of this infinite being and life.<sup>12</sup> This ought to be well understood by everyone, because all true philosophy is dependent upon the understanding of this fact. It is only through your own pictures that you can get to know this world, and this world as world is being made by your own arranging activity, without which it would be just an unintelligible jumble of data, of sense-impressions, of details. That is what the Greek rightly called *chaos*. Also, in the teaching of Christianity, without the ordering work of God's spirit, everything was just *tohubohu*, that is disorder. Without spirit there is no order, no meaning, no value.

If that is kept in sight, there is nothing strange in holding that philosophy is theory of knowledge all round, that is to say knowledge about our knowledge of the world and life. This knowledge has been developed via the mediation of images and concepts, judgements and reasoning, by our own thinking comprising the innate functions of spirit (here the doctrine of innate ideas is truly in place!), and it is by virtue of the rules of your thinking that this picture necessarily unfolds with objective validity.

These rules, which lend objectivity and universal validity to the knowledge united in our picture of the world, are the rules of thinking, rules rooted in the pure *Self*, and as such they control the picture of the world, and are at the same time the rules of knowledge.

Hopefully I have managed to make myself understood by saying that our picture of the world has been created with unconscious necessity by spirit, with the functions arising

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. what Sipos says, „Beside *present realness* there is nothing to maintain the world: indeed where does anything appear if not in thought? It is thought that maintains the condition that we are constantly conscious of ourselves: this is what our world consists of, this is how thought is clear through life, in the sense of which the world is called 'világ' (= 'lightness, clearness') in our Hungarian language, very philosophically at that.” – See op. cit . p. 148

from its inner constitution. We do not know any other “world”, or life, than that which we do “know”. Then beyond our knowledge and understanding, what are the world and actual reality like? – That is a question we cannot answer. And if this picture has indeed been created with unconscious necessity by *ourselves*, it is no wonder that we can *consciously* get to know this picture made by us, since the creator of the picture is the same spirit as that learning about it. *Kant* is very right in saying that the laws of the object, i.e. of the unconsciously made world picture, are the same as those of *getting to know* the picture. The *Self* has created the object with its own laws and the *Self* gets to know it with its own laws, but in the second case it employs the laws consciously to know the picture developed unconsciously.

Therefore the result of the first step philosophy takes fully consciously is a realisation that the picture of the world, the objects constituting its elements, and all relations among the elements, from the simplest to the highest, are purely and fully its creation. *From the point of view of my knowledge and for my knowledge there does not exist any reality independently of objective thinking and of the understanding spirit.* In view of that, in modern philosophy a “theory of knowledge” has replaced the “theory of beings” of old philosophy, i.e. *gnoseology* has replaced *ontology*. If I want to get to know being and reality, I can only do so by the mediation of my picture: I must consciously re-create with my functions of understanding the picture that I have earlier made of being for myself with unconscious necessity. If I want to know being, I must get to know the knowledge that has come about by conscious re-creation of the picture that I had made of being with unconscious necessity. There is nothing shocking about that. No son of man can have access to reality except through his images. At a higher stage of development however it no longer satisfies him to be led along in the world and in life by a picture that has come about with unconscious necessity. Instead he brings this picture to pure consciousness by *consciously recreating* it, i.e. getting to know it. Undoubtedly, at some lowest stages of the development of human spirit, magic and wizardry used to be in the service of understanding: with their help primitive man tried to obtain power over existing reality and mysterious forces. As development progressed, the light of consciousness became brighter, and it was in the brightness of this light that the function of human spirit we call knowledge today, was born. Treating this topic at length, however, is not our concern now.

## § 14. THE TASK AND PROBLEMS OF PHILOSOPHY AS THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

Theory of knowledge, as a thoroughly exact and speculative science, could also be called dialectics, first philosophy, or basic philosophy. It tries to answer the following questions: *What is knowledge? – How does knowledge come about? – Which functions of knowledge help us to get to know the world and reality? – What are the criteria of true knowledge that make it possible to differentiate true knowledge from false knowledge?* These basic problems, or their solutions, constitute the foundation that all philosophical discussions and endeavours ought to be built upon. Without them all philosophising takes place in a void, lacking any stable and constant foundation that philosophy cannot be an exact or confident science without. These problems constitute the basic layer of philosophy, and their threads are woven into all its problems, so that discussing any problem means recognising and undoing these threads. Since Plato it ought to be clearly seen that there is no philosophy without dialectics, and without philosophy there is no confident and stable knowledge.

So the first problem of the theory of knowledge can be put into words thus: *What is knowledge?* In attempting to solve this problem, philosophy must first of all indicate that knowledge manifests itself not merely as some receptive capacity of spirit, but is also a fully *creative activity*, in which creative activity there operates, beside the enforcing power of the *Non-Self*, some primeval supreme force of the knowing *Self* or spirit, affecting what gets created as a factor equal to the irresistible power of the *Non-Self*. In creating a picture of the world, the spirit not only kindly and obediently accepts and faithfully reflects the picture enforced upon it by the *Non-Self*, but at the same time it incessantly reacts to the enforcing *Non-Self*, to the impacts reaching and attacking it from the *Non-Self*. It shapes, arranges, connects and interweaves the threads with which the picture of the “world” is entwined. This work is of course not so simple and easy as it might look at first sight. It demands a strong and patient *Self* which, using its capacities freely, intends to achieve nothing else but true and just knowledge.

While discussing the first problem, basic philosophy must point out that we get to know the world with the help of our *senses* and *thinking*, *through* our sensitivity and thinking. With the help of our senses – seeing, hearing, touch, taste, smell, etc., - we receive those sensations of reality and the “world” that flood us from the *Non-Self*: data of colours and sounds, flavours and odours, temperatures and palpations, so that with the mediation of certain physiological processes they get through, from our sense organs, to certain parts of our brains, or rather to the sphere of our consciousness. But these sensations, however great their number is or however fine they are, are far from being sufficient for knowing the world completely. The sensations in themselves are just some “raw mass”, or rude conglomeration, which has to be put in order, so that the meanings of things and objects should flash forth. This putting in order takes place through a psychological synthesis, and results in a *picture* created by unconscious necessity, in which are united the received

sense data (it is unnecessary and inconvenient to use the word “image”, when the word “picture” is fully adequate and expresses the situation better).

In a given situation we may receive the following sensations or sense data: longish and roundish shape, yellowish green colour, somewhat rough touch, characteristic odour, sweetish and slightly sour taste. When the power of the exterior object has made me unite these sense data in a synthesis, I obtain the picture of a “pear”. Instead of the object on the table I have got a definite picture that reveals that object to me as a reality facing me, and so to say “assigns” it to my knowledge. It must however be noted that now the knowledge of the object that is facing me in the form of a pear has not been completed, only the conditions have just been given to get to know the object. So the picture itself does not yet provide me with knowledge, since it can be interpreted in different ways. - A little girl, who had not seen any oranges during the last war, but had seen small yellow balls, ran very happily to take “the pretty yellow ball” when his father was going to give her an orange.

A picture produced with the senses signifies the object it is the picture of, but it is still not knowledge. The picture produced with unconscious necessity is the *object of knowledge*. If man were merely sensual, he would have no choice but be content with this picture, accepting it for good as primitive “sensual knowledge”, as it happens to people at the lowest stage of development. If however we could not choose but be satisfied with the mere picture, then we should have to do without acquiring knowledge that is objective and of universal validity. The picture is actually a merely subjective product, because the senses only have the capacity of such subjective products, which means that the picture created by them has only been made for the use of the individual. Sensuality is actually bound to the individual consciousness of a person exclusively, so it can only mediate subjective personal knowledge, as this is very clearly explained by Plato in his dialogue called *Theaitetos*, a splendid work so much worth reading. This personal and subjective knowledge, just because of its individual and subjective nature, would not be suitable to be used with all the objects it could represent and by all persons. *So a picture* produced by our psychological and physiological processes *is only a necessary basis and a condition of knowledge*, in so far as it only affords an object for knowledge, but objective knowledge of universal validity is the product of a factor of some higher value. A picture, however lively, definite, and clear it is, lacks the logical threads that could connect it with all objects represented by the picture and all individuals comprehending the object. A picture is subjective and personal, and only an indispensable basis for objective knowledge of universal validity about the object.

