Paweł Więckowski

Debatable Philosophical Wisdom

How Philosophy Accompanies the Development of Humankind

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Acknowledgement

Introduction

About the book. This introduction to philosophy aims at presenting its diversity, beauty and significance in a concise and critical way. It was first designed to accompany a short course for non-philosophers, often complete beginners,[1] but developed into a more demanding presentation. Its objective is to respond to the interests of an intelligent audience who would like to learn about the achievements of philosophy without being exposed to either naïve clichés or to obscure jargon. It can also help more advanced students to look at philosophy from a new angle. Philosophy is regarded here as searching real wisdom, resulting from a discussion and hardly ever certain (thus debatable in two senses of the word). Part One of the book is devoted to the history of philosophy, Part Two sketches an outline of what might be considered to have followed from it. I also intends to promote the project of philosophy as an interdisciplinary interpretation of the results of different branches of science as well as arts and humanities. There is a growing number of educated persons who are not interested in philosophy as an obscure set of conceptual systems but who would like to know what philosophers have said about knowledge, morality, God, free will, social order or the meaning of life. Academic philosophy usually disappoints them. This book assumes that answering basic questions in a responsible way is the main goal of philosophy, unfortunately a little forgotten during the last decades.

There is a large number of good texts that discuss various philosophical issues. It is much more difficult to find one that would present a coherent history of philosophy in its entirety. The existing manuals either accept the chronological order and present scholarly catalogue of unrelated doctrines, or take the systematic approach and present views on knowledge, morality, God, etc., taken out of their historical context. The former bore the reader with irrelevant details and lose the momentum of real discussion, the latter present problems in a way that is often incomprehensible to the modern reader (it is difficult to understand how Kant and Hume criticized the proofs of God's existence, without knowing the context in which the proofs came to be and how their criticism stemmed from the doctrines of the Enlightenment philosophers). Both methods lead the readers to believe that philosophy is a collection of strange doctrines

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[1] Its first version was prepared after I had been awarded a scholarship "Młodzi projektują zarządzanie" within a project in the Warsaw School of Economics in 2012-2013. (Projekt współfinansowanego ze środków EFS w ramach Programu Operacyjnego Kapitał Ludzki, Priorytet IV „Szkolnictwo Wyższe", Poddziałanie 4.1.1 „Wzmocnienie potencjału dydaktycznego uczelni.).

on bizarre topics, which may be interesting as trivia or oddities only, but have no bearing on the problems of a modern man.

In Part One, following the example of the *History of Western philosophy* by Bertrand Russell, history of philosophy is presented as a process accompanying the history of Western culture, in which different doctrines stemmed from specific historic circumstances. Being aware of many possible approaches I prefer not to see it as the study of the relationship between abstract ideas or works of conceptual art, formulated in their own untranslatable languages. Philosophy is - for me - a work of thought seeking to apprehend reality in its general and existential aspects. Socratic thesis that virtue is knowledge becomes clear when it is seen as a defence against relativism of the Sophists, which in turn referred to the political situation in Athens. Philosophers are arranged into groups and to show that e.g. the ethical views of Locke, Hume and Smith take on the clarity when considered as an expression of the middle-class optimism after the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Most philosophers wrote imprecisely, struggling with a huge task of building a general theory of the important aspects of the world. Their doctrines are often wrong (that is why a course of history of philosophy based on summaries of these doctrines as if they contained wisdom rather ridicules them in the eyes of shrewd students than promotes philosophy). However, when doctrines are considered within the horizons of the era in conjunction with its problems and stereotypes, supplemented with hypotheses about the intentions of their authors they cease to be absurdities and become a record of the struggle of the reason with the world (e.g. Kant, who wanted to save the moral principles which he absorbed in childhood and reconcile them with the Enlightenment cult of Reason. The value of philosophy does not lie in its past doctrines, but in the effort of thought that had been behind them, still encouraging dialogue.

I present the doctrines themselves rather sparingly (so the book may not be an easy reading, it sometimes resembles a brief summary to be discussed in class). Currently, there are many excellent introductions to individual philosophers, so there is no need to substitute them with my own ones. I choose rather to help students by directing their focus to the most important problems and suggesting some interpretations. (In our age of intellectual overproduction when unsorted information can be found everywhere the aim of a textbook is to make a comprehensible selection of the most important issues.) As additional reading I recommend miscellaneous sources, from a simple and decent introduction by Antony Kenny (*An Illustrated Brief*

History of Western Philosophy[2]), through books on individual philosophers to entries in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (http://plato.stanford.edu - entries can be easily searched through this page) on a more difficult academic level. (I am very much impressed by this effort of American philosophers to discuss the whole history of philosophy in a common modern conceptual framework. It also provides comprehensible bio- and bibliographical data). They do not necessarily agree with my interpretations.

I analyse different doctrines translating them into a simple natural language. I do not pretend to develop Hegelian philosophy using his language. (Although I Hope I do not go as far as Daniel Dennett who accused of "avoidance of the standard philosophical terminology" replied "I view the standard philosophical terminology as worse than useless--a major obstacle to progress since it consists of so many errors trapped in the seductively lucid amber of tradition: "obvious truths" that are simply false, broken-backed distinctions, and other cognitive illusions."

Understanding texts requires suggesting their actual meaning hidden between the lines and seen only from the distance. Enlightenment aimed at freeing men from superstitions based on tradition, while it only replaced them with a dogmatic worship of Reason. A critical discussion of different doctrines from the perspective of an educated and critical modern reader seems much more important to me.

The appeal to general history is valuable without relation to philosophy. After a period of fascination with the future, we witness revived interest in the past. New books and films certify the strive of the globalizing humankind to understand its history (including economic and political issues[3]). The invoked historical context (my philosophy classes are accompanied by slides with works of art and short pieces of music from different ages, at home students are advised to watch good history documentaries) reminds of our place in the development of humanity as a whole, and it is the only process of this kind in the known Universe. One does not need religious

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[2]   Actually Kenny's book is an answer to Russell's *History* and follows the same pattern of placing philosophical doctrines in a historical context, although in a less controversial or personal manner.

[3]   Daron Acemoglu, James A. Robinson, *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty,* Profile Books 2012; Niall Ferguson, *Civilization: The West and the Rest,* The Penguin Press 2011; Ian Morris, *Why the West Rules---for Now: The Patterns of History, and What They Reveal About the Future.* Profile Books 2010; Francis Fukuyana, *The Origins of Political Order: From Prehuman Times to the French Revolution,* Profile Books 2011. Also whole TV channels are devoted to history the History Channel or Swedish Viasat History.

doctrines to justify the uniqueness of humankind, but hardly anyone remembers that being human means taking part in this unique experiment. An especially valuable book is *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* by the historian Yuval Harari[4], which presents a reliable and clear account of the history of humankind with its interesting interpretations.

In Part Two I summarize most convincing results of philosophical enquiries. Philosophy is not only a kaleidoscopic collection of metaphorical outlooks on the world, it also contains arguments by which certain statements are more reliable than others. I have a lot of sympathy for the postulate that philosophy should be an interdisciplinary summary built on the scientific knowledge. That is why I add some information on how science shaped certain philosophers' convictions. Interestingly, philosophical theses which have proven to be particularly well-founded are no longer an exclusive property of philosophy. One can find them in various sciences or expressed by social activists, politicians, journalists and in everyday thinking. Searching for wisdom is not only the business of philosophy. However, I do not claim that those issues are resolved definitively. The concluding part reflects views which I find convincing but which still can inspire further discussion (which in fact is reflected in many entries of the *Stanford Encyclopedia*). The second part becomes more difficult when I try to present knowledge as having nothing to do with the naïve understanding of truth as correspondence with objective reality or engage into a discussion with contractualist and contractarian views on morality.

Certainly, a book of a modest size designed to accompany a short introductory course allows only for a limited fulfilment of my objectives. I sketch a general outline of the development of philosophy and treat specific issues very selectively. As with any short introduction it is much too simplistic. (which is not necessarily a disadvantage - a simplified map on a scale 1:10000000 is not worse than a map on a scale of 1:1000, they simply serve different purpose). The book is very imperfect so perhaps it should be treated as a project to be continued (some suggestions are mentioned in the appendix about the role of philosophy). It was meant for economy students so certain problems connected with capitalism are slightly emphasized. Some section presenting general information are brief and students, if they find it unknown, are advised to supplement it with other sources.

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[4]   Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (2011)*,* Vintage London 2015. The book has already been translated into 30 languages and appeared under a few slightly different titles.

Although Part One follows the usual British standard of short histories of philosophy, some arbitrariness of interpretation (if only in selection of main ideas) was unavoidable. Whenever possible, I tried to promote critical thinking, referring to arguments and be accurate as far as facts are concerned.

However, just like Russell, I could not avoid evaluations and taking positions on various issues, which poses special problems. Can we expect evaluations to be impartial or justified? I agree with those philosophers who separate discussions on fact and on values. While discussing facts we decide what is the case, while discussing values - what we want to be the case, what should be the aim of our action. Consensus about facts can often be reached because both data based on sensory observation and a method of testing hypotheses are fairly unanimously accepted. However, behind evaluations there are always personal attitudes, desires and preferences, which are not commonly accepted. Different groups of people can negotiate common standards to be used in evaluations but I doubt whether any universal consensus in the matters of values is possible. The point of view of the universe does not exist. This does not mean that evaluations should be avoided. On the contrary, they should be expressed, discussed and lobbied for. They should compete with one another as organism in the process of evolution. Perhaps while science is based on a commonly accepted scientific method concerning allowed procedures of justification, axiology can only be based on commonly accepted regulations concerning allowed methods of promoting preferences. Thus the Weberian or positivist ideal of value-free social sciences and philosophy is mistaken (and may even be harmful - when attitudes are not expressed openly they secretly permeate texts and become manipulation). We should express our attitudes in evaluations, attempt to convince others to them, develop understanding how they are interrelated. In the process evaluations may become perfected, more mature, accepted or rejected, but they do not become justified in the sense in which factual claims and hypotheses are justified. Perhaps evaluations can be only more coherent or more convincing.

There is also a practical reason for introducing evaluations. The world is becoming increasingly less secure nowadays. It may require decisive action, which is not possible without evaluations. Studying philosophy is a good occasion to prepare for it. As the motto of Dan Brown's *Inferno* (2013), allegedly taken from Dante, states "The hottest places in hell are reserved for those who maintain their neutrality in times of great moral crisis." (Especially two sections 'Looking into the Future of Western

Civilisation' and partly 'Appendix II. God's playground - Poland and its philosophy' which touch current political issues are less academic, more subjective and essayistic.)

The brevity of the wording and avoiding philosophical jargon (the manual does not require extensive knowledge of humanities) make some claims sharp, while some others are intentionally provocative (perhaps those places should be specially marked, although then the effect of surprise would be lost), which is also not a fault – it may help engage students into a discussion during classes. I tried to avoid one-sidedness even at the expenses of inconsistency. While talking about the Middle Ages, Christianity, capitalism, and especially Western culture as a whole, the most creative and the most neurotic in the history of humankind, I am sometimes apologetic, and sometimes bitterly critical. Student should be aware that different opinions are being held and that I am not telling them what to think but rather inspire them to think.

Bibliographical references are becoming a complicated issues nowadays. Classical texts have been reprinted many times, many of them are available on Kindle or on-line. If the reference does not accompany a quotation, singling out a particular issue seems pointless. On the other hand commonly known and unquestionable information does not need reference. But what counts as commonly known nowadays? I packed this book with many pieces of factual information, supplementing them with references to sources would require an enormous amount of footnotes. I assumed that if factual information can be easily checked using the internet (the level of accuracy of Wikipedia in English is very high, most entries are supplied with a list or reliable sources), it does not need explicit reference. I add references only when they are important (e.g. when I summarize a controversial or new claim or interpretation).

What are the benefits of studying philosophy. In the Anglo-Saxon cultural environment Philosophy is an essential component of education of the elites, which I was able to see at the London School of Economics. There, as well as in Oxford, where the programme "Philosophy - Politics - Economics" for leading politicians and journalists is run, studying philosophy teaches a mental discipline, navigating among complex abstract arguments, understanding and defining concepts, disarming rhetorical tricks, interdisciplinary approach to the issues and writing skills, which are an art in England and America, codified and described in many textbooks.

Philosophical written works expressed the spirit of their age and influenced the minds of their readers. What crystallized in the minds was more important than what was in the books. Many philosophical views are still present in current debates although

their proponents are not always aware of the problems which they involve (e.g. Plato's doctrine of absolute goodness, which must be obeyed, Aquinas' proofs of God's existence, Mill's concepts of individual freedom, the Darwinian thesis that humans are the same product of evolution as all other organisms). Therefore, explaining not to professional philosophers but to a wider educated audience what was the way travelled by humankind and what problems were discussed underway seems essential if the same rhetorical tricks and argumentation traps should not reoccur endlessly.

The message of philosophy. What has come out of two and a half thousand years of philosophical discussions? In the face of conflicting interpretations I can share my personal view. Philosophy has made, together with Western culture, the transition from the view, universally accepted in all ancient cultures, that the world has a definite structure and humankind ought to respect and obey the eternal patterns (recognized by specialists) - to the view that the unique position of the human species in nature stems from the humans being the creators of the structures in which they live, and the fact that in their development they must rely on themselves. This view emerged within philosophy and philosophy allows to comprehend it. Western culture (in a broad sense), neither the happiest nor the wisest one, but probably the most creative in history is the only one that accepted this view and is now facing its consequences.

Issues of philosophy

What is philosophy. Philosophers have a great difficulty in defining their discipline. Ancient Greeks had a strong conviction that behind what could be seen, the appearances, was hidden the reality, what really matters, what is true. The aim of philosophy was to pierce thought the veil of appearances by intellectual means. This was the search for wisdom and the birth of philosophy. Now a working definition of philosophy could claim that philosophy is (1) consideration of the basic problems of existence, knowledge, values, reason, mind, and language, (2) made by means of intellectual abstract reasoning. Both philosophers and their audience may pay more attention to the search for satisfactory answers to the questions of life, the intellectual speculation or to interaction with the world around them, so that sometimes different philosophical doctrines may have little in common. The most philosophical are those which harmoniously blend in all these three aspects. Neither the search for an answer in a different way (by reference to faith or common sense), nor the use of the intellect to study other, less fundamental and existentially important, is an archetypical philosophy.

(In fact many philosophical books are free intellectual speculation on the margins of the fundamental questions.)

Since its inception, philosophy aimed at knowledge, like astronomy and mathematics. It entered into discussions of current issues, and although it was an overusing abstract theorizing, it was considered necessary in discovering the truth, which ultimately did not contradict the principles underlying common sense. Unfortunately, philosophers also overused rhetoric to present their own ideas as timeless profound truths.

However, philosophy is much more than the search for knowledge or wisdom. Humans are *narrative creatures*. We live in worlds created largely by fictitious stories we make up, tell each other and even impose on each other. Narrations organise the whole human experience. Philosophers aimed at the truth but actually they created conceptual narrative frameworks in which the world was experience. Studying history of philosophy is discovering how great philosophical narratives accompanied the development of humankind.

Although philosophy is different from religion (as based on arguments), science (as not empirical and not taking matters other than basic), arts and social activities, but it is also often similar to them - it tackles the significant issue as religion, requires disciplined thinking as science, creates beautiful conceptual structures and sometimes tends to influence the world.

Philosophical issues can be subordinate to three main questions: What do we know (epistemology, logic)? What is there (ontology, also known as metaphysics: the basic structure of the world, God, man, nature, culture, history)? What shall we do or choose (ethics, issues of happiness, the state and society).[5]

A. EPISTEMOLOGY, the theory of knowledge. What is knowledge and truth? Whether it is objective or subjective? Where to get the knowledge from and how to develop it? How to justify our claims? What can we know? Can knowledge be absolutely certain? How to build a correct reasoning (logic)? How to construct the language which is the best able to express knowledge? What errors of thought and mental attitudes hinder the creation of knowledge?

B. ONTOLOGY What is being? What does "be" or "exist" mean? What guarantees the unity of the world? What is matter? What are the basic ontological categories (items, features, sets, events, etc.)? What causes a change in the world? Is time, space and matter infinitely divisible? What guarantees the identity of the item in

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[5] A similar list is assumed as the starting point in a popular American textbook ???

time – are we the same persons throughout our lives, can the same orchestra play for hundreds of years? Are there finite causes (do things have their own purposes)? Is there a spiritual or supernatural world? How do values exist? Does a man have the soul, the mind, or only the brain? Is the world determined or do people have free will? Could the whole world be considered an illusion, a big dream? What is beauty? What is evil?

C. GOD Does God exist? Can it be proven? What are His attributes? What makes a religion? What is a religious experience? What does religion give people, what does it require, why do they abandon it and what do they lose or gain in this way? What is the social function of religion?

D. HUMAN: NATURE, CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT (HISTORY) What distinguishes men from other beings? What is the difference between nature and culture? Which needs are natural? Is there a natural course of development? How much people are determined by their genes? Is fidelity to nature better than a departure from it (or: should we interfere with the laws of nature – or the natural law)? Is nature complemented by culture or corrected by it? Do people develop towards self-realization? Are the biological needs more important than the spiritual and cultural ones? Should the aims of life be discovered (e.g. by studying human nature or revelation) or chosen freely by those concerned?

E. HAPPINESS What is happiness? Is happiness the most important goal in life? What are the standards of a good life? How can it be achieved? What determines an individual and social level of satisfaction of life?

F. MORALITY What are the good, values, moral norms? How can they be justified? What are their functions? Are they objective or subjective and relative? What is egoism and altruism? Is everyone selfish? What are the basic civilized norms and values? What is conscience? Why does morality change? Do the intentions of the effect are morally important? What is the nature of moral conflicts?

G. THE STATE AND THE ECONOMY How are the states established? What are their objectives? How does their structure evolve? Who decides on the shape of the state? Does the existence of society require overcoming selfishness? What is the role of justice? Where do social conflicts stem from and how to tame aggression? What is freedom, what are its types and its price? What is liberalism?

(The term liberalism is ambiguous. In Europe it refers to trends created around the Enlightenment and represented among others by John Locke and Adam Smith. In America those trends are often called conservatism, because they constitute the traditional basis of the American social system, while liberalism refers to socialist

trends and the welfare state connected of the New Deal and later of the 1960s. To avoid misunderstanding I would talk about free market liberalism and socialist liberalism.)

Great philosophers have placed these issues within their proposed systems, based on common principles and expressing their overall vision of the world. The following systems of various philosophers accompanied the evolution of humanity and its growing self-awareness.

Questions: What is philosophy (e.g. according to Russell – to be read separately), what is its relation to science, religion, art, social and political activity? What are its main concerns (epistemology, ontology and axiology)?

Further reading

General History

A famous art historian Erich Gombrich wrote a beautiful *Little history of the world,* Yale 2005 [a good basic introduction, esp. as an audiobook]

Andrew Marr, *A History of the World,* Pan 2013 [written by a British journalist and broadcaster, also accompanied by a seven-episode film]

Norman Davies, *Europe. A history,* Bodley Head 2014 [a masterpiece of historical narrative, thorough and scholarly]

Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind,* Vintage 2015. [easy to read overview of the history of humankind and its main problems]

History of Philosophy

Bertrand Russell, *The History of Western Philosophy,* Routledge 2004.

Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy* (1926), Pocket Books 1991.

Robert C. Sproul, *The Consequences of Ideas,* Crossway Books 2009.

Nigel Warburton Philosophy: The Classics, 4th edition, Routlege 2014.

PART ONE - HISTORY

Ancient philosophy - Greece and Rome

From Big Bang to Greece and the birth of philosophy

Before the Greek culture began the world and humans had gone the long way. The known Universe probably started with the Big Bang nearly 14 billion (14 000 000 000) years ago. The Earth formed about 4.5 billion years ago. The first traces of life, that may have come from the outer space, are 4 billion years old, but larger life forms did not begin to evolve until the last 500 million years.

Homo sapiens as hunters gatherers

Creatures more similar to humans than apes, walking on the ground in an upright position began to appear on the Earth 2.6 million years ago in East Africa. There, about 200-150 thousand years ago the *Homo sapiens* (or more precisely *Homo sapiens sapiens*) evolved. Human prehistoric culture went though the Stone Age (Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic), the Bronze Age and the Iron Age. Initially, people lived in small groups, hunting and not creating culture. About 70 thousand years ago a small group left Africa and penetrated the Arabian Peninsula, from where it spread throughout the world. The last glacial period lasted for 100 thousand years ending 12 thousand years ago. Only then the human civilization and culture began to develop (it can be contrasted with the history of dinosaurs that lived hundreds of millions of years, or even a crocodile that has been on Earth for 80 million years). It seems that early humans were extremely pluralistic by nature. Whenever uniformity was not imposed by a central government people practised enormous diversity of lifestyles.[6] The same tendency was later seen in Greek city-states.

Hunter-gatherers (or gatherers-hunters, because it is not certain that hunting was more important than vegetarianism) already had job specialisation, assigned important role to women and had strong bond with nature. Norman Davies quotes W. I. Thomson who claimed that this tradition was often misunderstood.

"Because we have separated humanity from nature, subject from object, (...) and universities from the universe, it is enormously difficult for anyone but a poet or a mystic to understand (...) the holistic and mythopoeic thought of Ice Age humanity. The

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[6] Fekri A. Hassan, Demographic Archaeology, New York: Academic Press, 1981, s. 196– 199.

very language we use (...) speaks of tools, hunters, and men, when every statue and painting we discover cries out that this Ice Age humanity was a culture of art, the love of animals, and women (…). Gathering is as important as hunting, but only hunting is discussed. Storytelling is discussed, but the storyteller is a hunter rather than an old priestess of the moon. Initiation is imagined, but the initiate is not the young girl in menarche about to wed the moon, but a young man about to become a great hunter."[7]

While Western civilization has been dominated by the Judaeo-Christian and Classical traditions, there is also a much older tradition of caves, forests and individual freedom, which manifested itself in European romanticism, fascination with the Vikings or the New Age movement. Although it cannot be blindly trusted, it should be carefully cultivated as an important part of human heritage.

The agrarian revolution

As a result of the agrarian revolution, sometimes called Neolithic (between about 11 and 4 thousand years ago in different parts of the world) humans settled, set up cities (Sumerian Ur and Uruk are considered the oldest), developed agriculture and started to build a society based on hierarchy and diverse social roles. The transition from hunters-gatherer societies to agricultural societies was, however, a mixed blessing. More people could survive but their diet deteriorated (humans became smaller). Social hierarchy and the division between the elite and the masses emerged. It enable the development of sophisticated culture but also exploitation.[8] In fact it deprived people of freedom and in many respects made their lives boring, which in turn forced them to develop culture: instead of travelling and having adventures they settled and began filling the boring life of farmers with creations of their imagination. The religion of hunters-gatherers was animis, which regarded the world as inhabited by many different spirits. It somehow fostered integration between humans and the rest of the world. Later religions granted soul only to humans, which justified their right to dominate other species and not to cooperate with them.[9] Even in the 17th century Descartes, who in spite of his declarations represented fairly traditional views, regarded animals as machines without any rights. Unfortunately all those attitudes only justifies human aggressiveness. Wherever Homo sapience arrived other species were massively dying out (Australia

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[7] Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, p. 73.
[8] Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (2011)*,* Vintage London 2015.
[9] "God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth". Bible, Genesis 1:28 (King James Version).

and Madagascar are clear examples[10]). Te development of religion and philosophy only intensified this tendency. Today liberal democratic capitalism with its plagues - overpopulation and consumerism - may destroy natural environment completely within this century.

The oldest civilization developed in the region of the so-called the Fertile Crescent (from the Persian Gulf to Palestine): in *Mesopotamia* (in turn run by the Sumerians, the Akkadians, the Babylonians) and in *Egypt.* Later followed by the *Phoenicians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Persians, Hebrews* (in the Fertile Crescent), and in *China, India* (now called the Far East). *Greeks* appeared later and were preceded by the Minoan culture of *Crete*.

Why was the civilisation of the Middle East, the Medditerranean and subsequently Europe most successful? Jared M. Diamond[11] gives a simple explanation. Although humans are genetically the same all over the world, the external condidtions gave Eurasia an advantage. There the crops (barley, wheat) were richer in protein, easier to sow, and easier to store than American maize or tropical bananas. The most useful animals for domestication lived there (horse, goat, oxen, cattle in general). Africa is full of animals but it is impossible to domesticate them (zebras look as horses but have never been used for work or in battle). Contact with animals immunized people against many viruses (smallpox, measles, and influenza), which later travelled with the Europeans to America and killed most of the natives there. The division into many small tribes or nations living close to each other fostered economic development, which was necessary for survival in a hostile neighbourhood.

If we compare the history of the known Universe to a calendar year (assuming the Big Bang occurred in the first second of January 1st and today is the last second of December 31st), the Earth was formed at the end of August, life appeared at the beginning of September, living organisms began to develop prolifically in early December, the first humans arrived seven minutes before midnight on December 31st , the last glaciation ended half a minute before the end of the year, and the whole history of human culture occupies the last 10 seconds. The development of the *Homo sapiens* is potential unparalleled in the whole known Universe.[12]

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[10]   Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (2011)*,* Vintage London 2015. Ch. 5. The flood.

[11]   Jared M. Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel.* W. W. Norton 1997.

[12]   About the prehistory of Europe see also Norman Davies, *Europe. A History.* Pimlico 1997, pp. 66-84.

The Bronze Age

The cultures of the Middle East are traditionally referred to as "the East" as opposed to "the West" - Greece, Rome and Western Europe. The East was regarded as irrational, prone to magic and astrology.

The earliest civilizations developed in Mesopotamia (Babylonia) between the Euphrates and the Tigris rivers (today Iraq) formed patterns for all future Mediterranean civilisations. It was there that the biblical Garden of Eden was placed, the first cities were built and the first human myths were told - that of the Flood or of Gilgamesh.[13] (*The Epic of Gilgamesh* regarded as the first great literary work of humanity, composed more than 4 000 years ago, contains an amazingly modern wisdom - friendship is necessary in life, which is meaningful even in the face of its inevitable end, while brute nature must be transformed into civilisation. One can wonder if humankind has actually got much wiser over the following four millenia.)

The religion of Mesopotamia (like all early religions of humankind) situated human life within much wider, divine and transcendent order, which can be apprehended only in symbolic, metaphorical way. Its aim was to provide communication between the human and the divine and protect the balance between them. It was polytheistic all religions before Judaism and similar to Greek mythology.

The Egyptian culture flourished primarily in isolation from the outside world (along the Nile River surrounded by deserts). In a way, it achieved what many later civilizations considered the perfect model of society: static, conservative and based on the "divine" order, where the subsequent generations did not introduce any significant changes. At the same time, it was obsessively focused on life after death, for which all earthly life was just a prelude. However, the afterlife was imagined as the continuation continuation of the earthly life. It may mean that they could not imagine any different life - or that they were satisfied with this life and did not expect any compensation for it after death. It is in sharp contrast with the Messianic Christian which despised earthly life as full of suffering. Religious myth of Egypt connected people to the order of the universe, justified the rule of the Pharaohs and discouraged any changes. It seems that without contacts with foreigners, competitions and progress (in the oldest period) it was a very happy civilisation. After the conquest by Rome (the death of Cleopatra in 30 BCE) and by the Islamic culture, it ceased to exist and today's Arabic Egypt is not its continuation.

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[13] This epic is also popular among the economists as demonstrated by a book by Tomas Sedlacek
Economics of Good and Evil. The Quest for Economic Meaning from Gilgamesh to Wall Street.
Oxford University Press 2011. See also Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, p.114.

Two early European civilisations appeared in Crete[14] (ca. 1900 BCE) and in Mycenae, in Southern Greece (a few centuries later). The Minoan civilization on Crete discovered at the beginning of the 20th century by Arthur Evans (the palace of Minos in Knossos with the Minotaur allegedly hiding in it) was probably destroyed abruptly, perhaps by a violent natural disaster (an earthquake). A disturbing thing about Crete is that this very early civilisation might have achieved what humankind has been trying to reproduce ever since - it was peaceful (cities did not even had walls), cheerful, cooperative, had solid social structure and rich, beautiful culture. Was it a real paradise?

Another strong civilisation was Aegean culture (Cycladic and Mycenaean), aristocratic and warlike, whose fall was preceded by the Trojan War fought by the Achaeans against the city situated on the coast of present-day Turkey (around 1200 BCE). The war depicted by Home in the *Iliad* may be a fictitious event, however, it represents real and serious military conflicts.

Around 1200 BCE the whole Mediterranean region was ravaged by the unknown Sea People. It led to the first global collapse of civilization, the first dark ages. New peoples came to Greece from the north.

The Iron Age

Between Mesopotamia and Egypt developed a remarkable culture that has had a huge impact on the thought and the history of the world: the Jewish culture. According to the Jewish part of the Bible (Old Testament, the Old Covenant, especially the first five books of the Torah, which constitute the foundation of Judaism and only later were adapted by Christianity), Abram (later Abraham) emigrated from Mesopotamia (about 1800 BCE) to the area of the later Jerusalem to make a Covenant with God, by which his descendants would be chosen people, supported by God the Creator, Yahweh. Then the Hebrew tribes went to Egypt (or perhaps Egypt conquered their territory), from where Moses led them to the Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments and renew the Covenant.

Historical records document the presence of the Hebrews in Egypt around 1200 BCE. Around 1000 BCE they created an independent state with the capital in Jerusalem probably run in turn by Saul, David and Solomon and the first temple was built (the knowledge of those events is, however, poorly documented outside the Bible). In 586 BCE they were conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, and their elite displaced to Babylon (the Babylonian captivity). Perhaps it was only at this moment that the monotheistic

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[14]   About Crete see also Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, pp. 89-94.

Judaism crystallized as a foundation of the national identity. When the Persians defeated Babylon, the tolerant Cyrus allowed Jews to return to Jerusalem (only a minority decided to do so, as Babylon was a tempting multi-ethnic metropolis) to recreate a small independent state around the rebuilt temple.

The Phoenicians in the current Lebanon built the first great civilization of merchants based on sea trade in the Mediterranean. When the brutal Assyrian empire, based on conquest and exploitation, arose next to them, in 814 BCE, the Phoenicians established Carthage (in present day Tunisia), destroyed 700 years later by Rome after the Punic Wars (146 BCE).

In Mesopotamia, the Chaldeans created a powerful empire (Nebuchadnezzar II, 6th c. BCE) making a huge metropolis of Babylon.

Soon another huge empire flourished in Persia (Cyrus II, 6th c. BCE) which, however, did not manage to overcome the small Greece.

Ancient Greece

The oldest attitudes and opinions of the Greeks, which had an impact on the emergence of civilization after the dark period, were presented by Homer (8th – 7th c. BCE) in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and by his contemporary, Hesiod. The Greeks who besieged Troy were not motivated by conscience and pro-social values - these attitudes did not appear until much later. Achaeans were not preoccupied with duty and concern for others, their goal was to forge their own character and shape their life in a similar way as the Greek sculptures were chiseled – to be beautiful. The Greeks valued strength and physical fitness, but above all the virtues of character such as courage, pride, passion. While striving for fame, prestige and position in the group they were selfish but not petty. The biggest misfortune was an insult, humiliation or disgrace. Shrewdness was also much appreciated, it came handy in relationships with people and gods alike. The deities were more powerful than mortals, but as far as character goes, they were equally vain, selfish and chimerical. For the ancient Greeks earthly life was the most important. They were not optimistic. Their world was a dangerous and unfair place and sinister fate lurked at every corner. The Soul was a force responsible for biological life of the body. After death it went to Hades, where it led boring existence reminiscing on past deeds.

In spite of strong individualism the Greek universe was orderly. Four common pre-philosophical notions were used to define it.

(1) cosmos: the Universe in totality of things. The word "cosmos" meant an orderly and beautiful arrangement. Following their mythology Greek philosophers sought to discover arche, the first and basic element or the first principle of existing things, conserved in the generation of rest of it, which caused all other things to exist.

(2) justice: justice prevails in the world when certain rules are observed by all, rich and poor, strong and weak. In fact, it can also be called harmony.

(3) logos: the world is imbued with a rational order. The word "logos" re-emerged through history of ancient thought and then penetrated Christianity where it was used in the first sentence of John's Gospel (written in Greek), "In the beginning was the Logos".

(4) excellence (arete or areté, pl. aretai, gr. ἀρετή, translated in Latin as virtus; eng. virtue): each thing has its own excellence, the pattern or standard of perfect functioning. The excellence ("virtue") of a tree lies in bearing good fruit, the excellence of a flute player in playing nice music, the excellence of a table in being flat and stable, and the excellence of a soldier in bravery. The concept of excellence is not complicated, but - because it is difficult to define it precisely with one word - it often seems vague (e.g. talking about the virtues of a table is somewhat awkward). Excellence is a standard that determines how a thing must act. If an employer determines the duties of employees, they create certain expectations to be met by employees (a job description in short). Those qualities can be either described or possessed by the employee (in which case they are good employees). This duality is always present when we talk about the characteristics of an object – its features can be "in the mind" when they are described, or in the object when it actually possesses them (e.g. bravery can be a part of a conceptual definition of a soldier and bravery can be characteristic of an individual who is brave).

This approach to excellence had several consequences. Things (in the broad sense, i.e. tables, soldiers, etc.) may be closer to or further from their model standard, same as employees can carry out their duties better or worse. A thing is good when it behaves in accordance with its respective standard and the further it is from it the worse is becomes. The Greek culture was perfect, everything had its model and the pursuit of excellence was the deepest meaning of life. That is why the Olympic Games were so revered. This attitude was passed on to the whole European culture.

Questions: How did the "Middle East – Europe" civilization begin? (agricultural revolution, Mesopotamia, Persia, Hebrews/Jews, Egypt, Crete)?

The phenomenon of Greek civilization – how did it begin? What were Iliad and Odyssey about? Whose moral values were described by Homer? What was the difference between East and West? What was the difference between official mythology and Bacchic/Orphic cults?

What were cosmos, justice (harmony), logos and arete (excellence, virtue) in ancient Greece?

Further reading

Norman Davies, *Europe. A History.* Pimlico 1997: Chapter II Hellas (Beginnings p. 95, religion p. 108, literature p. 111, art, science p. 117, philosophy p. 123, sexual life p. 126, social structures p. 128, Pericles p.132, Sparta p. 133, Hellenism p. 133, Alexandria p. 136, Syracuse p. 139); Capsules on Gat-Hunters, Lausel, Tammuz, Barbaros, Onphalos, Epic, Mousike, Oedipus, Achimedes, Demos,

First philosophers

The first philosophers (6th-7th c. BCE) appeared in Greek colonies, away from traditional religious centres like Athens. Their primary concern was nature in which they discerned some previously unknown problems. Their works, a combination of poetic metaphor and keen reasoning, have survived only in fragments, but gave rise to the intellectual heritage of the West. The philosophers valued different things than other Greeks - abstract intellect rather than sensual beauty and strength. They were often atheists or believed in their own gods. A typical philosopher was an intelligent man with plenty of free time, who did not like to deal with mundane matters, had little need for material things, cherished independence, also from the judgement and opinions of others, and above all indulged in sophisticated discussion about abstract matters. The uniqueness of ancient Greece was manifested in the fact that philosophers were widely respected, so this type of activity soon became fashionable.

Thales (ca. 624-545 BCE) made the first step when he asked about the common principle (arche) of the whole visible world and saw it in the water. For Anaximander (610-546) arche had to be abstract, and the multiplicity of elements was governed by justice. Pythagoras (573-474) considered arche to be numbers subordinated to harmony. Due to the strong attachment to the Orphic religion, similar to the Hindu beliefs (metempsychosis), he regarded philosophy as an art of living, the liberation of the soul from the burdens and annoyance of earthly existence. For Heraclitus (540 - 480) the world was a constant change (gr. panta rhei, all is flux), the war that had a divine order (logos) in the background.

For Parmenides (540 - 470) being was unchangeable (he tried to justify it by claiming that non-being is a contradictory concept that does not refer to anything), which was supported by his student, Zeno of Elea (490 – 430), who formulated brilliant paradoxes of motion.

In order to overtake the tortoise Achilles must first run to the place where the tortoise was when he started running, however, by the time Achilles reaches this point, the tortoise will have moved a little further, and this situation will be repeated infinitely (as long as space and time are infinitely divisible). This argument used one of the most important types of reasoning in the construction of knowledge. We assume some hypotheses H, we draw conclusion C (i.e. what follows) from H, and check if it is true. If it cannot be true, then the initial hypotheses cannot be true either. Here we assume two hypotheses: that space and time are infinitely divisible, and that senses inform us about real movements of things. If so, the conclusion is that Achilles cannot overtake a tortoise (or so it seemed to the philosophers). However, everyone can see that it is easy to overtake a tortoise. So at least one hypothesis is false - either space and time are not infinitely divisible, or what is perceive by the senses is misleading. Sometimes this reasoning is called reduction to absurdity. Another paradox: it seems that an arrow is moving, while it is at any moment at some point, and therefore there are no moments left for the arrow to move from one point to another.

For Democritus (ca.460 BCE-370 BCE) the world consisted of a variety of configurations of atoms devoid of colour and scent (what we perceive is an illusion, appearance produced by our minds). The argument for this was the shrinking of objects and soaking (it demonstrated the existence of empty space between atoms). The motion of atoms was governed by necessity, so free will was also an illusion (materialistic determinism).

The phenomenon of Greek philosophy consisted in that the intellect freed from the mythological thinking, focused on the problems that were beyond the reach of ordinary bread-eaters, yet they were not idle conceptual speculations.

(1) Appearance and reality. Does what we see at the first glance actually exists? According to Heraclitus, we see the changes, but beneath them lies regularity. According to the Eleatics we see movements, which in reality is perhaps impossible. According to Democritus we see multicoloured world, while actually there are only colourless atoms. Early philosophers were driven by the conviction that the truth and

the real world were hidden behind what we see in everyday life. This led to the second point.

(2) Trust your senses or reason. Some philosophers used the analysis of concepts to undermine confidence in what we perceive - Thales' water, Anaximander's apeiron, Parmenides' unchangeable being, Heraclitus' invisible order, Democritus' atoms. This was the beginning of metaphysics (although the term was coined later) – a rational study of the hidden reality. For two millennia philosophers mostly supported the idea that the mind learns the truth through abstract reasoning bypassing the senses.

After they embarked on the task of discovering the hidden reality, the questions about its structure arose.

(3) One and many, unity in diversity. Does the visible world in its diversity have a unifying principle (arche), some common material? For Thales it was water, for Pythagoras- mathematical relationships, and for Democritus- the fairly homogeneous atoms.

(4) Stability and change. According to Heraclitus the change takes place according to the rules, which are derived from logos. According to Parmenides the Universe does not transition from non-being into being.

(5) The infinite divisibility. Can time, space and matter be divided endlessly into still smaller parts? The paradoxes of Zeno of Elea is an attempt to draw consequences from the positive answer, which leads to a contradiction. Democritus atomic theory is a hypothesis based on the negative answer.

(6) Determinism. Is each state of the world necessarily caused by an earlier state or does free will exist and at least in some cases can affect the course of events by taking a free choice?

Questions: The phenomenon of philosophy: what were first philosophers interested in?; how did they combine rationality and poetry?, what were their main concerns?:

- Appearance and reality: Heraclitus, Eleatics, Democritus (atoms and colours).
- Senses and reason: Eleatics, Democritus.
- One and many, arche - Thales, Anaximander, Empedocles, Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Democritus.
- Change and stability: Parmenides vs. Heraclitus.
- Infinite divisibility (of matter and space) Zeno, Democritus.
- Determinism and free will – Democritus.

Further reading

Chapter PHILOSOPHY IN ITS INFANCY (and esp. The Milesians, Heraclitus and The Atomists) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy*. Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

Patricia Curd, "Presocratic Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2012/entries/presocratics/>.

The classical period and its great philosophers

The Greek culture reached its apogee in the short period between Athens winning the Persian Wars (449 BCE) and the establishment of the empire by Alexander the Great (325 BCE), interrupted by the Peloponnesian War (431-404 BCE) between Sparta and Athens.

Persians created another great civilization that for a brief moment in history seized Mesopotamia. In the mid-sixth century BCE Cyrus founded a huge and extremely rich empire. Guided by the principles of tolerance, the Persians allowed the Jews to return from Babylon to Jerusalem. Persians made an unsuccessful attempt to conquer Greece, and later succumbed to Alexander the Great, Rome, and Islam, influencing its Golden Age (8th to 12th c., when Baghdad was its capital), and finally in the contemporary Iran abandoned the attitude of tolerance and yielded to the militant Islamic fundamentalism. From the ancient Persia stemmed

Zoroastrianism, which may have influenced Judaism and early Christianity. The essence of the Persian religion was the dualism of good and evil, whose struggle filled the world until the expected triumph of good and its thousand-year-kingdom. The goodness was created by the god Ahura Mazda, while the evil by Angra Mainyu.

There are two different ways of seeing the sphere of values: the Greek and Persian concepts of good. For the Greeks, everything is basically good, though in varying degrees. A runner who reaches the finish line first is the best, the last is the worst. They make up a hierarchy. However, for the Persians the good and the bad are two different kinds. Man can choose good or evil, the choice is binary, the first deserves a reward, the second a punishment. In the first perspective, we all strive for excellence, a common goal, but in the other perspective, life is a dramatic choice between light and darkness, heaven and hell. The concept of good and evil in the Bible is closer to the dual optics and perhaps was influenced by the Persian perspective. Certainly, the Greeks also recognized the evil, misfortunes and tragedies. Oedipus unwittingly ruined his life and did not make it only less perfect. Declaratively, Christianity is a religion in which goodness is everywhere, but sometimes it is very diluted. But actually the Persian dualism was introduced into Christianity because of the Devil, the Evil One, who in the commonsensical thinking functions as a counterweight to the good God.

The Persian Wars (490-449 BCE) won by the Greeks allowed them to feel both the union (against the enemies) and the individuality as city-states (polis, pl. poleis).

Direct democracy developed in Athens, Sparta was like a military camp, Corinth and Thebes were kingdoms.

For thousands of years individual societies were bonded by the morality commonly accepted in them. In small communities the authority kept people in check without forceful overt coercion[15], they were disciplined only by their common collective morality that developed spontaneously. Often community members while meeting face-to-face adjusted mutual requirements and developed solidarity (but limited to their own community - towards strangers hostility prevailed). Although breaking the rules occasionally happened, there was no room for individualism and questioning of the accepted standards.

As the communities grew bigger and richer (generated large surpluses, which could be appropriated by a small group), the ruling class emerged as well as that of priests who used religion to justify moral standards, portrayed as constant and widespread, although this time favouring the elite and supporting social inequality. This was the case in every ancient civilization: Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, India, Israel, and ancient states of Native Americans. The ruling elites, who had disproportionately large means, were able to develop art, culture, a more sophisticated lifestyle, and also became attached to the country to ensure its stability. It is not clear if humankind could have developed at all under democracy and equality. Perhaps it would have plunged into chaos and disintegration or stayed forever on a basic level. The problem was the improvement of the elites, so that they would not yield to short-sighted selfishness.

The Sophists were teachers of rhetoric. They helped people to win their arguments and influenced the majority before the voting in the agora. They also were among the first who concluded that the truth and moral good were relative. The most famous were: Protagoras, Gorgias and Thrasymachus. Relativism (also called subjectivism) is the belief that knowledge is determined by specific qualities of the observer. The Sophists, for example, claimed that place of birth, family habits, personal abilities and preferences, religious training, age, and so forth determine the individual's beliefs, values, and even perception. There are two basic variants of relativism: cultural and individual. *Cultural relativism* is the belief that all values are culturally determined. Values do not reflect a divine order or a natural pattern, but merely the customs and preferences that develop in a given culture. *Individual relativism* leads to even more radical conclusions. Even at the same place and time, right and wrong are relative to the

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[15]   George Silberbauer, 'Ethics in Small-scale Societies' [in:] Peter Singer (ed.) A Companion to Ethics, Wiley-Blackwell 1993, pp. 14-28

unique experiences and preferences of the individual. There is no unbiased way to say that one standard is better than another.

Perhaps the difference between absolutists (or objectivist) and relativists (subjectivists) consists in that absolutists consider being good or right an intrinsic quality of a being, while relativists deny that such quality exists at all. Relativists do not claim that because something accepted by a culture or an individual it is intrinsically good or right. They rather claim that the question of what is accepted or rejected is everything that matters while the search for absolute, objective, intrinsic goodness is pointless. (Sometimes the oppositions absolutism-relativism and objectivism-subjectivism are understood as different ones, but commonly they may mean the same.)

Socrates

Socrates (469-399 BCE) is the "founding father" of philosophy, a model of a perfect philosopher. He defended the theory of the absolute goodness. On the surface his philosophy resembled that of the Sophists, while in fact he was fighting against them fiercely: as an absolutist he believed that truth and goodness were objective, the same to all people. (Socrates was led to them by his inner voice, Daimonion.) He channelled philosophy in the direction of moral issues. He did not preach his views directly but used paradoxes. When an oracle pronounced him the wisest of men, he said that his superiority consisted in the fact that he knew that he knew nothing (while the others pretended to know something). He did not write, but argued with people whom he stopped on the streets of Athens. He asked them about the definitions of basic concepts (such as justice, virtue), then challenged their answers by more questions (the method of elenchus), and finally with still more questions steered them towards the correct answer (the method of maieutics, or obstetrics). It was described by Plato as the dialectical method, which, however, was not used properly until science developed after the Renaissance. The by-product of Socratic interrogations was the ridiculing of his respondents. Traditionally, three claims are ascribed to him that constitute intellectual absolutism: (1) the good (goodness, excellence, virtue), like truth, is common to all, if something is good, it applies to everyone (of course, the excellence of a flute player is different from that of a soldier, but everyone should agree about it; the disagreement indicates that someone is wrong; goodness is not relative, does not depend on a point of view), (2) goodness is discovered through reasoning, using the dialectical method, (3) it is enough to learn what virtue (goodness) is to live according to it.

The extraordinary role of Socrates in history lies in the fact that although he never presented a justification of these claims, he instilled the belief that the task of philosophy is to discover the absolute good, the belief was unquestioned for two millennia in Western culture. A perverse (or cunning) paradox of his method stems from the fact that, although Socrates encouraged critical thinking, he did not tolerate disagreement. He was convinced that there was only one correct moral attitude and philosophy led to it. In time, it became clear that it was his method - putting out and challenging hypotheses – that exposed the weakness of his doctrine of moral absolutism.

Moreover, he believed in the excellence of a man as a man, the general pattern of the good life that should be respected and followed by everyone.

Personally he was not very emotional or sensitive to physical discomforts. He had a strong will, he was stubborn and appreciated independence, nor did he care about his beautiful wife, Xanthippe. Perhaps his charisma and extraordinary impact that he had on some people was the result of an unusual personality that would not be considered fully normal today. Self-sufficiency was one of his major goals, which confused his followers who understood it in many different ways.

His discussions and his hostility to democracy finally offended the Athenians. Some historians are even surprised that his annoying and anti-national attitude was tolerated for so long[16]. He stood before the court, ridiculed the judges and finally almost bullied them to sentence him to death. Despite encouragement to flee the state, he conspicuously surrendered to the judgement allegedly because of his love of the law enforced by the democracy he despised so much.

For some, he is a martyr of philosophical commitment, comparable to Jesus. According to others, he was perhaps a highly intellectual dogmatist (after all, he matched the ideal of a philosopher presented in Plato's *Phaedo*), who over the years maintaining a semblance of elegance, teased his fellow citizens, showing off his intellectual superiority and ridiculing them, until they lost temper. Perhaps his final malice was his spectacular death – he was 70 years old, did not have much to lose (otherwise he could have just gone into exile with his wife, with whom he poorly communicated, died soon and been forgotten), so he chose to provoke the court and took revenge on Athens. He was certainly a paradoxical prophet who inspired the European philosophy. Charismatic, devoid of empathy, haughty and poorly adapted to

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[16] Robin Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died. Dispelling the Myth.* W.W. Norton and Company 2009, pp. 191-192.

everyday life, he ultimately failed to convince his countrymen to his views, but he left a bunch of followers who developed a number of philosophical schools. One might wonder whether it was beneficial that such a man made an archetype of philosopher.

Questions: How was Greece organized politically? What was the difference between Athens and Sparta? Who were the sophists and why were they considered dangerous?What is relativism and absolutism in ethics and how does it relate to the problem of collectivist societies and individualism?

Who was Socrates, what were the similarities and differences between him and the sophists? Why was he sentenced to death? Was he a hero or a malicious old man? How does his personality influenced on future philosophers? What were his 3 main claims about the absolute Good (ethical intellectualism)?

Further reading

Chapter THE ATHENS OF SOCRATES (esp. The Athenian Empire, The Sophists, Socrates, The Euthyphro, The Phaedo) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy.* Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

Debra Nails, "Socrates", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/socrates/>.

Socrates and the definition

What did Socrates ask about when he asked about the definitions of words (concepts, things) such as courage or justice?

Polish "krowa" and English "cow" are two words (names), but they have the same meaning and refer to the same concept. The terms have referents (the objects to which they refer e.g. individual cows), scope (the set of all designations – the set of all cows), the content (the set of attributes, features, characteristics held by each referent and only it) and the emotional colouring (a proponent and an opponent of communism generally attribute to the word "communism" different emotional colouring, even if they agree on the scope and content).

The definition is a phrase that specifies the meaning of a term by specifying a distinctive set of characteristics of its designates, i.e. a set of characteristics that is entitled to all of them and only them (for example, a square is defined as a rectangle equilateral, because the squareness and being equilateral is a characteristics of every square). Possessing a characteristics is both a sufficient and necessary condition for belonging to a defined class. Sometimes philosophers use the term: "definition" to talk about describing not the meaning of a word but the essence of an object.

Definitions may be in a different relation to the existing language customs. A lexical definition is intended to describe the correct meaning of a word. Such a definition is true or false. ("My uncle is a brother of the father" - a true sentence, "My uncle is a brother of my husband", the sentence is false.)

A stipulative definition is designed to enter or specify a new meaning (when for the first time one ever used the word "computer" or "car").

A precising definition removes ambiguity or vagueness of a word. Railways recognize that a young person is less than 26 years old; an author who writes about the culture points out that he means generally the products of symbolic cultures, not microbiological of cultures of bacteria. Stipulative and precising definitions report the intention of the speaker and cannot be evaluated in terms of accuracy.

Definitions serve important cognitive functions. They introduce new words, change meaning of existing words and make them known so as to prevent misunderstandings. They are of crucial importance when concepts are used in building knowledge. Everyday concepts are vague and must be improved to be useful in science. A fish is commonly regarded as a large animal living in water but to build a useful theory of fish dolphins and whales it had to be excluded and a new characteristics suggested - fish breath with gills. Definitions are also the accumulation of knowledge about the objects and grouping them in classes. Sometimes we are able to intuitively identify a class, but then we search for definition, i.e. the characteristics (for example, although it is generally known who the man is since ancient times thinkers discuss, what the essential characteristics of people are). This was the aim of Socratic questions – the words like virtue or justice are widely known, but how to find the essence of the abstract objects to which they refer?

However, a one more thing must be taken into account. Some definitions are persuasive, i.e. they are put forward to resolve a dispute by influencing attitudes or stirring emotions. C.L. Stevenson identified persuasive definition in 1938 as a form of stipulative definition which purports to state the "true" or "commonly accepted" meaning of a term, while in reality stipulating an altered use (perhaps as an argument for some specific belief). Persuasive definitions are common in political argument. "Socialism" may be defined by its advocates as "democracy extended to the economic sphere", while "capitalism" as "freedom in the economic sphere". Both definitions suggest a positive attitude to the studied social phenomena. It is exactly what Socrates and Plato were doing - when defining concepts they tried to influence the acceptance of

certain theories. Plato described a totalitarian state as just and then claimed that justice is equal to bodily health thus suggesting that dictatorship should be accepted as healthy.

As people demand freedom, and then do the bad use of it injuring each other, one can try to prevent this by suggesting the other meaning of the word "freedom" - "Freedom is not doing what one wants, but having opportunity to do what one should do".

The classic form of a definition was presented by Aristotle. He assumed that all beings form a hierarchy in which a sub-set is isolated from a larger parent-set (a genus) by its specific characteristics (differentia specifica). In a definition "Man is a rational creature" "man" is defined by a genus ("creature") and the difference ("rational").

A good definition:

* should state the essential attributes of the species (not "Man is a two legged creature without feather");

* must not be circular (as in "A compulsive smoker is a person who smokes compulsively".);

* must not be too broad (as in "A bird is an animal with wings", since bats (for example) are also animals with wings, and bats are not birds);

* must not be too narrow (as in "A bird is a feathered animal that can fly", since hens are birds, but they cannot fly);

* must not be expressed in ambiguous, obscure or figurative language (as in "Bread is the staff of life").

Plato

It is difficult to characterise Plato (427-347 BCE) briefly. He was an Athenian nobleman (in spite of democracy the Athenian society was divided into distinct classes). On the one hand, he was a leading figure in the history of philosophy, the founder of the Academy, which lasted for 900 years, and according to the English philosopher A.N. Whitehead the European philosophical tradition was "a series of footnotes to Plato". On the other hand, only his written dialogues survived, while his more academic writings has been lost, so we do not know the essence of his views, because the dialogues may only be a reminder of the lectures to students (although Plato was an excellent writer, he did not trust written words).[17] The dialogues (the main are: *Euthyphro, Apology* [of Socrates]*, Crito, Phaedo, Symposium, Phaedrus, Protagoras, Gorgias, Republic*) are

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[17] Hans Krämer, Thomaas Aleksander Szlezáka i Giovanni Reale were major proponents of the so called Tübingen interpretation of Plato. *The Other Plato: The Tübingen Interpretation of Plato's Inner-Academic Teachings*, Dmitri Nikulin (ed.) State University of New York Press 2013.

ongoing discussions about the most important issues, in the anticipation of deep truths, but the arguments are falling by today's standards and often bizarre, and although they often seem to be suggestive, they do not prove much. Argumentation is mixed with religious visions and poetic metaphors, and the achieved results can hardly be summarised. Dialogues are the kind of work that is neither religious, nor scholarly, nor poetic. Perhaps they are just philosophy. They certainly had profound impact on the European culture, and was subject to numerous interpretations. Plato's underlying convictions are always clear - the material world is but a shadow of the intellectual world; the state should be governed by the philosophically educated elite who should direct everyone towards absolute goodness and restrict the pursuit of private interests by selfish individuals. Plato continued the efforts of Socrates to combat the Sophists. These ideas had an enormous impact on the Middle Ages, when the Church created just such an institutional structure. Plato also raised many smaller issues that were no less inspiring.

In some dialogues, Plato used the Socratic method, also known as dialectical. It consisted of formulating hypotheses and drawing conclusions from them. If they proved to be unacceptable or absurd, the initial hypotheses had to be rejected or modified. Much later this method (known as Popper's falsificationism) turned out to be the basic method of establishing reliable knowledge. Plato did not manage to capture absolute truths using them (because, as it was also found, at most it allowed to determine the most reliable hypotheses), so discouraged, he gradually replaced it by delivering monologues (often delivered by the person called Socrates). Perhaps Plato had two different personalities and in time the poet-explorer was defeated by the pedantic dogmatist.

At the core of Plato's doctrine there is clearly the theory of ideas (Forms) presented by the powerful metaphor of the cave. Plato argued that people living from birth among the objects of senses are not aware of the existence of the other sphere – that of ideas (or forms), patterns (and models) of material things. Plato transformed virtues, about which the Greeks had been talking for a long time, into abstract patterns that existed objectively in the immaterial world of the intellect. They are timeless, perfect, unchangeable, known only by reason. In addition to the form of individual things (such as a table or a tree) but also virtues (or aretai – e.g. of a good soldier). On the top there is the idea of Beauty and Goodness. Things, which are copies of ideas, are variable, flawed and exist in space and time. But where does the idea of a soldier, which is used to assess whether someone is a good soldier, draw from? Why should we all use

the same model of a good soldier? The forms (ideas) of individual items participate in the Idea of Goodness, which like god gives them their power. The idea of Goodness illuminates the world like the sun, so that colours could be visible. If the idea of Goodness disappeared, things would lose their patterns, and could not be evaluated as better or worse (or the evaluations would be entirely subjective as the Sophists imagined). Material things were created by the Demiurge, who used moulds to fashion matter (maybe it is one of those metaphors of the poet Plato which should not be taken literally).

In *Euthyphro* Plato formulated his famous dilemma. Originally the question was whether (1) gods approve of what is pious or (2) pious becomes what gods approve. It can be reformulated respectively as (1) we should approve what good is, or (2) good becomes what is approved. The first option means that there are objective standards of good, and when they have been recognized, they should be approved and respected. Do not kill, because killing is wrong. Because the standards are objective, there should be a consensus on moral issues. The second option means that first comes the attitude of approval, which may be irrational and arbitrary. However, what is approved, becomes good (and what disapproved - evil). I do not approve of killing, so killing is wrong to me. Since different people may approve of different things, moral relativism is unavoidable. Such was the position of the Sophists.

Interpreters have been puzzled by what Plato meant by the Good. One interpretations claims that it was a kind of harmony based on the right proportion (which was also crucial in the classical conception of beauty). The same harmony was reflected in forms which set patterns for different classes of things and then in individual things that belonged to those classes.[18]

Plato made use of the theory of ideas on different occasions. This, in conjunction with the theory of the immortal soul independent of the body (this view of Plato alluded to Orphism and was not popular in Greece), led to the condemnation of the material world and natural desires (some philosophers regard Plato as anticipating Christianity). The aim of life was liberation from material world and contemplating perfect abstractions. It was demonstrated as a powerful redescription of love in Plato's *Symposium* – from the love of individual bodies, through cherishing what they have in common (abstraction), loving the soul, one can ascend to love the Goodness, and only then life becomes meaningful.

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[18]   Hans-Georg Gadamer, *The Idea of the Good in Platonic-Aristotelian Philosophy,* Yale University Press 1986.

Four strange arguments for the immortality of the soul illustrates how Plato pretended to have proved his claims.

(1) From oppositions. First, there is the argument from opposites. If two things are opposites, each of them comes into being from the other. If someone goes to sleep, she must have been awake. But death and life are opposites, and the same must hold true here also: live in another world below, perhaps to return to earth in some latter days.

(2) From recollections. The second argument sets out to prove the existence of the non-embodied soul not after, but before, its life in the body. First, Socrates seeks to show that knowledge is recollection (our idea of absolute equality cannot be derived from experience); second, he urges that recollection involves pre-existence (if we are reminded of absolute equality, we must have previously encountered it).

(3) From simplicity. If something is able to dissolve and disintegrate, as the body does at death, then it must be something composite and changeable. The visible world is constantly changing; only what is invisible remains unaltered. The soul is in the very likeness of the divine, and immortal, and rational, and uniform, and indissoluble and unchangeable, and the body is in the very likeness of the human, and mortal, and irrational, and multiform, and dissoluble, and changeable.

(4) From necessity. Human beings may or may not be tall, but the number three cannot but be odd, and snow cannot but be cold. Snow, which is necessarily cold, must either retire or perish at the approach of heat; it cannot become hot snow. The soul brings life, just as snow brings cold. But death is the opposite of life, so that the soul can no more admit death than snow can admit heat.

In another way Plato used the theory of forms in his most important dialogue *The Republic*. The dialogue begins with a discussion of everyday commonsensical concept of justice, in which well-known ideas of every age recur: justice is acting in strict compliance with the law, looking after one's friends and own well-being, it is the convention imposed by the powerful in their own interests or the interest of society, but observed only under pressure as everyone is basically selfish. Through the character called Socrates, Plato combats these views by presenting a vision of justice as harmony both within the soul and the state. In the soul the intellect should prevail over the brave and appetitive parts. In the state philosophers should prevail over soldiers and workers. Every part has its virtue: wisdom, courage and moderation (later adopted by the Catholic Church). Besides containing moving visionary metaphors, *The Republic* is also

an ingenious handbook of totalitarianism for dictators. Plato made no secret that his ideas had common sense reasons – the lack of private property among governors (philosophers) and soldiers was meant to counteract corruption; the lack of families (children were to be produced anonymously and brought up by the state) should eliminate nepotism; myths would manipulate the masses, build social solidarity and justify the distinction between castes. In the mid-20th century Karl Popper in his *Open Society* called Plato the first theoretician of totalitarianism.

Criticism and comments

On the surface, the idea of the Absolute Goodness opposed Thrasymachus' view that might makes right. Societies should obey the Goodness and not those who have most political power. In practice, the difference is much smaller – philosophers, whose verdicts are beyond comprehension of ordinary people, decide what is good and impose it on their subjects, provided of course that philosophers have sufficient political power. The difference was that, according to Thrasymachus, everyone who possessed political power was authorized to enforce moral and legal rule, while - according to Plato - only philosopher who could understand the Goodness should do this, which look like a clever rhetoric trick. As in many monarchies political elites claimed to represent gods, so in Plato's Republic the elites would claim to represent the Goodness. An ingenious invention by Plato secured philosophers' position of power next to rulers - at least until recently.

Plato's ideas after centuries were subject to Christian interpretation (Goodness was interpreted as God) and formed the moral foundations of medieval Europe. Plato provided an excellent tool for rulers who sought to impose order in societies. For every issue there was only one correct pattern that belonged to the divine plan of the world, and only specialists (at that time theologians rather than philosophers) were entitled to determine and implement it. Plato completely denied the masses rights to their own opinions. The paradox was that although Plato advocated the so-called dialectical method, which is a method of reaching the truth through dialogue, in fact, he was a dogmatic delivering a monologue. This is evident throughout evolution of the ideas of Socrates and Plato. Socrates in his youth was probably a sophist, then began to proclaim the absoluteness of truth and goodness, but failed to formulate this claim, only hinted at it. In the early dialogues of Plato a real debate took place, but a commonly acceptable solution was never reached. In his later dialogues (including *The Republic*) Socrates delivers monologues and discussion is mainly used to ridicule opponents. Finally in

Plato's last writings (including *The Laws*), Plato even gave up the form of dialogue altogether.

It is difficult to criticise claims which are so unclear. General Plato's claims that one must act according to their nature, do not take into account the fact that human nature is shaped throughout lifetime (in the 20th c. Sartre emphasised it). One should live according to one's nature but since one can modify this nature, many different ways of life are possible and can be in accordance with nature too. Plato acknowledged nature to be unchangeable and believing that he had perfect knowledge about it he tried to instruct others about one legitimate way of life.

Also the notion of justice (as harmony of parts), used by him, is inadequate. What is harmony, and when is it achieved? In a totalitarian state (e.g. Communist or Nazi) there was some kind of harmony, in the U.S. - a different one. In music, harmony is heard (though a piece of music that sounds harmonious to Europeans may sound off tune to Africans), but in life there is no universal criterion of it. Recognising something as harmonious is a subjective evaluation. For Plato, harmony was a dictatorship of omniscient philosophers, for most people it would be a death trap.

Although it seems true that in case of individuals, as well as the state, a kind of balance between conflicting tendencies must be worked out (in the 20th c. Rawls calls it a reflective equilibrium), Plato's proposal is too radical and impractical. Critics point out that governments of omnipotent professionals is a fantasy - they would be neither impartial nor infallible. It would lead to the alienation of power and hinder the development of both society and the state. Above all, it would be impossible to establish such government since no one would allow philosophers to form it. Proponents retort that in any society the number of intelligent people, able to run the country, is very limited, and if they are not allowed to exercise their rule, the state will fall into chaos or stagnation and be defeated as a result of international competition.

Platonic forms seem to combine two features that definitely should be separated. The form of a soldier defines who a soldier is (distinguishes soldiers from non-soldiers) and also indicates who a better soldier is (closer to the model), and who a worse one is. The combination of these two features makes it difficult to talk about the forms of things that are of little value, such as mud (the model must be valuable).

The dominant claim by Plato that many people have different believes on what is right and true but only he and his students have real knowledge about it, is difficult to accept. History shows that claims of this kind can easily lead to fanatical intolerance. Socrates and Plato made a tremendous impact on philosophy. While the first

philosophers had open minds, were inquisitive and interested in the world around them and paved way for future scientific discoveries, Socrates and Plato lured listeners by the apparent depths of their claims embellished with poetic metaphors, used rhetoric tricks to ridicule their opponents and impose their political and moral views, and finally proved to be dogmatic and psychologically narrow. The horror of Nazi concentration camps and the ideological perversity of Stalinist political commissar are lurking from Plato's *Republic.*

Goodness

The concept of "good" in ordinary language is very vague. Let us try to clarify it a bit using Plato's inspiration. The ascending way to the Good in the *Symposium* may be regarded as a metaphoric distinction of three levels on which we talk about thing being good.

Ancient philosophers talked about good and the Goodness, the term "value" was introduced in 19th century. These words were used and overused in different contexts and have lost clear meaning, so I suggest a simple way of defining them by applying them to three levels of beings. (1) First, there are good things, that is *individual objects* such as a single knife, but one can also include events, states of affairs, or less concrete entities as political systems of different states (actual or possible). Individual beings sometimes are divided into good and bad (the Persian tradition), but also into better and worse. (2) They become good when they are good enough, i.e. possess some desirable features (qualities, characteristics). This is the second level - *desirable (or approved) features* (or their intensity), where entities of the first level become good or better (a good soldier must be brave but in fact what matter is the desired intensity of his commitment to fight). Those features are often called values. The knife is good (valuable) when it is sharp, a less sharp knife is worse. A political system is better when it is more just and fair. Features (or characteristics) of the second level (e.g. the sharpness of a knife) exist either in things or as abstract patterns (e.g. in mind). (3) Thirdly, the goodness is a rule or reason which makes some characteristics approved and valuable in contrast to others. For Plato, it was the absolute Goodness that - like the sun illuminating objects to make them visible - made a sharp knife or a brave soldier a good one. According to other philosophers things are good because they cause pleasure, serve the development of society, meet the interests or satisfy the needs (of individuals, society or species). Therefore, when a question is asked: "what is good", it may mean

three different things: (1) which items have desirable qualities, (2) what qualities are desirable, or (3) why certain qualities are desirable.

Questions: What was Plato's Academy? What were Plato's Ideas/Forms (allegory of the cave)? The *Euthyphro* problem: what is first – our approving of something or its being good? What was the idea of Goodness? What was his idea of a good life and a good state (justice/harmony)? What did the dialectical method consist in? What was the other (higher than "justice") ultimate aim in life (contemplation, Platonic love)? Was his Republic totalitarian (Popper)?

Further reading

Chapter THE PHILOSOPHY OF PLATO (esp. Life and Works, The Theory of Ideas, Plato's Republic) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy.* Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

Bernard Williams *Plato.* London: Phoenix, Great Philosophers series, 1998.

Julia Annas *An Introduction to Plato's Republic,* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981.

Nicholas Pappas *Plato and The Republic,* London: Routledge, 1995.

Karl Popper *The Open Society and its Enemies,* London: Routledge, 1945

Richard Kraut, "Plato", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2015 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), forthcoming URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2015/entries/plato/>.

Aristotle

Aristotle (384-322 BCE) was a student of Plato and the teacher of Alexander the Great living in times when small city-states merged into a great empire. He ran a philosophical school in Athens (Lyceum) for rich youths, where he promoted balanced, enlightened and traditional views (he taught aristocrats but represented what came to be known as the middle class values). He wrote on every subject known in ancient times, but did not affect the Hellenistic civilisation. In Europe he was remembered only in the 13th c. and his popularity grew where stability increased and the middle class rose to power (his aristocratic values were popular both with Polish nobles and English Victorians). Some philosophers of spontaneous nature (like Bertrand Russell) thought Aristotle was a bore. His main works (often collections of note compiled long after his death are: Metaphysics; Organon (Categories, On Interpretation, Prior Analytics, Posterior Analytics, Topics, On Sophistical Refutations); Physics, De Anima (On the Soul); Nicomachean Ethics, Politics; Poetics).

Epistemology. He belonged to the few early philosophers who advocated true knowledge founded on observation of the world. His classical definition of the truth states that a sentence is true when it corresponds to the reality (so it is also called the correspondence definition of the truth).

Ontology. He opposed Plato recognising that forms exist only in individual things (called "substances"), each of which is composed of matter and form (or essence), through which the thing is itself (this difference between Plato and Aristotle is reflected in the well-known fresco by Raphael Santi in the Vatican). The soul is understood as the substantial form of the body. He did not believe in personal immortality. (To him the best way to escape the mundane temporality was intellectual contemplation of abstract and divine truths. Then for a moment a person can participate in what is timeless.) While Plato was a mathematician, Aristotle was a biologist and excessively favoured the view that each thing (like seeds of plants) is assigned its own special purpose (telos), at which it aims - stones fall and fire rises in order to find their proper place. Hence, his general ontological approach is sometimes referred to as teleological. At the same time, he believed that every single thing belongs by nature (and not by a decision of the observer) to the genus and species, which was described as essentialism. The world has a specific structure and the mind discovers it but does not co-create it.

Physics, science and explanation. Despite his extremely progressive empirical attitude Aristotle became a downright tragic figure in the development of knowledge.

He supplemented his generally accurate observations with the generally erroneous hypotheses that - later supported by the authority of the Church - represented a significant obstacle to the development of modern science. He explained the existence of objects and their changes with four kinds of causes (formal, material, efficient and final). The final causes were in fact goals at which objects were meant to aim. The eyes are as they are because they are meant to see. The world was set in motion by the first mover. Movement must be constantly maintained, otherwise bodies will stop. Bodies while falling move to their proper places. The Earth is in the centre of the cosmos, the stars (moving around circular orbits, made of quintessence - the fifth perfect element) are governed by entirely different laws than the bodies in the sublunary world (on the Earth). Aristotle's case shows that the hypotheses that seem most obvious and commonsensical often turn out to be wrong (for example, that the sun rises, goes around the Earth and sets). Science developed when researchers saw that the common-sense hypotheses lead to contradictions and replaced them with less obvious hypotheses, but better adjusted to the non-contradictory whole.

Criticism and comments

Later an opposing view was formulated that what is observed is the result of the activity of the observer, who puts the observable data in order. The same items can be divided into different categories and acquire different characteristics. Only certain entities (related to the process of reproduction, as plants and animals) form sharply separated groups. Others, such as landscapes, buildings, personalities, can be grouped in various ways. Every researcher chooses the way that is most useful from the point of view of his objectives.

The development of science made by Copernicus, Galileo, Newton and Darwin was also a systematic undermining of Aristotle's hypotheses.

Let us clarify the concept of explanation. In a broad sense to explain is to make something clearer (e.g. to explain how a microwave oven works). In a stricter sense to explain is to find out why something happened. In the morning I found frozen water in my garden (the fact to be explained - why it is frozen). I explain this by stating that during the night the temperature outside fell below zero degrees Celsius (initial conditions) and that when the temperature falls below zero, water freezes (the law). The fact to be explained follows from the initial conditions and the law. Thus it is explained. Another example is: why did dinosaurs die out?

However, sometimes the answer to the question "why" is different. Why people have hearts? To pump blood all over the body. Although the question starts with "why" its meaning is "what for". This is a legacy of Aristotle. He confused the two questions assuming that discovering the aim of something is needed to understand why it exists. Aristotle also assumed that every object has a natural purpose and strives for it (he called it enetelechia). Indeed, certain things have purpose but it does not mean that they are created because of their. When Aristotle's philosophy got Christianised by St. Thomas Aquinas in the 13th c. this kind of argumentation led to the teleological proof for God's existence: since many objects seem to strive toward some goals (an eye can see, rain waters the ground and enables vegetation) they must have been created as such and their goals must have been adjusted to each other, which proves God's existence. Darwin's theory of evolution devastated this argumentation.

Ethics. In ethics Aristotle applied his general model of teleological explanation. Each action should aim at some good, the purpose of many efforts are means to further purpose (one eats to have strength and needs strength to work). Human life is rational (which is important) when is has the ultimate goal (the highest good, *summum bonum* in Latin), which is no longer a means to any other further goal (otherwise life is chaotic or the process of finding further goals would go into infinity. Since goals justify the means, nothing would be justified without the highest final goal). The purpose of human life is eudaimonia, the good life (often it is translated as happiness but it is incorrect – a life is a happy one when a person feels good or is satisfied with oneself, while a life is good – as in the case of a good knife – when it meets objective standards; a happy man is not synonymous with a good man, like a happy soldier or a happy flute player is not synonymous with a good soldier or a good flute player). Objective standards of a good human life are determined by the rational nature of man (or by the rationality itself – i.e. the logos). To live well is to develop certain habits of character (e.g. bravery, generosity) and act accordingly. They consist in choosing the (golden) Mean: the virtuous habit of action is always an intermediate state between the opposed vices of deficiency and excess, too much and too little are always wrong.

Thus, for example:

* with respect to acting in the face of danger, **courage** is a mean between the excess of rashness and the deficiency of cowardice;

* with respect to the enjoyment of pleasures, **temperance** is a mean between the excess of intemperance and the deficiency of insensibility;

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* with respect to spending money, **generosity** is a mean between the excess of wastefulness and the deficiency of stinginess;

* with respect to relations with strangers, **being friendly** is a mean between the excess of being ingratiating and the deficiency of being surly; and

* with respect to self-esteem, **magnanimity** is a mean between the excess of vanity and the deficiency of pusillanimity.

The adherence to human virtues is pleasant when they are well-trained, then there is no contradiction between being good and feeling good. Aristotle lamented that the validity of his theory may not be understood by someone who had not been trained to live according to it in their youth. Thus eudaimonia is possible only within the state which supports rational life and trains its citizens in appropriate virtues. The state is therefore the natural human environment, an organism that enables the development of its parts.

The founder of contemporary positive psychology, Martin Seligman[19], after a careful study of different source from the history of humankind, listed the main virtues (strengths of character) valued in most cultures. They are divided into six groups.

1. Wisdom and Knowledge (they involve the acquisition and use of knowledge): creativity (like in Albert Einstein), curiosity, open-mindedness, love of learning.

2. Courage (strengths that allow one to accomplish goals in the face of opposition): bravery, persistence, integrity, vitality.

3. Humanity (strengths of tending and befriending others): love, kindness, social intelligence.

4. Justice (strengths that build healthy community): active citizenship, social responsibility, loyalty, teamwork, fairness, leadership.

5. Temperance (strengths that protect against excess): forgiveness and mercy, humility and modesty, prudence, self-regulation and self-control.

6. Transcendence (strengths that forge connections to the larger Universe and provide meaning): appreciation of beauty and appreciation of excellence, gratitude, hope, humour and playfulness, spirituality, or a sense of purpose and coherence.

Eudaimonia (sometimes rendered as eudemonia in English) is often translated as happiness, but it is rather (a theory of) the good life. For happiness means subjective well-being, a condition when someone feels good (by which is usually meant that a

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[19] Christopher Peterson, Martin Seligman, *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification,* Oxford: Oxford University Press 2004.

happy person is satisfied with his life and experiences much more pleasure than pain). It is not the same as recognize that one's life is good, that it meets certain requirements, standards (although being happy may be one of the requirements of a good life). Those two concepts – a happy life and a good life – should be clearly distinguished. It is one thing to say that (1) someone feels good (achieved happiness), and another, (2) that someone is good (attained perfection). Exaggerate to say that people want happiness for themselves, and of their neighbours expect perfection. I wish that I felt good (happiness), while my neighbour wants me to be good (perfect: quiet, peaceful, clean). Aristotle emphasizes the conditions for achieving the good life (excellence), but does not hide the pleasure (though not of all kinds) are important goods (like Plato he divides the pleasures into good and bad ones, depending on their source). Experiencing pleasure is a matter of habit, every well trained activity can bring pleasure when it is performed well. Therefore, a life in accordance with the virtues is also a happy one if the virtues were properly implemented. The purpose of life lies not in collecting any pleasures, but in developing a beautiful character, and if its owner demonstrates enough commitment such a life will be a source of noble pleasure. (Hedonism was in a side effect of individualism in Athens. Many Athenians filled his life with the pursuit of sensual pleasures, and common feasts resembled rather orgies than a Platonic symposium. That raised a scandal. Conservative citizens were appalled by this as much as by solving making all decisions by voting in the agora where all citizens met. Leading philosophers fought both the hedonists and the Sophists.) Aristotle noted that the intense pursuit of pleasure is caused an intense desire to block out pain. (Aristotle's thesis also encourages the work on one's personality. A person with a rich personality has many sources of pleasure, a coarse person is limited to a few which after some time may become insufficient.)

In the last book of *The Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle suddenly announced that a truly good life is the intellectual contemplation which is similar to the life of the gods. Perhaps it was the continuation of the Platonic tradition of the two different objectives: (1) the harmony of the soul and the state on the one hand, and (2) available only to philosophers contemplation of the Goodness on the other. It was Aquinas in the Middle Ages who attempted to reconcile them.

As Aristotle pointed out people aspire to that which is *good, pleasant* or *useful*, he distinguished three different classes of goodness that tend to be aims of human action. Sometimes people (1) seek to achieve the objectives that are considered to be good *tout court* (which is the equivalent of Greek excellence, the ideal model of each thing), e.g.

to have a good character, to perform good deeds, to build a world that is good (or better); or (2) they want to feel good, to experience pleasure; or (3) they require means (including external good) to achieve the first two goals (goods in economics are mainly those external means needed to achieve perfection of pleasure). These types of goodness can either complement each other or be in conflict. A soldier can (1) try to be a good (brave) soldier, he can also (2) try to avoid the fight to reduce the risk of injury and pain, or (3) his armour is a good that is a mean to both (1) and (2).

Moreover, Aristotle observed that sometimes people tend to (1a) achieve the true goodness, but often especially when they do not consult philosophers and had not received adequate education they tend to (1b) reach the apparent goodness, which seems good to them but is not in fact. Different rulers want to build a good state, but only philosophers know what a truly good state is like.

Politics. Aristotle completed his ethical considerations with a theory of running a small state. He was a supporter of democracy (not direct but representative), since such system, although not the best in itself, is the most resistant against degeneration (better than monarchy or aristocracy). It was a democracy limited to free men at a certain level of wealth (i.e. similar to England in the 18th c. and the Republic of Venice, where wealthy families elected a doge for life). Aristotle accepted slavery, which was common in his time. In retrospect, it can be concluded that the philosopher most liked a state run by ambitious middle class who strived to live nobly and elegantly. He compared the types of government and their three degenerated forms. Aristotle considered monarchy the best form of government, but since it easily degenerated into the worst form (tyranny), finally representative democracy (in which only minority could participate) turned out the best solution.

Government:	Its degenerated forms:
monarchy (the best)	tyranny (the worst)
aristocracy	oligarchy
constitutional government (polity)	(direct) democracy

Criticism and comments

Basically Aristotelian ethics is an attempt to justify traditional aristocratic virtues using Aristotelian philosophical concepts (the form of a species determines what is the right behaviour for its members). As such it is a failure. What is common in human

nature does not justify what is the good life for everybody (since different ways of living can be good), and especially does not justify that only Athenian aristocratic life is a universal human standard. However, while Aristotle created a language to talk about good life and had some deep insights into what is good – this is the merit of his ethics.

(1) The criterion of mean referred to the traditional concept of moderation in Greece (very important and needed because the ancient Greeks used to exaggerate in everything). Unfortunately, it is of dubious value because with a little ingenuity even the worst vices can be justified by it – every character trait can be regarded as located between more and less (every thief could steal more or less than he actually did – so he is in the middle between excess and deficiency). The criterion of mean is a rhetoric trick that can be applied post factum to justify everything but it cannot predict anything in advance. In general, Aristotle had some valuable insights while talking about a good life but his justification by reference to the rational nature of man is mistaken. It seems that he had strong personal conviction about what is a good life but was unable to convince others and resorted to crooked thinking.

(2) His arguments deriving virtues form the rational nature of man can be interpreted as the ideal of human nature fulfilment (flourishing). However, in view of the findings of sociology and psychology, including evolutionary trends, it is difficult to argue that human nature is reasonable. Nowadays it seems obvious that (a) every individual has a slightly different nature (genetic endowment), (b) it is not possible to realize the full potential because everyone's potential comprises contradictory tendencies and developing some of them is only possible at the expense of others, and finally, (c) the development of certain natural tendencies (e.g. sadistic and paedophile) is not desirable. It is absolutely impossible to equate the essence of human nature with rationality since the rational parts of the mind are not considered central to humanity any more (Freud would have a lot to add about the subconscious mind).

(3) The Aristotelian concepts of the purpose and the highest good of life can encourage a discussion on rationalising the pursuit of life goals. This is perhaps the most creative reading of the philosopher. Since the purpose of life is determined by what is recognized as good, is it based on the objective good (how to discover it?) or on what is considered good by different people? Because there are many kinds of goodness, the ultimate goal cannot be one event or state of affairs (e.g. becoming a Nobel Prize winner), but the configuration composed of many components valuable in itself (e.g. having a family, experiencing ecstatic joy, being on good terms with neighbours, salvation, making the world beautiful). Ethics in this sense would explore

ways of selecting life goals, establishing their hierarchy as well as optimizing strategies for achieving them.

(4) The empirical, "naturalist" foundation of his ethics is now outdated. Aristotle developed Platonic conceptual framework, in which every object had its form which determined its aims and value. The closer to the ideal form, the better. Aristotle interpreted it in a naturalistic way - forms (or essences) should be discovered in the natural world by means of empirical inquiry. Two major objections to this theory may be formulated. First (formulated by Hume), there is no connection between what is and what ought to be. In the existing world no clues can be found as to what aims should be pursued. Second and more general, even if the existing world contained such clues or direction, they should not be binding. The essence of human lives is creativity. In its progress new things are invented, completely unknown and unpredictable at earlier stages. It even applies to non- human objects which are the result of human creation. Early men met wolves, domesticated them and through conscious efforts created different breeds of dogs. The shape and behaviour of Yorkshire terriers or Labrador retrievers are not determined by the natural form or essence of wolves. In fact even natural evolution, though slowly, creates novelty. Aristotle, who knew nothing about evolution, believed that everything already exists and by studying it all important knowledge, also about good, values and all aims worth pursuing, can be discovered.

Deductive logic

Aristotle was also the founder of deductive logic based on the conclusions following from the premises (the relation of entailment). Doing so Aristotle squandered the potential of the Socratic dialectical method (formulating and testing hypotheses). For the next two thousand years philosophers have defended the illusion that reliable knowledge must be reached by deductive reasoning. Only in the 20 c. the method of hypotheses was rediscovered by Karl Popper.

Logic is the study of the methods and principles used to distinguish correct from incorrect reasoning. Formal logic examines whether deductive arguments are valid, i.e. whether *conclusions follow from premises*. It depends on the logical form of an argument and not on the logical value (being true T or false F) of premises or conclusions taken separately.

(1)
(T) If Big Ben is in Paris, then it is in France.   If P then F. $p \rightarrow q$
(T) Big Ben is not in France.   Not F. $\sim q$
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(T) Thus it is not in Paris.   Not P. $\sim p$

(2)
(T) No cats are dogs.   No A are B.
(T) So no dogs are cats.   No B are A.

(3)
(T) All men are animals.   All A are B.
(T) All animals are mortal.   All B are C.
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(T) All men are mortal.   All A are C.

(4)
(F) All deer are plants.   All A are B.
(F) All plants are animals.   All B are C.
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(T) All deer are animals.   All A are C.

(5)
(F) No pens are markers.   No B are C.
(F) All pencils are pens.   All A are B.
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(F) No pencils are markers.   No A are C.

In deductive arguments (1) - (5) the conclusion follows from the premises (the premises entail the conclusion), i.e. the arguments are valid. Due to the logical form of a reasoning it is impossible for the premises to be true and the conclusion false. In (1) - (3) the premises are also true so the conclusions must be true. However, in (4) and (5) the premises are false so although the conclusions follow from the premises they do not have to be true. The conclusion that follows from true premises must be true, the conclusion that follows from false premises may be either true of false.

In valid deductive arguments a combination <u>true premises and false conclusion</u> is impossible.

                               T

The combination   T   is impossible!!!

                               F

| (6) (T) No dogs are cats. | No A are B. |
(T) And no cats are birds.	No B are C.
(T) So no dogs are birds.	No A are C.

| (7) (T) No dog are cats. | No A are B. |
(T) No cats bark.	No B are C.
(F) So no dogs bark.	No A are C.

Inferences (6) and (7) are not valid. (7) is a counterexample to show it (by means of logical analogy). It has the same logical form as (6), but its premises are true and the conclusion false, which is not possible in valid inferences.

The principle of contradiction

Aristotle also formulated the principle of contradiction – of the two contradictory statements (if one is the negation of the other) at least one is not true. This principle was accepted by all future serious methodologists as the foundation of knowledge. No true or accepted theory can contain a contradiction. It a contradiction is found, at least one statement of the theory must be rejected.

(1) If the plane had engine troubles (e), it would have landed in Krakow (k).
(2) If the plane did not have engine troubles, it would have landed in Warsaw (w).
(3) The plane did not land in either Krakow or Warsaw.

$$e \rightarrow k \qquad \qquad \sim e$$
$$\sim e \rightarrow w \qquad e \qquad \qquad e \wedge \sim e \quad \text{contradiction}$$
$$\sim w \wedge \sim k \qquad w$$
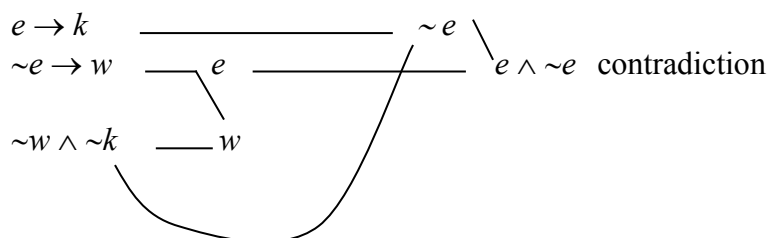
Sentences (1-3) contain a contradiction. It seems that the plane both had and did not have problems with the engine. The transformation of sentences is also an example

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of the use of natural deduction, which reconstructs the mental operations performed by logic-reasoning people. The premises are converted in accordance with the rules of deduction into conclusions - first partial, then the final.

Questions: Aristotle. Metaphysics – what was the structure of the world according to him (substances, essences, aims)?, Who was God?

Sciences: What was his biological bias? How did it affect his concept of final causes? What was the role of his physical concepts in the history of science?

Epistemology and logic: What is the classical definition of truth? What are deductive argumentations based on? What is the difference between Socratic dialectics and Aristotelian logic as methods of justifying beliefs? What does the law of non-contradiction state?

Ethics: What is the role of the final goal in life? What is the final good of humans? How is the rule of the mean justified? How were virtues defined? How does Seligman's proposal develop the virtue project? Is pleasure important in life (according to A.)? Are virtues natural or should they be taught (how)? Is friendship important? What is the difference between Plato's eros and Aristotle's philia? What is the difference between two concepts of a good life: a virtuous life and a contemplative life? What was the aim of the state and the roles of its elites? What is the best governmental system and why?

Do you think one should have an ultimate goal in life?

What is friendship for you? Is it the same as for Aristotle (in any of his three definitions)?

Further reading

Chapter THE SYSTEM OF ARISTOTLE (esp. Plato's Pupil, Alexander's Teacher; Moral Philosophy: Virtue and Happiness; Politics; Science and Explanation) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy*. Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

John L. Ackrill, *Aristotle the Philosopher*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981.

James O. Urmson, *Aristotle's Ethics*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1988.

Amelie O. Rorty (ed.), *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980.

Christopher Shields, "Aristotle", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/aristotle/>.

Richard Kraut, "Aristotle's Ethics", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/aristotle-ethics/>.

Fred Miller, "Aristotle's Political Theory", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2012/entries/aristotle-politics/>.

Alexander's empire

Alexander's empire put an end to the independence of Greek cities, contributed to the spread of the Greek spirit in the East, led to the flowering of Egypt (the founding of Alexandria, Ptolemaic dynasty, and the last queen Cleopatra), but in time it turned out to be too large for efficient management and began to plunge into chaos.

Bertrand Russell regarded great empires (Greek and later Roman) as a decline in comparison with intimate Greek city-states. Yet Greek city states were unable to create any lasting political structures. They showed how versatile and creative people could be but were continuously at war and would destroy each other sooner or later.

Hedonism

In ancient Greece an important issue was hedonism. In an individualistic society, which was Athens, amid sophists' declarations recognizing man as the measure of all things. There were crowds of people whose sole purpose in life was pleasure often identified with the pleasure of the senses obtained in the course of orgies, fashionable in Athens. Hedonists were combated in various ways, mainly because they were harmful to the state - what is the use of a person spending life in orgies?

A Sophist Prodicus of Ceos (c. 465 BCE – c. 395 BCE) presented the speech *Hercules at the Crossroads,* in which he criticised hedonism from the point of view of the long-term success in life.

Aristippus (435-350 BCE) stated that the only good is physical pleasure. It is common, known to everyone and more intense than any other. It was a very special continuation of the Socratic thought and legacy. Aristippus accepted the ideal of self-sufficiency and self-control, he wanted to enjoy the pleasure, and yet not to lose control over them, not to fall into addiction, but even in extreme conditions, take control of his life. Maybe he was rather a scandalist than a deep philosopher.

Further reading

Richard Parry, "Ancient Ethical Theory", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/ethics-ancient/> [Aristippus is mentioned under Cyrenaics.]

Epicurus

While Plato and Aristotle were teacher of the elite, Epicureanism and stoicism were schools for everyone. Epicurus (341-270 BCE) established a school in Athens that lasted centuries almost without changing its doctrine. According to it, the highest good in life was pleasure. His doctrine is, however, somehow unclear, since a lot of his writings had been lost. (What is known consists of three letters - to Herodotus, to Menoeceus and Pythocles - and a summary in *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* by Diogenes Laertius from 3rd c. C.E.)

For Epicurus, as for Plato and Aristotle, pleasure differed in kind. Passive pleasures arise without being preceded (or accompanied) by suffering, while dynamic pleasures (as satiety after starvation) require prior distress. According to one interpretation, Epicurus considered passive pleasures as qualitatively better than dynamic ones and more natural too. However, it contradicts common sense observations. It is natural that people are thirsty and then drink experiencing a dynamic pleasure; admiring a beautiful landscape without longing for it in advance is much less common and natural. Even if passive pleasures may be considered safer, they are not natural.

According to another interpretation Epicurus, anticipating the eighteenth century thought of Bentham, distinguished pleasure, which was always the same, from the sources of pleasure. The only thing that matters in life is the positive balance of pleasure (when suffering is taken away from pleasure). Therefore, Epicurus advocated pleasures which, though often small, have few unpleasant consequences over intense pleasures that, although strong, have unpleasant consequences or are preceded by suffering. This led to the idea of calculating pleasure and choosing the best combination (or rather the best combination of different sources that leads to the most positive balance). The wise strategy was to reduce pain rather than augment pleasure and to restrict one's needs – the less one needs, the fewer chances of frustration.

Pleasure should come in small doses and sometimes it should be postponed to be greater eventually. A small pain should be chosen if it results in augmented pleasure in the future. Finally, Epicurus was inclined to believe that life without suffering equals happiness (thus he came close to Buddhism, which recognised the desires of ego as the source of suffering). Suicide is not a solution since it ends the possibility of

experiencing pain and pleasure both. In practice, Epicurus valued friendship, long walks in the garden and discussions on abstract topics. To him the best way to successful life was noble character. However, all virtues were only the means while the one true purpose was the best balance of pleasure. For this reason, Epicureanism was widely attacked by both the Stoics and Christian philosophers. Epicurus advised against engagement in public life.

In order to free people from fear which causes pain Epicurus developed his theory of the gods (who do not interfere with human life), fate (it is not absolute – he was against Democritus' strict determinism), physical suffering (pain cannot be both acute and prolonged) and death (it does not concern us, we never meet death because when it comes, we cease to exist).

Criticism and comments

(1) Although Epicurus did not see contradiction between a noble life and a pleasant one, it is very easy to break the bond he perceived between them. Someone who decides to be satisfied with mediocrity as well as one who wants to live fast and die young can seek support in Epicureanism.

(2) Epicurus himself really cared about his friends, but Epicureanism easily justifies withdrawal and self-involvement (for example, the argument that death is not bad because a man will not meet it anyway does not take into account the man's loved ones who will suffer the loss. Against his own doctrine Epicurus worried what would remain after his death).

(3) There may be people who lead an orderly life, avoid excitement and are happy (in the sense of maximising the balance of pleasure), however, many others may suffer of boredom. Avoiding boredom requires either rich inner life or intense interaction with the environment. In his book *Flow* Mihály Csikszentmihalyi[20] argues that most people experience satisfaction when they engage in the pursuit of ambitious goals.

(4) Paradoxically, Christian monks often led highly regulated life, without external stimuli and felt happy but they did not consider pleasure to be the ultimate goal of life. Epicurus, perhaps without noticing it, touched a problem which returned in the 19th c. - even if ultimately everyone wants to maximise pleasure, the way to achieve this is a deep belief that one lives for a greater purpose: in order to fulfil God's plan, for the good of humanity, or to care for relatives.

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[20] Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience.* New York: Harper and Row 1990.

In the 20th century Epicureanism got unexpected confirmation in economists' research into the relationship between income and life satisfaction. In 1974, Richard Easterlin in his article "Does Economic Growth Improve the Human Lot? Some Empirical Evidence"[21] proposed the idea that the growth of income in a society translates into the increase of happiness only to a certain point. This explains the adaptive mechanism called "Hedonic treadmill" – people quickly get used to higher standard of life. In time higher level of income does not result in a permanent gain of happiness, although it costs more. So maybe the way to happiness is enlightened asceticism – reduction of needs and getting used to a humble life which in time will bring the same amount of happiness as any other kind of life. In our times, this would be a heroic choice.

Further reading

David Konstan, "Epicurus", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/epicurus/>.

The Cynics

In contrast to the hedonists the cynics and the stoics advocated independence from pleasure.

Antisthenes (436-365 BCE) taught that the only good is virtue, which is properly shaped character. He despised social life, its norms, material goods or fame. The famous cynic Diogenes lived in a barrel outside the city. When visited by Alexander the Great who asked what he could do for him, Diogenes, who happened to be sun-bathing in front of his barrel, asked only one thing: "Move over a bit, you're blocking my sun". Over time, the cynics living in isolation and despising social norms fell into degeneration, such as borrowing money and refusing to pay them back. That is why the present meaning of the word "cynical" is disregarding social norms, values and other people's feelings. This way it was proved in that one's neighbours play an extremely important role in one's personal development - they have expectations of one. With the exception of a few of outstanding individuals, a success in life is rarely achieved by those who rely solely on their own judgement.