## § 15. CONDITIONS AND FUNCTIONS OF KNOWLEDGE: SPACE AND TIME

A picture, which is produced with unconscious necessity under the influence of stimuli reaching the soul from an outer object, is therefore an indispensable condition of all knowledge. The spirit reacting to itself will however also realise that intuitions and pictures produced with the senses and sensations would not emerge, unless spirit possessed *two a priori* functions or *forms* which, as agents emerging from the essence of spirit, unite and arrange the materials mediated by sensuality, i.e. by the sensations received from the *Non-Self*. These two forms or functions, taken as such in a logical sense, are *space* and *time*, which, as forms in an *a priori* sense, arrange particular sensations. Their being a *priori* means that these two forms of the sensual intuitions of spirit are, in the logical order of things, prior to all materials and contents that the senses mediate to us. Space and time, as a priori givens, give sensual forms to the sense data and sensations by arranging them in spatial relations of juxtaposition and in temporal relations of succession. These two a priori sensual, intuitional forms of space and time are not abstracted from things, and for that reason they are rightly said to be *logical conditions* of the knowledge of objects. Without them intuition does not take place. We do not contemplate space, and much less do we contemplate time, but in order to be able to contemplate things we need both space and time. *Space and time, as functions of experiencing spirit, are a priori intuitions*, that is preconditions and fundamentals of all other intuitions.

It is necessary to treat the problems of space and time in more detail. They were much discussed subjects of debate by the Greeks already. In opposition to realistic theories that regard both space and time as self-contained realities, *Kant* has conclusively shown that neither is a reality, nor are they attributes of bodies (viz. space), nor of phenomena or events (viz. time), instead they are conditions prior to intuition, and as such emerge from the functioning of intuition. So it clearly follows that neither space nor time can be regarded as some sort of *empty form* or container into which things and phenomena enter as it were. Instead they are *spiritual functions*.

When more closely examined, *space* proves to be nothing less than the intuition, with which the subject contemplates the outside object that he has projected from himself into the outside world, and which he comprehends as an object. Let us consider this fact more closely. As already noted above, the *Self* directs its attention consciously to the picture emerging in it with unconscious necessity. However this picture is irreconcilable with the undisturbed self-identity of the *Self*, and in order to preserve its permanent self-identity, the *Self* cannot but project it into the outside world and regard it as an object of its contemplation. The projection is nevertheless more than just that. The consciously contemplating *Self* projects not only the picture but also the intuition with which it contemplates the picture produced unconsciously. Therefore space itself is also intuition, and precisely that intuition that fixes the projected picture at a certain place in space, and so arranges it for itself in the outside world.

From this there follows a fact very important to the outside world of our consciousness, namely that it is always spatial while we contemplate it. The details of reality, the objects and things, can only be contemplated through the mediation of projection, and in no other way. We can *think* of objects, and so we must, without contemplating them, but if we want to contemplate them, we can only contemplate them in space, as being placed near, below, above, etc. one another.

The other necessary a priori condition of knowledge is *time*. The work of intuition, and all activities in general, take place not only in space but also in time. Time as an a priori function of intuition is already needed when, with the separation of the Self and the Non-Self, the subject and object of knowledge appear. The subject must be *prior* to the object, and the object *posterior* to the subject. Indeed our everyday experience can prove it to us that all of our interior activities, including picture-creating, feeling, wanting, attempting, etc., take place in a *succession* in time, one happening after another. As we have seen, the picture created with unconscious necessity emerges *earlier*, and only *then* is it projected consciously by the *Self*, so time is an a priori condition of the emergence of the object of knowledge, too. We must therefore draw the conclusion that time appears as soon as we bring two successive things in relation with ourselves as *permanent* beings. If I did not notice this successiveness, in virtue of which "A" precedes "B", time would not appear. Nor would it appear if I did not relate the successiveness to myself as a permanent being. As a result, time is entirely a subjective fitting, without which intuition, and consequently knowledge, cannot take place.

That time is merely a subjective function is first of all shown by its being entirely dependent on the structure of mind. For an infinitely great mind there is not time: God in the epic by *Zrinyi* thought it over in a moment what had happened all over the world in all time until then. And an infinitely small mind does not need time because being is just a minute picture for it that disappears in one moment. The intuition of his genius made *Madách* says:

All things living live the same long,  
The hundred-year-old oak and the mayfly of one day.

Therefore if human mind were infinitely little, time would not be needed, just as it would not be needed if human mind were infinitely great. Time is a result of the limited nature of human mind.

Since spirit is eternal, time is also eternal, in the same way as space, whose infinity follows from the infinity of time. If spirit does not possess infinity, then it cannot possess momentariness either, since a moment is part of eternal time. And however paradoxical it may sound, we must say that time only exists in the sense of eternity. Indeed the *present* does not exist, since as soon as it is pronounced it has already become past. The *past* does not exist any longer and is only regarded as a motif. The future may indeed be a gate to many opportunities, but still it does not exist yet. It is therefore the eternity of spirit that posits eternal time, without which there is not contemplation or knowledge. Time, just like space, is a subjective function, but both are indispensable as conditions of the possibility of knowledge.

## § 16. A PRIORI CONDITIONS OF KNOWLEDGE: CAUSATION

It is often said that only what falls under the law of *causality* can be understood. Knowledge must be given up whenever the threads of causality cannot be found in the world of things and events. That is a true statement. The law of causality is a necessary, therefore a priori, condition of human knowledge. It must however be noted, that the attribute “a priori” is not used in a psychological sense, but in a merely logical one. In view of the psychological development of an individual, the causal law cannot be said to be an a priori function, since it is only at a higher stage of development that one looks for relations of cause and effect in the world of things and events. The French philosopher Lévy-Brühl has satisfactorily proven that the so called primitive peoples do not know of the law of causality at all.

The relation of cause and effect already appears at the very first step towards knowledge, or rather it should be said that causality, which is controlled by the law of cause and effect, is actually a condition of *being* itself. Indeed if an object outside the *Self* does not cause an effect in it, then a picture of it will never emerge in the *Self*, and there being no picture, the *Self* will not know about the existence of the object designated by the picture. Consequently, the relation of cause and effect and the causal law controlling it, is a *primary condition* of all being and of all knowledge about being. The effect of the object on the *Self* causes a change in the *Self*, which inevitably searches after the cause of this change and is not satisfied until it is found. Every change refers to a cause, that is to say every change has a cause. Or since every change is the result of an effect, the law may be put in words in the following way: *every effect has a cause*, or the other way round: *every cause has an effect*. This fundamental law was already clearly recognised by Plato, who formulated it in his dialogue called *Timaios* thus: “*everything that is, is necessarily, as the effect of a thing causing it. Because it is impossible for everything to come into being without being caused.*” In the dialogue *Philebos* the formulation is rather more simple: “*it is necessary for every becoming to become because of a cause.*”

A realistic understanding of the causal law and the relation of cause and effect, which deems that the causal relation is, independently of us, in the things and phenomena themselves, must be definitely rejected. We cannot answer the question “*What is there and what is there not, independently from us, in reality?*”, and no one else can answer it, however interesting it might be. We can only get to know objects created by ourselves, and nothing can make part of these objects except what we have placed in them in virtue of the functions of our activities of understanding. *The causal relation is projected into the objects by the understanding Self*, in order to give explanations of the *changes* having first of all *taken place in the Self* itself, and then in the things of the outside world. The picture having come into being with unconscious necessity disturbs the conscious identity of the *Self*, and consequently its peace, since by way of the picture something different than the *Self* itself has penetrated the *Self's* interior. The peace and self-identity of the *Self* will only be restored when it manages to find the cause of the change. In *Böhm Károly's* concise

formulation: the causal relation between the subject and the object is brought about by the unconscious work of self-preservation (viz. self-preservation of the *Self*). And when a change is noticed in an object outside us, the *Self* looks for the cause of this change in another object, so that while beforehand it drew the thread of causality between itself and its picture, now it establishes the causal relation between two exterior objects. Therefore it is obvious that causality is by all means a contribution of the *Self* to make it possible for itself to understand the change.

This subjectivity of causality was pointed out by *Károly Böhm*, who was also the first to offer satisfactory explanation for it. This view has recently been adopted in modern physics, too, in that causality is not looked for in the things themselves, instead it is considered to be a subjective function that does not get realised in the strict sense of the word: the law of causality is replaced by *probability*. But in practice, just because of the limited nature of our minds, laws of probability in the medium dimensionality, i.e. where sizes are super-molecular, obviously appear to us like laws of causality. The probability-like character is more and more conspicuous as sizes more and more approach sub-molecular or sub-atomic dimensions, while the more these infinitely small sizes are left behind and greater dimensions are approached the more causality is outstanding. But however things may be – modern physicists could not yet reach a common position concerning the explanation of the law of causality – undoubtedly causality is a condition of knowledge just as subjective and a priori as time and space.

Naturally this subjectivity does not mean in this case, either, that any exceptions could be stated to the law of causality. The universality of the law of causality is actually guaranteed by its having got into our picture of the world from the understanding *Self*, consequently true knowledge can only be such that this law validly applies to it. We do not ask whether this law is also valid in outside reality independently of us. We know reality merely from the mirror of our pictures, and these pictures are only understood if they can be caught in the net of causality. If I cannot establish the relation of causality among things and events, then I will only have separate pictures that do not explain anything, because they do not have any meaning. The cause-seeking *Self* establishes an endless network of causality with its functions, also placing itself into this network, since the pictures are effects of the *Self*, while with regard to it the world is the absolute cause that all its pictures owe their existence to. Without the world there is no *Self*: without content, what would be the use of the form? And if there is no *Self*, then what there is, is in vain, since no one exists to give form to it for oneself.

## § 17. PERMANENCY AND CHANGE. SUBSTANCE AND ATTRIBUTES.

Having a look around in the world of beings about us, and watching the eternal course of changes in things and phenomena, one must admit that *Heraclitus* was right in saying that all is eternal change and becoming. One cannot step twice into the same stream, because the stream is constantly changing and we ourselves change constantly, too. If this constant change resulting from constant activity were not going on, then knowledge would be impossible, because knowing is also activity and as such it changes all the time, when it creates its pictures with unconscious necessity, and then consciously re-creates them, by which it gets to know them. Contemplation itself is also activity, i.e. change, and indeed the only change known by us directly. Therefore we say that change and becoming are also primary conditions of knowledge, and so Heraclitus' thesis is true.

With that however the problem is not solved yet. How can something be known, if everything is just incessant change and reality is mere becoming? How is it possible to get to know something that has no trait of constancy? These are very legitimate questions: if we do not have the ability to make our pictures stable in some way, so to say fix them, then we will not be able to know them. We must be very careful about this seemingly irremovable contradiction between permanency and change.

If we want to understand this contradiction from the position of realism and say that change is in the things themselves, then the contradiction does not cease, because it is impossible to think that being, whose nature is to be the same, to be equal with itself, therefore to be permanent, should change somehow and some time. So realism is contradictory to the concept of being itself.

So in spite of the foregoing we must state that the other great Greek philosopher, *Parmenides* was also right in teaching that "*being is unchanging*, and if we see change everywhere, that can only be so because we are misled by our senses". And being is in fact unchanging: namely the being which is projected into the outside world. In this being we "fix" the world itself, set it up, as it were, in front of ourselves (this is the original meaning of the Greek word "problem": throw something up before me), so that we can get to know it in general. This constant being however maintains itself by changing all the time. That is, it is the *permanent* that *changes* all the time. So both constancy and changeability are stated about our own pictures, not about independent reality, of which we cannot say that it is constant or that it is changing, simply because independent reality cannot be known by us at all, and so we cannot state anything about it. The conscious *Self* however, which makes pictures of reality and projects them into the outside world, establishes relations of cause and effect among these pictures, and it can only justify the causes if it postulates activity, that is change, in and among the pictures.

From all that it follows that change is mistakenly thought to be a category of intuition: it is a contribution of the intellect. We contemplate only permanent reality, *change itself* we

do not see or contemplate. Since however the components and different aspects of reality follow one another in a certain succession, the intellect cannot but resort to change as an explanation. An infinite mind would not suppose any change, because it would see and contemplate the Whole simultaneously and all at once. The world of God is eternal and unchanging; change is just as far from his World as from himself, in him there is not even a shadow of change. That was very clearly seen by *Plotinus*, and by *St. Augustine* following him, from whom *Zrinyi* the poet took over the concept: nothing can be fully understood from the changing and passing details, only by having a view of the eternal Whole could we realise the real importance of things with a view to the future.

As a result of the foregoing we can state the following thesis about the nature of change: *change does not reside in reality and in each object, it is but a contribution of the intellect, and it shows up as the different places the picture takes in relation to the subject.*

With the help of the concepts of *permanence* and *change*, we can also understand the concepts of *substance* or *essence* (substratum) and *attribute* (accident, quality), both of which have played an important part in basic philosophy since the time of the Greek philosophers.

The “permanent thing” which is considered to be the basis in which changes take place is called *essence* or *substance*. Unless this permanency or essence takes its place among our intellectual categories, we cannot understand change, because it is just this permanent essence that is the basis and carrier of change. On the other hand what appears as a changing trait or characteristic of an object is just an *attribute*: while the essence is always the same and identical with itself, its attributes make contributions, as it were, to the essence, without being able to make any changes in its consistency or constitution. The relation between essence and attributes (or qualities) can be briefly described in the following way.

Since essence is indeed the essence of a thing, and so it is constant and the same forever, its attributes, which are given to us in our intuition, cannot be anything less than this essence. How is this then? Are essence and its qualities, i.e. substance and attributes, the same thing? Yes, they are. Their seeming otherness has its origin in the difference between contemplation and thinking. When I contemplate a thing, it appears to me in its functions and changes because of the limited nature of my intuition. For example, sugar is recognisable to me because of its qualities as something sweet, white, powder like, solid. When however I think of it, then these qualities, characteristics, functions, or however we may call them, strike me as an inseparable unity of actions and effects that is called the essence of the thing. Referring to the example of sugar, I think of sugar as the *carrier*, unity and cause of its qualities of whiteness, sweetness, powder like solidity, etc., since these qualities cannot be understood in any other way than the effects of this unity.

Neither essence, nor attributes can be considered to be in the objects of outside reality, both the one and the others are just intellectual contributions to make understanding and knowledge possible.

The dualism of substance and attribute may help us understand the concepts of *matter* and *force*. These two concepts refer to each other in the same way as the concepts of

essence (substance) and quality (attribute) do. Just like substance is not a category of content but a contribution of the intellect, so matter is also a contribution of the intellect supplied by our thinking about the object. Indeed we can only understand and conceive of essence, which is a unit and cause, as being extended and built up of parts, i.e. of atoms. So it is out of question that matter is a being that is independent of us: as soon as I want to contemplate essence, it looks matter to me. Essence however is defined not only as a unit: my intuition also shows it to me getting separated into its functions, i.e. the attributes, and it is *force* that causes this separation. Therefore both force and matter draw their explanation from the concept of essence: if essence is taken to be a unit, then the concept of matter emerges, and if it is taken to be an active agent that preserves its unity and identity, the concept of force emerges. Here I must also point it out briefly that modern physics cannot escape the view that matter is just such a contribution of the intellect, since in the new concept of the atom the place of matter has been taken by the nucleus and electrons, the infinitely small particles that do not fill up the volume of the atom because of their infinitely small extensions. "*Matter, which is so obvious and familiar to common intuition, is replaced by protons and electrons,*" says Zoltán Gyulai.<sup>13</sup> This in fact means that the explanation of the concept of matter has moved very far from the everyday concept that so called materialism intended to support scientifically by regarding matter as some tangible and visible data of intuition. The rude sense of matter is disappearing, to give place to the concept of force: an atom is now a centre of varied forces. It is also believed that a more general acceptance of the theory of relativity will result in the view that the difference between matter and force will disappear just as much as the difference between space and time has. Where is modern physics leading us? – Physicists may perhaps have a faint notion, but even they cannot tell us for certain, either. This is however obvious: philosophy must be on the alert for learning as much as possible from the results of researches in physics. But physics must be on the alert, too, for new results may bring the two sciences nearer each other, if they understand and appreciate their own results.