Further reading

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[21] David Easterlin, 'Does Economic Growth Improve the Human Lot? Some Empirical Evidence.' In Paul A. David and Melvin W. Reder, eds., *Nations and Households in Economic Growth: Essays in Honor of Moses Abramovitz*, New York: Academic Press, Inc. 1974. http://huwdixon.org/teaching/cei/Easterlin1974.pdf [retrieved 8.09.2014]

Richard Parry, "Ancient Ethical Theory", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/ethics-ancient/> [about the Cynics]

The Ancient Scepticism

Scepticism came in reaction to endless philosophical discussions. Pyrrho (c. 360 – c. 286 BCE;) and Sextus Empiricus (c. 160-210 BCE; *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, *Against the Mathematicians,* with many subdivisions) claimed that ignorance understood as the suspension of judgment (εποχη – epoche), should lead to αταραξια (ataraxia) – the state of tranquillity. B. Russell called this attitude "a lazy man's consolation," since it showed the ignorant to be as wise as the reputed men of learning. Not using one's reason seems similar to not using one's eyes or emotions. It is interesting that in spite of all the differences, the Epicureans, the Stoics and the Sceptics pursued at the same state of mind – ataraxia. Obviously life was so stressful in the past that most people longed for some peace. However, it also shows the diversity of ancient philosophical schools – some considered rational thinking the human essence (Plato and Aristotle), while the Sceptics rejected thinking at all; some tried to avoid pleasures (the cynics and the stoics) while others indulged in them (Aristippus) or took them in moderation (Epicurus); some lived away from society (the cynics) while others valued friendships (Aristotle, Epicurus) and compassion for others (the stoics). It reflects their creativity and versatility. Philosophy was not a conceptual game. It concerned basic existential problems and attitudes.

Further reading

Katja Vogt, "Ancient Skepticism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2014/entries/skepticism-ancient/>.

Cognitive therapy

Methods used by the Epicureans (as well as the stoics discussed below) were developed in 1960. and 70. in so called cognitive psychotherapy developed by Aaron T. Beck. Cognitive therapy seeks to help the patient overcome difficulties by identifying and changing dysfunctional thinking, behaviour, and emotional responses. This involves helping patients develop skills for modifying beliefs, identifying distorted thinking, relating to others in different ways, and changing behaviours. A therapist first identifies

dysfunctional beliefs, e.g., assumptions about the world. In fact if follows the path of the stoics – find peace by changing one's owns thoughts.

Ancient Rome

The Greek culture was admired by the new rising power – Rome. The stoic philosophy was founded in Athens, but flourished in ancient Rome.[22]

Although the date of the mythical creation of the city is 753 BCE Rome did not play any international role. The early kings were abolished (558 BCE), and the Republic introduced and managed by the Senate and consuls, based on traditional civic virtues and the balance between the patricians (aristocracy) and plebeians. The members of the upper class were forming alliances, became patrons who recruited clients and thus influenced political decisions. Rome went on conquering the surrounding lands, which were then absorbed and assimilated into the empire. It developed the craft of building roads and aqueducts, gave all citizens the right to participate in its growing prosperity (public baths, free grain and games - *panem et circenses*), and above all, introduced the rule of law that treated everyone (i.e. free citizens) equally and protected private property.

As a result of the conquests (including that of Carthage and Greece) the increased role of the army and acquired wealth led to the emergence of generals-dictators (Sulla, Pompey, Julius Caesar) who by manipulating social masses from the lower class deliberately caused the fall of the Republic and the rise of the Empire. Since Augustus' accession to the throne (30 BCE) until the end of the third century AD Rome was the greatest empire of the ancient world. It assured peace (*Pax Romana),* inspired by the economic development of the provinces (the Romans did not like working, they lived from taxes paid by the conquered peoples), was religiously tolerant (required only the worship of the divine emperor, to which mainly Jews and Christians could not agree, and for which they were persecuted) and admired the Greek culture. In time the vast Empire was increasingly disintegrated and difficult to manage.

The cultural role played by Rome was by no means only positive - promoting gladiatorial combats and centralization the Romans suppressed the development of the conquered cultures. Celts in Gaul were fairly democratic, did not discriminate against

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[22]   About ancient Rome see also Norman Davies, Europe. A History. Pimlico 1997: Beginnings p. 149, the Roman Republic p. 153, Caesar and Augustus p. 158, religion p. 160, economy p. 160, social and political life p. 165, army p. 172, architecture p. 174, literature p. 174, the Empire p. 179, Marcus Aurelius p. 191.

women, cared for the sick and elderly, which all ended when Julius Caesar murdered a million of them and turned another million into slaves. The Romans were unable to continue the achievements of the Greek culture, destroyed the centres such as Syracuse and Rhodes. Rome did not develop music or mathematics, it practised the art of warfare and rhetoric (the art of speaking), but not the art of critical thinking or intellectual enquiry (which resulted in Stoicism being an inconsistent patchwork of skilful techniques influencing minds, and not sophisticated philosophy). In part, this explains why Rome was so easily infiltered by various religions of the East - the Romans were not intellectually critical, but they were spiritually barren and hungry for irrational hope.

The Stoics

The Stoics avoided the Cynics' errors. Stoicism was founded by Zeno of Citium in Cyprus (344–262 BCE), developed by Cleanthes (d. 232 BCE) or Chrysippus (d. ca. 206 BCE), but earned fame in Rome, where it became the official philosophy of the Empire and reconciled individual development with the obligations towards the state and others. Eminent representatives of that school were rich Seneca the Younger (c. 4 BCE – 65 CE), slave Epictetus (c. 55–135 BCE) and the Emperor Marcus Aurelius (121–180 BCE), who wrote a famous diary called *Meditations*. Their moral teaching was heroic, which was necessary for someone living near the imperial court, full of intrigues and dangers. Life is often cumbersome, said the stoics, and the man helpless in the face of their own weaknesses and the inevitability of fate. A fool undertakes senseless fighting and allows emotions to direct actions. A wise man discovers that beneath the strife are the world's divine order and providence (Logos), and every evil serves good purpose. So he justifies the world and sees its omnipresent divinity (pantheism). Although one cannot change the world, one can and should change oneself and one's relationship with the world. Therefore the wise man improves his character, trains his will and fortitude, and treats his life as a role to be played with dignity and without emotions (apathy demanded). With the emotional lack of involvement he is internally free. Stoicism led to independence, but not to contempt for others, as the wise man is bound to discover the same divine nature in everything, the Logos, which evokes compassion and sense of unity with the world.

The Stoic doctrine was filled with insidious rhetoric. Nature is good and all inside it is good, so one should live in accordance with nature. However one is often mistaken

about what is natural. To aim at self-preservation is natural (so a Roman citizen should try to live long), but to aim at pleasure is not natural.

Human life must have an aim, and a good aim is good under every circumstance. A delicious dish may prove to be unhealthy, money may bring unhappiness. So only virtue (not as Greek arete but rather as Roman civic virtues) are good, they are sufficient and necessary as the good aim of life. However, wealth, health, pleasure, good food and so on, although not good, are in a way valuable so they can be pursued. Those claim are so inconsistent that they can qualify as brain washing to indoctrinate Roman citizens. All the claims used as justification of moral precepts were completely arbitrary (e.g. that one should follow nature, that nature is rational, that following nature consists in perfecting virtues and avoiding emotional involvement). The only thing that survives criticism is its perfectionism - life requires constant effort.

According to the Stoics, the world is determined (and material, which precluded eternal life), and cannot change its course. The world would come to a time when it would be destroyed by a great fire (conflagration), and start from the beginning. Our thoughts and feelings of helplessness (lack of control) contribute to our suffering, but these can be remedied. This can be achieved by the right exercise that changes one's attitude towards the world – e.g., to redefine situation so as to emphasize one's own part in it, to look at the world from the perspective of death, to keep desires at bay, to fight passions (anger, longing, regret). The expected result was not the lack of excitement, but peace of mind (or more likely the pride of one's own perseverance).

Already Alexander knew that a great empire could not be built on the foundation of nationalism (Aristotle did not understand this and urged Alexander to make Greeks a master class of his empire). Rome was a successful multinational empire so it had to be tolerant towards its different nations. Thus the idea of tolerance and equality of all people was also accepts by the Roman stoics since this philosophy was the official ideology of the empire. The principle of universal love - love your neighbour even of different nationality or religion, love all human beings - may have been formulated by different prophets but its popularity has clear political reasons. Small nations - like Greeks or Jews - clung to their national identity to survive but large empires must suppress nationalism to prosper. That is why within ancient Rome or Christian Medieval Europe the idea of universal love (or rather only acceptance) were developed. Only after the unity of Europe was disrupted during the Renaissance, universal love was replaced by nationalism, which strengthened interpersonal bonds within nations but finally destroyed Europe. The USSR preached internationalism but when it collapsed its

member nations plunged into nationalism again. Today China has many reasons to nationalistic while the world of Islam to be monotheistic although in the long run humankind as a whole may pay a large price for it.

Criticism and comments

The stoic theory of the world was a tool to manipulate emotions - determinism and pantheism were meant to bring reconciliation with the world and to pacify passions (though it could as well justify indulging in them - if everything is determined, one's passions are so too). The aim of the highlighting the self-sufficiency of virtue, in fact was to adjust individuals to the social structure of the Roman Empire. In the long term, it must have caused a sense of futility of life, which probably facilitated the triumph of Christianity, for which life was also very cumbersome and the recommended attitude was one of humility, but the reward of eternal life was more promising than stoic tranquillity. It is a wide-spread contemporary opinion, perhaps formed under the influence of psychoanalysis, that those who cannot feel negative emotions, cannot feel positive either. To feel real joy one must be prepared to feel real sorrow as well.

Stoicism (together with Epicureanism) became a "popular philosophy" immediately after its creation in the Hellenistic period. Since the Stoics gathered, discussed and taught philosophy in a public place, they were better know that Plato and Aristotle. They addressed the questions that most people were concerned with - how to react to death, suffering, great wealth, poverty. Stoicism provided an inner psychological fortress against bad fortune. It is remarkable that just after the death of Marcus Aurelius the Roman Empire began to deteriorate. Perhaps he was so preoccupied with searching inner peace that he neglected his vast state.

On the other hand the stoics were one of the first in history who proclaimed universal love to all humankind, even to slaves and foreigners. However, some Jews and early Christians did so too and earlier. It was in sharp contrast with the attitude of other early civilisations, Greeks included, which usually regarded foreigners as barbarians and despised them.

Questions: How did Alexander change the political and social structure of the Greek world? What was most important for philosophers in the Hellenistic era? What was happiness for them? What were the main recommendations of Aristippus, the Cynics, the Epicureans, the Skeptics and the Stoics? How were they related to the teaching of Socrates? In what way the doctrine of Epicurus was different from or

similar to the others (the role of pleasures)? How and why did he fight human fears (e.g. from death)? How did the Roman Empire come to power; was it artistically and intellectually as sophisticated as the ancient Greece; how did it help to preserve the Greek culture? What was the difference between the doctrine of the Cynics and Stoics (why did the former despise society and the latter respect it, why "others" are so important)? How did the Epicureans and the Stoics anticipated contemporary cognitive therapy? How does Epicurean reflection on the futility of desires relate to the hedonistic treadmill theory and the Easterlin paradox? How Mihály Csíkszentmihályi defends desires and action in human life (*flow* theory); how important was Stoicism in Rome? How did he prepare the way for Christianity?

Further reading

Chapter GREEK PHILOSOPHY AFTER ARISTOTLE (The Hellenistic Era; Stoicism; Scepticism; Rome and its Empire.) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy.* Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

Dirk Baltzly, "Stoicism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/stoicism/>.

Catholic Philosophy (Ancient and Medieval)

Judaism and Christianity

The three great monotheistic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, called "desert religions" by famous American mythologist Joseph Campbell[23], are based on strict law, required to organize society in difficult conditions. (The opposite are the religions of the Far East's "green areas" - Hinduism, Buddhism and Taoism.) Monotheism provided a better tool for organizing society than Greek mythology and all other ancient polytheistic religions. Odysseus could manoeuvre between gods, looking for support. In monotheism, God is an indivisible and infallible legislator. This construction gave priests greater ability to subdue their people. However, in Ancient Egypt the cast of priest was equally efficient although they preached polytheism. At the same time monotheism was more psychologically appealing, the only God with many names and often with no face who represented what was best in humans. It is understandable that finally the in the 19th century He was found a perfect projection screen by means of which humans tried to understand and perfect themselves.

However, in the long run, monotheism has proved one of the most vicious human inventions, together with national states. If humans want to create the cooperative humankind it must rest on multinational empires in which people do not fight with one another. Polytheism serves this purpose well. Since there are many gods different people can worship different gods. Monotheist is the source of continuous conflicts, it divides believers into groups which cannot compromise since for each one only one God is true. Continuous struggle between Christianity and Islam as well as the inability of Jews to function successfully within the multinational Roman empire are clear examples.

According to the Bible the ancestors of modern Jews, ancient Hebrews (or Israelites) received Canaan, the land around today's Jerusalem from God, who gave it first to Abraham, and later to Moses who he led his tribe form Egypt. According to modern scholars it is possible that Hebrews emerged from the native people of Canaan whose religion was polytheistic as almost all ancient religions. Then (until the 6th century BCE) it became henotheistic (worshipped only one god, but assumed the existence of others deities, which is also called monolatry). The almighty God evolved

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[23]   Joseph John Campbell, *This business of the gods: Interview with Fraser Boa* Windrose Films,Canada 1990.

from El, the supreme god of the Canaanite religions, who even had the female consort, Asherah.[24]

The rise of Christianity[25]

Judaism in its strict monotheistic form was established by Jewish priests under Babylonian captivity (6th BCE). Before that Yahweh probably used to be just one of many gods. God gave his chosen people the law (including the Ten Commandments), and in return for their adherence pledged to protect them. God the Creator was an angry judge who exhorted the Jews by sending prophets and punishment (plagues, floods). Monotheism inevitably leads to the feeling of guilt – every defeat turns out to be a well-deserved punishment. The problem of evil becomes crucially important: why does it exist in the world created by the good God? The blame was put on Adam and Eve, who committed the original sin by choosing independence instead of obedience and eating the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, for which they were expelled from Paradise and doomed to suffering, which in turn fell on all their descendants. The message was clear: in Judaism as well as in Christianity and Islam only God (through the prophets and priests) decided what was good and evil, and men must obey. Although the men are free, it does not mean that they can have own opinions on matters of good and evil. Human freedom boils down to the fact that a man can either choose obedience (and then is rewarded) or disobedience (and runs the risk of eternal punishment). The main sacred text of Judaism is the Torah, or Pentateuch, which opens also the Christian Old Testament. Included in it are numerous and simple laws (including the Ten Commandments) and parables illustrating their violations but no philosophical speculation.

History abounds in aggression and small nations usually ended up dominated by bigger ones. As the persecution of Jews intensified (first by the Greeks, then the Romans), especially as a rebuke for faith in one God, it gave rise to the conviction that the world was irreversibly evil. Only the Messiah could restore an independent Jewish state and at the same time create the kingdom of God on earth. The prospect of

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[24]   Victor Harold Matthews, *Judges and Ruth.* New Cambridge Bible Commentary. Cambridge University Press, August 2004.
"Asherah" in The New Encyclopaedia Britannica. Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica Inc., 15th edn., 1992, Vol. 1, pp. 623-4.
Tilde Binger, *Asherah: Goddesses in Ugarit, Israel and the Old Testament*, Continuum International Publishing Group 1997.
William G. Dever, *Did God Have A Wife?: Archaeology And Folk Religion In Ancient Israel*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2005.
Frank E. Eakin, Jr. *The Religion and Culture of Israel*, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1971.
[25]   About early Christianity see also Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997: Christianity p. 192, gnosticism p. 200, persecutions p. 203, heresies p. 205.

resurrection and universal understanding of Judaism emerged - Israel had to lead the way for other nations to Pardise on earth ("The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the lion shall feed together, and a little child shall lead them". Isaiah 11: 6).

In those circumstances came Jesus, an itinerant Jewish teacher from Galilee, then sentenced to death by the Roman governor of the conquered Judea, Pontius Pilate, as a potential political rebel who could inflame an uprising against Rome. The uprising broke out in 66 AD and in 70 AD resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans and the dispersion of the Jews (Diaspora). The Jews ultimately did not accept Jesus as the awaited Messiah, which according to Christians deprived them of their status of the chosen people. But it was historically quite understandable - Judaism as the religion of one nation was the basis of the Jewish identity and they had accepted Christianity, they would probably have dissolved into other nations instead of surviving nearly two thousand years without a state.

After the destruction of the Second Temple the Jews settled in Asia, North Africa and Europe, and not only have they sustained their culture but even strengthened it. Already at that time they eliminated illiteracy and attached great importance to the education of children (which in Western Europe was recognised only after the Enlightenment in the 18th c.). Rabbis guarded their tradition and gradually soaked it with theological speculation (first the Mishna in 3rd c, the developed into the Talmud, written in the 5th c. in Babylon) and mysticism (Kabbalah, 12th c.)[26]. Thus rabbinic Judaism became new stage of Jewish culture. It did not broke with tradition but introducing the idea of interpretation and reinterpretation of if opened a perspective of endless development.

According to Bertrand Russell, the most important Jewish roots of Christianity were:

1. A sacred history, beginning with the Creation, leading to a consummation in the future, and justifying the ways of God to man.

2. The existence of a small section of humankind whom God specially loves. For Jews, this section was the Chosen People; for Christians, the elect.

3. A new conception of "righteousness" - the virtue of almsgiving (or charity in general).

4. The Law. Christians kept part of the Hebrew Law, for instance the Decalogue.

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[26] An honest outline of Jewish history can be found in Paul Johnson, *A History of the Jews,* Weidenfeld & Nicolson 1987.

5. The Messiah.

6. The Kingdom of Heaven. Other-worldliness is a conception which Jews and Christians, in a sense, share with later Platonism.

At least two utterly different interpretations of Jesus' ministry exist. According to the official Christian one (recalled by Pope Benedict XVI in the book *Jesus of Nazareth*) Jesus was God, who willingly died on the cross to redeem the guilt of humanity and allow eternal life. According to another one, proposed by such prominent biblical scholars as Geza Vermes[27], Jesus spoke only to the Jews. He preached boundless trust and faith in God (the caring father), withdrawal from the world and turning the other cheek (Sermon on the Mount). He predicted the imminent arrival of the kingdom of God, especially for the poor, the meek, those who seek justice (Blessing), emphasized the superiority of faith-based communities over the family, calling for inner transformation, emphasized the order of love (already present in the V book of the Bible - Deuteronomy). He had not planned crucifixion or resurrection.

The original meaning of the messianic ethics of Jesus was by no means paradoxical. God is good. He created a good world that became bad as a result of human sins. People should take God's side against the world. Perhaps in this world they may pay a high price for it - humiliation, exclusion, even death - but the kingdom of God (on Earth, not in the afterlife) is close, so this is the price worth paying. Jesus probably expected that the world will end in his lifetime. The martyrs of the first centuries understand the message of Jesus frighteningly literally. Being devoured by lions was a small nuisance that preceded the eternal bliss.

Whatever the interpretation, the morality proposed by Jesus was not supposed to serve as basis for the organization of life in this world. It would work only the ideal world of God's kingdom.

Shortly after the death of Jesus, the Jews rose up against Rome, which met with severe persecution. The priests again, as in the period of the Babylonian captivity, rallied to Orthodox Judaism for preserving national identity. As the interest in Christianity among the Jews began to wane a Jew of Tarsus, later known as St. Paul, who had not known Jesus personally began promoting the religion among non-Jews. He achieved unprecedented success, spreading the slightly modified ideas of Jesus around the Mediterranean. Written at the end of the century the Gospels were addressed to the Greek-speaking readers (Jesus spoke Aramaic, which was the common language of

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27 Geza Vermes, *The Authentic Gospel of Jesus*, London, Penguin 2004; *Christian Beginnings: From Nazareth to Nicaea, AD 30-325*, London, Allen Lane 2012.

Jews, an easier alternative to Hebrew). They contained the concepts of eternal life, redemption of sins and the original sin, and of Jesus the God. The fourth Gospel (John's), written later than the others, also began to manifest anti-Semitism.

In the next centuries, the Church managed to discreetly marginalise the broken promise of Jesus that the kingdom of God would rise after his second coming (*parousia*), which should have taken place during the lifetime of the apostles. Christianity became the religion of the martyrs who like Perpetua of Carthage at the beginning of the 3rd century joyfully welcomed death as the end of earthly suffering and gateway to Heaven.

But Christianity was not an internationalised Judaism and quickly became one of the most bizarre world religions. While other religions were created in one cultural milieu and evolved with it, Christianity was the work of many different cultures and nations. It could be compared to a snowball that while rolling down gathered different influences. With an extended practice of reinterpreting past events (e.g., a quite accidental life of Jesus, into which a detailed plan of God's redemption of the original sin was implemented), Christianity became a collection of symbols that, depending on the circumstances, took on different meanings (which explains the existence of a multiplicity of denominations and heresies, all of which relied on the Gospels). During the first 300 years Christianity was exposed to different influences both from Near East (Persian dualism, Gnosticism, Manichaeism) and Greece (Neoplatonism). But it was in Europe where Christianity flourished, especially when it went rather far from the original teaching of Jesus. Even if it happens that God does not exist Christianity will remain one of the most beautiful and powerful achievements of Europe, a symbolic narrative around which European mentality crystallized. It would be most unwise to rejects this heritage. It is should rather be transformed in the same way as pagan rituals and festivals were once transformed by Christianity.

And then, unexpectedly, from a religion of the martyrs it became the state religion of Rome (4th c. AD), survived the collapse of the empire ruined by the invasions of Germanic tribes, developed independently in the East (Assyrian Church of the East), the Byzantine Empire (up till 1453) and Europe, where after the conversion of the Germans it became the main force shaping the continent.

Ancient Christianity

At the beginning of a new era the spiritual currents of the nations conquered by Alexander and suppressed during the Hellenistic period re-emerged. The Persian

influences were particularly important (the dualist Zoroastrianism, where the good god, Ahura Mazda or Ohrmazd, fights the evil god, Angra Mainyu, to create the victorious millennial kingdom of peace). Reluctance toward the mundane world, sexuality and carnality, asceticism, waiting for a saviour and eternal life in a better world became commonplace. While earlier religions (Judaism and the Greek religion) discerned order in the world and accepted it, around the year 0 religions began to reject it and long for another one.

Gnosticism (1st and 2nd c. AD) is a set of doctrines recognizing the mundane world as the work of an evil god, and using secret knowledge (not faith) to rip the soul from the prison of the body and worldly matters (or more precisely - the man is composed of body, soul and spirit and the spirit needs to be ignited and to lead the way of liberation from the hostile world). The Gnostic writings included among others Simon Magus, *Hymn of the Pearl*, Marcion of Sinope, Hermes Trismegistus, Valentine Egyptian. Gnosis was sometimes independent of Christianity and sometimes Christian (the Creator was the god of evil, and Christ the good god). Persian Mani (3rd c.), who created a mass religion based on the myth of the battle between Light and Darkness was a gnostic too. Gnosticism gave rise to various Christian heresies (such as the Cathars), the movement of Rosicrucians, the founding of anthroposophy by Rudolf Steiner, and in Poland Jerzy Prokopiuk was a follower.

Even the Platonic school in the 3rd c. produced a philosopher who likened the doctrine of Plato to the Eastern thought. Plotinus (c 204-c 269) argued that the peak of perfection was the Absolute, which, however, defied description (this is called negative theology – one can only tell what it is not, not what it is). The world is its imperfect emanation, but it is not bad, because what seems to be wrong is just less good. The goal of life is liberation from the body and return to the Absolute; the way to it - asceticism, a complete withdrawal from the world. Plotinus remained within the limits of Greek philosophy, he did not condemn the world (for the Greeks the world was the cosmos, an entity imbued with governance), but treated matter with contempt (although not as evil, and only as the lack of good).

In the 3rd c. the empire began to plunge into crisis. The remedy would be to find a new policy of uniting various peoples scattered over large area. Diocletian (284-305) created a state based on the cult of the emperor, which led to the persecution of Jews, Manicheans and Christians who did not comply with it. His successor, Constantine, moved by the fortitude of Christian martyrs equated their religion with the other (the Edict of Milan 313 AD). In 330 he moved the empire capital to Constantinople, which

began to grow as a Christian capital of the Eastern Empire. Constantine, who made ancient Rome Christian, converted to Christianity only on his deathbed so as not to commit serious sins, which as the Emperor he could not have avoided.[28]

In his famous book *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–1788) British historian Edward Gibbon (1737-1794) identified five causes for the success of Christianity: (1) inflexible, intolerant zeal of the Christians, (2) doctrine of eternal life, (3) miraculous powers ascribed to the primitive Church, (4) pure and austere morals of the Christians, (5) unity and discipline of the Christian republic, which gradually formed an independent and expanding state in the heart of the Roman empire. Bertrand Russell finds the last one most important.

Christianity was developing mainly in the East, where successive ecumenical councils[29] (Nicaea 325; Constantinople 381; Ephesus 431 and 449 and Chalcedon 451) discussed the nature of Christ (divine and human), the cult of the Virgin Mary and condemned heresies: Arianism, Monophysitism, Nestorianism. Disputes were politically motivated by a power struggle between Rome and Constantinople. As a result, Christianity developed in three distinct areas: - the West (Rome), the Roman East (Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch) and the East outside Rome (the Assyrian Church with millions of members in Central Asia, as far as India and China, which in most part, however, ceased to exist in the 13th century).

In the West, Bishop Ambrose of Milan (4th c.) established the Imperial Church in Rome. He sought to create not only the Church, but the church state holding power over monarchs and emperors. The more power the Church acquired in Rome, the more intolerant it became towards other religions. (An example is the destruction of the ancient spirit of Alexandria, the second largest city of the Roman Empire, a centre of knowledge and the Greek world founded by Alexander the Great and a lynch on the woman philosopher Hypathia by the Christian mob provoked by Cyril, the Bishop of Alexandria (vividly presented in the 2009 movie *Agora* directed by Alejandro Amenábar.)

Christianity spread in two ways, (1) bottom-up and (2) top-down. (Ad 1) On the one hand, the religion was often adopted spontaneously by ordinary people inspired by the teaching of Jesus' and his prophets. This happened in Syria, where Simeon the Stylite was a prophet, India and China where Christianity arrived in the 7th c. and also among the Germans (who often took the Arian version) or much later in Russia (the

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[28] See also Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997:
[29] About Christianity in the Age of General Councils see also Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, pp. 258-275.

Church of the Old Believers who do not acknowledge reformed centralized church). The same spirit has also appeared in Protestantism. (Ad 2) On the other hand, Christianity eventually became the rulers' religion and served to discipline the subjects. The centralised Imperial Church of Rome demanding obedience is the best example. Germanic rulers of the Merovingian dynasty adopted Catholicism to build a powerful state, from which eventually the state of Charlemagne developed. Peter I of Russia centralised the Orthodox Church as an instrument of power. Authoritarian churches of the rulers often converted pagans violently. Both these attitudes have existed in Christianity since the 4th c.

It must be remembered that for the people of those times a decisive question in the choice of religion was: will god give them victory in battle and ensure success in life? Relationship with gods was quite self-serving contract - obedience and sacrifice in exchange for their support. Jesus' moral ideas had little effect on conversion.

For many Christians, God the Creator has become the fundamental God. Jesus was only an intermediary and stood in the shade. Although St. Paul promoted the idea of Christian love in a very suggestive way, it was the tradition of the Old Testament, until then reserved for the Jews, that was most overwhelming and inspiring. In the writings of the two greatest philosophers of Christianity - Augustine and Thomas - much more room is devoted to the problem of obedience to the Creator than compassion toward others and following Jesus. The latter prevailed only in the works of St. Francis of Assisi (13th c.), Thomas Kempis (*The Imitation of Christ* - 14th c.) and the 17th c. Pietists.

Further reading

Chapter GREEK PHILOSOPHY AFTER ARISTOTLE (Jesus of Nazareth; Christianity and Gnosticis; Neo-Platonis) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy*. Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

Lloyd Gerson, "Plotinus", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/plotinus/>.

Augustine of Hippo

Augustine (354-430) made a synthesis of Platonism, Neoplatonism and the teachings of Jesus and created the ideology that prevailed in Europe for the next millennium. In his *Confessions* he presented his own life as an example of ascending to the eternal Good (which is Christina God but understood through Neoplatonism); in *De Civitate Dei* (*The City of God*) the vision of the world became prophetic (and in many

other small works and letter he often presented slightly different view suggesting that he was trying to form a coherent doctrine). The world existing in time is fragile and imperfect. Only the present moment really exists but it is a point where the future becomes the past, disintegrates and goes into oblivion (the philosophy of time was Augustine's original contribution to philosophy). The only entity that can help men in this fragile world is the eternal (i.e. situated outside of time) God. A man trapped in a cage of the body longs to be free from worldly desires and return to God, from whom he had been separated by the original sin. In this life only superficial knowledge of God is possible, the true joy will only be the "vision of God" in the afterlife, which only the elect will attain. However, a man's search for God is completely helpless, he cannot achieve anything on his own. Souls are either created individually by God to rule each body or descend from the soul of Adam; it is also not clear if they are connected to the body according to the original plan (as a trial) or as the consequence of the original sin (as a punishment). It opens the question how can all humans be guilty of the original sin. Augustine condemned the Pelagian view that man can flourish without grace. In his views men were so spoiled that without God they could not raise from sin.

Knowledge about God and eternal truths is possible through illumination. According to many interpretation it is close to God's revelation, which means that the role of human mind is passive. Knowledge is not sought, it is given by God. Other interpreters disagree and see a place for human activity.[30] Illuminations enables souls immersed in bodies to go beyond the limits of the sensual world.

Nevertheless, the world is not evil. Augustine distinguishes natural and moral evil. Natural evil does not exist (this was a shocking claim of Augustine although in the spirit of Platonism it is perfectly traditional). There is only bigger and lesser good. The world is good and all its goodness comes from God, however, the further from God the sparser and more diluted goodness is, so by comparison some things in the world may seem much worse than others (like darkness, which actually has some light but less than places exposed to direct light, seems to be the opposite of light). Only human decisions can be (morally) evil when a smaller good is preferred to a bigger one, which means that human will turns away from God and attaches itself to inferior goods as if they were higher. (Augustine had a turbulent life, before his conversion to Christianity he professed Manichaeism with its opposition of darkness and light. He then attempted to overcome this dualism with dubious results.) Finally, humankind seemed to him a mixture of two types of people - the good and the bad, waiting for salvation or

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[30]   Gerard O'Daly, *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind*, University of California Press, 1987, pp. 206–7

condemnation. Augustine remained possessed by a sense of human sinfulness that pervades the whole corrupt nature, and eloquently described the torment awaiting sinners in hell in *The city of God* (which is important since only a small minority would avoid hell).

Criticism and comments

Augustine's did not seem to solve the problem of human responsibility for their action. Either we have free choice and then can be judged for wrong decisions - or we are spoiled by the sin and without God's grace cannot make right choices. But then we are not responsible for them. At most we are victims of Adam and Eve's choice. Pelagius insisted that humans must be free, which would make Grace unnecessary. Augustine was of the opposite view - we are free to sin, but not to sin we require grace, which we never deserve. It is given as a gift, out of God's free will. Salvation depends upon grace, which might be obtained before birth (predestination). Contrary to widespread opinions, salvation in Christianity depends on the free decision of God, and is not a reward for good deeds (this could be understood as exerting pressure on God by those who lived well and then demanded to be rewarded).

Another controversy was created by God's omniscience - if God knows that we will sin, are we free not to sin? As the Bible is full of inconsistencies, Christianity is full of paradoxes.

Augustine created Christian philosophy combing the Bible and Neoplatonism. In the Bible as in Judaism the world was real and important, created by God as a natural place to live for humans. Jesus assumed that since it is spoiled it will be replaced by a new one, by the Kingdom of God, but equally earthly. For Augustine, as for Plato and Plotinus, the world is a prison which separates human souls from God. This was completely new to the mentality of Jews and Jesus. On the other hand his vision of history was Biblical (history is linear, end with the final Judgement) not Greek or Roman (cyclical). Thus Augustine created the ideology that is commonly attributed to the Middle Ages: The world is spoiled and man is weak. One should leave the world and seek God's help. It is rather annoying that even though Augustine had a very colourful and rich life, full of intellectual exploration, travels, relationships (including love and fatherhood, though eventually he abandoned both his concubine and child, which he later described in his famous *Confessions*), and political successes, so that his life can be considered fulfilled and successful in a worldly sense of these terms. He left his successors with a doctrine based on fear, contempt for world and asceticism.

Augustine is also an excellent illustration of Freud's thesis that the belief in God is a transformed longing for a father. Augustine did not know his father well and did not respect him, his emotional bond with his mother were strong (even too strong – he was dependent on her) and he turned to God when his mother died. In his religiosity a specific type of pride is present: as a man he was a sinner, but when God accompanied him at every turn (Augustine spoke to him constantly in his mind), he felt extremely strong. It was a kind of psychological identification – it manifests itself in forming an attachment with someone powerful (it can also be a movement, ideology, institution - even imaginary) and thus gaining a sense of power.

Questions: What was the religious development of Hebrews/Jews from early monotheism through mature Judaism to Messianism? What are the main Jewish elements in Christianity? What was the role of Jesus (Vermes versus Ratzinger)? What was the original teaching of Jesus? Who was St. Paul? What was the life of early Christians like (e.g. Perpetua)? What was the ascetic atmosphere of the first three centuries (Zoroastrianism, Gnosticism, Manichaeism, Plotinus)? How did the situation of Christianity change with Constantine? What were the strengths of Christianity? What were the ambitions of the Imperial Church of St. Ambrose and St. Augustine? Was evangelism of this church always peaceful (Hypathia in Alexandria)? What was the doctrine of Christianity by St. Augustine (the position of God and Man, the need of knowledge; sin, predestination, grace and sexuality, Christ versus God-Creator)? Why is theodicy and the problem of evil important in monotheism? Was Augustine full of compassion for the sinners?

Further reading

Chapter EARLY CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY (esp. The Life of Augustine; The City of God and the Mystery of Grace) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy*. Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

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Byzantium

In the year 330 Constantine created a centre of power in Constantinople. By the end of the fourth century, the entire empire adopted Christianity as the official religion,

and gradually began to disintegrate into a Western, Latin and eastern part (Byzantium), based on the Greek language and culture. In the western part Milan became the main city, where state institutions were moved (but the Bishop of Rome remained the important figure in the Christian Church in the West). The western part of the Roman Empire was invaded in the 5th and 6th c. by Germanic tribes (originally allied with Rome and trained by it!). The Byzantine Empire lasted for over 1000 years as purely Christian state (the Emperor was both the head of the state and of the Church), centralized, well governed, with very educated citizens. Yet although it continued the ancient Roman Empire, it was a Medieval state, not an enclave of antiquity. It balanced between the East and the West (under the influence of the West art painting icons evolved there - one of them is Our Lady of Częstochowa; under the influence of the Muslin East, which prohibits depicting people, the icons were destroyed during the so-called iconoclasm 726-843). In the 9th c. Hellenistic culture re-emerged there, the first university in Constantinople was founded. The Eastern Slavs were converted giving rise to contemporary Orthodox Christianity. When the Pope in Rome crowned Charlemagne as the new western emperor in 800 it stirred hostility between Western (Catholicism) and Eastern Christianity. In 1054 (Great Eastern Schism) the two Churches went their separate ways, but during the Crusades they fought together against Islam. In 1204 the fourth crusade led by Venetians captured and ransacked Constantinople making it a Catholic state for another 70 years. Eventually it was destroyed by the Ottoman Turks in 1453. Before that it inspired the Italian Renaissance. In the 14th and 15th century Byzantine politicians frequently visited Europe seeking help in their wars with Turkey. They used to teach Greek and spread knowledge about ancient Greek culture among Italian intellectuals (e.g. Francesco Petrarca) who later became leading humanists.

Let us summarise the development of the Greek culture. Before 1200 BCE Greeks had powerful aristocracy. Around 800 BCE Homer created his epics, philosophic schools were established, Athens reached its peak with Pericles, Plato and Aristotle, many city-states flourished. Alexander conquered land, created a great empire and founded Alexandria, which for 700 years was second only to Rome as the cultural centre of the ancient world. When Greeks adopted Christianity in Constantinople a highly spiritual culture was in progress for 1000 years. The first serious blow was inflicted by the Roman Catholics who in 1204 conquered and plundered Constantinople destroying a large part of its cultural heritage. After 1453 Greeks were systematically massacred by Turks and never regained their former glory. They were one of the most creative nation in the history of humankind.

Further reading

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Islam

Islam was created by one man, Muhammad, in 622. *The Quran* (or simply Koran) presents the God of the Bible, although the two texts differ in many details, and Muhammad himself is the most important prophet of that religion. The foundations of Islam are principles of social organization, moral austerity and solidarity (charity or almsgiving). Political involvement and obedience to religious law are more important in Islam than pure faith (which was often central in Christianity). For this reason Islam can hardly by confined to inner attitudes in private life. Islam was quite tolerant towards Jews and Christians (adherents of the same monotheistic Abrahamic religion of the Book), converting them discreetly via tax policy (taxes were lowest for Muslims). In the Middle Ages the Islamic culture surpassed Christian cultures. Three distinct periods can be identified in the history of Islam. (Apart from tolerance and a simple but well-designed structure of the movement another reason for Islam's fast development was the discovery of many gold mines in the deserts of Arabia, which helped finance the conquest.[31])

Islam influenced enormously the development of Christian Europe. Before Muhammed Christianity spread freely over the world. Islam which developed around Europe separated it from the rest of the world and confined Christianity to it. Europe became a besieged fortress and had to integrate in order to withstand the pressure from Islam. Thus Christianity has become the basis for integration. When Arabs conquered Egypt, the granary of the Roman Empire, Europe had to produce her own crops to survive. It fostered the crystallisation of the feudal system.

(1) The purely Arabic period, combative, when the first four Caliphs and the Umayyad dynasty in Damascus established a powerful empire in 747 that covered the

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[31] Gene W. Heck, 'Gold Mining in Arabia and the Rise of the Islamic State,' *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient,* Vol. 42, No. 3 (1999), pp. 364-395.

area from the Atlantic (North Africa and temporarily Spain) to India and Indonesia. Thus Islam contributed to the fall of Rome in the West, then forced the popes to seek help from the Germans (Charlemagne) as it weakened the Roman Empire in the East (Byzantium), took him numerous territories (including important agricultural Egypt), and began to surround Western Europe.

(2) The universalistic period, when the Abbasid dynasty moved the capital to Baghdad (750-1258). At that period of a remarkable cultural flowering Baghdad was a multicultural city where Jews, Greeks, Christians, Persians developed sophisticated culture and science (mathematics, astronomy). Islamic philosophers experienced their own renaissance through rediscovering classical Greek thought. Principal thinkers such as Averroes synthesized Muslim theology and Aristotle's philosophy. In Spain the Umayyad caliphate in Toledo and Cordoba flourished as multicultural centres (Muslim, Jewish, and Christian) surpassing everything that happened in Christian Europe. After Alfonso VI of Castile had conquered Toledo in the Christian Reconquista in 1085 Medieval Europe discovered Aristotle, widely read in Arabic countries but forgotten elsewhere. The main figures were Avicenna, Averroes, al Ghazali, the tales of *One Thousand and One Nights* (or *Arabian Nights*) were then compiled. In 1258 the Mongols (first organized in the early 13th c. by Genghis Khan) ransacked Baghdad and killed most of its inhabitants. It should be stressed here that Arabic culture in spite their successes in conquests, was tolerant and as based on commerce open to the world. It was the invaders - Mongols and Christians during the crusades and taught them brutality.

An example of the power of Islamic thought is *The Muqaddimah*, a book written by a historian Ibn Khaldun in 1377 in North Africa (Tunisia). It deals with history, philosophy of history, sociology, theology, natural sciences, economics, sketches an early scientific method and even anticipates Darwinism. It is characterised by versatility resembling Aristotelianism and was centuries ahead of Western thought.

(3) The Turkish period. In 1220 In the 11th c. the Seljuk Turks, nomads from Central Asia converted to Islam, defeated Byzantium and seized Anatolia (today's Turkey). From the 14th c. the Ottoman Empire (the name comes from one of the Anatolian provinces) gradually seized first the rest of Anatolia and then the entire world of Islam (as well as destroyed the Byzantine Empire in 1453) and maintained control over it until World War I. As the country was centralized and tolerant it was a model for Europe during the religious wars (seventeenth century) and the Enlightened Absolutism.

However, the over-centralization prevented the formation of the middle class and suppressed the development of the Islamic world.

In Egypt as a result of the Mongolian conquests the Mamluks (originally slaves) seized power and ruled there from 1250 to 1517 forming an oligarchic state. Later Egypt was conquered by Turks whom Mamluks finally supported.

It seems that the impact of Turkey and the Ottoman empire on the world was not very positive. It first terminated the development of Greek civilisation, then dominated Islam suppressing Arabs and Persians cultural development, and finally even Turkey stagnated.

Wahhabism, a strong orthodox fundamentalist movement within Islam was originated by Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703–1792) and primarily directed against Ottoman Turks ruling in Arabia. It still plays an important role there (especially in Qatar, UAE and Saudi Arabia).

At the very beginning of the 20th c. oil was discovered in Arabia, which immediately ignited fierce competition between Russia, Britain, France, Germany and finally the U.S., which led to their interference in the region. Arabs and Persians, who by the then had been very poor and rather unimportant in the world politics were again drawn into conflict with the West. As the early spread of Islam was fuelled with gold, now it uses profits from oil.

Some Islamic countries (e.g. Egypt, Turkey, Syria) has undergone Westernisation but it was always inforced by central governments (sometimes strongly supported by the USSR) at the expense of democracy. Now wherever in those countries autocratic regimes are overthrown and democracy is introduced the result is withdrawal from Western values and the spread of Islamic fundamentalism. Thus promoting democracy as the core western value becomes self-defeating for introducing Western values in the Islamic world.

Islam and Christianity are the two most conquering religions in the world. However, while Christianity was perhaps less tolerant, Islam became intolerant mainly in recent centuries also as a result of losing in the economic competition with Western culture.

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The Medieval Europe

The fall of the Roman Empire in the West is often misunderstood. Some scholars repeat the claims of Edward Gibbon (1737-1794) who in his famous book *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–1788) accused Christianity of diverting people's attention to the afterlife which resulted in neglecting their empire in this world. It is absurd since the Eastern part of the Roman Empire, an entirely Christian state, lasted until 1453 waging wars witch also strongly religious Islamic states, which drew inspiration from stories described in the Bible.

To understand the fall of the Western Roman Empire we must understand the dynamics of human civilisations. Apart from China, India and American Indians, the main important spring of human culture was in the Near East. Egypt, Mesopotamia, the whole Fertile Crescent, Persia were all strong cultures of the region. When Greece appeared it defined itself as the West, which soon, due to Alexander's efforts, dominated the East. Rome emerged as even more western (in fact Greece after Alexander again became very Eastern). However, the Roman civilisation was somehow shallow culturally. It was based on military power, good political organization, commerce and consumerism. Gods of Rome were first borrowed from the Greeks and later from all other conquered regions. Even when we talk about Roman law we refer to the *Justinian's Codex* compiled in Constantinople in the 6th century. Rome was culturally, spiritually void, much inferior to the Near East and Greece. In the 4th c. when Constantine moved the capital of the Roman Empire to Constantinople it was as if the centre of culture move eastward again, toward the cradle of culture. Even Greeks became more eastern and mystical than before. The territories crucial to ancient Rome - Italy, Gaul, Spain, Britain, In Italy - became suddenly far peripheries of the empire governed from Constantinople. The Empire had political problems, was to big to be properly controlled. Romans employed Germanic people as soldiers, taught them to

fight and then lost control over them. When Germanic tribes attacker them from the North, and Islam from the South (capturing first the African provinces and then Spain), Constantinople was too far away to intervene effectively. The ancient culture of Rome, with the cult of many gods and the emperor, was fairly superficial and lost its appeal. The world had a new invention - monotheist religions, Christianity and Islam - but the Roman centre of Christianity was in Constantinople, while since the 5th c. Europe was divided into numerous new kingdoms, often already Christian, but too weak to dominate the whole continent. The bishop of Rome in Italy wanted to maintain independence from Constantinople but also was politically too weak to do so either, especially that the Emperor in Constantinople was still nominally the head of Europe. The reasons of disintegration of Europe were mainly political.

The fall of the political order in Europe was a powerful challenge. Suddenly Europe had to integrate on its own. The danger of Islam (Muslims soon conquered Northern Africa and Spain, and even crossed the Pyrenees) mobilized the Church in Rome. (One may wonder what would have happened if Muslims had conquered the whole of Europe in the 8th century. Maybe it would have saved the world many wars and tragedies.)

While in the Near East (but with influences reaching through Africa to Spain) cultural development was energetic throughout the whole Middle Ages, Europe until the year 1000 was a backward brutal continent. The backwardness of the Middle Ages was rather the manifestation of the generally low level of people living in Europe (Celtic, Slavonic, Germanic, Viking), unable at that time to produce anything comparable to the great cultures of the Near East or Greece. No surprise that during the Middle Ages the greatest and most beautiful city of Europe was Venice, which traded with Constantinople, and that it was Italy that flourished during the high Middle Ages and commenced the Renaissance. Northern Europe required more time to wake up. Then it revived partly under the inspiration from Islam (after the conquest of Toledo in Spain and its libraries in the 11th century) and later by Byzantium in the 14th century.

The only thing that survived from Ancient Rome was Catholicism, which combined Roman political traditions and Eastern God News. Before the Roman Empire collapsed in the West, the Church had learnt how to build a centralized state and carried this skill on into the next era. The Church was smart enough to interpret the principles of faith in a manner appropriate to the time in which it had to act, thus making Christianity the religion that shaped Europe. After the fall of the Empire in the West the Church in Rome lost its influence. Its power was limited to a small state of Rome where

local aristocrats elected the Pope from among themselves. Rome was politically unimportant. Byzantium was powerful but increasingly alien. Spain and Africa were conquered by the Arabs. Germans were true Christians, but independent from Rome. Vikings occupied Scandinavia. England raided by the Anglo-Saxons was poor and the pagan Slavs were closer to Byzantium. Between 600 and 1000 AD western cities fell and Europe plunged into barbarity. The Church began to spread the Gospel by organizing monasteries in Western Europe (monasticism was born in the 4th c. in Egypt, which however was soon enough dominated by Islam). Europe develop increasingly interdependently from Byzantium. In 751 the Exarchate of Ravenna (in Italy), a centre of Byzantine power in Italy from the end of the 6th century, was conquered by the Lombards and later became part of the Papal state. In 800 the Pope crowned Charlemagne, who was by then ruling the kingdom of the Franks, the largest Germanic state in Western Europe, to be the Holy Roman Emperor of the renewed Europe. It manifested the complete reorientation of Europe, no longer connected with Byzantium. Although Charlemagne rule spurred the Carolingian Renaissance, a period of cultural and intellectual activity, his state disintegrated four decades later. Both French and German monarchies considered their kingdoms to be descendants of Charlemagne's empire. Finally the Church in Rome managed to create in Europe what earlier had emerged in Byzantium and in the World of Islam - political order unified by a monotheistic religion. Since this kind of order appeared in different civilisation perhaps it was determined by some necessities and was a stage in development of civilisation born in the Middle East.

Between 800 and 1050 AD Europe was flooded by the Vikings. Vikings were one of the major forces that formed Europe. In their boats they reached Iceland and North America, travelled over Volga to Constantinople, started the Rurik dynasty in the Kievan Rus' and then expanded to the second centre of the statehood in Russia, Veliky Novgorod. The richness of early kingdoms in Kiev and Novgorod was due to trade with Constantinople, where the Vikings formed the Varangian Guard, an elite unit of the Byzantine Army, from the 10th to the 14th centuries, and from where they took Christianity. In the 10th century in Poland they controlled trade on the rivers Vistula and Bug (settlements in Bodzia, Truso near today's Elbląg, and also Wolin), through they maintained contact with both Kiev and Scandinavia. A daughter of the first Polish king, Mieszko I, married the Viking king of Denmark, while his granddaughter a prince in Kiev, so probably Vikings strongly contributed to the creation of the kingdom of Poland

in 966.[32] They also settled in Normandy and from there conquered England in 1066, where having confiscated 90 percent of land they formed the upper class that is still important in Britain today. At that time the Vikings controlled a network of states and trading routes from Constantinople thought Kiev, Novgorod, northern Poland, Scandnavia to Normandy, England, Ireland and Icelnad. They also established a tolerant kingdom on Sicily – Karol Szymanowski wrote an opera about their king Roger – and played a major role during the first crusade and the slaughter of 30 000 inhabitant of Jesrusalem. They were brutal and perfectly organized. Their mythology, written in *Edda* found in Iceland was violent and depressive, their chief gods – Wotan/Odin, Thor, Loki – awaited the end of the world, Ragnarök. Wagner and Tolkien were inspired by it, Hitler was under its spell.

It was not until 962, the year of Otto I coronation, that the Holy Roman Empire was firmly established (as well as the ongoing struggle between the Pope and the Emperor for the primacy of the West). It must be stressed that the Holy Roman Empire covered not the whole of Europe but mainly German speaking territories and Bohemia (and for some time many parts of Italy). France, England, Poland, Hungary and later Spain were outside it. Neither was Otto's Empire the continuation of the Frankish empire of Charlemagne, who defeated Saxony while Otto was the Duke of Saxony. Europe broke its bonds with the empire in Constantinople and became the constellation of independent states united mainly by the Church in Rome. The Church became a highly centralised institution modelled on the ideas of Plato's *Republic*. Its intelligent diplomacy secured the support of secular rulers, whom at the same time the Church tried to civilise (for many brutal warlords the war was the main purpose of life). In the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries the Church ideologically dominated Western Europe, and the Christian doctrine penetrated aspect of life of its inhabitants. As suggested by Plato, selected and trained "masters" who forswore families and private property determined the dogmas of faith, morality and customs. The Church had to struggle against numerous heresies, which generally called for the return to the purity of early Christian morality. Some heretics were persecuted by force, but St. Francis of Assisi was isolated in an order created for him, where he could preach poverty without disturbing the Pope. This was the period of Gothic art, the Crusades to the Holy Land (1096 - 1270), universities, scholastic philosophy and polyphonic music. When many princesses were left alone by their husbands taking part in the Crusades, the phenomenon of courtly love appeared – a romantic sentiment, passionate and undisciplined, between lovers who

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[32] Jan Wołucki, *Wiking a sprawa polska,* Gdańsk 2005.

were not husband and wife (like in the Celtic song of Tristan and Iseult, also known as Isolde). It marked the beginning of the idealisation of romantic love in Western culture.

The Mongols exerted great influence on the development of the Russians. The first state in this region, later known as Kievan Rus, was founded about 862 by Rurik, probably a Viking. In 988 Vladimir was baptised by the Byzantine Empire. However, from ca.1223 to ca.1480 (the 13th to 15th c.), the Mongols isolated Rus' from external contacts (with Byzantium and Western Europe). The natives were building settlements in the vast forests, exposed the cruelty of the Mongols led force wary of the world and focused on the relationship with God. This had a huge impact on the Russian mentality as well as the subsequent misfortunes. Poland invaded and occupied Moscow in 1605-1606, then Napoleon, Emperor Wilhelm, and finally Hitler endeavoured to conquer and in the last case perhaps exterminate the whole Russian nation. Few other nations experienced such dangers. It explains why Russia mistrusts the whole outside world and all the time feels endangered. When Lenin and Stalin convinced Russians that capitalism was the main reason for world wars in the 20th century the conclusion that capitalism must be destroyed was easily accepted by them.

MUSIC. At the time of Augustine the music of Byzantium permeated to Europe, perhaps with Greek and Jewish elements (Ambrosian chant in Milan). Original Western music began to develop only in the 9th c. as a Gregorian chant - religious singing in unison.

From the 11th c. secular music began to develop, often associated with the sphere of courtly love, created by French troubadours, trouvères and German minnesingers. Students from emerging universities sang Carmina Burana.

In the 12th c. polyphonic music was invented in France, particularly in the school at Notre Dame (many voices superimposed), which soon spread all over Western Europe. The most famous medieval example is the *Notre Dame Mass* by Guillaume Machaut (14th c.).

Questions: How did the Western Roman Empire fall? What was Byzantium? How did the Muhammadan culture develop (its three stages) and what was his impact on Europe? What was the political and cultural situation of Europe in the Dark Ages (ca. 600 - 1000 CE)? What was the situation of papacy and why did Popes enter into cooperation with Germanic kingdoms? What was the result of this cooperation for them (Germany versus France and England)?

What changes began in Europe around 1000 CE? Who were the Vikings and Normans and what were their methods and achievements? What were the most characteristic feature of mature Middle Ages (1000-1300 CE)?

Further reading

Paul Vincent Spade, "Medieval Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2013/entries/medieval-philosophy/>.

Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997: Chapter V Medium (the Middle Ages 750-1270) p. 291, 750-1054 (the Vikings p. 293, the Magyars p. 296, Charelmagne p. 298, invasions on Britain p. 307, feudalism p. 312, Otto I and the Holy Roman Empire p. 316, Moravia p. 321, Bulgaria p. 321, Bohemia p. 324, Poland p. 324, the Kievan Rus p. 326, Scandinavia p. 328, the Great Schism 1054 p. 328); 1054-1268 (social life p. 335, Papacy and Gregory VII p. 336, literature p. 249, the German Empire p. 350, France and England p. 353, the Crusades p. 358, the Mongols p. 264, economic life p. 366, Holland p. 370). Capsules on Tristan, Futhark, Nibelung, Cantus, Compostela, Leper, Biblia, Ding, Madonna, Athos, Bogumil, Ghetto, Hansa, Gothic,

Anselm and scholasticism

Scholasticism - rational reflection on the dogmas of faith - was established at the time of Anselm (1033-1109) and in the next century experienced rapid development. Europeans took the risk of admitting an intellectual analysis of faith. Certainly scholastic philosophers hoped that the religious dogmas would be fully proved by reason. Unfortunately once accepted practice after centuries finally resulted in the dogmas being undermined by reason.

Anselm formulated (in chapter two of the *Proslogion*) the so called ontological argument - God as a perfect (the greatest possible) being must exist, otherwise (if it was only a thought in the mind) He would not be perfect because another more perfect being (the existing, real God) would be possible.

Criticism and comments

(1) By analogy a perfect island would have to exist. Otherwise it had not been perfect. (2) We do not know a priori what God is like, so we do not have the right to formulate His definition (Aquinas - 13th c.). (3) Existence is not a feature, because the existing 100 Thalers have has the same value as the imaginary 100 Thalers. A real object in not more perfect than an object with the same feature that is only imaginary. The definition of any object cannot prove that it exists. (Kant - 18th c.). (4) The proof contains a formal error, because it takes as its premise, which is to be proved. If being

the greatest possible being implies its existence (outside the mind), the defining God as perfect assumes that it exists.

St. Thomas Aquinas

Metaphysics and epistemology

Aquinas (1225-1274) is the greatest philosopher of the Catholic Church. Aristotle had been forgotten in Europe but his books were known and discussed in Baghdad and Cordoba. His Arabic commentator Averroes even advocated the independence of reason and faith. When as a result of Crusades Aristotle was rediscovered in Europe, he immediately aroused admiration and anxiety, because the author was a pagan. Students in Paris, tired of the dominant role of the Church used his writing to back their demand for the independence of rational enquiry. Thomas, an aristocrat and monk form Monte Casino, was entrusted with the task of reconciling the views of Aristotle with the Christian dogma. Thomas was canonized in 1323, the Counter-Reformation classified him among the Doctors of the Church. In 1879 Pope Leo XIII recommended to base the teaching of the Church on his numerous works (the most important are *Summa Theologica* and *Summa contra Gentiles*). The philosophy of the Catholic Church is still based on Aquinas. Jacques Maritain and Etienne Gilson were among greatest scholars in this movement.

His doctrine is the intellectual equivalent of Gothic cathedrals. In thousands of arguments he described the world less austere than that of Augustine, but no less imbued with God. Shortly before his death, under the influence of a mystical experience he decided that what he wrote seemed to him straw and stopped writing. Aquinas retained the main structure of Platonic, Augustinian Christianity but added most of the Aristotelian concepts to it adjusting them in an ingenious way.

A. Philosophy and natural theology.

According St. Thomas only a few problems require the revelation. Most truths can be discovered by reason using the senses, they will not contradict the Bible (so-called natural theology). He believe as Aristotle did that most religious dogmas can be proved by beginning with truths evident to all and through careful logical argumentation.

Criticism and comments

In fact he restated many Christian dogmas without any justification only introducing certain definitions to avoid contradictions or criticism about them. Only some dogmas are provided with arguments. Aristotle was mistaken when he thought that his method is scientific, which is forgivable because he was at the beginning of the intellectual history of humankind. In the same vein Aquinas was deluded that he could prove any religious claims. As Richard Dawkins maintains[33] the best argument for religious claims is direct experience - if someone experiences God's presence so vividly that he cannot deny it, he should accept religion. All other proves are unconvincing according to the scientific methodology (which does not mean that they are false - the only cannot be proven). This, however, poses a serious problem - the experience may be caused by mental illness (e.g. paranoia) or by Devil. How can one distinguish reliable experience from illusory?

B. God

God is simple, without composition of parts, such as the body and the soul, or matter and form. God is perfect, lacking nothing. That is, God is distinguished from other beings on account of God's complete actuality. God is infinite. God is immutable, incapable of change on the levels of God's essence and character. God is one, without diversification within God's self. The unity of God is such that God's essence is the same as God's existence. God is not in the process of becoming; God is already fully actualized, complete, realized and unfolded. There is no potential to become because God already fully is.

Goodness is a measure of self-actualization; it is the degree to which we have become what we are drawn to become. Evil is a kind of non-being, a disfiguring of form, a failure to actualize.

Knowledge of God is only analogical – the terms used in describing Him should be understood metaphorically, not literally. Socrates was wise and God is wise, although "wise" does not mean the same in both cases.

Criticism and comments

One can't avoid feeling that most those claims are beyond human comprehension. How God that is simple could will anything? Willing in humans is an act of some complexity. Can a being that is simple and unchangeable afford it? How can God that exist beyond time create anything? If humans do something it requires time. Aware of

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[33]   Richard Dawkins, *The God Dellusion*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin 2006.

this difficulty Thomas claimed that words when used about God have an analogical meaning (as their basic meaning refer to our world). However, if the words like: "create", "exist", "want" when applied to God mean something different than when applied to us do we understand them at all? Maybe they do not make sense to us, in which case any argumentations and proofs with them may not be correct.

Aquinas presented five proofs of God's existence, so called "Five Ways".
* as cause of movement (unmoved mover)
* as the first (efficient) cause – the cosmological argument
* as the only necessary being
* as the only perfect being
* as the cause of order in the world – the teleological argument

Criticism. Each of them were criticised (see below). However, it is not certain, what was the role of those proofs in Aquinas' system. In Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics* a distinction is made between proving the existence of at least one object of a class and guliding knowledge about this class based on its essence. It is possible that Five Ways serve the first purpose - they demonstrate that there is somethin like a god, while a particular description of God should be made through His essence (His essence is His existence). No knowledge about God follows from the Five Ways.[34]

C. The good.

God is good (this continues Plato and Plotinus, not to Aristotle!). Other entities are gradually receding hierarchy from perfect and God (although they never become bad). Only in God essence is identical with existence. Mundane world is not the opposite of eternal, but its complement. The material world, though imperfect, is a creation of God and as such is good. Thus the world is good, evil is the lack of good and results from either coincidences or intentional sinful behaviour.

Criticism and comments

The concept of goodness used here is very unclear. People want to become good (live up to some standards), to feel good, to acquire objects that are good for them. Many things are good from one point of view and evil from another. The goodness of a knife is in its sharpness. How can God possess all possible goodness? Is He sharp?

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[34] Ralph McInerny, John O'Callaghan 'Saint Thomas Aquinas', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/aquinas/>, ch. 11.1

D. Man

The soul, created by God, is the essence of man, setting out its position and goals in the world. Man consists of the soul and body that need each other (Thomas as Aristotle recognizes the soul as the form of the body, which does not make much sense on the basis of Christianity, so that this thesis was occasionally even condemned by the Church in the past). Man is designed to operate in the world for the glory of God, who has endowed it in the natural law, including indications of how to proceed. The man fell and the original sin spoiled his nature, but by nature desires the good (ultimately – God). The return to God - the source of good - is the only true happiness.

The goal of human existence is union and eternal fellowship with God.

This goal is achieved through the beatific vision, when a person experiences perfect, unending happiness by seeing the very essence of God. (The very idea that finally the chosen will see God "face to face" was suggested in the First Epistle to the Corinthians of the New Testament, attributed to Paul the apostle, 1 Cor 13:11–12) This vision, which occurs after death, is a gift from God given to those who have experienced salvation and redemption through Christ while living on earth. On earth an individual's will must be ordered toward right things, such as charity, peace, and holiness. Aquinas sees this as the way to happiness. Those who truly seek to understand and see God will necessarily love what God loves. Natural reason finds the way and the will naturally follows it. In case of doubt one should consult theologians and the Church. Following the wrong way is acting against human nature and our own interests.

Criticism and comments

* This final aim is adapted from the philosophical happiness of Aristotle, for whom there were three kinds of life: based on pleasure, on virtues and on contemplation. But for Aristotle virtues did not lead to contemplation.

* If it is human natural aim, surprisingly few people seem to want it.

* Fort most believers the life in heaven filled only with the beatific vision must not be very rewarding. No wonder that the Muslim paradise had more appeal.

* One can wonder what the role of this world is?

In Judaism God helps his people in this world and there is no other world.

According to Jesus in this world people prepare for God's Kingdom purifying their hearts – this will be useful in future life, where life will be based on simple morality and love towards neighbours.

According to Augustine: everything is decided before people are born; this world is in fact a useless theatre, a burdensome waiting for the verdict.

According to Aquinas people need to exercise virtues in this world although they will be useless in their future life (experiencing the beatific vision does not require them).

The naturalistic outlook – humans are created by brutal evolution, once they developed self-awareness they can improve their nature and create a better world in the future – seems more coherent and no less exciting.

Moral and political theory

The good is objective (Thomism is called a realistic philosophy). It should be pursued because it is good, it is the will of God, it is rewarded in heaven, leads to excellence and fulfils the real human desires. Reason recognizes the good and the will seeks it. Virtues (Platonic, Aristotelian and theological) and the natural law point the way of improvement. (Thomas combines the tradition of Greek ethics - the goal is to strive for good – with the tradition of Judaic ethics, based on obedience to God's law, the commandments.)

God endowed man with freedom so that his decisions be the result of their free choice (only then they are morally important – otherwise people would be machines not responsible for their actions). However, what is right is decided by God so human choice is between obedience and sin. The doctrine of double effect justifies killing in self-defence and just war.

Morality is summarized in virtues. Theological virtues are: Faith is the yearning for answers to the ultimate questions of life and willingness to be drawn to the words, ideas, and religious rituals that attempt to answer them. Hope is the habit of embracing a higher standard of behaviour, which leads people to becoming better and happier. Charity is the habit of choosing to be vulnerable enough to be drawn to the good, to love it, and to act accordingly.

Moral (cardinal) virtues are: Prudence is the habit of thinking well about what is to be done. Justice is the stable and lasting willingness to do the right thing for everyone. Courage (fortitude) helps us be bold in the attainment of good. Moderation (temperance) helps keep our passions from ruling over reason.

Sins are those acts that interfere with our path to authentic happiness, blunt our common sense, and block our growth towards what we are supposed to become. Seven deadly sins are: wrath, greed, sloth, pride, lust, envy, gluttony.

Natural law, upon which all other laws must be based, is based on the basic principle that good is to be done and evil avoided. (What is good and what is evil can be stated objectively; it is not a matter of opinion. Christian philosophers, theologians and the Church are responsible for discovering what is good and evil – just like in Plato's system.) Human law must be based on it.

Aquinas maintained that the state was an organism headed by a monarch representing God who helps attain salvation. It must be based on divine law (made known to man through revelation). It is a hierarchical organism, and each position in it is assigned the rights and obligations; rulers are obliged to ascertain the well-being of the whole country.

Criticism of Aquinas' view on morality and comments

Aquinas combined three traditions. According to the Bible the good is what God ordered. According to Plato, the good is absolute, discovered by reasons. According to Aristotle the good is what is determined by natural essences of different classes of things (the human good, the good of a horse, the good of a carpenter). Those traditions were conflicted with each other - Plato in *Euthyphro* contrasted what god wanted and what was good in itself, Aristotle fostered the natural goodness of every species against Platonic absolute goodness. Aquinas blended them all with the result that (in a brutal oversimplification) people should do what God wanted them to do, but what was announced by the Church; it was absolutely good in itself (because God was good), and in fact everyone wanted it (because human nature was created so as to want the good). However, if they did not want what the Church told them to do, it meant that they acted against God, the God and even their true nature.

In Aquinas (as well as in Plato or Aristotle) there are no precise and explicit methods of discovering what God wanted to be done. In different religions the same claims are made but conclusions are often different. This is the difference between scientific and religious authorities. Scientists are trained to use the scientific method more skilfully than others but the method is explicit so that everyone can study it, apply and check the argumentation. Religious authorities do not show a convincing method – they require blind obedience. Homosexuality is wrong because it is against God's intention and nature; while celibacy is right. How can one know this?

The authority of the Bible cannot solve this question. First, why the Bible and not Quran, the Upanishads or Confucian Analects? Second, the Bible was written in a manner understandable to people who lived thousands of years ago; today it should be understood and perhaps written in a different way – but who is to determine how? The law must change when humanity changes. What was right for people on a certain level of development may be wrong on another.

Thus Thomism resembles Platonism and Aristotelianism – the experts (philosophers, theologians) should identify the objective good and impose it on everyone. A very smart move which showed Aquinus' ingenuity at its best was to explain how, although the good is discovered by natural reason possessed by everyone, the Church's advice was needed. God gave man the reason with the ability to recognize good and nature that pursues goodness. However, the will can take action before the reason ends the process of identifying good and acting on wrong premises can lead to a mistake (sin), which may bring eternal punishment. Since the only tool that can tell us about errors of reason is reason itself, in fact, we can never be sure and it is safer to follow the advice of the Church. (Descartes in the 17th century attacked this reservation and postulated that everyone had enough reason to think for themselves.)

We should not forget that the whole tradition of Plato, Aristotle and Aquinas had a rhetoric twist, it was meant to equip leaders, rulers, elites with ideology with which they could efficiently run their states and institutions. It was paternalistic and perhaps really useful, it benefited both philosophy (the ability to think on an abstract and general level) and politics (the art of governing). Even today different groups of political and economic interest can be founds behind different and conflicting philosophical doctrines (Marxist, social-democratic, free-market, liberal, Catholic). However, wise societies and elites know that in the long perspective it pays to have independent thinkers who can blow a whistle when societies become disoriented as a result of widespread manipulation and opportunism.

General Criticism and comments

Aquinas' argumentation is often incorrect. Already the first philosophers created arbitrary metaphysical theories - although they analysed the same world, they maintained that the being is water, a mixture of the four elements, apeiron (the unlimited), colourless atoms; that it is constant or continuously changing; it is uniform or powered by the struggle of opposites; chaotic or imbued with divine governance; allowing freedom or determined. The man has a soul, the soul is simple, the soul

consists of many parts, etc. Philosophers constantly developed the skill of immersing their data into what they came up with, append them with it - in an intelligent and convincing way so that they could pretend that it WAS reality. Thomas added God to what he saw in the world. He did it with incredible finesse, but according to principles which had long been used by ordinary people: "I succeeded, so God heard my prayer; I failed, so God wanted to give me a chance for improvement. Whatever happens, God is in it." Creating metaphysics which revealed more about their creators than about the real world did not cease after Thomas, the spectacular achievements being Marxism and psychoanalysis. With the development of the scientific method a desire emerged, expressed by positivists, to reject any metaphysics of this kind and reduce theories to bare facts. The contemporary philosopher, Rorty, suggests a different solution: let philosophers construct their subjective interpretation of the being. It is perhaps inevitable, but let them keep a healthy distance from their creations - they are not absolute truths, they only express the subjectivity of their authors.

Despite declarations, reason only creates an impression that the truths of faith are proven. Thomas did not provide a method by which these truths could be sought. He adopted religious dogmas as given and then adjusted proofs. Many of them do not prove anything, they only restate their conclusions. Others are based on the ambiguity of terms (the thesis that God is the highest good, or the sum of all goods), or conclusions are added arbitrarily (since God is the supreme good, the beatific vision of God must also be the supreme good). A common method of argumentation is to distinguish meanings – with one meaning of a term the thesis in question is false, but with the other it is true ("obvious in itself" is different from "obvious to someone", hence the existence of God is obvious in itself, but it is not obvious to someone who does not understand the word "God", and therefore requires proof). In many argumentations subtle errors are deeply hidden which allows Thomas to slide from one thesis to another in an unauthorized manner, e.g., it is possible that everything did not exist at some point of time but it does not mean that there was a moment when nothing existed (this mistake was made in his Third Way) – analogically it is possible that everyone will be at some point in time but it does not follow that there will be a moment in time when there is no-one. Thomas commonly used a strategy of saving endangered hypothesis by adding a rescuing hypothesis *ad hoc* (i.e. he was doing what the twentieth century methodologists Karl Popper considered a cardinal error in the creation of reliable knowledge). And yet the work of Thomas is unparalleled. No one had ever conducted such precise reasoning. His work contains numerous errors, but

humankind can learn from the mistakes. Only someone has to make them. Therefore, the entire course of critical thinking could be based on examples from Aquinas' works.

The greatest philosophers of the Enlightenment, David Hume and Immanuel Kant, perfected their ability to think logically on Aquinas' Five Ways. The cosmological proof assumes that the world either has always existed, or once came from nothing. Kant found both of these possibilities difficult to imagine. Hume held that the world could have existed forever, and there is no evidence to test the hypothesis that it had been created, which also applies to the teleological proof. (Earlier Leibniz had formulated the disturbing question that perhaps will never be convincingly answered: "Why is there something rather than nothing?"). Certainly, the world could have always existed (it is true that if there was no first cause, one cannot number the following ones, but this does not mean that they would not have existed). It is also possible that the various "ways" refer to five different entities, so Aquinas postulated the existence of five gods, neither of them must have the qualities that are attributed to God in the Bible.

Questions: What was scholasticism? What was the relation between philosophy and religion? Was Plato important in the Middle Ages? How did Anselm and Aquinas try to prove God's existence? What was the role of Aristotle in the philosophy of Aquinas? How did his system resemble the art of Gothic and polyphonic music? What was the role of God in Thomism (the source, Good, final aim)? What were the two aims of human life – earthly and eternal (beatific vision)? What was natural law? How should the state be organized according to medieval thinkers? What is the principle of double effect in ethics? How did Christianity work to improve people (sins, virtues)? Why should anyone respect the Absolute Good and obey laws based on it? What is the general method behind Aquinas' argumentations and what is wrong with it (evident faults, general methodological faults)?

Further reading

Chapters EARLY MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY (esp. Saint Anselm) and PHILOSOPHY IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY (esp. Aquinas' Life and Works; Aquinas' Natural Theology; Aquinas on Essence and Existence; Aquinas' Moral Philosophy) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy.* Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

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The Autumn of the Middle Ages

In the fourteenth century both the papacy and the empire were weakened. France gained power and imprisoned Popes in Avignon (1309-1377), the climate underwent a temporary cooling, the Hundred Years War marked with fanatic heroism of Joan d'Arc raged between England and France (1337-1453) and resulted in a financial crisis. The Middle Age globalization enabled the Mongol Empire brought a plague ("The Black Death") to Europe which killed in the middle of the century 30 percent to 60 percent of the population of Western Europe. The authority of the Church, who could not prevent this, was shaken and it contributed to the weakening of the feudal system. In England, the peasants left their land and searching for a better pay become free labour, the first swallow of the future capitalism.

"There is a sense of fatalism about life in the later Middle Ages. People knew that Christendom was sick; they knew that the ideals of the Gospel of Love were far removed from prevailing reality; but they had little idea of how to cure it. The senior Christian state, the Byzantine Empire, was reduced to a pathetic rump. The Holy Roman Empire could not control its own mighty subjects, let alone exercise leadership over others. The Papacy was falling into the quagmire of political dependence. Feudal particularism reached the point where every city, every princeling, had to fight incessantly for survival. The world was ruled by brigandage, superstition, and the plague. When the Black Death struck, the wrath of God was clearly striking at Christendom's sins. (…) At the same time, 'the violent tenor' of medieval life, its 'vehement pathos', had so intensified the pains and pleasures of living that modern sensibility is said to be barely capable of grasping them. 'The violent contrasts and

impressive forms lent a tone of excitement and passion to everyday life, and tended to produce that perpetual oscillation between despair and distracted joy, between cruelty and pious tenderness, which characterises the Middle Ages."[35]

In this century, called by Huizinga the Autumn of the Middle Ages art and music were becoming more and more sophisticated. Then lived the most outstanding medieval mystic Meister Eckhart (c. 1260 - 1327/8), and a little later, but in the climate of the era Tomas a Kempis wrote *The Imitation of Christ* (1418), the second most popular book after the Bible, promoting the original ideals of Jesus - not earthly power but humility and Christian love.

Away from the major centres of power small independent cities in Northern Italy developed - Florence, Milan, Genoa, Bologna, Padua, Urbino, Pisa (Venice was a power throughout the whole Middle Ages), in which a new era would soon be born, the Renaissance.

Praising Italian cities one should not forget about other agglomeration of independent cities that flourished in the north of Europe - the Hanseatic League, the mercantile cities on the Baltic coast, with the dominant position of German cities. From the 12th to 16th centuries these cities – among others Hamburg, Rostock, Lübeck, Danzig, Riga, Reval/Tallinn - flourished economically and culturally. The religious wars of the 17th c., the development of nation-states, the domination of the Atlantic states and development of colonialism put an end to the Hanseatic League. The history of Hansa shows that sustainable development is achieved where there is a strong central government that does not dampen regional autonomy. Unfortunately, after the Renaissance, Europe entered the road of greedy competition, which ultimately led to the wars of the 20th century.

Further reading

Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997: Chapter VI Pestis. Christendom in Crisis 1250-1493 (the Byzantine Empire p. 385, Moscow p. 389, Spain p. 393, the Holy Roman Empire p. 395, Florence p. 398, Popes in Avignon p. 403, Switzerland p. 404, France p. 404, England and Scotland p. 408, the Black Death p. 409, the Hundred Years War p. 419, the east-central Europe p. 427, the medieval civilization p. 431, the Ottoman Turks and the fall of Constantinople p. 444, Portugal and Spain p. 451, the raise of Moscow as "the third Rome" p. 455).

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[35]   Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997: Chapter VI Pestis. Christendom in Crisis, p. 383.

The Middle Ages - Conclusion

After the collapse of Rome, Europe fell into chaos and barbarism, which were overcome only around the year 1000 thanks to the Church. If not for its knowledge and ambitions perhaps Europe would have remained divided into small kingdoms constantly waging tribal wars with each other (as it was after the Renaissance). The Church crucially contributed to the emergence of a united Europe, which today, after centuries of wars, the European Union is trying to recreate. (However, it must be admitted that Islam produced a more sophisticated culture, also built on religious foundations and happier than Christian Europe. Perhaps one of the reason of their superiority was low development of commerce in Europe. The native peoples of Europe were also less cultivated at the beginning and perhaps more aggressive and cruel.)

The Medieval Europe was theocentric in the same way as Byzantium and the world of Islam. The role of the Church was great (as enormous was its size, e.g. before Henry VIII clergy constituted one fifth of the population of England; it was a real power counterbalancing often uneducated aristocracy) but perhaps not as overwhelming as it is often thought. In spite of paternalism of the Church Europe did not become totalitarian and never overcame many local particularism. The lack of technology made it impossible to control Europe from one central point (as the USSR from the Kremlin). Cities of northern Italy enjoyed a high degree of autonomy (which frequently led to brutal wars between them). Byzantium was more centralised within its borders, but the Emperor's religious authority was much weaker outside them, in countries which adopted the Orthodox version of Christianity. In Europe different tribes formed different states with their own kings, some of them very successful as in the case of the Vikings who established dynasties (e.g. Dukes of Holland) and states among others Britain, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Island, Poland and Kievan Rus, but too weak to dominate the whole Europe. The Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and Pope were competing with each other without creating one centre of religious and political power. It is not clear whether those different kinds of competition served freedom and cultural development or harmed them.

Throughout the Middle Ages Platonism played a huge role. It inspired a symbolic treatment of the surrounding world (as the image of the hidden world of ideas); condemnation of the body; distrust of the outside world and contempt of earthly things, combined with the cult of the spiritual power of reason and a particular preference for metaphysical reflection.

Over the centuries, there was a shift from the views of Augustine (the man is helpless and in need of grace, God is the only rescue, the body is a prison of the soul) to appreciate the role of reason and independence of a man (who by himself discovers certain truths). Christianity could use reason incorrectly, but it was never irrational (not based on magic, fortune-telling, astrology, etc.). Therefore it always looked suspiciously upon the mystics). The man still was considered sinful, but he was at the centre of a world that exists only as the background of his drama - from creation, through the fall, the redemption to the resurrection, the apocalypse and the Last Judgement.

The theories of the state alluded strongly to the Stoic concept of the Logos (the divine law and reason) – it should be imbued with religious values and ruled by the Church. While for Augustine the earthly state was a place of the struggle between the good and evil people, for the mature Middle Ages, the State should be a harmonious organism ruled by the central authority of the Pope, in which different bodies are subordinate to god of the whole, which precluded the existence of disputes and conflicting interests of men, although "amputation diseased organs" was permitted. They were accompanied by the outlook on the world as a hierarchy of increasingly perfect beings and spheres of them, leading to God (as described by the American philosopher Arthur Oncken Lovejoy, the founder of the discipline known as the history of ideas in with his book *The Great Chain of Being,*[36] who claimed that wholistic conception of the world was dismantled in the late 18th century).

Domination of one religion has certain disadvantages. On the one hand monotheism is a powerful tool for strengthening a community; on the other it suppresses pluralism and builds walls against other communities who believe in different gods. Jews invented monotheism to strengthen their identity. They survived thousands of years of persecution thanks to their religion - but were persecuted mainly because of it. Ancient Rome was multi-religious and tolerant, all it expected from its citizens was that they worshipped Caesar as god. Because of their monotheism Jews were unable to do so. When Catholicism evolved from Judaism it required worshipping only one God. It overcame divisions into nations and created Europe as a multinational continent but prevented the assimilation of Jews in Europe, which otherwise would have been extremely beneficial to both sides. Now Islam also requires worshipping only Allah. It is a cruel irony of history that Jews who invented monotheism as the foundation of their national identity suffered most because of the attachment of others

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[36] Arthur Oncken Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea* (1936). Harvard University Press. Reprinted by Harper & Row, 2005.

to monotheism and nationalism. Today it seems that multinational and multi-religious political structures (states or rather empires) are best for the development of humankind. The success of the U.S. is a proof.

The focus on eternal life was much less radical than that required by the original doctrine of Jesus. The Church in Rome was an earthly political power whose centre was run by Roman aristocrats. In addition to religious life, there was secular life, universities were founded (although under the influence of the Arabic world), intellectual (scholars) and emotional (courtly love) life flourished. Knights organized crusades (which were brutal but as every war fostered technological and organizational progress), engineering achievements were considerable. Various phenomena can be criticised, but definitely it was not an uninteresting or fossilized period. There were many instances of fanaticism, the crusaded were extremely brutal but the causes of it lay deep in human nature as the Second World War and Stalinism demonstrated.

In the 13th century Europe reached another peak in her history. However, in the 14th c. the Middle Ages exhausted its potential (in Western Europe, because Central Europe - Poland, Bohemia, Hungary - still flourished) and Europe moved smoothly to the Renaissance.

Modern philosophy

The Renaissance

Renaissance was the next stage of European development when new individualistic energy burst out after the fall of the centralized Middle Ages. The Church lost it political power, Christianity was still important, although the search for spirituality was was not confined to it. The Italian humanists returned to the original Plato and Neo-Platonism. The main feature of the humanist movement was rising individualism. The idea expressed by Pico della Mirandola's in his *Oration on the Dignity of Man* (1486) - humans have a unique opportunity of choosing their own destiny. After almost 500 years the same ideas were repeated by Martin Heidegger and Jean-Paul Sartre. Humans are not endowed with a definite nature. The essence of humans is that they create themselves in the process of being.

The Renaissance was born in Florence around 1400, in the 15th c. it covered the whole Italy and in the 16th c. the whole of Europe. It came to England late and lasted until the early seventeenth century (Elizabeth I, Shakespeare) but never reached Russia. The Black Death contributed immensely to the Italian Renaissance killing around half of the population of Florence and making the other half twice as rich as before.

Another very important reason was renewed diplomatic contacts with the declining Byzantium endangered by the rising Turkish Ottoman Empire. Byzantine envoys visited Europe begging Popes for help. The Greek language was unknown in the Medieval Europe (Aristotle was translated from Arabic into Latin, Dante knew the Roman Virgil but not the Greek Homer), but was spoken in Byzantium and its intellectuals taught it to the Renaissance humanists. Even the Eastern Roman emperor visited Italy. In 1439-1445 a Council was held in Ferrara and Florence. Unfortunately religious obstinacy and fanaticism was to strong to allow an agreement between Eastern and Western Christianity. As a result in 1453 the Eastern Roman Empire was destroyed by the Ottomans. One century of negotiations enabled the transmission of the Greek culture to the West. Without it the Italian Renaissance would not have flourished.

Italy produced perhaps the most colourful culture of Europe. However, countries from the North were continuously destroying it. Already towards the end of the 15th century France began the Italian wars devastating the country. Later also the Habsburg Spain invaded Italy. It was Italy that invented opera (Florence, 1600). When England

was becoming rich in the 18th century young men from well-off families used to spent at least a few months visiting Italy (the so called Grand Tour).

In 1400, in Florence a competition for the door of the Baptistery was announced, which began a renaissance in the arts. The Medici bankers gradually dominated the city (the main figures: Lorenzo the Magnificent, Cosimo the Great), and then the renaissance flourished in many principalities of Italy.

In the 15 c. the Popes returned from Avignon to the neglected Rome and undertook the reconstruction of the cities in the Renaissance style (and later Baroque). The main patrons were Popes Julius II, Leo X (up to 1521 - during his pontificate Luther broke with Catholicism in 1517), Clement VII (up to 1534 - during his pontificate Henry VIII established the Church of England in 1533). The greatest achievement was the new St Peter Basilica (1450-1590), while the greatest artists were Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael Santi, and architects Bramante and Bernini.

The Renaissance brought the diminishing authority of the Church, the change of interests, the change in attitude (worldly activity). In was manifested by:

* the focus on earthly Man (humanism, the motto: "nothing human is alien to me");

* individualism (as represented e.g. by great proud artists like Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael);

* the interest in ancient culture (also in the original Plato);

* the appreciation of beauty (the whole renaissance civilisation might be treated as an attempt to create a beautiful work of art, as stressed by Jacob Burckhardt in hi famous *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860) ;

* Neo-Platonic spirituality, the search for eternal beauty (represented in e.g. Botticelli's paintings);

* the desire for worldly pleasures - in Italy, divided into numerous small principalities, princely mansions set new standards, courtiers cared about good manners and were surrounded by the arts. The courts developed a new morality: while the Middle Ages valued asceticism, humility, prayer and struggle in defence of the faith, Renaissance princes, who were often selfish, cruel, and put themselves above the law, sought fame, power and earthly pleasures. The Renaissance popes (esp. the two from the Medici family – Leo X and Clement VII were corrupted and indulgent);

* the rise of science: Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, and later Newton

* geographical discoveries (first Portugal began searching new route to Orient around Africa, then Columbus reached America in 1492 and Spain began conquering the New World) – Europe began colonization of the world;

* alchemy: Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa, Paracelsus, John Dee (16th c.) On the surface they aimed at creating the philosopher's stone (to transmute common metals into gold) and an elixir of life for preserving youth. More deeply they believe in a natural and symbolic unity of humanity with the cosmos and tried to navigate in it without help of God. Their aim differed from the aims of science, which is interested only in controlling the empirical and basically visible world. They perceived the world as spiritually complex and as modern hacker wanted to acquire secrets codes in the Middle Ages reserved for the Creator of the whole system. Alchemy understood as spiritual search for personal transmutation, purification, perfection and a religious regeneration of the human soul is an esoteric practice, connected with Hermes Trismegistus, an ancient (perhaps legendary) author of the *Corpus Hermeticum* (hence the word "hermetic"). Having in mind enormous popularity of the New Age movement in America, alchemy must have responded to some important human needs. Faust, a legendary scholar depicted among others in by Christopher Marlow (1588) and Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1773 and 1832). Goethe's Faust, seen from the Enlightenment perspective, avoided hell because of his "unending striving" and for many has become a symbol of Western culture - sinful, dramatic, creative and preoccupied with unattainable ideals.

* the dissolution of the united Europe and the rise of national states which until 1945 constantly waged wars with each other;

* new political thinking based on realistic observation rather than ideology - Machiavelli;

* plans to create an ideal state - utopias (after the name of the work of Thomas More);

* Reformation - splendour surrounding the Church in Rome led to the outbreak of the Reformation (1517), which in fact was another in the long series of anti-Roman heresies, this time crowned with success. It broke the monopoly of the Church in Rome, which after a while of confusion responded with the Counter-Reformation (the Council in Trent in 1545-1563, the establishment of the Jesuits). The dispute was settled by a number of bloody wars in the 17th c.

The relevant date was the year 1492, when Columbus discovered America. In the years 1405-1433 the Chinese admiral Zheng He flowed over the Indian Ocean with a fleet bigger than all the fleets of Europe put together. Luckily, he did not discover Europe, and the next emperor of China ordered the fleet to be burnt and chose isolationism. After the expedition of Columbus Portugal and Spain colonized South America, robbing their Indian cultures (of the Aztecs, the Mayas, the Incas) and spreading European germs which destroyed them (as well as bringing syphilis from America to Europe). This began the era of European dominance in the world which lasted until the first half of the 20th c.

In the same year the rulers of Spain Ferdinand and Isabella expelled the last followers of Islam from Spain, as well as Jews, and made Spain a bastion of radical counter-Reformation Catholicism (the famous Spanish Inquisition was established in 1480).

England first ended the Hundred Years War in 1453, then the Wars of the Roses (Lancasters and Yorks) in 1485. Consequently England began losing interest in Continental Europe (which was precipitated by Henry VIII's secession from Rome and establishing the independent Church of England in 1534) and slowly turned to building an overseas empire. Literature, music and theatre (often used for propaganda purposes) were more important in England than visual arts and some scholars (e.g. C. S. Lewis) doubt whether the Renaissance in England really existed (since the period in questions has neither specific characteristics nor is connected with equivalent periods in Italy). It is another sing that England would develop to a large extent interdependently from Continental Europe.

Why did Europe become an international power? Niall Ferguson[37] listed the following reasons (all of them seem to a certain extent controversial and will be commented on later):

1. <u>Competition.</u> Europe itself was politically fragmented and within each monarchy or republic there were multiple competing corporate entities. China closed itself after 1500 and stagnated, while Europe through competition between nations and companies achieved the highest possible level of development.

2. <u>The Scientific Revolution.</u> All the major seventeenth-century breakthroughs in mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry and biology happened in Western Europe. Islam (Turkey) rejected scientific development at latest at the time of the Battle of Vienna (1683), which stopped its development.

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[37] Niall Ferguson, *Civilisation: The West and the Rest*, The Penguin Press 2011.

3. <u>The rule of law and representative government.</u> An optimal system of social and political order emerged in the English-speaking world, based on private property rights and the representation of property-owners in elected legislatures. Ferguson contrasts the history of South and North America. Rich South America was conquered by Spanish and Portuguese armies which stole its gold and silver and introduced an aristocratic centralised system of the Catholic Counter-Reformation, preserved after the Bolivar's independence revolution in the early 19th c. Barren and pour North America was inhabited largely by British impoverished home servants who found land and freedom there, and exhibited the protestant incentive to work hard and rely on themselves. The result is visible and eloquent. (However, in *Empire*[38] Ferguson admits that in South America colonists married local women and dissolved their original culture, while in North America colonists brought wives with them and stayed as far as possible from the non-white and the non-puritans. This might also have been an important factor.)

4. <u>Modern medicine.</u> Nearly all the major nineteenth- and twentieth-century breakthroughs in healthcare, including the control of tropical diseases, were made by Western Europeans and North Americans. It made colonization of Africa possible.

5. <u>The consumer society.</u> The Industrial Revolution took place where there were both a supply of productivity-enhancing technologies and a demand for more, better and cheaper goods, beginning with cotton garments. Consumerism adjusted industrial production to real needs of the people, kept economies growing and prevented exploitation (the poor do not buy enough of industrial goods).

6. <u>The work ethic.</u> Westerners were the first people in the world to combine more extensive and intensive labour with higher saving rates, permitting sustained capital accumulation. Ferguson laments over the decline of religions in Europe and contrasts it with high (although perhaps superficial and governed by economic reasons) popularity of religion in the U.S.

Yuval Harari adds that without certain myths, fictional narrations with which a community organises and interprets its world domination of Europe would be impossible.[39] Even between 1500 and 1850 when the advantage of Europe over China or the Islamic world was not obvious Europe was building its progress on different foundations: Europe built capitalism and science. The ability to do so required a special mental attitude lacking elsewhere. Science, capitalism and Western imperialism did not

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[38] Niall Ferguson, *Empire* Empire*: How Britain Made the Modern World.* London, Allen Lane 2003.
[39] Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (2011)*,* Vintage London 2015. Chapter 15. The Marriage of Science and Empire.

aim at re-constructing divine order on earth. Their essence was to conquer the unknown and never be satisfied with what was already possessed or known.

The Renaissance introduced a division in Europe between capitalist West and agricultural East. The West saw the development of the middle class, free movement of labour and ultimately - capitalism. In the East (Prussia, Austria, Poland, Russia), which specialized in agricultural production, serfdom was reintroduced, urban development stopped, the position of nobility and aristocracy strengthened. It had a definite charm, favoured the development of high culture, beautiful architecture, art and music, but in the face of international competition it made this part of Europe underdeveloped.

The Renaissance did not bring a breakthrough in music. In the 16th c. the old polyphonic style continued (Thomas Tallis and his 40-voice motet *Spem in alium*). The leading composer of the Counter-Reformation era in the Papal Rome was Giovanni Palestrina - *Missa Papae Marcelli*. Allegri's *Miserere* written deep in the seventeenth century was in the Renaissance spirit, although filled with the anxiety of the era of religious wars.

The Renaissance is often presented as a period when Europe began emerging from the dark and superstitious Middle Ages towards civilisation. I seriously doubt this one sided assessment. It is equally true that after 1492 Europe began the road to self-destruction which culminated in 1914-1945. Europe has always been inhabited by warlike, brutal and aggressive yet creative people. During the Middle Ages the Catholic Church achieved a miracle - it pacified them to a large degree (partly exporting aggression outside Europe during the crusades, which was not fair towards non-European people, but at least it saved Europe from continuous wars between aristocrats.) The Church was a unique institution built on Platonic inspirations. Clergy were recruited from all strata of society, trained, promoted on the basis of merits, and usually free from families, which allowed them to concentrate on spiritual ideals and political activity not hampered by family particularism. (Plato thought that people having families cared more for them than for the state, so only workers should be allowed to have them.) During the high Middle Ages the Church tried to discipline kings and aristocrats, dominate them using education and not physical power, which produced peaceful life and cultural development reaching its peak in the early 14th c. (I do not want to stress religion because the Church can be easily regarded as primarily a political institution, whose aim was to organize the life of Europe.)

Then the Black Death and political ambition of the kings of France who enslaved Popes in Avignon undermined the authority of Papacy. During the Italian Renaissance

the leading role was played by princes who without the coercive patronage of the Church immediately turned selfish, brutal and greedy. Outside Italy (in Spain, France, Britain) kings adopted the same pattern - they forgot about Europe and spiritual ideals, engaged in brutal wars to establish and enlarge their kingdoms, to satisfy their personal needs. While priest were often highly educated, kings and aristocrats were often not so. They were descendants of warriors, not intellectuals or visionaries. Beautiful architecture, music, fine art great dynasties left us were mainly sponsored and collected by them, while only a few had real taste for it. France, which defeated England in the Hundred Years' War (1337 to 1453), the began aspiring to the position of the most important state France in Continental Europe.

After the Renaissance Europe was dominated by families and dynasties. Kings and princes were not like Popes - they had families and they cared for them. Establishing a dynasty was more important to a king than making his country flourish. Having a male heir was an obsession of every king. The rule that the son of a king becomes a king was disastrous for Europe since many of those sons were not fit for ruling. Very often children of outstanding people are disappointing. If one king was particularly bright he usually left his powerful kingdom to someone who would spoil it. Louis XIV was charismatic, but Louis XV and Louis XVI were weak. In 1700 Spain collapsed when the last Spanish Habsburg, Charles II, physically and mentally degenerated, could neither rule nor have children.

Renaissance changes the role of the Church - it was no longer in a position to dominate kings. It was kings who used church for their dynastic plans. The infamous Spanish inquisition was invented by kings to secure their political position, not by the Church in Rome. In time the Church had less and less to say in Europe. To survive it formed morally dubious alliances first with kings and aristocrats, then with capitalists and nationalists, which in fact discredited it.

In the 16th c. Europe was Catholic and most priests honestly performed their duties, although the top official were too much authoritarian and unwilling to discuss any reforms. The Church had an institutional structure of which European Union now dreams. The key to its success was, in my opinion, that it was founded on high culture and common beliefs (which may be called ideology) and not on consumerism and economic ties. There was little corruption or nepotism outside the city of Rome. And there was no need for Reformation. It was the individual ambition of people like Luther or Calvin and local princes who supported them which destroyed the unity of Europe, caused disastrous wars and unnecessary bloodshed. Most of the political life in Europe

from 1492 to 1945 was one great shame. For instance throughout all this period wars were regarded as natural way of solving international problems or enlarging states (ruled by kings or parliaments). It is not impossible (although I do not endorse this claim) that if the Church had not lost control over Europe after the Renaissance, the whole Europe would have become as beautiful as St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, and not covered with workhouses and death camps. Malta, where joyful Medieval Catholic tradition is retained, may serve as an example.

Life in Europe between the the Renaissance and the 20th century World Wars was dominated by strong individuals, not by collective bodies - and perhaps precisely because of that it was so colourful and creative. Individuals with strong desires dominated the whole continent and imposed them on its peoples. They competed and it seems that aggression and creativity were equally inspired by this competition. (Nevertheless it is easy to imagine aggression without creativity and beauty. Europe combined them in a unique way.) Europe was filled with passion and emerged as beautiful and irresponsible.

Political Thought of the Renaissance

In the Renaissance political thought was polarized between practical and cynical vision of Machiavelli, and idealistic Thomas More, though it is possible that both works contained elements of satire. One exaggerated the brutality of the European life, the other contrasted it with noble ideals.

Nicolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) was he was for many years an official in the Florentine Republic. Sent to prison after the change of the rulers, he decided to describe methods of doing politics. With his work *The Prince* (an ideal prince was modelled after Cesare Borgia but his description could apply as well to Lodovico Sforza, Francis I of France or Henry VIII of England) he began modern reflection on politics (while also reflecting a deplorable political state of the Renaissance Europe, in which greedy princes waged brutal war against one another). He broke with the Middle Ages when politics was described from a moralist point of view. In his opinion if the welfare of the state is to be achieved, immoral means are not only justified but even necessary. Citizens must be manipulated by the ruler, otherwise chaos will prevail. He illustrated his claim with numerous examples which he knew from his life. Machiavelli perfectly well expressed a new attitude to politics which permeated European life from the Renaissance to the 20th century in which the national interest (fr. *raison d'État,* reason

of State) is the main goal of action. It is not uprising that the Church lamented over it and included *The Prince* in the index of prohibited books.

Criticism and comments

The ruler who manipulates the whole society and is out of any control can quickly begin to strive only for his own good or, what may be even worse, follow his own fanaticism. However, when a ruler is controlled by a larger and responsible elite, then the danger of destabilising social life is greatly reduced.

Sir Thomas More (1478–1535) was an English philosopher and statesman who opposed the King's Henry VIII first divorce and consequently was executed by him. More's controversial work, *Utopia* (1516), describes an ideal city. It contrasts the contentious social life of European states with the perfectly orderly, reasonable social arrangements in Utopia, where private property does not exist, men and women are educated alike, and there is almost complete religious toleration.

Criticism and comments

If More's Utopia was to be taken seriously, it would encourage the implementation of artificially designed social orders, which most probably would not work at all because their authors would not be able to predict most to possible problems. A new social order must always evolve slowly from an existing previous order. The most tragic example of introducing an artificially designed social order was real communism in the Soviet bloc. No order can be perfect or final because humans are destined to experiment and search new solutions endlessly (as stressed in the liberal conception of the state, e.g. in Karl Popper's *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, 1945, or Robert Nozick's *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, 1974)

Further reading

Quentin Skinner, *A Very Short Introduction to Machiavelli*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Isaiah Berlin's classic essay 'The Originality of Machiavelli' [in] Isaiah Berlin, ed. Henry Hardy *The Proper Study of humankind*. London: Pimlico, 1998.

Nigel Warburton, Derek Matravers and Jon Pike (eds), *Reading Political Philosophy: Machiavelli to Mill*. London: Routledge, 2001.

Sebastian de Grazia, *Machiavelli in Hell*. London: Macmillan, 1996.

Reformation, Protestantism, the Counter-Reformation.

The discussion was centred on theological issues, but in the background was a dispute about political power. It is a stereotype that disgusted with corruption of the clergy and indulgences Martin Luther (1483-1546) refused to obey Rome (1517). In fact the motivation behind the whole process was more complicated. Luther at first wanted only to discuss the problem of indulgences (more precisely - why money collected in Germany was sent to Rome for the new basilica). Then the situation developed into an open hostility, especially when Zwingli in Zurich and Calvin in Geneva (in fact not inspired by Luther and even disagreeing with him on many issues) came up with their ideas. Protestantism did not want to civilise Christianity. Quite the opposite. Christianity began as an other-worldly religion concentrated on the afterlife. Roman Emperors (especially in Byzantium) and Roman Popes slowly focused on this world. In Italy Christianity acquired warm colouring which beautified earthly existence, as it was exemplified by Thomas Aquinas' works. During the Renaissance Christianity in Rome made earthly life full of beauty. Heretics who opposed this process saw life on earth only as full of suffering, filled with the hope for salvation. That is why they demanded that the teaching of Jesus was strictly followed. In Florence twenty years before Luther a monk, Girolamo Savonarola, gained popularity ordering that works of art, masterpieces of the Renaissance, should be destroyed as vanity. Although unlike Luther, he also stressed the need for Christian love. He was excommunicated by the Pope and burned at the stake by the municipal authorities of Florence. For similar reasons early Protestantism could not accept the Church ceasing to be ascetic. It is true that Popes used different techniques to collect more money, e.g. selling indulgences, but the purpose of this was to erect magnificent churches (first of all the new St Peter's Basilica) to lift human spirits. The problem was that Popes were too concentrated on Italy, they behaved like Italian Renaissance princes concerned with their principalities.

On the other hand Protestantism represented nationalistic desires of local communities which did not want to obey Rome. Europe lost its unity.

Luther translated the Bible from Latin so that everyone could read it, which was previously the privileged of the few and in turn gave the Catholic Church freedom in reinterpreting it. Was it wrong? The Bible is a literary text written over centuries mainly by Jews. The Old Testament contains the Ten Commandments, more than six hundred rules of the traditional Jewish law and the inspired poetry of the Psalms. The New Testament expresses the Messianic attitudes of the early Christians, that is asceticism, rejection of the world, longing for death and salvation as the main aim of life. Since the 4th century Europe was being constructed by the Catholic Church which reinterpreted the content of the Bible and combined it with the political tradition of ancient Rome and with Greek philosophy. When Luther demanded that the Bible should be the only foundation of Christianity, he rejected most of the tradition of European Catholic Christianity. Luther seemed not to have understood that running and integrating Europe required much more than one book written more than a thousand years ago.

Certainly the main question is whether the Catholic Church was the right institution to exert influence on Europe. In Germany Karlheinz Deschner in his *Criminal History of Christianity* (*Kriminalgeschichte des Christentums*, 10 volumes, 1986-2013) presents the Catholic Church as an oppressive institution. However, if we take into account that the Church was a political institution and compare its activity with other political agents in Europe, a brutal and warlike continent, it does not appear exceedingly oppressive. Major ethnic groups in Europe - the Celts, Norsemen/Vikings, Magyars, Slavonic and Germanic tribes - were fairly primitive and barbarous when Roman empire collapsed in the West. The Catholic Church used knowledge and manipulation when others used brutal force. It forged documents, fabricated relics, threatened with hell. But what was the alternative? The rule of local leaders who would have worshipped gods from primitive mythologies, waged constant wars, plundered and then spent time on pleasures. The Catholic Church pacified Europe, absorbed and developed Greek philosophical heritage, fostered intellectual and spiritual interests, developed arts and music. Recently a leading BBC broadcaster, Simon Shama, presented a TV documentary series about the kings of England,[40] who mainly appeared to be brutal ruffians, especially the Plantagenets. Popes measured against similar standards do not look exceptionally evil. The criminal history of Christianity is part of the vast criminal history of Europe. Yet certainly Islam created a better framework for

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[40]   Simon Schama, *A History of Britain*, 2002.

its people, was tolerant, cherished knowledge and arts, established universities (which later influenced European universities). Obviously a religion designed by one person, Muhammed, for his contemporaries, better fitted their needs. Catholicism, the religion of the Catholic Church, was like Europe itself, a tormented continent of creative yet aggressive, passionate and obstinate individualists.

Luther argued that the most important was faith (*sola fide*), while good deeds were irrelevant for salvation. Calvin had a significant influence on the development of Protestantism (churches in Switzerland, German-speaking countries, and Britain). Protestantism rejected the mediating role of the church, recognizing that man alone talks with a distant and incomprehensible God. Man was directed not by the Church but by his conscience – therefore conscience had to be carefully shaped in childhood! Individual confession was rejected and individual reading of the Bible recommended. The idea of predestination was renewed - man is destined to salvation at birth. The difference between Luther and Calvin was that while Luther idealistically believed that unrestricted individualism would direct everyone straight to God (the only obstacle was the corrupt Catholic Church), Calvin rejected individualism introducing carefully planned religious dictatorship (in Geneva it took shape of religious terror) to supervise the conduct of believers, harsher than the Catholic Church had ever applied.

The Reformation succeeded because it was supported by German and English princes and kings who found it a good excuse to become independent from Rome. (Lutheranism was supported mainly by princes seeking political independence, Calvinism appeals to different social groups from the rising urban bourgeoisie or the nobility, the landed gentry and magnates) Catholic priests even living at local courts were (at least partly) loyal to Popes in Rome. King Henry VIII of England not only established Anglicanism but immediately confiscated the wealth of monasteries. Although the arguments of the Reformation were theological, the real forces behind it were political or economic.

However, the main point was that after the Renaissance religion could no longer organize social life in Europe (although for some time Puritanism, the radical wing of Calvinism was important in the U.S.). When technological and scientific progress intensified, no religion was able to evolve to accompany it. Luther wanted to revive religious feelings, which resulted in bloody religious wars in the next century, but later Protestants lost their faith faster than Catholics. Countries like Scandinavia, Britain, the Netherlands are now mostly atheistic. Southern Europe responded with Counter-Reformation which, although colourful, made Catholicism more centralized, fanatical

and hostile to cultural changes. It is possible that if the Reformation had not succeeded the development of Europe would have been more harmonious and less dramatic. The main difficulty was that Catholicism was a very proud religion and very slow to change. This is a major problem for all great religions - when the world changes, they cannot adjust to it.

The Reformation precipitated the division of Europe into national states, the competition between which finally almost destroyed Europe during the World Wars of the 20th centuries. Now Europe has to integrate to survive globalization and an institution which would be a modern equivalent of the medieval Catholic Church is desperately needed.

Reformation and development of capitalism

Calvinists like Augustine despised earthly life, but unlike Augustine, they did not even count on the contact with God - this was only possible after death. Under the influence of Calvin the denomination of Puritanism developed, especially popular among Anglo-Saxon middle class (bourgeoisie, merchants, craftsmen). According to the German sociologist Max Weber (1864-1920) Puritan mentality became the basis of capitalism in the 17th and 18th centuries. Puritans devoted all their time to work, which testified to their intention to achieve salvation. Since earthly life was devoid of any value, they did not feel the need to spend money on consumption, so they could invest. They were absolutely honest because the success achieved in a dishonest way was not a testimony of a received grace. In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (published in 1905) Max Weber set the idea that the development of capitalism was fostered by Puritan mentality. Their attitude was characterizes as inner-worldly asceticism: they worked hard by were not motivated by greed and treated their work as vocation.

Erich Fromm clearly presented this attitude in *Escape from Freedom* (1942). Society in the mature Middle Ages was centralized and well organized, which enabled safe life but did not give chances of autonomy. Gradually, with the increase of wealth, the structure was destroyed by the rulers and citizens of Italy, who first emerged as strong and independent individuals. For other citizens, this meant the destruction of the stable world – they were condemned to freedom. Instability caused anxiety and resulted in the "escape from freedom", helped by the protestant doctrine of Luther and Calvin. According to Fromm its essential elements were: the uncertainty of human fate (all depends on the received grace), solitude (Protestantism deprived people of the support

provided by the Catholic Church, an intermediary between God and man), helplessness (salvation does not depend on human efforts), the feeling of total dependence (on God). It contained a large amount of hostility, which was expressed in the sharp division of people destined for salvation and damnation (the latter deserving contempt). The recommended attitude was resignation from all pleasures (asceticism as a form of auto-aggression and expression of latent hostility) and dedication to work (since success in business was supposed to be proof of grace, which in turn would help reduce uncertainty and anxiety). Fromm noticed that Reformation gave relatively durable character to the lower middle class. It is characterised by: compulsion of work, desire for success, willingness to surrender one's life to some anonymous force, asceticism, and overwhelming sense of duty.

The outstanding commentator of Weber, Reinhard Bendix[41], added some more characteristics of the lower middle class: reluctance towards art, sex, friendship, rejection of the supernatural dimension and symbolism, rejection of confession and funeral rites, contemptuous attitude toward poverty and the poor, distrust in interpersonal relations and reliance on impersonal honesty. Weber explained the likely importance of these values by pointing to the fact that their followers have a deep inner insulation, that in light of pessimism and disillusion they can only rely on themselves and their work, that they reject all sensual pleasures and worldly entertainment, that they do not apply the rule of charity, but condemn the sinner with hatred and contempt as an enemy of God bearing the mark of eternal damnation. As a result, the Puritans practised "worldly asceticism" and devoted their life to work. According to Weber, capitalism enclosed people in a "shell as hard as steel" (German *stahlhartes Gehäuse*, which Talcott Parsons incorrectly translated into English and propagated as "an iron cage").

Puritanism should be firmly distinguished from other Protestant denominations. Protestantism is divided into two currents – Lutheranism and even Calvinism. Puritanism was a radical faction of the latter. It developed mainly in Anglo-Saxon countries, Calvinism in Switzerland, and at one point in Norway, as well as in Prussia governed from Berlin by the Calvinist Hohenzollern dynasty. Lutheranism was less rigorous and more emotional. A denomination within Lutheranism was Pietism, whose outstanding representative was Philipp Jacob Spener, who advocated the path guided by compassion and love of neighbour in everyday life (*Pia Desideria* 1675) in Germany and Scandinavia. His influence, e.g., in the Nordic states - currently atheist - is still

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[41] Reinhard Bendix, *Max Weber:An Intellectual Portrait*, University of California Press 1977, p. 244.

visible. This may explain why the 19th c. Britain and the U.S. were countries of ruthless competition, but Sweden and Denmark have become welfare states.

Weber's thesis, it must be remembered, was subject to criticism, some of which was based on the facts from economic history. Ephraim Fischoff[42] pointed out that capitalism developed against Calvinism, so it could not have been its result. Roland Bainton described capitalism flourishing in the Netherlands before Calvinism[43]. Kurt Samuelsson in his devastating critique of Weber's thesis in 1957 drew attention to the huge gap between the time when Calvinism was formed in Switzerland, and its economic rise[44]. Also, Schumpeter[45] pointed out that capitalism began to develop in the Italian cities at the end of the Middle Ages. Jacques Delacroix[46] determined that the development of Catholic Belgium and the Catholics in Amsterdam was not slower than the development of Protestant countries. The same conclusion follows from the latest research by Cantoni[47], which juxtaposed the development of the Catholic against Protestant German states in the years 1300 to 1900 and found no difference in favour of Protestantism (Cantoni apparently ignored the question of the difference between Protestantism and Puritanism).

Another part of the criticism is based on the history of religious doctrines. In his classic work, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (1926), Richard H. Tawney drew attention to the differences between the original Calvinism and its Puritan version. Calvin in Geneva promoted collective discipline, while Puritanism was individualistic[48]. Bainton suggested that Puritanism was not particularly pro-capitalist, rather it encouraged any kind of activity, treating success as a sign of God's promised salvation[49]. He was echoed by Samuelsson arguing that the pro-capitalist sermons of the Puritan preachers were due to the fact that many Anglo-Saxon men of business entered into the high ranks of the Church. Therefore preachers adjusted their doctrine so as to fit

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[42] Ephraim Fischoff, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism: The History of a Controversy. *Social Research* 1944, Reprinted in: R. W. Green (ed.), *Protestantism and Capitalism: The Weber Thesis and Its Critics,* Boston: D.C. Heath, 1958, p. 113.

[43] Roland Bainton, *The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century,* Boston: Beacon Press, 1952 p. 254.

[44] Kurt Samuelsson, *Religion and Economic Action*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993, p. 102.

[45] Joseph Schumpeter, *History of Economic Analysis*, Oxford University Press 1954.

[46] Jacques Delacroix, *A Critical Empirical Test of the Common Interpretation of the Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1954)*,* Paper presented at meetings of Int. Assoc. Business & Society in Leuven, Belgium.

[47] David Cantoni, The Economic Effects of the Protestant Reformation: Testing the Weber Hypothesis in the German Lands 2009, http: //www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~cantoni/papers.html [downloaded 6.08.2010]

[48] Richard H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1962, s. 226-227

[49] Roland Bainton, *The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, Boston: Beacon Press 1952, s. 252-55.

into the mentality of the capitalists who would anyway strive to gain profits[50]. Puritanism may have combined the Franklinian morality with religion, but did not lead this morality out of religion. Donald Frey[51] notes that although American Puritans, such as William Ames, encouraged economic activity, they tried to tie it with service to God and the common good.

It is questionable not only whether religion supported the spirit of capitalism, but also whether capitalism needed it. Samuelsson points out that hard work and dedication was not a sufficient factor to develop capitalism. A degree of ingenuity was also required to invest capital and organize production[52]. Reducing consumption to an absolute minimum could not last too long. Capitalism at some point satisfied the basic material needs of society and the ever-increasing consumption has become a necessary condition for its further development. In America, as early as 1861 the first department store was opened by otherwise very pious John Wanamaker, which was intended to encourage consumption. He put fixed price printed on the product in order to prevent haggling[53]. Consumerism has become the basis of American capitalism and the way to prevent conflicts between working class and capitalists: workers earned relatively much, but spend their earnings on goods and product from their factories. In a sense, you could even put forward a thesis that the compulsion of consumption is a modern form of asceticism in American capitalism - one consumes not for pleasure, but out of civic duty.

Most of that criticism was taken into account as early as 1967 by the eminent British historian Hugh R. Trevor-Roper[54]. The essence of capitalism was in his opinion the activity of strong individuals who were not anti-Catholic, but fled Catholic countries to avoid paternalistic pressure of the Church during Counter-Reformation. He defines their libertarian and individualistic attitude as Eriasmian (after Erasmus of Rotterdam). By the end of the Middle Ages economic activity developed in Catholic countries - Italian cities, Flanders and the Rhine Valley. However, when Reformation began, the Church (not only in Italy and Spain, but also in the Netherlands occupied by the

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[50] Kurt Samuelsson, *Religion and Economic Action*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1993, s. 27-48.

[51] Donald E. Frey, Individualist Economic Values and Self-Interest: The Problem in the Protestant Ethic, „Journal of Business Ethics”, October 1998.

[52] Kurt Samuelsson, *Religion and Economic Action*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993, s. 83-87.

[53] William Leach, *Land of Desire,* New York: Pantheon 1993.

[54] Hugh R. Trevor-Roper, *The Crisis of the Seventeenth Century: Religion, the Reformation and Social Change* [1967]. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2001. Chapter 1. Religion, the Reformation, and Social Change. http://oll.libertyfund.org/?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php %3Ftitle=719&chapter=77032&layout=html&Itemid=27 [retrieved 26.07.2012]

Spanish Habsburgs) stiffened and became over rigorous, which deterred open minded entrepreneurs who emigrated to Protestant countries where there was greater tolerance and they had better business opportunities. The Calvinist and Anglican states offered even better opportunities than Lutheran ones, where Reformation was a rebellion of the impoverished German states against Catholic authority, but finally entrepreneurs also settled there (as they did in Sweden when it was growing in power).

Trevor-Roper's reconstruction explains why Puritanism was not the driving force of capitalism but rather a haven where the energetic entrepreneurs found refuge, as well as why the Catholics were comparably successful in those areas – not all energetic entrepreneurs changed their religion. In England until the Glorious Revolution in 1688 Catholic kings came in power now and again along with the Protestant ones, which is what caused the Puritan emigration to America (during the periods when England persecuted Catholics).

Weber's thesis found support. C.T. Jonassen[55] showed that while Lutheranism and Catholicism dominated in Norway the economic growth was weak. This only changed when Calvinism arrived in Norway in the 19th c.

Did Puritanism play any role? Capitalism is based on the extensive involvement of the whole society in the industrial production and exchange of goods and services. Production, trade and the investment of capital are three different threads that developed independently and were later combined to form capitalism, later accelerated by creation of large companies. To create such system in Catholic Europe an intelligent reconstruction of attitudes and institutions was needed. It was necessary to persuade masses of people to work hard and discourage consumption to allowed the accumulation of capital later used for investments. It was necessary to prevent fraud. Even though, as evidenced by Trevor-Ropper, the main businesses were Catholic, Puritanism played a huge role in disciplining the masses. Puritanism was in fact little Christian. It emphasized competition and contempt for the poor, but it was a convenient tool that moved religious crowds from the secure Catholic Middle Ages to early capitalism. Certainly, in the process the ideals of Jesus had to be abandoned. Puritanism motivated to work, honesty and thrift, and these were the virtues of the new regime. In short, Puritanism helped turn feudal rural states into industrial labour camps. Did greed play important role in it? Perhaps Weber was partly right. In the 17th and early 18th century capitalism did not attract greedy entrepreneurs. In Europe merchants (e.g. the

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[55] Jonassen Christen, 'The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism in Norway,' "American Sociological Review" Dec. 1947.

Dutch and British East India Companies) chased high profits. In America it was southern plantations that served greedy consumption of their owners (although those who arrived first to Virginia in 1618 were also Puritains), while northern Puritans lived according to strict religious work ethics. In the 19th century greed of capitalists was easily seen, which inspired Marx to right *the Communist Manifesto*. Yet perhaps there is difference between capitalism, which went throught the phase of Puritan work ethics, and capitalism without that phase. The former is more stable, less prone to social tensions and revolutions. Thus Weber traced back at least one essential interesting of successful capitalism.

Further reading

Sung Ho Kim, "Max Weber", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2012/entries/weber/>.

The Rise of Science: Copernicus, Bruno and Galileo

In 1543 Copernicus published his observation and formulated the solar model of the Universe which deprived humans of their privileged position – they were not the centre of the Universe any more. Influenced by the ideas of Copernicus, Giordano Bruno (1548-1600) believed that the Universe did not have a central location, and planets such as Earth, inhabited by intelligent beings, could be many. Man was creative not passive, and God was in everything (pantheism). The date of his *auto-da-fé* at the hands of the Roman inquisition (1600) marks the symbolic end of the Renaissance.

Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) contributed to the development of modern physics and astronomy (the study through the telescope), which conflicted him with Aristotelianism and the Church. Aristotle taught that heavenly bodies were perfect spheres. When Galileo challenged this theory, revealing craters on the Moon, Aristotelians responded that they were filled with invisible substance that restored its roundness. According to the methodology of the 20th century scholar Karl Popper this was a classic example of an illegitimate procedure to save the theory by *ad hoc* unfalsifiable (impossible to undermine) additional hypotheses.

However, the history of Copernicanism provides another valuable observation. Ptolemy's theory, though false, agreed well with the observations as it was supplemented by a number of epicycles (in the Ptolemaic system, the planets are assumed to move in a small circle called an epicycle, which in turn moves along a larger circle called a deferent.). However, the theory of Copernicus for a hundred years after its formulation poorly agreed with the observations, since he assumed that the

orbits were circular (not elliptical as Kepler discovered later), and the whole Universe was much smaller than in reality. Only intuition of other researchers who supported Copernicus rescued the theory from rejection, which initially seemed justified. In fact when the Church forbade Galileo to propagate the theory (1633) it was partly justified – the theory was both revolutionary and seemingly incorrect[56].

Further reading

Sheila Rabin, "Nicolaus Copernicus", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2010 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2010/entries/copernicus/>.

Peter Machamer, "Galileo Galilei", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2014/entries/galileo/>.

Daniel A. Di Liscia, "Johannes Kepler", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/kepler/>.

Bacon

Francis Bacon (1561-1626) was the first theorist of the modern scientific method, according to which the purpose of knowledge is the domination of nature. The knowledge created so far was worthless to Bacon because it was either the result of idle speculation (made by "spiders"), or the mindless accumulation of individual observations (made by "ants"). The correct method (of "bees") begins by observing and through gradual generalization leads to general statements (Bacon called this the inductive method). He developed a method for comparing the circumstances, so as to discover the causes of phenomena (If X is always accompanied by the phenomenon Y, and if there is no X, there is also no Y, and if Y increases with the intensification X, then X is the cause of Y.).

If we wish to discover the form of heat, we must identify in what cases heat is present (e.g., the rays of the sun, and the sparks of a flint), cases in which it is absent (e.g., the rays of the moon and the stars), and cases in which it is present in different degrees (e.g., in animals at different times and in different conditions). When we compare the results we shall discover what is always present when heat is present, what is always absent when it is absent, and what varies in proportion to its presence.

Soon a critique disclosed the common sense roots of this method: "I ate minced pies on Monday and Wednesday, and I was kept awake by indigestion all night. I did not eat any on Tuesday and Friday, and I was quite well. I ate very few of them on

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[56] Paul Feyerabend *Againat Method*. Verso 1975; Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger *Turning point for Europe? The Church in the Modern World—Assessment and Forecast.* San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press. 1994.

Sunday, and was very slightly indisposed in the evening. But on Christmas-day I ate a lot of them and was very ill. The cause of my indigestion cannot have been the brandy which I took with them. For I have drunk brandy daily for years."[57]

Causal relation should be distinguished from a conditional relation. One can say:

Every human H is a mammal M. (Aristotelian logic)

If he is human, he is a mammal. (Propositional calculus)

In both cases being human is a sufficient condition for being a mammal, while being a mammal is a necessary condition for being human.

Conditions refer to logical relation.
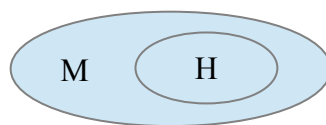
Being a member of a subset (e.g. a human) is sufficient for being a member of a superset. In simpler words: A sufficient condition - It is enough to be H in order to be M. A necessary condition - one must be M to be H.

Some lightning cause thunders (sound), but not all. So every thunder follows a lightening or if there is a thunder there is a thunder there must have been a lightning (but not vice versa). The cases where there is a thunder belong to a subset of cases when there is a lightening.
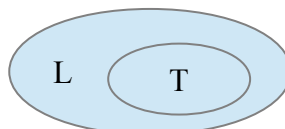
But certainly it is a lightening that is the cause of a thunder. A cause must be earlier than the effect. "John L. Mackie[58] argues that usual talk of "cause", in fact refers

[57] Thomas Babington, Lord Macaulay, 'The Life and Writings of Francis Bacon: Lord Chancellor of England' The
      Edinburgh Review (1837) 14' p. 88 https://books.google.pl/books?id=FogvAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=pl&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false [retrieved 2.09.2014]
[58] John L. Mackie, *The Cement of the Universe: A study in Causation.* Clarendon Press, Oxford,

to INUS conditions (insufficient but non-redundant parts of a condition which is itself unnecessary but sufficient for the occurrence of the effect). For example, a short circuit as a cause for a house burning down. Consider the collection of events: the short circuit, the proximity of flammable material, and the absence of firefighters. Together these are unnecessary but sufficient to the house's burning down (since many other collections of events certainly could have led to the house burning down, for example shooting the house with a flamethrower in the presence of oxygen etc. etc.). Within this collection, the short circuit is an insufficient (since the short circuit by itself would not have caused the fire, but the fire would not have happened without it, everything else being equal) but non-redundant part of a condition which is itself unnecessary (since something else could have also caused the house to burn down) but sufficient for the occurrence of the effect. So, the short circuit is an INUS condition for the occurrence of the house burning down."[59]

Further reading

Jürgen Klein, "Francis Bacon", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2012/entries/francis-bacon/>.

Methods for knowledge building.

Let us summarise the discussion on the methods for knowledge building.

* Deduction. It consists in deriving conclusions from premises; if a conclusion follows from the premises and the premises are true, the conclusion is true as well. Deduction allows the justification of mathematical theorems by tracing their roots to axioms (e.g., the Theorem of Pythagoras). Problems: It is hardly possible to justify general laws based on empirical evidence (for example to support the claim of Archimedes, one would need to have more general statements from which it would appear).

Deduction is a good way to refute claims – it is enough to show that they contain contradictions. A theory that contains contradiction cannot be accepted, it must be rejected or improved (to eliminate the contradiction).

* Observation and experiment. One can see only some properties of objects. If a theorem involves unobservable qualities (e.g., atoms) it cannot be proved by observation. In addition, scientific laws are general statements ("A body immersed in a

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England, 1988.
[59] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Causality; retrieved 28.07.2013

fluid ...") and one cannot observe all possible objects in question. The statement "Everybody is made up of atoms" contains both kinds of difficulties.

Initially only events that occurred spontaneously were observed, after that F. Bacon run experiments that involved artificially created circumstances.

* Simple induction. It is based on the assumption that the observed relationships will be repeated in a similar manner in the future. If many white swans have been seen and none of different colour the statement "Every swan is white" is accepted. The problem is to determine how reliable are such claims (for example, when black swans were discovered in Australia, the previously accepted claim about all swans being white turned out to be false). This is the problem of induction indicated by Hume in the 18th c.

* Complex induction. Proposed by F. Bacon and in the 19th c., developed by JS Mill. To detect the cause of the phenomenon X, one looks for such a factor Y, which always precedes X, never occurs when X is not present, and changes its intensity in proportion to X.

The difficulties of this method are: (1) the examined phenomenon X may have several independent reasons, the factor Y with the abovementioned properties does not exist at all, and (2) one cannot identify the right cause, because it is deeply hidden or related to another. Someone discovered that when they drinks whiskey, or gin, or Martini with water, they always get drunk, and the only common factor which they could see was water. Someone else noticed that the tea does not get sweet unless it is stirred with a spoon and took it for the cause. Clouds always precede rain, but they are not the cause. It only rains when the conditions in the air are right for condensation of water, the clouds are the first result, the rain is the next.

Using the complex induction requires formulation of a number of hypotheses, showing various potential factors that could be causing the phenomenon in question, and then making a rational choice and selecting the best hypothesis. The search for the causes of complex phenomena can be very tedious and its result can never be certain.

Questions: Why was the 14th c. not a happy one? What was the role of Lombard cities (and especially the Medici family) in the rise of Renaissance? What were the main cultural changes of the Renaissance (in attitudes, ways of life, interests, activities)? Why was the 1492 important? How did Machiavelli destroy the ideal of a Christian kingdom in his *Prince* and why was it dangerous? How was this ideal transformed in More's *Utopia*? How did the Protestant Reformation begin and how

successful was it? Why did Fromm interpret Reformation as an escape from freedom? How did Calvinism influence capitalism according to Max Weber, Erich Fromm and Trevor Ropper? Who were the first main scientists? What use was made of the Copernican theory by Bruno and how did it end for him? What ideals of knowledge were formulated by Francis Bacon? How the inductive method differ from the deductive one?

Further reading

Chapter RENAISSANCE PHILOSOPHY (esp. The Renaissance; Machiavelli; More's Utopia; The Reformation; Bruno and Galileo; Francis Bacon) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy.* Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

The Age of Baroque - the 17th and 18th c. - and continental rationalism

Although "baroque" is a term referring to a style in art and music it captures the essence of what was happening in Europe at that time and which can be characterised by existential tensions, metaphysical experiences, grandeur and the cult of mathematics.

In the 16th and early 17th century continental Europe was dominated by the Habsburg family, who reigned in Vienna for over 600 years and was holding the office of the Emperor of Europe. In the Renaissance they reached the peak of their power. They ruled in half of Europe and from Spain colonized South America. In the seventeenth century they began the devastating Thirty Years War and partly through cunning manipulations of France lost this position. Now it is somehow forgotten, so it seems fair to list but a few its most important members.

Rudolph I of Germany became the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire in 1273 and the Ruler of Austria in 1276.

Maximilian I (Emperor 1508–1519) began the Habsburgs' expansion.

Under Charles V (Emperor 1519–1556, associated more with Spain than with Austria), the "World Emperor" of an "empire on which the sun never set" the Habsburg dynasty achieved, for the first and only time in their history, the position of a true world power.

In 1521 the dynasty split into the junior branch of the Austrian Habsburgs and the senior branch of the Spanish Habsburgs.

Rudolf II (Emperor 1576–1612) developed Czech Prague.

Ferdinand II (Emperor 1619–1637) began the Thirty Years War against protestants.

Maria Theresa of Austria (Empress 1740–1780) strengthened Austria, also by annexing part of Poland.

Joseph II (Emperor 1765–1790) introduced radical Enlightenment reforms in Austria (they were withdrawn after his death).

The Holy Roma Empire was dissolved by Napoleon, the Habsburgs became Emperors of Austria.

Francis Joseph was the last great Emperor of Austria (1848–1916) and unwisely began the First World War.

In 1918-19 the victors of the war as well the political parties of Austria dissolved the Empire and introduced radical social-democratic reforms. The Habsburgs left Austria.

Europe after the Renaissance plunged into religious wars between Protestants and Catholics. The largest one, the Thirty Years War (1618-1648), ravaged Europe, causing huge losses to the population (up to 50 percent, due mainly to diseases). After that, however, and especially after the final liberation of Europe from the Islamic threat (Jan Sobieski at Vienna in 1683), there had been a remarkable development of Baroque culture, which lasted at least until the mid-eighteenth century. Baroque essentially expressed the spirit of the aristocratic and Catholic Europe. Meanwhile, outside of Europe the development of colonialism was accelerating. Catholic Spain and Portugal invaded South America and introduced a typical aristocratic social organization. However, they failed to spread the spirit of the Gospel. Indians were brutally robbed and exploited, over 90 percent of them died, mostly due to European diseases previously unknown in America. The cultures of the Mayas, the Aztecs, the Incas were destroyed and almost forgotten. Historians like Ferguson compare the development of Spain, Portugal and the South America on the one hand and of England and the North America on the other to show the inferiority of Catholicism to Puritanism. However, one can argue that if Puritanism had not introduced the germ of fierce competition, the Catholic part of the world would not have declined. Catholicism favoured slow but harmonious development. When Napoleon invaded Spain he found there strong resistance on the part of a coherent society based on the Catholic and aristocratic values. Puritanism imposed almost ascetic organization on its adherents. Puritan capitalism has won, but at what expense!

France competed with England in North America, where the Indians had no gold and the colonists had to get down to hard work. The most successful were English Puritans, who from the beginning of the 17th c. would settle in New England giving rise to the northern states, which ultimately led to the creation of the United States. The Dutch and the British began to trade with India (establishing East India companies).

The dark side of colonialism was the slave trade. It is estimated that between the 16th and the 19th centuries at least 12 million Africans were transported across the Atlantic. During the travel that lasted from 3 to 13 weeks, 30 percent of them died. Imperial Austria and Prussia began to compete for dominance in the German-speaking countries. Moscow began the construction of a large empire. Apart from England and the Netherlands (and partly Poland) it was the era of the triumph of the aristocracy and centralized governmental systems, called absolutist. In the 18th c. they developed into the "enlightened absolutisms" which promoted general education and reorganization of social institutions with the aim of strengthening their countries position in the international competition, and also introducing more human values (especially in Austria).

In the 17th and 18th century Europe was divided into there cultural zones. England began the scientific revolution, established Parliamentary democracy and was heading for industrial capitalism; France was absolutist, which coincided with the rejection of baroque by Louis XIV and the introduction of classicism; the rest of Europe was feudal and beautifully baroque. Two great areas of Europe - Italy and Germany - from which the medieval Europe evolved, stayed divided into many small principalities centred around local courts.

In France, Louis XIV (1638-1715) created a model of the absolutist state and built Versailles. France gained supremacy in continental Europe, which lasted till 1815 (and which different French indicatives have endeavoured to restore since). French has become the major international language of Europe, French absolutism was imitated in Austria, Prussia and Russia (although Turkey was even a better model). However, both the methods and the results of the French domination seem dubious. France has usually acted according to the famous quote by de Gaulle during the Second World War: "France has no friends, only interests." France did not play fair. After winning the Hundred Years Wars it engaged in the Italian wars which massacred Italy's beautiful Renaissance. In the 16th century when the whole Catholic Europe was terrified by the Ottoman Turks, Francis I plotted with them against the Habsburg Emperor (in 1543 was rewarded with Niece given to him by the Turks). During the Thirty Years' War the

Catholic France supported Protestants. As a result the unity of Europe was lost, while German speaking countries (both Austria and German principalities) were weakened which was necessary for France to emerge as the main power in Europe. The monarchistic France supported the American Revolution, which drained its financial resources. The political system of Louis XIV was most inefficient. It first suppressed pluralism within France and then degenerated, which lead to the catastrophe of the French Revolution. Later Bonaparte devastated Europe. French culture, although often interesting, bold and dazzling, cannot be regarded as constituting the core of European culture. It is too worldly, expressing the grandeur of an empire and somehow lacks deeper spirituality. Besides, the beauty of Europe lies in her pluralism, which French supremacy distorted. Finally, the world wars of the 20th century can be regarded as the result of German frustration resulting from centuries of French domination.

Poland was still one of the greatest European powers with a democratic system under which a huge class of the noblemen (which amounted to 10 percent of society) led a fairly comfortable and cultivated life in the fully agricultural country. When the neighbouring countries that introduced efficient centralized monarchic systems quickly accumulated military power, Poland fell and lost independence. This, however, illustrates what was the major motivation behind economic and social changes - the desire to become more powerful than others.

In this age in Europe two opposing streams of development were prominent – Reformation, Protestantism in the North and Catholicism, Counter-Reformation in the South. Although both currents were full of dramatic conflicts, the Catholicism showed the grandeur, glamour, splendour, and refined beauty, whereas Protestantism was strict, severe and gloomy. Caravaggio was a leading figure of the Italian baroque (1571 - 1610), and the difference of both trends is emphatically illustrated by the Catholic Rubens (1577 – 1640), full of abundant life, and the Protestant Rembrandt (1606 - 1669), always tensed, dark and in a shadow. In 1648 both the Thirty Years' War and at the same time the Eighty Years' War ended. The latter one brought the Protestant Netherlands independence from the Catholic Spain. Dutch trade exploded within the decade after the peace was reached (although the Dutch East India Company was established in 1602), so the new Dutch Republic was the most prosperous country in Europe, and the leader in European trade, science, and art. The Netherlands became a precursor of the Protestant liberalism and capitalism, religiously tolerant, attracting Jew from Spain and Protestants of different denominations. The Bank of Amsterdam, founded in 1609, was the most important bank in Europe. The power the United

Provinces was reflected in the Dutch Golden Age paintings. While previous ages depicted battles and gods, Dutch painters with their practical realism (and sometimes hidden symbolism) showed successful burgesses and scenes from everyday life (frequent still lives, landscapes, images of nature and portraits – e.g. famous women's portraits by Vermeer). In the next centuries the Protestant camp dominated economically Europe and the entire world, while the Catholic camp was gradually losing its position. Unfortunately, it was held at the expense of the great art and high culture which would never rise to the level of the baroque. Pursuit of the material goods and workaholism were gradually expelling spirituality from Europe.

After 1600 Europe created its best music. In Italy opera was established (Monteverdi, Vivaldi). For the first time instrumental music flourished (Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, *Brandenburg Concertos* by Johann Sebastian Bach, *Water Music and Fireworks Music* by Handel). While religious vocal music of the Middle Ages and Renaissance developed well in Western Europe, new trends came from Italy and spread over Germany, France and England. J. S. Bach was the greatest composer who ever lived. Baroque in music lasted until 1750.

In 1605 and 1615 Cervantes published *Don Quixote*, a novel about the twilight of the world of knights, when only a madman believes in idealistic values.

With his reflections on the just war Grotius initiated discussion on international relations. There was a rapid development of astronomy and physics (Galileo, Newton), accompanied by the cult of mathematical-deductive systems. In philosophy, new trends manifested outside universities dominated by scholastics. Descartes first rejected all tradition, doubted in anything that was not absolutely certain, and then decided to rebuild all knowledge following the model of geometry and using deductive reasoning, which inspired the speculative systems of Spinoza and Leibniz. On the other side of the English Channel, Hobbes, following F. Bacon (but not Descartes), started to treat a human being as a material entity, with natural desires which satisfaction required the creation of morality and political systems. At this point Anglo-Saxon philosophy broke with the tradition of the rational absolute good.

Philosophy

In the the age of Baroque Continental and British philosophy took different paths. Continental rationalism (Descartes, Malebranche, Spinoza and Leibniz) continued the old tradition of deducing knowledge from basic (but arbitrary) principles. British

empiricism (of Locke and Hume, preceded by Bacon and Hobbes) introduced new spirit and as such will be discussed under the Enlightenment.

Rationalists believed that reality, or at least some part of it has necessary existence, and that necessity is something like logical necessity. (Leibniz asked "why is there something rather than nothing at all?" and answered that there is something because there must be something; there cannot be nothing.) Sensory experience became unnecessary, causal connections were viewed as logical connections, deductive methods of reasoning were privileged (geometry and mathematics were ideals), and knowledge rested on innate ideas. And yet rationalist produced metaphysical beauty in their systems (like J.S. Bach in his music), inspired independent thinking and set a framework for viewing the world as a whole and not as a haphazard collection of unrelated objects (as empiricist who also favoured liberal individualism tended to hold). One of the main problem was what kind of beings primarily exist. The substance (gr. ousia) meant individual being for Aristotle. For Descartes it was not a body but an individual mind, for Spinoza the whole Universe was one substance, while for Leibniz many individual monads were placed by God in a pre-established harmonious framework. Their systems are complex and but hardly acceptable to modern readers. They can be studied as systems contained in themselves, unrelated to everyday reality and experience. What is important to us is often hidden between the lines.

Questions: How did the Catholic Church react to Reformation? Which countries converted to Protestantism? Why did the Habsburgs start the Thirty Years War and how did it affect German countries? Reformation in England – wars between the Parliament and the King? Colonization of America, slavery, commerce, East India companies? What were the main cultural trends between 1640 and 1750?

Further reading

Thomas M. Lennon, and Shannon Dea, "Continental Rationalism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/continental-rationalism/>.

Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, Chapter V Renatio. Renaissance and Reformation 1450-1670 (the House of Habsburg, Charles V 524, Sweden 553, Poland-Lithuania 554, Prussia 556, Muscovy 557, the Ottoman Empire 558, the Thirty Years War 563, the rebuilding of Rome 569); Chapter VIII Lumen. Enlightenment and Absolutism 1650-1789 (Absolutism p. 578, Europe's colonies p.580, Western vs. Eastern Europe p. 582, French Absolutism of Louis VIV, Louis XV and Louis XVI p. 614, Spain and Portugal p. 638, the Ottoman Empire and the Siege of Vienna p. 641).

Descartes

Descartes (1594-1650) advocated a break with tradition and the independent investigation of truth through rational argumentation (everyone has enough reason, he said, because no one complains about having too little of it). He presented his groundbreaking ideas in *Discourse on the Method* (in French, 1637) and in the *Meditations on First Philosophy* (in Latin 1641).

Knowledge must be completely certain, because if it is even a little questionable, it is worthless (here Descartes expressed a panic risk aversion). Almost all of the available knowledge had proven to be contaminated with doubt: (1) the senses sometimes are mistaken, (2) everything can be a dream, or (3) even abstract thinking can be clouded by a powerful demon (then 2 + 2 may not seem to be 4). The only certain thing for Descartes was that he doubted, therefore he though, and therefore he existed (Cogito ergo sum - I think therefore I am). Knowledge should be based on deductive reasoning, in the same way as geometry (the axioms must be clear, and the other claims must be derived from them as their logical consequences). Unlike the classical concept of truth, the criterion of truth is *clarity and distinctness*, not a comparison of claims and reality. Knowledge creation is made possible by innate ideas that we find in our minds. It was a seventeenth-century rationalism, referring to the views of Plato and Augustine – knowledge is acquired by reason alone, the senses are unnecessary. (Actually Descartes admitted that practical knowledge is based on the senses, only the most important general principles must be deduced from innate seeds by means of rational argumentation, as he stated in the sixth *Meditation*.)

Descartes was the first to maintain that the existence of the world requires a proof (only the existence of his own mind was certain, beyond doubt). To do so, he first developed a proof of God's existence (it stems from the fact that man has the idea of a perfect being, and as an imperfect being man could not make it on his own). It is impossible for God to deceive us. So if it seems to us that the material world exists, it must exist. The world split into the realm of thought and the realm of extension (of the body) - in fact, Descartes referred again to the views of Plato and Augustine. The man is a combination of mind (thought, understood broadly - as all mental content) and body (what is extensive = occupies space), the rest of the world consists of extensive beings only, which function as machines, mechanisms. (He devoted the whole book *Passions of the Soul* (1649) to defining emotions as subjective perceptions that guide behaviour of the body. Animals do not feel their emotions, and animal spirits are material movements.) He could not explain how the soul communicated with the body.

The actual Descartes' argumentations, although naïve, was an expression of the desire not to take anything for granted, but use critical thinking and seek justification for each view. This aim has been slowly accepted in modern times.

Criticism and comments

In fact the whole Cartesian enterprise was based on misinterpreting philosophical tradition. Descartes rejected Aristotle and scholasticism because of their claim that knowledge must be based on senses. But this claim was an unjustified declaration, as already F. Bacon had observed. Scholastic philosophy was made like cobwebs of spider out of their own substance, it only pretended to be based on the senses. So while Bacon, Hobbes and other British philosophers understood that scholastics was fruitless and made a move towards empiricism, Descartes also realized that traditional philosophy brought dubious results (in fact in the 17th c. scholastic philosophy at universities was completely lifeless, which explains why new great thinkers appeared outside universities) but made a step in the opposite direction, he rejected empiricism altogether and turned to mathematics believing that its method could yield reliable knowledge. His mistake was discovered during the Enlightenment (which turned towards empiricism), but before that it inspired the whole movement of continental rationalism.

There are many clear mistakes in his system.

* There is no evidence for the existence of innate knowledge (Locke).

* There are no commonly accepted axioms which could be used to build knowledge with the application of the geometric method (Hume).

* Knowledge based on observation, although uncertain, is the only knowledge that we have (Hume), although to build reliable knowledge a hypothetical method is required (Popper). Descartes like Plato overlooked the possibility that knowledge does not have to be drawn from anywhere, it can be created - in the proper senses of the word, inside the mind. It is exactly how Popperian hypotheses are built.

* The proof for the existence of God is circular. God's existence is necessary to prove the reliability of human rational arguments, but the very proof is convincing only if rational arguments are reliable. (The construction of a proof for God's existence might have been an unintentional well- chosen step towards safeguarding his new method against attacks of traditionalists. Descartes pretended that although the method was new it would not undermine religious dogmas. A similar step was made by Copernicus, who dedicated his theory to the Pope.)

* The existence of reality cannot be proved, it is at best only a hypothesis, but it would be unwise not to accept it.

* The idea of a perfect being is itself imperfect (its content is unclear), so it could have been created by man.

* From the fact that a man thinks, the conclusion that his thinking is detached from the body cannot be drawn (the body also might think). Nor does it follow that when one does not think, one ceases to exist (when one does not think he does not know that he exists, which is not the same as not to exist).

* Body and spirit do not have to be two completely different types of entities. Soon it became obvious that it is against the laws of physics that the immaterial mind could influence the material body. (The origianl argument moves from the fact that one can doubt the existence of the material world, but cannot doubt the existence of oneself as a thinking thing, to the conclusion that one's thoughts belong to a nonspatial substance that is distinct from matter. It is not convincing.)

However, despite these erroneous claims, Descartes gave philosophy a new direction. In the philosophy of knowledge he demanded that knowledge be justified in the same way as geometry (which is also free from any contradictions). He also designated the feelings of clearness and distinctiveness of idea as the criterion of truth, which contrary to his assumptions was highly subjective. This was a problem for a few centuries - how to create knowledge as certain as geometry, accepted by everyone and free from contradiction out of what the individuals find subjectively convincing.

In ontology as the starting point and the basic sphere he accepted not the world of things outside us nor the world of perfect beings above the material objects (ideal forms – Ideas, God), but the subjective content of human minds. This opened a debate on the interaction between the mind and the brain.

A good research project begins discussions, not terminates them. Through its ambiguity and even contradictions, it inspires further discoveries. Descartes' project perfectly fulfilled this role.

Malebranche

Nicolas Malebranche (1638-1715) could not accept Descartes' teaching on the interaction between mind and body. For Malebranche a spiritual being, like the human will, was incapable of moving the smallest particle of a matter. If I will to move my hand, my will does not cause any movement of it. The only true cause is God who makes my arm move. The only sense in which causes are human is that human beings

provide the occasion for God to do the real causing. This is Malebranche's famous 'occasionalism'.

Questions: How did Descartes introduce the subjective Man and subjective ontology? What were the stages of his doubt? What was the turning point in his quest? How did he try to recreate knowledge (God? innate ideas? geometric method)? How was Man divided (thought and matter) and what problems did it create (Malebranche)?

Further reading

Chapter THE AGE OF DESCARTES (The Wars of Religion; The Life of Descartes; The Doubt and the Cogito; The Essence of Mind; God, Mind and Body; The Material World) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy*. Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

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<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2015/entries/descartes/>.

Pascal

Blaise Pascal (1623-1662) was an adherent of Jansenism (a Catholic religious movement stemming from the ideas of Augustine and Calvin, finally condemned by the mainstream Church in France and the Pope) and an opponent of the Jesuits. He was an extremely versatile person: he invented the mechanical calculator, wrote a treatise on projective geometry (at the age of 16), strongly influenced the development of economics and social science. He refuted Aristotle's followers who insisted that "nature abhors a vacuum" and discovered the air pressure of the atmosphere while experimenting with barometers. His main philosophical book *Pensées* (Thoughts) consisted of a series of fragments published posthumously in 1670.

He saw men as constantly accompanied by anxiety, which he himself expressed using many metaphors ("man is a thinking reed", *Pensées,* Fragment 104). He was especially frightened with the infinity (man is situated between infinitely big and infinitely small objects). "The greatness of human beings consists in their ability to know their wretchedness" (*Pensées,* Fragment 105). Pascal emphasis dread of an

unknown future (because we do not know whether we are saved or damned), the apparent insignificance of human existence, and the experience of being dominated by political and natural forces which far exceed our limited powers. Because of it he is regarded as a forerunner of existentialism. His metaphysical trembling was also characteristic of some writers of the early 17th century called "metaphysical poets" - John Donne, George Herbert, Henry Vaughan, Andrew Marvell, and Richard Crashaw in Britain, Mikołaj Sep Szarzyński in Poland. The background was instability caused by religious wars.

Being an extremely talented mathematician, an inventor and a scientist, he was aware of the limitations of the rational method of Descartes and contrasted "the order of the heart" and "the order of reason". To a large extent he followed the footsteps of St. Augustine - human nature is weak and fallen, God's grace is necessary for salvation, religious faith is irrational. Although he had no rational arguments for this he believed that only the Catholic Church led people to salvation. He based his belief on the metaphysical mystical experience he once had, which gave him the certainty of the existence of God.

However, finding proves of God's existence as unconvincing, he formulated the so called Pascal's Wager (*Pensées*, Fragment 397), which introduced the framework of game theory. (Actually he did not think that his wager could substitute real faith and convince an unbeliever. Thus it was rather an intellectual exercise in which he used his ideas of game theory.) Those who live in accordance with the requirements of faith need to sacrifice some worldly pleasures but instead can win eternal happiness (though they can win nothing if God does not exist). Those who move away from faith may gain some forbidden worldly pleasures, but can also be condemned to eternal damnation. What can be gained and lost in those situations (even if probabilities are uncertain) makes it more profitable to follow the path of faith.

	I believe	I do not believe
God exists	− worldly pleasures + eternal pleasures	+ worldly pleasures − eternal pleasures
God does not exist	− worldly pleasures 0	+ worldly pleasures 0

Criticism and comments

(1) Argument from inconsistent revelations. If we do not know whether God exists, we also do not know what we must do to merit eternal happiness.

Recommendations of different religions contradict each other (e.g. fundamentalist Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism). Particularly dissuasive example are the Arab suicide bombers who, in fact, use the Islamic version of Pascal's wager.

(2) Argument from inauthentic belief. It is not known whether self-serving faith will be rewarded.

(3) Using the method of Pascal one can calculate that the most profitable is to be a sinner and repent just before death (as the Emperor Constantine in Rome did).

(4) Pascal seems committed to a policy of profit maximization. Following the strategy of losses minimization, we come to the opposite choice - treading the way of faith, if God does not exist, we lose everything (both worldly pleasures and eternal happiness), following the way of unbelief, even if we go to hell, we can experience a little pleasure before death so we do not lose everything.

(5) In any wager the presences of a +infinity gain makes it the winning option. If two para-banks make two offers (1) "Give us 1000 $ and in a year we will pay you back 1100 $", (2) "Give us everything you possess and after some time we will pay you back +infinity $", one should choose the latter option (if only the chances seem greater than zero). That is why offering a possibility of an infinite gain is a dishonest practice – it is trump if only its reliability is more than zero.

(6) Contemporary Christian religiosity solved Pascal's dilemma in a practical way recognizing that following the path of faith does not require any great sacrifices. Thus believers benefit both during their life (with the support of God and the church in difficult situations), and after death.

Questions: Why Pascal may be considered the first existentialist? Did he believe in rational method in solving basic philosophical problems? How did he approach the question of faith? Is his wager convincing?

Further reading

Chapter CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE AGE OF LOUIS XIV (Blaise Pascal; Spinoza and Malebranche; Leibniz)from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy.* Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

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Spinoza

Baruch Spinoza (1637-1677) was a Sephardic Jew whose family had to leave Spain after 1492 and settled in a most tolerant city at that time, in Amsterdam. He is considered the first modern philosopher who fully rejected traditional religions and the image of God as the Creator. Although he was excluded for his views from his Jewish religious community, he could still live a peaceful life focused on intellectual work. His writing inspired the Jewish inveiglement and the tendency to regard the Bible only as a moral teaching. It is significant that while Jews are credited with the invention of monotheism they were also the first to abandon it, however, not for the sake of unrestricted individualism but rather becoming one with the Universe. He also advocated the freedom of speech as essential to the welfare of society.

He took over the programme formulated by Descartes and wrote a bizarre work, *Ethics*, in which he tried to prove claims of ethics as Euclid did with geometric theorems - by axioms and deductive reasoning (arguments proved to be mostly incorrect, which does not rule out the depth of his claims). He justified pantheism, stating that there is only one entity (one substance), which is both God and the Universe ("Deus sive Natura"). Thinking and extension are two of its aspects (modus, pl. modi). They do not need to communicate with each other, because they are the same, just seen from two sides (like two sides of one page). He considered the Bible to present morality in a simple way for uneducated people. God is determined by its nature, and with Him the whole world (as in the Stoics) - when we understand this and look at our lives "from the perspective of eternity" (sub specie aeternitatis), we can free ourselves from our subjectivity, from fear and envy. Everything is in fact as it should be, and intellectual contemplation neutralizes violent (disruptive) passions. In this way we gain freedom (which consists in being motivated by thoughts, not passions). Also such terms as "good" and "bad" may be abandoned. They essentially mean "pleasant" and "unpleasant" and refer to subjective emotional states of people who do not identify themselves with God and Nature.

 In the simpler treatise *Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione* (*On the Improvement of the Understanding*, 1662), Spinoza laid out his position on the issue of happiness. People often consider happiness to be pleasure, wealth or power. However, none of these things is sustainable, permanent, nor deep, and the pursuit of each of them have nasty side effects. Sensual pleasures lead to illnesses and exhaustion, money are easy to lose, while gaining power requires constant squabbling with stupid people. For Spinoza the basis of happiness was the experience of mystical union with the Universe and God.

It gave him a lasting feeling of fulfilment, peace and joy, so that he could enjoy his life without worrying about dangers of everyday life. Spinoza himself was a model of a serene and benevolent person, reconciled with the world despite numerous severe distresses (for his views he was excommunicated and expelled from the Jewish community in Amsterdam, where he lived).

Abraham Maslow, the founder of humanistic psychology in the 1950s, recognized Spinoza as one of those people who have reached the maximum degree of self-actualization of human potential. Maslow's theory will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

The mind-body problem.

Descartes believed that the mind and the body are two separate entities ("substances"), which led to the question of how they can communicate to share information. One of the solutions was Malebranche's occasionalism – God is the intermediary. (Later the same issue was discussed by Leibniz and Berkeley. For the former minds are rooms with no windows, and God places in them information about the outside world; for the latter God displays in the minds images ("films" in our terminology) about the world, but the real world outside the mind does not exist at all). Spinoza believed that the mind and the body (or the mind and the brain) are two sides of the same process. This view seems to be questionable in the face of the theory of evolution – why would nature duplicate entities? If the mind is the same as the brain, but seen from the other side, there is no reason for its existence. Its formation is justified if the mind can make operations that the material brain without the mind could not perform.

The existence of the mind is still one of the greatest mysteries of philosophy and science - where does it exist? If in a dream I see images (e.g. a rhinoceros) they are only a product of my brain and are present in my mind. (Primitive peoples believed that the soul leaves the body in a dream and sees the real rhinoceros.) But even the most thorough analysis of the brain does not find any rhinoceros in it, the examination reveals only the nerve cells as well as chemical and electrical impulses. Where is the rhinoceros that I saw in a dream? From *inside* I could see it, from *outside* only a brain can be seen. A prominent contemporary neurologist and philosopher Antonio Damasio[60] finds Spinoza a good starting point for his theory of mind-brain relationship.

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[60]   Antonio Damasio, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow, and the Feeling Brain,* Harcourt, 2003.

Pantheism

Pantheism may be reductions (God is exactly the same as the Universe) or immanentist (God is not the same, by is in everything, like water in a sponge).[61] While Spinoza is not the latter kind of pantheist, is not clear if he is the former.

Under careful examination, pantheism undermines the idea of moral improvement. If everything is God, then everything is as it should be, and one should not change anything. Both the Stoics and Spinoza seem to commit this mistake. Identification with God and looking at the world *sub specie aeternitatis* are very vague postulates - when it comes to specific choice, it is not clear how to follow it. Similarly, the recommendation that the concepts of "good" and "bad" should be abandoned as subjective would bring helplessness to the world. The reconciliation with nature and God may also be understood as the acceptance of everything that life brings, of subjectivity and passions. Why should I not identify with my anger when I am angry? Maybe this is the necessary course of events? My anger as well as my passions are parts of the Universe, and they, too, belong to God. Perhaps Spinoza's ontology, like that of the Stoics, was used as a rhetorical strengthening of the ethical programme to which those philosophers were inclined. In simple words their aim was to overcome narrow-mindedness, attachment to momentary emotions, and finally to produce a stable attitude towards the world.

A postulate to mute emotions is perhaps legitimate in relation to rapid and transient emotional fits, but as Hume argued in the next era (and today Damasio)[62] morality cannot be based only on reason, it must take into account emotions, so they cannot be eliminated, because then all motivation to act would be eliminated.

Determinism

Determinism is also the view difficult to maintain. If everything is determined (i.e. the course of events follows necessarily in every detail from the previous states or decisions of gods), the human mind is also determined. (The stoics somewhat arbitrarily assumed that the material world is determined but the spiritual mind is not.) Convincing arguments are difficult to find, however a psychological dimension is worth examining – why some people find determinism comforting while others depressing. Perhaps the

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61 See: Steven Nadler, 'Baruch Spinoza', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2013/entries/spinoza/>, Section 2.1 God or nature.

62 Antonio Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain,* revised Penguin edition 2005.

inclination towards determinism depends on whether it is considered at the beginning or the end of one's life. At the end it lifts the burden of guilt or at least the uncertainty if more could have been achieved. However, the structure of Pascal's wager may be employed to find a pragmatic solution to the problem.

	I accept determinism	I reject determinism (at least some of my decisions are free)
I am fully determined	(1) I am right, but it does not depend on me	(2) I am wrong, but it is not my fault
I am not fully determined	(3) I am wrong and I deny my freedom I LOSE	(4) I am right and I can use my freedom I WIN

The very consideration of the issue of determinism makes sense only if determinism does not exist. If everything is determined then also my opinion about determinism is determined. If I accept determinism, it either does not matter (if everything is determined) or is a mistake (if not everything is determined). On the other hand, if I reject determinism I am either right or my opinion does not matter (if everything is determined). I can be right only if I reject determinism.

The next task should be to determine how much we are determined and how does the free will work. The Minnesota study of identical twins that were separated at birth and reared apart reveals a surprising compatibility of the characters in each pair. This has provided disturbing arguments that perhaps the impact of education on human development is grossly overestimated.[63]

Why, then, is Spinoza so inspiring? Since the establishment of Christianity the West was dominated by two visions of man – (1) a sinful servant participating in the divine plan and totally dependent on God and (2) a rebellious individualist who lives alone and relies only on himself. Spinoza, like the thinkers of India, medieval mystics and Renaissance humanists (such as Giordano Bruno) represented the third vision - of a man who participates in the divine, discovering it in himself. Perhaps this is the most demanding vision, but the most promising as well.

Questions: How did Spinoza combine spiritual commitment with geometrical method? In what way is it similar to J.S. Bach's contrapunctual polyphony (the fugue)? What does it mean to look at the world sub specie aeternitatis? What was the aim of life (happiness) for him? How was his pantheism reconciled with determinism? Why was he an example of a self-actualized person for Maslow?

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[63]   http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Bouchard [retrieved 28.08.2013]

Baroque music

Building complex "geometrical" systems heavily laden with spiritual experience issues was accompanied by a refined and spirited polyphonic baroque music, which crowning achievement were the fugues by Johann Sebastian Bach.

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Leibniz

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646 – 1716) was a rich German philosopher who formulated a rational system based on logical concepts, known as the last "universal genius". As a devoted Christian he opposed both Hobbes and Spinoza, as atheists. He wrote a few major works (*New Essays on Human Understanding; Theodicy; Monadology*) and a grest many minor (among them letters to ca. 1200 persons).

The world consists of monads, basic cells of consciousness. Each monad is a complete individual substance [= being, entity] in the sense that it contains all of its features — past, present, and future. Monads are like "windowless" rooms, where images about what happens outside are presented by God, who also coordinates the activity of all monads and their internal experiences (images put into minds). Minds and bodies act according to their separate laws, do not interact with each and yet they seem as if thy interacted because they are placed in pre-established harmony created by God.

The Principle of Contradiction generates the truths of reason. The Principle of Sufficient Reason generates the truths of facts, each of which states the connection between an existing individual substance and one of its infinitely many accidental features or relations.

All knowledge is in the name (concept) of the object in question. The concept of a square comprises its being a flat figure with four angles. The concept of Alexander the Great comprises all his victories.

There are many possible objects that can or cannot coexist with some others. God chose the best possible combination of objects that can coexist. Thus ours is The Best of All Possible Worlds

At the same time in Britain Locke represented a completely different approach to philosophy.

Questions: How did Leibniz combine logic, spirituality and subjectivism (monads) in his rational system?

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The Age of Enlightenment (the eighteenth century)

The development of sciences and technology accelerated competition between European nations and provoked revolutions in social and political structures accompanied and often prepared by new philosophy. In 1687 Isaac Newton wrote his *Principia Mathematica* demonstrating the powere of mathematical simplicity in describing a diversity of physical phenomena. Descartes' doubts about the certainty of knowledge and his tust in reason were reinterpreted in the empirical framwork.

The philosophy of the Enlightenment is rational and empirical at the same time (rational in a different sense that in Descartes - reason analyses sensual experience), distrustful of tradition and religion, fascinated with science. Enlightenment political thought introduced such ideas as social contract, government founded upon the consent of the governed, human rights, freedom, equality, religious toleration (as an antidote to religious wars frequent in the previous century) and suggested institutional systems to grant them, e.g. democracy, division of political powers organized in a system of checks and balances. The Enlightenment ideals are still considered to be the foundations of culture in Western Europe. A prodigy of this era was also the United States of America. The Enlightenment was optimistic in that it believed in building a paradise on earth.

Chronologically the philosophical Enlightenment began in England around 1690 (although its forerunner was Hobbes around 1650) and was represented by Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Adam Smith and Bentham. In the mid-18th century it gripped France (philosophy created by the circle of Encyclopaedists) resulting ultimately in the

outbreak of the French Revolution. Toward the end of the 18th c. it came to Prussia (Kant was the most important thinker).

The development of Britain and continental Europe were different. In England, which broke off from the centralised tradition of medieval Europe, a capitalist middle class developed and created a new model of society based on individual effort and success. An even stronger process occurred in the U.S., which gained independence during the Enlightenment.

In many countries of the continental Europe power became more centralised with absolute monarchs on top. In France the clash between highly centralized monarchy (Louis XIV, Louis XV and Louis XVI) and the democratic ideas imported from England led to the Great Revolution (1789). In feudal Central and Eastern Europe, where the economy was based on agriculture, which hindered the development of the bourgeoisie, centralized monarchies were very strong (in Russia, Prussia, Austria), however, the rulers were trying to take advantage of some of the Enlightenment ideas educating their societies. In Poland, the nobility and landowners defended their privileges and did not contribute to the advancement of the country in the direction of capitalism.

The Seven Years War (1756-1763), the first worldwide war, which claimed about million victims, sealed the religious and cultural transformation of Europe. Italy had long had the glory of the Renaissance and Baroque periods behind it, and with the development of trade in the Atlantic lost its importance. Similarly, the Habsburg Spain and Portugal, had reached full bloom in the era of the South American colonization. Germany within the frontier of the Holy Roman Empire was severely weakened a hundred years earlier by the Thirty Years War. Now two other Catholic powers, France and Austria, were defeated. The winners were Protestants: England, which won a dominant position in the global market of colonies (as a result English is now the language of the world) and Prussia. England has also strengthened its Puritan colonists in America who a moment later would, somewhat ungratefully, gained independence. From that moment on Catholicism, shaping societies as a hierarchical organisms, gave way to Protestantism (often in a Puritan variation), which was based on discipline and competition.

In Poland the Enlightenment had a very limited impact. Its main centre was the king's court, which was unappreciated with conservative gentry. Polish mentality was shaped to a large extent by the 17th century, and later by romanticism.

In music the Baroque style was replaced by classicism. After the death of J.S. Bach polyphony almost disappeared, a melody with accompaniment was preferred. The audience also changed – music, which was first composed for church ceremonies and royal and aristocratic courts, now found mass audience (the middle class) who paid for tickets or even played themselves at home. This also resulted in simplification of musical techniques. Vienna became the musical centre of Europe with three great composers Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, followed by many others. Haydn was still a court composer for aristocrats, Mozart attempted to lead an independent life of a freelancer but died in poverty, while Beethoven, delighted with the ideals of the French Revolution, became an independent musician who did not even bow to the Emperor.

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Epistemology and ontology of the Enlightenment

British philosophers, continuing the empirical tradition of F. Bacon analysed the problem of knowledge and the existence of the world. Locke's empiricism opposed the rationalism of Descartes. Berkeley created a radical hypothesis explaining our experience (concurrent with the modern film *The Matrix*). Hume consistently applied Descartes' scepticism and showed how questionable the whole knowledge possessed by humans was. Working in the Prussian Königsberg Kant tried to resist Hume's radicalism.

Locke - epistemology and ontology

Locke (1632-1704) already in 1690 created a consistent version of empiricism that opposed Descartes' rationalism. He rejected the theory of innate ideas (because no views are uniform among all people and each idea develops through experience and

training). The mind at birth is an unwritten card (*tabula rasa*) and everything in it comes through the senses. Simple ideas arise under the influence of internal and external experience. The world that we see is in the mind and represents the real world outside the mind. Everything I see - the objects (e.g., a chair) and my body (e.g., my hand) – are only images of real objects. The qualities of perceived objects are either primary (e.g., shape) or secondary (e.g., smell). Primary qualities represent the actual qualities of the objects (shape of a perceived apple corresponds to the shape of the real apple), but its colour is figured only in the mind and does not represent the actual colour (which may not exist at all). Simple ideas are combined into complex ones (observations), on the basis of which the mind creates abstract ideas (such as the concept of an apple). Mind comparing ideas accepts (or rejects) certain propositions (claims, theorems), which are knowledge.

Criticism and comments

In time it became obvious that the human mind/brain was not a tabula rasa. It possessed some innate tendencies, procedures by which the perceived stimuli were organized (for Darwinists they were the result of evolution) and therefore could not be considered to be blank and empty at the start. Locke, like his immediate successors, did not find a good answer to the question, how we could know that the world outside the mind is similar to the ideas within the mind, as we know only ideas, not things.

Locke raised an interesting question - what makes a man the same person throughout life? Body or soul? Locke distinguished a man (made up of the body), a soul (immaterial being) and a person (aware of their memory). Identity is relative - the same horse is not the same matter throughout its life, but it is the same organism. The identity of a man is based on the identity of the bodily organism evolving through life. The identity of the person continues until its memory lasts (but what to do with false memories?).

Criticism and comments

The view that the identity of a person was based on their memory spawned numerous difficulties. Is an offender the same person who perpetrated a crime if they do not remember committing it? Can they be convicted?

Berkeley - epistemology and ontology

Berkeley (1685-1753) created subjective idealism drawing the ultimate consequences from Descartes' doubt and Locke's empiricism and used them to combat materialism. His major works were the *Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge* (1710) and *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous* (1713). Since the entities that we know are combinations of ideas in our minds (an apple is a certain shape, weight, colour, taste - that is sense data), why the existence of mysterious "material objects" outside the mind should be accepted? In a dream we see the world almost as in reality and yet everything exists only in our heads. Suppose, then, that everything we experience is one big dream. The source of this dream is God who displays a sequence of images in the mind. All items actually exist only if they are perceived (as objects in a cartoon film, we may add) – *esse est percipi (aut percipere)* — to be is to be perceived (or to perceive).

His argument was summarized by Winkler: Berkeley presents here the following argument [64]

(1) We perceive ordinary objects (houses, mountains, etc.).

(2) We perceive only ideas.

Therefore,

(3) Ordinary objects are ideas.

And in fact there is only God and individual souls, in which films are screened. The matter, which according to Locke is a kind of *substratum*, a background substance without qualities in which different features (colours, shapes, smells, etc.) become unnecessary. Thus, materialists are wrong. Material objects (substances and their qualities) may not even be the cause of the idea in the mind, because the sense data are not similar to entities which are perceived by the senses (the colour I see cannot be compared at all to the "colour" of the real object outside my mind, because colours exist only in the mind when there are seen, outside of it there could be nothing that resembles colours).

If Berkeley's theory that the objects are only what is seen at the moment seems shocking, consider the following arguments:

(1) Without a doubt in a cartoon film objects exist only when they are actually drawn, and yet the mind of a viewer connects individual appearances of the characters and treat them as existing in continuum. Of course, a producer ensures their stability and makes sure that their next appearance retains continuity (the character does not

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[64]   K.P. Winkler, *Berkeley: An Interpretation,* Oxford: Clarendon Press 1989 p. 138.

become older, younger, taller or shorter out of the blue). As you can see, for the mind to have the impression of continuity of the perceived world, the world does not have to be actually durable, it is enough that the manufacturer duly correlates its successive manifestations. In the world called real the role of producer is played by God.

(2) In a dream, only the images inside the mind are seen, so if the real things were to be seen in reality, the neurological mechanisms of vision should be separate and different in a dream and in reality.

(3) When we succumb to an illusion, we see an image which, after closer examination, is changing. If the real things were always seen, illusion would be impossible. Additionally, electrical or chemical stimulation of the brain affects the perceived objects, which indicates that they are the product of brain activity. (Even if some people get drunk what they see is doubled – it would be absurd to suppose that real things become multiplied.) If at the beginning of the process of perceiving the world stimuli are received through the senses, at the end of it the images appear in the cerebral cortex, which brain "shows" itself.

Locke treated the mind as a bunker equipped with external cameras from which the live feed is displayed on a screen inside. Leibniz believed that this image was sent directly by God, but also corresponded to what was on the outside. Berkeley held that just the image itself was enough and outside of the mind there was nothing (except God). The ideas in the mind cannot represent objects outside the mind. "But say you, though the ideas themselves do not exist without the mind, yet there may be things like them whereof they are copies or resemblances, which things exist without the mind, in an unthinking substance. I answer, an idea can be like nothing but an idea; a colour or figure can be like nothing but another colour or figure". (*Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge,* section 8) The question was – how can any of these views be justified (otherwise how can any of them be selected as the best)?

Berkeley's view can go even further to recognize that in general there is only one mind (mine), or even that the whole "dream" started a few minutes ago, and I as the viewer have been given the illusion that it had started much earlier.

Berkeley's view is difficult to refute, though, it cannot be proved either. Certainly the "dream" that appears in my mind must have some source - whether it be God or objective reality or anything else - but it cannot be autonomous. Surely, it is not quite dependent on our will (if we stand in front of a closed door, we cannot open it with the force of our mind) but it is also not completely independent - if in a "dream" I introduce what I consider my body into water, then in the next scene I will feel that I am wet. So

it is an interactive "dream", in which the same rules apply as in real life. Even when we become followers of subjective idealism, we will continue to proceed as in the previous life to avoid the same pain and get the same pleasure.

Criticism and comments

Berkeley's view has two major drawbacks. (1) One can believe it, but it would be difficult (if not impossible) to test it or to develop it (which are the main flaws from the point of view of the 20th c. methodology). (2) It is supported by the false claim that the images in the mind as made up of sensory data could not be similar to material things outside the mind (and cannot represent them). Images in the mind and things outside it may have analogous structure, even if they are made up of qualitatively different material. When I see two green cucumbers and two red tomatoes, I may by right to believe that in reality there are four fruits (roughly speaking since cucumbers are vegetables) paired according to their features, which in the mind are manifested as the colour but in reality they are something else (e.g., reflection of waves of certain amplitude).

Hume - epistemology and ontology

A. David Hume (1711-1776) was master of scepticism and clear thinking. He developed Locke's empiricism to a point of crisis. He decided that the entire content of the mind comes from sensory experience (first simple impressions rather than complex and abstract ideas). Every concept on which knowledge is to be built must be based on mental images derived from experience. All knowledge is either (1) a priori (it consists of definitions of terms, axioms and whatever can be inferred from them, like geometry, this knowledge does not have to be based on impressions) or (2) a posteriori (based on observation and induction). (Ad 1) The former is certain, but it says nothing about reality, because it only refers to the concepts that we have defined ourselves. An example of this is the Pythagorean theorem: In a right-angled triangle, the area of the square whose side is the hypotenuse (the side opposite the right angle) is equal to the sum of the areas of the squares whose sides are the two legs (the two sides that meet at a right angle). It is proved by means of deductive inferences by reference to the axioms of Euclidean geometry, and which is valid only where the axioms are accepted). (Ad 2) The latter will never be certain. An example is the Archimedes' principle, a law of physics stating that the upward buoyant force exerted on a body immersed in a fluid is equal to the weight of the fluid the body displaces. In other words, an immersed object

is buoyed up by a force equal to the weight of the fluid it actually displaces. One cannot be certain that every object shall behave the same in these circumstances.

Also, causal relationship lacks empirical justification, as what can be observed is only a fixed sequence of events, rather than the actual *causing* of one event by another. Beliefs about causal relationships are based only on psychological habit – they are useful in life, but they are not justified. (Although Hume questioned the validity of using the concept of a cause, he used it when he claimed that the regular succession of phenomena is the cause of the (unjustified) formation of the concept of a cause. It shows how strongly the notion of causality permeates our language and thinking.)

This remark about habits in Hume's theory of knowledge opened up new perspectives developed fully by American pragmatism. Where claims cannot be justified (e.g., about causality), the reason for their adopting may be human benefit. The next step would be to recognize that while discussing the value of knowledge, the truth is as important as utility. And that's a whole new approach to knowledge, which becomes a tool to achieve human goals.

Hume formulated two important objections to the construction of empirical knowledge, which will never lose relevance.

(1) The problem of unobservable entities: How knowledge about them can be acquired (e.g., causes, atoms, elementary partial).

(2) The problem of induction: Scientific assertions are strictly general statements about infinitely many future objects (Archimedes principle: "an object, wholly or partially immersed in a fluid..."). Since generalisations are based on previous and thus limited experience, how can one trust that in the future every object in given circumstances will behave in the similar fashion.

In light of these difficulties, the demand of Descartes and Locke to build reliable knowledge about the world lay in ruins. Kant and the positivists will try to restore certainty of knowledge.

B. Next, Hume attacked the concept of "I". If all knowledge comes from experience, there is no reason to speak about the "I" that lasts for the whole life of man, and maybe even longer. We experience perceptions, emotions, memories, etc. But we never experience our own "I". Hume forged up the phrase: "I am a bundle of sensations".

Follow up. In the 20 c. the already mentioned neurologist Antonio Damasio[65] specified three distinct manifestations of the human "I": (1) the protoself (a coherent collection of neural patterns which map, moment-by-moment, the state of the physical organism. It is non-conscious and solely concerned with homeostasis), (2) the core self with core consciousness (the essence of core consciousness is "the very thought of you - the very feeling of you - as one individual being involved in the process of knowing of your existence and of the existence of others"), and (3) an autobiographical self with extended consciousness (what one thinks about oneself). None of those "I"s is permanent as the human soul was supposed to be.

C. Also, the knowledge of God, as not based on experience, is impossible. Hume criticized the teleological proof, postulating the existence of God as the creator of purposeful governance in the world in the same way as the order that we find in a watch explains the existence of a watchmaker. Hume noted that there are cases of order that arises spontaneously (e.g., plants), and even if we accept the existence of some kind of "creator" it does not have to be God (who may be malicious or incompetent). The final blow, however, was inflicted by Darwin's theory of evolution.

Criticism and comments

Hume showed limitations of empiricism - knowledge cannot be entirely derived from experience. His ideas inspired two kinds of commentators and followers. (1) Some perfected the methods of extracting reliable knowledge from experience (positivists, scientists, neopositivists), while others went beyond empiricism to incorporate the subjective conditions of knowledge (from Kant to phenomenologists and conventionalists a belief was growing that the mind constructs knowledge according to its subjective inclinations. Thus we rather give meaning to experience, than draw it from experience.). Finally, in the 20th c., the problems of knowledge were largely solved by Karl Popper's falsificationism: knowledge consists of the best hypotheses of a given time, created by an active mind which goes beyond the content of the experience.

Kant - epistemology and ontology

Kant (1724-1804) believed (*An Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment?*, 1784) that the aim of the Enlightenment was to reject traditional superstitions, discover

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[65] Antonio Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain*, revised Penguin edition, 2005; *The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness,* Harcourt, 1999; *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow, and the Feeling Brain*, Harcourt, 2003; *Self Comes to Mind: Constructing the Conscious Brain*, Pantheon, 2010.

the power of Reason in everyone (so that everyone could think independently), but not to undermine basic traditional religious and moral believes. Since it had happened in Britain and France, Kant, who lived in Prussian feudal Königsberg (today's Russian Kaliningrad), staged a counter-offensive. In his *Critique of Pure Reason* 1787 he decided to reject Hume's scepticism by what he called the "Copernican revolution" in epistemology. The starting point was an attempt to build a bridge between the *a priori* knowledge described by Hume (certain, but based on the definitions and limited to what follows from them) and *a posteriori* (describing the world, based on experience and therefore uncertain). According to Kant, there is a third kind of knowledge, so-called *a priori* synthetic propositions (judgments) that there are certain as *a priori* propositions, but refer to observable reality as *a posteriori* propositions.

How is this possible? The world that we study is not reality outside the mind (Kant calls it the world of thing-in-itself), but a collection of images (phenomena) inside our minds. Phenomena do not accurately reflect reality (the thing-in-itself), but are constructed by the mind according to its structural tendencies. The mind is so constituted that all it sees is in three dimensions, therefore, the world in our minds will always be three-dimensional. And therefore the sentence (proposition) "Each object is three-dimensional", although it refers to the world (and not to the objects of geometry or mathematics), is necessarily (*a priori*) true, and its truth is derived not from experience but from the structure of the mind.

While Locke and other empiricists believed that the phenomena in the mind reflect the qualities of external objects, Kant held that they depend also on the structure of the mind. In this way, an object (a phenomenon) is adjusted in part to the mind. The Newtonian empty space and time form the framework of all possible experience for they depend on the structure of the mind, as well as the necessity to relate the phenomena in causal relationships. Events (as seen by our minds) are causally related not because they are related in reality outside the mind but because causality is imposed over them by our minds. If we had other minds, we would see things differently. The world of thing-in-itself out of the mind is unknowable. We cannot determine what it is like based on phenomena. Kant, like other empiricists, decided that we do not have the grounds to speak about God, soul and freedom. However, for practical reasons we should believe in God and consider ourselves free, because without that morality would lose the necessary justification. Kant's attitude towards religion was ambiguous. On the one hand, he challenged Aquinas, and showed the insufficiency of natural human powers to know God (hence his criticism of the proofs of God's existence), on the other

hand he was clearly not able to part with God (some see here the influence of his old and deeply religious servant Lampe, whom he did not want to upset.)[66].

Criticism and comments

Kant only apparently solved the problem of knowledge. To recognize that some of the components of our experience are necessarily determined by the structure of our mind, first it must be determined and established with certainty what these structures are. One can ask if the knowledge of these a priori components of experience is itself a priori. If not, then the whole idea turns out to be worthless. Perhaps there are aspects of the experience that are necessary, but if we do not know which aspects they are, we cannot base any knowledge (a priori synthetic propositions) on it. How could Kant be certain that the fact that humans see everything in three dimensions is the result of the structure of human mind and not the structure of reality outside the mind? Maybe we see everything in three dimensions because the world is three-dimensional. (A similar argument can be given against theory of innate knowledge, which for Descartes was to be unassailable, certain knowledge base. It is not enough to carry innate knowledge, one still need to be able to reliably determine which knowledge is innate.)

Even if Kantianism were justified as a philosophical movement, its practical usefulness would be negligible. We consider the concept of causation necessary for our picture of the world, but it does not solve the problem of how this should be applied to specific cases. Do clouds cause rain? Does fire cause heat? These questions cannot be answered by discussing the structure of the mind and it is here that Hume's scepticism is severe.

(Inquisitive critic might ask how Kant could have known at all of the existence of the world of the thing-in-itself, and how he can claim that the-thing-in-itself causes at least in part the phenomena in the mind, since the concept of cause applies only to the phenomena and not to the thing-in-itself.)

It soon became apparent that the mind can produce many different ways with which it embraces its experience. Modern physics created a different concept of space and time than Newtonian one. Mathematicians have developed a different geometry than Euclidean one. It was found that the child is not born with the idea of an empty three-dimensional space, but it develops with the handling of objects. Finally, the theory of evolution indicated that the innate structure of the brain is the result of selecting the

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[66] Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy* Simon and Schuster 1991, p. 219 quotes Paulsen, *Immanuel Kant*. New York 1910. p. 8, who in turn quotes Heine.

features conducive to better adaptation of living things to the world around them. The evolutionary perspective is something like the theory of gravity in astronomy – after it was established anything not compatible with it (like the geocentric Ptolemaic system) had to be considered wrong. The theory of evolution and Popper's falsificationism allow to overcome Kant's scepticism about knowledge of the external world. We have no direct knowledge of entities outside of mind, but we can make hypotheses that go beyond our direct experience and test them indirectly.

Kant drawing our attention to the distinction between reality outside the mind and the phenomena within formulated a hypothesis that what we see is constructed by the mind according to its inclinations and capabilities in response to the stimuli coming from the outside. However, from a certain point of view this may not be a merit. While the Anglo-Saxons would form hypotheses about the world outside of mind - and were successful, German philosophers focused, at least until Husserl's phenomenology, on the study of phenomenal image of the world how it was constructed in the mind, and the study distracted their attention from discovering scientific rules and their methodology. A primitive man looked at the rising Sun and thought that it revolved around the Earth. Then he could either start to study how the Sun image was constructed in his mind (instead of studying the Sun itself), or he could formulate and test different hypotheses about the Sun and study the rules of their correctness. Kantianism encouraged to do the latter, the development of science required the former.

The relationship of mind and reality

Let us summarize the relationship of mind and reality.

Initially (Aristotle and Aquinas) maintained that the mind and things existed in the same reality and cognition (perception) was a kind of meeting of the senses and things.

Descartes held that the mind perceived its content (ideas), the material world was "out there", and its existence was guaranteed by God. It created the question of how matter affected the mind - in fact, still unresolved. He also required that the knowledge be completely certain.

According to Spinoza, mind and matter were two sides of the same, two *modi* of one and only substance.

According to Malebranche, mind perceived ideas, things were out there, and their relation was possible through God.

According to Leibniz, there are many monads (some of which are minds) not in contact with each other, but coordinated with each other by God, who placed them in a "pre-established harmony".

Locke found that the mind sees its ideas, which, at least in terms of primary qualities represent faithfully the outside world.

Berkeley was of the opinion that God participated in the creation of images in the mind while creating the world outside the mind would be redundant.

Hume agreed that the data we possess do not authorise many claims previously called "knowledge" and therefore they are replaced by useful habits.

Kant claimed that although our knowledge embraces only the content of the mind, some parts of it seem certain as they reflect the structure of the mind.

A romantic philosopher Fichte went to the extremes holding that the world was a product of the all-powerful "I". Philosophy did not treat this proposal seriously.

Those philosophers agreed that the world we see exists in the mind, the question was what caused it and what was outside of mind. Is it caused by the outside world (Locke), which resembles it (Locke) or not (Kant), or by God (Berkeley, Leibniz)? Is it possible to rationally decide between these hypotheses? The solution can be drawn from the 20th c. methodology of Karl Popper and Imre Lakatos (both taught at the London School of Economics). The existence and shape of the outside world is hypothetical only and cannot be directly tested. Hypotheses in general must be consistent with other recognised statements, which usually means that they cannot be arbitrary. In addition, they should open the way to formulating and testing further interesting hypotheses, which would promote the development of knowledge. Hypotheses by Leibniz, Berkeley and Kant terminate any further debate - one cannot develop them in any non-arbitrary way. They leave one helpless against the unknowable reality. However, the hypotheses of Locke (and Hume) enable the development of knowledge - the images represent things, the mind exists because of the brain, which is one of the things outside the mind. By studying how the mind reflects the things one can formulate consecutive hypotheses about the outside world, and indirectly about their effects on the mind, which ultimately resulted in the development of scientific theories about both the world and the mind. These theories are an extensive collection of interrelated hypotheses (such as the theory of evolution), more reliable and useful than rival hypotheses. Still, it cannot be excluded that the whole world is an interactive film, which is displayed in our minds by some powerful demon.

Questions: Enlightenment epistemology and its ontological consequences: How was knowledge acquired according to Locke (*tabula rasa*)? How was the content of the mind related to external reality (primary and secondary qualities)? Why was the external reality unnecessary for Berkeley and could be substituted by God-sent images? What were the strange consequences of his doctrine (*esse est percipi*)? Was knowledge of the self and efficient cause possible according to Hume? What was the difference between a priori and a posteriori knowledge and how did it undermine the ideal of certainty formulated be Descartes? Why is the mind-body problem still intriguing? What is a contemporary view on the self (Damasio)? How did Kant try to restore certainty (thing in itself and the innate structure of phenomena)?

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Chapters ENGLISH PHILOSOPHY IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY (The Empiricism of Thomas Hobbes; Locke on Ideas and Qualities; Substances and Persons) and BRITISH PHILOSOPHY IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY (Berkeley; Hume's Philosophy of Mind; Hume on Causation) and THE CRITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF KANT (esp. Kant's Copernican Revolution; The Transcendental Aesthetic) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy*. Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

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Ethics of the Enlightenment

At the dawn of the Enlightenment, European philosophers considered China a model of the state in perfect order, which did not require the support of religion.[67] This is the reason to mention it here. In the 6th and 5th c. BCE when China was mired in chaos and wars, Confucius developed the doctrine of social organization and upbringing of good citizens, whose essential virtues were Righteousness (or Justice), Humaneness, Propriety or Etiquette, Knowledge and Loyalty (although some others were also mentioned). Society would be a great community in which everyone cares about the order and the common good. Righteousness (yi) is required to do legitimate things because they are morally good. Righteousness is based on selflessness, not seeking benefits. (It was closer to Kantian ethics, and in sharp contrast with the attitude of self-interest or pleasure-seeking). Humaneness (ren), "love for others", prompts a man who loves others to fulfil his duties for their sake. An important component is the equivalent of the Golden Rule: "Never impose on others what you would not choose for yourself". (*Dialogues* XII, 2). Moral actions bring happiness, because we are free from anxiety about the success of our operations or the fear of failure. Confucianism exclude competition and China proved to be a durable and efficient state after adopting this moral doctrine, which lasted until Mao's Cultural Revolution (1960s).

In the 17th c. Europe was dominated by Christian ethics derived from Scholasticism. Morality was based on the good, which was objective, should be discovered by reason (with the help of church authorities) and respected. Aquinas combined inspirations from three different sources (Plato, Aristotle and the Bible): the Good is objective (Plato), God's commandments are based on it since God's nature is

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[67] See: Yuen-Ting Lai, China and Western Philosophy in the Age of Reason [in:] *The Columbia History of Western Philosophy,* R.H. Popkin (ed.) Columbia University Press 1999 pp. 412-420.

good (the Bible), and humans nature was created so as to desire what is good (Aristotle). The Enlightenment began formulating opposing system that are still discussed by philosophers as valid ways of dealing with ethical problems. Many philosophers avoided being too radical and postulated that morality had objective justifications. Locke believed in natural law, some moral sense theorists assumed that our intuition informed about what was objectively good. However, finally many new trends breaking completely with tradition began to crystallize: (1) subjectivism: good is what is approved by individuals, what they desire as emotional beings; (2) social contract: good is what is negotiated by individuals (Hobbes and his followers favoured contract based on self-interest, Rousseau on the will of society as a whole); (3) Kant's formalism: what is right and wrong is determined by reason, its essence is fairness or impartiality and it should be respected in the name of duty; (4) social Darwinism in a pre-Darwinian form by Malthus: morality is in the interest of the strong, (5) utilitarianism: good is what makes people happy, what is good *for* them, while morality should maximize it (Bentham). The underlying assumption of the whole Enlightenment movement was that individuals must cooperate to achieve what is good for society as a whole.

The Enlightenment in philosophy began in Britain, then moved to France, and finally spread to the rest of Europe. To understand the phenomenon of the British Enlightenment, some facts about the history of the British Isles should be recalled. England was conquered by the Romans during the reign of Claudius, but the Roman civilization never dominated the Celts living there the way it dominated the Gauls in what later became France. After the departure of the Romans at the beginning of the 5th c. Germanic Anglo-Saxons invaded the island from Denmark. Since they had never had any contact with the Romans, the Roman tradition was completely disrupted. The Normans (who were descendants of the Vikings) conquered England in 1066 and built a highly efficient state with the French-speaking court ruling over Saxon peasants. The Normans were Catholics and covered England with monumental Romanesque cathedrals, built not as much from the need to spread the Good News, but for the monks to pray for the souls of sinful knights. Gradually the Norman invaders intermarried with Germanic native inhabitants, although the distinction between the upper class having a different blood than the rest of the population survived for a long time. As early as the 12th c. barons had the *Magna Carta* passed and bullied the king to convoke the parliament to approve war tax. In England the concept of the rule of law appeared very

early which obliged even the king. In the 14th c. the Black Death caused the death of so many peasants that the whole feudal system was derailed - the surviving peasants wandered looking for better opportunities, thus creating modern workforce while east of the Elbe serfdom prevailed and even intensified in the following centuries.

When the Tudors took the power, Henry VIII established the Church of England in 1534 (mainly for political reasons – here reformation did not need a religious cover like in Germany, the aim was to gain independence from Rome), and confiscated estates of the Catholic Church. His daughter, Elizabeth, happily survived the attempted intervention of the Spanish Habsburgs, who planned to restore Catholicism in England (the expedition of the Spanish Armada of Philip II), but it did not stop religious wars. Successive kings were alternately Catholic and Protestant. Catholics were convinced of the divine origin of their power, Protestants more gladly cooperated with the Parliament. In the first half of the 17th c. Olivier Cromwell, a Puritan fanatic, who later massacred Ireland, led a religious dictatorship which beheaded the Catholic king, Charles I (1649), 150 years before the French did the same with their monarch.

At that time and with connection with those events the most important English philosopher of the period, the monarchist Hobbes, published his *Leviathan* (1651).

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Hobbes (ethics) and the religious wars

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) was a pioneer of the Enlightenment. Inclined to atheism and materialism, he broke with the view that that political authority came from God (although he supported the Catholic King and not the Protestant parliament), as well as with the theory of divine "natural law", which should be the basis for any law in the state. Even more than with religious wars in Britain it was inspired by the Peace of Westphalia which ended the Thirty Years' War in continental Europe in 1648. It assumed a new framework for political relations between different states in Europe, and later in the whole world. Before it was at least therapeutically accepted that Europe had

Pope and Emperor to supervise individuals kingdoms, solve conflicts between them and even interfere in its domestic affairs. After 1648 political states had sovereign sovereign power on their territories, were free to adopt any law without consulting natural law, given by God and interpreted by the Church. International conflicts between the states should be prevented by maintaining a pan-Europan balance of power. (The result of the Westphalian framework was three hundred years of constant competition between European states, which on the one hand inspired creativity, but on the other destroyed Europe by 1945. Today's institutions of the European Union are meant to eliminate intentional conflicts by restricting sovereignty of individual states.)

Hobbes' system was devised as an answer to the question how the state, as a sovereign being, constructs its laws and all moral rules. Considered man as a natural being of flesh and blood, equipped with natural needs and emotions he described the genesis of a state in the form of a thought experiment. Initially, people lived in the state of nature, without any authority, being free but deprived of security. Their life was "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short" and the only "law of nature" was taking care of one's own business. The lack of security (rather than simple greed) led to an endless struggle for power, which would provide more security. This prevents the development of many human talents that can thrive only when this senseless rivalry is stopped.