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<sup>13</sup> P. 8 in *Fizikai világ és szellemiség (Physical World and Spirituality)*, Kolozsvár, 1938.

## § 18. ONTOLOGY OR BASIC PHILOSOPHY, AND AXIOLOGY OR THEORY OF VALUE

Sections 15 to 17 dealt with the problems of basic philosophy, attempting at a sketchy explanation of the most basic philosophical concepts, which all together make up the ontological structure of reality. We have seen that the *Non-Self*, i.e. the world, emerges as an oppressive, disturbing, compelling and painful, forceful factor, which the *Self* cannot avoid. The *Self* has to face and accept it with the resoluteness and curiosity of primary consciousness and try to bring it under its power somehow. Setting up the problems of philosophy, or rather of basic philosophy, starts when the *Non-Self*, i.e. the world, astounds and perplexes the *Self*. This astonishment and perplexity gets the *Self* to realise that not only the *Non-Self*, i.e. the world, is a problem for it, but the *Self* becomes a problem for itself, too, as we have tried to make this understood. *Philosophy commences with this astonishment, and at the same time spirit also starts its own progress in history.*

The *Self*, whose peace and self-identity has been disturbed by the *Non-Self*, strives to restore its identity through knowledge; and since this identity, i.e. the special way of being of the *Self* is existence, as rightly stated by existential philosophy that originates in Kirkegaard's teaching, all the kinds of philosophy that are rooted in the opposing poles of the *Self* and the *Non-Self* can be truly called existential philosophy. It follows from that that no existential philosophy may take refuge in the depths of mysticism, all of it has to face the test of sense and reason, and if some cannot pass the test, it will have to leave, willy-nilly, the kingdom of philosophy.

It is of great importance, and for that reason it requires full attention and patient examination, that as a matter of fact basic philosophy is the indispensable key that opens the gate to philosophy by understanding its own concepts. Hegel was right in saying that just like to Thebe, there are a hundred gateways to philosophy, too. But you can only enter through these gates if you have got the passport of basic philosophy. Anyone entering without it will never become a proper philosopher, however eminent specialist he may be in an already well developed particular discipline of philosophy like e.g. ethics, philosophy of law, aesthetics, etc.

As we have already said above, the basic concepts of the previous chapters, namely space, time, causality, etc., have revealed the ontological structure of the *Non-Self*. These basic concepts have emerged under the compelling force of the *Non-Self*: we cannot help but get the picture of the world interwoven with the threads of space and time, cause and effect, change and permanency, substance and attribute, matter and force, so that by their means they should get arranged into a unitary Whole. These basic concepts, as the ultimate functions, were rightly called *world-functions* by *Böhm*, because they are the preconditions of the ability to think about the world. The most distinguished, and also most difficult, duty of basic philosophy is to deduce these world-functions, or ultimate functions of spirit, which we did by disentangling them from out the inner structure of experience, and showing that they are contributions flowing from the essence of spirit, and that without

them neither knowledge nor a world-concept could develop. This indispensability *justifies their being unconditional*.

From these ontological statements many things have resulted also for understanding the fabric of spirit. First of all the essence of spirit actually consists in constantly thinking the *Non-Self* and so forming it. The emphasis is on the words '*constantly*' and '*thinking*': spirit is eternal and constant activity, and the aim of its activity is to shape the *Non-Self* in accordance with the inner structure of the *Self*, and in this way to make it part of the *Self*. The spirit emanating from the *Self* can only bring the *Non-Self* under its power by shaping it in its own image in accordance with its own inner functions. And since permanently thinking spirit is the main principle of the Whole of Man,<sup>14</sup> and the life of spirit consists in this thinking, therefore the highest stage of all life is thinking. The life of spirit is the highest stage of life, it is *primary life*, from which all life acquires its own sense and value.

Neither the a priori functions of intuition, i.e. space and time, nor the chief categories of the intellect, i.e. cause and effect, substance and attribute, matter and force, are in the objects, therefore in reality, which is independent from us; they are just contributions without whose means there can occur no experience, and so no picture of the world can emerge, either. The conscious *Self* creates universal and objective relations among the separate pieces of data offered by the *Non-Self*, which flood the *Self* in unending waves through the senses, and so knowing *what is true* becomes possible.

Looking back on what has been said so far, the following thesis is getting clearer and clearer: when the *Self*, reacting to its own activities, i.e. philosophising, contemplates the picture of the world created by itself, recognises its own functions in this picture, and so *gets to know itself*. The a priori conditions, by whose means the *Self* manages to create the object of knowledge, are also a priori conditions of *getting to know* the object. Knowing the *Non-Self* most fundamentally also means knowing the *Self*. For example, if between the *Self* and the *Non-Self*, and also among parts of the *Non-Self*, we were unable to draw the causal chains that flow from the essence of the knowing spirit, then we were unable to get to know the *Non-Self* or its parts. And we can only understand the relations between objects when we have already drawn the threads of causal connections among them. It gets clear from the results and theses of basic philosophy that we are not constructing metaphysics, when a theoretic minded philosophy that is developing as a system, is regarded to be the self-knowledge of spirit. Spirit recognises itself in the objects that are its own creations, and the more conscious and plentiful this knowledge is, the more developed and thriving is spirit as the creator of its objects, and at the same time the more developed is its unity that gets revealed in the organic Whole of thinking and knowledge. Spirit is unified, the world-picture developed by it is unified, and consequently the functions of spirit are also world functions, and since spirit is the highest level of life, they are also *life-functions*.

The above fact must be fully understood in order to be able to see clearly both the organic relation and the difference between ontology (i.e. theory of reality) and axiology (i.e. theory of value). Being and thinking are one in a dialectical sense, but not in a

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. the pertinent discussions in the work referred to above: *Ember és élet (Man and Life)* by Bartók

metaphysical sense. Spirit gives unity to knowledge by means of its primary functions, and it gives unity to the consciously created world-picture by means of knowledge. It gives its *own unity*, because it is the only source of unity. Spirit structures and shapes the material received from the Non-Self by means of its functions, and turns it by their means into objective knowledge of universal validity. Whoever has not understood this structure of knowledge, and has not immersed himself in the dialectical structure of spirit, cannot really grasp true philosophy, because regarding its roots, such comportment itself is actually *true philosophy*. Whoever is not capable of such immersion, lacks philosophical ethos. Philosophical ethos reveals itself in accordance with its own essence when the philosopher, having fought all difficulties with resolute and patient work, is taken from the peripheries of spirit into its Holy of Holies at a propitious and fecund moment, so that he can see creative and potent spirit face to face. It is however impossible to analyse and put in words the activity that leads into the depths of spirit. This activity leading into the depths of spirit, however, cannot be expressed or analysed in words. We must listen to what Plato says in his 7<sup>th</sup> Letter: "Differently from other matters of the teaching, the final insight cannot be explained in words, it will only flare up suddenly, like some brightness lit by a spark, in a soul that has been occupied with it very often and has lived with it for a long time, and then the flame will feed itself."(341) Firstly therefore, the sudden, almost unexpected striking out of a spark lights up the depths of the soul. A philosopher is thankful to receive everything that a special branch of science can furnish, yet with the help of those result he must rise *above them*, so that the flame ignited by the spark and feeding the self should light up the Whole, which is nothing else than *The Self and its World*. The richer the knowledge is about details, the richer the material is, on which the forming functions of spirit work. But it would be a vain effort to accumulate more and more details and to work on them, if the spark striking out of the spirit were not to present its own light to the understanding Self.