Reason discovers other laws of nature, which would lead, if respected, to satisfying of basic human needs – mainly security. There were many such laws (e.g., Save as much freedom as you leave the other; abide by the terms of any valid contract which is made with another person; reciprocate the good that were done to you; forgive the mistakes of others, if they repent; do not hate others; treat others as equals). The central place was occupied by The Golden Rule, which Hobbes formulated in a manner of negation: "Do not act toward others in a manner in which you would not want them to act toward you." (Positive wording appears in almost every culture, even in the Gospel and says "Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you."). Hobbes made a radical reform of morality - it is not an absolute description of the mandate of God, but a set of rules whose observance in society results in satisfying natural human needs.

Unfortunately, Hobbes was a pessimist. Even if everyone can recognize the validity of these rules, after the contract to respect them is made, people can violate them and break any contract for their own benefit (this is a problem of the prisoner's dilemma, which will be discussed later with Hume's views). People who feel insecure easily become aggressive and possessive. The state of nature turns into a state of war of

all against all (*bellum omnium contra omnes*). Everyone is free, but no one feels safe. The only thing we can do is to agree to the appointment of an absolute ruler who would arbitrarily establish the law and safeguard peace. In order to gain security, people should give up their freedom. The monarch was not a party to the agreement - the subjects make the agreement to choose one among themselves. The king can demand obedience only when he fulfils his primary responsibility, which is to guarantee safety. There is a flaw in Hobbes philosophy – on the one hand (represented by the famous cover of his book) the power comes from all the people, the state, the Leviathan, is an aggregate of all citizens; on the other hand, a monarch suddenly appeared as the key figure with prerogatives of absolute power. Even to guarantee the execution of what people agreed upon (the exchange of freedom for security) an external power of a monarch is necessary. (Hobbes seemed to anticipate the prisoners dilemma problem - to be discussed later in this book.) Nevertheless it was a bold beginning for a serious modern political thought. Had Hobbes not been a pessimist and a monarchist, he could have gone much further this way.

Criticism and comments

(1) Primitive society did not live in a state of chaos. They were cemented by collective morality. Chaos occurs when, for example after a conquest the former civilisation collapses. Or, as in England, when a power struggle begins between a number of leaders. Ordinary people who have no appetite for power do not start wars. Hobbes was inspired by the History of the Peloponnesian War by Thucydides. It shows a struggle between countries (headed by ambitious rulers) in the absence of an international central government. However, in a wide perspective, the state of nature can be interpreted as a continuous alternative to peace - if a society do not negotiate a contract (even a tacit one), a civil war may follow. (2) Absolute rulers were generally not chosen as a result of a contract, but they would seize power displaying much initiative in this direction. Sometimes they used democratic mechanisms to manipulate voters. (3) The absolute rulers do not guarantee safety for their countries - they quickly start to use power to pursue own ambitions (Hitler again). However, again, in a wider perspective the need for authority may be unavoidable. Even if a compromise is reached, it must be kept. In both an initiative from the elite may be necessary. (4) Cooperation is fostered by common sense, as well as culture and social institutions. There are many other ways of maintaining order without resorting to authoritarian rule,

but they require some experience. Perhaps the views similar to those of Hobbes are a myth spread by dictators who want to justify their methods of governance.

A new paradigm in ethics

Whatever Hobbes' mistakes may be, he introduced a new paradigm in ethics and thus is as important as Descartes for modern philosophy. Earlier philosophers were talking about objective Good (Plato), natural goodness (Aristotle) and god's commands. Any of them should be discovered and obeyed. The paradigm was paternalistic (only specialists knew the Good, others had to trust them) and in fact arbitrary (there was no explicit method for discovering it).

Since Hobbes a new perspective was becoming popular (although the adherents of the old paradigm never disappeared). *Good is either what people like* (what they approve or disapprove) *or what is good for them* (pleasure, interests, satisfaction of desires). The former was good according to an individual or society (and thus relative to either individuals or societies); the latter was good for an individual or society.

Morality as a common universal set of rules that overrides individual preferences is a compromise reached by individuals.

In all areas of theoretic activity (in sciences like astronomy, in philosophy - in epistemology, ontology, ethic) during the Renaissance basic hypotheses, definitions and procedures changed, which is best represented as a transition from the Ptolemaic geocentric model of the solar system to the Copernican heliocentric one.

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Locke (ethics) and the Glorious Revolution

After the death of Cromwell monarchy was restored in England and the revolution was forgotten. Unfortunately the alternation of Catholic and Protestant rulers continued to cause conflicts. From the beginning of the 17th c. the Dutch and the Englishmen established East India Company and began commercial colonization,

therefore the entrepreneurs of both countries wanted peace and economic development, rather than ideological disputes. The Netherlands, which has freed themselves from domination of Catholic Spain, had the first perfectly organized society in which the Protestant middle class played dominant role. In fact, liberalism was also born there.

In 1688 England's Glorious Revolution took place. When at the invitation of the burghers the Dutch Protestant king William of Orange came with a large fleet (which in fact amounted to an invasion), the Catholic king of England James II fled from London. A year later, Parliament adopted the Bill of Rights establishing parliamentary monarchy. Parliament gained strong position, and soon the two-party democratic system settled in and the whole Britain had to observe the laws passed by the Parliament. Catholics were expelled, the aristocracy weakened and England entered a path to capitalism and power.

It should be stressed that the power transferred to the Parliament meant at best the rule of politicians who were supposed to represent the top of society (only a minority of men were entitled to vote, but it is reasonable to assume that they represented also their households with women and children. The number of voters was not more than a quarter of males until late in the 19th century). As in the Roman Republic or Polish Nobles Democracy it did not imply that political power should come from society as a whole (which was important in early Germanic/Viking societies, in France after the Revolution on in American democracy). And perhaps it is the most efficient basis for a political order. If decisions of a government are determined by the will of only a few (kings, generals, oligarchs) they are too selfish, and the alienation of the elite follows. If a government is obliged to respect desires and opinions of all members of society, chaos, anarchy or populist manipulation can easily follow (leaders who pretend to represent the will of the people are bound to manipulate large sections of society; otherwise they would have to take decisions everyone would soon regret for the simple reason that most people do not know what must be done to please them even in the nearest future). The history of Britain demonstrates that the best results were achieved when the country was governed by specialist (politicians) who were then assessed (in the elections) by the top (in terms of education and wealth) of the society. Britain was exceptional in building a peaceful yet successful empire and avoidance social revolutions. It may be a coincidence that when in 1928 the right to vote was extended to the everyone (above a certain age) Britain soon lost its empire and much of its international position. Although the view above may be controversial it should be seriously taken into account now when thorough the world democracies are failing while undemocratic countries like China are rising. Perhaps the process of running a

country progresses best when decisions are taken democratically within the top quarter of society. If this top quarter is wise, responsible and benevolent everyone benefits from this form of government. Otherwise social tension and exploitation grow, but even then a revolution usually makes thing even worse.

One year after the Glorious Revolution John Locke published the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and *Two Treatises of Government*, ideological manifestos of the era.

John Locke (1632-1704) was in contact with colonies in North America and at some point became a strong opponent of royal power. He devoted little attention to moral philosophy and concentrated on a political project. As a theorist of democracy he defied the political pessimism of Hobbes (*Two Treatises on Government,* 1889). Man is not naturally aggressive, but hard working and peaceful (similar beliefs were expressed in Daniel Defoe's novel *Robinson Crusoe* 1719). "Men living according to reason, without a common superior on earth, to judge between them, is properly the state of nature." (*Two Treatises* 2.19) People tend to follow natural law which they know intuitively (Locke assumed God's existence, though personally he was a deist, not Christian), which requires respect for basic human rights: (1) life and health, (2) liberty and (3) property. (It should be noted that the idea of natural rights was formulated already in 1625 by Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), who in his *De jure belli ac pacis* (*On the Law of War and Peace*), though he concentrated on the right of self-preservation.) The founder of the state is the sovereign people, who choose representatives to provide necessary foundation of public life and uniform application of law. Some governments are created by force, but legitimate governments is instituted by the explicit consent of the governed. (However, Locke also suggested that a tacit consent may be enough - if one does not emigrate from a country it means that he approves of the government.) Their aim is to protect human rights. Positive law must be consistent with the natural law, and power must be divided into different parts so as to keep each other in check in order to prevent abuse. Locke proposed separation of power into legislative, executive and the one regulating international relations, however, later the Montesquieu's tripartite division into the legislative, executive and judicial powers was adopted. Locke began creating the concept of liberal freedoms, including the freedom of religion, i.e. the right to choose one's own road to salvation.

In justification of rights Locke did not use the concept of social contract. While Hobbes and Hume assumed that the right to property resulted from social conventions,

Locke produced a religious and metaphysical justification. God created the world and presented it to humanity as a whole. Then those who mix their labour with the material world (here Locke meant mainly land) should acquire rights to it. "Though the Earth… be common to all Men, yet every Man has a Property in his own Person. This no Body has any Right to but himself. The Labour of his Body, and the Work of his Hands, we may say, are properly his. Whatsoever then he removes out of the State that Nature hath provided, and left it in, he hath mixed his Labour with, and joyned to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his Property. It being by him removed from the common state Nature placed it in, it hath by this labour something annexed to it, that excludes the common right of other Men."[68] Those ideas were already mentioned by Aristotle (*Politics*, Book I, chapter 3) and Thomas Aquinas (Summa Theologica, Second Part of the Second Part, q. 66). The important question - to what extent it is justified that some are rich, and some are poor - is in fact not answered by Locke.

Criticism and comments

Locke's political system is not so much a philosophical analysis as the project made to satisfy the desires of entrepreneurial sector, tired of the king's rule. Although Locke appealed to the idea of social contract, it did not affect the basic "rights" - life, health, liberty and property. These ideals were adopted without discussion. In fact, they were not "rights" at all though they are qualified as such. One can talk about rights when there is a legal system that guarantees them. Rights prior to a system are rather needs, desires or ideals, in this case espoused by Locke. Since there were more people opting for them (the entrepreneurial class) they were widely adopted, which contributed to the development of capitalism. However, the idea that the right to property comes from the Christian God seems strange if we remember how Jesus despised property in the Sermon on the Mount. Liberty likewise is not the chief Christian value. Both Puritans and Locke used God to support their capitalist ideals but this was an abuse.

Locke's definition of property (as the object of natural right) is most unclear. On Macpherson's interpretation[69] Locke set three restrictions on the accumulation of property in the state of nature: one may only appropriate as much as one can use before it spoils (*Two Treatises* 2.31); one must leave "enough and as good" for others (2.27); one may only appropriate property through one's own labour (2.27). It is difficult to

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[68] John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, Second Treatise, par. 27, Peter Laslett (ed.), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1988.
[69] Crawford B. Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1962.

apply those rules in modern capitalism, when property accumulated as money never spoils, most people have enough to survive (even if they live in slums) and property is acquired though hired or automated work.

Not all people, or perhaps only a minority of persistent individualists could agree that the aims of the state and government are restricted to protecting the four basic rights. The traditional Christian doctrine based on Aquinas and Aristotle assumed that government should care for harmonizing interests of individuals so the stated functioned as an organism, and also cared for moral development of the people, their virtues and their flourishing. Socialists assume that the state is responsible for social justice and general welfare. In fact the state may be responsible for anything what their inhabitants desire, or more precisely for whatever they agree upon, providing it is possible. Locke decreed the ideals of one group of enterprising individuals as the only legitimate aim of the government.

While in his *Treatises* Locke extolled human freedom, in his earlier draft of a constitution for Carolina, the southern part of British colonies in America (1669), he supported aristocratic government, slavery and the expulsion of Native Americans from their land (the reason was that only those who mix their work with natural resources have right to the land. Since Native American mainly hunted and not cultivate land, they could be expelled from it).[70] He might have changed his views later.

However, on closer examination his attitude towards aims seems well-justified. How can ultimate aims (or intrinsic values) be justified? If we reject three absolutist justifications (God's commandments, absolute Good, or normative human nature) they could be accepted as means to other aims (which is impossible since they are ultimate aims) or deduced from more general principles (which in this case do not exist). Some other ways are reliance on tradition (which cannot be applied here sine Locke rejects tradition) or one's irrational intuitions (e.g. inner voices). If all this fails one can put forward a project based on his own personal preferences, his likes and dislikes. Thus Locke did what was to be done and his only deception was a pretence that his personal preferences were identical with natural law. Locke never presented any deep analysis of how human rights and natural law could be discovered and why they were binding. It seems that the used those concepts as useful slogans to introduce his preferences. If the project becomes popular among others it can be implemented and on the basis of its performance the support for it in society increases or decreases. The major problem lies in unpredictability of its success. Those who believe in the project usually have to

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[70]   James Farr, 'Locke, Natural Law, and New World Slavery', *Political Theory* 2008, 36 (4): 495–522.

invest in it before it begins, then they have to adjust to its requirements, learn new skill, change old habits. It usually appears after some time that the results are less than was expected, there are side effects, but to reject the project and retreat to the previous state would be difficult also due to the change in attitudes. So the project is continued although it is neither the original project nor its benefits are as expected before. This is how the progress is made - old ways are abandoned, new ways disappoint, but since there in no return still new solutions must be found for the unexpected developments. Certainly, it has little to do with rational planning.

Locke's project proved successful. In Britain it accompanied fast break with Catholicism, slow deposition of British aristocracy, filling social space with energetic entrepreneurs who developed capitalism. Side effects were poverty and economic expansion into non-European countries where natural economic development was prevented by import of industrial goods from Britain. The culture of minimal states are usually much less dazzling than in states with strong central political power concerned with much more than four basic human rights (it enough to compare the art of the Catholic Spain and the early capitalist Britain.)

Locke and the American Democracy

One hundred years later, American democracy proved to be a great achievement of the Enlightenment Era. British colonists in America, who often conformed to the Puritan religion, from the beginning created self-governing communities (although freedom was limited to white men). When they became independent from Britain, their Constitution was written by their best minds, the Founding Fathers, and based on guidance found in Locke. Even the *American Declaration of Independence* in 1776 chose the same ideals: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by Their Creator with Certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving Their just powers from the consent of the governed". The pursuit of happiness was inserted at the discretion of Jefferson and later it did not appear. Before the *Constitution* was adopted (1797) the so-called Federalists Papers were published (1787-1788), where different political issues were raised, among others how to reduce the impact of selfish groups (factions) on the country (the solution was to build a large republic, in which a small group would not gain advantage, and to introduce a multi-legislative process, which would stop making changes under the influence of momentary enthusiasm and a volatile majority). Despite

the adoption of the *Bill of Rights* the problem of the dictatorship of majority was not fully solved, which drew attention of Alexis de Tocqueville and J.S. Mill in the following century.

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Mandeville and early capitalism in Britain

In the 18th c. Britain underwent a rapid economic development (we will discuss it in connection with Adam Smith). London became the city of consumption (20 thousand stores) and entertainment for the high-born. Then merchants and overseas trade began to play a decisive role (with morality becoming more stringent).

Bernard de Mandeville (1670 - 1733) was not a philosopher, but his *Fable of the Bees: or, Private Vices, Public Benefits* (1705, 1714, 1723) became the expression of the emerging ideological climate in Britain (although it may also be treated as a satire): human vices and immorality contribute to the wealth of the community (the hive developed by the selfishness and greed of the bees who mutually satisfy their vanity), so they should not be corrected. When bees reformed and became altruistic the hive was weakened.

Although Mandeville's fable looks like an apotheosis of unregulated capitalism, it is also possible that it was a satire. British and Irish writers perfected the genre of sophisticated satire. Moor's *Utopia* (1516) might have been a satire on European societies, Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726, 1735) was undoubtedly a political satire, not a book for children.

Hume - ethics

British moral philosopher of the Enlightenment should be read by all those who expect clear answers from philosophy and complain about its detachment from real life. Hume and Smith analysed real life examples and supplemented them with both

thorough analyses and conclusions which formed a moral system. Hume continued ethical discussion opened by moral sense theorists, who opposed both the rationalist tradition and Hobbesian egoism. Hobbes provoked discussion when he formulated his extreme point of view: no objective moral rules or goodness existed, individuals call "good" what they desire (e.g. freedom and security), while morality is a social compromise which should help to achieve as much as possible of what they want.

From an empiricist angle Hobbes was attacked by the Third Earl of Shaftesbury (1671 - 1713) in *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711). Shaftesbury claimed that good was what contributed to the well-being of the system in question (e.g. species, society or the whole cosmos). However, it is not reason but emotions that inform us what is good and motivate our action. We feel it and because of it we act. Human duty is based on emotions which sometimes are split. One emotion is more selfish, another more moral, obligation requires to follow the latter, however, all courses of action are justified emotionally, not rationally. Shaftesbury introduced a notion of second-order emotions (emotions about emotions) that constituted moral sense. Animals also have emotions (or desires) and they can be good for themselves or their species, but only humans can dislike or regret their selfish desires. They are not subjective, moral sense informs about objective goodness of actions and emotions. Shaftesbury also stressed that many human actions are altruistic or at least not egoistic (they do not harm others to promote the interest of an egoist). He maintained that both Hobbes and Locke advocated egoism.[71] His views is understandable, as of an aristocrat who did not have to struggle for money. He regarded Locke (who was employed as a private teacher of the young Shaftesbury) as an ideologist of the middle class entrepreneurs who did want money. His views are example of good-nature pre-Darwinian naitivity - the world is harmonious, emotions inform about goodness, virtue leads to happiness. (British philosophers after Hobbes understood happiness as predominance of pleasure over pain in life).

Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746) was the paradigmatic sentimentalist among moral philosophers of the period (*Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, 1725; *Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions with Illustrations on the Moral Sense,* 1728). As a proponent of the Scottish Enlightenment he strongly influenced other Scottish philosophers, among them Hume and Smith. Nature is benevolent and endows organisms with the ability to emotionally distinguish good from evil, our approval or

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[71] Michael B. Gill, 'Lord Shaftesbury [Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury]', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2011/entries/shaftesbury/>.

condemnations is signalled by pleasure of pain accompanying reflection on actions or desires. In simple words it means that normal persons could not find pleasure in harming others. It was Hutcheson who coined the phrase "the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people," while talking about evaluation of actions.[72] (Although the first who suggested it was Leibniz.[73]

Very important views were expressed by the Anglican bishop Joseph **Butler** (1692 – 1752), the author of *Fifteen Sermons Preached at the Rolls Chapel* (1726) and *Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed* (1736). He attacked Hobbes for his claims about human selfishness and aggressiveness, but also rejected early protestant asceticism. God wants us to be happy in this life and traditional virtues taught by the church leads to it. Human nature consists not only of different passions (affections, appetites) but also of the ability to choose a useful compromise between them. Cool, reasonable self-love (based on due considerations) does not contradict virtues. On the contrary, practising virtues leads to the same end as considered self love, to general happiness (by which he meant pleasure), both of individuals and whole societies. Doing good to others (benevolence) is an important source of pleasure.

Hume continued the efforts of his predecessor opposing both Hobbes' egoism and rationalism (represented in Britain by Samuel Clarke, 1675–1729) and finally constructing a complex though sometimes inconsistent ethical system (in his *Treatise of Human Nature*, 1739–40, and *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, 1751). As an empiricist he thought that all valuable knowledge must be based on observable facts. However, moral claims [e.g. "Stealing is wrong", "You should not steal"] differ from factual claims [e.g., "The earth is spherical"]. A priori knowledge can be justified by reason, a posteriori knowledge is often based on habits. Moral claims are not discovered by reason but originate in our passions (or feelings of approval or disapproval). It is not possible to derive knowledge on what "ought to" be from what "is".[74] (Unfortunately Hume devoted to this famous claim only one paragraph, which made it unclear and ambiguous.) Also reason does not provide motivation to act (morally, and in any other way at all); it is emotions (desire, pleasure, pain) that direct human action.

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[72] Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1725) ed. Wolfgang Leidhold (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2004). Treatise II, Section 3. http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2462 [retrieved 26.01.2015]

[73] Joachim Hruschka, "The Greatest Happiness Principle and Other Early German Anticipations of Utilitarian Theory." *Utilitas* 3 (1991): 165–77.

[74] David Hume, *Treatise on Human Nature*, book 3, part 1, sect. 1.

However, some values, such as those that constitute justice (by which Hume meant honesty with respect to property), have a strong foothold in society. (Hume distinguished natural virtues that arise spontaneously in small communities and artificial virtues which are needed in large communities where natural inclinations are not enough.) They result from a compromise between reasonable selfish individuals serving their benefits (i.e. ultimately each individual benefits from the compromise). First, each one individually approves of certain values which contribute to their self-interest, and then they all together establish rules that are beneficial to society (or to all of them). With prudent selfishness comes the consent to the existence of private property and inequalities - the liquidation of property and introduction of equality would require the use of terror and weaken the incentive to work. However, not all morality stems from selfishness and calculation (here Hume differs from Hobbes). There is also a moral sense based on sympathy (Hume like Smith meant empathy by it), which sometimes motivates us to have selfless concern for others. Egoism does not mean aggressive egoism here, inconsiderate to others.

Criticism and comments

* Reason and passions (emotions, feeling, desires)

Hume (in fact together with Adam Smith) believed that freedom was beneficial to societies. His whole moral philosophy was meant to demonstrate that the old paternalism of kings and priests is not necessary to establish a satisfactory moral order. Freedom does not lead to chaos or war as Hobbes predicted, nor vices need to be tolerated (as in Mandeville). Hume and Smith expressed not only the middle class optimism of the era after the Glorious Revolution, but also a kind of patriotism - as Scots while Scotland was subject to the English king they had good reasons to demonstrate that the king (or other centralist authorities) should interfere as little as possible in social life.

To dismiss traditional (e.g. scholastic) views on morality Hume questioned the possibility that reason might discover what was good and thus he followed Hobbes in rejecting the whole tradition of absolute standards of goodness (Plato's Good, Aquinas' God and the natural law). According to Hume the good originated in feelings of approval (of in self-interest which in fact also is approved).

Antonio Damasio, in his *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain*,[75] gives evidence that reason (intellect) does not provide basis for taking action.

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[75]   Antonio Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain,* revised Penguin edition

Patients with brain damage resulting in the exclusion of emotions, even though they could analyse arguments for and against an action, could not reach decision. Emotions seems necessary. Therefore, morality must be founded on emotions, in giving approval to one of the possible choices.

This appeal to emotions is, however, misleading as it came to be known during a discussion about subjectivism in the 20th century. Some people approve of abortion while other disapprove, they have different emotions. How can they discuss the problem together? If only by comparing their emotions, disagreement will always be the result. So if any agreement is to be reached there must be some possibility of comparing their reasons, assessing whose emotion is better in this case. For instance how disapproval about abortion conflicts with approval for other social values, e.g. freedom of choice, preventing poverty, avoiding suffering etc. So even if values are based on emotions it does not exclude the possibility of rational discussion about their being right or wrong, even if only as comparing different emotions and harmonizing them.

Reason may also play an important role in transferring approval from one object (claim, state of affairs, character trait) to another. If one approves premises stating that that (1) *one should not cause unnecessary suffering* and (2) *eating meat causes unnecessary suffering to animals*; and if reason shows that a conclusion (3) *one should stop eating animals* follows from them, one should disapprove of eating meat. Reason can influence emotional attitude, although it cannot create motivation alone.

Without the possibility of discussing which emotion is right the very aim of ethics would be undermined. Ethics should make possible deliberation on values, argumentation about what is right or wrong, correcting values of others, choosing best solutions in case of doubt. If everything boils down to personal emotions how could any controversy be solved otherwise than by the fight?

* What is approved

It is also unclear what kind of beings are approved or disproved, or what is good or bad. On the one hand Hume focused on virtues and vices, i.e. character traits. They are good or bad separately and not in relation to one another. On the other hand Hume insisted that our emotions preferred actions that were useful for the whole society (as in Shaftesbury). The only thing good in itself, as an ultimate aim is then the interest of society, while individual virtues are good only as means to this end. So finally when we

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think that lying (or a vice of being a liar) is bad it is either because we feel strong emotional disapproval for it or because we consider it harmful for the good of society. The former attitude is deontological, the latter consequentialist or teleological (they will be discussed later in this book).

* Justice and public benefits

Hume did not want to follow pessimistic views of Hobbes and even Mandeville - that everyone seeks his or her own selfish benefit, while the benefit of society is at most a by-product of it. He postulated - together with Smith - that human nature is inclined to cooperation, which arises spontaneously if it is not prevented by deliberate actions of individuals. No formal agreement is needed to establish it (as in Hobbes or Rousseau). Sympathy and rational egoism are enough.

"Thus, two men pull the oars of a boat by common convention for common interest, without any promise or contract; thus gold and silver are made the measures of exchange; thus speech and words and language are fixed by human convention and agreement. Whatever is advantageous to two or more persons, if all perform their part; but what loses all advantage if only one perform, can arise from no other principle There would otherwise be no motive for any one of them to enter into that scheme of conduct."[76]

(Hume obviously neglected that each of the oarsmen had his own individual benefit in view, and not any "common interest". The example of oarsmen is carefully selected - they have to cooperate on equal terms to achieve their aims. But consider two lost persons in a deserts who are digging a well because they need water. They have similar interests but each of them may want the other to do most of the work because no matter who works more the water will be for both of them. However, in this case cooperation may not be so easy (which leads to the problems of tragedy of the commons or the prisoner's dilemma).

Moreover, Hume claims that justice (here understood as rules on the distribution of property) aims at the good of society.

„THAT Justice is useful to society, and consequently that PART of its merit, at least, must arise from that consideration, it would be a superfluous undertaking to

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[76] David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, Appendix III. A 1912 Reprint Of The Edition Of 1777 http://www.gutenberg.org/files/4320/4320-h/4320-h.htm#2H_APPE1 [retrieved 6.08.2014]

prove. That public utility is the SOLE origin of justice, and that reflections on the beneficial consequences of this virtue are the SOLE foundation of its merit (…)."[77]

He then presents a serious of thought experiments demonstrating that under certain conditions rules of respecting private property would not be valid (e.g when everyone steals, when no reciprocity is expected). His conclusions seem unwarranted. He overlooks that this cases can be explained in a simpler way - that under certain conditions rules of justices would be broken because they would bring no benefit to the person who might break them. So if someone stops practising virtues, it is not because it would not be beneficial to society, but because it would not be beneficial to the person. One's concern for the benefit of society may be only a means to one's own benefit (as in Hobbes). Hume assumed that concern for social benefit is based on the emotional approval of it. Consulting our emotions we discover that we want to act for this benefit and then invent means for it (moral norms). It seem that Hume hesitated between two interpretations of social benefit - it is either an aim in itself, or a means to personal benefits. Or perhaps both social and personal benefit can be an aim in itself (as both are emotionally approved) but they may be conflicting (Hume was unwilling to admit this but finally he mentioned the free rider problem - see below).

When Hobbes, Smith or Hume talk about benefits or interests (public or private) the very concept of it seem unclear. What is the public benefit, the good of society? For some it may be its strength in international relations, for others its wealth, but for still others cultural development. The problem becomes sharp when what serves one of those benefits at the same time harms another. What counted as "useful to society" in Sparta (a lot of military training, not wasting time on reflection) might not counted as useful in Athens.

Cooperation is beneficial - but for whom? If a producer and a consumer cooperate, it is beneficial for both of them, but separately, rather than for each of them. A producer wants to sell and earn money, a consumer has money and wants to buy. Their common interest is an illusion. Their individual interests are not enough to justify the claim that cooperation is beneficial to society or that rules which enable cooperation are beneficial to society. Cooperation between a master and a slave is also beneficial for each of them but rules which make it possible are usually more beneficial for the master than for the slave. Most moral norms serve the good or interest of different members of society to a different degree. Feudal morality favoured aristocracy, bourgeois morality

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[77] David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, Section III On Justice, Part I.* A 1912 Reprint Of The Edition Of 1777 http://www.gutenberg.org/files/4320/4320-h/4320-h.htm#2H_SECT3 [retrieved 6.08.2014]

favoured energetic proprietors, apartheid morality served more one racial section of society. Many moral discussions focus on how to balance interests of different persons. The claim that morality servers the whole society simply avoids this problem by blurring it.

Even individual benefit, personal self-interest is an unclear concept. What should an egoist aim at? Someone may think that sleeping long and going to parties is best for him, after a few years he may regret it. It is then understandable why Bentham (discussed below) was so excited when he found a simple solution to those problems: self-interest consists in the maximisation of personal pleasure, while public benefit consists in the maximisation of social pleasure, which is the sum of individual pleasure of its members.

* How to justify moral rules and evaluations

Even if we agree that values are grounded in emotions of approval and disapproval there are many possibilities of understanding their justificatory power. According to intuitionists like Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, who believed in moral sense, when one thinks about a character trait or action, moral sense perceives its moral quality (if it is right or wrong) and informs the person about it by means of an emotion of approval or disapproval. Emotions inform about what is really, objectively good, thus what is good on this ground is valid for everyone. According to subjectivist all emotions are subjective and the same object can be accompanied by different emotions in different minds. What one approves someone else may disapprove. It seems that Hume felt compelled to abandon the former interpretation.

A third possibility, perhaps the most favoured by Hume and Smith, is that it is common human nature that determines what is approved and what disapproved. Everyone wants to be liked, avoid suffering and not cause it to others, and above all, protect their own interests. Like atoms with their natural properties, spontaneously but in accordance with the laws of nature people endowed with natural tendencies create morality and free, self-regulating market. It is common human nature that decides what is right or wrong.

The above claim taken literally seems utterly mistaken. (1) Human nature is not common, humans have different genes and personalities. And spontaneously they have different tastes, preferences and values. (2) Many spontaneous preferences causes harm, are cruel and by common standards immoral. (3) In the political sphere the most common spontaneous preference is to select a leader, a ruling elite and to obey their

orders. It can be witnessed all over the world and at all times. But it does not mean that it is the best political solution. It is only the most natural. (4) One may also ask what is the aim of ethical reflection if human nature spontaneously discovers what is right and good. And why is there so much evil in the world. Hume explains that good morality should be formed by following natural human inclinations but does not give hints what to choose if controversies arise. This attitude seems largely mistaken. Human societies can spontaneously give rise to very different moral systems, those systems constantly evolve especially when they come into contact, which is unavoidable in the face of globalization, especially when interests and ideals of different groups are conflicting. Controversies appear very often within different systems and it is the aim of ethics to devise methods of solving them. Hume's philosophy seems to overlook this problem placing too much trust in spontaneous genesis of morality.

Hume was to a certain extent aware of the complexity of moral problem, which explains why his system was not coherent and is open to conflicting interpretations. For instance he was convinced that it is in our interest to establish government in order to restrict individual selfishness which may harm the society and most of its members. It is a basically Hobbesian solution, although Hume suggest a civil government (or "the magistrates').[78] Such government should be impartial and benevolent to protect citizens against their own weaknesses (since breaking the rules of justice out of selfishness is a weakness which can destroy the welfare of all). One may wonder how Hume could ensure that such government would protect justice and not its own interest. However, sudden inconsistencies of Hume's system show that his inquisitive mind discovered serious difficulties which needed overcoming but found unsatisfactory remedies.

Hume was certain that what is morally right cannot be found by reason in the objective world. It rests on human "passions", emotions. desires. But stating this is not the solution to moral questions, it is only the first step in the right direction. To find the optimum moral solutions we must have tools to discuss preferences of different persons, compare different options and arrive at a compromise that can be accepted by all. These are the issues discussed by moral philosophers (contractualists and contractarians) in the last few decades.

The Free Rider Problem

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[78]   David Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, bk. 3, part 2, section 7.
  http://www.gutenberg.org/files/4705/4705-h/4705-h.htm#link2H_4_0094 [retrieved 3.08.2014]

Hume was aware[79] that his justification of morality is faulty and even when an action or rule is beneficial to all it does not guarantee that all will perform this action or respect the rule. This is the free rider problem that will be discussed in the next section (on the prisoner's dilemma).

Further reading

Paul Russell, *The Riddle of Hume's Treatise: Skepticism, Naturalism, and Irreligion*, Oxford University Press 2010.

Aaron Garrett, "Joseph Butler's Moral Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2014/entries/butler-moral/>.

Michael B. Gill, "Lord Shaftesbury [Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury]", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2011/entries/shaftesbury/>.

Alexander Broadie, "Scottish Philosophy in the 18th Century", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2013/entries/scottish-18th/>.

William Edward Morris, Charlotte R. Brown, "David Hume", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/hume/>.

Rachel Cohon, "Hume's Moral Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2010 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2010/entries/hume-moral/>.

The Prisoner's Dilemma

Prisoner's dilemma is one of the most discussed issues in social sciences, the mathematical game was invented in 1950 by Melvin Dresher and Merrill Flood, the story was later developed by Albert W. Tucker.

This is one of its many versions (which differs from the original version by Tucker). Two prisoners suspected of committing a crime are in custody in separate cells. Each is asked by the investigator to testify against his partner. If both prisoners remain loyal to each other, each will receive two years in prison. If only one behaves unfairly, he will come out after a few months, while his loyal companion gets 20 years in prison. If both blame each other - each will be sentenced to 10 years. Possible moves of the game can be presented as follows:

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[79]   David Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, bk. 3, part 2, sect. 8.

configuration	Prisoner A receives	Prisoner A chooses	Prisoner B chooses	Prisoner B receives
1	2 years (reward R)	loyalty (he cooperates C)	loyalty (he cooperates C)	2 years (reward R)
2	a few months (temptation T)	betrayal (he defects D)	loyalty (he cooperates C)	20 years (sucker's payoff S)
3	20 years (sucker's payoff S)	loyalty (he cooperates C)	betrayal (he defects D)	a few months (temptation T)
4	10 years (uncooperative payoff U)	betrayal (he defects D)	betrayal (he defects D)	10 years (uncooperative payoff U)

The players have to choose between loyalty C (cooperation) and betrayal D (defection). Depending on the behaviour of the other party, they may obtain payoff of temptation T, reward R, uncooperative payoff U or sucker's payoff S, where $T > R > U > S$.

Putting it less formally, the prisoners would take most advantage from mutual loyalty. However, the prisoner who decides to cooperate, runs the risk of becoming a loser (a sucker), but if he betrays his companion, he has the highest chance of the temptation payoff - if his partner will be a loser. Or, in another perspective, no matter what the accomplice does, it is always profitable to betray (defect) than to stay loyal (cooperate). Thus, usually the result of the game is configuration 4, which for each individually and for both prisoners together is worse than 1. However, achieving configuration 1 would require a guarantee of loyalty, which no one is able to get in the game. Scenario 4 is a state of Nash equilibrium (Nash my be widely known as the main character of the film *A Beautiful Mind*), because on the basis of individual rationality it is the optimal choice for each player - with either choice of the other player, disloyalty is always better than loyalty (10 years instead of 20, and few months instead of two years). Other illustrations of the prisoner's dilemma are two stores that compete by reducing prices (if both reduce them to a comparable extent, each will lose margin, and none will attract customers), or two powers increasing military spending (if both increase comparably, they will lose money gaining no advantage). However, it must be remembered that although for a long time military competition between the U.S. and the USSR resembled the prisoner's dilemma, finally the USSR ran out of money and collapsed. If both sides agreed to disarmament believing it was the optimal

compromise, the USSR might have lasted to this day. Sometimes it is better to run the risk, compete and win.

One of the attempts to remedy the stalemate situation was to use evolutionary perspective (modelled on rivalry between hawks and doves). It showed that players applying non-cooperative strategies may not dominate societies. It was based on arbitrary or unrealistic assumptions that could hardly be met in real-life situations[80]. Above all, not individuals, but entire communities are subject to evolution, and the majority of them is destroyed, when the proportion between hawks and doves turns out to be wrong. This blind model of evolution is not what civilised societies strive to obtain. However, in principle the development of societies followed this path - societies which chose the bad model of cooperation were defeated by neighbours who chose a better one.

Another attempt was introduced by metagames, in which choice depended on convictions about the strategy that might be selected by the other party[81]. The results were rules such as: "Cooperate if and only if you are convinced that your opponent will be cooperating if and only if he is convinced that you will be cooperating Their usefulness in real world is limited to a situation, when beliefs of the co-operator are well-known.

The gravest trial was to develop a strategy of punishing the opponent for non-cooperative behaviour in the dilemma played repeatedly between the same players (iterated). Players punishing each other mutually for the uncooperative conduct were supposed to force the cooperation in subsequent duels. It was described at the beginning of 1980 by Robert Axelrod, who earlier organised a few duels of computer programs. The winning strategy was tit-for-tat by A. Rapaport. The player applying it begins with cooperation (the strategy is friendly), when he encounters an uncooperative response he also starts being dishonest (the strategy is also retaliatory), but when the opponent is deciding to cooperate - in the next game tit-for-tat changes back to cooperation (the strategy is forgiving).

Moreover, transparency is required - the opponent must know what to expect (why the opponent is supposed to trust information can be a problem - here the possibility of an intentional deception, i.e. the breach of trust, is arising). This strategy, although the best, has a lot of defects – (1) it is making the victory impossible (at most a

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[80]   J. McKenzie Alexander, 'Evolutionary Game Theory', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2009 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2009/entries/game-evolutionary/>.
[81]   Philip D. Straffin, *Game Theory and Strategy*, The Mathematical Association of America 1993, Part Two, p. 63-125.

draw can be achieved); (2) it requires many iterations, which in real world is not always possible (when the cheated company is going bankrupt, it cannot punish the partner in the next duel); (3) if it is known how many times the game will be fought, the cooperation may not take place at all (in the last duel it isn't worthwhile to cooperate, or else it is possible to become a sucker and it won't be possible to punish the partner for disloyalty; in that case it isn't worthwhile to cooperate in the duel before the last one, because in the very last one the opponent will choose a punishing strategy; in that case it isn't worthwhile to cooperate in the third from the end - and like in a domino chain or a backward mathematical induction - it is not worth to cooperate at all); (4) this strategy sometimes is losing. Later in time a safer version of this strategy was developed: tit-for-two-tats. The player wanting to force the cooperation breaks cooperation only after his opponent fails to cooperate twice. This protects from entering the retaliatory spiral initiated with accidental absence of co-operation[82]. This strategy can, however, turn out to be very disadvantageous, when the opponent often applies "accidental" absence of co-operation (if player A is uncooperative in every other game, player B applying tit-for-two-tats will be the sucker in half of the games never breaching confidence himself!).

At present, learning strategies are being developed. They analyse the pattern of behaviour of the opponent in many preceding games[83].

Every fraud and abusing one's readiness for the cooperation poses a similar problem. The classical prisoners' dilemma is only a special case of dilemmas of public cooperation. In 1968 Garrett Hardin[84] described another kind of dilemmas based on a similar principle - being guided by their own interest players expose the good of community to a risk, which after some time affects themselves as well. He named it Tragedy of the Commons. These are a few examples:

The group of people is going to a restaurant and decides to divide the bill evenly among themselves. Everyone orders expensive dishes knowing that if they order little they will be paying for others' extravagancies. As a result everyone is paying a lot.

Every fisherman catches too much fish, because they are afraid of bankruptcy (if they catch less, others - catching more - will have cheaper costs), as a result they all run out of fish to catch.

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[82] Steven Kuhn, 'Prisoner's Dilemma', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/prisoner-dilemma/>.

[83] Ibidem.

[84] Garrett Hardin, 'Tragedy of the Commons,' *Science* 1968, December vol. 162.

Villages pour sewage water into the lake in order to spare the cost of building sewage treatment plant. After some time everyone must pay for cleaning the lake, which costs much more than the construction of a sewage treatment plant.

Some passengers do not pay for the ticket because they estimate that if others pay the line will keep operating. As a result the line generates loss and is shut down.

A grenade is thrown into a room full of people. Everyone can rescue all others by covering them with his body and dying, but nobody is willing to do it, so everyone dies.

A voter is not going to elections calculating that one vote does not affect the result. As a result, the selected candidate will be supported by an extreme minority and the majority will be dissatisfied.

Patients demand expensive and unnecessary tests paid by insurance, which in turn leads to a continuous increase in insurance fees.

During a drought it is possible to economise water supply, if everyone agrees to limit their water consumption. However, everyone expects that others shall do it. As a result, nobody economises on water and after a short time water is cut off for everyone.

In an employee-owned company, where everyone considers themselves to be the owner, everyone is trying to shirk from work. As a result the company goes bankrupt and everyone becomes unemployed.

Still, people do happen to cooperate. How is it possible?

Hobbes and Locke's solution was to appoint an arbiter or government who would warrant all agreements. Governments can also be egotistically dishonest. So it wouldn't be sufficient to appoint a government, it should still be controlled, along with the bodies that keep it in check - still *ad infinitum*. Elinor Ostrom[85] suggested that appointing a government would only increase the number of possible dilemmas - dilemmas of second degree, embedded in dilemmas of the first degree will arise. And so is the situation without exit?

Martin A. Novak and Karl Sigmund suggested that cooperation improved reputation and therefore is favoured even if it does not pay in terms of profit. In certain species of birds helping is so frequent that even competition for being more helpful is observed. The cost of helping is returned in higher status achieved by acts of altruism[86].

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[85]   Elinor Ostrom, *Governing the Commons*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1990.
[86]   Martin A. Novak, Karl Sigmund, 'Evolution of indirect reciprocity by image scoring,' *Nature* 1998, no 393, p. 573-576.

James Rilling and his team examined the spontaneous readiness of people to cooperate. Participants in experiment chose more often cooperation than disloyalty, and MRI showed that even cooperation without award gave them pleasure[87].

An extended experiment was suggested by Fehr Ernst from the University of Zurich and Simon Gächter from the University of St Gallen. They invented a financial game, in which participants who had not known each other had to decide whether to invest money in a joint undertaking, or refuse, and then exploit the prosocial attitude of others. Players founded a common fund. They doubled the collected money and then divided it evenly among all the players, irrespective of how much they invested. The group as a whole gained the most when all players invested the maximum accepted sum, but the first traitor who refused to invest profited more than others at their expense.

In the Swiss experiment 240 players were divided into small groups so that any two players met only once. Until financial penalties were introduced for the ones who didn't invest their money for the common good, and only relied one the generosity of others, the cooperation failed entirely after six rounds. In order to punish egoists other players stopped cooperating.

However, when penalties were imposed on egoists, the common good triumphed: in this case over 90 per cent of players increased their input. The most effective was the strategy of "altruistic punishing" in which persons imposing a penalty incurred certain modest costs. The researchers stated that in spite of the suffered loss this strategy had given some psychological (but not financial) gain to players since it created the chance of relieving the anger towards free riders. The phenomenon of unselfish punishing of the egoist seems to matter greatly in creating good climate for public cooperation[88].

The researchers explicitly rejected the thesis about the *homo oeconomicus* who is driven exclusively by aspiration to egotistical maximisations of profits. A vast majority of people equally strongly aspire to enforce justice, equality and reciprocity. No society or community was found, in which pursuit of one's own interests would be the foundation of social life[89].

The prisoner's dilemma is an example of a dispute strongly influenced by ideology. The supporters of economic liberalism prove that without central government

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[87] James K. Rilling et al. 'A Neural Basis for Social Cooperation,' *Neuron* 2002, vol. 35, 18 July, p. 395-405.

[88] Ernst Fehr, U. Fischer, 'The Nature of Human Altruism,' *Nature* 2003, vol. 425 (23 Sept.) s. 785-791.

[89] *Foundations of Human Sociality. Economic Experiments and Ethnographic Evidence from Fifteen Small-Scale Societies,* J. Henrich, R. Boyd, S. Bowles, C. Camerer, E. Fehr and H. Gintis (eds.), Oxford University Press, New York 2004.

cooperation is still possible, while the opponents of liberalism show that without central institutions that maintain order and punish free riders or swindlers, a widespread mistrust is inevitable. On the whole the answer to the question why people cooperate is manifold. Sometimes cooperation is enforced by (1) political authorities (that may become corrupt and oppressive), by (2) the equals (e.g., neighbours) who control each other (which works only in small communities and can suppress individualism), sometimes individuals are forced by (3) their conscience, convictions or habits which control them from the inside and finally if they are motivated by (4) inborn inclinations (developed in the process of evolution - like sympathy, reciprocity or the need to punish free riders). In fact all these motivations act simultaneously, but in different proportion, and neither of them is perfect. Some of them can create self-regulating mechanisms, which, however, are slow and costly. Often they only help regain balance after a disaster when cooperation breaks (economic depressions are perfect examples). This is the reason why although self-regulating mechanisms are the last resort, civilised societies seek more comfortable solutions instead of relying on them.

There is also a possibility of extending the dilemma to encompass market problems. "Bill has a blue cap and would prefer a red one, while Rose has a red cap and would prefer a blue one. Both prefer two caps to any one and either of the caps to no cap at all. They are each given a choice between keeping the cap they have or giving it to the other. This "exchange game" has the same structure as the story about the prisoners. Whether Rose keeps her cap or gives to Bill, Bill is better off keeping his and she is better off if he gives it to her. Whether Bill keeps his cap or gives it to Rose, Rose is better off keeping hers and he is better off if she gives it to him. But both are better off if they exchange caps than if they both keep what they have. The new story suggests that the Prisoner's Dilemma also occupies a place at the heart of our economic system. It would seem that any market designed to facilitate mutually beneficial exchanges will need to overcome the dilemma or avoid it."[90]

Early British capitalism

A few distinct trends have contributed to the emergence of capitalism, its three main pillars were (1) trade, (2) banking system of money lending and capital market; (3) intensive industrial production based on leased workforce. (Ad 1) Trade on a large scale existed in different periods of history (when Phoenicians travelled around the

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[90] Steven Kuhn, 'Prisoner's Dilemma', The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/prisoner-dilemma/>.

Mediterranean, under the Mongol Empire, in the Islamic states in the Middle Ages). It was not very popular during the European Middle Ages (though Northern Italian states were exceptions, especially Venice) but accelerated in the 16th c. when overseas colonies were established. Although a few countries were involved in the Atlantic trade (mainly Spain, Portugal, The, France, Britain), the modern liberal trade empire was build by the Netherlands (the Dutch East India Company was established in 1602, it bankrupted by the end of the 18th century) to be replaced by Britain in by the 18th century (the British East India Company was established in 1600).

(Ad 2) Northern Italian cities are credited with the invention of the banking system in the late Middle Ages, which contributed to the development of Venice and the Renaissance in Florence. The role of credit is crucial to modern capitalism. Those who take credit today spend money which they hope to earn in the future. Thus the whole institution of capitalist credit involves a trust in future economic development. If economy stops developing capitalism with all its institutions will collapse. Thus the whole system makes everyone dependent on future economic progress.

(Ad 3) The history of capitalist workforce began with the Black Death in the 14th century which destroyed the Medieval structure of self-sufficient feudal agriculture in Britain. Before that serfs were forced to produce for lords, there was little interest in technological innovation, co-operation with one another, selling on the market and competition. Lords spent capital on warfare and conspicuous consumption. After the Black Death, which might kill as much as half of the population in Western Europe (but almost none in Poland) peasants who became scarce formed free workforce hired by landowners. The collapse of the manorial system in England created a class of tenant-farmers with more freedom to market their goods and thus more incentive to invest in new technologies. The landowners did not have to care for their existence and welfare any more (so the state ceased to be organic as in the Catholic Medieval doctrine). Market mechanism entered the stage.

In the 16th century monasteries were dissolved by Henry VIII in England, which further contributed to the decline of the organic Medieval society. Yet the development of woolen manufacturing was strongly promoted already by Henry VII (1485–1509).

At the same time through enclosures of common grounds in villages peasants were deprived of part of their income, impoverished and forced to move to cities as to provide cheap labour (the process started in the 16th century and lasted till the 19th century). The turn of the 18th and 19th centuries was the peak of the enclosure process. Common land in villages was privatised, which restricted the resources of small farmers

who bankrupted and were forced to move to cities to form an impoverished mass of factory workers willing to take any job for minimal wages. (Land was consolidated in the hands of a new class of owners, the gentry, much richer than the old aristocracy, and often turned into pasture. Already Thomas More in his *Utopia*, 1516, predicted that in the process sheep would devour people.)

Calvinism and Puritanism prepared large sections of society to hard work without many benefits, thus creating work ethics based on inner-worldly asceticism (as described by Max Weber).

Yet greed and consumption always played an important role in capitalism (greed is inherent in human nature and it is naïve to assume as Max Weber did that capitalism could bypass it). In the 18th century London with its 20 000 shops became a centre of consumptions.

When in the 17th and 18th centuries France practised mercantile policy of supporting export, Britain did actually the same but more efficiently, creating better financial institutions (The Bank of England, The Stock Exchange), better trade infrastructure, better disciplined workforce and more energetic entrepreneurs. In 1721 Robert Walpole, the first British prime minister, introduced a reform aimed at promoting manufacturing industries. Duties on imported raw materials and exported manufactured goods were lowered, subsidies to export and duties on imported manufactured goods introduced. According to Ha-Joon Chang[91] Britain built its economic power using protectionism, not free market or free trade.

Finally the industrial revolution began in Britain with mechanized cotton mills, steam engines, coal mining and railway networks. In 1771 the self-made man, inventor and entrepreneur Richard Arkwright built the world's first water-powered mill at Cromford, employing 200 people mainly women and children, the model of future industrial factories.

Thus English capitalism was born, based on the pillars of a stable state law, trade, banking system, chap labour, consumer markets, work ethics.[92] This was accompanied by a morally disciplined attitude of the majority of the population (both workers and capitalists); although landowners held long their position in society it did not inhibit the development of an economy protected by law. This general development was

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[91] Ha-Joon Chang, "Kicking Away the Ladder: The "Real" History of Free Trade," Foreign Policy In Focus (Silver City, NM: Interhemispheric Resource Center, December 2003). http://www.personal.ceu.hu/corliss/CDST_Course_Site/Readings_old_2012_files/Ha-Joon%20Chang%20-%20Kicking%20Away%20the%20Ladder-The%20%E2%80%9CReal%E2%80%9D%20History%20of%20Free%20Trade.pdf [retrieved 7.10.2015]
[92] James Fulcher, *Capitalism.* Oxford University Press 2004.

responsible for optimism and individualism expressed by many philosophers of the era. The state and parliamentary acts played an important role in precipitating pro-capitalist social changes.[93]

Smith

Adam Smith (1723-1790) was the author of the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), where he discussed two mechanisms that led to spontaneous creation of pro-social morality.

The first is "sympathy", by which he meant the ability to feel the emotions of others (so it should rather be called empathy). "Sympathy" overcomes selfishness and is the foundation of justice. Smith, like Hume, harboured the illusion that sensitivity to the suffering of others prevents harming them. (It is sometimes the case, but not always.)

The second mechanism is the "impartial spectator" that develops in everyone's mind, embodies the moral point of view, and requires acting in accordance with impartial rules (similar to the Golden Rule). In fact, the reason for this is selfish – everyone wants to be liked by others and "the spectator" helps to achieve this.

Smith like Hume described how morality is actually formed as a natural process. Society imposes the impartial spectator view on individuals who first internalize it and then can use it even to oppose dominant social views. Smith devoted much attention to moral psychology but then he suggested a normative solution for moral questions. While "sympathy" for Hume's meant the ability to understand the actual emotions of others, for Smith it became the ability to understand what the ideal impartial observer would feel in a given situation - and this was what one should respect and follow.

So even if people have to compete, the two mechanisms guarantee that they will behave morally.

Criticism and comments of Smith's moral philosophy

Smith's solution to moral problem was the impartial observer. Several reservation about it can be suggested. (1) It is not true that morality is based mainly on impartiality. As Marx observed, the official morality often represented the interests of the ruling class. The king favours morality which regards killing the king as the greatest crime. Impartiality is to some extent genetically supported (hence the popularity of the Golden Rule) but it is not the only basis for morality.

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[93] More details but also in a concise form can be found in: James Fulcher, *Capitalism.* Oxford University Press 2004. Robert C. Allen, *Global Economic History.* Oxford University Press 2011. Manfred B. Steger, *Globalization.* Oxford University Press 2009.

(2) A society may agree to construct its morality on the foundation of impartiality. However, it is not at all clear what it should mean. A Darwinian may also favour impartiality - all organism compete on an impartial basis and then the strongest get the lions share while the weakest are eliminated. A referee in a sports game should be impartial which means that he should follow the rules and not be biased towards individual players. But a referee does not establish rules, the rules are given and he only executes them. The aim of the game is that the best should win and the concept who is the best is defined by the rules (e.g. the team who scores most goals). In morality it is first the rules that should be established and there is often no impartial way of doing so. A referee should be disinterested in who personally will win the game. In social life different groups fight for their privileges, e.g. peasants and aristocrats. An impartial person should be disinterested in who will win provided it serves the good of society. What is the good or benefit of social life? The one of Athens or of Sparta? The decision must be based on preferences, on desires. It may be equality or perfectionism, but the choice of the aim cannot be impartial. We can be impartial only in executing rules that are already created or in selecting means to an end. In selecting aims one has to rely on some preferences, likes and dislikes (unless one believes in divine commands, Platonic Good or normative human nature).

Perhaps the very combination of sentimentalism and impartiality is impossible. Moral choice rests on passions (emotions, approval, desires) and cannot be impartial. If I prefer fruit ice-cream over chocolate ice-cream on the basis of my emotions, it means that I like one more than the other. How my liking could be impartial? How the very idea of emotional attitude of the impartial spectator could be possible?

A belief in natural mechanisms of morality is an illusion. People spontaneously divide into groups which may be compassionate with and impartial towards members of the same group, but may hate, exploit and kill members of other groups (in the following century Marx made it a central point of his philosophy).

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At that time the two dominant doctrines concerning the wealth of nations were mercantilism and physiocracy. Mercantilists (e.g. Josiah Child and Jean-Baptiste Colbert, the French minister of finance from 1661 to 1683) equalled national wealth with monetary reserves acquired through a positive balance of trade. Since mercantilism was connected to political absolutism it also advised both strong governmental

regulations impose by force and intense exploitation of the workforce (also child labour) to promote export.

Physiocracy (Francois Quesnay, *The Tableau Economique*, 1758) was the opposition to Colbert. It praised a laissez-faire attitude, although at the same time emphasized agriculture as the only source of wealth.

After publishing his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* Smith took a trip to France, where he became acquainted with the economics by Quesnay. Smith's later work, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776) is the single most important book in the history of economy. Its central theme is how to provide cheap goods to satisfy the needs of the people. His solution emphasizes the self-interested competition in controlled circumstances. However, Smith never revoked his earlier views on morality and perhaps considered them as not contradictory.

Smith's theory is often misused to justify unrestrained free market and the state whose role is reduced to a minimum. Yet the original Smith's views were quite different. Smith was an Enlightenment idealist who wanted to contribute to the social welfare, and improve the situation of all members of society. Observing the development of capitalism in Britain (and the lack of economic development in France) he described two simple mechanism of (1) allocation guided by the market exchange and (2) the division of labour.

Although "an invisible hand" of the market is mentioned only once it *The Wealth of Nations* (in a context where the meaning is quite general - even human selfishness and disadvantages contribute to the public good, which maybe is a reference to Mandeville's fable of bees; Book IV, chap. 2), the self-regulating mechanism of the market is central in the whole book. (Self-regulating in the sense that the optimal result, the welfare of the whole society, is achieved automatically by the marked exchange without local interventions from the government or any similar body - although the goveenment protects the very mechanism called 'free market'.) The source of wealth is work and exchange, which enables everyone to purchase what they want, to everyone's benefit. People sell what they possess in abundance and buy what they need; thus even sheer exchange without creating new goods profitd all the involved parties (the idea later developed by Ricardo in his theory of comparative advantage). Smith believed that in the long run actual market prices of goods would be equal to their natural prices, determined largely by the cost of production (Book I, Chapter 7–8).

Certainly market would not satisfy every need. The result of the free market mechanisms would be the optimal satisfaction of demand on a social scale, given the

available resources (time, energy, skills, organizational possibilities, natural resources). The main claim by Smith was that prices set by the market direct this process of satisfying social demand better than administrative decisions of the king or government and their bureaucracy.

Also unrestricted international exchange will lead to the wealth of humankind. Thus he condemned tariffs protecting local market. It was Smith who formulated the idea, later used by the critics of 19th-century imperialism, that colonies provide new markets (Book IV, Chapter 2).

Engaging in commerce and production also shapes positively one's character developing self-control, punctuality, commitment to keeping promises and deferring short-term gratification for long-term benefit (which were also the puritan virtues).

Smith devoted much space to extolling the usefulness of the division of labour (his famous example of a pin whose production can be split into several small steps), which constitutes a theme different from the "invisible hand" (Book I, chaps. 1–3).

There is still one more Enlightenment motive in the Smith's vision: the division of labour and the world wide free market will contribute to universal peace. Wars are usually waged by armies of peasants between countries which do not exchange goods of a market basis.

Smith's project is filled with **the spirit of the Enlightenment**. Society consists of individuals, they are basically equal (everyone counts as one and no-one for more than one, as it was put later by Bentham). People have different desires and while competing in the market they aim at their own interest (in this context this concept is clear - everyone wants to earn as much as possible). If the market is properly structured their actions will result in the optimal satisfaction of desires of all individuals. Smith was close to Bentham's utilitarianism formulated not much later. If Bentham thought that the aim of morality was to provide the greatest amount of pleasure for the greatest number of people he actually reformulated the social aim proposed by Smith which can be expressed as to provide the greatest amount of goods to satisfy needs of the greatest number of people.

The leading theme of the Enlightenment was how to coordinate individual pursuits of individual aims with social pursuit of the common good. Some philosophers denied the existence of selfishness (claiming that people are benevolent and given the opportunity will cooperate altruistically), others advised to introduce state coercion (Rousseau). Smith and Hume although allowing some extent of both altruism and

coercion added a new option: selfishness would promote social good if executed within controlled circumstance of the properly organized free market, in which individual producers compete by lowering prices, raising the quality of their products or changing their profile of production.

Further Reading:

Muller, *Adam Smith in His Time and Ours*, chap. 10.

Smith, Adam, The Wealth of Nations. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1976. Originally published 1776.

Criticism and comments

More criticism will be gathered in the chapter summarizing the development of capitalism in the second part of this book. Here only a few basic points about Smith's conception are stressed.

(1) Free market needs regulations. Smith was fully aware that his free market can be easily derailed by human self interest. Competition must function within certain limits. Smith, as much as Hume, was fully aware of the prisoner's dilemma: although fair competition is socially beneficial, every individual motivated by her self-interest may be tempted to break rules of fair competition. Producers may cheat consumers, bully other producers, steal. Since every market involves numerous regulations (e.g. about child labour, safety, guarantees, working hours, trade unions etc.) many variations of markets, free or regulated in different aspects, are possible. Every change in regulations might result in different outcomes in terms of justice, distribution of wealth or style of life in general. Who should set the framework for fair competition? Usually it is the responsibility state authorities, but then they aim at strengthening the state, not the whole humankind, and even not all the inhabitants of the state.

There seems to be two different understandings of the freedom of the market. In one of them free market can be constructed and protected by strong political forces and then it will function to the benefit of humankind. In the other understanding it is enough to remove all regulations and out of human selfishness a perfect order would spontaneously arise providing humankind with greatest possible welfare. It is misleading to attribute the latter to Smith. It is the responsibility of political authorities to choose regulations (or their lack) for different spheres of economic activity in society - in order to achieve the desirable outcome.

Smith did not approve of a weak government. Believing that the more economically developed a country is the greater its government must be he devoted much attention to ways of collecting taxes (Book 5, Chapter 2).

(2) Free international trade is difficult to obtain. Although international capitalism might benefit the whole humankind, in real world free market may develop only within regulations imposed and execute by states authorities. There may be different solutions to the problem: establishing a world government, creating a federation of independent national states, creating multinational empires, like the ancient Roman empire.

As the history of economy demonstrates, all powerful industrial countries required state protectionism to develop.[94]

In 1791 Alexander Hamilton, American Founding Father and 1st U.S. Treasury Secretary, presented The Report on the Subject of Manufactures claiming that unless America adopted tariffs and subsidized its industry it would remain underdeveloped and dependent on import form Europe. Although the U.S. Congress opposed it at first in a few months his suggestion were implemented.[95] America was protected by tariffs until World War Two. The father of German protectionism, Friedrich List, claimed in *The National System of Political Economy* (1841) free international trade is universally beneficial only among equally developed parties. Otherwise it favours the stronger ones while blocks the development of the weaker ones (which manifested even within the EU, where strong industry of the old member states blocked the development of infant industries in new member states).

(3) Free market spontaneously leads to monopolization. Smith was a bitter critique of the East India Company, the largest enterprise of his time. On the whole he was mistrustful about professional businessmen who use their skills at the expense of average consumers. Smith devoted chapter 1-8 of Book IV to discussing vices of members of different classes. (He was malicious in the final pages of Book I, Chapter 9.) Yet even if a perfect free market was established very soon it would produce losers and winners. It is impossible to maintain competition between small family businesses. After a short time many of them go bankrupt while others develop into large firms employing hundreds and thousands of workers. Even if the state prevents the emergence of monopolies, there will be a few oligopolies (like famous brands of cars,

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[94] Ha-Joon Chang, *Kicking Away the Ladder: Development Strategy in Historical Perspective*. Anthem 2002.
Ha-Joon Chang, *Bad Samaritans: The Myth of Free Trade and the Secret History of Capitalism*. Bloomsbury; 2008.

[95] Forrest McDonald, *Alexander Hamilton: A Biography.* W. W. Norton Company 1982.
Jacob Ernest Cooke, *Alexander Hamilton*. Charles Scribner's Sons 1982.

refrigerators or computer producers) that divide market between themselves. They have funds to carry out technological research, they compete but it does not necessarily respect the will of average consumers who live on wages and buy products under pressure of advertisements and fashions artificially created by producers, as often stressed by Marxists.

The above reservations show how difficult it would be to establish free market. Yet even if it happened it could bring undesirable outcomes.

(4) Free market with its specialisation dehumanise workers. Smith was well aware that free market, even well organised, would not make workers happy and fully human (in which he anticipated the worries of Marx).

"In the progress of the division of labour, the employment of the far greater part of those who live by labour, that is, of the great body of the people, comes to be confined to a few very simple operations, frequently to one or two. But the understandings of the greater part of men are necessarily formed by their ordinary employments. The man whose whole life is spent in performing a few simple operations, of which the effects are perhaps always the same, or very nearly the same, has no occasion to exert his understanding or to exercise his invention in finding out expedients for removing difficulties which never occur. He naturally loses, therefore, the habit of such exertion, and generally becomes as stupid and ignorant as it is possible for a human creature to become. The torpor of his mind renders him not only incapable of relishing or bearing a part in any rational conversation, but of conceiving any generous, noble, or tender sentiment, and consequently of forming any just judgment concerning many even of the ordinary duties of private life. Of the great and extensive interests of his country he is altogether incapable of judging, and unless very particular pains have been taken to render him otherwise, he is equally incapable of defending his country in war. (…) But in every improved and civilised society this is the state into which the labouring poor, that is, the great body of the people, must necessarily fall, unless government takes some pains to prevent it."[96]

(5) Free market is open to manipulation. Smith seemed to assume that production was guided by natural needs which should be satisfied. Today, many needs are artificially instilled. Those who influence human desires actually influence the market no matter how otherwise it is supposed to be unregulated.

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[96] Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, Book V, Chapter I, Part III, Article II (On the Expense of the Institutions for the Education of Youth). https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/smith-adam/works/wealth-of-nations/book05/ch01c-2.htm [retrived 13.7.2014]

Science and democratic capitalism

New trends permeated Western Culture after the Middle Ages and resulted in the change of paradigms can be traced in different spheres of life. The old paradigm assumed the existence of a stable order that should be discovered and followed. In politics kings and priests were responsible for its implementation, in epistemology knowledge was constructed by deductive arguments beginning in the first principles. The order came from a perfect source, human role was passive.

After the Renaissance the basic structural framework was redefined (the alchemists were the forerunners of changes which actually happened in the 17th c). Human mind became the creative spot from which all activity began, then the interaction with independent forces and competition between individuals selected the winners. In science hypotheses were born in human minds, tested against observations until the strongest were used to form accepted theories (this methodological idea crystallized from F. Bacon to Popper). In the capitalist economic sphere different producers compete and the most skilful win. In democracy different individuals form groups which compete for votes of the electorate. In every field essentially important are basic rules which need to be accepted by all participants. Those who reject them are not treated seriously. In science some people still claim that the earth is flat, after elections some losers attack democracy, in business mafias emerge and terrorise their opponents. The rules must be calibrated in such a way that the majority would defend them against minorities who would like to reject them for their particular privileges.

Further reading

Samuel Fleischacker, "Adam Smith's Moral and Political Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*(Spring 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2013/entries/smith-moral-political/>.

Lisa Herzog, "Markets", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2013/entries/markets/>.

Questions: What was the new theory of Man (naturalism, materialism, emotions over reason) and the state (social contract leading to absolutism) formulated by Hobbes? What was Hobbes' starting point? Why is the strong ruler necessary? The historical background – religious wars in Britain (Henry VIII, Queen Mary, Elisabeth I, Stuarts, Cromwell, restoration, Glorious Revolution, parliamentary monarchy)? What was Lock's political projects (basic "natural" rights: life, freedom, property; elected and divided government)? Was it really justified as a social contract? Has morality

naturalistic roots: Mandeville's bees, Smiths internalised observer (the Golden Rule) and "sympathy", Hume's "sympathy" and the compromise of rational egoists? Why morality cannot be justified according to Hume ("Is – Ought to")? What were Hume's views on property and how did he justify them with clever thought experiments? Why was he against social equality? Why is Hume's project of a compromise of rational egoists threatened by the prisoner's dilemma difficulty? Smith's economic views: what were the ideal conditions of free market? How free market can develop against Smith's hopes?

Further reading

Chapters ENGLISH PHILOSOPHY IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY (Hobbes' Political Philosophy; The Political Theory of John Locke) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy.* Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

Russell Hardin, "The Free Rider Problem", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2013/entries/free-rider/>.

Steven Kuhn, "Prisoner's Dilemma", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/prisoner-dilemma/>.

Enlightenment in France - Voltaire and Rousseau

In France the course of Enlightenment was the most dramatic. In the 18th century Paris was a large city, a cultural centre, with which the rulers of France, who chose   to live in seclusion of Versailles, were never able to establish correct relationships.

France produced numerous philosophers (in French *philosophes.* among them Diderot, Voltaire, Helvétius, de La Mettrie, Condillac, d'Alembert) who were a model of independent intellectuals. They were versatile and interdisciplinary, wrote on all subject, as Aristotle. They believed that scientific knowledge would contribute to reforming the world and building a paradise on Earth. As the American historian, Carl L. Becker[97], noticed these philosophers replaced longing for the divine paradise with the promise to build an earthly paradise. They identified happiness with pleasure, and defined the good as what provides satisfaction. They collected knowledge available to them in the first *Encyclopaedia* and demanded the realisation of Descartes' ideals - to free human knowledge from superstition, for which they blamed tradition of the Church. They were rationalists, but in a different sense than Descartes – reason should

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[97]   Carl L. Becker, *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophers* (1932), Yale University Press 2003.

create knowledge based on observation, rather than out of itself. They broke with the Platonic-Christian tradition of supernatural world and immortal souls. The earthly world was the only one that existed, and the man was an exclusively material being. The matter was inseparable from motion (so there was no need to introduce the first cause of motion) and prone to spontaneous development. Although critical about religion, they chose deism (the view that God created world, but is not interfering with it) rather than atheism, all the more willingly since their practical consequences were similar (the existence of churches was pointlessness). Philosophers contributed to the outburst of the French Revolution creating a tempting alternative to the ancient regime, the old social order based on the privileges of the aristocracy and the Church.

Voltaire (François-Marie d'Arouet, 1694–1778) represented the rational wing of the offensive. He was the first to inform Frenchmen of the reforms in England (*Letters on the English*, 1733-34, published under several slightly different titles). Voltaire argued that commerce provides means which facilitate cooperation between people of different ultimate orientations. He defended the London Exchange (created among others to finance the British government and its wars not through loans but government bonds, which was a financial innovation giving Britain advantage over France). His ethics was hedonistic, his epistemology admire Newtonian science. He tirelessly criticised the Church and attacked religious intolerance (but not religion as such), and also the naïve optimism of Leibniz (in the novel *Candid*). He was suspicious of revolution, which could lead to a disaster. One can regard as his followers such famous figures as Auguste Comte and Charles Darwin in the 19th century, and Karl Popper and Richard Dawkins in the 20th century.

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) represented the emotional wing. This son of an ambitious craftsman from Geneva contributed to raising sensitivity (he exerted a significant influence on the creation of sentimentalism), among others in the sphere of child rearing (in the novel *Emil,* 1762). He commenced the philosophical career opposing the Enlightenment faith in progress and the value of civilization. In his answer at the competition of the Academy in Dijon (*Discourse on the Sciences and Arts* 1749/1750) about the Enlightenment and moral progress, he acknowledged the hypothetical primitive man of Nature to be good (as guided by empathy towards others), while civilization with its institutions and ideals depraved him. Man in a State of Nature had been a solitary, ape-like creature, but not bad as according to Hobbes. His main passions were *amour de soi* (self love) concerned with most basic biological needs for things like food, shelter and warmth, self-preservation, and *pitié* (compassion)

directing people to relieve the suffering of others and of animals. Like animals he had an "innate repugnance to see others of his kind suffer" and was driven by natural worry about his own good. The development of civilization led to the escalation of egoism, greed, cynicism and pride. The strong created society, in which they exploited the weak and hurt them, whereas everyone were losing authenticity and lived in the shackles of convention, pretending to be someone else. In the *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality* (1755). He predicted (anticipating Marx) that future states would be divided into opposing classes and executing the common interest of the rich who would exploit the poor.

Although at first Rousseau seemed to suggest that the "return to nature" would be a solution, he finally (*The Social Contract*, 1762) recognized that civilization could be improved through social contract (after all, civilization brought too much benefit and apart from that, civilization produced conscience which the natural man did not possess). The society should discover its *general will* which determines moral and legal norms. Then individuals should conform to the law based on general will and abandon their natural rights. "Each of us puts his person and all his power in common under the supreme direction of the general will, and, in our corporate capacity, we receive each member as an indivisible part of the whole." (*The Social Contract,* Book I, Chapter 6)

It would be the only possible way to eliminate the root of evil - human egoism as opposed to the common good. The problem was how to establish the general will, since societies usually do not agree unanimously.

When everyone expresses their views during a poll (without consulting others or forming a party or faction – Rousseau preferred direct democracy), *the will of all*, often contradictory, is established. However, only after due consideration (by the legislator or lawgiver, but perhaps Rousseau meant a philosopher) is it possible to distil from it the homogeneous *general will*. An individual conforming wholly to the general will retains freedom and is free from egoism at the same time. It is sometimes necessary to force individuals to do so (Rousseau calls it freedom coercion - they must "be forced to be free" (*The Social Contract,* Book I, Chapter 7). Since society, composed of all the citizens, decides what is good for the whole, then if an individual lapses back into his ordinary egoism and disobeys the general will, he must be forced to listen to what has been decided partly also by himself as a member of the collectivity. Thus, the law based on the general will is not a limitation of individual freedom, but its expression.

Criticism and comments

Rousseau is a controversial figure both because of his personality and views. Interpreters distinguish diverse threads in his views. On the one hand, in contrast to the self-interest of the French aristocracy, he propagated the common good, which should be protected in society.

An interesting and important is the appeal to the will of a community or society, not to its good. There is a fundamental difference between what is good for somebody and what is good according to somebody. Whereas many philosophers stressed that morality should promote what is good for a community or society, Rousseau chose to define morality by what a community wants. In principle it is a very wise solution. What is good for a community is always debatable. One can claim that its members are unaware of it and it is their leader who discovers it and implements. Appealing to the will, at least at first sight, exclude manipulation - everyone knows what they want - the main problem being how to extract the will of all from individual decisions.

This good was founded on personal desires of individual citizens (and e.g., not on the will of God), simultaneously not favouring anyone's egotistical desires (e.g., of the aristocracy). Rousseau was inclined towards a paradox: the good is derived from subjective desires and yet after all it is supposed to be freed from partiality and subjectivity. In a way it is possible to say that common good is the common part of all individual desires. (It is surprising that the author who was an outermost individualist and tolerated no power over himself formulated such a view.) Although Rousseau's intentions were lofty (fight against particular self-interests), his ideas turned out to be dangerous (similarly to his sympathy for the revolution). It is at all possible to define a unanimous general will of the society freed from the flaw of egoism? It is hard to do when views of members of society are split. Rousseau was explicit that what is good is determined by personal desires and wanted to eliminate the tension between different desires. It seems that he confused a description of an ideal and a real state. His general will can exist only if citizens can adjust their desires and moral intuitions to form a consensus, the law which they all accept after a discussion and consideration (although not consultations with each other that might lead to bargaining). Only very few societies (if any at all) could afford such consensus. In all other societies individual desires will not be compatible so in order to coordinate them the lawgivers will have to impose discipline on individuals and shape their personalities. The lawgivers should discover what is in the (real, deep, authentic) interest of individuals and if it is different from what the individuals consider their interests themselves, the lawgivers should correct them by force or manipulation.

Top-down forced unanimity can swiftly lead to the formation of a totalitarian state (communist, fascist). Rousseau also rejected the separation of powers (e.g., into legislature, executive, and judiciary), which would open the doors to the dictatorship of one party. In practice, it would lead to the dictatorship of the majority at best, which was not Rousseau's intention. Therefore supplementing it by laws protecting the minority was important. The state should not decide what is the only good to be achieved, but rather create framework for the development of individuals, who contribute in their own way to the common good. The limits of individualism are important.

Rousseau's doctrine invited a perilous practice. Groups of specialists, such as philosophers, could speak on behalf of society and teach citizens what their real will was, the "will of the people". Revolutionary leaders used it widely to enslave societies.

While Rousseau's views gradually gained popularity on the Continent, in Great Britain and the United States they were rejected in the name of the principles of liberalism. Society is composed of individuals with different views, which should not be suppressed or sacrificed because of some mythical "general will The views of the majority were dominant but the rights of minorities had to be protected. Social development required an on-going discussion and co-existence of different views. The private sphere should also be protected, so that everyone could be the master of their life.

Opposition between the states of nature and civilisation may be somehow backed by our knowledge of the world of hunter-gatherers changed by the agrarian revolution, which fostered inequalities, aggression, social hierarchies. Rousseau, as later Nietzsche, had personal affinities for hunters-gatherers free style of life, their freedom and self-reliance and perhaps saw that the agrarian revolution had been a trap for humanity (which the provocative claim of Yuval Harari[98]). It brought many disadvantages but its few advantages were so addictive that it was impossible to withdraw from it. They both could not accept the shape of modern societies. Perhaps they sensed the problem: petrified societies based on strict, homogeneous patterns of accepted behaviour could not accommodate people with unusual personalities. However the cure they found was worse than a disease: either totalitarianisms (Rousseau) or an illusion of the over-man (Nietzsche). Today the most promising solution seems a pluralistic society, organised by wise political elites, in which persons of different personalities can live and cooperate.

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[98] Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (2011)*,* Vintage London 2015. Chapter 5. History'w Biggest Fraud.

Music

In music new trends followed philosophy. In 1784, Pierre de Beaumarchais staged in Paris an anti-aristocratic play *The Marriage of Figaro* (*La folle journée, ou le Mariage de Figaro*), on which Mozart, the main musical genius of the period, based one of his best operas two years later. The revolutionary zeal of Rousseau was echoed by Beethoven (although living in the imperial Vienna after the French Revolution). He detested aristocracy. As a child of an alcoholic he had a difficult and explosive character. Cut off from the world by his deafness, he could freely indulge in his idealism. He never formed a close relation with a woman, but his only opera (*Fidelio*) praised the ideal of a perfect marital love. Deeply lonely he included in his *Ninth Symphony* an ode in honour of universal brotherhood, which became the anthem of the European Union.

The Revolution and its aftermath

Marx continuing the cruel Hegelian philosophy of history would describe revolutions as the inevitable element of the historical process. Thorough analysis shows that revolutions were rather the result of mistakes of elites who escalated social tension and frustration. France repeated the error of Turkey - isolated the centre of power (the court) from the rests of the country. Louis XIV assembled the entire aristocracy in Versailles in order to have them under control, under Louis XVI it was aristocracy who, defending their privileges, controlled the king, who although willing to introduce reforms was weak and undecided. The country stood on the brink of bankruptcy, and the third estate (those who were neither clergy nor nobility) did not watch it passively.

The French Revolution (1789) deprived aristocracy of privileges, guillotined the king, destroyed numerous testimonies of the religious past of France (dissolution of monasteries, desecration of churches), promoted a new faith in Reason, then plunged in terror and wars which ended with an intervention of foreign powers. France was rescued by the ambitious general Napoleon who combined faith in revolutionary ideals with a desire for absolute power for himself and a dominant position of France in Europe. Unfortunately instead of reforming the continent, he devastated it. Although he pretended to bring progress to the whole Europe his campaigns were a manifestation of the French desire for supremacy. They caused nationalism to crystallize in other countries and encouraged Germany, an otherwise loose constellation of small states (excepts Prussia) to unite and compete with France. The tradition of Europe was the

balance of power - coalitions were formed in order to prevent any country from taking a dominant position. Napoleon showed that this balance was increasingly difficult to maintain. But perhaps his intention was right - Europe should be united under one centre of power.

After his defeat at Waterloo (1815) continental Europe suffered poverty (which was another reason for the British supremacy) and questioned the ideals of the Enlightenment, returning to the aristocratic rule (the Congress of Vienna in 1815). England, however, where the elites were more willing to compromise, developed continuously. France was torn apart by conflicts between aristocracy who attempted to return to the pre-revolutionary order and the strong bourgeoisie of Paris trying to preserve the gains of the Revolution. While the United Kingdom developed steadily, France was shaken by revolutions (1830, 1848, 1871). These events inevitably convinced Marx that the revolution must exterminate all members of the falling elite so that they would not obstruct the inevitable development of humankind.

The American and French Revolutions had an unexpected and unfortunate impact on Poland. During the Renaissance Poland developed the Nobles' democracy which privileged the large class of nobility (10 percent of population) and eventually weakened king's power and the whole state. Since 1717 (the so called Silent Sejm, the meeting of the Polish Parliament terrorised by the Russian army) Russia was interfering into Polish affairs creating anarchy. On 3rd of May 1791 a constitution, one of the first in the world, was adopted in Warsaw with the aim of modernising the country and strengthening the central government against both the obscurantist and self-contented parts of nobility as well as Russian interference into Polish affairs. The constitution, although not revolutionary - since the king was was one of its supporters, could make Poland strong by introducing rational organisation of the state. Russia accused Poland of spreading the spirit of the French Revolution and invaded Poland taking its independence.

After the French Revolution two versions of conservatism were created. One was represented by the Irish philosopher Edmund Burke (1729 – 1797), who in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), written at an early stage of the Revolution and accurately predicting its future problems with terror, maintained that society must be subject to change, but it should take place by way of evolution and allow time for citizens to adapt. Rapid changes can easily replace the old ineffective elites and institutions by the new ones, even less effective. Burke did not believe in any human rights to be discovered by reason and applied in an ideal and artificially constructed

society. All human institutions, rights, norm evolve historically. One can change society by improving what already exists but not by designing an utopia and imposing it by force. As a European conservative he accuse the "men of money" (who acquired them recently but did not assimilate traditional cultural values) and intellectuals (who deliberately rejected them) for undermining the stable social order. He strongly criticised the British East India Company (also criticises by Adam Smith) as an enterprise established for swift and immoral profit. According to Burke the failure of the French Revolution came directly from the basic aim of *the philosophes* who aimed as such an utopia, which disrupted the continuity of French national tradition.[99]

While Burke accepted commerce as natural in less advanced Germany Justus Möser (1720–1794) represented conservatism which opposed any form of capitalism, its international commerce and industry and defended traditional hierarchical social structure.[100]

Another traditionalist conservatism was formulated by Joseph de Maistre (1753-1821), for whom the old order based on religion and aristocracy was the best, which referred to the natural law created by God. De Maistre continued the tradition of convoluted justification by the appeal to nature (the natural course of events). The comparison of Burke, Möser and de Maistre shows that conservatives tend to regard conditions in which they were brought up as natural and optimal, while any further changes as unnatural and dangerous. What was normal for Burke in the most advanced Britain was most dangerous for the two others. In the U.S., which did not go thought the phase of aristocratic feudalism, conservatism means the acceptance of free market individualism as opposed to state interventionism. It demonstrates how relative are the apparent absolute foundations of social order to which the conservatives refer. It seems that if anything is the eternal foundation it is constant progress and change, the everlasting panta rhei.

While the latter conservatism is sheer obstinacy, the former although seems wise inevitably leads to the question what counts as natural or right pace of evolution. As it was discovered later natural evolution on earth has been neither gentle (individuals suffer and are being eliminated all the time) nor even smooth (without the sudden and tragic end of dinosaurs mammals would have never conquered the Earth and humans

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[99] Jerry Z. Muller, *The Mind and the Market: Capitalism in Modern European Thought*. New York: Knopf, 2002, ch. 5.
[100] Jerry Z. Muller, *The Mind and the Market: Capitalism in Modern European Thought*. New York: Knopf, 2002, ch. 4.

might not have not come to exist at all). It seems that slow changes are equally normal as revolutions in Nature.

Was the French Revolution a failure or did it pave the way to future progress? Perhaps it was both. The system created by Louis XIV was unhealthy. It caused the alienation of the centre of power in Versailles, economic stagnation, the failure of social communication. When a serious of bad decision put France on a verge of bankruptcy it was impossible for the king and the aristocrats to solve the problems. It is them who are first off all responsible for the catastrophe of the state. Philosophers in Paris formulated a tempting alternative - a paradise on earth tailored according to the will of society, free from egoism and privileges. The revolution failed to fulfil those dreams, shaking the culture of France and the whole Europe. It does not mean that its ideals should be abandoned and regretted. It only demonstrated what was the price of their realization. They can be reconsidered, modified, some of them could be rejected, while others retained. Societies must change, progress is inscribed in human nature, those who block it raise social tension and cause sudden eruptions. The revolution was the lesson for any future elite (to be more open to changes) and also for the revolutionaries (that terror in the name of building a paradise on earth is futile). Whether they learnt that lesson is another matter. One important lesson from the revolution was that revolutionary terror and crimes committed in the name of future prosperity, a paradise on earth and so forth are inexcusable because they do not bring desirable results.

The motto "liberté, égalité, fraternité" (liberty, equality, fraternity) formulated during the revolution and later regarded as its ideological legacy was often found contradictory. *The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* of 1789 states that "Liberty consists of being able to do anything that does not harm others: thus, the exercise of the natural rights of every man or woman has no bounds other than those that guarantee other members of society the enjoyment of these same rights" (article 4) and [The law] "must be the same for all, whether it protects or punishes. All citizens, being equal in its eyes, shall be equally eligible to all high offices, public positions and employments, according to their ability, and without other distinction than that of their virtues and talents" (article 6). If so the aim of the revolution would be to lift all privileges (e.g. aristocratic) and expose society to free competition. The most gifted would become rich and powerful. This, however, can be considered harmful for those who would become poor. The source of the problem lies in the definition of freedom whose limits are harming others. (It should be noted that John Stuart Mill used the same definition concept in his conception of liberty - with the same consequence, which will

be discussed later.) Every action harms somebody. Even getting on a bus deprives other passengers of some oxygen. One must decide what is more important - happiness or freedom. Either freedom should be restricted so as to maximize happiness (as in utilitarianism discussed below) or freedom is most important even when its exercise harms others.

Another problem is posed by the very notion of equality. It may be understood as the legal equality (the same rules or laws apply to everyone) or the equality of result, of income or access to personal goods. It seems that although the *Declaration* understood it in the former way, the popular understanding is the former. The French journalist François-Noël Babeuf (1760-1797) used it to agitate for the revolution of the poor which would abolish private property. Karl Marx was also influenced by him.

Yet equality can also be understood as a condition in which everyone counts as one and no-one as more than one (the saying is attribute to Jeremy Bentham). It can be further developed as equal influence on governmental decisions and consequently society (the will or desires of every person are equally important).

In time, it turned out that different senses of egalitarianism are incompatible, respecting the will of every person does not lead to equal happiness of everyone. After the rise of Darwinism it also became evident that egalitarianism in practically every sense is against the Nature, which must be cumbersome for philosophers materialist for whom humans are a natural species. In every species a fierce competition between individuals kills a large number of individuals, so that only those who survive have influence on the future of the species. (This may be an unexpected new meaning of the phrase "For many are called, but few are chosen" Matthew 22:14 King James Version. Granting equality to every born individual would cause severe deterioration of the species and finally harm all its future members.)

The limits of fraternity is most difficult to define. If two persons are in conflict whom should be supported by the adherent of the principle of fraternity? To what extent fraternity (with others) demands making sacrifice (of one's own good)?

However, all those difficulties do not undermine the validity of the motto. The critiques point out that all of the cannot be obligatory in every situation, since what promotes freedom may restrict equality and so forth. It need not be a serious problem. If I want to eat a lot and stay in good health, which is incompatible, I sometimes prefer eating over health and sometimes vice versa finally achieving a balance which satisfies best my desires. If there are many different values, many qualities of social life which seem important, it is necessary to decide in which proportion they should govern human

actions. A society needs to work out a set of rules and habits that sometimes restrict liberty while sometimes equality. The three ideals stemming from the revolution are not a principle from which other norms can be deduced. It is a statement of intentions to respect several different values a compromise between which must be found in every situation. Different societies can choose different balances, which means that they actually accept different values. Whenever more than one value is adopted to guide action the proportion in which they are to be applied is equally important as their definitions.

Questions: How France was different from Britain in the 18th c.? What was the difference between Voltaire and Rousseau? What is the role of general will in Rousseau? How could Rousseau's ideas of social contract be used to introduce the practice of revolutionaries who arbitrary interpret the will of the people (the general will)? How did the French Revolution start and end (terror, Napoleonic wars)? What were the reflection of Edmund Burke about it?

Further reading

Chapter THE ENLIGHTENMENT (The Philosophes; Rousseau; Revolution and Romanticism) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy*. Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

Robert Wokler *Rousseau,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, Past Masters series, 1995.

Timothy O'Hagan *Rousseau*, London: Routledge, Arguments of the Philosophers series, 2000.

N. J. H. Dent *A Rousseau Dictionary.* Oxford: Blackwell, 1992.

Christopher Bertram, "Jean Jacques Rousseau", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL =
<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2012/entries/rousseau/>.

J.B. Shank, "Voltaire", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2010 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2010/entries/voltaire/>.

Jerry Z. Muller, *Conservatism: An Anthology of Social and Political Thought from David Hume to the Present*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997.

Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, Chapter VIII Lumen. Enlightenment and Absolutism (Absolutism p. 578, cultural life p. 586, religious life p. 590, the Enlightenment p. 596, Deism, the *philosophes* p. 601, economics p. 602, Locke and Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau p. 603, early Romanticism p. 611, French Absolutism of Louis VIV, XV and XVI p. 614) Chapter IX Revolutio. A Continent in Turmoil (the French Revolution p. 693, Revolutionary Wars 1792-1815 p. 715, the Russo-Polish war p. 719).

Kant - ethics

The historical background of Kant's moral beliefs was the development of Prussia and Freemasonry. However, with Kant an important part of German tradition begins. As Barry Smith noted "(...) philosophy has played a role in the history of the German state that is quite unique. Just as England has its National Theatre, and America has its Constitution and its Declaration of Independence, so Germany has its National Philosophy: Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Schlegel, etc. are national monuments of the German people, whose memory is held sacred not least because they were so closely involved in creating that unified national consciousness which made possible Germany itself as a unified nation state."[101]

The Teutonic Order (The Order of Brothers of the German House of Saint Mary in Jerusalem) was founded during the Third Crusade (1191), to care for the wounded and sick Crusaders. After a failed attempt to move to Hungary, it was invited by Duke Konrad Mazowiecki (1226) to Poland to proceeded with the Christianization of the pagan Prussians, whom they exterminated, and then having falsified various documents seized their lands. In 1410, the Lithuanian-Polish King Władysław Jagiełło defeated the Teutonic Knights at Grunwald, but he did not capture their capital, Marineburg (now Malbork). In 1525, the last great master Albrecht Hohenzollern, persuaded by Martin Luther himself, converted unexpectedly to Lutheranism, losing all his allies and founded a secular state outside the territory of the German Holy Roman Empire, so he was not a subject to the Emperor. The Polish King Sigismund I the Old took his homage (painted by Matejko in the *Prussian Homage*), although the state of Albrecht was so weak that he could destroy it with little effort (perhaps he king wanted to weaken the power of the Habsburgs in this way). On the whole during the Renaissance Poland was one of the most tolerant European countries.

The Hohenzollerns, who ruled both Prussia (with the capital in Koenigsberg, now Kaliningrad) and Brandenburg (with the capital in Berlin), gradually united these countries, dissolving the relation with Poland. The most important ruler was Frederick William "The Great Elector" (ruled 1620-1688), who made Prussia a strong and absolutist state, and Frederick the Great (ruled 1740-1786), an outstanding absolute ruler who although very cultivated and resourceful, had a few terrible twists in his character. His love of arts, music (J.S. Bach would compose for him) and philosophy

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[101] Barry Smith, 'Why Polish Philosophy does not exist,' [in:] J.J. Jadacki and J. Paśniczek (eds.), *The Lvov-Warsaw School – The New Generation.* (Poznań Studies in the Philosophy of the Sciences and the Humanities, vol. 89), Amsterdam/New York, NY: Rodopi, 2006, p. 31-32. http://ontology.buffalo.edu/smith/articles/Polish_Philosophy.pdf [retrieved 1.10.2014]

(he hosted Voltaire in Berlin) was combined with love for war and discipline. He undermined the power of the Habsburgs in Vienna, annexed Silesia, destroyed Saxony, partitioned Poland. The curious thing was that he disliked the German language as too plebeian (his court spoke French). He made Prussia a liberal and militarist state. Curiously, he did not value the German culture, and preferred French. He also created favourable conditions for the development of Kantian philosophy.

The young Frederick the Great had Masonic inclinations[102], and even Kant had some friends among the Freemasons[103]. This movement, flourishing in England after 1717, originally aimed at the improvement of humankind through knowledge, rejection of inequality and class privileges. Mozart, who was also a Freemason, encrypted in his opera *The Magic Flute* the transition of humankind from superstitions to a paradise on Earth under the auspices of Reason, and also in harmony with nature. The Freemasonry movement did not succeed in Europe, but greatly influenced the Founding Fathers of the U.S. Kant's moral philosophy was similar to many Freemasons' views, however, it is not certain who influenced whom.

Kant's moral philosophy

Kant formulated his moral philosophy first in *The Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785) and then developed, enriched, and in some cases modified in later works such as *The Critique of Practical Reason* (1788), *The Metaphysics of Morals* (1797), *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (1798) and *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* (1792). Kant could not accept the views British philosophers (first of all Hume) that morality had a naturalistic and emotional basis (desires, sympathy), that it was a tool to achieve non-moral objectives (e.g., maximizing profits), and that it might vary depending on the situation. To the contrary, morality should consist in doing what was objectively good out of pure unselfish motives.

Kant, as in epistemology, referred to the idea of the *a priori* knowledge. The visible world was created in the mind and its frames were determined by the Reason itself (not by experience), therefore they were necessary and imposed by the structure of the mind (such as three-dimensional space and causality). Similarly, nature must have moral rights – they must be universal (apply to all people and situations equally) and

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[102] Arthur Edward Waite, *A New Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, Cosimo Books, New York 2007, vol. 1, pp. 286-7. http://books.google.pl/books?id=cmCYyetzBxUC&pg=PA286&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false [retrieved 8.06.2013].

[103] Manfred Kuehn, *Kant: A Biography*. Cambridge University Press 2001, p. 226.

draw their power from the structure of the mind. These requirements are satisfied by the morality based on the Categorical Imperative.

Before determining the content of morality, the role of motives should be considered. To act morally, one has to be free (acts under compulsion are not judged moral), and must be sufficiently motivated (cannot be guided by a desire for pleasure, self-interest, under the influence of compassion or other desires). Only the good will is really good, because does what the Categorical Imperative commands. (Kant uses the term "to fulfil obligations", but it can be confusing. It is not an obligation imposed by any person, but the perseverance in managing an imperative, not any other motives. Kant's morality rested on the obedience not to God or the king, who are outside, but to the autonomous reason, which resides inside every man. In following this reason that constitutes the structure of a human being one can be autonomous and thus true to oneself.) Kant differs from Aristotle, who believed that an action was good if it was based on fully assimilated virtues that had shaped the character of a person, so that moral behaviour was completely natural and pleasant to him. For Kant ethical performance is better, if it is taken against one's own inclinations or acute emotion.

Following proper motivation, one should recognize what to do. This is achieved by means of the Categorical Imperative (which Kant formulated in several different ways). The main first formulation (the Formula of Universal Law) the Categorical Imperative "requires that the maxims be chosen as though they should hold universal laws of nature"[104] and states: "Always act according to that maxim whose universality as a law you can at the same time will, that it should become a universal law" and is the "only condition under which a will can never come into conflict with itself [....]"[105] Briefly speaking, moral rules can be universalised without falling into contradiction and this universalized form should be rationally willed. For example, when I want to steal something, my rule would be "steal if you want something", but raised to the rank of a general law ("Let everybody steal if they want something") would result in private property ceasing to exist (if everything can be stolen then nothing belongs to nobody), and so the very notion of theft would be useless. If a rule, having become a universal law, undermines itself or comes into conflict with itself, acting in accordance with this rule would be immoral. In this way, autonomous reason alone shows what can (and what cannot) be a moral rule that everyone should respect in their operation.

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[104] Immanuel Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Trans. Lewis White Beck. p. 436 (the page number is Beck's marginal number that refers to the page numbers of the standard edition of *Königliche Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften*. Berlin, 1902–38).
[105] Ibidem p. 437–8

The Categorical Imperative is in fact unclear and thus prone to different interpretations and misinterpretations. It should be stressed that Kant does not say that the rule is morally right just because one wants it to become a universal law. The point is not whether one wants it, which is a frequent interpretation of Kant's doctrine and which equals Kantianism with the Golden Rule – do as you want others to do (and results in prohibitions based on reasoning like this: I can't steal because I do not want others to steal). Under this interpretation if one wants to suffer one can inflict suffering on anybody. However, Kant's claim is different and impersonal: the rule is morally right if the rule itself could be universalised without contradiction, i.e. if it is possible to make it a universal law without contradiction in itself (no matter whether one wants it or not).

Robert Johnson[106] considers the following formulation basic: "act only in accordance with that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it become a universal law," and interprets it after O'Neill and Rawls[107] in four steps. "First, formulate a maxim that enshrines your reason for acting as you propose. Second, recast that maxim as a universal law of nature governing all rational agents, and so as holding that all must, by natural law, act as you yourself propose to act in these circumstances. Third [conception test], consider whether your maxim is even conceivable in a world governed by this law of nature. If it is, then, fourth [will test], ask yourself whether you would, or could, rationally will to act on your maxim in such a world. If you could, then your action is morally permissible.

If your maxim fails the third step, you have a 'perfect' duty admitting "of no exception in favour of inclination" to refrain from acting on it". If the universalised formula is contradictory, it is morally forbidden. "So, for instance, Kant held that the maxim of committing suicide to avoid future unhappiness did not pass the third step, the contradiction in conception test. Hence, one is forbidden to act on the maxim of committing suicide to avoid unhappiness".

"If your maxim fails the fourth step, you have an 'imperfect' duty requiring you to pursue a policy that can admit of such exceptions. (...) [T]he maxim of refusing to assist others in pursuit of their projects passes the contradiction in conception test, but fails

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[106] Robert Johnson 'Kant's Moral Philosophy', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/kant-moral/>.

[107] Onora O'Neill, *Acting on Principle,* New York: Columbia U. Press 1975.
Onora O'Neill, *Constructions of Reason,* New York: Cambridge U. Press 1989.
John Rawls, "Themes in Kant's Moral Philosophy," in: *Kant's Transcendental Deductions*, E. Förster, ed., pp. 81-113. Stanford: Stanford U. P. 1989.
John Rawls, *Lectures in the History of Ethics,* Cambridge, MA: Harvard U. P. 2000.

the contradiction in the will test. Hence, we have a duty to sometimes and to some extent aid and assist others".

Categorical "ought to" must be distinguished from hypothetical "ought to" - e.g. if one wants to make tea, one ought to boil water. Kant also suggested that moral rules should be adhered to without exception, even if sometimes this would lead to undesirable effects (even if all would benefit from a white lie, it is prohibited).

The second formulation of the Categorical Imperative (or Humanity Formula) holds that Humanity in every man (as a rational being) "must be treated never as a mere means but as the supreme limiting condition in the use of all means, i.e., as an end at the same time"[108]. Perhaps this should be understood as commanding a non-instrumental approach to people who should be treated with respect as human beings. Although it sounds noble and acceptable its flaw is that it is not connected to the rest of Kant's moral philosophy. It is rather a personal view of Kant only superficially attached to his moral theory.

There is also a suggestion (under the title Kingdom of Ends) that "our fundamental moral obligation is to act only on principles which could earn acceptance by a community of fully rational agents each of whom have an equal share in legislating these principles for their community".[109]

All those formulas was meant to equivalent and following them would result in being morally autonomous that is determined as if from inside, by one's own but as the same time universal Reason which defines our being human beings.

Kant argued that a perfectly moral world without happiness would be incomplete. Reason produces the idea of a world in which there is both complete virtue and complete happiness, which he calls the highest good. Only virtue is unconditionally good, happiness is good when and only when it is pursued and enjoyed virtuously. Morality cannot be defined as rules the observance of which lead to happiness since what is necessary and sufficient for happiness is vague. Thus virtue and happiness are independent aims, although Kant also claimed that the duty to promote the highest good is the sum of all moral duties. It can be fulfilled only if the highest good is believed to be possible, which requires the immortality of the soul and the existence of God. So they must be accepted. (From the point of view of critical thinking this argumentation can be diagnosed as wishful thinking. In many places in the *Critique of*

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[108]   Immanuel Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals* Ibidem

[109]   Robert Johnson 'Kant's Moral Philosophy', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/kant-moral/>.

Practical Reason he returned to the problem of immortality and God's existence and argued that although the cannot be proved they are necessary to save morality from collapsing and reason from contradicting itself. Kant knew that he had no good arguments but was unable to admit defeat. His whole philosophy originated from the desire to protect God, immortal soul and objective values from the scepticism of the Enlightenment.)

Finally Kant (in the *Critique of Practical Reason*) suggested that although morality is based on objective duties, the idea of happiness as proportionate to virtue as the ultimate culmination of our moral strivings, requires the existence of God who rewards virtue with happiness in the afterlife. Otherwise morality would direct us to an empty ideal, since this end does not seem attainable entirely through human agency in the natural world.

Criticism and comments

Kant's intention seems to be as follows. He was raised in a strict Christian (pietistic) morality. Obeying law and not following personal desires was essential in this morality. After having lost confidence in the official Church he set himself the task of saving what was valuable to him in this morality but without reference to the authority of the Church or God. Kant needed some authority, it could not be his desires or social compromise and contract (since it would be unstable, changing from society to society) so finally he chose the authority of universal reason, the same for every rational human being. It was very much in line with the spirit of the French Enlightenment adoring Reason as a goddess. Morality still had to rely not on calculating benefits (as intended by some British moral philosophers), but on doing what was right and because it was right. In other words, morality equals following the rules (such as those in the Ten Commandments), and doing it with a sense of moral obligation and not because of emotional inclinations (e.g., compassion), nor even in the enlightened interest of the community. Examples provided by Kant (do not make false promises, do not commit suicide, develop your potential) suggest that he considered his theory fit to the task. While Hobbes and Hume departed from traditional views on morality, Kant wanted to retain much from the ideas of Aquinas.

Unfortunately, under closer examination his theory taken literally reveals numerous flaws, which became the subject of endless philosophical debates.

The understanding of morality as analogous to the rules imposed by the mind/reason on the phenomenal world seems completely wrong. If the mind dictates

that everything must be seen in three dimensions, everyone sees the world in three dimensions, it is not a subject of choice, but a fact. However, even if the reason forbade suicide, some people would still commit it. Kant did not give any convincing argument why one should obey the moral dictates of reason. There is no analogy between the role of reason in epistemology and ethics. It is only a suggested but unjustified analogy.

(I disregard the fact that Kant's epistemological theory itself is not convincing - even if the mind dictates how to see the world, one can reject it as wrong as in the commonly occurring sensory illusions – everyone sees one line as longer that the other, it is common and determined by structure of the mind, although it is an illusion. The whole direction chosen by Kant, that Reason determines the necessary framework of both knowledge and ethics, is basically wrong.)

Kant's ethics entails the assumption that morality is timeless and one and same for all, like seeing the world in three dimensions is necessary to every being endowed with a human mind. However, it is obvious that morality varies depending on the balance of power in society, development of sensitivity, and emergence of new situations. Perhaps Kant wanted to force one morality for everyone, but this rather indicates fanaticism than enlightenment.

Sociobiologists' observations were an interesting contribution to the debate. Some moral convictions emerged in the evolution of human nature. We tend to use the Golden Rule, show jealousy or take revenge, because these behaviours have proven to be beneficial for the survival of our ancestors. It does not follow from this that they should be accepted today, and by anyone. It is not the autonomous reason or nature, that take moral decisions, but the man with the whole of his personality.

Even if one believed Kant's claim that morally right rules are the ones that are indicated by reason as universally valid under the threat of falling into contradiction, Kant's criterion - the Categorical Imperative - is too vague to discover such rules.

The criterion of the imperative is based on the possibility of raising the rule that one wants to apply to the rank of general law without falling into contradiction. This procedure assumes that before deciding what to do one must first (1) determine what is the rule of his intended behaviour, then (2) present it as a universal rule for everyone, and finally (3) assess whether it undermines itself or not.

Two situations could jeopardize the usefulness of the criterion. (1) In a given situation no rule can be justified by the criterion. (2) In a given situation more than one rule (each contradicting the other) may be justified and it is impossible to choose the right one.

(Ad 1) Society functions well when only a small number of people are willing to take leadership, while the rest agrees to comply. Meanwhile, on the basis of the imperative both being subordinate and superior is not moral, because neither can universalise the rule that leads to taking this position (a subordinate cannot justify the rule "Let everyone be a subordinate", neither does the superior justify the rule "Let everyone be the leader" - in either case is leads to contradiction; one cannot be a subordinate when there is no leader and vice versa).

(Ad 2) One can imagine situations where both possible alternatives are equally right. "Let the cars drive on the left" and "Let them drive on the right", "Let the eldest brother have a privileged position", "Let the youngest be privileged". Are any of these rights equally moral? So which one to choose? Both the rules of the welfare state and the state based on strong competition can be universalised, so which one is moral? The imperative does not provide guidance here.

Subsequent stages raise further questions. How does one know what is the rule of their intended action that should undergo the procedure of universalisation? When a beggar comes up to me and I do not want to give him money, which will be the rule of my action? (1) "I do not give money to beggars" (2) "I do not help people in need", (3) "I do not give money to idlers or hustlers Depending on the choice of the rule, the same action may be moral or immoral. Rule (2) raises doubts when made into a general law ("Let no one give money to people in need"), but the rule (3) does not ("Let no one give money to idlers or hustlers").

Sometimes Kantianism would exclude quite acceptable actions. I want to hike in the mountains. I must consider the general rule "Let everyone go hiking in the mountains". If that happened, the mountains would be overcrowded and any hiking would be impossible. So the initial rule may not be followed. Consequently, hiking in the mountains turns out to be immoral.

This could be prevented by modifying the initial rule or the procedure of turning it into a general rule. For example, the relevant law would sound (1) "Let anyone *be able to* go hiking in the mountains" or (2) "Let anyone *who wants to be able to* go hiking in the mountains", or (3) "Let anyone *be able to* go hiking in the mountains, as long as it does not cause congestion (This solution is adopted in the crowded national parks by setting limits of entry and applying them in a way that does not discriminate any group of potential hikers, e.g., by making payments or subscriptions.)

However, such solution would undermine other obvious moral rules. You can consider the rule "Let anyone be able to steal, as long as this does not cause private

property to collapse" or "Let anyone be able to lie, if it does not cause the collapse of social communication." Weakness of this approach lies in the fact that, ultimately, someone has to decide to what extent you can do something, and when it would be prohibited. Decisions will either be arbitrary and subjective or will appeal to some ultimate good (e.g., the welfare of the society), which means that ultimately morality would be based on some kind of social contract, in which participants decide what is allowed and what prohibited. But that is Hume's proposal, which Kant sought to avoid.

Kant insisted that the rules must be exception-free and apply to all people and all situations. It was not meaningless. Suppose I want to travel without a ticket, and I consider the rule "Let passengers ride without tickets". If everyone could ride without a ticket, the entire transport system would collapse (unless it is sponsored externally). However, I can modify my rule: "Let philosophers ride without a ticket". It would not lead to similar consequences, so my rule is universalisable and I can go without a ticket. Of course, then everyone could formulate rules with qualifications that allow special treatment (privileges) for small groups to which they belongs, which finally would undermine the whole enterprise of morality. The meta-rule that rules must not contain qualifications and must apply to everyone prevents such situations.

However, this solution is absurd. The moral (and legal) rules must be qualified by circumstances. One should rescue a drowning person provided they can swim. Morality and law are complex systems of rules, which are always a compromise between various basic principles and interests of people, and that is the reason why societies have different moralities. The desire to capture the essence of morality in one rule, one imperative, will never be fulfilled.

According to sociobiologists (e.g., Konrad Lorentz) in the hierarchy of the herd everyone wants to be close to the top, and the whole herd benefits from the rivalry (the best become the leaders). Is it compatible with the Kant's imperative? If being at the top would be moral only on the basis of the rule "Let everyone be at the top", this would lead to a contradiction, and therefore being at the top (or even the desire to be) would be immoral. If, however, the principle in question is formulated "Let everyone try to be at the top", it would not be contradictory. The use of the imperative requires fairly arbitrary decision on how to formulate the general rule, which is to be the criterion of moral acts.

Kant had no children. Was it consistent with the imperative? If his specific rule "I will not have children" is transformed into a general rule "Let no one have children", it would be as destructive as the principle of universal suicide that Kant rejected. One

could create the rule "Let anyone who wants to have children, have them, and anyone who does not want them, not have them". Such rule would undoubtedly act as the universal law, as it actually does nowadays. However, the rule about suicide can be transformed in the same way – and it also functions this way nowadays. It seems that the rules allowing suicide and childlessness are very similar. Would Kant accept this? Again, it turns out, how much depends on the wording of the rules, which will then be universalised. Does it not mean that the criterion of the imperative is very vague, rather rhetoric than strict? Every rule can be reformulated in many ways with different results. Certainly one can impose limits on the formulation of rules, but then on what ground? If the limits rested on common sense or social contract, would it not undermine Kant's intentions?

Another example: I'm going to buy bread, but not sell it. The rule "Let everyone buy bread, but not sell it" leads to a paradox, because no one could buy bread, if no one sold it. So buying bread and not selling it is not universalisable, and therefore immoral. The situation could be saved by redrafting the rule: "Let everyone buy bread, and then sell it or not", which is again an arbitrary adjustment.

Since literal interpretation of Kantianism had not withstood criticism, its followers focused on drawing general inspiration from it. Here are two such methods. (1) In some cases, the imperative comes down simply to the Golden Rule. The procedure is moral, if you really want others apply the same rule, even to yourself. No one wants to be robbed, lied to, killed, so no-one should steal, lie and kill[110]. It is possible that such interpretation would not be contrary to the intent of Kant. The Golden Rule was popular during the Enlightenment Age.

(2) An interpretation more consistent with Kant finds the essence of his doctrine in impartiality (or fairness). Moral action is that which can be recognized by everyone, transcends the particularity of human selfishness and desires, and thus goes back to the essence of humanity. (It is worth noting that also Rousseau would agree with this definition of morality.) The rule "Let philosophers do not buy tickets" is not suitable for a fairly acceptable law. What is impartial is different from what would be the result of universal agreement, or compromise, between individuals aware of their selfish desires. It is possible that the ability to accept impartial rules is a sign of a highly developed conscience and human solidarity. These problems will return on the occasion of utilitarianism, Darwinism and John Rawls' *Theory of Justice* in the 20th c.

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[110] See for example Harry J. Gensler, *Ethics: A Contemporary Introduction.* New York, Routledge 1998.

It is worth noting the differences between the Hume's and Kant's views.

* Kant is a traditionalist, who replaced the authority of the timeless Good (Plato) and God (the Bible, Aquinas) with the autonomous authority of reason, but the rest is often left unchanged (although egalitarian Kant would favoured anti-aristocratic reforms). If fulfilling moral duties should be accompanied by happiness, God was necessary to guarantee this. "For example, I should help others in need not, at bottom, because doing so would make me feel good, even if it would, but rather because it is right; and it is right (or permissible) to help others in need because this maxim can be willed as a universal law".[111]

Hume rejected traditional views on morality. Morality consists in rules whose observance is either in accordance with natural inclinations (natural virtues) or brings positive effect to society as a whole and to each of its members (artificial virtues). Morality is the result of people's tacit agreement, a compromise between their desires under given circumstances.

* For Kant, morality is based on the dictate of reason, for Hume on emotional attitudes (everyone wants their own benefit, everyone feels "sympathy" and reason only dictates the rules of effective compromise).

* According to Kant, moral rules are not affected by attitudes of people – right is right. The imperative sets standards for both the public and individuals. For Hume, morality is a social phenomenon. Rules can vary depending on a situation. Every citizen must take into account what norms are observed in their society. Someone who lives in a country overrun by bandits, would behave unreasonably, following the principles of honesty.

The essence of the dispute between Hume and Kant is still important. Artificial virtues in Hume views it as a social phenomenon and starts with its function: it must serve the community. Then he tries to reconcile it with an individualistic perspective: how an emotional and often self-interested individual arrives at the rules that benefit everyone. The prisoner's dilemma shows a possible pitfall – if one follows moral rules, knowing that the only reason is their own benefit (also emotional), they may easily abandon them whenever it would seem more beneficial.

Kant looked at this problem from the perspective of a user of moral norms (who perhaps stands under the tree of knowledge of good and evil but does not dare to eat its fruits, i.e. is not too inquisitive and takes morality at the face value) and gives a

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[111] Michael Rohlf, 'Immanuel Kant', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/kant/>.

traditional answer to the problem: one must regard rules as good in themselves and follow them out of duty, not calculating possible benefits for himself or for the community. (It is significant that even atheistic Confucius in China insisted that this was the right attitude towards morality). However, his justification of this attitude, although well-grounded in the spirit of the Enlightenment, is hardly convincing.

Kant is plagued by the same problems as Plato and Aquinas, the proponents of the objective absolute Good. Its supporters agree in their criticism of subjectivists (e.g., the Sophists, relativists), which they consider to be immoral, but when it comes to presenting their own positions, it immediately turns out that according to some of them equality is objectively correct and universally applicable, while others prefer inequalities. To some homosexuality is acceptable, to others nasty and vicious. Some would allow divorces, while others would not, and every time the argument is the same - because their solution it dictated by the timeless absolute Good. It certainly raises the suspicion that calling something absolute Good is a convenient way to promote one's own subjective views.

How then does morality arise? That it arises and is often effective is well documented by historians. It is partly innate (we will come to this when we discuss Darwinism and sociobiology), and partly it is the result of the activity of the elites that shape the subjective inclinations of individuals. In short, Moses pondered on what rules would most effectively organize the people of Israel according to his view on what was a good organisation (which is always a compromise between preferences of the elites, and inclinations of the masses), then he formulated it as the Ten Commandments and presented as the will of God. Since it proved effective (the Commandments provided foundations of organisation, which strengthened itself by generating satisfaction of those who had conformed to it), it stood the test of time. This method was imitated many times with different "gods" as a justification and with varying success (the morality of the French Revolution, Communism, Nazism).

Kant took many practical views (e.g. on suicide, serving others) from the tradition, also Catholic, yet in his attempt to justify them he introduced elements of the Lutheran Protestantism (listing to the inner voice of conscience) and the Spirit of the Enlightenment (this conscience was not the voice of God but of Reason). The result was unconvincing, too conservative and dogmatic on the one hand, and too much dependent on the slogans of the Enlightenment which soon came of of fashion.

However, though perhaps very traditional, the basic insights of Kant are extremely important. We all want to fulfil our need for benefits, for pleasure or

whatever seems beneficial to us. We can compromise to make those benefits larger and call this compromise "morality". But besides this most people have strong conviction that there is more too care for than private benefits. We care for our future (although the person we will be in 20 years will be very different form us today), for friends and families, our country, future generations, the whole humankind. Even if many do not have determination to give up personal benefits for greater causes, they admire those who can, and expects this from others. We have deep intuitions that personal benefits is not everything that matters and this makes us human. (Although this tendency, often called idealistic as opposed to pragmatic, is often misused by dictators and social manipulators.) Kant wanted to convey this in his a bit obscure language of the autonomy of reason, good will and duty, while this perspective was lost in Hume and Bentham, who often saw morality as a means to maximise personal benefits. Kant, on the other hand, although stressed the existence of moral inclinations which do no serve those benefits, failed in describing their content, Categorical Imperative proves largely inadequate to the task.

Further reading

Chapter THE CRITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF KANT (Kant's Moral Philosophy) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy.* Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

Robert Johnson, "Kant's Moral Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/kant-moral/>.

Lara Denis, "Kant and Hume on Morality", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2014/entries/kant-hume-morality/>.

Questions: How did Kant try to oppose Hume's subjectivism and ground morality in the Reason and its imperatives? How is the Golden Rule present in them and what problems do they pose? How does Kant's philosophy relate to the atmosphere of the Prussian Kingdom and the freemasonry?

Bentham

The last radical British moral philosopher of the Enlightenment was Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), whose work *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (printed in 1780) was published in 1789.

Recognizing that both morality and law are products of human choice, he suggested a common principle for both, according to which the only good is happiness, or simply pleasure (he used the term "utility" which meant "satisfaction"), and the only evil, pain. Bentham held that, in fact, everyone was guided by a desire to experience

pleasure and avoid pain (after two millennia a renewed view of Epicurus). The word "pleasure" does not refer to certain sources of pleasure, such as food, sex and success in competition, but to mental states which they produce. The sources of pleasure are different, but the result is always the same, however, differing in degree. The good (or aim) of a person is to maximise his satisfaction (utility, the sum of pleasure, happiness). Bentham created a calculus, which was to facilitate the assessment: the duration and intensity of relevant experience must be taken into account as well as some other factors (which in fact promote future pleasure). Nothing is more absurd than giving up one's pleasure for religious motives or ambition. No absolute goodness, good for itself exists. What is good is always good for someone. This is stated by psychological hedonism.

Ethical hedonism builds a moral system on psychological hedonism. Morality should promote the achievement of good on a social scale. Bentham shared egalitarianism of the Enlightenment and believed that in society "everybody to count for one, nobody for more than one" (as it was reported by J.S. Mill), the happiness of every person is equally important. The basic moral principle of utility states that everyone should act for "the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people When we wonder what course of action to choose, we should estimate how it would affect the amount of happiness in society, and select the most advantageous one. The hedonistic calculus shows that stealing is wrong, because usually the loss hurts more than the gain pleases, therefore, the robbed is more upset than the thief is pleased, which would reduce the amount of happiness in society.

Members of the public should therefore accept the maximization of social happiness as the main goal of universal morality. This does not automatically mean that this morality will be obeyed. When it comes to the conflict between one's own good and the social good, probably the former would be chosen. Therefore, morality must be supported and enforced by moral education and legislation. Just as in Rousseau, an individual must be pressured to not squander long-term happiness by yielding to momentary temptation.

The above reasoning is by no means self-evident, and its weaknesses were discovered in the 19th and 20th c.

Although Bentham began the great debate on the foundations of morality, his main intention was to improve English law and relieve human suffering, which in his opinion was not done by religion requiring the acceptance of suffering in the name of some vague good or chaotic law. Therefore, as Epicurus, he emphasized not multiplication of pleasure, but elimination of unnecessary suffering. He also believed

that the principles of utilitarianism should regulate socially important activities while in the personal sphere everyone has the right to follow their own moral sense. He formulated principles to help lawmakers, not ordinary citizens on a daily basis. Contrary to a popular belief, Bentham did not expect everyone to perform calculations about how their next action might affect happiness of humankind at all times. He insisted that general guidelines should be developed by legislators.

Utilitarians are classified as consequentialists (teleologists) (the result of the action determines its value) as opposed to deontologists (certain deeds are right or wrong by themselves, regardless of their consequences – e.g., theft, murder and lying).

Bentham takes an extreme position in the debate on a range of issues normalised by morality. Another view is that morality only creates boundaries for human behaviour. It contains basic precepts (e.g., help the needy, keep promises) and prohibitions (e.g., do not kill), but what is neither commanded nor forbidden, is left to the discretion of each individual. According to Bentham every action has an effect on the sum of human happiness, so every action is subject to moral evaluation. The moral duty of a man is to choose the course of action, which contributes most to increasing the sum of happiness. This obligation should be enforced by the government. Of course, if everyone takes care of their own happiness, it is not obvious that they will take care of the happiness of others. The principle of utilitarianism requiring care for the sum of social happiness is a moral imperative and must be nurtured like any morality that goes beyond self-interest of individuals, and may even contradict it (here Bentham differed from Hume, according to whom morality was a spontaneous adjustment of people to each other in order to enhance their individual interests). The difficulty is that both the rulers and individuals must be persuaded to accept utilitarian principles. Why should they do it, if it is against their individual interests? Bentham was an idealist and believed that reading his works would provide sufficient argument and incentive.

Utilitarianism flourished in England in the 19th c. and was developed by John Stuart Mill and Henry Sidgwick.

Criticism and comments

(1) Utilitarianism versus common moral intuitions against injustice, instrumental approach to people and harming the innocent. Consider two societies. In one the righteous are happy and the vile are unhappy, in the other the opposite is true. In both the sum of happiness is the same. Do we consider them to be equally good, or is the first somehow better? If so, the maximisation of pleasure is not the only goal. This leads

to an inevitable question - how much should the level happiness be reduced, if it were to make its distribution more just? (Utilitarians would answer that because justice is generally conducive to long-term happiness, it is better to give up some happiness today in the name of preserving justice, because it will result in greater total happiness tomorrow. If the principles of justice were rejected, moral confusion and demoralisation would follow, which would quickly reduce the amount of happiness.)

* Depersonalisation of society in utilitarianism. One can get the impression that in Bentham's theory (perhaps contrary to his intentions) the most important is the impersonal amount of pleasure, while individual people are merely its custodians. This would undermine the Kantian principle of treating people always also as ends.

* Harming the innocent. If hurting an innocent man (a scapegoat) contributed to the increase in total happiness, utilitarianism should consider it acceptable. Similarly, Robin Hood, who robbed a few rich, and gave away to many poor, deserves praise.

Again, it is against the Kantian principle of respect for others. However, utilitarians can defend themselves indicating that it is necessary to take into account long-term effects. Many practices that bring short-term beneficial effects are in the long run detrimental. Harming the innocent would affect the sense of security in society, which would reduce significantly the level of happiness. Robbing the rich and giving to the poor would diminish the incentive to work.

It should be remembered that Bentham's intention was to help the poor deprived of their happiness by the rich and powerful. He believed that the same amount of money will please the poor more than the rich, and therefore redistribution and higher taxes would increase the amount of social happiness. A situation where the majority would unfairly exploit a minority (e.g., the masses living comfortably at the expense of the middle class who think for them) is not taken into account. Utilitarians may argue that it is acceptable to hurt an innocent person to save ten others from severe suffering, but we cannot do this to add a little pleasure to a million people. Opponents will argue that such calculations are not very reliable, and non-harming innocent people for the benefit of others should be based on common moral feelings, not on calculations of the possible consequences. On the other hand, Darwinists notice that the vigorous development of nature involves the elimination and suffering of most living things, thus the innocent must suffer so that species could evolve at all.

(2) The difficulty of calculating utility. It is difficult to estimate the long-term consequences of actions, which is required to decide which course of action is the best one. It is even not known how long the temporal perspective should be. It is easy to

compare whether more commuting time will be reduced by the construction of new underground lines or spending the same amount of money on buses and trams. It is more difficult to compare whether gay marriages will make humankind happier in the long run. What's more, knowing the propensity of people to self-deception and creating pretexts (rationalization), it may be suspected that such calculations would be routinely shifted to favour the self-interest of those decision-takers.

The hedonistic calculus seems to be based on an erroneous principle that pleasure can be measured in a similar way as money. One big disaster (such as the death of a loved one) may be offset by a number of small pleasures (e.g., eating ice cream) or the opposite - a short intense pleasure might be worth years of suffering, which is counter-intuitive. However, hedonism can be rescued by assuming that what counts is the proportion of pleasant and painful periods in life. A happy person is not one who accumulated the greatest number of pleasure units (hedons or utils, as they were called) but one that experienced pleasant emotions most of their life no matter how intense they were or what their source was[112].

(3) The difficulty of implementation. If everyone chooses to increase their own pleasure, the greatest pleasure of all might be chosen only under the pressure of morality. (One can give up one's own hoping for a reward in the future. Utilitarianism does not guarantee this either in this world or in the afterlife.)

Traditionally, morality developed either spontaneously (in personal contacts in small primitive communities without the upper class or kings) or was promoted by the dominant elite who acted in exchange for privileges that morality guaranteed to it. (It was a very effective compromise: the king became the guardian of morality, and morality recognized regicide as the most serious crime. Therefore, it is prudent to choose elites whose prosperity is coupled by welfare of the country. The result was a hierarchical social structure. The upper class, most interested in the development, would chose intelligent energetic people from all backgrounds to govern the country effectively thus creating the middle class. This formed the framework that allowed the working class to live in an organized society. Unfortunately, selfish greed of the upper classes often led to exploitation of the lower ones and subsequent social unrest. Bentham naively believed that as soon as he published his deliberations, legislators would reform the law.)

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[112] Daniel Kahneman, Objective happiness. In D. Kahneman, E. Diener & N. Schwarz (Eds.), *Well-being: The foundations of hedonic psychology* New York: Russell Sage 1999, pp. 3-25.

(4) Is pleasure the only value? Bentham was appalled by unnecessary suffering around him and formulated an alternative - either the only good is pleasure, or else one propagates asceticism. Is it not a false alternative? (Aristotle, who did not disregard pleasure, observed that violent pleasures were often sought by those who were overwhelmed with excessive suffering.)

The whole European tradition pursued the ideals of excellence. The ancient concept of excellence (*areté,* virtue) required to perceive every individual object against the background of its perfect pattern. The aim was to strive for excellence. One of the goals (goods), but not the only one, was enjoyment. Suffering was never good, it was no more than a means to some good. A man can strive to be good (to meet requirements), or to feel good (to find pleasure, satisfaction, happiness). I can consider my life good, valuable if it is rich in pleasure, but certainly I will not acknowledge my neighbour's life as good if he only has a lot of fun. At the same time we are ready to consider one's life miserable, but valuable (Beethoven was rather unhappy but great). With some oversimplification I can say that my neighbours' lives are good when they meet the requirements, and my own life is good when it is pleasant. Since people around me think likewise, we all seek pleasure but we also have to meet the requirement set forward by others. As a result the sound moral ideals mingle requirements with pleasure, like in Aristotle.

Utilitarianism combines taking pleasure (good for someone) as the only good with the general principle of egalitarianism ("everyone counts for one"). As a result, it is considered rational to seek pleasure, but it is moral to allow others to do the same, and if so, to strive together for the greatest pleasure of the greatest number of us". Under this principle, all other aims are justified only as a means to this ultimate goal. Is it really possible to agree to it?

Pleasures of pills. Aldous Huxley in his novel *Brave New World* described a dehumanized world of consumption and homogeneity (which somehow resembled both communism and mass production capitalism), where citizens although leading a meaningless life felt happy (because they had happiness drugs administered to them). According to utilitarianism, nothing is wrong with this solution. Would most people (except the suffering and hopeless) consider a life without dignity, freedom, beauty and heroism good? Proponents of utilitarianism would argue in their defence that in practice such a world were not possible, because either the drugs would get scarce, or the government would begin to oppress its citizens, and the weakened state would be

defeated by another. The pursuit of pleasure must be supplemented by at least a concern for survival, and that requires discipline, effort, competition, etc.

Is pleasure + strength enough? Is a society that cares only about survival and pleasure, but ignores higher values, acceptable? Thus acted ancient Rome. It was effectively organized, and cared for nothing save conquests, while indulging in feasts and gladiator games, which led to such spiritual emptiness that both simple folk and the upper class embraced Christianity, which offered a bit more meaningful life. The world devoid of depth, even if it is effective and enjoyable, does not deserve to last.

Neither Darwinism nor Nietzsche (although for different reasons) agreed that the aim of life was the greatest extent of pleasure. A good society must be dominated by resourceful individuals who accomplish great tasks and open up new prospects for the humankind and the society.

It should be remembered that in the evolutionary perspective pleasure and pain are rewards and punishments for doing what is useful or useless from the point of view of evolution. Living organisms do not eat or have sex for pleasure; they eat and procreate to survive and pass on their genes, while pleasure occurs to encourage them to those activities. Utilitarians reverse the relation between means and ends - pleasure became the end, while everything else means. Let me illustrate it with an example. If everything in a factory works well, a watchman sees all control lights green. If some of them turn red, something goes wrong and he has to intervene. In an advanced system the wires are connected to his brain and when panel light are green, he feels pleasure, when red - pain. After some time he decides that all that matters is not the factory, but the green light and his feeling of pleasure, so he rewires all connections and feels pleasure all the time, regardless of what happens in the factory. Soon the factory breaks down and he feels mainly pain. The point is that all people strive for happiness (or pleasure), which, however, brings good results only if the mechanism of pleasure and pain are well calibrated, i.e. pleasure and pain are associated with the appropriate sources, doing right actions is rewarded with pleasure, and wrong is punished by pain. The allocation of pleasure and pain within the whole system evolved over thousands of years and then within naturally developing societies. It changes constantly and may be improved but slowly and cautiously; every sudden change may result in the deregulation of the whole system as it happens in drug-addicts, who start with seeking pleasure but end up in unbearable pain.

* The universal mission of humankind. The recognition of pleasure as the ultimate goal of life could also jeopardize the development of humankind, the most

interesting process in the known Universe. Compare the two worlds. (1) In the first one, everyone has a small organic plot, grows basic food, hand washes clothes, spends a lot of time talking with neighbours and peeling potatoes (sometimes such pictures of "happy villages" cut off from the world are presented on TV). There are no wars, competition, progress, art, technology, or great ambitions - and everyone is happy. (2) In the second one, people fight, experience passions, create great projects, masterpieces of art and science, sometimes extermination camps. They are proud of the achievements, but often unhappy. For six thousand years it has been our world. Is the first world better? According to utilitarians it is. According to G.E. Moore it is not. Living in it, humanity would never achieve anything great, and any significant impact that humankind can have on the Universe would be lost.

Hopefully, the choice does not have to be made between the two worlds. Perhaps we can build a world of compromise, in which the competition is not murderous, outstanding people realize their ambitions, the less ambitious contribute to the development by less ambitious work, and in return benefit from the organisation and beauty created by the former. But still, to justify why the world of compromise should be built, one should move beyond the ideals of utilitarianism. There is no guarantee that the world with great ambitions will be the happiest.

Utilitarians may still argue that the eco-friendly world with no ambitions would not be the happiest, because it would lead to boredom, as evidenced by some too well organised countries where life is safe, but barren and depressing.

What then can prevent people from falling into the destructive cult of pleasure? I believe that salvation is in our neighbours. Even if one would seek only one's pleasure, one would not accept the same attitude in their baker, dentist or caretaker, because it would reduce the quality of their performance. A man left to himself (unless he is a puritan hero like Robinson Crusoe) succumbs to the temptation of pleasure and degenerates; a man surrounded by neighbours who require something of him – flourishes. WE are not deprived of humanity by others, on the contrary – it is others who force us to be human. The principle "live and let live" points the way to the weakening of moral standards. No wonder that even a supporter of radical individualism, Ayn Rand (*The Virtue of Selfishness*, 1964), paraphrasing Jesus, formulated her moral postulate: "Judge, and be prepared to be judged".

Questions: What was Bentham's idea of the ultimate good society? How was it justified?

Further reading

Chapter THE UTILITARIANS (Jeremy Bentham) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy.* Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

Julia Driver, "The History of Utilitarianism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2014/entries/utilitarianism-history/>.

Andrew Moore, "Hedonism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2013/entries/hedonism/>.

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Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, Chapter VIII Lumen. Enlightenment and Absolutism (Prussia 647, Russia of Peter and Catherine 649, Poland-Lithuania and the partitions 655, Mozart and Prague 664);

Malthus and Ricardo

The concern about economic problem was strong in Britain at the turn of centuries. Towards the end of the Enlignhtennment period another movement was heralded by Reverend (Thomas) Robert Malthus (1766–1834) in his *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798). Although his main concern was overpopulation, in fact he promoted Darwinism half a century before Darwin. His claim was that that sooner or later population will be tested by famine and disease. In opposition to the popular Enlightened view that society may be improved and a paradise on Earth built, he thought that natural mechanism of what was later called natural selection, though brutal, was unavoidable and inherent to the natural course of events. As a cleric, Malthus saw this situation as divinely imposed to teach men virtuous behaviour. As a result, he objected to social aid (as traditional English Poor Law), suggesting that it produced more problems than it solved. What he meant was obvious - if one feeds the poor, they only produce more children who become poor as well, while social aid generates costs. Since population growth is restricted by famine and diseases, there is no point in fighting poverty. It would only postpone the problem. His views became influential, and controversial, across economic, political, social and scientific thought. Pioneers of evolutionary biology read him, notably Charles Darwin. The controversy between social Darwinism and utilitarianism became acute in the 19th c.

David Ricardo (1772-1823), an extremely well-off banker, politician and economist from the period of classical economy, born in a family of Sephardic Jew (like

Spinoza). He developed Smith's economic ideas in his *Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* (1817). His theory of comparative advantage claimed that if nations specialised in industry and export on what they produce most efficiently (using resources they posses) free international trade would benefit all of them (they would sell what the produced inexpensively compared to other nations and buy what they most needed).

Free trade would make prices of products to reflect their natural prices, which are determined by labour needed to their production. Ricardo was struggling with the labour theory of value, later used by Marx, till the end his life never satisfied with the results.

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Robert L. Heilbroner, *The Worldly Philosophers*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 1986, Chapter 4. The Gloomy Presentiments of Parson Malthus and David Ricardo.

The Enlightenment revolution in morals

Let us summarize. Previously it was believed that morality must be based on the objective absolute good (Plato), the essence of the human nature (Aristotle), the will of God (Augustine), or all of the three (Aquinas), and that the state was supposed to be a hierarchical structure based on the privileged elite who made God's will on earth. Enlightenment rejected those beliefs. Morality and the state should serve society composed of equal individuals, and are based on social contract, emotional sensitivity ("sympathy"), appeal to the Golden Rule and rational selfishness. A closer aim was to combat suffering, and the final aim - the construction of a paradise on Earth. Philosophers differed in some respects.

The least radical was Kant who replaced God with Reason and rejected the privileges of the elite, but kept the rest.

According to Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Hume, and Smith, morality and the state are set up by the members of societies who make some kind of agreement in order to achieve their objectives. According to Hobbes, they aimed at ensuring safety, and could be achieved through the rules specified by reason, but due to the difficulties of enforcement, it was necessary to appoint an absolute ruler.

Locke presented his ideals as natural rights, not resulting from any agreement, which determined only the choice of government to enforce them.

Rousseau recognized people as creators of morality and wanted to tame selfishness with the norms based on the general will of the whole society.

Smith and Hume, on the contrary, believed that natural inclinations (sensitivity, sympathy, need for approval and respect of others) shape basic morality (e.g. the Golden Rule), while rational selfishness give rise to artificial virtues which regulate life in large communities and care for its benefit. They believed selfish desires of different people would be harmonised by an unwritten compromise.

The French Encyclopaedists and Bentham advocated focusing on removal of suffering and proliferation of pleasure, which was an obvious goal for them, not selected by the contract.

Comparing the ethical theories, we should keep in mind the dilemma of Plato's *Euthyphro*. Originally the question was whether (1) gods approve of what is pious or (2) pious becomes what gods approve. It can be reformulated respectively as (1) we should approve what is good, or (2) good becomes what is approved. The first option means that there are standards of good, and when they have been recognized, they should be approved and respected. Do not kill, because killing is wrong. Because the standards are objective, there should be a consensus on moral issues. This was the position of Socrates, Plato and Thomas. The second option means that first comes the attitude of approval, which may be irrational and arbitrary. However, what is approved becomes good (and what disapproved - evil). I do not approve of killing, so killing is wrong to me. Since different people may approve of different things, moral relativism is unavoidable. Such was the position of the Sophists.

The second approach seemed awkward and could impair the normative nature of ethics. If someone's approval determines what is good, how can anyone's views and attitudes be criticised. The moral views of one person can be confronted with the views of another. I approve of this and you disapprove. But who is right?

In antiquity and the Middle Ages the former understanding of good prevailed, since the Renaissance the latter has became become more and more strongly expressed. Kant remained faithful to the objective good, but other philosophers generally agreed that the approval of the members of society determined what was right. Good is what is considered good. Although it does not have to result in relativism, since it was assumed that all human beings have the same nature. It was not until the 19th c. that the destructive individualism flourished.

Romanticism

Previously, violent emotions had been considered impaired, while artists worked for the elite beautifying the world. Romanticism preferred extreme emotions - despair

and euphoria (a forerunner of Romanticism, Beethoven, was posthumously diagnosed as suffering from bipolar affective disorder). The romantics were often reversed from the outside world towards the spiritual realms unknown to reason and the senses. Romantic artists were at first invited to the aristocratic and bourgeois salons, but soon forgotten, because their lifestyle was too different from the way of life of the upper classes. Capitalism required discipline, controlled emotions, the dedication to work and calculation under the Weberian "shell as hard as steel". When the majority of the population surrendered to those demands, the most sensitive individuals assumed rebellious positions and extreme emotions.

Romanticism had different shades depending on the country in which it developed. Although it was basically the attitude of over-sensitive and anarchistic individuals, who rejected social order, in some countries is became institutionalized and found social approval.

In France romanticism was introduced by Rousseau, a neurotic individual unable to cooperate with others and supported demands of the Third Estate. First its attack was aimed at the aristocracy and the convention on which their privileges rested. Romanticism was individualistic but it also cherished the idea the common people who form the core of a nation and who represent true values and should be the source of political power in the state. Morality and law should rest on the will of the people, not on desires of the elite of clergy and aristocrats. Thus romanticism for a moment seemed to support the Revolution.

In Germany romanticism was a reaction against the Enlightenment. Its forerunner was not widely known Johann Georg Hamann (1730-1788) from Königsberg in Prussia.[113] Then it developed through a proto-Romantic Sturm und Drang movement in German literature and music (ca.1765-1785), which emphasised individualism and extreme emotions. Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803) also from Königsberg attached exceptional importance to the concept of nationality, whose foundation was the *Volk*, the people understood noble mass Earlier, residents of a country felt subjects of one king or inhabitants of one state, but did not have a sense of national identity. For the Romantics, especially in Germany, the nation was a community of blood and soil (although the very expression was coined much later and was often used by the Nazis) based on a misty bond felt most by uneducated people and present in their folklore. German nationalism was suddenly strengthened after the invasion of Napoleon (in 1808 philosopher Johann Gottlieb Fichte gave a series of speeches in French-occupied

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[113] See Norman Davies, *Europe. A History.* Pimlico 1997, p. 613.

Berlin called *Addresses to the German Nation*). The essence of a non-nationalist romanticism was captured in the painting of Caspar David Friedrich. (The spirit of German romanticism represented by Albert Bierstadt produced also outstanding painting of American landscapes.)

Romantic idealism had two serious and overlooked flaws. First, after the the aristocracy and clergy had been deposed it was either dictators or capitalist who gained control over societies. Every functioning state must be ruled by some elite. The idea that the nation as a whole of the common people would rule is a populist propaganda slogan, whose use created many egalitarian illusions, but whose implementation usually ends in disaster. (Perhaps the best criticism came some time later form Darwinism. If human species is like all other animal species in nature then competition between individuals is natural and inevitable. All species develop in a simple and brutal way - many individuals are born, the best survive and determine the future of the species. In every species the best-fitted comprise only a small percentage of those who are born. The aristocracy and clergy had a privileged position because they had won it as a result of competition. When they degenerated, they fell into stagnation and were overthrown but not to be replaced by the common people or nation as a whole, but by another elite which emerged in the process of competition. When the new business elite had crystallised, it was very rational and completely uninterested in romantic attitudes of the Revolution. Both the romantics and the common people were disillusioned.

Second, over-sensitive romantic outsiders could not even be accepted by the common people. It is only highly educated persons who can appreciate complex and difficult personalties of romantic artists. Common people, peasants or the working class treat them as freaks. Beethoven, a musical counterpart of Rousseau, live in aristocratic Vienna and hated aristocracy. Yet it was rich aristocrats who deliberately paid him an amount of money every month only because they confided him a genius. (Beethoven had a troublesome character, had no family and almost no friends, changed flat every half a year, was unable to hold any stable job to earn his living. And yet he believed in the ideal of universal love and brotherhood, which he expressed in his *IX Symphony*, now the anthem of the EU, composed when he was completely death and outside any normal relations with people and the world....) Romantics should be admired and cared for, since they are exceptional individuals, but not necessarily believed as prophets.

British romanticism (poets like Blake, Keats, Wordsworth fascinated with the Lake District) rebelled rather against early capitalism than aristocracy and the

Enlightenment. It was in a way a safety valve in a society where capita;list production demanded rational organization excluding unnecessary emotions.

Polish mentality was strongly shaped by romantic poets for whom the main value what to sacrifice oneself on the altar of national independence. World War Two was the last culmination of romantic attitude both in Poland and Germany, which led to sheer destruction.

The romantics somehow did not see a contradiction between individualism and nationalism. Soon the ways of the two parted. The 19th century was full of individualists who rebelled against what they regarded as the mediocrity of the masses (in philosophy it was Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche among many others). On the other hand the idea of nationalism was largely hijacked by political leaders to manipulate the masses in different counties, which finally lead to the destruction of Europe in 1914-1945. In France two intellectuals lecturing at Collège de France supported extreme nationalism. One was Jules Michelet (1798 - 1874), the author of *The People* (1846); the other was a great Polish poet on exile Adam Mickiewicz (1789 - 1855), who presented Poland occupied at that time by Russia, Prussia and Austria and the Polish nation as the Christ of Nations. Perhaps the two ideas are as if dialectically connected in a pervert way. Those who choose individualism may become so tired of walking alone that they find a final relief only in giving up all individuality and becoming obedient parts of a collectivist community of a nation (as Hans Castorp in the last pages of the *Magic Mountain* by Thomas Mann). Romanticism advancing individualism exposed that being an individual as great art requiring great wisdom. Otherwise individualist may easily become either lunatics or conformists.

The main composers were Franz Schubert, Felix Medelssohn-Bartholdy, Robert Schumann, Georges Bizet, Hector Berlioz, and great virtuosos Franz Liszt, Fryderyk Chopin and Niccolo Paganini. Fascination with national peculiarities resulted in drawing from national folk music (Tchaikovsky, Mussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov in Russia, Grieg in Scandinavia, Dvorak in Bohemia, Moniuszko in Poland).

In 1815 the age of great romantic changes (the Napoleonic wars) ended and the Congress of Vienna restored the power of the aristocracy suppressing all movements calling for social reforms yet forming a framework for a peaceful development of Europe until 1914 (it can be sadly contrasted with the much less successful Paris Peace Conference of 1919 during which the aristocracy was replaced with the bourgeoisie while Europe was filled with the spirit of capitalist competition). Romantic artists formed an emotional opposition active until the Revolutions of 1848. Then Europe

embraced capitalism and the age of bourgeoisie triumphally began. Romanticism was forgotten, rationalisation of life was introduced. However, music, the most emotional kind of artistic expression, remained romantic throughout the 19th c. Until in 1914 the rational construction of Europe proved self-defeating.

Hegel

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770 – 1831) worked in Prussia and was associated with the newly created University of Berlin. His main works are the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807), the *Science of Logic* (1812-1831) the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (1816-1830), the *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* (1820). The literary structure of those works are revolutionary. Hegel did no write about the world we know from everyday experience, he constructed a philosophical world as if different concepts know from its tradition were characters in a novel. Hegel was the first philosopher who wrote intentionally vaguely, using metaphors instead of arguments. There were conclusions about the real world that could be drawn from those texts (like that greed destroys the world follows from Tolkien), but they were often uncertain (that is why the right-wing political interpreters of Hegel differed from the left wing ones) and certainly there was little that can count as justification of those claims. Hegel was like a prophet who in unclear scripture announced deep truths to be deciphered and believed. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, whose subject is the way of the Spirit (or Mind) to self-consciousness he engages the reader in this process as if the mind of the reader was to gain the self-conscious for the Spirit which created the whole Universe.

The impact of Hegel on German philosophy was tremendous. Some admired him, some reformed, while others crystallized their views in opposition to him (even one hundred years later Heidegger wrote his works in the same style, and his idea that *becoming* contains *being* and *nothing* is already in Hegel). One part of conclusions following his work concerned a fantastic vision of the history of humankind (Hegel was deeply affected by Napoleon, whom he saw and called the world spirit on horseback. Though a romantic, Hegel, like most philosophers, admired Reason so in his system the development of the world progressed according to the "laws of logic", the most fundamental of which was the law of dialectical development involving a transition from a *thesis* through its opposition (an *antithesis*) to a *synthesis* that combined the best features of the two previous stages, before becoming another thesis for another antithesis. The world history is a big battleground on which nations fight with each

other according to the immutable laws - one nation clashes with another (thesis against antithesis) to establish a synthesis on their ruins, a nation combining the advantages of both previous nations. The world develops according to the laws of thought, because the essence of the process is Spirit (Geist) or the Idea, which encompasses all that exists (the world has a spiritual nature). In this process, full of suffering and blood, freedom is gradually born (in progression from the nations of the East, through the Greeks and the Romans, to the Germanic people and specifically Prussia). While individual people strive for their personal aims, the cunning of Reason (or the Spirit of the World - Hegel defined the whole pantheon of Spirits of different levels) directs them towards his aims (Reason is undoubtedly a masculine creature) and thus they unconsciously contribute to the unfolding of the history in the predetermined direction. (Hegel believed that the time had come for the German nation to unite and become the main force in the current history. However, he predicted that in the future America would become the world leader). Because history aims at its own purposes, people are merely actors or even cannon fodder in this scenario. (Incidentally the very expression, as *la chair à canon,* was coined by the French writer François-René de Chateaubriand in his anti-Napoleonic pamphlet *De Bonaparte et des Bourbons* in 1814.) The characters most involved in the development of history (Alexander, Julius Caesar, Napoleon) received the worst treatment - when their role was over, they were abandoned and died prematurely. The main goal of the history, however, is not the spread of freedom, but the Absolute's pursuit of self-awareness. The Idea is primordial, it was at the beginning of everything (it is worth noting that Hegel deposed all traditional gods). Wishing to understand itself it created the world. The whole history of the world is equivalent to the content of the Idea. (We may visualize the history of the world as the process of unpacking a computer file; the Idea was a file which contained everything.) When the history of the world comes to an end, the Idea will understand what it is (Hegel believed that his philosophy marked the very moment).

Although his writings were extremely vague, his role in the history of thought was groundbreaking. He destroyed the harmonious vision of the Universe created for humans by gods or nature. For him humans neither control the direction of the world development nor can they find happiness in it. True romantics (Schopenhauer and Kierkegaard) understood this vision perfectly well. He also emphasised evolutionary and relativistic character of the world development. Individuals have their own personal aims, progress results from their competition (although still guided by a predetermined scenario, which was later dropped by Darwinian evolutionists).

Feuerbach

Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-1872) was a romantic who developed Hegelian threads while at the same time absorbing the legacy of the French Enlightenment (in traditional Germany it was a discovery). In *The Essence of Christianity* (1841) he considered religion as man-made. God is an alienation of man, which means that people put in Him theirs best features, which they have as a species (immortality, omnipotence, omniscience, mercy) but did not recognize them in themselves, so they considered themselves as sinful, weak and stupid. The knowledge of God is man's self-knowledge (more philosophically: religion is an alienated form of human self-consciousness). Worshipping God diverted human beings from enjoying their own human powers. When humanity understands that it has the characteristics attributed to God, religion will disappear and a period of universal love and joy will come, people will love their neighbours not for the sake of God but spontaneously.

Religion was not useless, although God is only a human invention. It helped humankind get in touch with its essential features, even if they were not discerned in the right place. However, when humankind reached maturity, the inexistence of God must be admitted so that the strive for perfection and good will be undertaken in the name of love for humanity. This does not require a revision of morality, whose function is to serve society. Such aims as compassion, respect, knowledge, diligence, fairness will still be valid. Only their justification turns out to be different.

Criticism and Comments

In his theory of alienations (the relation of human beings to their own essence as though to a being distinct from themselves) Feuerbach anticipated the concept of projection in Freud, though Freud was more concerned with projecting negative parts of one's psyche, e.g. one's own aggression attributed to others..

Questions: How did Rousseau inspired Romanticism ("a noble savage" erroneously attributed to him)? How were its ideas echoed by Beethoven's music? What were the ideas of German and English romantics? In what way was Romanticism a rebellion against capitalism? What were basic ideas of Hegel's philosophy (bloody history? the evolving whole? dialectical process? supremacy of the state? individuals manipulated by the Absolute)? What did Feuerbach think about Christianity?

Further reading

Chapter THE ENLIGHTENMENT (Revolution and Romanticism) and GERMAN IDEALISM AND MATERIALISM (Hegel) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy*. Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

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Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, Chapter IX Revolutio. A Continent in Turmoil (Bonaparte p. 725, the Russian campaign of 1812 p. 742); X Dynamo. Powerhouse of the World 1815-1914 (Romanticism p. 782, Hegel p. 789).

The age of the bourgeoisie. Part one 1848-1871

In the second half of the 19th century Western capitalism triumphed. With the Revolutions of 1948 (the Spring of Nations) Romanticism ended in Europe; enthusiasm aroused by the progress of capitalism was combined with an intensified competition between national states and their empires in Europe and overseas. Europe underwent modernization.[114] Although in most European countries aristocracy was still considered to be the top of the social elite, it was the bourgeoisie who occupied the dominant position. Those energetic members of the Third Estate, endowed with freedom, took charge of capitalism, but also imperialism and exploitation of the proletariat. As usual in history new ideas at first lured everyone with apparent benefits but in time produced enormous destructive side effects. With increasing prosperity in Europe an elegant popular culture was born (e.g. operetta). It was an era of elegance and ambition, of convention and hypocrisy, presided over by the long-lived rulers of England and Austria - Queen Victoria and Emperor Franz Joseph. Initially the outburst of optimism suppressed criticism. Technological exhibitions were organized all over Europe, which grew richer, gained colonies and was the indisputable centre of the world. Serious problems were recklessly overlooked - dark emotions in the depths of man (though they were studied by great writers such as Dostoevsky and Conrad), miserable industry workers, the growing greed and aggression. In the second half of the 19th century rigid

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Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, pp. 764-782.

regulations deprived Europe of its spontaneity, making even sexual life a burden. The sense of the spiritual dimension accompanying humanity for millennia was evaporating and Man came to be regarded as a primarily biological being. Many social groups desired power and accepted violence as a means to it, which culminated in the two world wars. No wonder that great philosophers of this era - Marx, Nietzsche and Freud - were mainly debunkers of the official culture.

The outcome of early capitalism in Europe, especially on the continent, was perplexing. "None the less, the world created by European modernization was incredibly rich for its chief, middle-class beneficiaries—rich in material possessions, rich in variety, rich in culture and style, rich in new experiences. A university professor in Scotland in the 1880s might earn £600 annually, ten times the upper reaches of the working class and equivalent to the price of a six-bedroomed house. In 1890-1 the seventeen official nationalities of Austria-Hungary shared 215 registered spas and 1,801 newspapers and periodicals. 'La Belle Epoque' was the time when people went waltzing, dined at the Cafe Royale, bought pictures by the Impressionists, lived in the luxury of Art Nouveau. 'A French politician like Edouard Herriot, mayor of Lyons, could speak excellent German, and hold his own on Wagner and Kant.'"[115]

Yet this economic and cultural growth was accompanied by poverty of the masses on the one hand, and superficiality if not mediocrity of the new elites on the other. In France great writers - Honoré de Balzac, Gustave Flaubert, Émile Zola - depicted both those phenomena, which were the background for Marx's philosophy which crystallized in France in 1840s. Artists and philosophers attacker the official culture centred on many-making. It should be an important warning for any new form of capitalism. If the official culture turns spiritually dry, too down-to-earth, the result may be as disastrous as the world wars of the 20th century.

Great music of the era was wildly romantic. Powerful emotions filled operas (Wagner, Verdi, Bizet) and works written for symphony orchestra (Brahms, Bruckner, Mahler and Richard Strauss). But it also had a lighter shade (an operetta by Gilbert and Sullivan in England, Jacques Offenbach in Paris, and most of all Emerich Kalman, Johann Stauss son, Franz Lehár in Vienna and Budapest). The mainstream mid-century art and literature were realistic (e.g. Balzac's, Dickens's and Tolstoy novel's), with the

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[115] Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, p. 781.

beautiful exception of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in Britain accompanied by the fascination with the Middle Ages and Gothic. But by the end of the century the mood of decadence, saturated with violent emotions and irrationalism began to build up. Cult of the art was replacing disappearing religiosity.

An exceptional and forgotten example of the 19th century capitalism was Polish city Łódź, also known as Litzmannstadt (130 km from Warsaw), where German settlers had been invited in 1820 to establish a textile manufacturing centre in almost empty fields. Due to capitalism the city became the fastest growing in Europe. After 40 years, in 1860, it had 33 thousand inhabitants. Then the boom of continental European capitalism began and 50 years later, at the begging of the First World War it had 500 (630 with the suburbia) thousand inhabitants! This part of Poland was under Russian occupation, the Russians administered the city as a night watchman (preventing its cultural development and protecting industrial production against workers' unrest), entrepreneur were German and after 1860 also Jewish (in 1913 one third of the population of Łódź was Jewish) while Polish peasants constituted its workforce (the Nobel Prize winner Władysław Reymont depicted the city's capitalism in a bitterly critical novel *The Promised Land*). The city's industry imported wool and cotton and exported textile products to the vast Russian empire, it had little internal demand so the workers were impoverished. Soon in the city centre about 100 beautiful palaces were built in different style (Renaissance, Baroque, Art Nouveau) together with a number of opulent apartment houses, but half of the population lived in slums. The city has not been destroyed by wars so it can serve as a museum of the European capitalism illustrating what its self-regulating mechanisms mean.[116]

Industrial Capitalism

Capitalism was a major factor behind philosophy of the era. While British philosophers (the Darwinians and utilitarians) were on the whole optimistic about the world, continental philosophers were rather pessimistic. Whatever we may think about

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[116] Bohdan Baranowski, Jan Fijałek, *Łódź. Dzieje miasta*. T. 1. Do 1918 r., Warszawa-Łódź: PWN 1980.
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real Communism as a solution to those problems, Karl Marx was an extremely inquisitive philosopher who discerned the dangers of capitalist development and warned again unregulated capitalism. Schopenhauer was pessimistic about the very idea of busy-ness (being constantly busy), while Kierkegaard reacted against the rigid discipline characteristic of the newly created bourgeoisie.

Several new ideas were widely discussed during this period.

Darwinism

* Darwinism[117] encouraged the materialistic view on humanity. Unfortunately early social Darwinism was very narrowly materialistic, so it tended to reduce human life to physiology. Moreover it was collectivist, so it tended to subordinate individuals to the supposed good of the species. Only in the 20th century evolutionism was understood as endless creation and a journey into the unknown.

Political and Economic Liberalism

* Political liberalism was perfecting the idea of government by consent, while economic liberalism was focusing on free trade and the doctrine of *laissez-faire*. with the role of the stated reduced to the night watchman.[118]

"Liberalism developed along two parallel tracks, the political and the economic. Political liberalism focused on the essential concept of government by consent. (…) For much of its early history it was indistinguishable from the growth of limited government. Its first lasting success may be seen in the American Revolution, though it drew heavily on the experiences of British parliamentarianism and on the first, constitutional phase of the Revolution in France. In its most thoroughgoing form it embraced republicanism, though most liberals welcomed a popular, limited, and fair-minded monarch as a factor encouraging stability. Its advocates stressed above all the rule of law, individual liberty, constitutional procedures, religious toleration and the universal rights of man. They opposed the inbuilt prerogatives, wherever they survived, of Crown, Church, or aristocracy. Nineteenth-century liberals also gave great weight to property, which they saw as the principal source of responsible judgement and solid citizenship. As a result, whilst taking the lead in clipping the wings of absolutism and in

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[117] Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, pp. 792-794.
[118] Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, pp. 802-812.

laying the foundations of modern democracy, they were not prepared to envisage radical schemes for universal suffrage or for egalitarianism.

Economic liberalism focused on the concept of free trade, and on the associated doctrine of *laissez-faire*, which opposed the habit of governments to regulate economic life through protectionist tariffs. It stressed the right of men of property to engage in commercial and industrial activities without undue restraint. Its energies were directed on the one hand to dismantling the economic barriers which had proliferated both within and between countries and on the other to battling against all forms of collectivist organization, from the ancient guild to to new trade unions."[119]

Political liberalism (but it must be remembered that what is called liberalism in Europe is called conservatism in the U.S., while American liberalism is strongly influenced by socialism) was formulated before Darwinism became popular. However, economic liberalism was rather Darwinian. It praised competition which selected the winners who took the lion's share and the looser who deserved their misery. The role of the state was reduced to the night watchmen. In fact economic liberalism, by advocating unrestricted competition, undermined political liberalism.

Perhaps two different kinds of competition should be distinguished. In micro-competition, like in sporting events, competitors try to do their best but the rules are given and they are controlled by independent referees. Competition mobilizes contestants. This kind of competition was also popular in communist countries in which work competition was organized. Macro-competition selects the winner who can change the rules of competition and the whole course of events. A party wining elections can change the constitution. There is no reason to assume that the results of competition should be regarded as the best possible solutions. Neither kind of competition is safe and both exist in Nature, thus the wisest attitude is to use both in societies but with caution and in moderation.

Conservatism

* Conservatism continued the inspirations of Edmund Burke and "began to crystallize as a coherent ideology in conjunction with liberal trends. It was not opposed to democracy or to change as such, and should not be confused with simple reactionary positions. What it did was to insist that all change should be channelled and managed in

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[119] Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, p. 802.

such a way that the organic growth of established institutions of state and society—monarchy, Church, the social hierarchy, property, and the family—should not be threatened." It was represented in Britain by politicians like Sir Robert Peel or Benjamin Disraeli.[120]

Socialism

* "Socialism, like Nationalism, was a collectivist creed. It opposed the exploiters and manipulators for the protection not just of the individual but of society as a whole. It took its name from the idea of fellowship or, in the modern idiom 'solidarity' (...). It maintained that the poor, weak and oppressed could not be guaranteed a tolerable life except by the pooling of resources, by the equitable distribution of wealth, and by the subordination of individual rights to the common good. Unlike liberalism, it did not fear the modern state; on the contrary, it looked to the state as the arbiter and often as the prime mover of compassionate measures. Socialism was to be directed against oppressors both at home and abroad. The feeling of international solidarity made it the natural opponent of nationalism. Nineteenth-century socialism is generally considered to have drawn its strength from four separate sources: from [1] Christian socialism, from [2] the trade union movement, from [3] the co-operative movement, and from [4] the 'utopian' socialist theorists.

[Ad 1] Without ever using the label, Christian socialism had a centuries-old tradition. Christian doctrine had always urged service to the community and the renunciation of personal wealth. The Sermon on the Mount had been regularly invoked to justify collectivist economic schemes (…). In the nineteenth century, Protestants generally showed the most initiative (…). The Roman Catholics were more inhibited until the publication of Rerum novarum in 1891. In Russia, the doctrines of the Orthodox Church, the collectivist traditions of the peasant communes, and existence of an all-powerful state all furnished fertile ground for the reception of socialist ideas.

[Thus it should not be perplexing that in the 21st century often socialist ideas are held by right-wing political parties.]

[Ad 2] The trade union movement grew out of the vulnerability of wage-labourers in the free-market economy. (…) The critical launch dates are seen as 1834 in Britain,

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[120] Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, p. 812.

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1864 in France, 1869 in Germany. By 1900 most European countries possessed an active labour movement.

[Ad 3] The formation of co-operatives, which sought to protect their members from the evils of big business, took place in three main sectors—manufacturing, consumption, and agriculture. In 1800 the experimental textile settlement of New Lanark Mills was set up in Scotland by the visionary Robert Owen (1771-1858). It guaranteed a ten-and-a-half-hour working day and sickness insurance, but did not outlast its founder.

[Ad 4] Socialist theorizing had been in progress ever since the 'Conspiracy of Equals' was organized in Paris in 1796 by Francois-Noel Babeuf (1760-97). Like Babeuf, who was executed by the Directory, all the founding theorists were French Utopians. They included Claude Henri de Rouvroy, Comte de Saint-Simon (1760-1825), Charles Fourrier (1772-1837), Etienne Cabet (1788-1856), Louis Auguste Blanqui (1805-81), Louis Blanc (1811-82), and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-65). Fourrier's Theorie des Quatre Mouvements (1808) envisaged a scientifically ordered society, free from all government, which would ascend through various stages of perfection on the road to 'Harmony'. (It is often regarded as the source of Marx's ideas on the stages of history and the withering of the state.)

French influences were strong in the thought of the early German socialists. Ferdinand Loslauer (Lassalle, 1825-64), a Silesian Jew, who was killed in a romantic duel after founding the first German socialist party, spent a formative period in Paris. The two inseparable exiles, Friedrich Engels (1820-95) and Karl Marx (1818-83), who met in Paris, based many of their arguments on study of the French Revolution. (...)

Almost all socialist organizations were dominated by middle-class intellectuals. The German Social Democratic Party (SPD) was permanently established in 1890, after twelve years of banishment under Bismarck's anti-socialist law. It traced its origin to the *Gotha Programme* of 1875, and to the merger of Lassalle's association with various Marxist groups. The *Erfurt Programme* of 1891 was largely formulated by Karl Kautsky (1854-1938), and was openly Marxist. But it was soon modified both by the revisionist criticisms of Eduard Bernstein (1850-1932), who rejected the apocalyptic vision of socialism, and by the pragmatic inclinations of party leaders in the Reichstag.

The internationalist branch of the movement encountered similar difficulties. The 'First International' fell apart amidst recriminations between Marxists and anarchists. The 'Second International', which in 1889 succeeded in setting up a permanent secretariat in Brussels, was soon dominated by representatives of the SPD. It organized congresses, acted as a pressure group largely in the pacifist cause, and evaporated in 1914 when none of its national branches opposed the war. Its demise left the field deserted by all except the revolutionary Russian party, which was run by exiles like V. I. Ulyanov (Lenin, 1870-1924) and other like-minded conspirators."[121]

Anarchism

* "Anarchism, though passing its infancy in the company of socialism, soon grew up to be incompatible. At the core of anarchist thought lies the contention that all forms of domination are hateful, that government is not just unnecessary but harmful. One early strand, which could be traced to the Anabaptists and Diggers of the seventeenth century, came to fruition in England in the *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (1793) of William Godwin (1756-1836).

A second strand, in France, in the work and writings of Proudhon and his disciple, Anselme Bellegarrigue, centred on the doctrine of mutuality (mutualism). This held that the workers should avoid involvement in parliamentary politics, and should liberate themselves by direct action on the streets and in the factories.

A third strand grew from an extreme reaction against the extreme autocracy of the Russian Empire. It was nourished by two aristocratic Russian exiles, Mikhail Bakunin (1814-76) and Prince Peter Kropotkin (1842-1921). Bakunin, who once declared that 'the passion for destruction is also a creative urge', broke up Marx's First International. 'The Communists believe that they must organize the working class in order to seize power in states', he declared. 'Revolutionary socialists [meaning anarchists] organize in order to destroy states.' He was the inspiration of the collectivist variant of anarchism that took hold in the Latin countries. Kropotkin, a distinguished author and geographer, wrote (…) in his campaign for a communist society free from all central government.

A fourth strand, initially described in *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum* (*The Individual and His Property*, 1845) was launched by the Berlin journalist Max Stirner (1806-56). It stressed the absolute rights of the individual to freedom from institutional

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[121] Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, p. 835-840.

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control. This proved attractive to numerous avant-garde artists and writers, from Courbet and Pissarro to Oscar Wilde. But it also shows why the anarchists' own principles ruled out any chance of an effective anarchist organization." [122]

Further reading

Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, Chapter IX Revolutio. A Continent in Turmoil ('Modernization' - technological and social changes p. 764, Romanticism p. 782, Darwin p. 789, religious life p. 794, politics p. 799, liberalism p. 802, conservatism p. 812, nationalism p. 812, socialism p. 835, anarchism p. 840, Bismarck p. 841, Jews p. 842, European Imperialism p. 848, Modernism and Nietzsche p. 854, Decadence p. 861, international relations (the Franco-German war, the Crimean war) p. 865)

Marx

Karl Marx's (1818-1883) motto was "Philosophers have so far explained the world in various ways: the point, however, is to change it" (the 11th thesis on Feuerbach, which is also inscribed in his tomb in Highgate Cemetery in London). As a revolutionary he had to flee yet feudal Germany, in Paris he found greedy capitalism, and his experience with the English capitalism (including the treatment of poverty as a crime and sending those in need of social help to the sweatshops of forced labour, the workhouses) spilled the cup of bitterness. 1840s were the decade of poverty (the uprising of weavers in Prussian Silesia, the tragic famine in Ireland) which inspired Marx's grim vision of capitalism that he would never revise.

"Marx aimed to create the same sort of universal theory for human society that Darwin had done for natural history. (...) He took the subject of materialist history from Feuerbach, the class struggle from Saint-Simon, the dictatorship of the proletariat (which he soon rejected) from Babeuf, the labour theory of value from Adam Smith, the theory of surplus value from Bray and Thompson, the principle of dialectical progress from Hegel (thesis - antithesis - synthesis). All these components were put together in a messianic doctrine whose psychological roots are thought to lie in the Judaism which his family had deserted during his childhood."[123] His vision was a philosophical interpretation of history and economics. Since his youth Marx hated the pursuit of money, which he saw as an alienation (he used the Hegelian term but changed its meaning). In time he extended his reluctance to the entire capitalist system and wanted

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[122] Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, p. 840-841.
[123] Norman Davies, *Europe. A History.* Pimlico 1997, p. 837.

to destroy it. Living in great poverty Marx devoted his life to fighting the capitalist system theoretically and practically.

His views began to take shape in 'On The Jewish Question' (1843) and *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (1844) and the 'Theses on Feuerbach' (1845) unpublished in his lifetime. *The German Ideology*, written with Engels in 1845, contained his vision of history, while *The Communist Manifesto* (also with Engels in 1848) draw practical implications from it. Economics became dominant in his *Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy* (1959) and his main economic work *Capital* (1867-1894). *The Critique of the Gotha Programme* (1875) contains his reflections on the nature and organisation of communist society (although it must be stressed that he devoted only a few pages to it as compared to thousands of paged on which he criticised capitalism. It was Lenin who designed real communism in the USSR).

Marx first diagnosed the changes which took place after the French Revolution - aristocracy was marginalized by the bourgeoisie who created a hell of exploitation, in which human values were lost, so that only the workers' revolution could change the destiny of the world. But he quickly generalized it to encompass the entire history of humankind (his historical materialism). People initially lived in happy small communities, but when every society created two classes - the exploiting and the exploited - a struggle between them became the driving force of history. First, slaves were struggling with their owners, then peasants with aristocracy, and finally, workers with the bourgeoisie. The situation of the exploited class gradually worsened. Engels gave it a thorough analysis in *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1844) and discovered a systematic (in fact restricted to a very short period of time) decline in real wages, an increase in exploitation. It was accompanied by the process much more dangerous from a philosophical point of view - "alienation" or degradation of work. By working Man expresses his essence - creativity. However, a factory worker is deprived of this possibility. The division of work (as predicted by Smith) dehumanises the workers. Their work is stultifying, reduced to the mindless use of machines, is experienced as a torment and is directed to aims not in accordance with truly human powers. A worker has no impact on the entire process of production (the assembly line at Ford's factory in 1920s would confirm Marx's worst fears). This point is extremely

important in Marxism. It was not an economic theory driven by compassion for the poor or aiming at improving economic growth. Its central theme was the criticism of capitalism as cramping human creative potential.

Governments instead of taking care of the workers represent the interests of the rich only. The created product is taken away from its producer It was in sharp contrast to earlier periods when individuals took care of themselves and did not sell their work for money. The main force responsible for the degeneration of the world was the bourgeoisie. Capitalism deprived human life of the joy of creation turning the whole humankind into a disciplined army of producers and consumers. It destroyed family and community ties, and replaced them with business-like marriage contracts. The institutions of capitalism perpetuate themselves. Capitalists intend to stay in business so they have to exploit their workers. The worker must take the best job on offer. By doing this they reinforce the very structures that oppress them. Thus Marx attacked the main pillars of capitalism: self-interest, private property, the division of labour. He believed that if the situation deteriorated to the point where workers would not have to lose anything but their chains, a revolution would break out to destroy the bourgeoisie and create the ultimate synthesis - a communist society, classless, which would enable all its members to have a decent and creative life.

As to why humankind develops Marx gave two conflicting explanation. One was dialectical: two classes have conflicting interests and their struggle move the world forward. The other was materialistic. The productive forces (the means of production plus technology) develop, become more powerful, which determines changes in the economic structure (organization of production), which in turn changes the superstructure (culture, political institutions). Those explanation do not have to be complementary and can be accepted separately. Capitalism accelerated economic progress. "Constant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, and everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones" (*The Communist Manifesto*, Part one).

Although Marx called on people to be active in the creation of history, at the same time, alluding to Hegel he emphasized that historical process was independent of the human will. Capitalism had to fail, and the revolutionists would only accelerate the progress of "the locomotive of history."

Exposing the internal contradictions of capitalism is one of the most interesting achievements by Marx. To win the competition, manufacturers lower prices and subsequently the wages of the workers. Exploitation will be intensified but selling products will be even more difficult because the demand will stifle. Capitalism will be plagued by overproduction and deflation crises until production comes to a standstill (the crisis of 1929 was another fulfilment of that vision - in fact one cannot say that Marxism was always unscientific, some of its predictions were confirmed). At the same time, smaller producers will be devoured by larger ones, so that eventually the economy will be concentrated in the hands of a small group of the very rich acting on an international scale, which will result in the disappearance of national states (also this prediction has been fulfilled to some extent).

Private property (factories) is the result of capitalists robbing workers. Marx believed that it is possible to estimate the objective value of the work done by workers. Their wages are equal to the replacement cost of labour (the cost of maintaining a family to produce new workers). In the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (1875) Marx and Engels referred to the social-democrat Lassalle as the proponent of *the iron law of wages* stating that real wages always tend, in the long run, toward the minimum wage necessary to sustain the life of the worker. Yet products are sold more expensive. The capitalist uses the market value of the goods and appropriates (or simply steals) the entire surplus (the so-called surplus value). Therefore factories are in fact owned by workers who have the moral right to reclaim them. (Already Locke in the *Second Treatise on Government* related value of a commodity to labour needed to its production. Smith introduce the concept of the natural price.[124] Then it was developed by David Ricardo and the Ricardian socialists in 1820s and 1830s. Marx used it to justify his claim that capitalists robbed their workers, which allegedly could be discovered by comparing the amount of labour embedded in their products and the amount of work that can be purchased by the wages received by the workers. Money can be exchanged for goods and services but actually they are all different forms of labour. Workers put more labour into what they produce than the labour they can buy for their wages.)

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[124] Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations, Book I, chaps. 7–8.

Marx's theory of exploitation belongs to a debate over what is a just price for products and just payment for work. A most recent contributors were Eugen von Böhm-Bawerk (capitalists organize production and means of production so their input in the final values of commodities is more important than labour provided by workers; *History and Critique of Interest Theories*, 1884), David Ramsay Steele (supply and demand for all commodities and their ingredients determine their price; the labour theory of value is inadequate[125]), John Roemer (exploitation results from unequal ownership of property (labour, skills, land, means of production[126]).

The more commonsensical arguments are that (1) the organization of work (management) contributes to the value of the products as much as the labour of the workers and that (2) labour without demand creates no value at all. Marx's thesis that workers were often exploited can by justified even without accepting his dubious theory of the objective value of good based on labour. The price is just when it is set by free market. Yet very often or almost always there are conspiracies which raise the price and provide unjust profits to some parties involved in the processes of production and exchange. When Smith criticised the East India Company he just meant that its owner as monopolists raise prices and thus exploit both producers and consumers. When the state creates intentionally high unemployment to make the cost of labour low it exploits the workers. However, this explanation is less compelling than Marx's theory with allegedly enabled easy calculation of the amount of money stolen by capitalists from workers. If we accept that the really just wages and prices are those which are set by the really free market we must first define what counts for the really free market. The extreme (perhaps social Darwinian) standpoint assumes that just and optimal prices and wages are those which really exist. If workers cannot fight for higher wages perhaps they deserve what they have and it is just. However, this makes the very concept of justice useless. eliminates the very concept of justice: everyone is self-interested (workers want to earn much, capitalists want hight profits), their aims are contradictory, the balance between different interests achieved in any time is always just because it

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[125] David Ramsay Steele, *From Marx to Mises: Post Capitalist Society and the Challenge of Economic Calculation*. Open Court 1999.

[126] John E. Roemer, 'Should Marxists be Interested in Exploitation', *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 1985, pp. 30-65.
John E. Roemer, "Origins of Exploitation and Class: Value Theory of Pre-Capitalist Economy", *Econometrica*, Vol. 50, No. 1, 1982, pp. 163-192

reflects the bargaining power of each party. And yet accepting this attitude may result in constant war of all against all.

Marx unmasked the bourgeois culture as an ideology encouraging production and accumulation of goods. Art, religion, morality, and even science constitute the superstructure, the content of which is determined by the base - the general relations of production in a given time. The dominant class creates the official culture and uses it to enslave the exploited class.

Already in 1843 attacking Bruno Bauer about Jewish emancipation Marx argued that although religion is not an obstacle to political emancipation, it prevents full human development. Impoverished people need religion, also to help establish social order. Later he regarded religion as the "opium of the people" because it facilitates exploitation by promising compensation after death. (It must be remembered that in 19th c. the Church sided with the rich against the poor.) Revolutions in art reflect revolutions in the mode of production. Classicism was the art of the nobility as opposed to sentimentalism - the art of the Third Estate. The victory of the bourgeoisie resulted in the rise of the bourgeois novel. (No wonder that the workers' revolution tried to create the socialist realism in art, which, however, turned out to be mostly state propaganda.)

One of the main Marx's achievement was drawing attention to the fact that the interests of capitalists and workers are not complementary and they do not spontaneously reach an equilibrium.[127] Yet on careful analysis one can ask what is an equilibrium or harmony that should be reached. Nature is full of conflicts which are solved not by harmonious adjustments but by the eliminations of the least fit. Human interests or desires are usually conflicting. Their adjustment of is a continuous process. The existence of societies require certain level of adjustment, otherwise the war of all against all would destroy social life. Since the pace of life accelerated due to capitalism conflicts became more visible with less time for finding a solution. Marx exaggerated this situation. On the one hand found capitalist conflicts unsolvable, on the other created a myth of a classless communist society, harmonious and without serious conflicts.

Marx regarded his theory as "scientific" but its many parts resemble the Messianic doctrine of Jesus. Marx discarded Hegel's idealism, but retained the structure

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[127] Joan Robinson, *An Essay on Marxian Economics*, London: Macmillan 1942.

presenting history of humankind as a cosmic process in which the whole humankind should be saved. Thus he combined Hegel's and Jesus' teachings (after all both were prophets). The world is so corrupt that it is not worth repairing. One should give up fighting for material success in this world, cleanse the spirit and the heart (to become a revolutionary), trust in the higher power (the laws of history) and prepare for the coming of the kingdom of perfection and righteousness (communism) in the near future. (Marx's views on money were strongly under biblical influences. Money was gold, a commodity which has its own value and was used for exchange but also was admired as valuable in itself. Paper banknotes only represented gold coins.[128] It seems that money was for Marx a kind of biblical Golden calf. He overlooked the fact that money is an abstract entity, a social institution on its own rights. As Yuvel Harari notices money is the most trusted institution in human history.[129]) Marxism was a kind of a messianic religion, so not surprisingly it could not tolerate other religions. B. Russell drew analogies between the teachings of Christianity and Marx:

Yahweh = Dialectical Materialism

The Messiah = Marx

The Elect = The Proletariat

The Church = The Communist Party

The Second Coming = The Revolution

Hell = Punishment of the Capitalists

The Millennium = The Communist Commonwealth[130]

It shows that both the ideology of Marxism and further the structure of the communist party heavily depended on the Christian tradition of Europe - and perhaps because of this enjoyed such powerful appeal.

Contrary to its own claims Marxism was often unscientific. It developed a perfect strategy for reconciling any facts with the interpretation adopted in advance. Popper criticized him for this, and Paul Johnson compared the methodology of Marxism to the superstitious sixteenth-century Lurianic Kabbalah.

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[128] Ernest Mandel, *Karl Marx*, Chapter VI. Marx's Theory of Money.
https://www.marxists.org/archive/mandel/19xx/marx/ch06.htm [retrieved 14.11.2014]
Originally published in John Eatwell, Murray Milgate & Peter Newman (eds.), Marxian economics, London 1990, p.1-38.

[129] Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (2011)*, Vintage London 2015. Chapter 10.

[130] Betrand Russell, *The History of Western Philosophy*, Simon & Schuster 1967, (2. 1. 4) Saint Augustine's Philosophy and Theology, p. 364

Marx very keenly diagnosed the situation of his time. The French Revolution meant progress but then a kind of new slavery prevailed, the exploited working class was created together with the greedy capitalist class. All human values, culture, freedom, happiness collapsed. This is what it looked like in the 1840s when Marx created his system. Then the world changed, but at all costs Marx defended his system against any revisions.

The dynamics of Marx's thought may be summarized as follows. As a humanist he did not approve of the bourgeois lifestyle focused on the accumulation of wealth. As a Hegelian he believed that the world was governed by inevitable laws, and thus the emergence of the bourgeoisie had to make sense from the point of view of the history of humankind. Marx's answer was: the bourgeoisie and capitalism, although they develop the world economically and impose technological progress, bring humankind to moral and spiritual poverty and form a new class - the proletariat - which would strike the final blow to the world divided into classes and based on exploitation (certainly when philosophers would take the lead - this was a Platonic motive). Marx changed this hypothesis into a dogma, perhaps because he truly hated the bourgeoisie and its ideals and did not see any other way to overcome them.

Marxism was made up of several threads: (1) an inquisitive analysis of the internal contradictions of capitalism; (2) defending humanistic values threatened by capitalism; (3) pseudo-philosophy of history derived from Hegel; (4) scarce, contained on a few pages only practical recommendations concerning the revolution and society therafter (elimination of the elites, dictatorship of proletariat). (1) and (2) were brilliant, (3) and (4) rather toxic. Yet it is impossible to claim that Marx is morally or intellectually responsible for further Marxist thought or Soviet totalitarianism. His thought was widely used and interpreted by very many followers which if anything attests to its inspirational force. For instance he extolled individual freedom, so it is possible that if he had lived a century later he would rather have supported social liberalism than Soviet communism.

When the workers' movement began to organize (in social-democratic parties) Marx tried to influence it (writing a constitution ad a few addresses for an International Working-men's Association, later called the first International). He initially expected the revolution to break out soon and in Western Europe. He did not condemn the use of

terror against the bourgeoisie (he was one the few intellectuals who supported the Paris Commune of 1871, probably thinking that the sooner the traditional elite were removed, the faster it would end the agony of class societies). Towards the end of his life, seeing that no revolution was going to happen in Europe, he began to persuade the Russian intelligentsia into revolution, recommending that they should spread it to Western Europe as soon as possible (the idea was taken very seriously by Lenin and Trotsky).

Marxism and communist parties became popular only after Lenin made a revolution in Russia in 1917 and in that it was also similar to Christianity. Jesus, his apostles and their disciples existed as a church of the martyrs on the outskirts of societies for three hundred years. Only after Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity it became powerful but perhaps less faithful to the original teaching. Only when Lenin added political pragmatism and the power of the state to Marx's romantic idealism Communism became real power.

Questions: How did modernization and rationalization change the traditional structure of Europe? How was the Victorian society organized (workhouses, orphans) and how did it evolve? How did Marx change Hegel's framework to stage an attack on capitalism? What is the driving force of history and what are three main stages of the class struggle? How is culture ("ideology") created, what is its function (e.g. of religion)? What is the situation of workers (alienations of work)? How was capitalism developing according to Marx and what was wrong with it? What were the similarities between Marxism and Jewish/Christian messianism? How the communist revolution was meant to change the world? How was the nationalisation of private property justified?

Further reading

Chapter GERMAN IDEALISM AND MATERIALISM (Marx and the Young Hegelians; Capitalism and its Discontents) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy.* Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

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Jonathan Wolff, "Karl Marx", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2011/entries/marx/>.

Jerry Z. Muller, *The Mind and the Market: Capitalism in Modern European Thought*. New York: Knopf, 2002, ch.7.

Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, Chapter XI Tenebrae. Europe in Eclipse (the Russian Revolution p. 914, the 'Russian Civil War' p. 928, Fascist and Bolshevik totalitarianism p. 944, Stalinism p. 959); Chapter XII. Divisa et Indivisa (Eastern Europe - the Soviet system p. 1098, the Cold War p.1109, Gorbachev and the fall of communism p. 1117).

Darwin and Spencer

Darwinism had a huge impact on ethics. Darwin (1809-1882) in *The Origin of Species* (1859) formulated the theory of evolution, according to which for the species to improve on oneself much more organisms must be born than can survive. In the struggle for survival those organisms win which from birth, due to innate qualities, are better adapted to their environment. Consequently, those who survive pass on their traits to future generations, so they influence the future shape of the species. This is natural selection. It is not the adaptation of individual organisms to the environment. Genes are assigned at the time of conception and since then there is only competition with others.

Darwinism explained the apparent design in nature - new features arise accidentally as a result of unintended mutations, and only if they prove to be useful for survival they are handed down to future generations. (Characteristics acquired during lifetime by learning are not transmitted in this way.) Therefore, what spreads in nature, seems designed for a specific purpose. In fact, it is the result of the accumulation of random, beneficial mutations that allowed the childless extinction of organisms without these mutations.

Darwinism considered humans to be a species which evolved in the same way as other natural species and rejected the description of the creation contained in the Bible.

It should be stressed that Darwinism does not reduce natural creativity to a bloody competitive mechanism. Before new feature are selected by the survival of the fittest, the must come to being. It cannot be denied that nature spontaneously creates new features. The abilities to compose symphonies or to formulate the theory of relativity are inherent to mater, the substance of the universe. Evolution only helped them manifest.

Darwin completed the destruction of the Aristotle's conception of final causes. Organisms in general are not seeking any purpose or final goods. Their structure is the product of a simple and blind mechanism based on small random mutations. All the complexity of the world is achieved in this way and it has no further or deeper purpose. For many people it was bad, depressing news. Christian philosophers suggest that it is still possible that God used evolution to achieve His goals. Critics ask whether the Almighty and Merciful could not have found less cruel methods - the process of evolution is a giant slaughter (mostly of animals). For example, the crocodile can live up to 80 years, but 90-98 percent crocodiles die in the first year of their life. This is the price for maintaining perfect adaptation to the environment. Crocodiles have existed for 80 million years and are one of the flagship products of evolution.

In England, Darwin's ideas were applied to social issues even before Darwin (Malthus). Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) coined the phrase "survival of the fittest" to capture the essence of natural selection, which leads to the improvement of the species.

Social Darwinism became popular among the English upper classes in the 19th c. justifying social inequalities. The better fitted become rich, the maladjusted poor. Tampering with this state of affairs and the implementation of social assistance programs would therefore interfere with the laws of nature. One of the manifestations of the spread of Darwinism was the creation of the university departments of eugenics, the science of improving societies by crossing the strong individuals to breed better offspring. Some races (e.g. Africans) were found to be lower, which justified their extermination during the conquest of Africa. However, Darwin did not support the idea of racism. In his views differences between so called races (e.g. white and black people) although easily visible were unimportant from the point of view of social success.

Darwinism coincided with a period of unprecedented prosperity in Great Britain under the rule of Queen Victoria (reigned 1837-1901). The British Empire, supporting global trade and globalization, covered a quarter of the world, was organized efficiently and managed relatively humanely. The standard of living of the British middle class was high. While in London's East End working-class people lived very poorly, the popularity of revolutionary ideas on the British Isles was negligible (this is why Marx could work and write there freely). When workers rarely organized protest marches, other social groups spontaneously organized counter-demonstrations. The majority of

the public supported the existing social structure - upper class and the parliament stood guard over ownership and rights, ambitious middle class strengthened social cohesion, lower class carried out the work. All believed that by hard work their material and social situation would steadily improve.

Criticism and Comments

Although social Darwinism is now politically incorrect and often totally eliminated from handbooks of philosophy it reveals an extremely important and timely issues. The evolution of all species is based on the elimination of ill-adapted organisms. As a result the traits of the better-adapted are spreading among the population. By means of this the whole complexity of nature is achieved. Also human species is subject to these procedures. Until a few hundred years ago the high mortality rate in children used to eliminate vulnerable individuals. Medicine reducing the mortality undermined one of the key mechanisms for the development and sustainability of the species. This has led to rapid population growth and the risk of genetic defects (if some random mutations are beneficial, some are also unfavourable).

Darwinism has revealed a huge and tragic ethical problem. Crocodiles do not have sensitivity that would force them to counteract the huge selection of their offspring. In each species, a number of individuals reach fulfilment, some live a more or less miserable lives, while others are eliminated. Humankind, however, is the only species that rejected this principle for moral reasons. People do not agree to the selection of their own children. Anyone who is born should be granted the right to live ans prosper. Genetic engineering has to be the next step, even though it may not be sufficient. The cost of it may be enormous. This could enhance the diversity of individuals. However, attempts to ensure well-being to all present inhabitants of the earth according to the prevailing standards of Western consumerism would lead to the destruction of the environment of the earth.

Scientific Darwinism inspired the development of sociobiology and evolutionary psychology that examine the evolutionary roots of institutions and social mechanisms. Everything that exists, has to deal with natural selection. Jealousy, revenge, falling in romantic love are universal, because they contribute to the survival of the genes that are

responsible for them. And yet it may be beneficial to correct them. Culture again contradicts nature. It can no longer be maintained that nature is harmonious and rational; it is brutal and stochastic.

Darwinism challenged the Enlightenment vision of an egalitarian society in which "everyone counts for one In nature, competition implies that the impact on the future of a species is exerted by a small group of individuals who appear to be best suited and pass on their genes to future generations. The researcher of animal life Konrad Lorenz *(Das sogenannte Böse. Zur Naturgeschichte der Aggression 1963; On Aggression 1966)* praised the competition within species thanks to which the strongest individuals become the leaders of the flock and all others benefit from it. Egalitarianism, concern for the poor, the delegation of the decision to the majority, rather than to the best are yet another examples of suspending the laws of nature. After all, nature takes care of crocodiles killing most of them young, so that only a minority can achieve success and develop the species. It explains why many naïve utopian visions failed. Humans do not have to follow the natural solution, but since the whole natural world is based on cruel competition the fight for humanistic ideals is difficult. To win it the best and moral part of human mentality must rebel against its evolutionary roots.

Questions: What are the basic ideas of Darwinian evolution? How did social Darwinism justify social inequalities? What was eugenics?

Further reading

Chapter THREE MODERN MASTERS (Charles Darwin) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy.* Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later)

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John Stuart Mill

Utilitarianism was developed and revised by John Stuart Mill in his books *On Liberty* (1959) and *Utilitarianism* (1863). The former, though initially shocking, later became the flagship manifesto of western individualism. Another prominent utilitarian was Henry Sidgwick (1838-1900), the author of *Methods of Ethics* (1874).

J.S. Mill's biography seems important here. Raised by his father, James Mill aided by Jeremy Bentham, to be a strict utilitarian, he had a rigid childhood dominated by intellectual pursuits, and when, at twenty-one he began to question some of his beliefs, he suffered a nervous breakdown. Mill later struggled with his intuitions that utilitarianism was too unemotional and that it failed to capture and understand the "higher" pleasures. Thus, Mill's writings should be understood as the product of a struggle to reconcile simple Benthamian utilitarianism with much deeper intuitions of J.S. Mill. As he was also declined individual freedom as a child his views on liberty (strongly influenced by his future wife) could express similar tension. Under the influence of romantic poetry which he read while suffering a nervous breakdown he demanded freedom mainly to inspire individual creativity which might be suppressed by the pressure of society dominated by mediocrity. Employing passionate style in his writings he sounded even similar to Nietzsche at times.

(1) Higher pleasures. Opposing Bentham's view that "Push-pin [a simple game for children] is as good as poetry," Mill distinguished higher and lower pleasures. Given a choice between them the former should be preferred, even if they are difficult to achieve. The decision which are higher should be made by competent judges, people who know all the discussed kinds of pleasure. Mill put it briefly - it's better to be unhappy Socrates than a happy pig.

(2) The paradox of happiness. In a small note in his *Autobiography* Mill also expressed concern that the conscious pursuit of happiness is not the best way to achieve it. Perhaps it is more effective to search for what is valuable (or simply good), and happiness will appear as an unintended by-product. It is a very perplexing paradox. To achieve happiness (pleasure) one must seek things valuable in themselves different from happiness, but how can anyone find them since Bentham had already declared that only pleasure is valuable in itself?

(3) Rule utilitarianism. Gradually rule utilitarianism was defined as different from the original utilitarianism (now called act utilitarianism). Act utilitarianism requires to calculate separately for each action its outcome in terms of the social level of happiness (e.g. whether to take from the rich and give to the poor; or whether not to pay off debts since the creditor has a lot of money, and the debtor is still poor). Rule utilitarianism tries to assess statistically the results of acts of a certain kind and lay down rules that must be observed in each case to produce, on the whole, the most desired effect (to maximise pleasure). It may be sometimes beneficial not to pay off debts, but in general paying off debts contributes to the maximisation of happiness, while leaving it open to individual's decision (whether to pay or not) may bring chaos and collapse of the whole credit system, so on the whole unhappiness. Stealing, killing and lying may sometimes bring good results but in the majority of cases is detrimental to society and its level of happiness so they should be prohibited in all cases.

Robbing the rich and giving to the poor may bring more happiness in some cases but as a general rule it would bring harm to society. Rule utilitarianism advises that in every individual case general rules which statistically maximise happiness most efficiently should be observed even if in a particular case it might be beneficial to break them. Utilitarianism, therefore, after some time came close to the form of traditional morality - its main principles led to the creation of traditional rules ("Always pay off your debts") which should be followed in every case. It is possible that many of these rules would resemble the rules of traditional morality, but at the same time utilitarianism would provide a tool for modification and development of morality: as a whole it should serve the purpose of the maximisation of the social sum of happiness.

(4) The rights of minorities. By introducing the principle of individual freedom. Mill rejected the possibility of abusing minorities (or scapegoats) for the sake of the majority (which otherwise would be justified if it would increase the sum of happiness). He was bothered that democracy could lead to tyranny of the majority, realized either explicitly or by public pressure.

The issue attracted the attention of a famous French scholar studying American democracy, Alexis de Tocqueville (*Democracy in America*, 1835-1840). He vividly described how people who disagreed with the customs of the majority were excluded from society and condemned to living on its margins. Tocqueville also warned that if

the individuals were too weak and the government too strong, the government would treat them patronisingly as children, or a flock of sheep, taking decisions on their behalf, which would make them even weaker. It is a valuable lesson for today's government.

Mill formulated a principle of political liberalism which stated that an individual had the right to freedom of conduct provided he did no harm to others. If individuals harm only themselves no one has the right to force them to change their behaviour. Mill pointed out that it is individuals who are the source of progress in society. If they are deprived of the right to promote the ideas and attitudes that are inconsistent with the opinion of the majority, progress would come to a standstill. Therefore, even the supporters of the views considered by the majority to be completely wrong should not be silenced. There are three reasons for this. (1) Sometimes such views may eventually turn out to be right; (2) even if they are wrong, they may contain a grain of truth; and finally (3) the need for the debate forces the majority to understand their position and not to adhere to it to dogmatically.