However, philosophy has not yet completed its work by examining and understanding the primary functions that proceed from the *Self* and are indispensable a priori conditions of picture-creating, and of understanding the pictures consciously. We have to face not only reality that is usually referred to as "nature", and to which also belongs the understanding *Self* with its own ontological structure. Nature constitutes only half of our world, i.e. it is only part of the Whole at which philosophy turns its attention. This "Whole" is indeed not only that which is created by the *Self*, when the *Non-Self* forces itself upon it with irresistible power, and by knowing which the *Self* develops in accordance with its own structure, and acquires freedom. It is the brutal force of nature that surprises man and forces him to exert his activities. The activities of the *Self* however, having started, cannot cease at this point. Having realised what powers it has, the *Self* is no longer satisfied with receiving the effects of the *Non-Self* and catching all its details in the net of natural laws, but *it itself also wills to create things of its own choice, sua ponte*, i.e. of its own free will.

"The world of man,- -says *Károly Böhm*, - does not only consist of what the *Other* (the object) does in it, but also what *man himself* creates in it through his own power. This is definitely the more important part of our world, anyway we are more interested in this than in what already there is; because with this we take our part in the great work of eternity, into the great tissue of which we get our own threads entwined, which are humble but indispensable for the existence of the world. There we are wildly and rudely tossed about, here we make our own power effective by returning the blows and subjugating the brute

forces of *physis*.”<sup>15</sup> These immortal and profound words display the infinite richness and beauty of the world of man in the crystalline mirror of the philosophical ethos of a wise man.

Károly Böhm’s above quoted words refer to the problem of *nature* and *culture*, which has incessantly concerned philosophers since the time of Rousseau. The difference between the two is indubitable, but it is also indubitable that the two, nature and culture, are necessarily and inevitably dependent on each other. Neither the *Self*, nor the *Non-Self*, neither culture, nor nature could exist alone. Grasping nature in pictures through an unconscious activity of the *Self* is indeed culture already. And each material bit of culture is indeed a bit of nature, however sublime and subtle it may be, like for example human voice.

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<sup>15</sup> Introduction to *Ember és Világa (Man and His World)*, Vol. 3, p.vi.

## § 19. NATURE AND CULTURE

These two concepts can be made to be understood if the difference between them is made obvious, and if the interconnection due to their essences is made clear. Nature is *necessity*, the kingdom of constraints that do not permit any choice or hesitation, where there is no exception to the rule of law. It is in vain to try to find value or non-value in nature: here everything is the result of the same sort of necessity, and what is beneficial to one is harmful to the other, and *vice versa*. In nature everything is value and non-value in the same way. The viewpoint and standpoint decide everything. From man's point of view all mice are harmful, from the viewpoint of a hawk all mice are useful and nice creatures.

The world of *culture* is different. Culture is the sphere of *freedom* and free voluntary relationships, where the wealth of spirit grows before our eyes. Culture is the kingdom of *value*, where value starts and continues its resolute fight against all that is non-value. While in the sphere of nature everything is assessed from the point of view of *what there is*, in the sphere of culture *what ought to be done* decides the norm and the direction. In the sphere of nature we have to accept *what there is* in the way it forces itself upon us: we must regard a river as being a river, and I cannot avoid the hail that destroys the crops in my land. In contrast to that, in the world of culture and in its light, *what there ought to be* gives me the clue to my decision, which means that I do not accept what does not satisfy my requirements. It is in vain that "the scientist" accumulates more and more data on his slips of paper, and gets absorbed in arranging his specimens kept carefully in his museums, since if they lack the enlivening ties that *Goethe* spoke about in his *Faust*, then they are to be thought of as valueless. Therefore it must be noted that even human culture creates products that appear as valueless from a higher viewpoint. Still culture is the infinite kingdom of values and of the fight of value against non-value. In brief, culture is the world of *history*, which is actually the kingdom of the fight for freedom, but in which beside values there is a role played by non-values, too, which remain even predominant for short times because of the enforcing effect of their brutality. That is why history is indeed the tribunal judging the world. Its verdicts allow no appeal.

As for the validity of the laws of nature, it needs no detailed explanation that they are valid without exception in the world of culture, too. Culture is actually creation that enters reality and becomes its part, so it is subject to all laws of reality. That is why it is wrong to think that because of their axiological nature, cultural creations are not subject, for example, to the laws of causality. Culture possesses reality structures, and is always the product of activities that endeavour to realise certain values, and just because of this element of "realness" it is always subject to all laws of nature. All human creations, and so culture, too, are made with the help of the spiritual functions of space, time, causality, etc., from which it necessarily follows that the functions that realise the universe of nature, and the laws they generate, hold true of all cultural products. The process, for example, that was to result in the ready-made statue called "A Melancholy Shepherd" by Miklós Izsó, was subject to all conditions of intuition and creation. And the statue itself is subject to them now, when the process has yielded its result, and has created a thing of high value.

But it would have been under the control of these conditions even if it had not resulted in anything of aesthetic value.

Therefore it cannot be left out of consideration that the primary functions that realise the world and life are valid in the historical cosmos, too. From that it necessarily follows that the two spheres, i.e. nature and culture (or history), are not two completely separate worlds at all. If they were, then it would be impossible to speak about the Whole, which is the subject of philosophy, but just about two independent spheres that are not connected by any meaning or relationship. But then philosophy as the science of the universal Whole, were not to exist, either; and also spirit, which creates and intuits this Whole, would have to be different, too.

The close relationship between the worlds of nature and history (or culture) becomes even clearer if we say that these “two” worlds are not two “worlds”, but just two different viewpoints or “aspects”, both of which may be taken of both spheres. Nature can be viewed not only from the ontological point, looking at it in order to explore its ontological structure, i.e. reality, but also from an axiological point of view, so as to see whether a certain piece of reality carries some value for human life. Cherries, for example, display an ontological structure of round shape, sweet-sour taste, and red or yellow colours. But these ontological givens can be examined to find out whether or not they are valuable, and it can be said that their taste gives me *pleasure*, and their shape and colour together is a source of *aesthetic enjoyment* to me. Also I can say that I expect to earn a *profit* by selling a certain amount of cherries. So basing it “on” the ontological aspect, we can have regard for values without any difficulty or impediment.

And the proposition is also true the other way round: the ontological aspect has validity in the field of culture, too, and it even has to be taken into consideration if we want to understand culture, since it reveals the ontological structure of the work in question. In the case of the great tragedy “*Bán Bánk*” by József Katona e.g., the history of its genesis and how it got on the stage, also how many acts it has and in which scenes the plots get unfolded or the conflicts resolved, etc., are all parts of the ontological structure of the play. Then this ontological structure is subjected to aesthetic assessment to establish the aesthetic value of the play. In the case of a painting, too, its understanding starts with a description of its ontological structure, upon which to base an aesthetic evaluation. Even the least ontological details of a work of art are worth knowing, otherwise an aesthetic appreciation might be left hanging in the air.

We must therefore state the following: we contemplate and examine the nature of “value-saving” from the point of view of value, and of value-carrying culture from the point of view of “factualness”. It is not only unjustified, and therefore unnecessary, to separate the two viewpoints rigidly, but it is logically impossible, too. The two great “*cosmoi*” cannot be definitively separated, one is dependent on the other; what is more, the development of culture and history is directly dependent upon the condition of how much power we have gained over the natural cosmos as a result of our knowledge of it . Where man has still not liberated himself from the oppressive powers of nature, and his spirit has still not gained independence, there is yet no soil favourable to culture and history.

And it is also indubitable that culture reacts upon nature and creates something new through this reaction, something that has not existed in nature before. So for example human culture changes the landscape of unyielding alkaline soil when man plants it with thousands of fruit trees and vines, or when man uses all means of scientific technology to limit the power of waterfalls, connects the Danube and the Tisza with canals, or binds wind-blown soil by putting it under grass and acacia forests, etc. Human culture controls natural processes when it crossbreeds animals and plants, even creating new types. We change the look of nature aesthetically by planting forests, digging basins for lakes, making fountains, designing alleys, protecting wild flowers, bushes, and trees. In these and similar cases the powers of culture and nature, merging as it were with each other, create new things. In this sense there can be no doubt about *Schleiermacher's* postulate that says that if we want to establish morality, then reason must completely become nature, that is to say nature must become organised by reason and reason must unite with nature. This postulate is actually rooted in *Schelling's* teaching, who wrote the following, "The final aim of the *Self* is to turn the laws of freedom into laws of nature, and the laws of nature into laws of freedom; to establish the *Self* in nature, and nature in the *Self*."