However, it seems that persuading the majority that listening to minorities is in their interest (and in the interest of society) was only Mill's rhetoric. Mill differed from Smith in that for Smith individual freedom was justified because it benefited the whole society (together with the invisible hand of the market they produce more that any centrally governed society would produce). For Mill it seemed that freedom to develop one's potential was an intrinsic value, an aim in itself. That it should perhaps benefit society was of secondary importance.

(5) Vilfredo Pareto applied principles of utilitarianism to economics (*Manual of Political Economy*, 1906). He found that the utility could be measured by examining the hierarchy of preferences without treating it as pleasure or any ethical good. He also suggested a simple rule (the so-called Pareto-optymality) eliminating the difficulty of sacrificing utility/benefits of some for the sake of maximizing utility/benefits of others: the best is a situation where anyone can no longer improve their own position without deteriorating the position of others (No one can be made better off without making someone else worse off). However, in practice it is difficult to achieve, because usually when one gains someone else loses.

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In *Principles of Political Economy* (1848) Mill presented a searching philosophical analysis of key questions first raised by Adam Smith. It was him who discussed thoroughly the concepts of supply and demand, and developed the idea of Homo Economicus, a conceptual construct of a person who discussed by the economists. Later critics of the construct often referred to Mill.

"[Political economy] does not treat the whole of man's nature as modified by the social state, nor of the whole conduct of man in society. It is concerned with him solely as a being who desires to possess wealth, and who is capable of judging the comparative efficacy of means for obtaining that end."[131]

He stressed that not only *competition* but also customs, habits set prices (Book II, Chapter 4). Competition has also another function - it motivates people to work hard which is against (lazy) human nature. However, the world of continuous competition seemed depressing to him. He somehow dreamt that if people worked hard to rise the standard of living they would be able rest in the *stationary state*, the world not troubled by too much haste (Book IV, Chapter VI). He also drew attention to the *economies of scale*, large firm which emerge on the market and have overweening advantage over small firms (Book I, Chapter IX). Although he advocated supporting the poor as a social obligation (but only on the condition that it would not lead to overpopulation; Book II, Chapters XII and XIII), he offered an argumentation against *government interference* in economy (Book V, Chapter X and XI). Yet he advocated government assistance for newly emerging industries.

Criticism and comments

(1) Instead of improving utilitarianism Mill's adjustments revealed its weaknesses. If out of two qualitatively different pleasures one is usually chosen this may mean that it is considered to be a greater good (more valuable) and not greater pleasure. The choice between qualitatively different pleasures is in fact not a choice between two pleasures of different kind but a decision whether to select more pleasure of the lower kind or less pleasure of the higher kind. Bentham's utilitarianism assumed that what

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[131] John Stuart Mill "On the Definition of Political Economy, and on the Method of Investigation Proper to It," London and Westminster Review, October 1836. in: Essays on Some Unsettled Questions of Political Economy, 2nd ed. London: Longmans, Green, Reader & Dyer, 1874, essay 5, paragraphs v38. http://www.econlib.org/library/Mill/mlUQP5.html [retrieved 7.3.2014]

counts is the amount of pleasure which is always of the same kind and differs only in quantity. One should try to get as much pleasure as possible. Mill's revision of utilitarianism introduced what was usually regarded as ordinary moral considerations. One can get less through honest work, and more through theft, and of course one should choose the former. This is what moralists say. Now Mill says one can have less pleasure from reading a book, and more from drinking beer, but since competent judges consider reading a higher pleasure, it should be preferred. Why? Because it is better according to the judges. Mill's judges becomes traditional moral authorities.

(2) Mill's views on liberty appear to be consistent only on the surface. The principle determining the limits of freedom is imprecise. In fact, every action is harmful to others. By opening the store one creates competition and deprives other shopkeepers of clients; by buying a car one increases the danger of accidents on the roads; getting on a bus one takes the air of other passengers. Social life requires determining the limits to which it is possible to harm others, because it contributes to long-term benefits. In practice, therefore, the Harm Principle of Mill - you are free until you harm others - is of little use.

The utilitarian postulate of freedom ("You have the right to be free, as long as it does not harm others") differs from the Darwinian principle of freedom ("You have the right to be free as long as you do not limit the freedom of others" or "every man may claim the fullest liberty to exercise his faculties compatible with the possession of like liberty to every other man".[132]). Darwinism (Spencer) proposes that justice should mean the protection of equal opportunities and fair competition, which inevitably produce many losers. As in nature, many will be harmed, but it will be good for the development of the species/society.

It should be remembered that Mill's views on freedom were formulated before his view on utilitarianism and my even oppose them. Mill was brought up in a utilitarian home and at some point rebelled against its intellectual climate, and after reading romantic poets decided to protect individual creativity against the pressure of society. His mood was clearly Nietzscheanian then and it is possible that his views were not at all reconcilable with utilitarianism. Is freedom an end or a means to an end in Mills views? If it contributes to the general happiness it is a means and stems from the

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[132]   Herbert Spencer, *Social Statics* (1851), RareBooksClub.com 2012 , ch. 4, § 3.

principle of utility. The same was true about Darwinism - freedom and competition are means to strengthening the species. Often, however, freedom is more intrinsically valuable (valuable in itself). We would more appreciate a less happy world where people are free than a happier one in which they are enslaved. (On this a theodicy is sometimes based - God gave man free will, even though he knew that it would often cause suffering and evil.) If so, the value of freedom goes beyond the principle of utilitarianism and requires the recognition of other grounds for value than maximization of social happiness. Thus understood the principle of freedom limits utilitarianism - one must seek to maximize universal happiness, but only if it does not limit freedom.

Of course, when many different things are valuable (e.g. both freedom and happiness) and they are not reducible to one another their optimal proportion must be determined. How much freedom should be sacrificed for a greater happiness (and vice versa)? Reducing all aims or values to a single one (like happiness) is useful (it makes all values commensurable) but not very convincing. Morality, or more broadly, axiology, always searches for a compromise between conflicting values, goods, objectives, requirements. The main question being what is the ground for such compromise.[133]

Mill's view contributes to a debate whether individual freedom is really beneficial to individuals. In 1960s the hippies declared freedom as the supreme value, stopped bringing up their children allowing them "free development As a result, children felt abandoned and neglected.

Drug addicts do not harm anyone at first, but over time they first become aggressive and dangerous, and second, even if they do not attack anyone they become socially useless, they use roads, water supplies, buses, healthcare, and do not contribute to their creation. On a small scale it is not dangerous, but if these attitudes became commonplace, it would be destructive. Freedom is like a drug - once it is tasted its hard to give it up, even if it brings undesirable effects.

The idea of individual freedom may be at firs pleasant to the elite - it frees it from the obligation to care for society. Individuals who prefer freedom must take care of

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[133] Elinor Mason, 'Value Pluralism', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2011/entries/value-pluralism/>.

themselves. However, the result may be disastrous. It opens a space for social manipulation. Confused masses, devoid of responsible and transparent management fall victim to self-appointed false prophets who use their confusion to dominate them.[134]

In Britain citizens had to fight for democracy themselves, grew up in the process and therefore were able to use it properly. In Germany democracy was imposed after World War One and after the initial euphoria, when problems accumulated, the society chose to escape from freedom under the wings of Hitler. Freedom should not be an automatic right, a gift, but something fought for.

A reasonable compromise between the lack and the excess of freedom is to exercise a regular but discrete pressure by the government on individuals, so that the majority of the population undergoes it while the truly independent persons could oppose it, especially if it results in creative achievements. And it probably looks more and more like that in modern societies.

Mill's intention was to enable the development of interesting and unconventional human potential, and not to free selfish individuals from obligations towards society as it happened when the idea of individual freedom became popular.

Mill's views were motivated by his personal experience. As a child he was dominated by his father, who wanted to make him a philosopher at all cost. Then he fell in love with a married woman who could not get a divorce, and for many years he had to wait to be able to marry her. He could be understandably resentful. In fact, he tried to protect outstanding individuals against mediocre majority. He did not take into account that the spoiled majority may use the principle of liberty to refuse to obey reasonable minorities.

Summary of utilitarianism

(1) Is pleasure the only aim? Bentham created his system partly to help the poor and the oppressed. The rhetoric of utilitarianism served well this purpose but it had many flaws as the theory of morality. Of the three types of goals for which people strive (I want to be good, I want to make the world good, I want to feel good) utilitarianism accepted only the last one, although on a social scale. The rest was hopefully supposed to be derived from it. The justification was based on the fact that since everyone prefers

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[134] Kazimierz Jankowski, *Hipisi w poszukiwaniu ziemi obiecanej.* Wydawnictwo Jacek Santorski & Co. Warszawa 2003.

pleasure to pain, pleasure is the only good and the ultimate aim. Although it often seems true, it also seems obvious that many things are considered valuable. The relationship between what is pleasurable and what is considered valuable is twofold: one considers valuable what brings them pleasure, but also one finds pleasure in doing things and living in a world that they consider valuable. It is not the case that what is considered valuable is always adjusted to the circumstances so as to maximize pleasure. Also how people live is adjusted to what they consider valuable.

George Edward Moore observed[135] that pleasure intervened twice in taking decisions: (1) a thought (before deciding) about a course of action may be pleasant; (2) pleasure may be experienced as a result of taking a certain course of action. Moore contrasted thinking about drinking a glass of wine and the result of drinking it. Both may be pleasant. The former pleasure defines our desires (and in fact values): what is desired is what is thought of with pleasure. Utilitarians are mistaken when they assume that the latter pleasure is always the aim of desires and actions; although it sometimes happens, it is the former pleasure that moves people to act in accordance with their values.) We desire the aims the thought of which is the most pleasant, and not the aims that bring the most pleasure when they are achieved. Only in this sense it may be argued that "pleasure is the aim of desires." (Most people think with pleasure about experiencing pleasure, so experiencing pleasure is valuable, but only as one of the values, not necessarily the most important one.) Moore, also relying on intuition, argued that the purpose of the moral action was to maximize the good in the world, but the good was not pleasure, it was absolute goodness. Goodness is unique in that it is just good in itself. A good picture is a good thing, even if no one can see it or find pleasure in it.

(2) The principle of utility in its general form is not self-evident. From the fact that (perhaps) everyone prefers pleasure does not follow that everyone values the attainment of pleasure in others. (Mill famously argued "each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness, therefore, a good to the aggregate of all persons," which is an overtly fallacious argument). The opposition against the utility principle may go in two directions. (a) If pleasure is the only value it is personal pleasure, for each his own. So it would be difficult (or even impossible) to convince

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[135] Gorge Edward Moore, *Prinicia Ethica* (1903), §42. http://fair-use.org/g-e-moore/principia-ethica [retrieved 2.09.2014]

pleasure-seeking individuals that their action should be directed towards the pleasure of all rather than their own individual pleasure. (b) If pleasure is the only motivational force that directs people to aims other than experiencing pleasure, their morals rules should protect and lead to those aims (socially defined) and not pleasure alone. Although a community can agree to live according to the sole principle "try to be happy and make others happy" it may not be the wise choice. So far the development of humankind has been based on formulating mutual requirements not on only caring for everyone's pleasure.

(3) Can pleasure be the sole aim of existence? However, the theory can always be modified and improved. If the idea of maximizing pleasure was to be taken seriously, we should examine not only what to do to get the most pleasure, but also how to develop our sensitivity to pleasure and pain as well as our habits (or personalities) in order to get as much pleasure as possible. A fan of skiing who had to move away from the mountains may either commute to the slopes or change his hobby. He should make a calculation of profits and losses of the two strategies. Can moral issue be dealt in the same way - how to modify simultaneously habits and circumstances to achieve the greatest possible amount of happiness? If it is difficult to live honestly, is it better to make friends with cheaters (since former friends may not accept dishonesty)? Is it possible to estimate the costs of adjusting moral habits to the circumstances? Would the result not be a complete loss of moral orientation? Or one's own identity? The problem of pleasure as the only aim is not an easy one, because even though not many people believe in the pursuit of pleasure as the main target, few people cannot pursue it. As Rawls in his *Theory of Justice*[136] remarked it may happen that individual people with unique qualities cease to matter and are reduced to mere containers of some abstract substance, pleasure, which should be augmented at all cost.

(4) Why should pleasure be the only value? Mill suggested that pleasure is the ultimate value because everyone desires it. (He had some problems in distinguishing "desired" from "desirable," which demonstrated his bias toward subjectivism, again similar to Nietzsche - what should be desired is actually what is desired. The normative claim of ethics was suspended.) It opened an interesting possibility for reforming utilitarianism - the ultimate aim is not pleasure but whatever is desired by people.

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[136] John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1971.

Sidgwick seized this opportunity and restored normativity. Different things may be desired, but what should be desired is what would be desired under ideal circumstances when a person would be fully informed about all consequences of every action."[137] Values are determined by individual human desires, and yet they can be corrected if it could be argued that they rest on factual mistakes and that when fully informed the person would desire other things.

Sigwick showed this possibility but eventually he thought that what is desired is pleasure. Other utilitarians in the 20 c. Richard M. Hare, Peter Singer and Richard Brandt[138] developed this idea into a preference utilitarianism. Everyone has desires and preferences and seeks to fulfil as many of them as possible; an action is morally right if it contributes to the greatest satisfaction of desires of all members of society. This version of utilitarianism retains some old problems (if people have their own private desires, why should they desire to satisfy the desires of others?) and add new ones. First, although it is possible to roughly estimate experienced pain and pleasure (it is enough to count how much time was spent experiencing them), it is very difficult to quantify the amount of satisfied desires (is going on holiday one desire or hundreds of the them: to swim, to have good meals, to watch sunsets, etc.?). Secondly, desires are not the equivalent of pleasure. Pleasure is always good for the person who experiences it while a desire may not be good the person who feels it (if I desire peace for the world even after my death the satisfaction of this desire will not affect me in any way).

If satisfaction of informed desires is the aim of morality, it may separate morality from happiness, pleasure or what is good for people (since what is desired may be absolute goodness not goodness for anyone; angry warriors may desire to destroy their enemies even if they themselves will die in the process, so nobody will be happy in the end). Thus utilitarianism rejects its own roots and returns to the traditional bedrock of axiology - the aim of action is to do what is good (even if it means good according to someone), and not what is good/pleasant for someone.

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[137] „[A] man's future good on the whole is what he would now desire and seek on the whole, if all the consequences of all the different lines of conduct open to him were accurately foreseen and adequately forefelt, i.e. realised in imagination at the present point of time. „ Henry Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics,* Macmillan , London 1907 (on-line: https://archive.org/details/methodsofethics00sidguoft [retrieved 7.04.2014]) Bk. 1, ch. 9/4 pp. 111-112.

[138] Richard M. Hare, *Moral Thinking*, Oxford Univ. Press. 1981.
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Questions: How did J.S. Mill try to correct utilitarianism (Should happiness be our only aim? Is it only the amount of pleasure that should matter?)? What is the difference between utilitarianism of acts and rules (Sidgwick)? What should be the limits of individual freedom?

Further reading

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The Pessimists: Schopenhauer and Kierkegaard

The works of Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) grew out of the climate of pessimism after the Napoleonic wars (*The World as Will and Representation*, 1818). He was the first philosopher who directly attacked the idea that life has any meaning. He perceived the world as filled with strenuous efforts forced by a pervasive Will, greedy and voracious (the term "will" refers here to an irrational driving force, rush in life, desires, which later influenced Nietzsche's Will to Power. It does not have much to do with the will as the ability to make choices, the free will). Schopenhauer used the system of Kant but also of Spinoza and claimed that thing-in-itself and thing perceived by the senses are two sides of the same object. Thus what we see as material things is at the same tame but from the other side Will. Even out body is made out of it. (Although this is not a serious development of Kant's and Spinoza's thoughts it expressed a powerful experience of being made up of something with which a person cannot identify.) As a result individual being are aggressive and constantly in search of something. Life is filled with evil, suffering and fear; with endless striving, blind impulses devoid of knowledge, lawless, free, self-determining. The world was disgusting for Schopenhauer as it consisted of individuated and objectified Will. Religious consolation is illusory, because it is uncertain and useless against the fear of death. The philosophical belief in the progress of the good is misleading - the world is eternal, and thus if the good has not triumphed so far, it never will. Since the will makes the nature of man and the world, these are evil as well, therefore the right course of life means a rebellion against nature. Happiness cannot be achieved, but at least one can temporarily free oneself from suffering through (1) contemplation of art, (2) compassion and (3) isolation and asceticism.

A tranquil state of consciousness can be achieved through aesthetic perception. When contemplating works of art it is possible to see Platonic ideas in and identify with it (see sections 33, 34, 50 of his main work; already Aristotle observed that while contemplating abstract beings human mind becomes one with them). Main arts are architecture, sculpture, painting, and poetry, but music is special among them, most subjective and moving. (Schopenhauer influenced generations of artists with his remarks on art.)

Trough compassion (all suffer in the same way - here the Enlightenment egalitarianism and "sympathy" can be found) one can transcend his egoistic desires imposed by the Will.

Finally, only the denial towards our will-to-live, which Schopenhauer identifies with an ascetic attitude of renunciation and resignation, can bring enough tranquillity. Schopenhauer was one of the first Europeans who drew inspiration from Buddhism, which he understood as an incentive to get rid of the self and its aspirations. (A discreet difference is that according to Schopenhauer will is the essence of man, while in Buddhism ego and desires are the result of illusions and conventions.)

Towards the end of his life he formulated advice on how to achieve happiness - quite popular at the time and now thoroughly rejected by psychologists. It amounted to a recommendation how a man who despises the world and still needs it should reconcile both these tendencies by keeping a reasonable distance to the world. They represented the stage where individualists find life with others unbearable but still could not live without them.

Criticism and comments

Schopenhauer's theory of man (only the will is reality, the rest are the phenomena of the mind) is a fantasy on the margins of Kant's system, even more questionable than the original. Ethical demands (freedom from the will and overcoming selfishness by compassion) sound extremely pessimistic. However, Schopenhauer's philosophy expressed the problems of the era. He fully understood the horror of the role of individuals in the Hegelian system as well as anticipated Darwinism: human nature is not the work of God nor is it created for happiness (as even Adam Smith thought); it is the product of an aggressive process of evolution. His pessimism (Nietzsche compared him to the knight accompanied by the death and the devil in the famous Dürer's woodcut) is not without a certain wisdom. His brilliant tirades against the world allow even deeply suffering persons to maintain distance from their suffering, although they do not allow to overcome it. Sources of Schopenhauer's pessimism lay in large part in his neurotic psyche twisted by the hostile attitude of his self-centred mother. Instead of looking for its causes and remedies he projected it onto the world. Whether the world seems sensible or absurd, joyful or sad, depends more on the individual temperament

and attitude than on the world itself. He diagnosed the need for psychotherapy but living alone only mastered the heroic art of suffering. Nietzsche and Freud made the next steps.

<p style="text-align:center">* * *</p>

Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) published mainly in the 1840s (*Fear and Trembling,* 1843; *The Sickness Unto Death,* 1849; *Either-Or* 1843). He was the forerunner of existentialism, a movement that opposed the rational synthesis and described the world full of tragic and emotional tensions experienced by individuals who valued authenticity. His literary style was excellent but not straightforward. He used irony, parody, satire, humour, and deconstructive techniques (and also many pen-names) in order to avoid conventionally accepted forms of knowledge, values and thus avoid being shut in stereotype roles imposed by social order of Danish new-born capitalism. One of his main problems was finding his identity in a changing world (the same problem haunted Cervantes' Don Quixote). Today he would post to the internet under different nicknames. The following summary presents as an example just a small part of Kierkegaard's complex output on the borderline of philosophy and literature, full of riddles and paradoxes. According to Kierkegaard, an individual could adopt several styles of life. (1) The lowest level (below which there was just thoughtlessness) was the aesthetic life exemplified by Don Juan and Faust seeking only shallow pleasure, or an artist concentrated on egocentric artistic visions, seeking immersion in sensuous experience, contemplating many possibilities without making choice, avoiding consistency, flying from boredom. (2) A more meaningful is the life of an ethical person (in fact a middle class bourgeois), progressing in accordance with generally accepted morality and customs with conventional religion treated as a complement to ethics serving the good of society. It is accompanied by the sense of guilt and sinfulness (the Protestantism in Copenhagen was rather strict in those days) and does not satisfy one's thirst for infinity. To accomplish this one must adopt (3) a true religious attitude, which demands total surrender to the irrational and often paradoxical voice calling a man from eternity. It involves a teleological (not: theological!) suspension of ethics. Choosing a faith is a leap in the absurd, contrary to everyday rationality. An example of a religious personality was - according to Kierkegaard - Abraham, ready to sacrifice his beloved son Isaac to prove his devotion. Abraham was placed in a paradoxical situation, because

the order to kill his son ran against ethical principles. The central paradox of Christianity is the assertion that the eternal, infinite, transcendent God simultaneously is incarnated as a temporal, finite, human being (i.e. Jesus).

Kierkegaard's attitude was somehow associated with the spirit of Protestantism, which emphasized that man was standing alone before God (Catholicism advises that if in doubt, one should consult the Church). However, more important is the opposition against Hegel and bourgeois capitalism based on Weberian rationalization, which suppresses the most essential human needs and turning an individual merely into an element of a well- organized but mundane society. Taken literally Kierkegaard's views are the incentive for irrational fanaticism. The beauty of his thoughts lies in a constant and brilliant struggle with intellectual paradoxes, much of which is lost when summarized.

Criticism and comments

Kierkegaard's views defies justification. Why the religious level is the most advanced while the aesthetic the lowest. Does it not reflect only Kierkegaard's personal preferences. Freud, who admired high culture but despised religion held the opposite view - some who admires are is most advanced, while someone who cannot live without religious beliefs is on a very primitive level.

What in ordinary language is called folly or madness and in psychiatric language psychosis is characterised as involving a loss of contact with reality, thought disorder, and difficulty with social interaction and daily life activities. All this applies, although in a mild degree to Kierkegaard and his otherwise brilliant philosophy. It is often thought that over-sensitive persons exposed to acute stress find psychosis a solution to their problems. For Kierkegaard this stress might have been cause by the sudden emergence of capitalist order in Denmark. His answer was extremely brave - instead of clinical psychosis he responded with existential philosophy.

Questions: Why did "normal" life seem empty to Kierkegaard and what was his solution? Why was life absurd to Schopenhauer and what was his solution?

Further reading

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Religions of the Far East

A prominent American scholar Joseph Campbell called Hinduism, Buddhism and Taoism "religions of green areas". They flourished in the areas of abundant vegetation and, in contrast to the Middle Eastern religions, emphasized the development of the individual rather than obedience to the law and the Lawgiver. When they penetrated into the West they counterbalanced the dominant mentality based on rationality and the cult of power with peace of mind and meditation. At the end of the 19th c. the opposition was sharp – Christianity in the West was very strict, and many outstanding personalities were fascinated by religions of the Far East. Their popularity increased even further during the 1960s' sexual revolution when they were used to support the need for freedom and authenticity, which seemed to lack in the cultures of the West.

Later they inspired the commercialized New Age movement (offering its practitioners psychic and mystical experiences, contact with the cosmic energy and their previous incarnations). Over time, it turned out that Eastern style cults also fall into fanaticism. While monotheistic religions are based on strict law (as in Judaism), Eastern religions use sophisticated techniques of brainwashing. However, their meditation techniques have proven to be beneficial to the health and well-being regardless of their religious foundation.

Hinduism crystallized in India around 15th c. BCE as a polytheistic religion, devoid of dogmas, and for centuries operating in the caste system of India. It assumes that the visible world is an illusion, and the only reality is the world of the divine self, with which people often lose connection. Life is full of suffering, and the main human desire is to unite with the divine Self (Brahman) through the divine element in the human soul (Atman). The way to liberation leads through meditation. After the death one often returns to a world full of evil as a new incarnation and, depending on the balance of deeds (karma), becomes a superior or inferior being (which justified the caste system). This process continues until the liberation from the reincarnation cycles, Samsāra, and attaining the state of moksha (better known under the Buddhist name of nirvana indicating the same state), which is the loss of individual traits and eternal union with the divine Self.

Practical improvement techniques of yoga concentrated on thoughts, love, deeds or meditation (in the West meditative yoga is the most popular). An important component of spiritual practice are mantras and proper diet. It is interesting that although Hinduism recognized that the world was filled with suffering and India devoted to Hinduism, sexual pleasure was not despised there (as in Christianity) as exemplified by Kama Sutra. The Hare Krishna movement is a 19th century offshoot of Hinduism.

Buddhism is a religion without gods, limited to the practice of meditation. It was created (probably) in the 6th c. BCE by prince Siddhartha Gautama. Brought up in ignorance of suffering and death, he met them by chance when he suddenly left his family palace without permission. Terrified by the suffering, he meditated until he became awakened (which is the meaning of "buddha") or enlightened. Buddhism is based on the belief that the origin of suffering is the separation of the human *ego* from the real world (*ego* is understood quite differently than in psychoanalysis) by human desires and even abstract thinking. When the unity with the world is restored through meditation, the suffering should disappear. Then it is possible to pass to nirvana. Buddhism in India disappeared melting into Hinduism but it flourished in Tibet. A state of Buddhist monks headed by the Dalai Lama (currently operating in exile) existed there for a few hundred years until it was destroyed by the Chinese aggression 1950-1956 (the tradition of placing some boys in monasteries was invented to prevent

inheritance conflicts). There are many Buddhist monasteries in Japan, where the ideal of bodhisattva emerged, a sage who attained awakening but decided to delay his passage to nirvana and helps others who suffer out of compassion. Love of every human being (similar to agape in Christianity) plays in Buddhism as important a role as in the teachings of Jesus. Also in Japan Zen Buddhism appeared, a variety of Buddhism based on strict meditative and mystical practises and reluctant to any explicit theories (which is in sharp contrast to Dalai Lama's numerous writings). Zen has become very popular in the West since 1970s.

Daoism was created as an alternative to Confucianism by master Laozi (according to legends living also in 6th c. BCE). It was a doctrine of loners who lost interest in social life (so strictly regulated by Confucianism) and retreated to nature (thus it is an early form of counter-culture). Its main aim was to help find the way (tao or dao) through perfecting one's intuition. Thinking and theorising is not indispensable. What matters is learning how to harmonize one's life with the surrounding environment and the natural powers of the world. An experienced Taoist does not fight with the world but allows the forces of nature to carry him like a river carries a wooden branch flowing in it. Taoism also used two Chinese concepts of energy - ying and yang - which must be balanced. A practical method of improvement is the tai chi gymnastics.

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The age of the bourgeoisie. Part two 1871-1914.

After 1871 Europe became intoxicated with her success. Three new processes became prominent towards the end of the 19th century: the assimilation of Jews, European imperialism and the unification of Italy and foremost Germany

European Jewry

"***European Jewry*** has played such a prominent role in modern times that its story has been the subject of all sorts of myths and misunderstandings, both sympathetic and hostile. The main lines, however, are clear. After the break-up of Poland-Lithuania, the only large state to have provided a safe haven in preceding centuries, three closely related developments took place. First, the Jews began a new era of migration. Secondly, they received full civil rights in most European countries. And thirdly, they rebelled in ever increasing numbers against the traditional restrictions imposed on them by their own community.

Jewish migration was mainly set in motion after 1773 by the Partitions of Poland. (…) The scale and tempo of Jewish migration markedly increased in the second half of the nineteenth century. (...) The Jewish population of Europe multiplied from about two millions in 1800 to about nine millions in 1900. Under Alexander III (r. 1881-94) (…) hundreds of thousands of Jews left Russia for good, heading for Western Europe and the USA.

Jewish migration was greatly assisted by the growing circle of European states where Jews enjoyed full civic rights.

Yet Jewish emancipation was a double-edged operation. It required a fundamental change in the conduct and the attitudes both of the host societies and of the Jews themselves. (…) Modern concern with the roots of anti-Semitism sometimes overlooks the severity of the Jews' own laws of segregation. Observant Jews could not hold to the 613 rules of dress, diet, hygiene and worship if they tried to live outside their own closed community; and intermarriage was strictly forbidden. Since Judaic law taught that Jewishness was biologically inherited in the maternal line, Jewish women were jealously protected. A girl who dared to marry out could expect to be disowned by her family, and ritually pronounced dead. Extreme determination was needed to withstand such acute social pressures. It is not surprising that Jews who rejected their religion often turned to extreme alternatives, including atheism and communism. (…)

Reformed Judaism [was] a new denomination which appeared in Germany in 1825. Reformed Judaism sought to reconcile the principles of Jewish religion with the demands of life in a modern society; its adherents were not required to observe the same degree of rules and restrictions. It became the norm for the majority of migrant Jews in Western Europe and the USA, but did not affect the great mass of traditional Jewish communities in Central and Eastern Europe.

In Western Europe, and in some of the larger centres of the East, the combination of legal relaxations and of growing Jewish assimilationism created unprecedented opportunities. Jewish names appeared ever more frequently on the lists of financiers, lawyers, doctors, writers, scholars, artists, and politicians of the age." Yet the success of ex-Jews posed a threat to the very existence of a Jewish community. "As a result, as migration and assimilation accelerated, a serious reaction set in. The onset of Jewish nationalism (Zionism), first in cultural and later in political form, was part of the Europe-wide nationalist trend.

Antisemitism in the sense of 'Jew-hatred' had been endemic throughout i European history. Its causes have been classified as religious, economic, social, and cultural. But it is essentially a vicious psychological syndrome, where the stereotyping of Jews precedes accusations of conspiracy and treachery. It turned the Jewish community into the archetypal scapegoat for all sorts of ills. Its embers were always alight, bursting into flame and dying down in patterns that are not easily explained. In the late nineteenth century, however, it was fanned by the migrations which brought many Europeans into contact with Jews for the first time, by adverse social conditions, especially in the burgeoning cities, and by the rising tide of nationalism, which made many people less tolerant of ethnic and cultural diversity. It came to the surface in the Russian pogroms, in the Dreyfus Affair in France, and in the sinister invention of the 'Protocols of the Elders of Zion'. (…)

There remains the fascinating puzzle of why Europe's Jews should have made such a formidable contribution to all aspects of European culture and achievement. (…) It was clearly related, too, to the Jewish passion for education, which was rooted in the study of the Torah, but which could be easily redirected to the early acquisition of foreign languages, of legal qualifications, or of scientific expertise. It must also be

related to the expanding frontiers of knowledge and communications, where people with international contacts stood at an advantage over their homegrown confrères.

Most Jews, of course, did not either shine or thrive. Statistically, the greater part of European Jewry in the early twentieth century remained exactly what it was 100 years before—a scattered mass of poor, ultra-religious, rural communities huddled in the unchanging backwaters of the former Polish provinces.“[139]

Nationalism

* "Nationalism, a collection of ideas regarding the nation, whose interests are taken to be the supreme good, has become one of the elemental forces of modern times. It received its greatest single boost from the French Revolution, and was crystallized by the social and political changes of nineteenth-century Europe. It has since travelled round all the continents of the globe. It came in two opposing variants. One of them, state or civic nationalism, was sponsored by the ruling establishments of existing states. The other, popular or ethnic nationalism, was driven by the demands of communities living within those states and against the policy of their governments. (…) State nationalism was initiated 'at the top', among a political elite which sought to project its values downwards into society at large. Popular nationalism started 'at the grass roots', at the bottom, seeking to attract mass support before trying to influence or overthrow the existing order."[140]

Nationalism was present in all European countries,[141] it destroyed both the Turkish and the Austro-Hungarian Empires, in Germany it produced the ideology of *Blut und Boden* (blood and soil), while in France it found advocates in the movement *Action Française.* After the unification of Italy (1861), the unification of Germany in 1871 marked the beginning of the second phase of the age of the bourgeoisie.

The American Civil War (1861-1865) can easily be understood as a national conflict. (It might be tempting to view it as a conflict analogous to the French Revolution, in which the hard working North of the U.S. rebelled against the aristocratic South, but this would be misleading since the Southern slave owners did not oppress the Northerners.) The South (the Confederacy) and the North (the Union) developed as two different nations within the U.S. The South wanted secession in a

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[139] Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, p. 842-848.
[140] Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, p. 812.
[141] See Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, p. 812-835.

similar way as Hungary wanted freedom from Austria (as a result the dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary was established in 1867). The American solution to nationalism was to crush it (after the war the South was politically destroyed) in order to save the power of America as a whole. It is fairly possible that the opposite solution - the creation of two independent America states - would result in further divisions of the U.S. and endless wars between different independent states. The final solution was federalisation of all states, which retain some independence but have the strong federal government over them. Unfortunately, especially after the First World War Europe took the other path (also under the advice of President Wilson) - to divide into a growing number of nation states. This weakened Europe as a whole. The solution to this problem - the creation of the strong federal European government - is thus warranted.

The rise of nationalism was unfortunately connected with democratisation. Before the 19th century multinational political entities were constructed because national identity did not play any role (although in the 17th century religious identity divided Europe between Catholics and Protestants). In the 19th century it was peasants, workers and the middle class who proved attached to their national identities, which was subsequently used by the leaders to get control over the masses.

The rise of nationalism in the 19th century was discussed by Ernest Gellner[142] (1925-1995), a versatile and searching intellectual, who in his *Nations and Nationalism* (1983) claimed that it was industrialisation which strengthen it (actually Gellner went even further arguing that industrialisation created it but this is untenable - nationalism existed in ancient Greece and in Europe after the Renaissance).

Nationalism in question here was not liberal nationalism, which unites all of the inhabitants of a country, like in the U.S., but ethnic nationalism, which unites people of the same language, origins and often religion. When industrial capitalism replaced pre-capitalist forms of social organization ethic nationalism became suddenly a very useful strategy to help people organize. Even before 1914, when Europe was divided into multinational empires, ethnic national divisions were clearly visible. In the Austro-Hungarian empire the ruling class was of German origin. Gellner, whose family stem from the Czech Prague, observed that native Bohemians were second class citizens there. In the Polish city of Łódź belonging to the Russian empire the political

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[142] Ernst Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*. Cornell Univesity Press 1983.

administration was Russian (constituting 2 percent of the population), a small German minority built first factories, then a large number of Jews moved in constituting one third of the population and 60 percent of the bourgeoisie in 1913.[143] Different ethnic groups did not mix in multinational empires. The miracle of America is that the multinational stream of immigrants melted into one liberal nation (or at least it seems so).

Single nation states not only imposed a uniform organization on all its inhabitants but also weakened social tensions. The workers did not rebel against the capitalists and the capitalists cared for the workers. They all spoke one language, had one history, shared the same mythology. This is the reason why Marxist think that Hitler represented great capital while free market liberals that he protected the workers. In fact he managed, although for a very short time and at a very high price, to solve conflicts between them strengthening their national solidarity. While ancient and early modern nationalism was elitist, only the upper class counted as a nation, the 19th-century nationalism was more egalitarian, which counterbalanced tensions generated by individualist capitalism. Nation-states proved at least a temporary solution, a safe haven in the troubled see of fierce competition. Jews were victims of this process. They were alienated by their origin and religion even if they tried to assimilate. Gellners reflections help explain anti-Semitism not as a sudden outburst of malice but as an effect of a social processes which swept over the whole Europe: capitalism strengthened the need for nation-states in which Jews were like a grain in the eye. It is not surprising that their situation is or were best in countries, in which ethnic nationalism was weak, in the U.S. and the USSR.

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Unification of Italy and Germany

* Italy and Germany divided for centuries into many principalities and cities were finally unified, Italy by Garibaldi and Germany by Bismarck. Italy was waiting till a new opening till Mussolini, but Germany immediately began playing important role in Europe. To fully understand its significance we must return the the early history of

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[143] *Polacy – Niemcy – Żydzi w Łodzi*. Paweł Samuś (ed.), Ibidem, Łódź 1997.

Germany, which usually had not been powerful or aggressive.[144] The Frankish Empire of the Merovingians and Charlemagne (ca. 481–843) was Germanic but neither French nor German, although both nations originated from it. After its fall, Otto I created a German kingdom, which soon was named the Holy Roman Empire, while its kings received from Pope the tile of Emperor (Otto was crowned in 962), which involved them in constant competition with Popes for supremacy. After some initial successes, Frederic II from the Hohenstaufen dynasty established a modern, professionally administered state from his base in Sicily (1212-1250). Yet after his death no further dynasty was able to subordinate all German native territories. They stayed divided into numerous small states, whose strongest rulers were responsible for electing a king (the Golden Bull of 1356 established seven electors). In 1274 they elected Rudolf von Habsburg, who was considered the weakest of the candidates and thus the least dangerous. While kings of Spain, France, England, Poland or Russia built powerful states, different dynasties ruled in different German principalities (e.g. the houses of Habsburg, Nassau, Luxemburg, Wittelsbach) unable to establish one unified state. All those states had Emperor over them, but his power was limited. After 1483 the position of Emperor was filled by members of the Habsburg family (with one exception) who built a multinational empire governed from Austria and Spain, but difference German principalities still had great autonomy. On the one hand the result was pluralism, on the other - the lack of political power of a unified state. When different states (Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Britain, France) began developing overseas colonial empires, the Habsburg dynasty took part in it through Spain, but other German territories did not benefit from it. Soon they were massacred by the Thirty Years War. The ways of the Habsburg Empire and the German principalities north of Austria diverged. Even Russia had a great empire while Germans in spite of their hard work lived in a collection of beautiful but small, unimportant and rather poor states.

The only exception was Protestant Prussia (already mentioned above in the chapter about Kant's ethics). It had a number of creative citizens but its political structure was authoritarian and militaristic, while its only open-minded king was Frederic the Great. Its militarism was vividly summarized by Norman Davies:

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[144] A good introduction to the history of Germany is an almost literary narration, which reads like a novel *Deutsche Geschichte des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (1058) by Golo Mann, a son of the famous writer Thomas Mann (*The History of Germany Since 1789*. Chatto & Windus 1968).

"The Paradeschritt or 'Parade March' of the Prussian Army was one of the most unnatural and expressive movements ever invented for the human body. Its foreign critics called it the goose-step. The lines of jack booted soldiers were trained to point their toes on every upward beat, raising their legs to a high horizontal position. In order to keep their balanced they had to lean forward, swinging their arms like cantilevers, and holding Their chins in a characteristic jutting posture. Since every step required enormous effort, the musical tempo had to be moderate to slow; and the march was performed with a grim, deliberate air of latent menace. Fierce facial expressions were an essential adjunct to the soldiers' exertions.

The body language of the goose-step transmitted a clear set of messages. To Prussia's generals, it said that the discipline and athleticism of their men would withstand all orders, no matter how painful or ludicrous To Prussia's civilians, it said that all insubordination would be ruthlessly crushed. To Prussia's enemies, it said that the Prussian Army was not made up just of lads in uniform, but of regimented supermen. To the world at large, it announced that Prussia was not just strong, but arrogant. Here, quite literally, was the embodiment of Prussian militarism."[145]

Prussia defeated the Catholic Habsburgs several times between 1740 and 1866. Although Germany was almost united by the people (as in Italy in 1861) and the Parliament which emerged from the 1948 Revolution, but at that moment the king of Prussia refused to become the king of united Germany since the offer was initiated by a body which was too democratic and plebeian. In 1871 the unification was forced actually by one man, an extremely skilful politician Otto von Bismarck, who after provoking and winning a war with France persuaded all kings and princes of the German provinces (without the Habsburgs in Austria) to unite and transfer power to the king of Prussia, who became the Kaiser of the German Empire.

Germany within a few decades equalled economically Britain. By the First World War they became the most educated nation in Europe (by the number of people with higher education). And yet the success was as superficial as in the rest of Europe.

"Late imperial Germany was the country which felt the most cheated by the imperial experience. In many ways it was the model nineteenth-century state - modern, scientific, national, prosperous, and strong. Under Wilhelm II (r. 1888-1918), whose

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[145] Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, p. 612. See also pp. 647-649.

withered arm was seen as a mark of his country's flaws, it assumed an arrogant and a truculent air. Germany's mighty industrialization had occurred later than that of Britain and France. Political unification had only come about in 1871. As a result, the German colonial empire had not assumed the proportions which Germany's pride and prowess seemed to deserve. Objectively, Germany's disadvantage was more imagined than real: her economic penetration of adjacent areas in Eastern Europe more than offset the lack of distant colonies. Yet her psychological resentments ran deep. The Kaiser and his court did not see that peace was the key to Germany's eventual domination of Europe's political and economic scene."[146]

Perhaps a serious problem was of socio-psychological nature. In 1871 Germany was thrown into a hectic European capitalism and imperialism, for which it was mentally unprepared. For instance, one of the greatest passions of the king Ludwig II of Bavaria was erecting the Neuschwanstein castle (began in 1869), the prototype of Disney's imaginary castles, for which he spent his fortune. Germans wanted to unite the country realizing in the rest of Europe strong national states were fashionable. Even German nationalism (after the initial phase during the Napoleonic wars) was strongest in Austria, where Georg Ritter von Schönerer attacted Jews, liberals and Catholicism and demanded the creation of a state exclusively for Germanic people. His views, which influence Hitler, were formulated in response to the rising social, economic and political position of non-Germanic peoples within the Austria-Hungary. In territories north of Austria, many Germans, living in many small states, did not have even a sense of belonging to one nation (as the peoples of France or England or in Poland where patriotism was the default attitude of all educated strata after the loss of independence).

When Germans joined the race for power and prestige, they were largely unaware of possible pitfalls on this way. The economic and industrial development was swift yet often opposed by German intellectuals and intelligentsia, who favoured humanistic education and the values of the nobility rather than bourgeoisie. As a result German intellectual culture at that time was powerful, radiant and admired in the whole Central Europe. But the official German culture developed trends imitating the imperial culture of France and lost some of its pluralistic charm. This explains the widespread criticism of capitalism,   science and technology by Max Weber, Werner Sombart, and

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[146] Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, p. 612. See also p. 584.

philosophers Friedrich Nietzsche, Wilhelm Dilthey, Edmund Husserl, and later Martin Heidegger, who lamented over the dehumanisation of life in Germany. It had far reaching implications - educated Germans felt obliged to protect cultural values against dehumanising civilisation imposed on them by other countries (the opposition of culture and civilisation was then strongly emphasised, with *Museumsinsel* in Berlin, a great museum complex of the world culture, as its visible expression). The worry was in many respects justified - traditional values of European culture are often undermined by technological progress, capitalist competition and the spread of mass-men and pop culture. Yet it built siege mentality in Germany, a catastrophic syndrome of a surrounded fortress attacked by everyone and to be defended at all costs, which was strong till 1945.

German criticism of capitalism: Weber and Sommbart

The capitalist transformation after 1871 provoked an intense intellectual debate about the social, cultural, and political ramifications of capitalism.[147] Although German universities were more oriented towards education useful in industry (hence many technical universities), German intellectuals were terrified with social changes caused by capitalism. Probably what Eastern Europe experiences in the 21st century is a similar cultural shock.

When Max Weber and Werner Sombart (1863-1941) had travelled to the U.S. in 1904, they returned with mixed feelings. Sombart was horrified by cultural and spiritual barrenness of America. It seemed to him an "asphalt jungle". He lamented that the Americanizing Berlin was becoming much worse than cultural Vienna[148]. In *Der moderne Kapitalismus* (1902-1927) and in *Der Bourgeois* (1913, *The quintessence of capitalism*) attacked capitalism as destructive for culture. He contrasted the pre-capitalist, natural and authentic economy with the capitalist economy of his time as artificial, creating massification, depriving people of inner peace, high quality of life, the faith of their fathers. Although far from anti-Semitism he later supported the Nazis hoping that they would protect German productive capitalism against international

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[147] Jerry Z. Muller, *The Mind and the Market: Capitalism in Modern European Thought*. New York: Knopf, 2002,ch. 9.

[148] Loader Collin, Puritans and Jews: Weber, Sombart and the Transvaluators of Modern Society, „Canadian Journal of Sociology", 26, 4 (Fall), 2001, s. 635-653. Por. też. http: //www.cjsonline.ca/articles/webersom.html [retrived 6.08.2010].
Werner Sombart *Morgen*, 1907, vol. 1, p. 172–175.

capitalism permeated with financial speculations. In *The Jews and Modern Capitalism* (1911) he claimed that

Max Weber (1864–1920) identified capitalism with rational calculation, adjusting means to ends, and bureaucratic organization, which inevitably killed human spontaneity and "disenchants the world," making magic and mystery useless and replacing them with careful search for casual relations. (It is significant that scientific method at that time did not mean formulating and testing any hypotheses but more strictly sober hypotheses about simple cause-effect relations. This was the reason why so many German intellectuals rebelled against the dominance of science.) Yet as a liberal German nationalist he approved of competition without which Germany would lose in comparisons with France, Britain and the U.S.

In the *Protestant Ethic and the "Spirit" of Capitalism (1904–1905)* he rejected the claim that capitalism is motivated by greed. On the contrary, greed was common in the pre-capitalist era of conquests. Capitalism is rather the result of the inner-wordly asceticism, which originated among 17th-century Calvinists, especially the British Puritans who treated work as vocation and rejected joy and pleasure of consumption.

In time the religious elements were marginalized and their role taken over by rationalized organization of production, which ended the era of "the beautiful humanity" and shackled humanity in the shell of aimless workaholism. This is the last touch of Weber's work. Let us quote.

„The idea that modern labour has an ascetic character is of course not new. Limitation to specialized work, with a renunciation of the Faustian universality of man which it involves, is a condition of any valuable work in the modern world (...); hence deeds and renunciation inevitably condition each other to-day. This fundamentally ascetic trait of middle-class life, if it attempts to be a way of life at all, and not simply the absence of any, was what Goethe wanted to teach, at the height of his wisdom, in the *Wanderjahren*, and in the end which he gave to the life of his *Faust*. For him the realization meant a renunciation, a departure from an age of full and beautiful humanity, which can no more be repeated in the course of our cultural development than can the flower of the Athenian culture of antiquity.

The Puritan wanted to work in a calling; we are forced to do so. For when asceticism was carried out of monastic cells into everyday life, and began to dominate worldly morality, it did its part in building the tremendous cosmos of the modern economic order. This order is now bound to the technical and economic conditions of machine production which to-day determine the lives of all the individuals who are born into this mechanism, not only those directly concerned with economic acquisition, with irresistible force. Perhaps it will so determine them until the last ton of fossilized coal is burnt. In Baxter's view the care for external goods should only lie on the shoulders of the "saint like a light cloak, which can be thrown aside at any moment". But fate decreed that the cloak should become an iron cage.

Since asceticism undertook to remodel the world and to work out its ideals in the world, material goods have gained an increasing and finally an inexorable power over the lives of men as at no previous period in history. To-day the spirit of religious asceticism—whether finally, who knows?—has escaped from the cage. But victorious capitalism, since it rests on mechanical foundations, needs its support no longer. The rosy blush of its laughing heir, the Enlightenment, seems also to be irretrievably fading, and the idea of duty in one's calling prowls about in our lives like the ghost of dead religious beliefs. Where the fulfilment of the calling cannot directly be related to the highest spiritual and cultural values, or when, on the other hand, it need not be felt simply as economic compulsion, the individual generally abandons the attempt to justify it at all. In the field of its highest development, in the United States, the pursuit of wealth, stripped of its religious and ethical meaning, tends to become associated with purely mundane passions, which often actually give it the character of sport.

No one knows who will live in this cage in the future, or whether at the end of this tremendous development entirely new prophets will arise, or there will be a great rebirth of old ideas and ideals, or, if neither, mechanized petrification, embellished with a sort of convulsive self-importance. For of the last stage of this cultural development, it might well be truly said: "Specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart; this nullity imagines that it has attained a level of civilization never before achieved."[149]

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[149] Max Weber , *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Trans. Talcott Parsons, Anthony Giddens, London-Boston, Unwin Hyman 1930. End of Chapter V. http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/WEBER/WeberCH5.html [retrieved 1.09.2014]

Whether the essence of Capitalism is asceticism, rationalisation and bureaucracy and whether its origins are puritan was called into question many times (as discussed in this book in the chapter devoted to the Renaissance). As a large scale project involving international cooperation capitalism needed discipline and sophisticated organization, but also creativity, consumption and great ambitions. (Weber's vision probably expressed both the climate of the time and Weber's personal problems. He had a very strict, perhaps compulsive personality and in the last year of his life had a love affair with Else Jaffé, née von Richthofen, a rebellious lady whose earlier lover was Otto Gross, a famous psychoanalyst and anarchist championing sexual liberation. Weber must have experienced sharp tension between rigorous discipline and spontaneity very personally.

European Imperialism

"*European Imperialism* in the late nineteenth century differed from earlier forms of the phenomenon in several important ways. It was part of a world-wide scramble for control of the last remaining countries suitable for exploitation. It was evident that the world's resources were finite: states which set up a colonial empire quickly stood to gain a permanent advantage; those who delayed might be excluded from the 'First Division' forever. In the two decades starting in 1875, over one-quarter of the land surface of the globe was seized by half-a-dozen European powers. Colonies were viewed as an integral part of the advanced industrial economies. The supply of raw materials, cheap labour, and semi-finished products was planned to maximize the benefit to the 'mother country'. There was a qualitative as well as quantitative leap in the intensity of exploitation. In their eyes of some, including the Marxists, the growing competition for colonial resources was bound to lead to international conflict. Lenin's Imperialism as the Highest Form of Capitalism (1916) was a typical work of this genre.

Political and economic imperialism was attended by a conscious cultural mission to 'europeanize' the colonies in the image of the mother countries. In this, Christian missionaries formed an important element, though their relationship to the political authorities and to the commercial companies was rarely a direct one. Unlike their predecessors, such as the Spanish missionaries in the Americas, they often saw their task in broad terms, encompassing medicine, secular education, administrative reforms, and technological innovation. (…) Britain held the largest of empires with a minimum

of military force. It continued to rely heavily on native princes and on local troops. There were fewer British bureaucrats in Delhi, ruling an Indian population of 400 millions, than Austrian bureaucrats in Prague."

The swift colonization of Africa (Scramble for Africa ca. 1880-1914) was done with extensive use of machine guns and abounded in crimes. The record holder of these massacres was Leopold II of Belgium, who turned Congo into his private labour camp and killed about 10 million Africans in the years 1885-1908.[150] When it was discovered, a scandal followed, part of which was Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* novel, but the king avoided punishment.

The phenomenon of European imperialism in the late 19th century was at that time explained by many theoreticians of capitalism. British journalist John Hobson (*Imperialism*, 1902) argued that since domestic market is plagued with under-consumption by the working class (because they are underpaid) colonialism is a global contest to monopolize markets for investment. To improve the situation capitalism should change the distribution of wealth within the country. Rudolph Hilferding, a Marxist from Vienna school of socialists also argued in *Finance Capital* (1910) that imperialism is the result of capitalists searching for investment opportunities. Also Rosa Luxemburg in *The Accumulation of Capital* (1913) understood colonialism as the search for new markets to sell commodities for which there was not enough demand in Europe. Lenin repeated the same argument in *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916).

However, Joseph Schumpeter in *The Sociology of Imperialism* (1919) opposed those analyses. Imperialism was for him a remnant of pre-capitalist emotional attitudes and habits connected with with the class of warriors, while capitalism should promote pacifism and peaceful exchange of goods.

As usual both sided were partly right and partly wrong. At that time European powers competed for colonies for prestige ad drew little economic profits from them (unless they were robbed, which had little in common with capitalism). They did not invest much capital in colonies wither. However, the situation changed within the nest hundred years. Now globalization very often bring great profits to the most developed

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[150] Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa*, Pan Macmillan 1998, pp. 225–33.

countries and great corporation which find both cheap labour and markets to sell their products in the developing countries. Also post-Communist Eastern Europe, where industry was destroyed by the chock therapy advised by the IMF and the World Bank in the early 1990s, became an enormous market for products from the developed West. Thus the intellectual analysis of imperialism was often correct but was formulated in advance. Maybe even it became a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Further reading

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Nietzsche

Although Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) never created an orderly theory, he proved to be one of the most inspiring philosophers. His main works are: *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872), *The Gay Science* (1882/1887), *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883–85), *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886), and *On the Genealogy of Morals* (1887), *Ecce Homo* (1888). Initially, he was a classical philologist and proclaimed that the Greeks originally (before Socrates) drew their energy from irrational abyss of deep experience, a sense of "enormity" (the Dionysian aspect), which was later suppressed by the calm and rational pursuit of harmonious beauty (the Apollonian aspect). Now Europe to review must release the Dionysian energy again. All his life he was ill, struggled with pain, almost every other day had migraines and nausea. He travelled all over Europe frequently visiting the Alps and experiencing the world through the prism of philosophy, the history of which he knew well.

His criticism of contemporary morality was precede by careful (and disturbing) psychological analysis of human abilities. People are rarely free in their choices, they also do no understand their true motives and contrary to Aristotle do not have common nature. Nietzsche in his metaphorical style anticipated Freud's psychoanalytical insights: human decisions have subjective irrational motives, often obscure to those who take them. Our preferences are determined by our mental constitution.

His central theme, acute also in his personal life, was the disappearance of "will to power", of which he accused the contemporary world. Mediocrity triumphs in it together with over-intellectualisation and lifeless conventions; there is no real depth and

heroism. The destruction of the forces of life had already begun in Socrates and Plato, who rejected emotions (present in Greek tragedies) and worshipped the intellect, Reason, and sacrificed the real life in the name of another, supposedly higher reality, which was an illusion. Later this trend was strengthened in Christianity with its yearning for the illusion of eternal life (St. Paul was much more to blame than Jesus). The next steps of decline were orderly bourgeois morality, democracy, favouring masses and utilitarianism proposing shallow pleasures, and finally science with its concept of objective truth (according to Nietzsche one's views are always subjective and have value only as tools of the body in achieving its goals in life). For a moment he thought that the music of Richard Wagner would restore a sense of depth in Europe.

Nietzsche launched a frontal attack on morality. Initially, the world was dominated by Masters, warriors. They were not constrained by any rules, were noble, aristocratic, despised comfort, peace and fear, their actions spontaneously expressed their life energy. The Slaves, the weak or a herd valued compassion, mutual assistance and gentleness, which gave them a sense of security. They could not face the Masters, so they invented morality to humiliate and bind them. Morality dictated to turn the other cheek instead of pick up a sword and fight. The source of morality was the *Ressentiment* (resentment), a feeling close to envy, hostility towards those who cause frustration, which filled the hearts of the weak at the sight of the strong. And so gradually the morality of the slaves (of the herd) overpowered the morality of the Masters, which crushed the life force of humanity.

Contemporary culture happiness, altruism, equality, compassion. Those values do not created suitable atmosphere for masters. Fortunately, *God is dead* (*Got ist tott*) and nihilism is reigning. The old values have lost their power to organize social life, the idea of a divine cosmic order that pervaded the world is forgotten. The world has lost its perfect patterns, the Platonic Forms that guided human efforts. "The last people" are weaklings. The only way out is the transvaluation of all values, stepping beyond good and evil, and the creation of the higher man who would regain the Will to Power. (In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* Nietzsche talked about the Overman, Superman, in German *Übermensch.* It was a poetic term and in other works he referred to the higher creative man, examples of whom were Goethe, Beethoven and Nietzsche himself. He definitely did not mean a blonde soldier who mercilessly follows orders.) What serves the higher

man is suffering, and a certain stoic indifference to it, self-love and self-interest, inequality. (The higher man was supposed to be solitary, selfish, centred on his responsibility for a great project, healthy and resilient, affirming life and filled with self-reverence. It is not necessarily a pleasant picture, thought many great geniuses were like this.)

An indispensable prerequisite is the rejection of any illusions of the afterlife because they divert attention from the surrounding reality. They are not valuable in itself (intrinsicly), but as means to becoming a higher man. (To appreciate Nietzsche's heroism it must be remembered that his life was full of suffering.)

Nietzsche expressed these ideas in *Beyond Good and Evil* and later in an unconventional way in the philosophical poem *Also sprach Zarathustra (Thus Spoke Zarathustra)*, where he used a character of the ancient Persian prophet Zoroaster, who once decreed the opposition of good and evil. Nietzsche's Zarathustra came to cancel this opposition. How to become the higher man? One must reject the desire to belong with the herd, stop defending against suffering or seeking consolation in religious illusions, open to the tragic and piercing emotion, love earthly world and heroic life in it. (Similar ideas were proclaimed in Poland by Witkacy using an imprecise phrase "metaphysical feelings"). The ultimate test for being the higher man is the acceptance of the eternal return. It is not enough to accept one's life as it is. One has to accept that it will be lived infinitely many times in the exactly same way. Nietzsche revived the Stoic conception, according to which the world comes cyclically to an end and recovers after a cosmic fire. Since this process is infinite, once all the combinations of atoms are exhausted the same world will recur again and again since the time is infinite. (Critics felt that perhaps in this way Nietzsche wanted to gain some immortality, which he otherwise declined.) Apotheosis of eternal return crowning *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* is the antithesis of Platonic contemplation of the abstract Beauty and Goodness (in *Symposium*), which made life most valuable. According to Nietzsche not intellectual contemplation but a creative life here and now was the greatest good.

Also objective truth came under attack. What we believe to be true as well as good is relative to our life and expressed our inclinations. Nietzsche reintroduce relativism and anticipate American pragmatism. Human mental activity is part struggle in life and is used as a bodily organ for this purpose.

The tone poem *Also Sprach Zarathustra* from 1896 by Richard Strauss (used as the theme music of the film *2001: A Space Odyssey*) was the musical commentary to Nietzsche's masterpiece.

In 1889 he went mad. Legend has it that as Raskolnikov in his dream from Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (written 20 years earlier), he saw the coachman whipping his horse by at the Piazza Carlo Alberto. Guided by compassion he rushed to help the horse and fainted. The next 11 years he spent in madness, like a vegetable under care of his mother and sister, who adjusted his writings to suit the needs of Nazism. He had perhaps the most tragic life among philosophers.

Criticisms and comments

Nietzsche was a personality full of contradictions and at the same time of prophetic visions. He attributed his desires to others, and expressed theirs himself. It is impossible to read him literally (although his style is highly artistic) or quote his sentences out of context because they often contradict each other. He himself suffered from the loss of vital energy, and blamed his times for it, while his times were filled with greed and the desire for power. Most probably he despised vulgar strength and admired aristocratic dignity, more and more lacking in his days. He preached individualism but also loved the city of Turin (it was there that he became insane), then run by the Savoy dynasty and Italian aristocrats, where he could walk for hours along elegant alleys among palaces and baroque monuments. He longed for this aristocratic spirit, hated mediocrity, and seeing the imminent collapse of Europe which plunged into the mundane greed he withdrew into extreme individualism, his inner but haunted fortress. A malicious irony of history made him the philosophical flagship of German militarism.

His criticism about alleged human rationality was a turning point in philosophical anthropology. His claim that objective truth does not exist was often attacked as contradictory - how can one say that the truth is that truth does not exist? How can it be true that nothing is true? The answer is not difficult. The existence of objective truth presupposes that it is determined by reality and should be accepted by anyone. Nietzsche replaces it with the claim that only subjective opinions can be compared and discussed. It is his opinion that no opinion is objectively true. There is no contradiction

but we may ask how valid is this opinion. Why others should accept it if it is only personal, subjective. The solution is that although opinions are subjective they should comply with more general standards. If many persons accept the same standards their opinions should not differ. (One person may call something long, while another short. When they agree on the measurements of short and long objects, their opinions may converge.) However, it is the opposite standpoint that is difficult to hold. If someone says "It is my subjective opinion that objective truth exists" it is nothing more than a subjective opinion justified on the basis of subjective standards. This Nietzsche's idea (that one cannot escape from his subjective cage) became extremely popular in the 20th century.

His philosophy influenced artists at the turn of the century, and then fascinated Hitler. Is Nietzsche responsible for this? His writings include a dose of aggression and individualistic cult of violence. In a sense, Hitler was his follower, perhaps one of a few in his regime (those who carried out his orders were definitely not). We must keep in mind the circumstances of his life. He was seriously ill, alienated, walked alone through the mountains putting down his chaotic thoughts formed under sudden emotional tensions. He probably even did not realize their potential social impact.

Nietzsche's historical knowledge was very limited. He used certain stereotypes (of Greeks, Germanic tribes, Christianity) as metaphors to express his views. One can only speculate who his philosophy could have changed had he knew contemporary controversies about the influence of the agricultural revolution. He might as well construct an oppositions not between Masters and Slaves but between hunters-gatherers on the one hand and priest and farmers on the other (his personal sympathy for a nomadic lifestyle is obvious). Then certainly the Nazis could not have used his philosophy.

After World War Two Nietzsche became fashionable in the Anglo-Saxon countries. (Even Osho, a Hindu guru and spiritual teacher of joyful life wrote a book of commentaries to *Thus spoke Zarathustra*.[151]) From a distance it became obvious that he was a prophet. Being over-sensitive and having a penetrating mind he anticipated the future of Western culture for a century ahead. His main achievements were twofold. (1) He dispelled epistemological, ontological, axiological and religious illusions about

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[151] Osho, *Zarathustra: A God That Can Dance*, Osho Media International 2012.

rationality and objectivity and held that all we had was our subjectivity. (2) He predicted that although there was much aggressive rush in Europe, real creativity and greatness were fading away. As chaotic as Plato, he became his adversary. Plato propagated the idea of the Absolute Goodness which as the Sun gave meaning to the world, Nietzsche most fully expressed the tragic individualism in a world where everyone had only his own point of view and was doomed to subjectivity and uncertainty. Nietzsche clearly realized the problem of decay of values and exhausted it to the end, while his madness anticipated the future of Europe in the 20th c. Although he did not find a remedy to the problems he diagnosed (his depiction of the higher man was grotesque), he pointed out various possible paths to be taken (sometimes leading astray), such as radical rejection of illusions; acceptance of the world around as the only place of human activity, however painful, uncertain or unstable; the need to rely on oneself (which, curiously, was a Socratic credo); adopting high standards and making sense of one's life by meaningful searching for joy over suffering and routine. His search for the will to power was interpreted as (roughly) the search for self-actualization against the petrifying pressure of the environment, for unleashing of suppressed psychic energy.

A note on Richard Wagner

One of the fascinations of Nietzsche was Richard Wagner, who built himself Europe's most modern opera house in Bayreuth and in 1876 staged a 15-hour opera *Ring of the Nibelung,* considered to be the most important work of European Romanticism. The libretto was based on creatively developed Germanic (or Viking) myth of the ring, whose each subsequent holder renounced love and undertook the frantic struggle for power, which always ended in failure (the same myth was later used by Tolkien). The romantic pessimism of Wagner combined here with the pessimism of the Germanic mythology, which predicted the twilight of the gods (Ragnarök), the total destruction of the world, after which it will be reborn in a better and happier shape and with new gods. Wagner was able to renew the spirit of the Greek tragedy and overwhelm the viewers with crushing emotions. The *Ring* was also a kind of commentary to the situation in Europe where fierce competition for money, power and colonies began to develop. Wagner had a gift for enchanting people. Under his

influence the Bavarian King Ludwig II spent his entire budget on the construction of the fairy tale Neuschwanstein Castle, which resulted in his incapacitation. Hitler loved his music, and eventually completed its message - the destruction of the world. Although Wagner predicted the tragic outcome of the greedy intoxication rather than encouraged it, his person and achievements are sometimes viewed as akin to Nazism (for example his operas are not officially staged in Israel). Actually Wagner predicted the development of Europe and Germany until 1945. When after 20 years of composing he completed the Ring cycle in 1876 greed, conceit and aggression raged in Europe. Germany united in 1871 and began competing for power and colonies with Britain and France. The scramble for Africa - swift conquering of the whole continent by Europeans was about to begin. Wagner's message was impressive and clear - it all would end in total destruction. And he was right.

Questions: What were the causes and dangers of nihilism for Nietzsche? Why was humankind in danger? What was his solution? How did Wagner's music represent Nietzsche's ideals? Why was Nietzsche a turning point in the development of individualism? Why did he accuse Christianity, Plato, democracy? What is the difference between the morality of Masters and of Slaves?

Further reading

Chapter THREE NINETEENTH-CENTURY PHILOSOPHERS (Nietzsche) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy*. Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

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Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, Chapter X Dynamo. Powerhouse of the World 1815-1914 (Jews p. 842, Modernism and Nietzsche p. 854, Decadence p. 861).

Psychoanalysis

The process of the Jewish assimilation in Europe, begun in 18th c., brought unexpected results. In mid-nineteenth century they turned out to be the most dynamic ethnic group in Europe. Despised for centuries they now showed that competing on equal terms with others they reached enormous success thanks to the incredibly hard work and intelligence,. Although previously there were isolated cases of stunning spectacular careers, such as the Rothschild family, now these careers became commonplace.[152] Since most Jews had lived for a few centuries between the Black Sea and the Baltic, they flourished mainly within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In Vienna they constituted 10 percent of the population.

Freud

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) came from a Jewish family in Moravia, worked in Vienna, a city particularly hampered by convention in the late 19th c. as vividly described be Stephan Zweig in his nostalgic autobiography *Die Welt von Gestern* (*The World of Yesterday,* 1942)*,* the famous book on the Habsburg Empire. Initially, he was a practising physician who treated emotional problems by "the talking cure". The patient lying on the couch monologued using loose associations and recalling events from the childhood. Freud was fascinated by archaeology and eventually built the archaeology of the psyche: psychoanalysis. He found that often the source of current problems (e.g. hostility towards superiors) resulted from an emotional trauma and was arising as a

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[152] More reliable information can be found in: Paul Johnson, *History of the Jews*, W&N 1988; Norman Davies, *Europe: A History*, Pimlico 1997; Yuri Slezkine, *The Jewish Century,* Princeton University Press 2004.

result of a flawed relationship with the parents (e.g. resentment stemming from the hostility to the father). He also noticed that when the emotions associated with painful experience become conscious in the presence of the therapist, there is an improvement. On this basis, he came to reject the Cartesian view that the essence of the psyche is the conscious mind and its thinking. He found the hidden psychological level, *the unconscious*, many times more extensive than the consciousness (as an iceberg below water in relation to its tip above it), in which the unacceptable memories and desires are stored.

The repressed content of the unconscious can be discovered by analysing (1) everyday trivial mistakes, (2) reports of dreams, and (3) the symptoms of neurosis (e.g. anxiety attacks, bizarre behaviour). Psychoanalyst interpreting these symptoms assigns meaning to them. (It was found that although psychoanalysts might intuitively discover the real problems of their patients, they quite often made patients believe in their therapists' own fantasies about their problems. While Freud enjoyed great popularity as a practitioner seeing patients every day for several hours, the improvement on the side of the patients was not stunning and hardly confirmed the theoretical claims of psychoanalysis. His successors had even worse results.)[153]

Psychoanalysis became eventually largely a personality therapy. Why do traumas prevent the development of personality? According to Freud human personality is shaped mainly during the first five years of life. The development consists in passing through the stages associated with the change of pleasure sources which are the following: (1) the mouth (the oral phase), (2) the anus (the anal phase) and (3) genitals (the phallic phase). As a result of a trauma a child may stop developing (under fixation) at any stage and become attached to its patterns in future life. (Ad 1) When a child lives in fear that he or she will not be regularly fed, an oral fixation may occur (the focus on collecting objects and people to provide a sense of security). (Ad 2) If a child is forced too early to control bladder and bowel movements (toilet training), he or she may develop an anal personality and become pedantic, deprived of freedom and imagination, but also be explosive and destructive. (Ad 3) In the phallic stage of development, children begin to desire sexually the parents of the opposite sex (Oedipus and Electra complex respectively for boys and girls). If such an interest is not explicitly

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[153] Anthony Storr, *Freud,* Oxford Paperbacks 2001, ch. 10, p. 177-130.

condemned, the child may undergo a phallic fixation, do not develop conscience and consolidate the trend towards instrumental treatment of people as a source of pleasure. If, however, a child passes through all the stages successfully, their interest in sex are dormant and would come back at puberty with the rise of normal personality. The theory of disordered personality has been greatly expanded over the next hundred years and has become an important component of psychology. (Many of Freud's specific observations were retained, but the theoretical framework was abandoned, e.g. the anal personality has disappeared from scientific psychology.)

The final stage, which can be described as maturity, and at the same time as mental health, was defined by Freud as the ability to love and work. Its necessary condition is the liberation from the painful conflict between different parts of the soul. The method is to understand and accept both the unconscious and reality. This is what was intended by psychoanalysis. It is also the health according to Plato's definition of the soul - harmony between different parts (which, however, means very little, since the word "harmony" is a word-bag that may refer to very different states of the relationship between the parts).

Later Freud expanded the description of the psyche. He distinguished three levels: the *id* (the sphere of instincts), the *ego* (self, consciousness) and the *superego* (over-conscious, or simply conscience). The id includes drives (the basic one is *libido*, sexual needs, but all the basic needs may be classified as either love or violence and death, which are metaphorically patronized by two Greek gods Eros and Thanatos). The id is governed by the pleasure principle, which is the desire for an immediate release of tension. (Freud's definition of pleasure is rather trivial, hydraulic – when tension accumulates it must be discharged and this is pleasure.) The ego consciously seeks to satisfy the needs of the id in reality, thus it analyses reality, builds skills of managing it, tries to exert rational control over the tensions of the psyche. In the superego (conscience) the moral precepts and the strive for excellence (perfectionism) instilled in childhood are stored. (This view on the human condition proves well-established nowadays. Human personality is formed under the influence of genes and society, represented by id and super-ego, while conscious ego is trying to adjust those influences to form a mature self, "I".)

When injuries and true desires are displaced into the unconscious (because they are painful or immoral), the neurotic anxiety signals the danger of their disclosure. A number of mechanisms were created by the false consciousness to protect it from unwanted content of the unconscious, hence their name of the defence mechanisms. Their definitions belong now to the core of psychology. Some of them are: *projection* (attributing one's own unacceptable feelings to other people), *displacement* (directing emotions raised by some people towards others), *reaction formation* (attenuation in others which we suppress in itself), *rationalization* (coming up with noble motives to hide the real immoral motives), *sublimation* (unacceptable desires are realized as a substitute).

In popular culture Freud is often said to claim that the essence of man was sexual desire, while the inability to satisfy it was the main disadvantage of life in a society. Nothing can be further from the truth as demonstrated by his late book, *Civilization and its Discontents* (1930).

Civilization (Freud used the word culture defined as all the inventions of humankind, social institutions, law, religion, customs, art) is beneficial to our survival. However since the human nature is based on sexual and aggressive desires and civilization restricts them, many denounce it as a source of suffering. It intensified when primitive cultures were discovered and many Europeans [the famous painter Gauguin among them] longed for them as an apparently unspoiled paradise. It aroused hopes for achieving the popular aim in life - happiness. Yet this is an illusion. Happiness - intense pleasure - arises from a fairly sudden satisfaction of pent-up needs. By its very nature it can be no more than an episodic phenomenon. Then it changes into a prolonged comfort, mild positive mood. Nothing more was intended for humans by Nature, while all the institutions are opposed to human happiness. Because civilization is built on the rejection and non-satisfaction of human natural drives, it creates a cultural frustration.

Instead of striving for happiness, it is better to concentrate on suffering since "life is too hard to bear without palliative measures" (p. 14). Freud indentifies three main strategies: Distractions to forget the misery (like engaging in different activities, especially work); Substitutions (using illusions like religion or fantasies, day-dreaming, or sublimation); Intoxicants (e.g. alcohol or drugs).

Love seems conducive to happiness but one has never so little protection against suffering as when in love.

However, denouncing civilization is pointless since no alternative exists. It is necessary for human survival and may be the source of sublime satisfaction and a value in itself. The whole Third Section of the book extols civilization. It involves control over nature (physical environment); cleanliness and order; opportunities for higher mental faculties evident in a care and concern for art. It's a sign of civilization if people devote efforts to things that have no practical value whatsoever e.g. beauty. It also produced justice that substituted execution of the will of the strongest. All this is achieved through sublimation of human natural drives. When they are unacceptable they are channeled into more socially acceptable forms, which makes it possible for higher mental activities to develop.

Thus although high culture was primarily a by-product of suppressing sexual and aggressive drive, it turned out to be the most precious human invention. (Animals also suffer but no culture results from it.) The aim of life is not to reject culture in search for satisfaction of basic desires, but to accept its frustration, part with them and identify with culture, which becomes human true nature. This is the true aim of psychoanalysis.

Seen from this perspective, Freud's project turns out to be very rational. How is therapy to help patients? The source of their suffering are traumas (resulting from individual life events and harmful attitudes of people around them), and the frustration of primary needs of the body (inevitable due to their anti-social nature). Neurotic patients avoid confronting their overwhelming suffering by applying defense mechanisms which deform their consciousness. They develop neurosis. It brings temporary relief but makes it difficult to cope with the current tasks of life, which causes further suffering.

Therapy slowly increases their awareness of the suffering, which must take a long time, because the whole personality of a patient is built on avoiding it by all costs. by strengthening the ego of a patient therapy makes him or her capable of bearing the suffering, looking it straight in the eyes. The aim of therapy is not to eliminate suffering resulting from frustration of primary needs, since it is impossible. It also does not discourage substitute satisfactions based on sublimation, as it is responsible for the greatest creations of man.

Freud's pessimism about happiness proves apparent. Happiness is an ambiguous term, sometimes it means intense pleasure, sometimes good mood and the lack of intense suffering. For Freud filling life with intense pleasure was impossible, but having mild positive mood and diminishing suffering was attainable. Especially when one had a strong ego, learned to endure suffering with dignity and was proud of cultural achievements.

Criticism and comments

It is significant that Freud, unlike Marx, had no ambition to change the world. All one could do was to adapt in the best possible way. (Freud himself led a very satisfactory life.)

Two main accusations were brought against psychoanalysis as a psychological theory and method of therapy. (1) Psychoanalytic theory has never been proven according to the standards of the scientific method. (2) Psychoanalytical practice requires a lot of effort but does not generate convincing results. The process of disclosing the unconscious is unreliable. It was sometimes the case that patients remembered traumas that could not take place (as was later discovered). (3) Freud himself did not believe that he could cure his patients.

Those charges may be discarded. Perhaps he made his patients believe in traumas they never had but this also could strengthen their egos. Perhaps his physiological mythology was unscientific, but it was proved that the theory which the therapist uses does not play crucial role in therapy. If a patient is susceptible to therapy (which often depends on the nature of the problem), a good therapist will help them regardless of the applied theory.[154] If Freud made derogatory comments about his patients, he might have been losing patience with those who instead of identifying with culture obstinately clung to their basic desires.

Freud stirred discussions on the systematic change of personality, the role of different social institutions (for instance religion), and how to find the sense of life without the prospect of an afterlife. His theory inspired numerous analyses of culture, literature and art as well as society. Psychologists dared to look into the human psyche

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[154] Larry E. Beutler, 'Making science matter in clinical practice: Redefining psychotherapy.' *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice, 16*, 2009, 301-317.
B. E. Wampold, *The great psychotherapy debate: Model, methods, and findings*. Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates 2001.

and devoted time to listening to patients. When he began his career, the dominant explanation of mental problems were physiological disorders of the brain. Thanks to Freud attention was shifted to childhood, upbringing and emotional traumas. Numerous followers, opponents and reformers of psychoanalysis contributed enormously to the development and enrichment of Western culture. The main psychological concepts of psychoanalysis (e.d. for defence mechanisms and stages of development) constitute a core of clinical psychology. In spite of his many idiosyncrasies he was one of the most influential geniuses in the history of psychology and thought in general. Freud stands very much in line with Socrates and Plato. Like the former he advised man to get to know himself, like the latter he departed from down-to-earth desires and strove for the sublime beauty and sophistication.

Further reading

Chapter THREE MODERN MASTERS (Sigmund Freud) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy.* Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later).

Stephen P. Thornton, "Freud" IEP, http://www.iep.utm.edu/freud/

Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, Chapter X Dynamo. Powerhouse of the World 1815-1914 (about Jews p. 842-850).

The development of psychoanalysis

Although Freud directed psychoanalytic movement in a despotic manner, some of his able students, often cursed by him, became independent and set up their own schools.

* Alfred Adler found that at the bottom of emotional problems lies the lack of self-esteem. It can be cured in a constructive way but can also lead to continuous frustration and neurosis.

* Karen Horney (*The Neurotic Personality of Our Time,* 1937) deprived psychoanalysis of its speculative character, formulated a well-known theory of neurosis and propagated it in the U.S. so the Americans underwent a thorough training in psyche analysis and coping with mental problems. Neurotics are characterized by:

(1) unrealistic views of the world and each other - they live in delusion and danger;

(2) excessive needs - of unconditional love, power, authority. Unable to satisfy them they finally escape into fantasy;

(3) ineffective methods of coping with problems - they are self-centred manipulators;

(4) lack of flexibility - they do not learn new behaviours;

Horney named ten patterns of neurotic needs,[155] which arise when normal needs become exaggerated, too much focused on. They are classified along three basic tendencies in people: towards others, against others or away from others.

Moving Toward People: the need (1) for affection and approval, pleasing others and being liked by them; (2) for a partner whom they can love and who will solve all problems.

Moving Against People: the need (3) for power, the ability to bend wills and achieve control over others (neurotics want more than just normal strength); (4) to exploit others, to get the better of them, manipulate them; (5) for social recognition, prestige and fame; (6) for personal admiration; (7) for personal achievement (needed desperately).

Moving Away from People: the need (8) for self- sufficiency and independence (it is more than autonomy, others are discarded entirely); (9) for perfection, being without slightest flaws; (10) to restrict oneself and lead as inconspicuous a life as possible.

* Carl Gustav Jung (a Swiss and uniquely non-Jewish member of the psychoanalytic movement) developed a semi-religious theory assuming that man develops using symbolic patterns (archetypes) of various aspects of personality, common to all humanity and stored in its collective unconscious. Jung studied how the influence the process of individuation - becoming fully human. It harmonizes with the inter-war climate seeking deep-seated roots of humanity (in the same vein the Nazis were looking for the old Germanic roots of the Aryan race but there were many others). Jung's deeply humanistic vision, still popular today,[156] was addressed to introverts and rejected Freud's dogma that the core of man are *libido* (sexual drive) and aggression, and the need to adapt to the fossilized society.

* Erich Fromm combined elements of Marxism, Buddhism and psychoanalysis, making them a tool for studying social life. In *Escape from Freedom* (known also as

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[155] Karen Horey, *Self-Analysis,* New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1942.

[156] Gerry Anne Lenhart, A developmental hypothesis based on the order of Jung's psychological functions (a PhD dissertation) 1996.
http://sulcus.berkeley.edu/flm/SH/MDL/GAL/galdischapts/galdis.intro#TOC [retrieved 10.10.2014]

The Fear of Freedom, 1941) he described the authoritarian personality as a sado-masochistic type who was the backbone of the Nazi totalitarian system (they were submissive to their superiors and contemptuous to their subordinates); and diagnosed the phenomenon of escape from freedom on the example of Nazi Germany (the sudden excess of freedom is an overwhelming burden that induces panic in unprepared people and forces them to blend into the crowd to avoid responsibility for their own lives).

The most contemporary list of personality disorders (described in the compendium of the American Psychiatric Association DSM - *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* 4th edition 1994) although it uses different names quite closely corresponds to the list compiled over 100 years ago by psychoanalysts, and also corresponds to the *International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems* (ICD), a medical classification list by the World Health Organization (WHO).[157] It comprises such disordered personalities as:

(1) Disorders of trust and bonding:

A. Avoidant - avoids people of fear and inhibitions;

B. Schizoid - leads a cold, solitary life and does not need others;

C. Schizotypal - lives away from people and looks odd, unconventional;

D. Paranoid - extremely suspicious.

(2) Disorders of abandonment and needs meeting (the symbiotic disorders):

E. Dependent ["oral" in Freud] - needs others desperately;

F. Borderline - emotionally unstable, with black-and-white thinking, love-hate emotions (idealization and devaluation episodes);

G. Passive aggressive - deals with problems in an obstructionist or hostile manner (expressing aggression in non-assertive ways);

H. Depressive - all the time feels rejected, cheerless, powerless;

Affective diseases (not personality disorders): major depressive disorder (clinical depression, a loss of interest or pleasure in everyday activities, lack of appetite, chronic fatigue, and sleep disturbances) and bipolar disorder ("manic depression") - experience alternating periods of mania and depression.

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[157] For simple presentation see: Theodore Millon, *Personality Disorders in Modern Life*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken, New Jersey 2004.

(3) Disorders of emotionality / emotional intensity:

I. Obsessive-compulsive ["anal" in Freud] - preoccupation with orderliness, perfectionism, and mental and interpersonal control at the expense of flexibility, openness, and efficiency;

J. Histrionic [~"phallic" in Freud] - excessively emotional, seeks attention and approval intensively.

(4) Disorders of shame and self- worth:

K. Narcissistic - either excessively preoccupied with personal adequacy, power, prestige and vanity; OR with helping others, being needed.

(5) Disorders of self in relation to society:

L. Antisocial - disregards and violates the rights of others.

M. Sadistic antisocial - cruel, demeaning, and aggressive behaviour; satisfaction is gained from intimidating, coercing, hurting, and humiliating others.

N. Self-defeating (masochistic) - loves to suffer.

In recent decades, however, with the discovery of many psychotropic drugs, often very effective in removing such symptoms as depression, shyness, lack of self-esteem, sensitivity to criticism, it became again fashionable to view many psychological traits as depending on the physiology of the brain, in particular its chemical neurotransmitters - serotonin, dopamine, noradrenaline. When their concentration departs from the optimum level, the symptoms typical for Freud's patients begin to appear.

Questions: How was the assimilation of Jews progressing in 19th c.? What was Jewish contribution to the culture of Vienna? What was the aim of psychoanalysis? How was it conducted? What was unconsciousness and how did its existence contradict Descartes' views on Man? How can it be analysed? What is the structure of personality (id – ego – superego) and what is the cause of neurotic tensions? What are defence mechanisms? How does personality develop and why can it be distorted? What is the role of culture (repression + sublimation) and religion? What are neurotic tendencies in

people according to Horney? How has psychoanalysis spread and developed (Adler, Fromm, Jung)?

Morality: deontology vs. consequentialism

In 19th c. a dispute erupted about whether the moral conduct consisted in (1) the right action (according to the rules, norms, commandments), which marked the deontological approach, or in (2) the pursuit of good results, outcomes, which was the teleological or consequentialist approach. (Ad 1) The deontological approach was exemplified by Kant, according to whom the rules had to be observed irrespective of consequences. If one should not lie, one should never lie, even if it would cause the death of someone innocent. (Ad 2) The teleologists (consequentialists) were e.g. the utilitarians, according to whom the aim of morality was to maximize long-term social benefits, the social level of happiness. One should choose what makes society happy. Depending on the situation, it may be telling the truth or lying. For Hume the desired effect was to maximize the interest of the citizens.

Both approaches have a long tradition. The deontological one derives from the Ten Commandments, the teleological one from Greece, where everyone was expected to strive for good (although virtues have more in common with the deontological approach). The main difference is the formulation of recommendations. Deontological rules indicate the prohibited and prescribed acts (do not lie, keep your promises, help the needy, develop abilities), while teleological goals and the good are states of affairs to be achieved: the greatest happiness, satisfaction of desires, dignity, security.

There are two more important differences between them. Firstly, the specification of rules (e.g.The Decalogue) gives a fairly clear indication of how to proceed, thus eliminating arbitrariness of individual choices. The list of goals or goods, on the other hand, requires each time a decision how to aim at them, leaving greater freedom of individual moral choice. Secondly, though both rules and goods/goals can be accepted as established by God, existing objectively, intuitively recognized or chosen freely, there is a significant asymmetry between rules and goods/goals: if the goods/goals are defined first, rules can be specified on this basis as well (as promoting them). However, if rules are specified first, it is rather difficult to discuss goods later on. The discussion of goods is even pointless since it is rules that should be obediently observed (the reflection on the goods/goals might even undermine rules or disclose conflicts within

morality). Building morality on the reflection on goods allows further discussion and reconstruction of morality (if there are new situations and new rules are needed); formulating rules first emphasizes obedience and cuts the debate short rather than encourages it (Eve was expelled from Paradise for curiosity, and the Decalogue was not to be a subject of debate). In the past this approach, represented among others by the Ten Commandments, the Golden Rule and Kant's Categorical Imperative, is still popular in social contract approach (e.g. John Rawlsa, Scanlon[158]), which assumes that morality is the result of a social contract, especially when first some general rules are negotiated and others follow after.

The teleological approach. If people have to strive for goals/goods, they must be detailed. Initially, the Greeks recognized the multiplicity of goods. Some were intrinsic, others instrumental. The former were goods in themselves, the latter were means to achieve them (although often the distinction is blurred, because as a result of a psychological habit the means are with time regarded as a good in themselves). What things are found intrinsically valuable? Games of chess, beautiful landscapes, well-prepared meals, interesting books, the performance of our duties, love affairs, friendship, travel, leisure, mystic experiences, creative work, and many other things.

Since there are many goods (or valuable things in a broad sense), we must take into account not only their list, but also the proportion in which they should coexist, so as not to pursue some at the expense of others (such as winning the war but failing to create art). To do the right thing, one must assess the possible consequences of various actions and choose the best.

The deontological approach is free of this difficulty. The Decalogue contains simple rules that must be observed with no exception, which does not require too much thought, but rather a maximum of obedience, perseverance, sometimes self-denial. Kant adopted a similar perspective, though he was aware that the rules must be more than the Ten Commandments. According to Kant, the rules must be strictly observed and never suspended in the name of obtaining a desired effect. However, another proponent of deontological rules, W.D. Ross (1877 - 1971) admitted conflicts between rules. According to Ross morality consists in observing *prima facie* (self-evident) duties (however, they must be reconciled with some good which also should be pursued, e.g.

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[158]   John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1971.
    Thomas M. Scanlon, *What We Owe to Each Other*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1998.

beauty and knowledge).[159] In case of a conflict some duties are weightier, and overrule others. Our basic duties are:

fidelity (keeping promises),

reparation (making up for any harm that we've done to another),

gratitude (returning good to those who have done good to us),

justice (upsetting distributions of pleasure or happiness that don't accord with merit),

beneficence (doing good to others),

self-improvement (improving our virtue and knowledge), and

non-maleficence (not harming others).

The difference between the two approaches appears in their practical application. As shown also by Kohlberg's moral development schema, one can try to follow the rules or seek to maximize the good. The latter requires more intellectual effort and self-reliance in assessing what measures lead to the best outcome. Therefore, the Decalogue was more effective for simple people who had to be organized and is generally effective on a daily basis when automated responses and stereotypes make choices easier.

Morality in the form of rules has at least two advantages. It provides a practical tool to make choices, and also disseminates standards to be expected from others. The original act utilitarianism encouraged to think about each act individually and choose the one that causes the greatest increase in happiness. Rule utilitarianism removes the burden of choice from individuals and implements rules carefully thought out by experts, based on the statistical effect of different types of activities. Even if you suspect that a violation of the relevant rule would lead in a particular case to greater happiness, this should not be done. Why? Romantic individualists may think that moral choices are a matter of individual conscience and intuition, and restraining them with rigid codes deprives them from authenticity. However, the arguments against are very weighty.

Firstly, the aim of morality is not to create opportunities for heroic choices. Morality is meant to help multiply good and diminish evil, motivate to improve oneself, strengthen the community, prevent destructive conflicts, protect from suffering. Thus in

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[159] W. David Ross, *The Right and the Good* (1930), Clarendon Press, 2002. The introduction by Philip Straton-Lake emphasizes the main ideas of the book.

similar situations similar behaviour is often expected. Certainly not everyone must do the same, there are individual differences and qualifications. However, the fundamental prohibitions, such as "Do not kill, do not steal, do not lie", are a common framework and should be unbreakable. If the rules may come into conflict, the way out also should be indicated. In this way society becomes stable, predictable, and not left to the arbitrary decisions of each individual. This does not mean that society must be incapacitated by moral codes. Everyone should have the right to make amendments and initiate discussions on the reform of morals. The morality may evolve in this way without being suspended. (However, if observing rules might result in an undesired outcome then one should break them - at one's own risk, treating it as heroic disobedience.)

The second reason for the existence of the codes is that it is easy to fall into a hypocritical selfishness and bend the moral standards so as to favour one's own interests (Freud wrote about it clearly when he described the mechanism of rationalization). Morality should be clear enough to recommend, in typical situations, the required procedures. Stalin argued that, given the aim at stake - building a paradise on earth - a multimillion human sacrifice was acceptable. Today it is known that they were not necessary but Stalin had murderous inclinations. Unbreakable moral rules should protect precisely against such situations.

However, even here the superiority of the deontological approach is debatable, because besides clear-cut rules (Keep your promises, do not lie) many other rules are very general and vague (Help the needy - how? whom? Develop your talents - which ones?). When rules are in conflict, it is not enough to specify their hierarchy; comparison of their effects also counts (one can lie when it saves suffering and does not cause much harm). Kant's recommendation not to allow any exceptions to the rules becomes worthless. If the rule "do not lie" comes into conflict with the rule of "do no harm to others" both cannot be observed. In fact both approaches are facing similar problems. Moral conflicts can be described either as conflicts of two rules which cannot be observed at the same time, or as a conflict of two goods that cannot be simultaneously realized. (Ethicists and writers like to deliberate on what to do when it comes to dramatic conflicts - there is one surgeon and two patients required surgery immediately; there is one life jacket and still the two passengers could not swim. In

such cases each choice is bad. An effective solution is not allow for such a situation. Moral progress of the world lies also in providing a sufficient number of surgeons and life jackets.)

Therefore, the development of ethics has led to attempts to reconcile the two approaches (as the dispute between the wave and corpuscular theory of light led to a compromise theory) as in the case of utilitarianism. Act utilitarianism was replaced by rule utilitarianism. The starting point is the recognition of the ultimate good - the maximization of social happiness. Then lawmakers estimate what system of rules statistically contributes most to this ultimate good, specify those rules to the public and advise to follow them without exception (respecting their hierarchy).

The Polish outstanding ethicist Maria Ossowska[160] considered rules (norms) and goods that they support as two parallel orders. In her opinion the basic moral and civilized standards and the legal standards based on them were designed to protect: life (do not kill), security (personal inviolability, privacy, social security), dignity, liberty and property of individuals (do not steal), social trust (do not lie), justice, solidarity and peaceful coexistence.

With the increasing complexity of life, the rules have become more intricate and their application is not as easy as remembering the essential goods. The solution is to improve the ability to understand the situation, to which a method of case studies contributes. Analysing specific situations from the point of view of goods/values/goals leads to arriving at the optimal solutions, which then become automatic and intuitively accessible.

The individual approaches to morality examined by Kohlberg should be remembered. Most people use rules, and only few (perhaps just lawmakers and authorities) consider morality from the perspective of the ultimate goals. People in positions of power should possess greater ability to deal with unusual and complex situations, although they may happen to anyone. Morality is not uniform. It comprises both basic rules that make every day easier and predictable, and sophisticated reflection on the structure of ultimate ends and necessary means. Even basic rules may be broken but only in exceptional circumstances and under personal responsibility.

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[160] Maria Ossowska, *Moral Norms*, Elsevier Science Ltd , 1980.

Researchers from the Darwinian sociobiological trends indicate that some rules are strongly inscribed in genes, such as the rule of reciprocity (which requires both to reciprocate the good and to punish evil). Evolution has strengthened these rules because they statistically maximized the chances for survival. If they are right it is also our genes that are responsible for our feeling that some actions are right and others wrong regardless of their consequences. However upon consideration their function can be discovered and questioned. Daniel Kahneman in his 2011 best-seller *Thinking, Fast and Slow* distinguishes two systems of decision making – fast (intuitive) and slow (based on rational reflection) which operate independently. They both make mistakes so they should work together. Moral intuitions could be described as belonging to the fast system, while considerations about their function and outcome (good they produce) to the slow one.

Questions: How do *Prima facie* obligations (Ross) oppose the utilitarian ideas of morality (deontological vs teleological [consequentialist] approach)?

Further reading

Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, "Consequentialism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL =
<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/consequentialism/>.

Brand Hooker, "Rule Consequentialism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL =
<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/consequentialism-rule/>.

Larry Alexander, Michael Moore, "Deontological Ethics", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL =
<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2012/entries/ethics-deontological/>.

Anthony Skelton, "William David Ross", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL =
<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2012/entries/william-david-ross/>.

Further reading

Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, XI Tenebrae. Europe in Eclipse 1914-1945 (The First World War 901, the Russian Revolution 914, The Peace Conference, President Wilson and the Treatise of Versailles 926, the 'Russian Civil War' 928, the collapse of the Hapsburg Empire 932, the Polish-Soviet War 934; The Inter-War Period 938, Fascist and Bolshevik totalitarianism 944, cultural life 951, Stalinism 959, Nazism 966, the rest of Europe 976, Franco in Spain 979, the war approaching 986,;

The Second World War 998, the Nazi-Soviet Partnership 1000, the Nazi Supremacy 1013, Holocaust 1016).

The scientific method

Since the mid-nineteenth century up to the mid-twentieth the theory of the scientific method saw rapid development. Science and technology triumphed, so their method deserved precise characterization. How much can be discovered despite Hume's scepticism? Does science, as Descartes wished, give certainty? Will it find the answer to every question?

Comte

Auguste Comte (1798-1857) preserved the Enlightenment optimism and combined it with a romantic admiration of humanity. He proposed the epistemological view called positivism. Only what is justified empirically (and not based on habits, which Hume allowed) may be called knowledge. Anything that goes beyond observations should be excluded as *metaphysics*. He believed that every science passes through three stages. At the *theological* stage phenomena are explained by referring to the actions of the gods (e.g. Zeus the god of thunder). The *metaphysical* stage postulates the existence of hidden forces (love and hate, the force of gravity, the drives in Freud). In the best third *positive stage* only observations are accepted and presented in elegant mathematical formulas and equations.

Scientism

Herbert Spencer (1820-1903; *Education: Intellectual, Moral, and Physical,* 1860) and Karl Pearson (1857-1936; *The Grammar of Science*, 1992) advocated a version of positivism known as scientism (not to be confused with Scientology), which like Darwinism became popular among educated classes in 19th c. Britain. Reliable knowledge should be based on observations. The model of knowledge is derived from natural sciences (physics, chemistry). Metaphysics and theology are worthless cognitive activities. The aim of science is to improve life of the community. Spencer proclaimed agnosticism, according to which there were many issues that could not be investigated scientifically, that is, reliably, and therefore one should have kept silent about them without taking a position either for or against. Religious issues cannot be tested scientifically, but nonetheless religion satisfies important human needs and should be

treated with respect. A popular illustration of the climate that bred scientism was the work of Arthur Conan Doyle, who on the one hand created the fictitious character of intelligent and rational Sherlock Holmes, but on the other was interested in parapsychology and spiritualism.

At the turn of 19th and 20th c. many philosophers mistrusted science. It was attacked by Nietzsche and later by Edmund Husserl (1859 - 1938) in *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie: Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie* (*The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*) 1936. Husserl was Freud's Jewish compatriot from Moravia who launched a specifically philosophical method of inquiry, phenomenology. More complex than psychoanalysis but equally incompatible with the standards of science it fascinated Central European philosophers for at least a century.

Today scientism can mean different things because the very definition and structure of science have changed. In its pejorative meaning scientism is the claim that empirical sciences (similar to Newtonian mechanics) can solve all philosophical problems. However, since contemporary physics does not resemble Newtonian mechanics, new fields of empirical science have been created (neuroscience, evolutionary science), methodology of science was influenced by Karl Popper and American pragmatism, the very notion of knowledge is different from that based on the classical definition of truth - the gap between science and philosophy is not that wide as a hundred years ago. It seems convincing that building knowledge should begin on a common sense level, then continue on a scientific level, and finally and most synthetically be crowned on a philosophical level. Philosophy should both study the basic concepts on which knowledge rests (formulating rules of critical thinking and scientific methodology) and build complex constructions using the results of empirical sciences, often too specialized to produce wide coherent and interdisciplinary pictures. (Certainly, philosophy can also concentrate on other spheres than producing knowledge.)

At the beginning of the 20th c. scientific tendencies were radicalised in logical positivism.

Austrian Philosophy, early Wittgenstein and logical positivism

In the second half of the 19th c. the Austrian-Hungarian Empire was a large multinational country in Central Europe ran by the Habsbugs in Vienna that created marvellous opportunities for philosophic development. A first major figure was a Catholic priest and Aristotelian scholar Franz Brentano[161] (1838 – 1917) who inspired many generations of followers, also in Poland (Kazimierz Twardowski, who created the Lwów-Warsaw School). However, it must be noted that many 19th c. philosophers used to call their philosophy scientific and rigorous as opposed to post-Hegelian romantic philosophy: Marx, followers of Kant, Husserl. In fact many of them were no more scientific than Aristotle was.

In the interwar Vienna, Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) radicalised positivist ideal in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921): language consists of propositions which picture the world; propositions are the perceptible expressions of thoughts, and thoughts are logical pictures of facts; the world is the totality of facts.

Philosophy was deeply criticised: "most of the propositions and questions to be found in philosophical works are not false but nonsensical."[162] Philosophy consists not in theories but shuould be a kind of activity consisting in clarification of thoughts and language, showing that traditional philosophical problems are nonsenses (if it is the case) using the tools provided by logical analysis. "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent" (7).

Then a few scientifically trained Austrian philosophers (such as Rudolf Carnap, Moritz Schlick, Otto Neurath, known as the Vienna circle, *Wiener Kreis*) took upon themselves the final effort to purify scientific knowledge of any "metaphysics" that stepped beyond what could be justified by observations. Knowledge must be based on the statements (propositions) stating crude facts; simple propositions are combined with logical conjunctions to form theories. The meaning of a statement is the method of its verification (determining whether it is true or false); believes that cannot be tested empirically are devoid of any sense. Knowledge should be codifiable in a single standard language of science; ordinary-language concepts were to be replaced gradually by more precise equivalents in that standard language. The opinions about values only

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[161] Barry Smith, *Austrian Philosophy: The Legacy of Franz Brentano,* Chicago-LaSalle, Open Court, 1994.

[162] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,* C. K. Ogden (trans.), London: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1922, thesis 4.003.

express emotional approval and disapproval, so they are not true or false and do not belong to science. The logical positivists moved to the Anglo-Saxon countries because of the Nazism, but despite their commitment, the project proved to be infeasible. Knowledge did not want to be reduced to what is observed. In England, positivism was represented by Alfred Ayer (*Language, Truth and Logic*, 1936).

Criticism and comments

The positivist views on ethics and values in general led scientists to avoid studying ethical issues, since values are subjective reactions to the world and not its objective components. (An exception was Moritz Schlick, who wrote *Problems of Ethics*.) Thus is was accepted that science should be value-free. However, if we agree that knowledge and morality are both human constructs the charge of subjectivity ceases to discriminate ethics. Knowledge is different from morality, since knowledge states what belongs to the world and what are the causes and conditions of different states of affairs, while morality indicates what to choose. However, both are made up of subjective attitudes of individuals which are later perfected according to some accepted rules (e.g. of non-contradiction) to form coherent wholes. Many aspects of values can be studied scientifically, e.g. what are the consequences of accepting certain values, what means are the best for given ends, why and by whom and under what conditions certain values can/cannot be accepted, how evolutions shaped human preferences. It can be shown that certain claims (about objective good, the will of gods) cannot be proven or are contradictory (that studding natural patterns justifies what should be done). Fortunately science will probably never be able to justify values, i.e. answer in an universally convincing manner what is right or wrong and what aim should be pursued - it would take the burden of deciding from people reducing them to mere executors of given life programmes. Logical positivism was in fact an extreme (and successful) denial of the value of subjectivity. Very soon it was frontally attacked by existentialists, pragmatists, Popper and even Wittgenstein himself.

Popper and Critical Rationalism

In the face of the failures of logical positivism (they could not construct reliable knowledge using their assumptions) Karl Popper (1902-1994) formulated a position called falsificationism or critical rationalism (*Logik der Forschung* [*The Logic of*

Scientific Discovery], 1934, and *Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth of Scientific Knowledge,* 1963) which despite many attacks survived as the basis for the scientific method. Instead of searching the reliable source of knowledge, seeing the limitations of deduction and induction, he focused on constructing hypothetical knowledge. (In fact Popper himself believed that he was defending realist and objectivist positions. Now his method is regarded as coherentist. It is not unusual that certain doctrines may be interpreted in a different way by their authors and by posterity.) The problem was how to justify scientific laws, which are strictly general and often refer to unobservable entities.

(1) Scientific laws are strictly general (they refer to infinitely many instances as "All swans are white", also to the future ones – and not just to a limited set of instances like "all Polish uprisings in the 19th c."). The problem of induction - building knowledge out of individual observations - was mentioned already by Hume. How many instances must be examined to justify such a law? In fact, every law is uncertain (plus they discovered black swans in Australia).

(2) Scientific laws refer to unobservable entities e.g. electrons and its orbits. They cannot be tested directly.

Even the claim that the Earth is round, which is not a general law, could not be tested directly for most of the time. Only indirect evidence connected to it might help to support it (e.g. ships disappear from the bottom; the higher one climbs, the more one can see, but always within a round horizon; one can get back to the starting point by going in one direction as Magellan).

Since deductive and inductive methods (discussed earlier) failed, Popper formulated a hypothetical method (in fact it had been used for a long time intuitively[163]).

Hypotheses H which cannot be tested directly are formulated. From H (together with other accepted knowledge, also about facts) conclusions P are drawn that can be tested directly. They are often called predictions, since this is what hypotheses (together with additional knowledge predict about the world, but especially about the outcome of future experiments).

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[163]   John Losee, *A Historical Introduction to the Philosophy of Science*, OUP Oxford, 4th edition 2001.

The logical relation between them is that P follows from H, so if H is true, P must be true, which can be written as material implication:

H → P

If the predictions are false, the hypothesis is falsified and must be rejected (or improved).

There is an asymmetry in assessing hypotheses: they can be falsified but not confirmed!

From the hypotheses H "All swans are white" follows that the next observed swan will be white. One counterexample (a black swan) is enough to falsify it. We are sure that it is false.

H → P

~P

~H

But no matter how many white swans are spotted, the hypothesis is not confirmed - we still cannot be sure that it is true. From

H → P

P

H does not follow.

Knowledge will never satisfy the wish of Descartes, it will never be certain. It should consist of best available hypotheses, however, they could be falsified in the future of better ones may be formulated.

How should the construction of knowledge proceed? One should formulate many hypotheses, suggest severe tests that may falsify any of them, carry out experiments until only one hypothesis is left and accept it tentatively. There is no rule for formulating hypotheses, creative effort is necessary. It is a miraculous human ability to come up with hypotheses which are not reducible to what is given in observations. Even though this ability was attested at the very beginning of philosophy (Democritus was looking at different objects and formulated the hypothesis that they all consisted of

invisible atoms), philosophers first overlooked it completely (they believed that knowledge must be drawn from a good source, recollected, received from God, deduced from premises - but not constructed by humans), an then dismissed as illusion (by empiricist, who wanted to reduce all knowledge to what can be observed). Only in the 20th c. it became evident that knowledge is human creation in the basic sense of the word "creation". It is born in minds. (Kant was of the same opinion but for him what was based on the structure of mind was somehow necessary, humans could not change it.) Different scientists observing the same objects (or at least looking in the same direction) can formulate different hypotheses and then bargain which should be accepted on the basis of common rule of acceptance (i.e. methodology) and available evidence.

If the right hypothesis is not formulated, the studied problem may never be solved.

The big mistake is to formulate hypotheses that cannot be tested – and cannot be falsified at all. "The world is moved only by love and hate" sounds nice but how can it be tested? "The life of men is largely determined by their deeds during previous incarnations." The same problem is with the existence of God. God may exist or not but there is no method of falsifying this claim.

If unfalsifiable hypotheses are accepted, they will be contradictory (like different beliefs in gods) and this would block the whole process of developing knowledge.

Falsifiability is Popper's criterion of demarcation between what is genuinely scientific and what is not: a theory should be considered scientific (which means it can be accepted or rejected) if, and only if, it is <u>falsifiable</u> - it must be clear what evidence would prove that the theory is false.

Another mistake it to cling to a hypothesis that is falsified and try to rescue it at all cost. Sometimes it is done by an *ad hoc* amendment. The theory becomes unfalsifiable then. According to Aristotle the Earth was the centre of the Universe. All heavenly bodies, including the moon, were perfect spheres that moved around the Earth in circular motion (or combination of several circular motions). In 1609 Galileo with his improved telescope saw craters on the Moon, which led to the conclusion that the Moon

is not even; it was similar to the earth.[164] Galileo's conclusion was a shocking one – the moon, a heavenly body, was not perfect and spherical.

Aristotelian astronomers replied that those craters and valleys were in fact filled with invisible substance so the Moon was actually spherical. This is a perfect example of an unfalsifiable addition protecting the Aristotelian hypothesis against the evidence that might falsify it. By such additions the progress of science and any reliable knowledge is hindered, according to Popper.

Still another example is Ptolemy's geocentric system. How could it have be maintained for hundreds of years and how astronomers studying the position of stars and planets had not detected discrepancies that had to occur? They found many of them, but dismissed them by *ad hoc* additions to the theory. According to them the planets were moving not along the orbits but around epicycles - small orbits somehow strung on a major orbit around the earth. The size of these epicycles and speed of rotation were calculated in such a way as to fit the observable position of the planets. The theory corresponded exactly with observations, although its basic mechanism was false. It would contradict Newtonian theory of gravity (which was formulated much later) so with time it had to be reconsidered and probably abandoned even if it were not challenged by Copernicus.

Marxism and psychoanalysis were Popper's contemporary examples of theories that can agree with any new facts, and thus are not reliable. They did not formulate any firm predictions, so if any fact seemed to contradict them, procedures commonly accepted in those theories allowed adding *ad hoc* amendments that explained any inconsistency.

The creation of knowledge does not proceed in accordance with the demands of naïve inductionism (which required collecting observations and gradual generalization). Knowledge does not come out of observation (even very long observation does not enable to see that objects are made up of atoms with electrons on different orbits). It goes beyond them.

The development of knowledge boils down to enlarging the set of accepted statements (propositions). One of the main pillars on which the whole procedure rests is basic statements that are accepted by (almost) everyone - "The colour of the indicator

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[164] Galileo Galilei, *Sidereus Nuncius or the Sidereal Messenger*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989, p. 48-49

turned red", "The bridge collapsed". They are observational statements. There can also be confusion or delusion about them, but they are possible to correct (Fata Morgana proves an illusion when one comes closer; colour blindness can be diagnosed and explained). Preferably observations should be reproducible and available to many observers. If humans were not largely unanimous in what they see, no intersubjective knowledge would be possible. (Popper maintained that the set of observational statements is also hypothetical and does not have a privileged status as a foundation of knowledge. It does not seem plausible. Most people - both experts and laymen - can distinguish between what they see and how they interpret it. The former is intersubjective to a large degree, the latter is not.)

The second pillar is the basic assumption behind falsificationism that knowledge may not be contradictory (which is an old Aristotelian rule): Two statements that contradict one another cannot both be accepted (or true). If a hypothesis predicts the results of experiments but the actual results are different than predicted there is a contradiction (between the predictions and the actual results). Something must be changed to avoid this and it must be the hypothesis since the results of experiments are evident. Contradiction may also be found between the hypothesis in question and other already accepted hypotheses or even between different sections of the hypothesis.

General rules of good thinking that follows from Popperian philosophy may be summarized as follows:

* The procedure begins with defining a problem to be solved: to formulate a general rule that will capture the observation; to explain a phenomenon (why dinosaurs died out); to eliminate a contradiction between the already formulated claims.

* By means of different procedures (e.g. brain-storming) as many hypotheses as possible should be formulated.

* Hypotheses should be clear, not ambiguous.

* Hypotheses should be falsifiable.

* If they cannot be tested directly, consequences (predictions) that could be tested directly should be drawn from them.

* Experiments must be carried out and any theory which had consequences that proved false should be rejected (or modified).

* Experiments and modifications of hypotheses should be repeated until only one hypothesis survives all tests. (As the competition between a corpuscular and wave theories of light demonstrated; it may be a long process.)

* It must be checked if the hypothesis in question is not contradictory with other accepted hypotheses.

* Then the hypothesis can be accepted tentatively until it is falsified or endangered by another competing hypothesis.

However, Popper was wrong thinking that a positive test result is worthless. If the theory predicted something nobody expected, the accuracy of the prediction is a serious argument in its favour, at least until a competitive hypothesis (falsifiable and not falsified) emerges, which predicts the same result. Otto Guericke once hypothesized that fish have ears. Feeding it while ringing a bell he conditioned them so that later they came at the very sound of the bell. It would be difficult to explain the observation with other hypothesis than that fish could hear, so a positive test result in the absence of a competitive hypothesis was regarded as a confirmation of the hypothesis.

There is, however, one serious problem. Scientific theories are not single hypotheses but whole bundles of them. If a theory is falsified as a result of experiments it is not obvious which part of the theory is to blame as was the case with the Copernican theory.

Copernicus' theory seemed at first falsified for three reasons. (1) It predicted that Venus should change its apparent size. Observations of Venus with naked eye did not show any differences, which should have led to the rejection of the Copernican theory. However, these observations were not trusted and after some time new observations made through a telescope confirmed the predictions of Copernicus. (2) Another prediction claimed that the angle at which the stars in the sky are seen (called parallax) should change on an annual basis with the change of the position of the Earth. Tycho Brahe carried out observations, but did not notice any change. He concluded that Copernicus was wrong. Later it turned out that Copernicus assumed too short a distance to the stars and expected too big a change. The negative result of the experiment falsified both (a) the Copernican geocentric hypothesis and (b) his assumptions about the distance to the stars, and Tycho erred in holding that it was the Copernican hypothesis (a) that was responsible for falsification. It was only later that more accurate

observations have shown that the parallax was changing. (3) The theory of Copernicus in the first one hundred years of its existence produced less accurate predictions about the positions of stars in the sky than the Ptolemaic system did. Copernicus assumed that the planets moved along circular orbits. Only when Keppler found that they moved in ellipses, the theory began to anticipate exactly what astronomers observed.

When a theory is falsified scientists can either reject its main hypothesis or amend the theory (by changing its main hypothesis or some minor ones). It is never obvious which strategy is better. The Ptolemaic geocentric model was being amended trough centuries only to be finally rejected. The Copernican model was defective for 100 years but after improvements it has been most successful. The decision whether to work on a hypothesis or abandon it is difficult and has grave consequences.

Popper's followers

Problems related to the Copernican revolution inspired the research on the development of science and encouraged philosophers to stage another attack against science. The idea that it approaches the objective truth was criticised by Thomas Kuhn (1922-1996). In *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962) he argued that every theory develops in the framework of a paradigm (the basic assumptions that define the way how empirical data are interpreted and understood), the change of paradigms being irrational. The paradigms are incommensurable, i.e. the image of the world emerging from each of them may not be translatable into the others.

Paul Feyerabend (1924-1994) in *Against Method* (1975) claimed that the development of science was irrational and was a collection of superstitions of groups of scientists (this view which was called epistemological anarchism).

Imre Laktaos (1922-1974) defended the Popperian rational rules against claims that science is irrational. Theories consist of hypotheses on different levels, some of them constitute the hard core. When scientists select a theory to be developed (Laktaos used the name of research programs), they should take into account, among others which of them are able to discover new facts, previously unknown, and concentrate on them. The Copernican theory, although in the initial phase of development its predictions were wrong, opened new perspectives and enabled the discovery of new facts. It was a progressive research programme. Ptolemy's theory was dead, exclusively

devoted to the rescue of its basic assumptions by adding new *ad hoc* hypotheses, which did not lead to new discoveries. It was a degenerative research programme.

Criticism and comments

The whole discussion about Popper is very misleading because Popper himself misinterpreted his main ideas. He tried to be a realist and assumed that his falsificationism enables the progress of knowledge towards objective truth. His followers and opponent either attacked this objectivism (Kuhn, Feyerabend) or tried to restore it (Lakatos). In fact, neither of them questioned the very idea of hypotheses testing, which form a basis for the scientific method. Only the general outcome of it was debated - does falsificationism lead to one and only truth (as in the classical definition of truth) or the process of testing, modifying, and falsifying theories will ever produce only hypotheses open to falsification. It seems that after all falsification is a form of coherentism. Hypotheses are adjusted to one another, scientist are never sure if they go in the right direction, every moment a new observation or a formulation of a new hypothesis can overthrow the existing edifice of knowledge, and, what is most important, even if all accepted hypotheses are free of contradictions, this is no proof that they are adequate to the objective reality since the whole set of accepted theories cannot be compared with it. It is even uncertain if the objective reality, the thing-in-itself, exists at all.

Kuhn and Lakatos discussed which theories were worth developing (are progressive research programmes) and which may be abandoned (as degenerative programmes). It is a different question than which theory deserves being accepted. The Copernican theory was worth developing. In case of great many new theories it is good to have rules that can rationally determine which of them merit consideration. However, those rules must not be confused with the rules upon which the final decision is made whether to accept or reject a theory. Even though paying attention to the Copernican theory was reasonable the theory could have been proven unacceptable even after a hundred years of research. If ultimately, after many amendments, it turned out to be the best hypothesis the decision was based on the Popperian rules of faslificationism. It was accepted not because it enabled the discovery of new facts, but because it predicted the

observations accurately and could be reconciled with other accepted theories (e.g. Newton's theory of gravity, which would contradict the theory of Ptolemy).

The alleged incommensurability of different theories also does not pose a problem. When it is difficult to compare theories because they seem to be formulated in different conceptual systems, this indicates the need to build the language into which both of them could be translated. Knowledge develops among others through creating more versatile conceptual system, in which more and more theories can be expressed and compared.

Late Wittgenstein

After World War Two, in Cambridge, Wittgenstein wrote *Philosophical Investigations* (1946) which contained his second philosophy. He rejected the dogmas of his early positivism (no atomic facts or statements that describe them exist) and tried to describe a much more complex structures responsible for the building of knowledge and communication. One of the crucial concepts were so-called *language games,* complex behaviours guided by sophisticated rules, in which language is intertwined with extra-linguistic elements. Traditionally words were described as having meaning, something they represented (concepts, thoughts, objects or their classes). Now Wittgenstein suggested that they should be described as having "uses". To understand language it is not important what its elements represent but how they are used. Words, sentences, theories are like tools, they serve different purposes. Saying this Wittgenstein paved the way for pragmatic understanding of linguistic knowledge (recently represented by e.g. Rory): language is created not to represent objective truth but to serve as tools to human aims.

Concepts cannot be defined with precision as they form groups based on family resemblances rather than on common characteristics (every member of a family bears some resemblances to some other members but there is no pattern common in the whole family; in the same way one can postulate that every instance of a free-market national economy is similar to some other instances in other countries but there is no universal pattern common to all of them, there is no common characteristics of free-market). An important position in his new system was occupied by social rules along which any activity is carried out. It was an absolutely illuminating perspective in rejecting traditional image of knowledge and morality. (In fact Wittgenstein was not the first one

who suggested this nor did he present a complete picture. Nietzsche had similar insights though less mature and too individualistic.) After Wittgenstein it was more and more unquestionable that playing different language games, e.g. searching the truth, requires not comparing statements with objective reality, but manipulating with language according to the accepted rules e.g. determining which statements should be accepted and which rejected. (An example of those rules are given above as Popperian hypothetical-deductive scientific method.)

No other philosopher has changed his view so dramatically within so few years.

Questions: What were the ideals of Comte's positivism and scientism? How were they supported by early Wittgenstein and radicalised by the Vienna Circle? How did Popper reject them and replaced with falsificationism (detailed account required!)? What was philosophy according to late Wittgenstein?

Further reading

Chapter THE PHILOSOPHY OF WITTGENSTEIN (Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus; Logical Positivism; Philosophical Investigations) from A. Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy.* Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd Edition 2006 (or later)

A. C. Grayling, *Wittgenstein,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, Past Masters series, 1988.

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Marrianne Sawicki, "Husserl", *The* Internet *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, http://www.iep.utm.edu/husserl/

Stephen Thornton, "Karl Popper", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/popper/>.

Thomas Uebel, "Vienna Circle", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/vienna-circle/>.

Anat Biletzki, Anat Matar, "Ludwig Wittgenstein", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/wittgenstein/>.

John Preston, "Paul Feyerabend", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2012/entries/feyerabend/>.

Alexander Bird, "Thomas Kuhn", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2013/entries/thomas-kuhn/>.

Road to war

The political structure of the German Empire was weak. Bismarck introduced universal and equal voting rights (which he later bitterly regretted). German society was strongly divided and consequently so was the parliament. Protestants and atheistic liberals were fighting the Catholic Church (in fact Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* was directed against it), but failed, the Catholic Church has been strong in Germany ever since. The landowners opposed capitalists. The Socialdemocrats aimed at seizing power in the country through democratic means and were mainly concerned with practical down to earth social aims. It clearly illustrated negative results of suffrage extended too fast to the whole society. German nationalism (as in fact every nationalism in every country) proved the only ideology the could unite Germany across those divisions.

(Since human desires are conflicting it has always been a problem how to introduce order in human groups. An unfortunately useful means is to find an external enemy. Early Viking societies united against those peoples with whom they were at war. Marx emphasised another method - the unification of the exploiting class of the poor against the exploited class. The white can unite against the black, Christians against Muslims an so on. In the first half of the 20th century Europe tested nationalism: every society united against other societies. Hitler achieved real mastery in it showing obvious shortcomings of this strategy. Soviet communists dreamt of uniting the whole Humankind around the Marx's ideal of classless society. In this context one cannot disregard the ideals of the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages - the creation of a pan-European harmonious society. The method was essentially the same as that of the EU -

establishing of the group of educated politicians (the clergy), who would control the whole continent eliminating tensions between different groups of interest or regions while not being identified with any of them. Communist had the same aim with the international communist party replacing the Church.)

In the turbulent landscape of German social and political life faulty democracy was accompanied by strong but undemocratic elements: the Kaiser, the chancellor appointed by him, not by the parliament, and the army which occupied a prominent position and was out of control of the parliament. (Bearing in mind chaos which resulted from democratic reforms in the Arabic world or in Russia and the success of undemocratic Chine we can wonder what contributed more to the downfall of the German Empire: Prussian authoritarianism or Bismack's universal suffrage). Democracy may be a good political solution but only when it works and this happens only under condition which are not easily met. If the population is split over many issues and the experienced class of politicians does not exist the risk of chaos, anarchy and a shift towards a dictatorship is very high.

A great handicap for Germany was the personality of the last Kaiser, Wilhelm II, who reigned 1888-1918. A grandson of queen Victoria, born with a physical defect, he underwent brutal treatment at the English court and developed a neurotic Hassliebe (hate-love) attitude towards Britain. Finally Britain and Germany, although respected each other, did not trust each other. Britain eventually supported France and Russia against Germany. Together with the arrogance of many other German politicians it isolated Germany in Europe, which in turn only strengthened the siege mentality syndrome in Germany.

Other major countries had their own serious problems. **Britain** was becoming tired of having an empire although it joined the scramble for Africa. In the 20th c. it experienced a rapid socialist transformation. In 1901 Queen Victoria, a symbol and guardian of the social hierarchy, the work ethics and strict morality, died. Shortly after that the liberals undertook an offensive in order to reduce the role of aristocracy. Then the Labour Party was founded and after entering the parliament began to opt for the introduction of the welfare state. Between the World Wars the British increasingly focused on building a friendly society in which everyone had relative prosperity and a decent amount of everyday pleasures. Unfortunately this led to the weakening of

Britain's military capabilities and international position. Britain had still an empire covering a quarter of the world but ruled it rather as a benevolent manager than as a true hegemon. The half-naked Gandhi was enough to force it to make concessions.

France, since the times of Louis XIV regarding itself as the heart of Europe and the greatest power on the continent, experienced a shock when it was defeated by Bismarck in 1871, which fostered anti-German hatred and the need for revenge. Social tensions of fast industrialisation manifested itself throught brutality on both sides during the Paris Commune revolution in 1871. Yet France was democratic and willing to built an overseas empire on civilised principles.

The **Austro-Hungarian Empire** was struggling with nationalistic aspirations of Hungarians and Slavonic people, especially when another empire on the periphery of Europe - the Ottoman Turkey - began collapsing, losing control over Slavonic nations in the Balkans.

The **Russian Empire**, despotic and inhabited by uneducated peasants, also wanted to catch up economically with Western Europe. Russia had been a traditional ally of Austria, yet when the Ottoman Empire began to crumble, it suddenly wished to annex as much as possible of Eastern Europe pretending to protect its Slavonic peoples according to a newly formed pan-Slavonic nationalistic ideology. It was defeated during the Crimean war (1853–1856), when Britain, France and Turkey formed a coalition. Later, however, Turkey formed a coalition with Austria, while France and Britain with Russia against Germany, a new competitor within Europe.

The power of Europe was looked impressive but lacked sound foundations. Europe had been poor throughout most of her history. The sudden wealth acquired in the second half of the 19th century intoxicated European rulers and politicians. Europe was rich due to her technological progress and industrial production but psychological abilities and socio-political structures left behind. (America also had its Gilded Age then, but managed to overcome temptations. Perhaps a good illustrations might be a cycle of paintings by William Hogarth *The rake's progress* originally meant as a history of a poor Englishmen who after becoming suddenly rich in the early 18th century London slowly but inevitably degenerated to end his life in a mental asylum. Europe went the same way between 1870 and 1945.)

No pan-European identity was emerging. Over-enthusiastic politicians were loosing realistic perspective and in fact control over Europe. The colonisation of Africa was superficial, hasty and did not bring real profits to Europe (only those who robbed Africa at extreme speed like Leopold II of Belgium earned a lot); the colonial empires collapsed soon because their maintenance was too costly and it was not possible to colonise the continent only with machine-guns. Europe overestimated its power. Capitalism turned peasants into industrial proletariat without realizing that workers were much harder to control and would rebel sooner or later. Nations and individuals began fighting for prestige which did not satisfy sound needs and was a kind of addiction difficult to break. Europe was under pressure of rationalisation - the process of imposing planed discipline (useful in industrial production) in all spheres of life, also emotional, which together with quasi-religious morality full of hypocrisy pent up human spontaneity depriving life of real joy. A general illusion of omnipotence lowered natural fear of risk, which explain why the First World War started so easily and with completely unrealistic expectation of all its participants.

Europe had been tormented by wars, plagues and poverty for at least 15 centuries, and suddenly was prosperous for 50 years. Only idiots could have believed that from that moment progress would be endless and secure. And yet most people in Europe believed it. The second half of the 19th century in Europe was like a gigantic speculative bubble which burst in 1914 leaving Europe bankrupt. It was not an accident but a natural consequence of the nouveau riche irresponsibility which like soda water filled the heads of Europeans. Wagner's magnificent opera *The Ring of the Nibelung* (1876) proved an accurate prediction of Europe's destiny. Europe fully proved that she was a crazy continent whose psychological essence was also captured by Freud's psychoanalysis. Unfortunately Europe did not undergo a proper therapy at that time.

First World War

The First World War was an absurd conflict. Why did Europe, believing in her endless progress, plunge into the abyss of self-destruction? It should be studied as an example of inefficiency in politics and intoxication with greed. The ideological background was Social-Darwinism applied to international politics claiming that for the

benefit of Humankind nations must compete and wage wars so that the weaker could give way to the stronger ones.

After Prince Ferdinand was assassinated in Sarajevo (Bosnia), Austria brutally attacked neighbouring Serbia, an independent, nationalistic and warlike state of peasants and soldiers. Austria was the politically weak and frightened by aggressive Slavonic nationalism in the Balkans, which threatened to disintegrate the Habsburg empire. Yet its intervention against Serbia could have been a local war without serious consequence.

Then Russia, Germany and France immediately organized mobilisation. All of them wanted war. Russia wanted to protect Slavonic nations in South-Eastern Europe (to dominated them and weaken Western Europe), France, defeated in 1871, wanted to regain supremacy on the continent and reclaim the Alsace-Lorraine (annexed by Bismarck, but perhaps more German than French), Germany were intoxicated with its recent success and felt surrounded by hostile countries. To make matters even more complicated politicians might have not know their real motives (as clearly explained by Freud's theory of subconscious actions). Britain was afraid of Europe dominated by Germany. German politicians might sincerely have believed that they acted in self defence and yet might have had different motives. As well as the others.

A striking feature was a certain fatalism among both the elite and the general public (also prominent in Wagner's masterpiece *The Ring of the Nibelung*), many of whom regraded war as inevitable. Form the psychological point view it is the attitude of persons who lose control over their lives. They watch something happening, they feel pressure to take part in it although they suspect that it is not what they want. The Kaiser Wilhelm II declared war first, backed by his generals, but he was terrified by what he was doing. It seems that the situation in Europe was regarded by everyone as cumbersome or unhealthy (art, which is a good barometer of social problems, was filled with decadent tendencies) and since no better solution was in sight people opted for war. Imperialism and nationalism shaped mental attitudes in all countries, the long period of peace after 1815 perhaps made Europeans bored. The war was first greeted almost by everyone with euphoria, as attested in Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*, although the war was expected to last only a few months. (Many socialists were antimilitarist, regarding war as a trick of capitals elites not in the interest of the working

class. In France the socialist pacifist leader Jean Jaurès was assassinated by a nationalist fanatic in 1914. Yet when the war went on also socialist parties supported their nations. The socialist Second International was dissolved in 1916. The war, once began, was destroying Europe with its inexorable logic.)

Also Britain (largely under the influence of anti-German Winston Churchill) entered the war deliberately and unprovoked, possibly because it was afraid of the rising power of Germany and willing to win this competition by military means. Germany envied Britain its empire but did not want to wage war with it at all. Niall Ferguson[165] even suggested that if Britain had stayed out of the war, Germany would have defeated France quickly and the German-dominated European economic union would have saved both Europe and Britain much misery. (Yet Britain had also good reasons for not allowing Germany, at that time an aggressive, alienated and unpredictable country, to dominate the whole Europe. Bitter competition between European countries had led to a stalemate.)

Perhaps it was technological progress that played crucial war. Defence weapons and strategies were much better offensive ones. Soon the western front settled into a battle of attrition with a trench line which would change little until 1917. The unexpected manslaughter was enormous but politicians and generals wee unable to change their plans. The watched millions of people die without sound reflection that the war must be stopped. The whole European political class showed that it is unable to govern Europe successfully.

In both Germany and Austria Emperors soon lost control over their generals, who were responsible for prolonging the war - a clear indication that civilians should have control over army. Nationalism and pride were triumphant. When Germany could not continue war on both fronts, it was the German Foreign Minister Arthur Zimmermann who transported Lenin from exile to Russia, which in the long run proved a bitter mistake. Certainly, Lenin did not care for Germany's interests. First of all he hated the "bourgeois" culture of the West. When Lenin announced his *Decree On Peace* in 1917 President Wilson responded with the *Fourteen Points* plan in 1918. The result was establishing small democratic nation states in Europe after the war. In 1920 the Polish Army stopped the Red Army near Warsaw preventing it from attacking Western Europe.

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[165] Niall Ferguson 'The Kaiser's European Union: What if Britain had "stood aside" in August 1914?' in Niall Ferguson, *Virtual History: Alternatives and Counterfactuals*. New York: Basic Books 1999.

Overpopulation was one of the key but often neglected factors that contributed to the downfall of Europe. Throughout modern times European nations exported surpluses of population abroad. This was one the main reasons for colonialism. Germany, which had only a few colonies in Africa (and lost them all as a result of World War One), was increasingly worried about the living space for its people. Sudden development of medicine in Europe reduces mortality and increased life expectancy hence after 1800 the population of Europe, especially of Britain and Germany, grew rapidly. The result was a great number of people not shaped by cultural tradition (if many children are born and survive there is not enough teachers to educate them and introduce them to civilised ways of life). It should be remembered now when world population is sky-rocketing.

German generals showed the obstinacy which later destroyed Europe in 1944 and 1945. In spite of losing the war, generals was unwilling to capitulate. Finally soldiered and workers rebelled against the war (first in the navy). German society was exhausted, different revolts (social-democratic, communist, a revolution in Munich was called socialist but was supported by artistic bohema). Germany had to capitulate (later it was called "a stab in the back" by general Ludendorff and Hitler) but other results were astonishing - all ruling dynasties in German lands and in Austria, which had been ruling for almost a thousand years, resigned and the republics led by social-democratic governments (in Austria and in Germany) were established. While in France feudalism was falling painfully for a long time after the French Revolution, in Germany it took a few days. Social democrats opposed both communists, who at that time were fairly week, and nationalists and militarists, who later became the Nazis. They provided good living conditions for workers but prevented a communist revolution and did not want to undermine the traditional structure of the state (as a result Stalin hated them), were peaceful and willing to cooperate with other parties. If they had managed to stay in power Germany might have become a stable country and the main pillar of the post-war Europe. However, this was not the case.

One of the reasons was the *Treaty of Versailles* (1919) and a few subsequent treaties singed separately with individual countries which were negotiated after the war and contained many elements not predicted in Germany at the moment of signing the armistice in November 1918. Germany solely was found guilty of the war, forced to disarm, make substantial territorial concessions and pay huge war reparations. On the

one hand it was understandable - Europe was terrified by German power and ambitions. The *Treaty* aimed at weakening Germany, which together with the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire would lead to establishing Britain and France as the only powerful states in Europe. An important role was also played by the idealistic President Woodrow Wilson, who was not an expert in European affairs but was eager to promote democracy in countries which were not prepared for it. He formulated his postulates in the *Fourteen Points* plan accepted in 1918. Yet the *Treaty* was much more demanding than this plan. It seems that Britain and especially France were not interested in helping Europe east of the Rhine river develop. They were preoccupied with their own colonial empires and were satisfied with the fragmentation of Europe which only made her safely weak and divided. If any plan of strengthening Central Europe and its democracies had been devised by France, Britain, and the U.S., the Second World War would have been avoided. The *Treaty* left Germany with a bitter sense of injustice. The war was a catastrophe for Europe but definitely not only Germany was responsible for it. While German armies were led by generals, the Kaiser amd some nationalists, the *Treaty* humiliated ordinary Germans and imposed burdens of reparations and annexations at the moment when they embarked on creating a new peaceful and responsible German state. For German nationalists it was a useful fuel.

After the war

The first reaction to the end of war was again euphoria. Those who survived it wished to forget about it. In the 1920s Paris became the cultural capital of the world, where artists came from all over the world to create modern art (e.g. Picasso, Stravinsky, Hemingway and many others). The main French philosopher was Henri Bergson (1859-1941). The subjectivist ideas became popular even before the World War One. The symbolic expression of it was Einstein's *Theory of Relativity* (1905) claiming that the reality may be described only as relative to the point of view of the observer. No objective Newtonian reality, the same for all observers, exists. Bergson developed similar ideas in *Introduction à la Métaphysique* (*Introduction to Metaphysics*, 1903) and *L'Évolution créatrice* (*Creative evolution*, 1907), in which he favoured intuitionism. Reality can be studied though subjective first-person intuitions which reveal what reality is for a particular observer. He rejected the Newtonian and Darwinian mechanistic interpretation of reality popular in the 19th c. Evolution is also not final, it

does not have the predetermined final aim (as represented by Aristotelian final causes). Reality evolves but in a creative fashion. Its driving force is *élan vital* (vital force).

All those ideas became extremely popular in the 1920s after the war had destroyed the sense of rational order in the world. People deprived of stability and security ceased to look into the future with optimism. They preferred to live in the present, concentrate on pleasures, looking at the world from a subjective perspective. Europe produced cabarets and many new trends in art callin into question the existence of a rational structure of reality, e.g. Dadaism, futurism, surrealism, James Joyce, Marcel Proust, Franz Kafka and Virginia Woolf and many others. Once again Europe proved to be an extremely creative continent and transformed despair and insecurity into artistic flourishing. Unfortunately this did not last long.

After the First World War had shattered multinational empires, many new nation-states flourished and immediately began to persecute minorities (for example, in 1915-1917 the Turks killed 1.5 million Armenians and then drove two million Greeks out of the areas occupied by them since three thousand years). Thus nationalism began an era of genocide and ethnic cleansing.

In all continental Europe tension grew between radical left wing movements (often communists) and militarist fascism. Britain avoided this by making peaceful concessions to the working class and gradually diminishing the role or aristocracy, e.g. through enormous inheritance or estate tax. It was facilitated by the long parliamentary tradition - Britain had responsible politicians trusted by society. In continental Europe, much affected by the war, societies were divided while young democracies, created under American pressure were immature and inefficient. Continental democracies failed completely in the inter-war period, especially when America bestowed Europe also with the Great Depression in 1929. Authoritarian regimes mushroomed in Europe and some of them were fairly successful.

The way to totalitarianism was discovered in Italy where Mussolini overcame post-war chaos and prevented a communist or socialist revolution in Italy. He used terror to seize power but later (between 1924 and 1943, when German occupation of Italy began) his rule although authoritarian was not brutal. There were no concentration camps, Jews were not persecuted, most of society supported him and in fact his regime

was beneficial to Italy. He almost destroyed the Sicilian Mafia (it was revived only when Americans landed in Sicily in 1943 to fight with Mussolini).

An essential feature of the period was what the Spanish liberal philosopher Ortega y Gasset (1883-1955) described in his provocative *Revolt of the Masses* (1930). In the public sphere a mass-man appeared, a demanding, ignorant, unambitious and irresponsible person. Although Ortega did not point to any social class (in fact he also criticised mass-men from the bourgeois background) it is obvious from a later perspective that on a large scale it is the masses and their new leaders that changed the world. For centuries the elite guided the masses, often uneducated and completely incapacitated. Rare early democracies, if they were not small and isolated tribal communities (as Iceland or Switzerland), restricted suffrage to not more than the top quarter of society (Athens, Rome, Poland, England), which secured stability. In aristocratic societies masses were exploited but at the same time cared for in a paternalistic way. During the Enlightenment the competing European countries embarked on educating them to a limited extent. This process was intensified by industrialization which needed workers who could understand simple instructions. It produced a mass men who learned to read, so they could be manipulated by populist leaflets, but who could not think critically and responsibly to defend themselves against manipulation. New leaders (or mobsters) seeing new opportunities incited the masses, often referring to their low emotions, jealousy, naivety and stereotypes of "a simple man", seized power and introduced terror. What is more perplexing this problem has not disappeared. Wherever the right to vote is extended to large sections of society there is always a possibility that many of the voter who do not understand rational arguments and cannot predict results of different decisions will be manipulated by populists. The masses themselves are rarely aggressive or destructive. It is their self-appointed leaders who become dangerous.

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Authoritarian regimes, often called fascist, were a common reaction against the 'revolt of the masses', the spread of radical revolutionary ideologies which became popular after the Bolshevik revolution as well as against uncontrollable free market capitalism. Communists at that time called for complete annihilation of the old European culture by means of terror so the use of terror by fascists seems at least partly justifiable. After suppressing communist and often also social-democratic activities, they genuinely aimed at restoring the European tradition at its best. If Hitler, who was a Nazi, had not corrupted fascists, they perhaps would not have committed serious crimes and they would have preserved this culture, although they still would have been too conservative. Hitler Nazism was fundamentally different from other fascist movements. His aim was not to restore any tradition but to create a completely new tradition based on the idea of a chosen Nordic race, brutality and physical extermination of the whole nations. Hitler was much more similar to Stalin and other Bolsheviks than to European fascists. And it was Hitler and Germans who followed him that destroyed Europe, not fascism and not pre-war authoritarianism as such.

After the First World War Germany experienced a shock. Between 1921 and 1924 hyperinflation broke out taking life savings of many and severely weakening the middle class, a stabilizing social force. Catastrophic feelings mushroomed. Oswald Spengler (1918-1922) published *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* (*The Decline of the West*) announcing the twilight of Western civilization. Hitler's first attempted to seize power in 1923 (the Munich putsch) and then was almost forgotten. Later in the 1920s life in Germany stabilized, moral permissiveness (the famous Berlin cabarets) and consumerism on credit (often from America) became widespread. In 1929 the Great Depression suddenly struck, German economy collapsed, unemployment reached the level of 30 percent, GDP dropped by 40 percent, politicians were helpless, voters turned

to two extreme parties - the Nazis and the communists. The crisis persisted until 1933, when Hitler became Chancellor. Even then he was not respected by most Germans, both educated and uneducated, but was often regarded as primitive and crazy. He was chosen out of desperation.

The communist movement, developed in Germany by Marxists, enjoyed significant popularity. In 1918-1919 revolutions broke out in Berlin and Munich, led, among others by Rosa Luxemburg, a socialist from Poland (and an opponent of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, favouring pluralism and democracy), later murdered by the nationalists (but the incentive came from the Socialdemocrats). The Great Depression seemed to confirm Marx's diagnosis - capitalism was falling. The Bolshevik Russia seemed to flourish, the Soviet Union was developing not at all affected by the Depression. For many Westerners, who did not know about the bloody and carefully hidden Stalin's terror, communism looked a promising alternative to capitalism. In 1931 during the construction of the White Sea Canal, Stalin launched the first massive extermination labour camp similar to the later Auschwitz. The decline of Western civilization was approaching.

Post-war Germany, organized as the Weimer Republic was a great failure of democracy because it was perfectly democratic. Hardly any efficient parliamentary majority could emerge from a competition between many parties which were loyal to their members. Since German society was divided between blue-collar workers, agrarian, shopkeepers, industrialists groups, whose interests were in conflict, so was the parliament. Under the pressure of the strong social-democratic party the state took the responsibility for negotiation wages between the employers and the employees, welfare-state measures such as government unemployment insurance. When the Depression stuck and money was scares, everyone was dissatisfied with the state and its democratic structure was paralysed by 1930.

German critics of democracy

Two thinkers summarized the worries of the time. Carl Schmitt (1888–1985) argued in *The Protector of the Constitution* (1931) that different groups pursuing their interests in liberal democracy weakened the state so that it was unable to perform its duties. Unless it was made more authoritarian it would collapse unable to protect the nation. Hans Freyer (1887–1969) in *Revolution from the Right* (1931) maintained that a

sense of individual purpose came from belonging to a larger community, preferably to the nation (*Volk*). Capitalism, international trade and technology creating cosmopolitan and individualistic culture weaken the nation and uproot individuals form a larger whole making their lives meaningless.

In those books capitalism appeared as a homogenizing force which destroys a shared collective purposes together with democracy paralyses of the state[166]

In Austria stability was secured by "austrofascists" in 1934-1938. (The accuracy of the term is debated - it is used mainly by left wing critics as derogative.) Engelbert Dolfuss and Kurt Schuschnigg, who stem from the conservative Christian Social Party (others were from the Fatherland Front), opposed the German Nazis (Dolfuss was assassinated by a Nazi supporter). They also opposed Marxism as well as free market capitalism. Although their rule was authoritarian and anti-parliamentary, it was not murderous or warlike. Communist, socialist, social-democratic, anarchistic and Nazi leaders were arrested. The dominant position of the Catholic Church was restored, the national past of Austria, the Habsbugs and traditional Baroque art were extolled, the legacy of the French Revolution mainly rejected. There was no official anit-Semitism and while the Nazi Germany were aggressive towards Austria, many Jews fled there from Germany. Freud left Austria only after Hitler had annexed it in 1938. The international position of Austria rested on the protection form Mussolini against Hitler.

The success of authoritarian regimes in Europe shows that Schmitt's and Freyer's ideas were not toxic as such. Authoritarianism was a natural reaction to problems created by democracy (which paralysed state institutions), free market capitalism (which atomizes and conflicted societies) and communism (which threatened with the destruction of educated elites and bloody dictatorship). Only Mussolini and Hitler used fascism for territorial conquest. However, authoritarianism maintained for too long is detrimental to the full development of human potentials. An interesting example is General Francisco Franco, who ruled in Spain until 1975. He was unduly brutal during the civil war, yet later he exhibited a reasonable political intuition. Although there were moments he wanted to enter the war finally he kept Spain out of it. He wanted to have controlled economy but yielded to international pressure, liberalised Spanish economy

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[166]   Jerry Z. Muller, *The Mind and the Market: Capitalism in Modern European Thought*. New York: Knopf, 2002, pp. 276–287 .

in mid-1950s and secured prosperity until his death. All this at the expense of individual freedom of those who did not considered themselves Catholic.

Hitler

National socialism designed by Hitler also could have appeared as a promising solution. It opposed both communist internationalism and capitalist free market liberalism (especially financial speculations). It had some dangerous nationalist elements (a plan to return to a homogeneous tribal society, hostile to strangers, consolidated around the leader), but it also contained ideas of respecting national cultural tradition and building a state based on social solidarity. The British post-war welfare state had similar objectives. It might have been flawed but it was not a crime as such. In Italy Mussolini was a tempting example (it he had not involved Italy in World War Two he might be remembered as perhaps a bombastic but otherwise decent politician.) Germans who voted for Hitler in 1933 might have expected the same, although in both countries the number of frustrated ex-soldiers were high.

How did Hitler manage to turn a civilized nation into a machine of destruction? Within a few months after he had become Chancellor he managed to dismantle democratic mechanisms and assumed dictatorial power. In March 1933, the Nazis used intimidation and manipulation to pass the Enabling Act, which allowed them to pass laws which did not need to be approved by the Parliament. (In the U.S. Roosevelt also initially received almost dictatorial power for the creation of the New Deal, after some time, however, the Supreme Court limited it. The U.S. institutions worked more efficiently.) Ian Kershaw who devoted many books to the history of the Third Reich[167] claims that the essence of Hitler's influence was the creation of an irresistible charismatic propaganda image of a marvellous leader who deserved love and obedience. But only a small group of Hitler's devoted followers (i.e. the Nazis) were eager to fulfil his wishes. Most of society even did not like Hitler very much. They were paralysed by his propaganda and having no leaders (whom Hitler sent to concentration camps) they did not have much chance to organize resistance. An ordinary German had good reasons to be afraid that if Hitler had been opposed and rejected either the Great Depression would have continued, making Germany impoverished again, or

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[167] Ian Kershaw, *Hitler 1889–1936: Hubris*, London 1998; *Hitler 1936–1945: Nemesis*, London 2000.

communists would have taken power and forced the union of Germany with the Soviet Union under Stalin.

History of Germany

It should be remembered that Germany was not a powerful country throughout most of its history.[168] After Otto I had recreated the Holy Roman Empire in 962 Germans proved very resourceful in creating Europe, they covered Central Europe with beautiful cities full of art, music and crafts. And yet they never achieved substantial political power. While kings of France, England or Poland built powerful states, German emperors first had to fight with Popes, who also aimed at dominating Europe. Then the position of the Emperor was filled by members of the Habsburg family who built a multinational empire governed from Austria and Spain, in which Germans were not the only force. Afterwards different nations (Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Britain, France) began developing overseas colonial empires while German principalities were massacred by the Thirty Years War. Even Russia had a great empire while Germans in spite of their hard work lived in a collection of beautiful but small, unimportant and rather poor states.

The only exception was Prussia (already mentioned above in the chapter about Kant's ethics), whose militaristic spirit was vividly summarized by Norman Davies:

"The Paradeschritt or 'Parade March' of the Prussian Army was one of the most unnatural and expressive movements ever invented for the human body. Its foreign critics called it the goose-step. The lines of jack booted soldiers were trained to point their toes on every upward beat, raising their legs to a high horizontal position. In order to keep their balanced they had to lean forward, swinging their arms like cantilevers, and holding Their chins in a characteristic jutting posture. Since every step required enormous effort, the musical tempo had to be moderate to slow; and the march was performed with a grim, deliberate air of latent menace. Fierce facial expressions were an essential adjunct to the soldiers' exertions.

The body language of the goose-step transmitted a clear set of messages. To Prussia's generals, it said that the discipline and athleticism of their men would

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[168] A good introduction to the history of Germany is an almost literary narration, which reads like a novel *Deutsche Geschichte des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (1058) by Golo Mann, a son of the famous writer Thomas Mann (*The History of Germany Since 1789*. Chatto & Windus 1968).

withstand all orders, no matter how painful or ludicrous To Prussia's civilians, it said that all insubordination would be ruthlessly crushed. To Prussia's enemies, it said that the Prussian Army was not made up just of lads in uniform, but of regimented supermen. To the world at large, it announced that Prussia was not just strong, but arrogant. Here, quite literally, was the embodiment of Prussian militarism."[169]

Although by many Germans regarded as a little backward provincial state it was Prussia that finally united and dominated Germany and filled it with its militaristic spirit. In 1848 Prussia (or precisely its king) refused to do so when the initiative came from a newly (and shortly) established liberal parliament but agreed in 1871 when the unification was staged by extremely skilful Bismarck, a politician who, like Frederic the Great, disliked the masses or even the concept of a nation and opted for a disciplined and efficient state run by a small elite in which the chancellor (i.e. the prime minister) was responsible only before the king (or precisely Kaiser). It should shed light on the alleged German nationalism. German romantics and some philosophers at the beginning of the 19th century (e.g. Fichte) were nationalists, i.e. they believed in the mysterious spirit of a nation represented best by simple folk. There was also a surge of nationalistic feelings as a result of the invasion by Napoleon. Later however nationalism could not play any important role since most Germans, living in many small states under many kings or princes, did not have even a sense of belonging to one nation (as the peoples of France or England or in Poland where patriotism was the default attitude of all educated strata after the loss of independence).

The Holy Roman Empire, the Habsburg Empire and the German Empire (1871-1918) were all pluralistic countries, constellations of many regions and peoples protected by one government but not crystallised around one centre of political power (which was similar to Italy).[170] It could make a perfect model for the unified Europe. Unfortunately the competition between centralised nation-states (Spain, Poland till the 17th c., Russia, England, and first of all France) promoted another model, which first spoiled Germany, and then destroyed the whole Europe. The German Empire after 1971 was established on a top-down initiative of Bismarck and his Prussian milieu, it lacked

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[169] Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, p. 612. See also pp. 647-649.

[170] Mary Fulbrook, A Concise History of Germany. Cambridge University Press 1991, Chapter 8, Pasterns and problems of German history, pp. 245-250.

naturally born patriotism, which was desperately substituted by ostentatious and often imposed chauvinism.

When the First World War broke out everything turned against Germany. For almost the next 20 years it fought against adversities. Suddenly Hitler came with a message "Follow me and I'll make you powerful again." When he was elected he began fulfilling his promises.

Although Germany was weak at that time the following years showed that it had both potential and opportunity to become a true superpower. America was not interested in world politics, the Great Depression in spite of Roosevelt's New Deal had not been overcome until the end of World War Two, people of the Soviet Union were harassed by Stalin's cruelty, Central Europe was impoverished, Jews regarded Germans as their greatest friends. Germany had a chance of expanding its influence eastwards. The only thing it needed was a good leader. Hitler looked promising at first but later proved a horrible mistake. His cruelty and fanaticism mobilised the whole world against Germany.

After he had been elected, Hitler began demanding moral concessions. His opponent were brutally beaten, Jewish shops were demolished, synagogues destroyed, civilians massacred in occupied territories, Jews sent to concentration camps and gas chambers. Hitler demanded those concessions step by step, and after each concession rewarded German society with new successes. It was like the Prisoner's dilemma - every choice seemed rational, although the outcome was tragic. Hitler divided his demands into small steps and at every step the choice was: either to accept the next moral concession - or to rebel against Hitler and everything that had been done before, and perhaps have to return to the year 1933 with all its misfortunes. Nobody knew where those concessions would lead but with each of them it was more difficult to divert. Hitler was like the magician in Thomas Mann's prophetic short story *Mario and the Magician* from 1929.

Two classic and widely reported psychological experiments shed light on the Nazis manipulation. In the experiment of authority (in 1961-1962) Stanley Milgram demonstrated that an efficient command issued by a person in authority can easily make an ordinary person kill. In 1971 Philip Zimbardo of the Stanford University conducted

the prison experiment, in which he placed mentally healthy volunteers in the basement of the university and divided them into prisoners and caretakers. Although the experiment was voluntary and anyone could leave, no one did. The toxic emotions and behaviour accumulated so fast that after a week the experiment had to be terminated for fear of the participants' psyche. Hitler moved the Germans back to early Middle Ages using similar mechanism, however, in the world much densely populated and equipped with modern technology. Those two factors, often neglected, seem crucial to me. Europe wad been devastated many times before the 20th century (e.g. during the Thirty Years War or the Napoleonic Wars), humans have always been cruel and aggressive but since they were few and had primitive weapons they could not do much harm to the world they lived in (although in 1994 in Rwanda 500 thousand to 1 million people were killed with most primitive weapons).

Hitler was obsessed with anti-Semitism, regarded Jews as a completely different breed which should be completely erased. This was utterly against German interests. Paul Johnson[171] made a detailed study of European anti-Semitism at that time showing that except a few countries (mainly Italy, Britain, Denmark) anti-Semitism was widespread in both Europe and America. In Germany it was not more intense than elsewhere especially that with Jews constituting less than 1 percent of the population many Germans outside big cities did not know any Jew personally. From any rational point of view German anti-Semitism was self-defeating since Jews were an important part of society and responsible leaders were aware of it. Bismark attended the opening of the New Synagogue on Oranienburger Straße in Berlin in 1866. (Jews who moved to the U.S. largely contributed to the power of this country, its nuclear and space programs, and enriched its culture).

However, one more thing contributed to the European anti-Semitism. It was raised in a dramatic way by Diarmaid MacCulloch in his film *A History of Christianity* (2009) based on his seminal book.[172] The Catholic Church for almost two millennia was presenting Jews as murderers of Christ and inferior people. It shaped mental attitude towards Jews in the whole Europe.

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[171] Paul Johnson, *A History of the Jews,* Weidenfeld & Nicolson 1987.

[172] Diarmaid MacCulloch, *A History of Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years*. London, Allen Lane 2009.

Fascination with Germanic (Viking) mythology played an important role in Nazism and coincided with the Anglo-Saxon ideas of eugenics. A pre-Nazi organisation Thule formed in 1911 already combined occultism and racism (and used a symbol of swastika). Later Himmler was particularly involved in occultism. He organized an expedition in search of the Holy Grail and rebuilt a castle (Wawelsburg) to serve as the seat of a new order of knights. The whole SS was built around old rituals of military orders. As a result while Celtic roots (e.g. connected with Stonehenge) can be admired in Britain, nowadays no one dares to celebrate Germanic mystical prehistory in Germany. Great myths have been tainted (the swastika was a Hindu symbol of prosperity). Perhaps they should be reclaimed by public awareness - Hitler's spirit from beyond the grave should not exercise authority over the cultural heritage of humankind.

Germanic mythology was extremely pessimistic, ended with Ragnarök, the total destruction of the world and the gods, after which a new world with new gods would arise. So ended Wagner's mythological cycle *The Ring of the Nibelung*. Hitler admired Wagner's operas in Vienna and finally recreated the same ending on the stage of the whole Europe - destruction of the world, of his comrades, a genuine twilight of the gods. And paradoxically the mythology won. World War Two ended the history of constant European wars and opened the possibility for new Europe - peaceful and united.

This was the background of the existentialism of Heidegger and Sartre - the world on the verge of destruction, in which all security was lost.

Further reading

Norman Davies, *Europe. A History*, Pimlico 1997, Chapter X Dynamo. Powerhouse of the World (Bismarck p. 841, European Imperialism p. 848); Chapter XI Tenebrae. Europe in Eclipse (The First World War p. 901, the Russian Revolution p. 914, The Peace Conference, President Wilson and the Treatise of Versailles p. 926, the 'Russian Civil War' p. 928, the collapse of the Hapsburg Empire p. 932, the Polish-Soviet War p. 934, The Inter-War Period p. 938, Fascist and Bolshevik totalitarianism p. 944, cultural life p. 951, Stalinism p. 959, Nazism p. 966, the rest of Europe p. 976, Franco in Spain p. 979, the war approaching p. 986, The Second World War p. 998, the Nazi-Soviet Partnership p. 1000, the Nazi Supremacy p. 1013, Holocaust p. 1016).

Existentialism - Heidegger

The views of Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), who used the phenomenological inspiration of Edmund Husserl, could hardly be summarized. They reflect his existential experience in a kind of poetic language, breaking words into components and extracting their hidden meaning, e.g. *Ver-stehen* (under-standing) is connected to taking a stand. This philosophy should be experienced rather than analysed. And then it can change the way of understanding the world (at least this is what his admirers claim). His fundamental work *Sein und Zeit* (*Being and Time*, 1927) moves the focus from what there is (being) to the very process of being in time (or becoming), mostly of man (defined as *Dasein*), who differs considerably from other beings. Human life requires constant conscious creation and faces Nothing (in a non-poetical translation it may perhaps refer to what does not exist yet but is possible). It evokes uncertainty, risk, peril. Those who avoid facing Nothing and creating their own lives become inauthentic, petrified, impersonal. It means forgetting about the process of being and focusing on its products, on what there is. Authenticity (or *Eigentlichkeit*) is often lost under the pressure of social routine, what is customarily done (the English lacks an equivalent for an impersonal German grammatical construction "man macht", French "on fait" or Polish "robi się").

The essence of being is being-in-the-world, making it a home, not just living in it physically, but dwelling in it.

Criticism and comments

Perhaps the historical context again explains a lot about Heidegger's style in philosophy. At the same time Tolkien was studying old Nordic languages to understand and then reproduce the old myths (even creating sacrificial languages in *The Hobbit* or *The Lord of the Rings*), Jung was creating a mythology of the unconscious of humankind. Heidegger offered philosophy in this vein. The question is whether by interpreting our world in this language Heidegger had something important to say, or whether it was only a linguistic trick. It is not infrequent to use unclear metaphorical language and claim that deep truths are thus conveyed, truths which, however, cannot be translated into a clear scientific language, so only those who use those metaphors can apprehend them.

It is not obvious how to develop a philosophy of this kind. It looks like poetry saturated with philosophical terms. One can agree or disagree with its visions, analyse them or respond with another vision - but what else? There is hardly any place for discussion based on arguments. After translating it into a simpler language much of its charm disappears. We are in the process of becoming, we do not know who we will become in future, but we must carry out our projects to be ourselves. In-depth experience of this fact may be very moving. In the strict middle-class society with many rules cramping like a straitjacket, the discovery of this fundamental freedom and uncertainty but also of a vocation coming from the depths of human existence could make one feel dizzy and panicked.

However, some interpretations in simple language can be suggested. Western culture concentrates on objects and not on the process of authentic being. This false attitude was in Heidegger also connected with technological development. (Germany was undergoing a fast industrialisation and many traditional intellectuals, among them Edmund Husserl, who inspired Heidegger, rebelled against this.) He accused Westerners that instead of experiencing being-in-the-world, they were preoccupied with objects they produced, bought and used. Heidegger believed that being in the world is a sacred process buried under the concern for objects. Disclosing this process was a monumental spiritual mission to be carried by the German people. That those interesting ideals were hijacked by the Nazis was an utter tragedy of Germany and Europe.

Eigentlichkeit (authenticity) means in German also being on one's own, being independent. One can wonder how Heidegger, who on the one hand favoured peasant-style collectivism (which drew him close to Nazism), could favour also *Eigentlichkeit*, which seems to be the opposite of collectivism. It is individualism that seems to encourage being authentic, while in a rural communities one behave as it is traditionally expected.

On the other hand, it is worth remembering that what existentialists proscribed as a desired strategy was common in primitive societies where young men underwent initiation rituals. They were taken to a forest, confronted with suffering and the unknown, which according to Mircea Eliade[173] revealed to them the sacred side of the world. Perhaps existentialisms had similar aim in view but under different

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[173] Mircea Eliade, *Rites and Symbols of Initiation*, New York, NY Harper and Row, 1958.

circumstances. Since habits imposed by industrial and rationalised societies were entirely profane, which separated individuals from the spiritual and the sacred, getting rid of them could restore the sacred dimension of life, this time found inside oneself.

Sartre

Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) expressed similar concerns being involved (but not too deeply) in the anti-fascist resistance movement in France, and then sympathizing with communism (he is now accused, as many other Western left wing intellectuals, that because of his contempt for bourgeois society he idealized the Soviet Union and was blind to its crimes). For him philosophy was also inseparable from experiencing the real world, but he chose rather to observe people in Parisian cafés. The most famous works by Sartre are *Being and Nothingness* (*L'être et le néant*, 1943) and an essay *Existentialism is a Humanism*. Summarizing them, although it is possible, deprives them of grace.

Humans are made up of being and nothingness. We possess some qualities but our consciousness goes into the future, a world of uncertainty. Moreover, our consciousness continually creates the world around us, prepares it for our use, stains it with different meanings. Man is a being-for-itself, co-created by his own awareness and the awareness of others. Creatures other than humans are beings-in-themselves, they just are. When in a moment of existential insight a person's experiences the real being of things (without interpretations assigned by consciousness) it is an overwhelming experience of complete alienation (as Roquentin's confrontation with the chestnut tree in Sartre *Nausea*). The world untouched by consciousness is inhuman. Being human, however, is based on the continuous choice of themselves. In the case of humans "existence precedes essence", humans are not born with a particular nature, the essence of which then determines their behaviour. We first are, and only then choose, create ourselves. There is also no God who imposes values and determines what action is appropriate. Man is condemned to freedom, the burden of which brings fear and tends to run in inauthenticity, the "false belief" (*mauvaise foi* in French), that is an illusion that there is no freedom and choice, no alternative, a desire to submit to stereotypical roles (Sartre illustrated this describing the unnatural behaviour of the waiter who plays the role of a waiter in front of customers). However, we always have a choice, even if an unpleasant

one. One can also choose one's emotional attitude to events if the events are unavoidable. A dignified life must be authentic even if it means tragic.

Criticism and comments

Sartre became extremely popular in the post-war France, mainly as a prolific writer, a critic of the bourgeois morality and a supporter of permissivism, unlimited freedom of the individual, the moral revolution of 1968 as well as Marxism and Maoism, popular among ignorant youngsters of Western Europe. Sartre's personal life matched his views - he hated his bourgeois father, whom he considered a snob and show-off, and used to renew his relationship with the writer Simone de Beauvoir every two years in order not to limit their freedom (they never married but also never parted although they had other affairs).

His philosophy has been often criticized as convoluted theorizing about some basic theses which have never been clarified. Yet Sartre's work is important because these basic thesis expressed significant changes in the self-consciousness of humanity, and still could be developed in a more disciplined manner.

Sartre permeated everyday experience with philosophical concepts. He looked at a waiter and saw ontological inauthenticity. But was he right? Was the waiter inauthentic? Maybe he was just a university student who played the conventional role to get bigger tips but otherwise had an authentic life? How can one be sure that humans create their lives freely if genetic determination is so important in every sphere of it?

Perhaps what is important is again the way of understanding human existence as a whole. We create ourselves, although we experience pressure from others (the hell is others, said Sartre), only we are responsible for our choices and eventually we judge the result. We are like gods. For Sartre it was a source of satisfaction. Only by accepting this situation and living authentically we are truly human. From the perspective of human history this thesis is revolutionary - we should not follow any natural or divine pattern. Humans must rely on themselves, set their own goals and revise them with time. We are forced to pursue this way by our nature, versatile, creative and able to learn from mistakes. The fear after discovering this fact is understandable but must not be discouraging. (Perhaps after describing the inauthenticity in taking decisions also the

inauthenticity in admitting responsibility for what has been chosen should be emphasized. Many people try not to look back at their lives.)

With time Sartre, whose main concern was previously individual freedom, began stressing the responsibility of every individual for humanity. Every individual choice, while constituting the identity of the chooser, also influences the future of humankind.

Existentialism rests on the concept of authenticity.[174] Kierkegaard sought authenticity in the leap of faith that suspends the mundane everyday conventions and enables achieving a deeper, more real *I* (as Abraham did). Nietzsche rejected the conventional opposition of good and evil. Heidegger and Sartre also rebelled against socially imposed and impersonal routine. Authenticity is akin to personal autonomy, being one's own against being reduced to socially defined roles. Today especially in pop-culture authenticity is often misunderstood as following spontaneous desires instead of fulfilling obligations. When an employee with a hangover prefers to sleep than go to work he is not authentic but weak. He yields to temporary desires and sacrifices earlier commitments. Spontaneous emotions are not more authentic than consistently cultivated habits, although emotions are more basic, primary. (Fascination with what is more primitive, original, basic, closer to our roots leads astray, as the Nazis found.) The tradition of rebellion against the civilised habits runs in the history. Rousseau, Nietzsche and the hippies yearned the primordial, while supporters of civilizations believed that primordial was barbarity and only limiting it would make a noble man. Psychoanalysts considered the behavioural regression to childhood under stress to be the symptom of the weak ego. Also Buddhists who believe in simplicity and rejection of artificial ego, nevertheless advise painstaking practise which boils down to habit formation and curbing of spontaneous desires. We do not have to be faithful to what was earlier in our development, on the contrary. Regardless of the details of their theories, philosophers and sages generally believed that valuable is what is acquired with great effort. Also existentialism does not postulate to choose primary emotions and behaviour. Authenticity is a way of constructing oneself which is different from both everyday routine and childish spontaneous reaction, and does not exclude pro-social commitments.

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[174] Somogy Varga, Charles Guignon , 'Authenticity', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2014 Edition) Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/authenticity/#Aca>.

Questions: What was the structure of a human being for Heidegger and Sartre? What was Nothingness? Was freedom cheerful? How did this philosophy relate to political situation of mid-20th c.? What is authenticity?

Further reading

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The world after the wars and the development of the U.S.

Philosophy after World War Two has become very diverse, often complicated and somehow detached from real life. In the after-war period the American philosophy intensified its development.

Europe

In the 20th century Britain and Germany turned against each other. Britain was ruled by the German dynasty from 1714 to 1901, when it built its empire. Queen Victoria was more German than British, especially that she was under influence of his German husband. The combination of British individualism and German discipline proved extremely successful. When Victoria died, Germany was ruled by her grandson, the Emperor Wilhelm, who because of his unhappy childhood in Britain mistrusted this country. The First World War destroyed the alliance between the two countries, but even Hitler still respected Britain. The Blitz of 1940 was meant not to invade Britain but to force it to withdraw from the war. In 1914 Europe dominated the rest of the world and was a continent full of creative life. Thirty years later Europe was ruined and half of the continent was at the mercy of Stalin. The old Europe committed suicide.

World War One was a failure of the old aristocratic order in Central Europe, while World War Two a failure of the weak democracies. Behind both was the development of capitalism.

In 1945 Europe exhausted the possibilities of developing as a collection of independent states. On the other hand, the U.S., which until World War Two had very limited international ambitions and was dragged into it by Japan and Germany, emerged from it as the true world leader.

After World War Two Europe and America still followed different roads. In Europe the supporters of militarism and authoritarianism, who often advocated fascism, were marginalised. Politicians who built the post-war welfare states (e.g. in Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Austria and Scandinavia) often had left-wing, social democratic or openly Marxist views, hostile to economic liberalism, which was held responsible for the Great Depression, Nazism and the Second World War. Another important factor which fostered the welfare state was the solidarity sparked by the joint fight against the enemy. (Although the idea of a welfare state, which somehow cares for everyone is in fact present in the history of Catholicism and later was advocated by the British Conservative party since the mid-19th century). When the two superpowers, the Soviet Union and the United States, established a new world balance of power, Europe gave up its previous international and military aspirations and concentrated on its welfarism - harmonious, free from poverty with limited competition and high social spendings.

Britain was so weak and indebted to the United States that, under pressure of this new power, agreed to the disintegration of its empire. Stalin, whose popularity and power rose after the victory over Hitler, built he Soviet empire. The role of "the world policeman" was taken over by the U.S.

In the European system the state played a key role. Its fundamental ideas were the principles of equality of opportunity, equitable distribution of wealth, and public responsibility for the poorest, which involved high taxation. The very idea was already introduced in Bismarck's Germany after 1870 for conservative reasons (to fight socialists). In Germany and Scandinavian countries social market economy based its appeal on a strong sense of community existing there from prehistoric times (those countries were never conquered by Rome and broke up early with Catholicism, so they did not appreciate centralised governments). In other countries (e.g. Austria or France) the position of a central government was strong. The success of the welfare state system resulted from the "economic wonder" of the 1950s and 1960s when the ruined and impoverished Europe suddenly recovered. It seemed that without much effort Europe could build a paradise on earth, where people could live in freedom while peace and welfare could be enjoyed by all.

One of the important aims of this system was to reduce both hostile nationalistic feelings and communist revolutionary tendencies by granting to the citizens of Europe individual freedom and welfare, making their lives so pleasant that they would not like to wage wars or make revolutions. Europeans were to become peaceful cosmopolitan individualist, who do not compete, do not unite around common causes, ideas or cultural symbols and depend on the all-powerful states which care for them.

It was undeniably a great achievement - after centuries of wars and social tension Europe could heal its wounds. (Even often criticised European bureaucracy had an important stabilizing function in this enterprise, as in ancient China.) It was achieved so easily that it deceived Europeans and suppressed their vigilance. This internal success, diminishing tensions within Europe, was accompanied by the weakening of the international power of Europe. In fact Europe was turned into a happy playground for children who lost any interest in what was going outside it.

Unfortunately European philosophy somehow reflected this irresponsibly. Philosopher began to juggle with concepts, pursue sophistication for its own sake.

Derrida and his followers' deconstructionists are a clear example. The result is admirable as far as originality is important but one can hardly expect from it disciplined and up to date answers to basic questions of humanity.

The U.S.

The context of the American philosophy was the specific culture of this country. Why did the Americans avoid the pitfalls of European capitalism? Several explanations seem plausible. The British initially sought to emulate the Spanish and Portuguese in America, i.e. is to rob the Indians of gold, enslave them and live from their work. Unfortunately, Native Americans did not have much gold and turned out to be very combative. So the British colonists created their own institutional model based on self-management and strict observance of the rules which allowed them to survive in hostile conditions, and formed foundations of the American society.[175] The British colonization began in the South (Jamestown, Virginia 1607) and in the North (New England 1620). The northern branch was radically Puritan, while the southern branch, after exterminating Indians imported African slaves and followed aristocratic social patterns. Especially the northern way of life resulted in a specifically American ideal of self-reliance.

The U.S. Constitution was composed by eminent minds, often linked with Freemasonry, and ensured the further crystallization of society around efficient rules and institutions. At that time America had the enlightened elite often with aristocratic roots.

European romanticism inspired a cultural movement of American transcendentalists (ca. 1830-1860). They condemned capitalism and money-making, praised communitarian life and intellectual pursuit. Ralph Waldo Emerson was the chief figure, while inveterate outsider Henry David Thoreau endowed the world with *Walden*, a manifest of a hermit living away from civilization, but close to nature, as well as the idea of civil disobedience.

When the threat of disintegration appeared (the secession of the southern states 1861-1865), the North mobilized all its forces, crashed the South and imposed its puritan morality upon it.

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[175] James A. Robinson and Daron Acemoglu, *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty.* Profile Books 2012.

In the second half of the 19th century America concentrated on economic growth. One of the foundations of American efficiency was the mechanisms of economic motivation, not administrative coercion as in the case of serfs. Although in the 17th and 18th century half of the immigrants were poor servants, in the century before the First World Was many more poor immigrants came to the U.S. changing its profile. Those people came mainly to earn money, which turned America form a Freemasonry project to a machine for making money.

The tensions of capitalism have been discharged in the United States through the development of the internal market and consumerism. While European workers were initially exploited to reduce the cost of production, American workers earned well and spent it on consumption, thus fuelling the economy. The first supermarkets were opened in 1861 by deeply religious John Wanamaker. In a way consumerism became the American religion, a new version of the original Puritanism, perhaps also requiring devotion and sacrifices (citizens consume not for pleasure but to keep the economy going).

The great success of America was the system of social promotion, which made maximal use of human resources. Careers from rags to riches were not just an ideological slogan as was demonstrated by George Vaillant, who for 40 years supervised several cross-sectional studies,[176] for which a large number of students at Harvard, highly intelligent women and children from poor urban neighbourhoods were selected before the Second World War so that their whole further lives be analysed in order to determine the cause of success in life.

Vaillant discovered that the students who got the best grades (A), were in majority among the happiest and most successful people in their old age (except those who were affected by psychological depression or alcoholism). However, the majority of students who got Cs did not succeed. Apparently, the ability to adapt to the demands of life tended to manifest itself throughout their lives. It seems that in the 20th c. in America conditions were created that anyone who was not charged with a tendency to depression and alcoholism, nor had extremely low IQ could reach at least material success.[177] Unfortunately this mechanism stop functioning as a result of Ronald Regan's

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[176] George E. Vaillant, *Adaptation to Life*, Little Brown, Boston, 1977. G.E. Vaillant, *Aging Well,* Boston: Little Brown, 2002.
[177] George E. Vaillant, *Aging Well,* Boston: Little Brown, 2002, s. 298.

deregulation and the following phase of globalization. The caste of the super-rich became closed.[178]

American culture owes much to Jews. The first great wave of emigration occurred in the 1880s when Russia began persecution and pogroms of Jews. The emigration was so large that in the 1920s the American out of fear of ethnic imbalance between different nationalities introduced severe restrictions on immigration, which were not lifted even during World War Two in the face of the Holocaust in Europe. It was these early immigrants who built the first cinemas (nickelodeons) and created most of Hollywood.

Until the 1950s in Western Europe and the U.S. traditional morality prevailed but in the 1960s it was overthrown. The new era was marked by the sexual revolution, the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, rock music and the Woodstock festival (since 1969), Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1962), leftist students demonstrations in Europe (e.g. in 1968 in Paris), strong opposition to the war in Vietnam. Hippies, "flower children", proclaimed the ideal of universal love and aversion to any restrictions.

In the 1960s during the presidency of J.F. Kennedy and L.B. Johnson America introduced some measures characteristic of European welfare states but later withdrew them and turned right in the neoliberal direction, on a large scale in the 1980s together with Great Britain. Those two countries also initiated a new wave of globalization (to be discussed later).

American culture is still developing. Initially America defined itself in opposition to Europe, its aristocratic past, centralised governments and elitist high culture. In spite of its wealth America never produced its own Michaelangelos or Beethovens, never built beautiful cities like those in Europe, baroque palaces or castles (buildings like Marble House in Newport were rare and rather unpopular exceptions). However, with time, especially after World War Two the process of assimilating European culture accelerated. Now it seems America has specialists in every aspect of culture created in the history. It is also possible that America, who endowed the world with the Internet and developed the art of cinematography, will come up with still new kinds of art (computer games could develop into sophisticated high art, especially when

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[178]   Joseph Stiglitz, *The Price of Inequality: How Today's Divided Society Endangers Our Future*. W.W. Norton & Company 2012.

technological progress enables artistically gifted individuals to create them on their own - instead of writing traditional books). American films have begun to draw from different old mythologies in the same way as Vivaldi's opera once did. What will it look like in another 100 years?

American philosophers have undertaken an enormous task of reviewing the whole history of philosophy, so that it could be developed in a rational and orderly way (*The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*). American philosophy has a characteristic flavour of practical usefulness - philosophy is not abstract theorizing, it should bring important massage to people, to humankind, engage in a dialogue with them. (It accompanies the capability of American society to learn new skills, to experiment with them.) Since ancient Athens whenever a country was flourishing it produced its own specific philosophy. It is a strong sign of decline when a country does not produce a vibrant philosophy. America holding a position of the world leader does not commit this mistake.

America as the world leader has a mission, a global task of shaping the world and inspiring its progress. According to Niall Ferguson the world needs a liberal empire and the U.S. can best play this role.[179] Although it can be contrasted with often extremely critical views expressed by the M.I.T. professor Noam Chomsky.[180]

Further reading

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American pragmatism

A genuinely American trend is pragmatism. William James (1842-1910) and John Dewey (1959-1952), developing the previous idea of Charles Sander Peirce's pragmatism, tried to eliminate the problems associated with the classical definition of truth. This philosophy was considered typically American. Instead of looking for propositions (statements) that are true in the Aristotelian sense, adequate to reality, corresponding to the actual facts (which is prone to accusations of the skeptics), it is

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[179] Janet Tassel, 'The Global Empire of Niall Ferguson', The Harvard Magazine, May-June 2007, http://harvardmagazine.com/2007/05/the-global-empire-of-nia.html [retrieved 10.3.2014]
Niall Ferguson, *Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire.* Gardners Books 2004.

[180] Noam Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance*. Metropolitan Books 2003.

better to focus on whether adopting a given claim is good for us. Theories are primarily tools for action (comparable to the organs of animals) and are created in order to bring the desired, beneficial effect. The meaning of a statement is the impact which accepting this sentence has brought on our action. The pragmatic approach had the advantage that it also covered the views that are outside the realm of science e.g. religious ones (and they are pragmatically "true"" when they bring benefits).

Criticism and Comments

The initial intuition of pragmatism - knowledge serves the purpose of man, not describes an independent reality - sounds promising, but its implementation raises many doubts.

1. Can the meaning of a sentence be defined as its influence on somebody's action? After accepting the same sentence (e.g. "It's raining") one will take an umbrella, another abandon going out, and yet another go out to wash their hair in rainwater. The meaning determined on this basis would be very vague (if at all possible).

Traditionally, it is assumed that sentences are made of words, and they carry meaning. What is the meaning of "rain" or "cow"? It may be the characteristics of every cow or every instance of rain; a prototypical notion that comes to the mind of the speaker who hears the word; a set of conditions that must be fulfilled before a sentence with the word (e.g. "It's raining" or "It's a cow") may be accepted as true; a set of relations with other words and sentences (which make it possible to accept: "If it rains, it is wet", "Cows give milk"). However, the effect of accepting a sentence seems very loosely related to the meaning.

2. Is it possible to determine whether the acceptance of a sentence is favourable or unfavourable? After accepting the sentence "It's raining" one may take an umbrella and not catch a cold, while another may go wash their hair in rainwater and catch a cold. Worse still, the effect is likely to change over time (someone with a cold stays at home and avoids an accident, because the train, which they usually use, is derailed). The atomic energy may be beneficial or may destroy the world but it does not change the truthfulness of sentences used in building the reactors. Clearly, the results of accepting a sentence may be very different in different circumstances.

The person who decides to go out to wash their hair may catch a cold as a result, and it may be concluded that it would have been better than staying at home. But this is not the same as saying that the sentence "It's raining" is not worth accepting, which is the pragmatic equivalent of its being false. Precisely because the sentence was true, the person caught a cold. There is no straightforward connection between (1) assessing the benefits of an action undertaken after accepting a sentence and (2) assessing on this basis whether the accepted sentence was true.

Is it similar to the usefulness of organs in evolution. Organs are more permanently associated with organisms, and their usefulness is measured by how they improve the chances of survival and successful reproduction. Even in the evolutionary process, the same organs may be beneficial for some time, and when the environment changes they become disadvantageous (many features of dinosaurs had been first preferable, but eventually led to their extinction). Evolution, however, tested the utility of its innovations for millions of years. Knowledge changes rapidly and needs criteria that do not require millions of years in trial.

We base our actions on sentences held true, but this does not mean that by looking at the results we can decide which sentences had been true. We want to know if the theory is true before we decide whether to accept it (and base our action on it) or reject it. The pragmatic theory of truth was also intended to serve the purpose. However, since the usefulness of a sentence, or theory is not its permanent feature, it can only be established afterwards, *post factum* if the theory proved useful, but it is difficult to predict it in advance. The classical definition of truth sought to determine whether a sentence was true, and if so if it would always stay true to everyone (as in "the Earth is a sphere"). Pragmatism, on the other hand, sought to examine the usefulness of accepting a sentence. However, it varies from situation to situation. Even if accepting a sentence in one situation proves beneficial, it does not guarantee that it would be beneficial in another. Thus, the whole theory of pragmatism turns out to be useless.

(Perhaps the study of the usefulness of sentences is hardly possible. To investigate whether it is more useful to accept the phrase "the Earth is a sphere" or "the Earth is flat" one would need two parallel worlds, differing only in that in one the former sentence would be accepted, and in the other the latter. Also, the criteria of usefulness are not obvious. If in one world many people lived and travelled and in the other only

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few, which would be considered more successful? Maybe we should compare the lives of those who accept one claim and those who accept the other. It is hard to resist the impression that a lot depends on whether the Earth is flat or round in the classical sense.)

3. Can a pragmatic claim be stated consistently? Its essence is substituting the classical definition of truth (correspondence to reality) with the pragmatic one (usability). Instead of asking whether the sentence (1) "God exists" is true, it is asked whether accepting this sentence is more beneficial than accepting its opposite (2) "God does not exist". The answer (sentence 3) "Accepting (1) is more beneficial that accepting (2)" not only does not require the pragmatic understanding of the truth, but clearly requires the classical understanding: it is better to believe in (1) than in (2) only if it is really (in the classical sense) more beneficial for the believer.

If we understood sentence (3) not simply as true, but as more useful (as sentence 4: "Accepting (2) is more useful than accepting (1)"), we would relapse into a *regressus ad infinitum*. Instead of saying (3) is true, and (4) is false, one should say (5) "Accepting (3) is more useful than accepting (4)", which also could not be simply true, but would still require a comparison with (6) saying that "Accepting (3) is less useful than accepting (4)". Then you would have to compare (5) and (6), and so forth to infinity. It seems that although pragmatists claim that while they say "sentence *p* is true" they mean "accepting sentence *p* is useful" (or more precisely: "accepting sentence *p* is more useful than accepting ~*p*"), when they actually decide that sentence *p* is useful, they treat this claim as true in the classical sense. This means that it is impossible (or at least difficult) to formulate the pragmatic theory of truth only within the framework of this theory. It seems natural to use the classical definition of truth even in claiming that it is obsolete. It is an obvious contradiction within the theory. In other words: If "*p* is true in the pragmatic sense" means "*p* is useful" and no other sense of being true is allowed, to actually state that "*p* is true in the pragmatic sense" one must first state that ["*p* is useful" is true in the classical sense].

James' defence of faith (*The Will to Believe, and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy,* 1897) is also not convincing. What kind of benefits resulting from faith should be taken into account? Temporal and eternal happiness? The latter is impossible to predict. As for the former, the effectiveness of religion is not obvious. Did the victims

of the Inquisition, religious wars and fanaticism become happier due to religion? Philip II of Spain so strongly believed in the victory of his Armada over Queen Elisabeth that he neglected to prepare well his expedition and lost. The defenders of religion argue that the atheists Hitler and Stalin produced more victims than religious wars, and what caused the wars and fanaticism was the weakness of human nature that religion did not create and only could not improve. Then however, it may be concluded that the real causes of suffering and happiness lie outside religion, while religion itself may be used as a mean for promoting both good and evil and as such is not responsible for neither benefits or losses, it is only an instrument that can be used for different purposes.

I think pragmatism has not reached its goal, and although it rightly pointed out that knowledge was created in order to be useful, it did not indicate a reliable method for selecting theories to be accepted and used.

People have always invented theories, which turned out to be more or less reliable. Many of them failed completely. Many were impossible to test (like theories about God). I think the solution was found in dividing the process of selecting reliable theories into two stages. (1) First, after comparing the methods used in creating the already existing theories, those methods were singled out which led to the theories that proved to be effective. The result was a currently accepted methodology. (2) Then, this methodology was used to select theories to be accepted, trusted, on which future actions would be based. The methodology and theories built upon it could be presented as belonging to the level of the object language (theories referring to the world) and the metalanguage (methodology referring to theories).

The processes of extracting the methodology and developing theories always accompanied each other. The success of science results from the fact that scientists (unlike philosophers) have agreed on a common language and common criteria, which allowed intersubjective discussions and consensus in the choice of theories. Theories must enable predicting future events, not just summarizing past experience. If someone using a currently valid methodology finds a theory reliable, it should be equally reliable to anyone else under similar conditions.

I think Popper's falsificationism leads to a reliable methodology. The formulated hypotheses are subjected to rigorous testing and join the set of intersubjectively accepted proposition if they do not lead to any contradiction. The statement "God

exists" cannot be treated as a hypothesis because it cannot be tested, but it may be the statement "Faith in God is useful to the believer". Hypotheses are evaluated on the basis of their accurateness in predicting the results of experiments, and not on the basis of their general usefulness for their users, because such general usefulness depends on a coincidence of many factors and on adopted values (which determine what is understood as beneficial). Therefore, one does not evaluate hypotheses of nuclear physics based on whether humankind would benefit from them. Physical hypotheses about constructing nuclear reactors may be evaluated by testing whether the reactors work or not, while hypotheses about whether it is good to develop this source of energy must be dealt with separately.

Richard Rorty (1931 - 2007) the author of *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* and *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* is a representative of the American neo-pragmatism (in the tradition of John Dewey, whom he regarded as his master). He is also the American philosopher who is closes to the European continental tradition.

He completely rejected the existence of objective truth and absolute goodness. He rejects the main trends in philosophy of the 17th and 18th centuries as based on meaningless assumptions that there is a world which determines what is true and good. The aim of the theory is not to grasp them. Developing "knowledge" is based on understanding the social justification of belief and not their accuracy of representation. Theories (based on different "vocabularies") are "contingent", are abandoned or adopted over time according to social conventions and usefulness. Marx and Hitler launched vocabularies of Marxism and Nazism. Vocabularies compete, spread or are eliminated. Their recognition is not based on common criteria. The process of changing beliefs is not based on only on arguments but often redescription - describing the world using different vocabularies and metaphors.

According to Rorty, questioning the objectivity of good and truth serves universal solidarity of humankind. The proper state of the mind in a liberal society can be described as "irony" or "ironism", that is a certain distance and openness to vocabularies (as opposed to dogmatism): everyone favours their own vocabulary, but without disregarding others, since none of them reflects the objective truth.

On the whole the pragmatic conceptions of truth holds that we can never recognize that one of our beliefs is true—all we can recognize is that it meets standards of acceptance that are endorsed, for the time being, in our community.[181] In our inquiries we should be free to propose new 'vocabularies'—systems of classification and description. They are not tested by seeing whether they enable us to discover truths or discover the nature of things. They are only evaluated by comparing how they enable us to achieve our goals and formulate better and more satisfying goals.[182] Rorty draws an analogy between producing theories and Darwinian description of the natural world in which organs evolve to serve different purposes, not to represent reality.

Criticism and comments

(1) With Rorty the philosophy has come full circle and returned to the views of the Sophists, who made Socrates formulate his view about the existence of absolute goodness. Rorty is consistent, he does not justify his views, but rhetorically promotes them. However, he seems to be going too far. Rorty's "vocabularies" are narrations though which humans interpret their experience, while the ability to believe in religions or ideologies is crucial to *Homo sapiens.[183]* Perhaps the reasons for the spread of theories or "vocabularies" are partly irrational, but the history of thought is not only the history of rhetoric. Even if absolute goodness and truth do not exist, it does not justify abandoning the search for inter-subjective criteria for evaluating theories and doctrines. From the time of Machiavelli, and even more of Bernays manipulation is known to be sometimes more effective than arguments, but those who propagate their doctrines through manipulation do not give up the search for reliable criteria - this time for assessing methods of manipulation. Rorty uses a false alternative: either there are absolute goodness and truth, or discussion and action are "catch wrestling" in which anything goes and nothing can be justified or predicted. In the history of humankind we

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[181] Richard Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism and Truth*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 199, chapter one.
Richard Rorty, 'Universality and Truth', in R. Brandom (ed.) *Articulating Reasons*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press. 2000: 1–30
Donald Davidson, 'Truth Rehabilitated' in *Truth, Language, and History*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005 3–18, esp. p 7;
For critical discussion: Christopher J. Hookway, 'Fallibilism and the Aim of Inquiry', in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society (Supplementary Volume)*, 2007, 81: 1–22.
[182] Richard Rorty, 'Feminism and Pragmatism', in Goodman, R. (ed.), *Pragmatism*, London: Routledge 1995: 125–48.
[183] Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (2011), Vintage London 2015.

can see the process, perhaps partly based on the method of trial and error, of forming criteria which enable rational, informed choices both about good and truth. The simplest method is to define languages (or vocabularies) into which different competing vocabularies can be translated. For instance to conduct a reliable discussion between proponents and opponents of Marxism, free-market capitalism and so forth we need a language in which arguments of both sides can be expressed. It is often difficult to construct not because of fundamental philosophical problems with truth but because both sides (or at least one of them) prefer to avoid rational discussions and recourse to manipulation or violence. Rational discussion with arguments is possible but only when all parties are interested in it. Otherwise controversies are settled with redescriptions imposed by force (e.g. the newspeak in Orwell's *1984*).

(2) Promoting the liberal attitude of irony Rorty gets into difficulty similar to that presented in the statement "It is true that nothing is true," which undermines itself. His view can be summarized as follows: "Since there is no absolute truth and goodness, nothing can be justified in this respect. Therefore, all views (vocabularies) are equally devoid of justification, and this justifies the requirement of tolerance." Similarly to Hume, who rejected the notion of causality but used it to describe the formation of habits, Rorty rejects the possibility of justification, and claims that this justifies tolerance.

(3) It is not clear whether the attitude of irony (distancing from dogmatically clinging to any theory) is beneficial to society or individuals. People formerly engaged in ideas, assuming their general validity. This often led to wars. The irony may lead to the conclusion that our own views differ from those of others only in that they are our own. This can further lead to either extreme selfishness (I struggle with others to impose my own views and this is my only motive, since my views are not any better or closer to the truth than any other), or to indifference (I do not engage in any views or opinions since all are equally untrue).

Questions: What is the difference between the classical and pragmatic definition of truth? How can it be criticised? Do individualism and the destruction of universal values and opinions bother Rorty?

Further reading

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Ramberg, Bjørn, "Richard Rorty", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2009 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2009/entries/rorty/>.

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The rise of welfare-state capitalism and criticism of capitalism

The aims of welfare-state capitalism were: to provide safety nets protecting individuals from risk, to provide full employment and promote peace. The means were governmental institutions intervening in the market through redistribution and stabilizing financial systems. The idea of social justice was widely used as its justification. Its background was both socialism and Christian teaching (the encyclicals "On the Condition of Workers" by Pope Leo XIII, 1891, and "On the Reconstruction of the Social Order" by Pope Pius XI, 1931).

In Nordic states welfare-states had social-democratic foundations, in Sweden it developed in 1930s and was successful due to the combination of general wealth of the country, hight social solidarity and low ambitions of the rich who did not desire to live in palaces etc. In the rest of Europe it was introduced after the war as a result of cooperation between worker's parties and conservative parties, often Catholic.

Behind it was the theory of "new liberalism" (U.S. "progressivism") represented by John Maynard Keynes (*General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, 1936), who postulated stabilizing economic cycles through fiscal and monetary policy (without nationalizing means of production) and creating high demand by governmental social spendings to ensure high employment. Keynes, a versatile and perfectly well educated British intellectual, did not favour socialism. In fact he believed that in the very long run economic progress would happen on its own. Yet economists should care for making the road to the future success of the economy less painful for average people. "The long run is a misleading guide to current affairs. In the long run we are all dead. Economists set themselves too easy, too useless a task if in tempestuous seasons they can only tell us that when the storm is past the ocean is flat again." (*A Tract on Monetary Reform*, 1923).

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In Britain William Beveridge prepared a report on Social Insurance and Allied Services in 1942, which contained plans for protecting sociality against five "Giant Evils": squalor, ignorance, want, idleness, and disease through National Insurance, the National Health Service and other Welfare State benefits. It was significant during the war when the consolidation of society was crucially important. Beyond doubt it went much further than Keynesian economic solutions to depressions. Hitler, who learnt about this plan, was also greatly impressed by it and in favour of its proposals. Yet there was a great difference. Hitler favoured a collectivist society in every sphere and with one general purpose. The British welfare state was collectivist in the economic sphere but did not suppress individualism in other spheres.

The Frankfurt School, Fromm and Marcuse

The Frankfurt School was a group of German philosophers who pursued the neo-Marxist interdisciplinary social theory, founded in 1923 at the University of Frankfurt am Main. Critical of both capitalism and Soviet communism they pointed to the possibility of an alternative path of social development. Its main thinkers were Max Horkheimer, Theodor W. Adorno, Erich Fromm, and Herbert Marcuse and Jürgen Habermas (in the later period). They had to leave Germany after Hitler's rise to power and moved to New York. Their philosophy is known as the Critical Theory (the name marked the opposition to positivist views prohibiting evaluations in scientific theories).

Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno in their *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944, 1947) condemned Enlightenment rationalism as responsible for Nazism and oppressive capitalism.