"What there is" and "what ought to be", fact and value, reality and idea are unavoidably interdependent. Value can only be realised in reality, what ought to be only upon what there is; and the rules conforming to what ought to be are without exception asserted against facts, against what there is. In brief, the *rules of value* regulate *what there is*, i.e. *facts*. It obviously follows from these that value and fact are not separates, but organic parts of one and the same Whole, and belong to each other; and it is the duty of philosophy to examine both with equal care.

## § 20. THE CONCEPT OF VALUE

In the Cosmos of culture (or history), therefore, the central concept is that of *value* (or *worth*). The question is what is to be understood by “value”? It is a most urgent task of philosophy to clear up this question, because the concept of “value” has been given such confusing explanations that to fix this concept precisely is in the common interest of both culture and all the spiritual sciences, whose objective is explaining the different forms and manifestations culture. We do not have enough space to do so here. We must content ourselves with noting the following briefly.

A *fact* includes some reality, something existing really, and is under the rule of the category of “what there is”. *Value*, on the other hand, does not mean an existing thing and does not belong to the category of “what there is”, but asserts the category of what is desired by an intelligent will, and signals a definite “ought”, i.e. what ought to be done even if it will never be done. This statement does not mean anything mysterious. Aesthetic beauty e.g., when it becomes conscious in an intelligent will, summons up in the mind the category of “ought”, which is characteristic of worth, and since this category is tied to the essence of beauty, it confronts the intelligent will, even if that will can purely realise it only *for itself* through its own aesthetic intuition. The specifically aesthetic mind is always controlled by the category of “ought”, there being nothing it would contemplate without the emergence of this category.

Value, which demands the assertion of the category of “ought”, cannot be real in the sense in which a pear, a flower, a dog, or a stock of corn is real, but is above them, virtually in opposition to them. As they say, value is an *ideal* reality. However, as something existing not really but ideally, it can only realise itself upon something existing really. If that real existent did not exist, then value would be condemned to the eternal emptiness of its own non-realness. So if value strives for real life, it has to *contribute* to reality: a beautiful woman, a beautiful horse, or a beautiful colour, etc., must participate *in beauty itself*, in order for that beauty to be intuited and become visible as it were. Also truth, as the value of science and knowledge, can only be realised in statements, theses, judgements, or doctrines, to which it lends the trait of worthiness by dressing them into its own ideal form. Goodness, as an ethical value, can also become visible and effective in human acts only: acts are the medium that acquaints us with the value-idea of *goodness*.

On the other hand reality, what there is, the factual, must also participate in value to be effective at all. A landscape is only beautiful or not beautiful when it is viewed under the category of beauty; an act of a person is only good when examined under the category of goodness, a teaching or doctrine can be true or not-true when thought of under the category of truth. Ontological content, when said to be beautiful, is beautiful by spirit that has endowed it with its own self-value, similarly the values that the viewer and the spiritual individual ascribe to true knowledge and good deeds are reflections of the self-value of spirit. That is why we must say that true knowledge becomes true by spirit, a beautiful object becomes beautiful by spirit, good deeds will be good by spirit. Spirit envelops the

ontological structure of objects in the infinite veil of worthiness. Reality and value together make up the Whole.<sup>16</sup>

*Value* (or worth) is therefore one and the same; *valuable* things, which become valuable by participating in value, are many and different. Logical value is *one*, and ethical value is *one*, and aesthetical value is *one*; each of them is one and the same and eternal, never suffering change, never increasing or decreasing. Everything else that acquires value, i.e. becomes true or good or beautiful by participating in them, is not value, but *valuable* only, because value itself does not fully become reality, the eternal potentiality in it never turns fully into actuality. If it were to become fully actualised, the dualism would cease between value and reality, between what there is and what ought to be; then neither logical, nor ethical, nor aesthetical control would be needed, because what exists would be the fullness of value. However in our limited and narrow existence, only through self-development and progress can we endeavour, passing from “what there is” towards “what there ought to be”, to realise valuable ideas, valuable deeds, and valuable works of art. The greater the number of realised values in this world, the more spirit there will be in it and the more and higher life there will be, and the universe will be more orderly in its infinity. Is it not indeed the essence of the tragedy of man that he may not attain a perfect realisation of spirit?

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<sup>16</sup>The relationship between valuable things and value itself was already clearly seen and correctly stated by Plato in his different dialogues. In *Hippias Major* it is said that the just are just by justice, (287.c.), and also that the good are good because of goodness, and finally that all of the beautiful are beautiful through beauty. In the dialogue *Gorgias* the relationship is stated even more closely. Here it is said that reality has the characteristic of being worthy, if value “is present” in it: god men can be said to be good by the presence of goodness, just as the ones are beautiful in whom beauty is present; and notably it is the same with the trait of worthlessness, too, which characterises things only if worthlessness is bestowed upon reality: “bad ones are bad by the presence of badness”. It is clear that in Plato’s teaching there is a clear and sharp difference between *value* and *valuable things*. *Value* is merely of a logical-dialectical nature, which is especially emphasised by Plato in the dialogue *Symposion*, where through the contemplation of beautiful things he reaches the idea of *beauty*, which is always entirely identical with itself, and in which all beautiful things participate in some way. Beauty taken in and by itself never increases or becomes greater, and never decreases or becomes less, because it never suffers any change, while other things fall into decay and disappear.

## § 21. VALUE AND EVALUATION

In conformity with the previous discussions, value, which is always one and the same, is to be sharply differentiated from all valuable things that exist, which are its multitudinous but limited appearances and realisations. So one might cautiously say that value in general is what does not exist but appears. This is ventured very cautiously, because value does exist, but it exists as ideal reality. Value exists as reality presented by spirit from out itself: value is spiritual even if it is realised in a sensual way, as we shall see it later when discussing sensual value.

Value is therefore something objective, and logically prior to the valuable, just as the creating primary function is prior to the created object. In the historically developed kingdom of culture, there are no valuable creations whose self-value could be appreciated without presupposing the independent existence of value that is logically prior to any valuable thing. If value itself did not originate in the essence of spirit, then the understanding *Self* would not be able to recognise the traits of value in anything. Value is a condition of the emergence of culture. Value can be recognised in cultural goods, in other words the distinctive character of cultural goods must be found in their being valuable, but no cultural creation is value itself.

As we have already said, the one and eternal self-equivalent value has the character of being objective. Its being objective excludes the possibility of acquiring an individual and subjective character. Objective value is not the result of some subjective evaluation that was set off by some valuable existent, nor is it a kind of psychological formula, but in virtue of its universal validity and objectivity it is an a priori logical condition of all processes of *evaluation* and all *valuable* things. Although it is true that the realization of objective value, similarly to all other functions of the *Self*, is tied to an individual will, yet this tie to a will, this psychological character, does not make it individual or subjective, just as the regulation of individual thoughts through logic is not psychology. Therefore it has to be admitted that individual will is the only medium through which value can become actual, and it also must not be left out of consideration that here again we have to do with an *anti-nomological* tendency of the *Self*: value is one and many, indivisible and divisible. Value is one and indivisible, because it is an *a priori* self-equivalent and objective unit; it is many and divisible, because its realisation is tied to an infinite number of individual wills, and it can become actual in real objects only by the mediation of infinitely many wills.

The one and indivisible value is actual in all cultural goods, and as for us, we can only change realities into cultural goods with the help of this eternal value. This truth is revealed by any valuable or non-valuable cultural creation being a possible *ratio cognoscendi* of value itself as value, but never its *ratio essendi*. I can recognise the moral value of a good deed e.g., but the good deed can never be the *cause* of that value as value. And so it is in every other sphere of culture, whether or not it is a work of logic, or an aesthetic creation, or a moral deed that we examine. The subjective dimension of each cultural creation indicates the ethos of the creator, that of his nationality, and that of the period, revealing

his inner spiritual character and shedding light on his concept of value. Its objective dimension indicates value itself, of which it is *one* of the actualizing and expressive factors.

*Deictic*, i.e. indicative threads stretch from out the creations of culture to subjective realising will and objective valid value alike. In the goods of culture and history, the same eternal value is manifest in different ways, different degrees, and different forms. In the world of history, i.e. culture, value steps out, as it were, of the sphere of spirit that is above space and time, and steps into, as it were, the world within the boundaries of space and time, so that it becomes visible and observable, even if only partially. Viewing matters from this point, the truth of it gets clearer and clearer that one and the same objective value exists above the categories of space and time, but the moment it is actualised it becomes effective part and power in the ontological world.

## § 22. KINDS OF VALUE, 1: SENSUAL VALUE AND VALUE OF USEFULNESS

As we have already pointed it out, valuable realities can be *ratio cognoscendi* of value, i.e. they can be the reason it is recognised. If from this viewpoint we try to answer our present question of what kinds of value can be distinguished, then, answering the question very summarily, we can say that in public life an ordinary person will firstly admit of things of *pleasure-causing* value and of things with the value of *usefulness* (utility). Undoubtedly the ordinary person's view is about quite right. In certain respects and under certain circumstances we attribute *sensual value* to things, and appreciate them for their propensity to cause pleasure. A deeper reflection upon things, however, must have undoubtedly made primitive man realise already that things can cause him not only pleasure but also be either *useful* or *harmful* to him. This realisation must have been forced upon him by effects of reality, when the success of man's attempts at self-preservation was accompanied by pleasure, and failure was signalled by pain. Existing reality also forced man to learn and understand that there are things that do not cause him pleasure, yet they further his self-preservation and so are useful to him, and that at the same time there are things that may be pleasurable, but from the point of view of man's self-preservation they are detrimental and cause harm.

When *pleasure* is examined more closely, it is noticeable that all pleasure without exception is fully tied to the individual enjoying it: only he feels it and knows what causes him pleasure and what does not. Small children and inexperienced people quickly learn that at their own cost. From that it follows that pleasure is entirely individualistic and subjective. It is individualistic, because the pleasure that a certain object causes is different from individual to individual: what I find pleasant because of its sweet taste, may be unpleasant, or even disgusting, to another person because for him it is too sweet. One may be delighted to smell patchouli, another may shut his nose when smelling it. And it is subjective, too, because it changes as the state of the individual changes, which shows that it fully lacks objectivity: one thing is pleasant to me, another is not, and what is more, one thing is enjoyable today, but tomorrow it is already disgusting to the same person. After a long walk someone may drink two glasses of water with delight, even if usually he does not care for the best fresh water at all. Today, he is not enjoying the dish he praised yesterday. And so on everywhere in the field of the pleasures of the senses, meals, or sexuality. *Pleasure is fully individualistic and subjective, so it can be neither the source nor the measure of value.* This thesis is of very much importance, especially in the field of morality, because there is an influential trend in moral theory teaching that moral goodness is nothing else but pleasure, which means that pleasure is the primary good thing, towards which all deeds must be directed. Our thesis stated above, expressing the dialectical structure of pleasure, is fully in opposition to this influential trend in ethics, and we hold that just because of its essence, pleasure is quite unsuited for being regarded as the primary moral good.

Pleasure, with its individualistic and subjective nature, points to something above itself: by no means can it be the primary value, from which all other sorts of value derive. A rather short meditation over the matter must be enough for anybody to see that there are some sorts of pleasure that are detrimental to self-preservation. Smoking opium for example is no doubt a source of great pleasure, but sooner or later it results in a complete destruction of the person who does so. In contrast to that there are pleasures that signal the success of self-preservation and show that from the viewpoint of self-preservation certain things are to be regarded as *useful*. A glass of water refreshes a thirsty body, i.e. it is useful to it. Bread is useful to a hungry person, rain to dry soil, grass to a hungry horse, etc. So usefulness is undoubtedly a kind of value, and it ranks higher than pleasure. The reason it ranks higher is that usefulness is a characteristic of the thing (the object), so it is objective, and its objectiveness can be measured. Medical science can precisely state how much protein, carbon-hydrate, water, vitamin C, etc. are useful to a human body, and it also precisely knows how much arsenic or other chemical is needed to cure an illness. So here values do not fluctuate depending on the nature, taste, and whim of a person, as those of pleasure do, but they depend on the relation between a person and an object, and are based on this relation. Therefore usefulness is objective, but relative, because it depends on the relation between a person and an object.

What indeed follows from the value of usefulness being relative? It follows that in terms of value, usefulness points *above itself*, too. Usefulness concerns a particular need of self-preservation. To a plant fertile soil is useful, to a man a well grown pig. But to man it is also useful to read a poem that ennobles the soul, to play a refreshing game, to listen to music, to look at a statue or a painting, to do good deeds. But these sorts of usefulness differ in their degrees of being valuable, depending on the *degree of self-preservation* they are useful to. So *it is always regarding something in particular that a sort of usefulness is useful*. Of the higher degree this “something” is, the higher the value of the usefulness is. So now our job is to find the particular thing with the highest value.

## § 23. KINDS OF VALUE, 2: SELF-VALUE

Just as pleasure points above itself to usefulness, so does usefulness point above itself to *self-value*. We call self-value those kinds of value, the value of which is not founded upon any other kind of value outside themselves, but all other kinds of value are founded upon them. In the final analysis, self-value is the source and foundation of all other kinds of value. Without attempting to discuss the problem of self-value thoroughly, (that is the job of the general theory of value), it must be briefly pointed out that self-value exists on three planes of being: corresponding to the categories of logicity, ethicality and aestheticity, we can distinguish the self-values of *truth, goodness and beauty*. As we have seen, there are other kinds of value beside them, namely pleasure and usefulness, but they serve self-value and obtain their worth to the degree of service they do for it. These values actually reflect the light that self-value shines on them, and if they did not exist, self-value would still radiate its forces about, emitting meaning and value.

The world of “value”, which exists above “facts”, reveals itself to our admiring mind through these self-values. But the world of self-value only shows itself to a philosophising *Self*, when it makes all its creations *cherished* objects of contemplation, and realises that the values of its own spirit are reflected in the objects of its own creation. For even self-value is regularity, and qualitatively it is the same kind of regularity that we have to do with in the world of facts, i. e. in ontology. But ontological regularities, being forced upon the *Self* by the *Non-Self*, control the being of objects, value regularities however control those creations of the *Self* that it has created *freely* and *fondly* for its own and others’ delight. Ontological regularities are laws of necessity, while the regularities of axiology, i.e. of self-value, are laws of freedom.

Seen from the vantage point of self-value, that is the way of the development of spirit. By fixing reality in pictures, we get to know the *Non-Self* that forces itself upon us, then from these pictures we create the objects of knowledge with the help of the categories, and in this way we also understand nature itself, which is nothing else but the entirety of phenomena. The picture we have created of the world gives us our world-picture, which is therefore a spiritual creation in every bit, and influences the activities of the *Self*. Therefore this world-picture itself is a creation that unfolds from the threads connecting the *Self* with the *Non-Self*, which will be the more consciously developed as the more advanced developmental stage the spirit has. It is certain that the world-picture of a physicist is different from mine, and the world-picture developed in the soul of a great composer is again different. But here we are not discussing the differences among world-pictures, though they must be admitted by everybody.

From the viewpoint of the development of spirit, it is the only important thing again that spirit produces, of its own accord, the infinite universe of creations, in which *knowledge, morality, and works of art* shine in our eyes, as the realisations of self-value in the great kingdom of culture built during history.

In view of this infinite universe of the realisations of self-value, it must be seen that these creations are facts, just as much as natural phenomena are. The natural cosmos – from a material aspect – is the aggregate of phenomena, while the historical cosmos is the aggregate of the creations of man, but both are equally real. The difference between the two only consists in that the natural cosmos is the object of knowledge offered to the *Self* by the *Non-Self*, while the historical cosmos has been freely created by the *Self* of its own accord. This aspect of freedom means that the creation of works is to be placed in the perspective of value, and the category of value is to be applied when we want to get to know these works.

Hence all creations of value-realising culture are focused on value as their objective to be realised. But culture, which is controlled so as to have value as its aim, is real in its objective being, even though it is to different degrees that value is somehow realised in it or *not* realised. Therefore here we are still in the field of ontology, and it is found that the psychological process that brings about the creations of the *Self* is governed by necessary regularities under the full rule of the law of causality. The ontological structure of an act that brings about a moral end does not differ in any respect from the ontological structure of an act that has *not* brought about a moral end, or just conversely, has brought about an immoral end. The psychological process, and consequently the ontological structure, of learning that results in true knowledge, is therefore the same as of learning that results in false knowledge. The realisation of self-value always takes place on an ontological basis, and the realised value is an ontological fact, the reality of which cannot be doubted even by one without any “sense” of the realised self-value.

## § 24. THE FUNCTION AND CHARACTER OF THEORIES OF VALUE

The axiological examination of the types of self-value, i.e. the value assessing attitude of the *Self*, starts only at a higher stage of reflexion, namely at the stage that the *Self* makes its own creations a matter of examination, confronting them critically, just as it confronted and critically examined the *Non-Self*, which enforced itself upon it. At this stage of reflexion the *Self* already examines the laws that guide the realisations of self-value. It is at this highly developed stage that pure value-theories are produced, namely *logics*, *ethics* and *aesthetics*, which are however never meant to prescribe rules, because they are not in the service of “praxis”. All the three remain pure theories, since if they served praxis, they would stop being philosophy, about which we have stated several times already that it is in every way a theoretical attitude. In other words, the philosophical doctrines that deal with self-value provide theoretical knowledge without the intention or ambition of regulating praxis.

Through theoretical examinations of the doctrines of self-value the *Self* actually gets to know its *own value*, which, in the last analysis, is the objective value that cannot originate in anything else but the *Self*, from which it gets into the object that realises a value. In other words and perhaps more clearly, at this high stage of reflexion the *Self* gets conscious of its own value, so that the laws of value, which control the production of valuable objects, are discovered by it, made conscious, acquired and absorbed into its own conscious content. These theoretical doctrines of value therefore examine valuable reality and the value of reality, and they do so in the perspectives of a-priori-existing value. These theories of value show that no mark of value can be affirmed about independent reality, and still less can we endeavour to find value that is independent of us. It is the job of these philosophical doctrines of value to show that all kinds of self-value, namely truth, goodness and beauty, emerge from the depth of spirit and get, through the activities of spirit, into the realised instances of knowledge, actions, works of art, and reflective thoughts. Such examinations are the means of discovering whether emotions, feelings, affections or passions have any roles in the creation and recognition of value, and if they do, then to what degree.

When we said that, conforming to its planes of dissemination, self-value can be true, good, and beautiful, thereby we already made it clear that these three planes reveal certain differences among truth, goodness, and beauty. We now do not even attempt at describing and explicating these differences. Such detailed and profound explanation is the job and duty of the philosophical doctrines of self-value. Obviously the differences cannot be grounded in anything else but the *directions* of the dissemination of self-value.

The directions of the dissemination of value are different, but self-value itself is *one*, namely spirit. It should not cause any difficulty to understand this fact. If the source and ground of self-value is spirit, then self-value itself is spirit, by which everything is created and which gives its own value to everything it has created. We must therefore state that

*spirit is true, good, and beautiful*, and if these are conceived of in their supreme fullness, then spirit is *perfect and holy*. That is the reason that even the Scriptures cannot use a higher adjective about God the creator of all, but this: God is spirit. Indeed the spirit-forming *Self* has not reached the highest stage of its development before it got to this summit of holiness.

It must be constantly emphasized that doctrines of self-value do not provide practical guidance about how to think logically, or develop valuable morality, or appreciate and create works of art, because their only aim is to carry on exclusively theoretical research concerning value and its different developments. It would be very easy and splendid, if by understanding the rules of logic we were to acquire logical thinking, or by learning the rules of ethics one became a person of a high moral standard, or if observing the rules of aesthetics led to the creation of classic works of art. Those nice dreams must be given up. A person does not become logical, ethical or highly artistic, but he is born so. The job of the doctrines of value can only be to search the truth freely and independently in each field of the kinds of value. It is not the job of any doctrine of value to deal with what consequences will follow from the practical utilisation of their results.

The opinion that philosophy ought to be the guide to sound thinking, acting, and artistic creation, is completely alien to the idea and essence of philosophy. Ethics is not a moral code, and aesthetics is not a collection of precepts and techniques for practising and developing arts. All doctrines of value are theories, because philosophy only aims at finding out the truth, whether it is knowledge about the world of things that are independent of us, or of things that depend on us, or of the world of culture and history. Hence the logical-epistemological character of all philosophy, which has been emphasized several times. Philosophical investigations are logical investigations, and so philosophy is under the rule and control of truth in every respect. In other words, philosophy is theory, and theory is the entirety of the valid relations of truth, therefore philosophy entwines the whole territory of reality and value into the valid relations of truth.

From that first of all follows that all realisations of value are only “valid”, if they are true: without truth there is no validity, neither is there realisation of value, because that is also fixed, under all circumstances, to the substantiation of truth.

Undoubtedly, the problems we have discussed direct us to ways and means of dealing with all-important matters. We cannot now give a thorough introduction to these ways and means. We must be content with having undone the thickest threads that unite the seemingly isolated parts into an organic Whole, and show up the organic unity of problems, the understanding of which has been the aim of philosophy for several millennia.

## § 25. CONCLUSION

Philosophy is reflective thinking, the content of which is spirit itself as the source of knowledge and value, and the aim of which is to raise to consciousness the self-development of the understanding spirit. Philosophy so understood is indeed *totalising* behaviour (as Hegel called it), which re-establishes the unity of the *Self* and the *Non-Self*, i.e. establishes it consciously, showing up the a priori and objective conditions, under which reality can be constituted, i.e. created, and at the same time become known under the same conditions.

All kinds of knowledge, both the natural sciences and the historical ones equally, apply these same conditions, but they do not “know” of their application. Philosophy makes just these *a priori* and objective conditions a matter of investigation, and shows that they are the conditions of the *possibility* of all knowledge. That is the reason philosophy rises *above* all other knowledge and that is what its *universality* necessarily follows from. Philosophy is not only universal but we can also say that *philosophy is One*: what we call philosophical doctrines – ethics, logic, epistemology, aesthetics, philosophy of history, etc. – are the ideal manifestations of the One and indivisible philosophy presenting its different aspects. This One and indivisible philosophy is a manifestation of the One and indivisible spirit, a *manifestation of its life emerging from its very essence*. Through and in philosophy the rich and abundant content of reality, and of spirit itself, opens up before spirit, so that in this revelation of reality it can sight its own traits and regularities with clear and conscious intuition. Philosophy is indeed the disinterested self-contemplation of spirit, by which it exposes, shapes, and so understands its own infinite content, and makes conscious everything that has not yet risen to consciousness in it. Philosophy is a universal attitude, with the final aim of progressing degree by degree and time by time, to create and establish the universal Whole, in which the *Self* and the *Non-Self* intertwine to form a closely knit unity.

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Linguist and philosopher, he studied English and French linguistics and literature at Budapest University, graduating with the equivalent of an M.A. degree in 1970. When graduating he founded the English language teaching studio named Structura in Budapest to utilise the findings of contemporary structural and generative transformational linguistics in foreign language teaching and to connect it with the intensive method. In 1984 he obtained a scholarship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and studied philosophy and general linguistics there from 1986 to 1989, graduating with his second M.A. degree. After the political transformation of Hungary in 1990, he published, in the radical national weekly 'Demokrata Fórum' (no. 47, vol. V), a lengthy article in the philosophy of economics entitled 'Gondolatok a gazdaságpolitika alapelveiről' (Thoughts on the Basic Principles of Economic Policy), pointing it out that neo-liberal economic policies destroy the country's economy, and true economics can only be rightly conceived of as applied ethics. Between 1992 and 2004 he taught philosophy, English linguistics and ancient Greek at Károli Gáspár Reformed Church University in Budapest. Since 2001 he has been an editor of the international journal of philosophy 'Existencia' published in Hungary, contributing with articles like 'Justice and Post-Communist Transformation' (vol. XI/2001), 'The New Hungarian Constitution' (vol. XXI/2011), and 'Justice, Democracy and Nozick's Minimal State'. He also translates works in philosophy and theology into English and Hungarian.

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