According to the School capitalism evolved from small-scale entrepreneurial capitalism to monopoly capitalism and imperialism and now was based on Weberian rationalization, bureaucratic domination and manipulation. It distorts human life as a result of alienation of work and exaggerated consumption. Everywhere the centralised elites manipulate societies and produce mass culture whose aim is to turn citizens into docile labourers. "Culture today is infecting everything with sameness. Film, radio, and magazines form a system. Each branch of culture is unanimous within itself and all are unanimous together. Even the aesthetic manifestations of political opposites proclaim the same inflexible rhythm... All mass culture under monopoly is identical... Films and

radio no longer need to present themselves as art. The truth that they are nothing but business is used as an ideology to legitimize the trash they intentionally produce."[184]

Erich Fromm (1900-1980) was born in Frankfurt am Main in a family with long rabbinical traditions. In his books he discussed a wide range of issues. In *Escape from Freedom (The Fear of Freedom)* (1941) he illustrated this escape with examples from the Reformation (the Protestant roots of capitalism), fascism (Hitler was chosen by the middle class frightened of life), and modern capitalism (in which freedom is apparent and societies carefully manipulated). According to Fromm, the only worthy solution was to overcome the fear and isolation through creative interaction with other people without sacrificing freedom.

The Sane Society (1955) and *The Revolution of Hope* (1968) presented an utopian vision of society in which a democratically elected government controlled the economy to stop the negative effects of competition typical of the free-market capitalism.

In *The Art of Loving* (1956) he argued that love is often only an attempt to escape from loneliness and takes the illusory form of falling in love. However, only a realistic vision of the partner and the relationship combined with the concern for the development of both partners leads to a successful partnership.

As many psychoanalysts Fromm was an atheist, but he valued the humanistic message of Christianity, and later became an avid Buddhist.

In *To Have or to Be* (1976) Fromm described two competing models of life: the creative "be" and the not creative "have". The book is the culmination of his reflection on the shortcomings of capitalism and human ways to self-fulfilment, unfortunately in his usual imprecise, metaphorical way.

One of his main ideas was that every era creates and imposes a social character (here Fromm combined Freud's descriptions of psychological fixated characters - oral, anal, and phallic - with sociological insights).

In modern capitalism Fromm saw several pathological social characters (in the book *A Man for Himself* he called them "orientations"):

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[184] Teodor W. Adorno with Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment,* Trans. Edmund Jephcott. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2002, pp. 94-95.

* The receptive orientation – in persons who are passive, dependent on the flow of goods and ideas from the outside, resigning from an independent self, falling into fanaticism.

* The exploitative orientation – in persons who are dominant and deceitful, pursuing their goals apart from others.

* The hoarding orientation – in stingy and suspicious people, not counting for help and solidarity, relying only on themselves, jealously protective of what they have worked out, unable to share with others.

* The marketing orientation – in people who want to sell themselves best, do everything not gratuitously or for pleasure but in order to increase their "market value" in the eyes of potential customers (e.g., employers, partners). Fromm devoted a lot of attention to this orientation because he considered it to be increasingly common.

The favourable and unfavourable orientations were summarized in his opposition of attitudes "to be" and "to have". The attitude of "to be" is the attitude of productivity (creativity) leading to the optimal use of the potential inherent in human nature. It is *a healthy, internally rich, powerful self (ego)* capable of forming brotherhood with others.

The "to have" attitude replaces the development with consumption and possessiveness, addiction to objects and aims created by others. The "to have" attitude combines the negative features associated with the Marx's alienation, Freud's anal character and the soul trapped in a commitment to the earthly matter in the views of Eastern and Western mystics. Fromm shared Weber's concerns about rationalization and sharpened his criticism hidden between the lines.

The weakness of the authentic self (or ego) characteristic of the "to have" attitude has several easily observable manifestations (Fromm used the standard repertoire of psychoanalytic diagnosis). Here are some of them (with more current exemplifications):

* Unbearable tension occurring in moments of silence and solitude. This leads to hectic bustle and superficial social contacts to pass the time, the pursuit of further successes and pleasures, breaking business records, producing more and more objects with no-one needing or wanting to buy them.

* Compulsion of surrounding oneself with objects, consumerism. To silence the grief or fill the emptiness, one goes shopping for goods that do not meet any significant needs, encouraged by a gigantic advertising machine.

The "to have" attitude refers not only to material goods. One can accumulate knowledge (stored in published books) to feel wiser. One can "have" their God, without whom one would feel worthless and one's life would lose meaning.

* Narcissism, the lack of genuine self-esteem, is constantly compensated by the struggle for appearances. A narcissistic person always has to "confirm" their value and respond to any criticism with anger or collapse. To feel better, they collect wealth, position and honours, buy expensive cars, look for admirers, seek to dominate subordinates; create mutual admiration groups that loudly emphasize their own superiority and oppress some "inferior" minority - as fascists did the Jews. Also, hostility to losers and contempt for the poor have narcissistic roots.

* Escape in unreality, in fantasy, currently fostered by the internet and the media creating fictional worlds of advertising and TV series. Internet conversations and acquaintances often end up in taking to one's own projections. This creates a vicious circle: people with weak selves, unable to cope with real conflicts, avoid real contacts that provide feedback, and thus perpetuate their fuzzy, immature selves.

* Inability of emotional involvement. It manifests itself as either a complete lack of emotion, purely intellectual approach to the world, or as emotional outbursts which get out of control.

* The loss of the ability to love and care for others, lack of empathy, exterior relations, the instrumental approach to people, oneself and nature.

* Hostility towards life, as reflected in the increasing aggression. According to Fromm destructiveness was the result of the blockage of creative energy and the inability to join the mainstream of life.

Already in *Escape from Freedom* he distinguished three kinds of authority (or three methods of governance) public, by conscience and anonymous. (1) The *external authority* imposes its decisions on its subjects by overt coercion and therefore is easy to diagnose and oppose. Such authority shall bear responsibility for its decisions. (2) The *internal authority* is exercised by conscience based on the programming in early childhood, which is usually not remembered. It is heard as an inner voice and more difficult to oppose. (3) The *anonymous authority* is exercised anonymously by means of manipulations based on the knowledge of human weaknesses (e.g. advertising, promotions, tempting with loans, fashion, modelling).

The theory of manipulation as a means to govern society, known as Public Relations, was created in the U.S. by Edward Louis Bernays (1891-1995), closely connected to Freud. He assumed that in a society as large as the U.S. chaos would prevail without manipulation, therefore the latter is necessary to defend democracy. His book *Propaganda* was widely acclaimed and one of its attentive readers was Joseph Goebbels. Fromm, blindly opting for individual freedom and against any elite, did not notice that manipulation in modern society is to some extent a necessity. In the era of democracy politicians, even if they are educated and honest, have to resort to manipulation, otherwise the elections would be won by populists who unscrupulously manipulate crowds.

Similar criticism was presented in *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (1964) by another Frankfurt School philosopher **Herbert Marcuse**, which was part of the New Left movement developing in the Western countries in 1960s and 1970s. It accompanied the sexual revolution of 1960s, witch its students revolts, drugs, rock-and-roll and general permissiveness. The general assessment of this period must be negative - youngster brought up in welfare rebelled against their partners and rejected all discipline. It was not surprising that it collapsed fairly soon. Yet some critical ideas of Marcuse proved more lasting.

Marcuse argues that "advanced industrial society" created false needs, which integrated individuals into the existing system of production and consumption via mass media, advertising, industrial management. The capitalist brainwashing enslaves societies and prevents them from reaching a higher level of cultural development and creativity. Freedom (for average citizens) means only freedom to buy products the desire for which was created by advertisements. Social energy is wasted on producing and consuming good that no-one really needs. Humans can achieve far greater fulfilment and there are far more important aims than the strive of ever greater productivity. Even sexual desire are commercialised and has a market value.

The capitalist social repression converges with that in the Soviet Union. This results in a "one-dimensional" universe of thought and behaviour, in which ability for criticism and oppositional behaviour disappear. Since the revolutionary potential of the working class is declining, it is the students, minorities, outsiders, and radical intelligentsia who should take upon them the task of transforming society.

A dominations of profit oriented mentality of great corporations has still one more dangerous result: overpopulation. While in the pre-capitalist era governments were eager to have more soldiers, capitalism need more customers.

Still another drawback of capitalism was the commercialisation of sexual permissiveness and pornography, which were first mad popular during the sexual revolution of the 1960s. Human culture, as stressed by Freud, evolved as a result of sublimation to substitute suppressed basic drives of sexual desires and aggression. When sexual pleasure and aggression are easily available (in cinema or in real life), sophisticated symbolic culture, one of the most precious human achievement, cease to develop and is replaced by popular mass culture which offers shallow and easy pleasure.

Criticism and comments

The interests and scope of analysis of the Frankfurt School were immense, but flawed in many respects. They used unclear concepts of German philosophy (vague "rationality", different types of reason - subjective reason, objective reason, instrumental as in Max Horkheimer's *Eclipse of Reason*, 1947) and were uncritical about Marx as their background. The also continued traditions of Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West* (1918, 1922), which predicted the decline of the whole Western civilization. Capitalism was evil and only a radical revolutionary reform could change it. The Frankfurt philosophers saturated their works with slogans reminiscent of political journalism. Claiming the right to evaluate social phenomena, they did it in a very arbitrary way (Adorno in hie *Philosophy of New Music*, 1949, admired Arnold Schoenebeg but despised Igor Stravinsky, though in fact both are equally modern and important in history of music).

Their criticism of capitalism is yet significant and inspiring. In Germany culture, high culture was one of major national concerns. Wagner ended his *Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (1868) with pathetic verses: "if it [art] did not remain aristocratic as of old, / when courts and princes blessed it, / in the stress of evil years / it remained German and true; (…) Therefore I say to you: / honour your German Masters, / then you will conjure up good spirits! / And if you favour their endeavours, / even if the Holy Roman Empire / should dissolve in mist, / for us there would yet remain / holy German Art!" In

fact in many cultures official art was sophisticated and formed the core of national identity. In ancient Greece everyone knew what was *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, while tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides were part of everyday life connecting it with the sphere of sacrum. Europe has always had official high culture which formed the core fo civilisation.

The language of the Frankfurt School, deeply rooted in German philosophical tradition, was hardly comprehensible and generally inadequate to the task. Adorno wrote:

"Nevertheless, considerations which start from the subject remain false to the same extent that life has become appearance.   For   since   the   overwhelming objectivity of historical movement in its present phase consists so far only in the dissolution of the subject, without yet giving rise to a new one, individual experience necessarily bases itself on the old subject, now historically condemned, which is still for-itself, but no longer in-itself. The subject still feels sure of its autonomy, but the nullity demonstrated to subjects by the concentration camp is already overtaking the form of subjectivity itself."[185] I suspect it could have little impact on anyone.

But, what is worse, it does not help find solutions to the problems of modern world and its culture. The idea that a revolution will depose the capitalist elite and restore humanist culture is naïve. In every society the ruling elite plays an important role, while the hippies were not interested in listening to Mozart. Capitalism poses challenges to humankind, destroys the environment, imposes shallow mass culture and "rationalisation" but also creates new opportunities which contribute to the prosperity of at least a part of the population. Instead of fighting it perhaps a better solution would be to convince capitalists to devote some money they usually spend on advertising to the search of modern Shakespeares. Western societies should produce cultural framework which enables individualism and multiculturalism and yet is common for members of this culture (I suggest the creation of a common, global cult of Human Potential as a general spiritual framework in which humankind would develop). Instead of rejecting capitalism and modernisation in the name of humanistic and spiritual values philosophers should invent methods of saturating capitalism with them. The driving force of those changes will be not the working class nor students but all educated

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[185] Thoedor W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections on a Damaged Life*, Verso, 2006, pp. 15–16.

persons who aware that each of them has only one life will not want to spend it in a hurry, selling and buying gadgets.

Different uses of Marxism in history are worth noting. It was used by dictators to suppress freedom, by the working class to demand welfare, by intelligentsia to attack the conventional bourgeois morality, by students to reject views of their teachers, by Western politicians to impose higher taxes or nationalise industry, and by intellectuals to protect high culture against the spread of mass culture. Whether it was an advantage or a serious flaw is another matter.[186]

Criticism and Comments

Members of collectivist societies built their identity on roles they played in it, individualism offered the possibility of separating them, although solid modernity could impose shells as hard as steel. Liquid modernity gives individuals no choice - everyone has to build strong independent identity (the possession of which was strongly advised by Fromm) to survive in the fast changing world. Individualist societies are considered happier than collectivist ones. The development of recent decades provides ample opportunities for the construction of friendly, strong and rich personalities. The access to knowledge and diverse aspects of culture is now huge. However, only few have time and energy for it - and only they will eventually be satisfied at the end of their lives.

Daniel Bell

Changes in capitalism were recorded also by those who were not its bitter critics. Daniel Bell, one of the leading American intellectuals of the postwar era, who described himself as a "socialist in economics, a liberal in politics, and a conservative in culture," offered powerful insights into the development of modern societies. In *The End of Ideology* (1960), he suggests that the older grand humanistic ideologies (Marxism, liberalism and conservatism) are exhausted and will be replaced by less ambitious, narrow minded "parochial" ideologies, but the future would lay with pragmatic technocrats rather than ideologies. In a new introduction to the year 2000 Harvard University Press edition, he argued that it was manifested by the return of traditional ethnic and religious conflicts fuelled by such ideologies.

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[186]   Jerry Z. Muller, *The Mind and the Market: Capitalism in Modern European Thought*. New York: Knopf, 2002, pp. 326–46.

Bell seems only partly right. Just after the publication of his book America witnessed the ideologically motivated Kennedy-Johnson initiative to build the Great Society in the U.S. Critics of capitalism integrated into the New Lest movement. Later American conservatives launched the ideologically motivated free market and free trade campaign. When globalization destabilised the world in its different parts strong ideologies rose to power (e.g. Islamic fundamentalism, Russian nationalism).

Bell was right that the West is somehow ideologically void and dominated by pragmatists and technocrats. But he is wrong believing that it can become a permanent state. Humans are extremely idealogical creatures. We need great narrative, symbolic, idealogical, spiritual frameworks that organise our lives and give meaning to them. The end of ideologies will be the end of humankind. Thus I suggest later in this book time has come for a global religion of humanity which could integrate humankind.

In his other books Bell was also inquisitive but only partly right. In *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society* (1973)he argued that capitalist societies were becoming postindustrial. The service sector is displacing the industrial sector, making science, and technology more important. (Ha-Joon Chang rejects this claim arguing that the industrial sector is fundamental to economic development in any country.[187]) While the production of manufactured goods depended on technology, making skills of workers useless, a new demand for new human services (filled by psychologists, sociologies etc.) creates opportunity for human creativity and productivity.

In *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (1976), when the crisis of capitalism became visible, Bell became less optimistic. He discerned a contradiction between the requirements of capitals production and a consumerist and hedonistic lifestyle. Production requires Puritan discipline, co-operation, deferring gratification (pleasure) in the name of long term goals. A consumerist lifestyle of the 1970s was based on excess consumption for immediate pleasure and often on credit and numerous superficial entertainments. Also atomisation and individualisation threatens the ability to cooperate even within institutions.

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[187] Ha-Joon Chang, *23 Things They Don't Tell You about Capitalism*. Bloomsbury Press 2010. Thing 9: We do not live in a post-industrial age.

It seems that capitalism responded to those challenges. Employees adjusted to behaving differently at work and after work. Employers introduced detailed procedure in corporation to promote new lifestyle at work which promotes cooperation even among people who do not know anything about themselves. Those who cannot learn to be disciplined at work and hedonistic and permissive after work end up unemployed.

Questions: How was capitalism criticised by the Frankfurt School (e.g. Marcuse and Fromm)? Did they still believe that it was the working class who should struggle for Marxist ideals of human development? Why did Bernays' activity represent great danger for them? What was their attitude towards Marxism and the Soviet Union? How does Bauman's concept of "liquid modernity" describe the same facts with less criticism?

Further reading

James Bohman, "Critical Theory", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2013/entries/critical-theory/>.

Arnold Farr, "Herbert Marcuse", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/marcuse/>.

Rawls and Nozick – American political philosophy

A prominent twentieth-century American political theorist John Rawls (1921-2002) claiming to be Kant's follower reformulated Kant's Categorical Imperative in his *Theory of Justice*[188] Good rules of social life should be impartial. How to arrive at them, how to free men from their subjective inclinations, selfishness, the pursuit of self-interest? (The same questions were asked by Rousseau who postulated transformation of subjective wills of all into the general will, the kernel of the will of the people, which remains after rejecting all subjective, purely individual desires and leaving only what is common to all.)

Rawls's solution was to define first the fictitious *original position.* Whatever is decided in such position, would be impartial and would truly deserve to be called a fair morality. We must imagine a situation in which members of the public will negotiate until they reach a compromise on the standards that will be effective in society in which

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[188] John Rawls, *A Theory of* Justice. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1971.

they would live. They negotiate behind the "veil of ignorance", i.e. they are not aware what qualities they will possess (although they share some basic desires) and subsequently whom they will become in society for which they are designing rules. They do not know whether they will be strong or weak, smart or retarded, women or men.

Rawls believed that in such conditions the rules of justice as fairness would be selected. In fact, they combine elements of liberalism and socialism. The basic rules are:

* The liberty principle: Each citizen should be given "an equal claim to a fully adequate scheme of equal basic rights and liberties, which is compatible with the same scheme for all."

* The fair equality of opportunity principle: Each citizen should be entitled to "fair equality of opportunity" i.e should not be discriminated.

* The difference principle: "social and economic inequalities … are to be to the greatest benefit of the least privileged members of society."[189] It means that the best society is the one in which the worst off (e.g. the poorest) are in the best position as compared to their position in other possible societies.

Because the rules adopted in this way are fair, they should be regarded as such even now and thus any society is required among others to care primarily for the weakest and poorest.

Criticism and comments

Rawls presented arguments in favour of both the welfare state and the pluralist liberal state. His liberty principle is similar to Spencer's principle of liberty, while the difference principle justifies state intervention on behalf of the worst off. Did he really convince that basic rules (moral and legal) should be impartial? Does impartiality support the welfare state?

Many rules are formed as a result of a contract but not in the original positions, rather in a real life situations, a contract of compromise between real people who have individual preferences and sometimes can reach a compromise. They know what they

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[189] John Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, rev. ed., Columbia University Press, 1996 p. 5-6.

value, what are their strengths and weaknesses. Persons with a stronger position have a stronger impact on the result of the compromise.

Does the principle of Rawls offer better prospects? People behind the "veil of ignorance" are difficult to imagine. What desires can they have if they know almost nothing about themselves? They are people without qualities. (Rawls assumes that they have some basic concerns – for equality, freedom, basic goods. But by saying this he smuggles his preferences into the original position situation.) The dominant feeling in them might be as well fear of what would happen when real life begins. Their main concern is their sense of security, and not a desire to create something great. Interestingly, these people are neither particularly altruistic, which is understandable - how can one feel compassion for a mass of people without qualities. A psychologist would say that their identity is not crystallized.

It was not difficult to demonstrate that under these conditions the attentions would be focused on the situations of the worst off. The main motive is the fear of "what if I become one of them". Is this a sound frame for the formation of morality? The development of the world occurred also (or even largely) thanks to those who possessed strong personalities, knew their assets and were ready to take risks. Behind the "veil of ignorance" there are none of them. The real danger is greed that results from unrestricted competition. Morality should prevent people from being inconsiderate and doing harm to others, but should not eliminate their ambitions. This can be achieved by developing compassion. Whether the appeal to the original position can be equally useful is not certain.

The first principle does not solve the problem of who should decide what is "a fully adequate scheme of equal basic rights and liberties, which is compatible with the same scheme for all". A person who suffers from bad hearing and loves loud music may agree on the scheme: "Let everyone have the right to listen to loud music". A lover of the sound of silence would prefer the scheme: "Let no-one listen to loud music loud". Both schemes allow everyone the same rights but they are different schemes of different rights.

Rawls' beliefs were opposed by the American philosopher Robert Nozick (1938 - 2002), who in 1974 published a defence of freedom and liberalism *Anarchy, State, and Utopia.*

Another supporter of radical individualism and freedom was the American writer and philosopher Ayn Rand (1905-1982).

Questions: How did Rawls develop the idea of social contract and Kant's imperatives?

Further reading

Chapter on Rawls from N. Warburton, *Philosopohy: The classics.* Routledge 3rd Edition 2006 (or later).

Leif Wenar, "John Rawls", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2013/entries/rawls/>.

Samuel Freeman, "Original Position", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/original-position/>.

Eric Mack, "Robert Nozick's Political Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2014/entries/nozick-political/>.

The Rise and Fall of Communism

To understand fully the changes in the economy in West we must have a look at the history of communism. A lot of new insights were presented by the Oxford professor Archie Brown.[190] He distinguished between communism (the ideal of a classless society) and Communism, a phenomenon of the 20th century politics with its centre in Moscow.

Marx was preceded by the long tradition of the revolts of the poor against what they regarded as injustice. He also belonged to the long tradition of dreaming about the perfect social order. The tendency to improve the world, and not only one's private life, is noble and inherent in human nature. Marx formulated the ideal: classless egalitarian society, without exploitation, free from state oppression, without competition, money, in which individuals are free, creative, and happy. (Equality referred not to equal opportunities, but literally to equal incomes and living standards or rather - equal and full access to goods.)   He formulated this rather simple and naïve ideal using philosophical rhetoric and, what was most important, very skilfully tied it to he social processes of his time: the emergence of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The

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[190]   Archie Brown, *The Rise and Fall of Communism*. Bodley Head 2009.

bourgeoisie was moved by greed for wealth, while the proletariat was being dehumanised with nothing to loose except the chains. The root of the evil was the existence of private property, private means of production. Either capitalist competition would destroy humankind or the revolution made by the proletariat would save the world and build a communist paradise, which will be the end of history. This either-or Messianism was the crowning flavour of Marx's doctrine.

Certainly this alternative is false. Scandinavia, Austria, Britain after World War Two found other solutions: societies with private property, without terror and without poverty. Their existence required a few basic components. Such societies had to be fairly rich (but not necessarily very rich); greedy individuals had to be put under control so as not to initiate bitter competition for wealth and prestige; authorities should be generally trusted and obeyed. The ideal of a welfare state was less ambitious than a communist paradise, but possible and less destructive than real Communism.

Lenin and the Communist revolution

At the beginning of the 20th century it was obvious that Marx was wrong. The social-democratic parties in Britain, France and Germany negotiated the improvement of the situation of the working class and the prospect for later improvement was bright. Lenin already in 1902 in *What Is to Be Done?* declared that the working class needed professional revolutionaries because without them the workers could not develop proper consciousness. It meant that those revolutionaries using convoluted reasoning would manipulate uneducated workers to elicit their support for Communism.

During the first world war the situation of the working class drastically deteriorated, which was used by Lenin, who published the book *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* in 1916. He claimed that with declining demand suppressed by the exploitation of the working class, the main capitalist powers fought for colonies to sell their products, which somehow was the reason of the war in Europe. The profits from colonialism were then used to bribe the working class making its richest group "labour aristocracy" hostile to the idea of the revolution. Lenin's claims were a bit far-fetched. European powers competed for colonies often for prestige (or to rob them from their natural resources) not to invest or sell products there. Earlier Britain sold its products worldwide, but little was soled to Africa. The overseas

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imperialism of the end of the 19th century was not the cause of the First World War, although it constituted part of the greedy mental attitude of the era.

Lenin took charge of Marxism and defined the core of communist practice and ideology on the basis of Marx's scarce and unclear suggestions as to the organizations of societies after the revolution.

(1) The communist party should have the political monopoly and use democratic centralism; decisions should be discussed and accepted democratically by the main leaders and then enforced with great discipline and rigidity within the party and throughout the society.

(2) Means of production should be owned by the state within the framework of a command economy, in which decisions as to what should be produced as well as what should be prices for goods and services were determined bureaucratically.

(3) All hardships and sufferings are justified by the end-point to be achieved: the perfect classless world of abundance, the final elimination of exploitation, greed, and poverty. (Most of the Soviet society and the party leaders believed in it until 1960s. It was not a propaganda trick.)

Thus the objectives of Marxism had three layers. The most important SOCIAL objectives: equality should be introduced; the bourgeoisie as the carrier of evil must be destroyed; social justice is needed to develop human potential (in real terms - equality, ideally - distribution of wealth by the principle of "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs"). ECONOMIC objectives were subordinated to them: private property must be abolished and the economy fully planned. In a way private property was for Marxists like the original sin in Christianity or the cursed ring for Wagner or Tolkien, an invention which destroys humanity. Capitalism was the result of this deprivation while the rich were the guardians of the empire of evil and thus had to be exterminated with all their culture. POLITICAL objectives formed a framework: after the revolution the dictatorship of the proletariat must be introduced in order to stabilize new authorities; revolution should encompass the whole world.

Communist movements inspired by Marxism were active in many places (Hungary, Germany, Italy, Spain, even in China), but only in Russia they won owing it to Lenin's determination. Already in 1918 Karl Kautsky published the book *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat* criticizing Lenin's totalitarian ideas and so did Rosa

Luxemburg, who was involved in the revolution in Berlin in 1918. Lenin took power in the devastated Russia and introduced terror. Yet he assumed that the aim justified the means.

The First World War was a brutal disaster which devastated Europe. Soviet Communism was born out of this climate and many its features can be understood as solutions to problems haunting Europe around the First World War. Terror was common during the First and Second World Wars so the Bolsheviks were not the first and only to introduce it. Nationalism was the source of constant wars in Europe so the Bolsheviks decided to suppress it and form a common Soviet nation. Democracy paralysed governments in Europe and many countries introduced authoritarian rule so the Bolsheviks eliminated democracy at the outset. (Yet it must be remembered that fascism was often introduced as a response to the threat posed by Bolshevism.)

To mobilize the masses Communists employed noisy overblown rhetoric, perfectly represented in *The Internationale* written during the Paris Commune in 1871 and sung as the official hymn of Communism.

Debout! les damnés de la terre
Debout! les forçats de la faim
La raison tonne en son cratère,
C'est l'éruption de la fin.
Du passé faisons table rase
Foule esclave, debout! debout!
Le monde va changer de base
Nous ne sommes rien, soyons tout!

Stand up! Ye wretched ones who labor,
Stand up! Ye galley-slaves of want.
Man's reason thunders from its crater,
'Tis th' eruption naught can daunt.
Of the past let us cleanse the tables,
Mass enslaved, fling back the call,
Old Earth is changing her foundations,
We have been nothing, now be all.[191]

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[191] https://www.marxists.org/history/ussr/sounds/lyrics/international.htm

However, when Communists began organizing social life according to their messianic ideology, it appeared to be so brutal and aggressive that the whole world turned against them. Most countries which moved from poverty to affluence did it though cooperation with more developed countries. Communist so strongly believed in their mission of destroying capitalism all over the world that they had to rejected this cooperation, had to build their economies out of scratches on their own - and failed. In addition the Soviet Union had to spend enormous sums on armament. A miracle must have happened so that poor Russia could develop entirely on its own, defeat the whole capitalist world and provide a decent standard of living for its people.

Stalin

When Lenin was replaced by Stalin terror intensified, but Stalin managed to hide it and create the impression of himself as a benevolent leader ruling a communist paradise. He introduced a perfect system of state control and forced rapid industrialization. He was also a sadistic psychopath and malicious murderer, with the score between 6 and 30 million victims before World War Two broke out. (It is remarkable that Napoleon, Hitler and Stalin did not belong to nations they made powerful. Perhaps it allowed them to treat those nations without sentiments and manipulate them without scruples. The result was spectacular but superficial, short-lived.) This scale of terror was by no means necessary to keep Communism going. It resulted from his private inclination and in the long run rather hampered the development of Communism than helped it. The argument that Communism was wrong because of Stalin's numerous victims does not touch the essence of Communism. (The same is true about Hitler, whose cruelty mobilized resistance against instead of helping him win the war.) Thus Stalin was not very popular in the USSR before the Second World War and only his victory made him a beloved national hero.

Communism in many other countries was the result of Stalinists inspirations. Yet in Cuba Castro was not a communist, Russia annexed his revolution after it had been done. In China Mao Zedong made a rather shallow copy of the Soviet system, with less philosophy and more terror.

When Marxism was introduced into feudal countries it superficially Westernised them but in time it appeared that Marxism adjusted to their feudal structure and habits.

The nexus between Russian imperialism and Marxist Messianism was an important issue.

Russia has always been a despotic centralized feudal country. Its political apparatus was hierarchical, individualism weak, society was cemented and pacified by deep, half-mystical religiosity. (It was a bitter irony that Marxism became a state religion, a true "opiate for the masses." The conviction that the Soviet people led the development of humankind compensated all the shortcomings of their everyday life.) Although originally communism was planned to be international and spread all other the world, during the Second World War nationalistic feelings became intense and necessary to ingrate society. (Another bitter irony: Hitler with his nationalism forced the USSR to tie Marxism with Russian nationalism. Stalin was fairly unpopular in the USSR before the war, but during the war he gained universal support as the saviour of the nation.) The land of the Russians was occupied many times in its history - for two hundred years by the Mongols in the Middle Ages, in 1605 for a year by Polish aristocrats, by Napoleon, finally Hitler's invasion was close to enslaving the whole nation. The fear of being conquered is extremely strong in Russia and is often used by politicians to unite the nation. Certainly Marx did not envisage that his philosophy might become the basis for national consolidation and survival. (The same applies to China, oppressed by the Westerners in the 19th century and by Japan in the 20th.) After 1990 Marxist ideology evaporated from Russia, but nationalism is still very strong there. Russia could easily avoid many problems by becoming an ally of the U.S. (as for example Saudi Arabia). And yet this option was never taken into account either in the USSR or after its collapse. Both Marxist ideals and Russian imperial ambitions may be responsible for this.

The cooperation between Russia and Marxism proved (temporary) beneficial to both sides. Russia promoted Marxism in the whole world, while Marxism made Russia really powerful (for a while). Without the determination of Stalin and the warlike organization of the country the result of the Second World War could have been utterly destructive for the Russians. (Although it is also possible that without Stalin the war would not have broken out at all.) After the war many persons abroad naïvely believing that the Soviet Union was a country with humanistic prospects was willing to help it, e.g. spies in the U.S. who stole the secrets of the atomic bomb. (Perhaps now Russia

could regain some of its international prestige if it acted as a protector of the victims of the neo-liberal globalization.) Only under communism Russia was a true world superpower. In a way communism proved one of Russia's best investments. Marxist philosophy created its power and when it was abandoned by Gorbachev, Russia lost this power. It is difficult to underestimate the role of philosophy in real world. And as the Chinese example shows the end of Communism did not have to be as destructive as it was for Russia.

"The dictatorship of proletariat" is the label of the two great mistakes of communism. It ennobled both dictatorship and proletariat.

Dictatorship. The hierarchical political structures have not been infrequent but the grip of the state authorities was usually much looser. Kings were surrounded by other strong political players and advising bodies whose opinions they had to accept. In Communism the whole communication was based on propaganda lies and society was not acutely encouraged to cooperated with the party. Its role was to listen and obey, which finally alienated the elite. (Yet the party was an open organization, not like the feudal hierarchy but rather like the Catholic Church. Everyone could enrol and be promoted.) With terror, the lack of any official opposition and even any open discussion, the very tight grip of state control suppressed spontaneous and creative social activity. Also the dictatorial leaders were subject to alienation and degeneration, they lost touch with real needs of society, fell into self-admiration and lacked criticism, which in turn led to bad political and economic decisions. The centralization of power hurt the very circles of power - they were constantly criticized because all grievances and complaints were addressed to them. Decentralization of power is actually more convenient for the government, because it blurs responsibility for failures.

Once the dictatorship was introduced it proved impossible to change. For instance it was impossible to lead dialogue with any opposition. In democracy the opposition may potentially rule one day so its demands and claims must be realistic. If they are irresponsible the opposition would discredit itself. In communist countries no opposition could rule thus the so called dissidents could claim whatever they wanted formulating populist demands and gaining widespread support. The communist governments could not accept their demands since it would amounted to the dissolution of Communism.

The working class. Did Marx and later Lenin really believe that the working class would become the creative force? The proletariat was formed out of peasants who were driven to cities by poverty, often artificially created. Polish Nobel Prize winner in literature Władysław Reymon, not connected to Marxism in any way, captured this process it in his two main long novels *Ziemia obiecana* (*The Promised Land*, 1898), about brutal and inhuman early capitalism in the Polish city of Łódź, and *Chłopi* (*The Peasants*, 1904–1909), depicting the traditional peasants life, also crude, but having a spiritual dimension. Germany, Poland and Russia were mainly populated by peasants. (Nazism appealed to peasants and to peasant mentality as deeply German.) In Germany proletariat had already formed, in Poland the process was slow, in Russia it hardly began. Workers were mentally not much different from peasants, they often preferred collectivism and stabilisation over individualism and creativity, but they were uprooted and alienated, and thus seemed easier to shape. Personally Marx was not especially affectionate about the workers next to whom he had to live in London's poor districts. But as an heir to the Enlightenment tradition he might have thought that since human personality could be shaped like clay it would be possible to make a creative humankind out of them.

Communists persecuted those who acquire education before the revolution treating them as contaminated with the germs of pre-communist social order (in that they were similar to anti-Semites who also regarded Jews as contaminated and belonging to a different, inferior race). Certainly it was not possible to run a country without educated elites. Communism attempted to form them anew from people of the right, working class background. The access to knowledge was easy. The new educated elite should have been small, loyal and not very well paid. Its members, living under dictatorship, amidst constant ideological repressions were immature and equipped with totalitarian habits. Yet the newly educated persons often ostentatiously emphasized that they belonged to a different and better social group. To the dismay of communists even them turned out to be rebellious. And finally they blew up Communism. An educated society desired freedom, individualism, consumption and not the dictatorship of the proletariat. While nationalism is often successful and strengthens social solidarity and the cohesion of one-nation societies, the idea of a classless society populated entirely by the proletariat in different mutations proved an ideological absurd.

Yet workers and peasants proved very useful in eliminating the upper class, which was very convenient for dictators who could get rid of any educated opposition and deal only with uneducated masses.

The theoreticians of Communism before the revolution often came from the intelligentsia or the middle class. Yet after the revolution the party and secret police leaders were closer to the working class. The working class played a prominent role in the culture of the Soviet block at the expense of the demanding and capricious middle class that is the foundation of a healthy social development based on discussion and questioning dogma.

Outside the Soviet block the abuses were even worse. Mao Zedong used youngsters to stage the brutal "cultural revolution" whose aim was to eliminate all opposition and retain power for ten more years. It cannot be denied that Marxism was very convenient for dictators.

Communism was a process (as everything that exists in reality), it was in constant change. Also the communist activists changed. Those who began the revolution were different from those who came later. In the early period communists were fanatical, brutal, but not opportunistic (which is obvious since their commitment to Marxism developed often before the revolution when being a revolutionary was not profitable). Later some of them were idealists who still cherished Marxist ideals; others possible good politicians who had to make careers in real Communism; hard-liners, who preferred to use oppression to hold power; and opportunists who used the existing political structures for private benefits.

Communism had its own privileged elite. Originally the elite had better access to state property (as in the platonic model or in the Catholic Church). Some party members, some private entrepreneurs, some educated persons who should be part of the classless ideal society, seeing that communism failed economically (shortage of goods was acute), culturally (no great flourishing of humanistic values occurred), militarily and politically (it did not win the competition with capitalism), decided to abandon it. Then the fall began.

The fall

When the last leader of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in 1985 Soviet economy was in a deplorable state, hardly manoeuvrable at all.

Why Communism was an economic failure? (1) The command economy which eliminated free market is often blamed. Yet although it contributed to the inefficiency of Communist economy other factors were also important. (2) Communist countries were cut off from the leading economies and their know-how. Russia without Communism also has not become a very developed country. (3) The intense arms race imposed by Ronald Reagan was an enormous burden (U.S economy was four times bigger and the USSR had to maintain parity). In fact arms race is profitable only for a country which wins it. For others money spent on it is utterly wasted. (4) A serious problem stemmed form the commitment of Communism to provide welfare for all. While in the early period peasants were brutally exploited by Stalin to provide means for industrialisation, when later the society began expecting a decent standard of living it was not possible to provide it on the egalitarian basis. (5) Perhaps the degeneration of the elite was a serious problem. Those who were responsible for maintaining the system, lost faith in it and began concentration on their own interests.

If Communism could made one quarter of the society rich while the rest poor, a normal practice in most societies in the history of humankind, it perhaps could last longer. Yet this would be in contradiction with its own declarations. Again the communist principle of equality was a burden.

As the North Korean example shows Communism could also survive in society held firmly with terror and ideology. The USSR did not have to fall yet to survive it had to undergo re-stalinization. It was possible. Communist states always had two pillars of control - the communist party and the security system (secrete police, the army). The latter was partly independent from the party and managed by hard-liners. There was always a danger that if liberalization attempts had gone too far or failed the hard-liners would have taken over and re-introduced military dictatorship. It is suggested that the escalation of Cold War by Ronald Reagan during his first term (1981-1985) could rather have strengthen the hard liners. However, and this was the main reason of the fall of communism, the newly formed educated class as well as the party bureaucracy were against the re-introduction of dictatorship. They wanted to enjoy life standards common in the developed world. In short, Communism was possible under the dictatorship of the proletariat but when it developed the dictatorship had either to be rejected or turned

against the whole society. While Marx claimed that capitalism contained the seed of its own destruction, Communism contained them as well, as Archie Brown claims.

(Yet in some satellite states, especially Hungary, Czechoslovakia and East Germany, economy was in a better state, the privileged elite did not crystallize, and on the whole communist ideals were more respected. In Poland, where economy was weak and the rule of the party irresponsible, the departure from Communism began slowly in 1970s with exaggerated consumption on credit and the emergence of the privileged class.)

After 1985 Gorbachev first introduced some semi-market reforms, which did not work, and then embarked on a general political reform. He dismantled the system of democratic centralism and command economy, encouraged first the party members to express private opinions, and finally introduced truly democratic elections. He did not expect the consequences. Society for many decades dependent on clear instructions from the leaders was completely lost, many hostile and nationalist emotions burst out, there were no reliable politicians to lead the masses. Gorbachev himself was not prepared to face political opponents who suddenly emerged.

Boris Yeltsin was elected President of the Russian Republic in 1991 and won popular support opposing the completely unprepared *coup* undertaken by a few communists (August 1991). His popularity was a clear example of the pitfalls of naïve democracy: the unprepared voters who for the first time in their lives had real choice elected a man who in a few years robbed and destroyed their country. He dissolved the USSR to eliminate Gorbachev, then President of the USSR. He pretended to be introducing free market economy (which pleased Western politicians and pro-market institutions, the IMF and the World Bank) with the result that a few oligarchs (together with some international corporations) got hold of the property of the USSR, mafias became powerful, while tens of millions of ordinary citizens plunged into poverty. It paved the way for Putin, who restored order, combated poverty thus gaining general sympathy and gratitude from the majority of the population. Russia went the way predicted already by Plato from democracy through chaos to dictatorship.

In 1989 Gorbachev was eager to prevent re-stalinzation of the USSR and to cooperate with Western Europe (and even used the idea of a Common European

Home[192] from 1987 and 1989). It opened the possibility of the convergence between the USSR and Western Europe, resulting in an economic commonwealth from Vladivostok to Lisbon and spreading Western values to the east.

Perhaps if the Soviet had not been destroyed but made a slow transition to democracy, supervised by Western Europe, the result would have been better. It would be another bitter irony of history if Russia was heading for the destiny Gorbachev wanted to prevent: a poor dictatorial country whose main strength is nuclear weapons, like North Korea.

Other countries

The end of communism in other countries brought equally questionable results. In Eastern Europe Communism was regarded as alien and as a form of Russian domination. Those countries had prospects of joining the EU and their nations somehow naïvely believed that they would soon enjoy the same living standards as in Western Europe. Although the EU protected democracy in those countries, they are still very poor. When after in 1989/1990 many East European societies opened to the capitalist West they were applied a shock therapy which destroyed, almost raised to the ground their economies. Poland experienced strong de-industrialization. A year later most East European societies regretted what they had done but it was too late to divert. Their factories were bankrupt and ruined. In East Germany many people who were demolishing the Berlin Wall are regretting it till today.[193]

An interesting case is former East Germany, where nostalgia for the communist past, *Ostalgie* in German, is still strong.[194] Although supervised by the intrusive secret police life of average citizens was peaceful, predictable and meaningful, especially because a strong sense of community, social security and identification with the state.

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[192] 'Address given by Mikhail Gorbachev to the Council of Europe.' Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l'Europe. 1989-07-06.
http://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/address_given_by_mikhail_gorbachev_to_the_council_of_europe_6_july_1989-en-4c021687-98f9-4727-9e8b-836e0bc1f6fb.html

[193] Julia Bonstein, 'Homesick for a Dictatorship: Majority of Eastern Germans Feel Life Better under Communism' *Der Spiegel Online International,* 07/03/2009,
http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/homesick-for-a-dictatorship-majority-of-eastern-germans-feel-life-better-under-communism-a-634122.html [retrieved 7.10.2014]

[194] Julia Bonstein, 'Homesick for a Dictatorship: Majority of Eastern Germans Feel Life Better under Communism' *Der Spiegel Online International,* 07/03/2009,
http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/homesick-for-a-dictatorship-majority-of-eastern-germans-feel-life-better-under-communism-a-634122.html [retrieved 7.10.2014]

What conclusions does it support? First, that an organized life without greed and haste is perhaps what many people genuinely prefer. Second, that Germans could make a good use of communism instead of fighting with it (also because communism was popular in this part of Germany even before the war, unlike in Russia, Hungary of Poland, where it was imposed by force; after all Germany was the place Marx had in mind dreaming about his revolution). Yet, East Germany occupied an exceptional position. It was politically isolated, free from international rivalry, artificially created as the country of proletariat and well organized. It was cared for by both the USSR, as a window display of communism, and by West Germany, for national reasons. It could last only because the USSR stabilized internally and externally its existence. If East Germany had had to compete with other countries (both economically and military) it might have immediately destroyed its harmonious communitarian life.

In China the communist party did not loose power, rejected Marxism and in cooperation with the U.S. became an undemocratic superpower. Why did it succeed? First, in China true Marxist Communism never existed. The ideals of the end of history, internationalism, social justice and finally creative development of human potential had little impact on China. Mao Zedong was primarily attached to one idea: that the poor, in China they were peasants, should exterminate all the educated so that the dictator could rule with as little obstacles as possible. Chinese Communism from the outset was nationalist and aimed at making Chine independent (from the West and Japan) and powerful although not necessarily imperialist. The communist party in China analysed the causes of the fall of communist dictatorships in other countries and decided to strengthen the economy, the position of the privileged elite, nationalism but also to ally with the U.S. instead of challenging it. The result was economically and politically spectacular. China is as far from Communism as Russia, has an enormous gap between the rich and the poor, but the party has not lost power or experienced turbulences of an unsuccessful democracy. It must be noticed that dictatorship does not have to be oppressive. If a dictator is wise enough to understand the desires of his subjects, he can find best means to satisfy them. After all most of the history of the world was undemocratic. It is possible that democracy is necessary in Europe and Anglo-Saxon countries because European dictators have been extremely selfish and oppressive. In other regions the difficulty of maintaining democracy overweights its benefits.

North Korea still exists as a poor and totalitarian state. When pro-Russian regimes in the Arab states began falling the result was not democratisation but the rise of terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism.

The fall of the welfare states and deregulation

The fall of Communism coincided with the fall of welfare states in Europe. The main problem was that European welfare states flourished in exceptionally favourable international conditions. Europe had technological advantage over most other countries. The world was divided between the USSR and the U.S., both of which had to spend huge sums on armament while Europe could devote its entire GDP to welfare. A paradise flourished mainly in 1950s and 1960s but even then Europe was not filled with enthusiasm. The 1960s ended in students' revolts, the Beatles and the sexual revolution, the culture of discotheques, which in fact introduced too much permissiveness leading to demoralization. In the 1970s the West began slipping into demoralisation. When international competition (first from Japan) intensified, serious flaws became visible. At that moment Margaret Thatcher rebelled against the welfare state for partly sentimental reasons as she wanted to divert Britain to the Victorian style of life. The success of neo-liberlism might not be exactly what she had expected. Keynesian method ceased to function. Government spendings cased stagflation (a combination of hight inflation, law growth, and high unemployment). The same phenomenon was observed in the socialist Israel during the so called lost decade (ca. 1973-1984), from which Israel emerged as a strongly free market economy (in a critical analysis of the whole process of the transformation Michael Bruno and Leora Meridor observed that during the stagflation period great firms managed to make large profits[195]).

It is still debatable what caused the stagflation and the crisis of the welfare-state model. The role of the oil crises in 1973 and 1979 is often stressed, but general relaxation of work ethics caused by generous welfare benefits and hight expectations about welfare for all must not be overlooked. The crisis was skilfully used by free market supporters who attacked the very idea of the welfare state and governmental intervention in economy. A prominent figure was Milton Friedman.

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[195] Michael Bruno, Leora Meridor (Rubin), The Costly Transition from Stabilization to Sustainable Growth: Israel's Case. in: *Lessons of economic stabilization and its aftermath*.- Cambridge, Mass. [u.a.] : MIT Press, 1991, pp. 241-275.

Milton Friedman (1912–2006) in 1960s focused on the problem of money supply (*Capitalism and Freedom*, 1962; *A Monetary History of the United States, 1867–1960*, with Anna J. Schwartz, 1963). Money for him was not only a means useful in circulation of goods or services. He claimed in his quantitative theory of money that additional money in economy cause inflation, growth or a change in patterns of consumption. After studying the history of American economy he discovered that depressions was always preceded by shortage of money. The inefficiency of the Federal Reserve was also the cause of the Great Depression (and not any alleged cycles of growth and recession). As a result of his studies Central Banks began controlling the supply of money by changing interest rates. The main point was that this kind of intervention should be sufficient in preventing depressions which are the main problem of free market economies. Other forms of intervention devised after the Great Depression became unnecessary. While before 1970s unemployment and inflation were regarded as negatively related (thus lowering inflation caused higher unemployment) Friedman separated them and focused on inflation (which should always be reduced), regarding unemployment as oscillating around some "natural level". He also suggested some radical free market measure including a proposal that money should not be printed by government.[196]

He declared (in *Capitalism and Freedom*) that political freedom will necessary follow economic freedom. The experience of China seems to question this claim.

Schumpeter, Mises, Hayek

The revived faith in deregulated capitalism drew inspiration from a long row of thinkers steaming for the Austria school of Economics.

T**he Austrian School of economics,** established by Carl Menger (*Principles of Economics*, 1871) and developed by Eugen von Böhm-Bawerk is one of the manifestations of the creative potential of the Habsburg empire. Together with the legacy of Alfred Marshall (1842-1924) it formed neoclassical economics, which through often very strict mathematical calculations serves free market solution. Yet it is not mathematics but general conclusions about economics that interests philosophers.

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[196] A popular introduction to his vies is: Milton Friedman and Rose Friedman, *Free to Choose*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York, 1980. Chapter 3 (about causes of the Great Depression) and Chapter 9 (about inflation and unemployment).
Leube, Kurt R., *The Essence of Friedman.* Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, CA, 1987.

Joseph Schumpeter (1883–1950) was one the greatest social scholars form this milieu. Borne in Moravia (like Freud) in a Catholic German family educated in Vienna and Berlin, for a short time a minister of finance in Austria finally taught at Harvard. The Austria economic school is a strange phenomenon. While in Germany scholars from Marx through Simmel, Sombart, Weber to the Frankfurt school generally opposed capitalism, in Austria capitalism was praised. The reason perhaps is that Germany really had capitalism and fast progress while Austria was governed first by the Habsbugs and then largely by social-democrats who usually preferred stabilisation or even stagnation with a very slow progress. People often value what they do not have. In Germany they had progress but longed for traditional stabilisation, in Austria the opposite was the case.

In *The Theory of Economic Development* (1911) Schumpeter emphasised the dynamic, creative side of capitalism. While the theories of Smith and Marx focused on adjusting supply and demand and on class division, Schumpeter stressed the role of the entrepreneurs (who are not identical with the owners of capital). Through innovation and "creative destruction" they transform the world (an example was the German steel tycoon August Thyssen). And yet entrepreneurs are often envied in societies and accused of destroying comfort of life in stability.[197]

Also Schumpeter in *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (1942) attacked the New Deal as a wrong method of dealing with crises like the Depression. Capitalism provided unprecedented economic growth, which profited everyone. It attracts energetic individuals but never secures lasting success, even the richest must be watchful. Capitalism benefits society as a whole and in the long run, or even the whole humankind. Individuals do not find this argument appealing if they personally are affected by unpleasant changes.

Another Austrian **Ludwig von Mises** (1881–1973) in the essay "Economic Calculation in the Socialist Commonwealth" (1920) argued that without free market setting the prices all information what people need would be lost and economy would develop in a mist. Only private ownership provides incentive property for self-interested individuals.

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[197] Jerry Z. Muller, *The Mind and the Market: Capitalism in Modern European Thought*. New York: Knopf, 2002, pp. 288–299.

Still another Austrian economist **Friedrich Hayek** (1889–1992), influenced by Mises, defended free market, individual freedom and restricted government throughout his long life, influencing Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. When the Great Depression struck in 1929 many economists and politicians not to mention average citizens lost faith in free market capitalism, also in the U.S. It is worth remembering that the GDP of the U.S. fell dramatically between 1929 and 1933 while unemployment skyrocketed. At the same time Stalin managed to present the Soviet Five-Year Plans as undisputed success (skilfully hiding high human costs of them). Hayek defended free market in *Collectivist Economic Planning* (1935). It is market prices that direct human activity. To make decisions knowledge is needed, yet it is often not easily accessible to individuals. Free market through its prices provides everyone with condensed information about what is needed in business (although, I think, it is fair to add that some get this information earlier than others). Free market to function properly requires wide access to information about resources, technologies, trends etc., which are normally hidden by the bureaucrats. Capitalism is dynamic and continually creates new needs and invents new ways of using the resources (oil was useless before car engine was invented). It is impossible to emulate functions of free market in central planning because before people take decisions or make inventions no-one knows how human energy will be channelled. Free market is a sphere of creativity where human decision crystallise, humans discover what they want to chose. Competition is a form of decentralized planning made by all society. It is impossible to predict their decisions by analysing their circumstances. Socialists suppress human freedom, the freedom of creation replacing it with commands made by those who themselves are out of control.

In his most popular book *The Road to Serfdom* (1944) he rejected the idea of the left wing critics that Nazism was pro-capitalist, supported by big firms. He regarded it as anti-capitalist, stemming out of frustration of the lower middle class left outside the main stream of capitalism and resentful against Jews as more successful. (A similar analysis was presented by Erich Fromm in *Escape form Freedom*, 1941, for whom it was the fear of individualism that attracted Nazi supporters.)[198]

In *The Constitution of Liberty* (1960) and *Law, Legislation, and Liberty* (1973–1979) he examined and criticised the ideas supporting the welfare state. For Hayek, the

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[198] Jerry Z. Muller, *The Mind and the Market: Capitalism in Modern European Thought*. New York: Knopf, 2002, pp. 347–368.

demand for social justice derives from conceptions of ethical obligation that made sense when confined to small, face-to-face groups but that are now obsolete and even dangerous. The consensus about values necessary to defining social justice does not exist, views on it are too much split. Moreover, capitalism does not reward proportionally to one's moral merit, which must be crucial in a conception of justice.

Yet the lack of social solidarity in a large liberal society has its advantages. In small communities solidarity was usually accompanied by hostility towards strangers. Liberal capitalism eliminates both.

There is also no point in bringing about equality of opportunity. Those who were born with better genes and had better childhood will always have better opportunity. This is cruel for those who fail but cannot be helped.

Globalization the aftermath

Around 1980 sudden changes appeared in the world. Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Regan supported deregulation of economy, while the U.S. and Britain engaged in globalization based on free international trade.

In the past, globalization trends meant either an exchange between independent countries or creation of multinational empires. The Mediterranean trade was developed by the Phoenicians, the Roman Empire, the world of Islam, the Mongol empire of the 13th and 14th centuries. They were examples of great enterprises which integrated the world and enabled exchange between countries. The West European colonization beginning with the Vikings in the 8th c. and the crusades at the end of the 11th c. accelerated in the 15th c. was a much more morally questionable endeavour. Western culture proved most cruel and fanatical until the beginning of the 20th c. Europeans mercilessly killed, exploited and enslaved members of other cultures. The native cultures of both Americas, Africa, Australia and some parts of Asia were physically destroyed or brought to degeneration by exploitation and flooding with European industrial good or other unwelcome products (as in the case of the British-Chinese opium wars 1839-1860). While Western civilization in Europe was perfecting humanist values, abroad Europeans exhibited greed and a neurotic need for superiority. Contemporary violent conflicts in the entire world may be at least to some extent the result of centuries of brutal European colonization which also destroyed natural self-regulating mechanism in many cultures.

The current wave of globalization began in the 1970s/1980s together with the crises of Western welfare states. In 2000, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) identified four basic aspects of globalization: (1) free trade trade and transactions, (2) capital and investment movements, (3) migration and movement of people, and (4) the spread of knowledge.[199])

In 1970s most of the world experienced crisis. The situation was different in poor and rich countries. The development of poor countries was slow and economists lacked reliable theory.[200] Many poor governments practised interventionism but were corrupted and inefficient. In the rich countries the problem was stagflation and a universal desire for welfare. The neo-liberal ideology blamed state intervention and pointed to deregulation as the only possible solution. There was a chance that if those governments are weakened then a new entrepreneurial class might emerge and take care of the economy in a more efficient manner. Was it right? A number of phenomena beyond the control of state intervention contributed to the crisis: a sharp increase in oil prices; the collapse of the Bretton Woods fixed exchange rate system (which was due to the suspension of convertibility of the US dollar to gold in 1971, which in turn was caused by high costs of the Vietnam War), the rapid development of Japan's economy, which created competition for the economies of the West. However, the system of state managed capitalism, that flourished especially between 1945 and 1973, also revealed its limitations. The existence of governments that guaranteed welfare for all inevitably led to demanding attitude of the public and undermined work ethic (it is difficult for a democratically elected government to discipline society when it is dependent on the voters, they in turn can use industrial action against governments but not against impersonal mechanism of competition). Decoupling of the economy from the elected government allowed corporations to exert more pressure on workers and eliminate weak companies. However, every developed state regulates its economic life, the state as a night watchman is a myth. When Margaret Thatcher was Prime Minister the amount of various state regulations was high, as well as the level social spending[201], only their structure was different. (She was a conservative, not a neo-liberal, and the

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[199] International Monetary Fund . 'Globalization: Threats or Opportunity.' 12 April 2000: IMF Publications. http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/ib/2000/041200to.htm [retrieved 10.12.2015]

[200] See Paul Streeten, "Development dichotomies". *World Development* (Elsevier) (October 1983) 11 (10): 875–889.

[201] James Fulcher, *Capitalism.* Oxford University Press 2004, p. 52.

aim of conservatives in Britain since the mid-19th century was a harmonious although hierarchical society.) Deregulation was a conservative idea, but them the process was high-jacked by neo-liberals (or 'global-liberals') and later a new ideology of globalization emerged from it.

Deregulated globalization was summarised in ten points and named Washington Consensus by John Williamson in 1989, which included fiscal policy discipline, reduction and redirection of public spending, trade liberalization, privatization of state enterprises, deregulation and legal security for property rights.[202] Those ideas were strongly supported by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, and the US Treasury Department. Later the term was broadened to refer also to the core of neo-liberal ideas such as to capital account liberalization, monetarism, supply-side economics, or a minimal state (getting the state out of welfare provision and income redistribution).

According to Zygmunt Bauman, a Polish sociologist, living since 1971 in England,[203] deregulated capitalism marks a transition to a new period in Western civilisation - liquid modernity. Contemporary economic systems have changed since Weber's times. Less attention is paid to issues of personality or characters imposed by the economic system (as in Fromm), more is devoted to institutions and their systems. In the late 1980s and early 1990s Bauman published a number of books which dealt with the relationship between modernity, bureaucracy, rationality and social exclusion. He contrasted "solid" modernity (of the 19th and 20th centuries) described by Max Weber, based on strict regulations, with "liquid" modernity being created now that confronting individuals with a series of challenges never before encountered. While solid modernity restricted freedom and gave social security, liquid modernity removes certainty. Social forms and institutions are no longer stable and cannot be frames for individual life plans. Individuals have to engage in short-term projects and episodes that don't add up to a career in which progress is made. Such fragmented lives require flexibility and adaptability to change tactics at short notice, to abandon commitments and loyalties without regret and to pursue opportunities according to their current availability under constant uncertainty.

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[202] John Williamson, 'What Washington Means by Policy Reform", in: Williamson, John (ed.), *Latin American Readjustment: How Much has Happened*, Washington. Institute for International Economics, 1990. ch. 2.

[203] Z. Bauman, *Liquid modernity*, Polity 2000.

The economic effects of globalization are disturbing. In the developed countries it led to the stratification of societies, the growing gap between the rich and the poor. Despite its name, the benefits of globalization are not global, they are enjoyed mostly by some sections of rich Western societies. Small and poor states (especially in Africa) which mainly have cheap labour to sell remains poor. The gap between the rich north and the poor south of the world has widened considerably. (In 2004 Fulcher boldly claimed[204] that (1) capital was not circulating globally but mainly between developed countries; (2) large national states played a key role in the activities of transcontinental corporations; (3) globalization instead of integrating the world, divided it further.)

Other effects of globalization are manifold. The negative may include the systematic destruction of traditional social structures and local cultures, which leads to uniformity; the spread of the single model of American mass culture that promotes materialism and consumerism. This model is supported by the globalized media belonging to a small group of corporations.[205] If consumerism was adopted worldwide, it would lead to rapid destruction of the environment. The lifestyle promoted as a part of globalization is not particularly creative. (America has, of course, great universities, philosophers, symphony orchestras and theatres, but this is not the aspect of America promoted by globalization.) A bitter critic of globalization is Joseph Stiglitz.[206]

In 1999 David Held et.al.[207] contrasted two opposing perspectives of globalization. (1) The Hyperglobalist perspective is characterized by the declining relevance and authority of nation-states. The worlds will benefit (at least economically) as the whole although in every country many will loose. The role of democratic mechanism and the welfare states protected by national governments may be diminished, yet a truly global civilization may emerge. (2) The Skeptical perspective stresses that we undergo rather regionalization than true globalization and the third world is increasingly marginalized while multinational corporations are tied to great nation-states. As a result no global culture is formed and the position of some national governments is strengthened. Held et al. put forward the third Transformationalist perspective claiming that because there

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[204] James Fulcher, *Capitalism.* Oxford University Press 2004, chapter 5.

[205] Manfred B. Steger, *Globalization,* Oxford University Press 2009, chapter 5.

[206] J. E. Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents.* New York: Norton. 2002. See also: 'Why Has the IMF Failed Its Mission?' in *Center on Law and Globalization*, http://clg.portalxm.com/library/keytext.cfm?keytext_id=33 [retrieved 7.10.2014]

[207] D. Held et.al. *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture.* Stanford: Stanford University Press 1999.

are great many factors influencing globalization,both previous perspectives may be false.

In the next decade globalization seems to have changed, perhaps as a result of the competition between the two main perspectives described above. At first deregulation and globalization were supported by conservatives, Thatcher and Reagan, for whom private property and global expansion of Western culture were core conservative values. They probably favoured the second perspective. Later, however, conservatives lost control over the process, which led in the direction of a new neo-liberal hyperglobalist world order, with the international super-rich elite and multiculturalism. Its problems will be discussed in more detail towards the end of this book.

When negative outcomes of globalization manifested even in the U.S. (de-industrialisation, poverty of workers, the declining middle class, political correctness which blocks free discussion) Donald Trump was elected President of the U.S. promising to put deregulated globalization under control and strengthen the role of national governments.

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PART TWO - CONCLUSIONS

In this section I aim at two objectives: I summarize briefly the claims of philosophers mentioned above but in the subject order and then I add my own opinion about what seems to follow from the 2.5 thousand years' of discussion. I must warn the reader that since there is little consensus among philosophers about what follows from their discussions my interpretations may be at times subjective. However, I think it is better to present a subjective point of view than leave the reader with the impression that philosophical discussions are useless. The sections on epistemology and values are the most important. In the sections about human nature and good life I present many psychological findings.

In the footnotes I direct the reader to the two recent bold projects (both launched in 1995) that discuss and summarize contemporary developments of academic philosophy: *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* and The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Though their entries may be two difficult for beginners, they demonstrate that philosophy is flourishing and yields results.

As it was mentioned in the *Introduction*, in the history of philosophy I consider crucial the transition from the objectivist view - the world, man and values have their own structure to be discovered (and this is the aim of knowledge) and obeyed, respected - to a much different view, according to which people construct values, their nature and their goals, as well as the reality (I would not call this *subjectivism* because subjectivism was only a stage in undermining objectivism). Western culture was the first to adopt this view due to its rapid development (for which it paid a high price of suffering) and for many it still is a shocking idea. We cannot justify our claims referring to the objective reality, we have to take responsibility for them, construct them out of subjective judgements and feelings, taking into account views of others, agreeing to compromise with them and be prepared that this is an endless process of constant creation and re-creation. The process of moving away from objectivity can be observed in all areas of philosophy.

Epistemology

Initially epistemology or the theory of knowledge had been dominated by a particular rationalism - the knowledge was to be discovered by reason and developed by

logic based on deduction. In addition, the source from which true knowledge could be drawn was sought - anamnesis (Plato: knowledge is recollected from past lives), illumination (Augustine: knowledge is obtained directly from God), innate knowledge (Descartes). Sometimes observation could also provide knowledge but of a lesser kind. Knowledge was to be a true (faithful) representation of reality (natural or supernatural). Men had a passive role, they did not create knowledge, but discovered it or perhaps developed by means of syllogism (or just drew it from somewhere). This view persisted until Descartes.

In opposition to it appeared empiricism together with the postulate of extracting knowledge from reality by means of inductive methods. After a brief development from Francis Bacon to Locke empiricism was challenged by a sceptical analysis of Hume and despite attempts to strengthen it by positivism it had to admit defeat - neither general statements nor statements about unobservable objects could be justified by induction.

Hume discerned three different types of statements and this distinction was later developed by positivists: (1) statements about concepts (formal knowledge, analytic truths, a priori), (2) statements about objects or facts (real knowledge, a posteriori), (3) statements about values (which either express emotional reactions to events or formulate means to satisfy personal interests).

Knowledge can be defined as justified true beliefs. According to the classical definition of truth it is the correspondence to objective facts that makes a belief true. If a proposition (statement) is true, it has always been true even if no-one knew about it.

The opposing view is called coherentism: propositions cannot be compared with reality, they can only be compared with one another or with observations. At every time some propositions are accepted, some are rejected, about others decisions cannot be made. The aim is to develop a set of accepted propositions which is reliable (if a proposition is accepted everyone can base their action on it and reach predicted results; once accepted sentences will not have to be rejected too soon and preferably never at all). Knowledge is a set of accepted propositions. Since this set is historically changeable, what once was knowledge may not be knowledge any more (currently the proposition "the Earth is round" belongs to it, while the proposition "the Earth is flat" does not), but perhaps the term "knowledge" should be dropped and substituted by some other term, since it seems strongly connected to the classical definition of truth.

The construction of the accepted set of propositions is a process of constant adjusting accepted propositions to one another, so as to create a coherent whole. The basic rule is avoiding contradictions among them, but there are more methodological rules that are also constructed. So in fact there are two simultaneous processes - accepting and rejecting propositions that constitute knowledge of the world, and constructing methodology that guides the former process. A simple example will illustrate this. People from times immemorial have had ideas how to construct bridges or houses. They formed simple theories. When some bridges and houses proved successful while others defective, they distinguished successful theories from unsuccessful. Then they could reflect on what makes a good theory, what are the requirements that only good theories meet. They are summarised as methodology.

The processes of construing it was arduous (as briefly mentioned above). Philosophers believed in deductive method, then inductive and finally reached the stage of falsificationism, which is accepted by many scientists as the best method for selecting reliable propositions. The success of scientific knowledge strongly supports such understanding of cognition.

The solution stemming from the Popperian falsificationism emphasises one principle - that of avoiding contradictions. It makes his theory a coherentist one, based on the claim that every proposition can be rejected if it contradicts another proposition. This is opposed by foundationalists who assume that some propositions are more reliable than others and in case of contradiction should be spared at the expense of the less reliable ones. It seems that for most people propositions based on careful observations are more reliable than others and they constitute the core of knowledge (e.g. that this tomato is red). Other propositions should be adjusted to them. Observational sentences can also be rejected (e.g. Fata Morgana) but usually it is possible to reach a consensus about what is seen (here I disagree with Popper – the set to a large extent can be regarded as theory independent). New hypotheses can be added to this set if they meet the requirements of falsificationism. Eligible hypotheses must be:

- precise, clear;

- testable and falsifiable (not like claims about invisible substance in the craters on the Moon).

They can be accepted if they are:

- not falsified by experiments;

- free from contradictions;

- not endangered by alternative hypotheses (as in the case of the corpuscular and wave theories of light).

Therefore, claims about gods or demons in the soul do not seem plausible today - each of them can be counterbalanced by contrary claims and there seems to be little chance of finding rational method of choosing between them.

Building knowledge in this way is an exciting venture. It is a constant search for new hypotheses, new definitions of more useful concepts and new contradictions that force the modification or rejection of a set of hypotheses in order to reach the largest non-contradictory whole. However, it does not require the Cartesian starting point, completely certain, on which all certain knowledge may be rested. Knowledge is never certain, it is a collection of the currently most reliable hypotheses, and its development can be compared to the reconstruction of the ship during the voyage (which is the famous metaphor by a Viennese logical positivist Otto Neurath). We start with a set of accepted propositions, analyse them, compare them with each other, draw new consequences to be tested by new experiments, discover contradictions, modify them - and this process has no end.

Since any theory consists of a number of hypotheses if a contradiction is detected, it is not always obvious which of them should be modified (as in the case of Copernicanism).

Knowledge is created by professionals, experts, but anyone who would invest their time, could control their results, because they are based on an explicit method and data. Thus scientific experts differ from religious authorities, who use data, sources and methods that cannot be tested by others, e.g. the revelation.

Falsificationism enables defining good and bad strategies in thinking. One should formulate different hypotheses, test them, and be ready to reject or modify those that did not pass the tests. Bad thinking consists in not being able to formulate nay hypotheses or formulating only one and sticking to it in spite of the results of the test. Good thinking styles must also comprise ability to detect rhetoric tricks that look like

correct justifications (e.g. based on circular definitions) but they are not (at least several dozens of them are important).

Knowledge should be intersubjectively valid, i.e. what is accepted by some users of the scientific knowledge deserves being accepted by others. The foundation of it is their sensory experience. If one could see three red tomatoes and another, in the same place, four green cucumbers no agreement would be possible. (Infrequent controversies about observations can be removed by proper training or rejecting evidence as illusion or the result of vision defects). There is no such unanimity in the matter of ethics. One finds abortion repugnant, while another does not. As long as the basic moral feelings will not be as similar in different people as their perceptions of objects, ethical systems will not be as universally accepted as physical theories are.

Another basis for interpretive validity is the common methodology adopted by experts. Scientific methodology, whose core constitutes falsificationism, is simple and convincing. In comparison people discussing ethics use different justification strategies based on different assumptions (some believe that morality is objective, others that it is based on nature of the will of gods, others still stress the role of intuition). As a result, no universally recognized experts exist.

Popper, however, could not convincingly explain how to justify his method. The answers may be found in pragmatism, even if it was not the intention of pragmatists to promote the Popperian methodology. (In fact this is what Rorty and partly Davidson do.) The purpose of knowledge may be defined not as the discovery of truth, but as the construction of intellectual tools for effective action (accepted sentences are those on which future action will be based). It is still possible to ask "Is this statement true?", however, it means "Would a well-informed person using a currently valid methodology accept this statement and base his action on it?"

Certainly many fundamental philosophical questions (e.g. about God and eternal life) cannot be answered be means of the hypothetical method and yet many people feel compelled to take sides. How this can be done is difficult to answer. Agnostics claim that many such questions must be abandoned or the answers to them should be accepted as arbitrary and therefore unreliable.

This is a change in understanding of the truth and knowledge in epistemology. It began with Aristotle's classical definition of truth and the search for criteria when a

belief corresponds with reality. After more than two thousand years the search for the truth seems abandoned and replaced with the search for the methodology that selects the most useful theories. Certainly it does not mean that our scientific theories are not true in the classical sense. But they can never be proven and their being true is not the reason for their acceptability. It is the opposite. They are accepted because they are selected by our best methodology and only because of that they are believed to be true. It completely reverses the traditional model (and develops the ideas of the "Copernican revolution" by Kant). Formerly it was assumed that we should first study reality and only then accept theories which correspond with it. Now, after Kant and in line with Neurath's metaphor, theories are created, modified, chosen or rejected in a coherentist ways on the basis of available observations and the current methodology (which in turn was developed with the view of creating theories which are useful in achieving aim important to humans). Then we believe that reality is what corresponds with the accepted theories. The objective reality that determines the results of experiments is thing-in-itself never to be approached directly, while the reality we learn about at school, we talk about and believe we live in, is a correlate of our theories.

Pewnych rzeczy się nie wie. Hipotezy nie mogą być ani uznane, ani odrzucone.

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Ontology

Various concepts of being tend to involve three aspects of things that exist: (1) what is natural (physical), (2) what is supernatural and (3) what is mental. (1) For

Enlightenment or modern materialists being consists of individual objects, things around us. (2) For Plato being is first of all abstract ideas, while for Augustine it is God outside the stream of time, (3) and for Descartes and Kant but first of all Locke, Berkeley and Hume the world with which we are dealing consists of mental images constructed on the basis of sensory qualities. The adoption of the last perspective leads to the problem of how one can know anything about the world outside the mind, but it also emphasizes the role of men as co-creators of their mental content.

For Aristotle being had objective hierarchical structure based on essences, it existed independently of any cognitive activity. Objects could be defined and classified properly in one manner only. Nowadays it is more common to assume that the structure of being is the result of human cognitive activity. Objects can be defined and classified in many ways according to the purpose for which the theory is created.

An ontological issue of major importance for any culture is the building of a coherent image of the world. Initially, all cultures produced the primary version of it, which included: the division of the world into natural and supernatural, panpsychism (everything has a soul), assigning to the world of animal attributes (animism) or human attributes (anthropomorphism), the treatment of moral values on a par with the physical characteristics, final causes, the opposition of the material against the spiritual sphere, the centrality of man and earth in the world (many of them were connected to the Greek belief in the existence of the cosmic harmony subordinate to Reason - Logos). The image had been rejected in Europe at the end of the Renaissance, and the Enlightenment replaced it by mechanistic materialism later supported by science developed in a positivist manner.[208] A component of this dispute was the elimination, eventually by Darwinism, of final causes. The scientific worldview was emotionally dry and thus generally unsatisfactory. In time, however, science as well as the concept of matter, have changed and surely it is bound to change further. Perhaps it is the task of philosophy to produce a new coherent world image that would meet the requirements of contemporary people. Obviously, if human beings are parts of the material world then matter must be a mysterious and amazing thing.

Another fundamental ontological problem is the existence of **free will** (the metaphysical problem of freedom is to be distinguished from the political issues of

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[208] Clive S. Lewis *The Discarded* Image. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964.

freedom: what restrictions should be imposed on the activities of individuals in a society). There are several variants of determinism: materialistic (Democritus, Holbach, Laplace: events are fully determined by their previous states and causes), religious (events are determined by fate, divine omniscience, predestination), social (education shapes the dispositions and beliefs of man), genetic (the similarity of monozygotic twins shows that genes determine character; according to Dawkins organisms are only "survival machines" for genes), history (Hegel: history uses people to achieve its goals). Random chance (as in quantum mechanics and the Heisenberg's uncertainty principle) undermines determinism, but does not support free will. It is significant that many philosophers (the Stoics, Spinoza, Hegel) found determinism comforting, which may mean that it was a way of relieving the stress associated with freedom. Describing the relationship between freedom and necessity is one of the main tasks facing the scientific philosophy. Without solving this problem little sense can be found in reflecting upon how to change anything in life, the guidance for which is expected from philosophy.

Another important problem is the **mind-body relationship**, considered to be one of the most difficult to solve. If scientists study the brain (e.g. in the laboratories) they cannot find even the slightest hint of the mind hidden in it. Images which appear in dreams cannot be seen from the outside. They exist in the mind, but cannot be detected in the brain. When people report seeing or imagining something at best some activity in the brain cells can be discovered. Where are the images people see? On the other hand, if one starts reflecting on what one can see all of it finally appears to be mental images. From the outside Man has brain, on the inside Man has the mind. How can the two worlds - physical brain and mental mind - be integrated? Why cannot both sides of brain and mind processes be seen simultaneously? Is the mind (or its predecessor - the soul) immaterial? If so, how can it interact with the material body? Why are the two necessary? Are they two ways of viewing the same process - from the outside and on the inside (like two sides of the same page)? If both of them were created in a natural, evolutionary way, they must have different functions (if they had the same one, one would be redundant and evolution usually does not create two things when one is enough for the task). Is one of them an illusion?

The mind is not a kind of room or a theatre stage, where all images form as if a coherent three dimensional representation of reality, as it was assumed in the 17th and

18th centuries. The brain is modular, different function are performed in its different parts, and so is the mind. While talking bout the mind we mean the sum of all mental representation, "images" which are not always compatible or even exiting in one place. When we touch and see a book, we deal two separate "images" of it, one visual, the other tactile, which are later represented intellectually as one object, although the mind contains actually many different modular representation later though of as belonging to the same object. Leibniz, Hume and Kant were already vaguely aware of it when they distinguished different kind of ideas or introduced the concept of aperception as different from individual perceptions. Some philosophers denied the existence of mental processes at all (Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind,* 1949), while others interpret it as a narration developed by the brain (Daniel Dennett, *Consciousness Explained*, 1991). An example of an interdisciplinary approach is the book *The Mind's I: Fantasies and reflections on self and soul* (1981), which includes chapters by (science-)fiction writers, popular science writers and philosophers.

Perhaps an ontological issue which is still unsolved but can have far reaching implications is what of **identity** or even more generally whether the world is as collection of separate objects or of interconnected processes. Most commonly the world is conceived as composed of objects with certain qualities and relations or interactions between them. Both traditional and predicate logic describe objects as certain reference points which acquires, possess and lose certain qualities. $P(a)$ represents an object a which has the quality of P. It may stop being P, and become Q (e.g stop being thin and become fat) but it is still the same a. Buy an object which is the same object although its qualities change is contradictory. Instead of talking about the same object we should talk about a process which at a certain time can be described as thin, while at other time as fat. Does it make any difference? I believe sometimes the difference is fundamental, for instance when we ask what is good for someone. The question as such appears not to have any sense. One can ask what is good for this person at this or that moment, but also - what is good for the whole process which starts at birth and ends at death. Similarity the claim "I want to live forever" is contradictory. If I say "I want" it expresses the attitude of this "I" which exists now, but it cannot "live forever". I may only wish the process to which I belong now to continue forever but this process (and its episodes in future moments) is (will be) not identical with this "I" which wishes this

process to last forever. So even if my life will continue, "I" will not. (It seems that the intuitions of the Far East was closer to this. The idea of Saṃsāra, reincarnation or metempsychosis in Greek tradition is much easier to accept if it is understood not as the rebirth of the same objects but as continuation of the same process after apparent death.) Moreover while the intellectual apparatus of logic presents objects as having clear boundaries, treating them as processes blurs the boundaries making all processes interrelated parts of one great process, the Universe (which again is closer to the Eastern view of the world).

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God

The philosophy of God accompanied the formation of the concept of God in history. Humanity first worshipped unspecified forces of nature, then gave them a human form (anthropomorphism) and thus formed the ancient polytheistic religions. The first attempts to introduce monotheism was made by the Pharaoh Akhenaten (14th c. BCE), but it did not survive his death. The Hebrews, then conquered by Egypt, might have learned about this idea and remembered it when they began to construct an independent state around Jerusalem. Yahweh was initially only the most powerful of the gods but became the only God when monotheistic Judaism eventually solidified during the so-called Babylonian exile (6th c. BCE). In the history of religion spiritual experience of individuals was often used by the priests in order to create structure (institutions, morality) that organize social life. The idea of a single all-powerful and all-knowing God the Lawgiver was more effective than the idea of polytheists gods. It is worth noting that the human imagination is, however, decidedly polytheistic, so that even in Christianity many saints are worshipped as well as many different versions of the same Virgin Mary (related to various sanctuaries).

Philosophers first introduced the idea of immortality (Plato), then developed the Christian concept of God as a perfect being outside time and space (Augustine, Thomas), and finally concluded that his existence was unprovable (the Enlightenment).

In passing, individual concepts of God were proposed. Aristotle saw in God the ultimate final cause, and intellectual contemplation was the best way to approach him. The Stoics, Bruno and Spinoza treated God atheistically, deists recognized him as the supreme being, but not a guardian of the world.

A number of proofs for the existence of God (e.g. ontological, cosmological, teleological, as the necessary and perfect Being, and, indirectly, Pascal's Wager) were formulated. None of them turned out to be convincing (though believers often claim that they are convinced by them). It must be remembered that undermining the proof of the existence of God is not the proof of His nonexistence. A major argument against the existence of the good and all-powerful Creator is the existence of evil, including the suffering of the animals involved in the process of evolution (which certainly exist in nature, even if one denies that the evolution is responsible for the emergence of of life and the mind). Why did God not choose a less painful method of creation?

The existence and functions of religion is a separate and not quite philosophical problem. If religions have existed almost always and everywhere, and yet they are notoriously incompatible with each other and none of them has proved its truth, perhaps the universality of religion is not due to the existence of gods, but has an innate basis, which would lead to a paradox: if there are no gods, the need for religion must be innate, and so religions will always exist. Dean Hamer claims he had discovered a specific gene (VMAT2) which predisposes those who possess it towards spiritual or mystic experiences by suppressing the ability to think rationally and critically.[209]

Religions can serve different functions in society. They explain (usually incorrectly) the creation of the world and man's place in it, allow a deep spiritual experience, justify morality, support in difficult times, give hope for a future life and divine protection, strengthen the community and its authorities. They also promote false claims contradicting science, cause fear, justify superstition and fanaticism, provoke a sense of guilt, command humility when rebellion is needed, emphasize trivial doctrinal

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[209] Dean Hamer, *The God Gene: How Faith Is Hardwired Into Our Genes.* Anchor Books 2005.

differences responsible for constant quarrels, divide people into friends and strangers and antagonizes them.

Religions contribute to human development by offering a way of experiencing the world as a whole through symbolic language and great metaphors. In everyday life there are few opportunities for this and without such experience life becomes shallow. Religions offer a narrative framework in which individuals perceive their lives and from which they take strength. This is the reason why religious people report grater happiness. Although it is possible to create non-religious, e.g. philosophical, frameworks of this kind, there are few institutions involved in it and without wide institutional support only very few people like Nietzsche can create their own systems which substitute traditional religions. French Enlightenment thinkers was right that if traditional religions are found inadequate a new system, e.g. the religion of Reason or of Humankind must institutionalized.

Is the influence of religion beneficial or detrimental? One the one hand the role of religion may seem overrated. The world is better or worse regardless of religion, and due to political institutions, personal maturity, the performance and intentions of elites. Religions are often only means that do not determine the purposes for which they are used. Islam is often quoted by terrorists, in the U.S. the view spreads that the multiplicity of denominations protects freedom of the faithful (which in practice allows them to change denominations and limits the power of priests over them), in Europe atheism or agnosticism are becoming dominant. On the other hand, if we use the concept of religion a bit more loosely, so as to comprise e.g. Marxism, Nazism and psychoanalysis, we may discover that religions have always existed and perhaps always will. The problem is how to handle their multiplicity if one the one hand they are indispensable, but on the other no proof can tell which of the is right. Undoubtedly, in the globalizing world religions will not be able to fulfil one of their basic social functions – creating homogeneous communities united against strangers. Globalization requires openness and tolerance to unite people. The American solution – religious commitments are treated seriously but the state does not favour any religion – is optimal. Unless a new religion of humankind spreads.

Another drawback of religious thinking is that in case of great religions it must be based on sacred texts written centuries or millennia ago. If humankind develops

continuously how can all wisdom have been recorded long ago? A standard practice is to interpret those text metaphorically. However, if those texts can be understood in many arbitrary ways they can mean anything. How far can it go? Ecumenism encourages the view that all religions are about the same God. Perhaps the next step is possible - that God is the Universe, and humanity plays a central role in it.

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Man and human nature

For most of the history, it was believed that the nature of things (of the world, of various objects and man), their essence defines their right conduct, imposes obligations to act in a certain way. Nowadays this view seems paradoxical: either nature forces us to act in a certain way (such as the nature of ice makes it float one the water and not sink) and then it does not make sense to talk about obligations (the ice cannot behave in

any other way); or nature does not force us to do anything (I eat meat but I can alter my habit), so it cannot justify any obligations (e.g. to eat or not to eat meat). As Hume emphasised, what *ought to* be done cannot be derived from what *is*. (Today natural needs seem to be used in this way, as in Maslow's conception of self-actualization). Plato formulated his theory of forms (ideas) hopelessly confusing what things are, and what they ought to be. The idea of a soldier, that defines who should be called a soldier, at the same time indicates what is the pattern or standard of a good soldier. Aristotle assigns to all things their supposedly natural aims towards which they develop. Aquinas declared that the nature of man was created by God, and naturally tended to develop towards God, which was also the Good.

(Christianity was the most consistent in explaining why despite the fact that some goals are natural, they are not generally accepted - human nature had been corrupted by the original sin and needed mending.) Kant believed that only by acting in accordance with the rules set by the Reason we become human, which is an elaboration on the same theme - by being rational we become what we ought to be.

Darwinism and further development of science rejected this rational and normative understanding of nature. Human nature is a product of evolution, it consists of dispositions that can be developed and certain inclinations. They can be altered (e.g. by habit formation) but the very ability to do so is also natural. Nature has little to do with rationality; the linguistic and rational module in the brain is rather peripheral (Freud was close to describing it while calling *the conscious* the tip of an iceberg). At the same time compatibility with nature is not a moral norm. Jealousy and revenge are as natural as compassion and responsibility. Since all human desires, dispositions, attitudes and preferences are equally natural, and at the same time following them all is not possible, since this would lead to a contradiction, it is necessary to give up some of them to be able to develop others. Already Hobbes saw nature in this way: both freedom and security are naturally desired but since they come into conflict, it is necessary to select one of them and sacrifice the other.

Existentialists experienced the collapse of culture in the 20th c. and at least Sartre saw it as a source of new faith - men are bound to create themselves. Man and humanity choose today what they will be in future although it does not have to contradict nature. Nature (genes) created certain abilities and preferences. For example, responding to an

insult with aggression. But these tendencies may be modified for example, instead of aggression the reaction may be willingness to negotiate, which may lead to understanding and forgiveness. The development of humankind rests on acquiring new mechanisms with which human abilities might be put into different use.

Biologists seem to confirm Freud's suspicions. Regression ad cruelty is deeply rooted in human nature and can be controlled only by the collective effort producing strict social organization. Our closest evolutionary cousins, chimpanzees are, unlike some other friendly animals as dolphins, intelligence but warlike, prone to murders (like a person who has id and ego but no superego).[210] We should not be deluded that if all people would live in freedom they would build a paradise on earth. They would rather cover it in blood. What is good in humans can manifest only in carefully engineered social order which controls what is evil in them. Not hippies communities but strong (but also benevolent) government is necessary if humans are to flourish.

Nowadays psychologists rather than philosophers discuss human nature. This is a classic case of philosophical problems crossing the border into another discipline. One of the leading themes is maturation - humans develop during lifetime. Freud expressed a pessimistic vision of development - in order to survive, we all have to adapt to the requirements of society, and this raises the inevitable suffering. In the mid-20th c. Abraham Maslow[211] rejected this view and created the humanistic psychology together with his famous pyramid of needs. Its meaning is that mastering the ability to meet the needs of a lower level (because it is not possible to actually satisfy these needs once and forever) provides the opportunity to direct attention to the needs of the higher level. Until this happens, the lower levels consume so much energy that further development is obstructed. The levels of the pyramid are: (1) physiological needs (sleep, food, etc.), (2) safety needs, (3) need for affiliation (friends, love, family, community, concern for others, proximity), (4) needs for esteem (self-esteem, mastery, play a role in the world), and (5) needs for self-actualization, realization of one's unique creative potential abilities and contributing to the development of the world. Maslow in an unscientific way described his ideal on the basis of a few dozens of subjectively selected lives (including Spinoza). Self-actualized People are characterised by realism (are

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[210] Michael L. Wilson, et. al. 'Lethal aggression in Pan is better explained by adaptive strategies than human impacts' *Nature* 513, 414–417 (18 September 2014)

[211] Abraham Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, Harper & Row, 2nd edition 1970.

realistically oriented, have a more efficient perception of reality, they have comfortable relations with it); acceptance (accept themselves, others and the natural world the way they are); spontaneity, simplicity, naturalness (they are spontaneous in their inner life, thoughts and impulses, they are unhampered by convention); problem centring (focus on problems outside themselves, they are other centred); detachment (they need privacy, like to be alone but do not feel lonely, retain dignity amid confusion and personal misfortunes); autonomy (they are independent of culture and environment pressure, rely on inner self for satisfaction); continued freshness of appreciation (they have a fresh rather than stereotyped appreciation of people and things); peak experiences ("Feelings of limitless horizons opening up to the vision, the feeling of being simultaneously more powerful and also more helpless than one ever was before, the feeling of ecstasy and wonder and awe, the loss of placement in time and space with, finally, the conviction that something extremely important and valuable had happened, so that the subject was to some extent transformed and strengthened even in his daily life by such experiences."); democratic values and attitudes (they are able to learn from anyone, are humble, friendly with anyone regardless of class, education, political belief, race or colour); discrimination (they do not confuse means and ends, what they consider good or evil); philosophical, non-hostile sense of humour; creativity; resistance to enculturation (they transcend any particular culture).

One of the followers of this tradition, the British therapist Robin Skynner developed Maslow's ideas in an original way. He began by characterizing mature people and families and then expanded his study to social institutions and various areas of life.[212] Although quite provocative in form (an informal interview), his book is full of insights.

The fully mature (optimal) personality is an ideal. For the purpose of the study the population is divided into the top 20 percent (most mature), the middle 60 percent (average), and the bottom 20 percent (pathological). Their maturity is measured by six scales.

(1) Kindness to the world. The mature section is spontaneously kind to everyone, yet they are hard-headed realists, who cannot be fooled. When faced with reluctance they are not easily discouraged, and do not withdraw their kindness. They do not act out

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[212]   Robin Skynner, John Cleese, *Life And How To Survive It*, Cedar Books 1996.

of self-interest, but ultimately their attitude pays off - they are generally liked. Those less mature are characterized by reserve and distrust towards others, meticulous counting what can be gained. The least healthy are emotionally destructive and overtly hostile.

(2) Emotional Independence. The mature people are flexible and adapt quickly to new emotional situations, do not fall in unhappy love, forget losses quickly. They have no need to control others (e.g. relatives), because they do not feel emotionally dependent.

(3) Effective consulting and decision-making. The mature people accept the procedure according to which in each group (family, company, country) there is a responsible person who makes important decisions after consulting others. Those less mature prefer authoritarian or dictatorial solutions. The pathological ones live in chaos and anarchy.

(4) Free communication. All members of a healthy community openly express their views, even on matters of emotions and controversial topics, which gives a sense of freedom and joy of life, and also teaches respect for different views of the world. In less mature circles there is one dominant view on every subject. In pathological groups the strongest deprive others of freedom or chaos prevails.

(5) A realistic view of the world. Mature people see the world clearly and without illusions, unadulterated by defence mechanisms (without denial, projection or displacement and so on, with full openness to all aspects of the world). They have a strong sense of right and wrong.

(6) Good coping with change. Mature people are able to deal with many things at the same time. They are not prone to stress and quickly adapt to new circumstances.

We may ask - is this hierarchy natural? Does nature in any way suggest that it is better to be on a higher level? Certainly not. However, given the choice, many people would prefer to be "mature" according to these definitions, and the research suggests that it is possible, some people are in the top group. Those who are in lower groups usually cannot function in a different way than they do. They may reject the values of other groups, but in fact those values are beyond their reach.

According to Skynner the ultimate justification for preferring the top group is that more than anyone else they feel job satisfaction, they have friends, they can fully relax,

they can fight for themselves, they have successful marriages, live longer, and simply are happy.

A different concept of maturity and optimal growth was based on the DSM, the official American manual of mental disorders[213]. According to it, there are several distinct aspects of personality, and in every man a few of them are conspicuously manifested, and sometimes conflicting. They also change over time. Each aspect may be present in a healthy personality (although if any of them intensifies above a certain level, it becomes a specific disorder; the list of healthy aspects below is parallel to the list of the DSM disorders in the above section on psychoanalysis). The authors understand the concept of maturity as the ability to cope with life and personality discrepancies.

A. Sensitive - needs approval, is easily depressed by critical opinions, behaves sensibly and discreetly in order not to hurt others, is afraid of rejection, likes clear rules of the game, derives satisfaction from routine, does not like challenges and the unknown, is faithful and loyal.

B. Solitary – is not interested in other people, self-sufficient and independent, dispassionate, poorly responsive to pain and pleasure, criticism and praise.

C. Idiosyncratic - is a dreamer, visionary and eccentric with a rich inner life, rarely pays attention to the real world and social conventions.

D. Vigilant - is independent, does not need any help or advice, values freedom, cannot be dominated.

E. Devoted - likes to take care of others, loses boundaries between himself or herself and other people, likes teamwork, with humility forswears their own opinions and needs for others and for the sake of harmony in the group, gets easily attached.

F. Mercurial (emotionally unstable) - experiences intense emotions, likes risky adventures, spontaneity, the loss of self-control, rarely thinks reasonably, moves easily from love to hatred.

G. Leisurely - does not like to do anything to adjust or overwork, does not identify with the employer, appreciates free time, resists if someone wants something from them, does not hurry to work, fulfils basic obligations but no more, is not prone to guilt.

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[213] John M. Oldham, Lois.B. Morris, *The New Personality Self-Portrait*, Bantam USA 1995.

H. Serious - soberly looks upon the world, is thoughtful, responsible and strictly evaluates oneself and others, guided by the dictates of conscience and guilt, life is hard work for them, is faithful and stable.

I. Conscientious - loves to work hard, follows the rules, is compulsory, disciplined, thorough, stubborn, cautious and attached to objects, likes order, rarely experiences emotions.

J. Dramatic - filled with emotions, colourful and changeable, likes to be the centre of attention, is confident, likes new ideas, suffers when it gets boring.

K. Self-Confident - likes to compete and be the centre of attention, manipulates people, does not tolerate criticism.

L. Adventurous - looks for adventure (adrenaline), disregards social norms and other people, is not afraid of risk, cannot stand stability, does not suffer from feelings of guilt or anxiety about the future.

M. Aggressive - a born leader, is cool and disciplined, authoritarian, feels good in stable hierarchies, likes to decide and take responsibility, can allocate other people, is consistent and pragmatic in pursuing goals, does not lose head in danger.

N. Self-Sacrificing (altruistic) - likes to take care of others, makes sacrifices, has little fun, but often experiences positive feelings, but just as often they are depressive.

Perhaps all the qualities listed above are part of human nature.

The final stage of the psychological offensive is positive psychology, initiated by Martin Seligman, rapidly developing over the last decades in the United States, whose aim is to support Maslow's humanistic visions with hard scientific evidence.

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Happiness and the good life

One the fundamental questions of philosophy was how to live. In response to it the theory of the good life (eudaimonia) was formulated. Socrates is supposed to have asked what was the good of man in general and found it was an independent and examined life. On the Platonic absolutism and perfectionism every being had its ideal form and its good was be as close as possible to his ideal. According to Plato one had to establish the right balance between parts of one's sole and occupy the right place within the state, according to Aristotle one should have the right character based on virtues and the human essence (although both Plato and Aristotle had a version for the initiated - the contemplation of the Good and ideas). One of the ingredients of the good life was experiencing the appropriate dose of decent pleasure (i.e. from the decent source). Aristippus and Epicurus formulated an opposing hedonistic view that the purpose of life was solely the maximization of pleasure, while the development of virtues was only a means to that. From that arose a sharp distinction between *I am good* and *I feel good*, later developed into different kinds of aims to be pursued by a person. It could be:

(1) to be morally good (according to different standards) and do good things in the world;

(2) to have a life good for oneself (sometimes this is called eudaimonistic happiness, sometimes well-being);

(3) to have a hedonistically (emotionally) happy life.

While (1) to be a good person form a social point of view and (3) to have a pleasant life are intuitively unproblematic, (2) is notoriously vague. It is not clear how to decide what life is good to a person living it or even why it is important to define a concept life this, what is the use of it.

The problem of happiness is a combination of two questions which have to be answered together: what is happiness and is happiness the ultimate aim of life. Some philosophers claim that happiness is pleasure but then their opinions split, for some it the main aim of life, for others it is not. For Epicurus and later Bentham the aim of life was to experience pleasure.

Other philosophers maintain that happiness is the ultimate aim of life but usually deny that is it pleasure. For Aristotle the aim of life was to be a fully developed person

(according to his standards), which involved both having appropriate virtues and pleasure; they together formed the ultimate human good (eudaimonia).

Interestingly, happiness primarily meant a short and intense pleasure (active or passive, i.e. excitement or euphoria), but in this sense it cannot be the aim of life. The Middle Ages accomplished a synthesis. The aim of life was to become a good person, to perfect one's personality (which meant to restore its initial goodness created by God) and attain reward in the afterlife - a vision of God, which both fulfilled all human desires and brought perfect pleasure, eternal bliss.

This vision did not convince the Renaissance, which again praised worldly pleasures. Pleasure was also admired by the falling French aristocracy in the 18th c. Philosophical hedonism flourished in the works of Bentham (late 18th c.), who identified happiness with the surplus of pleasures over pain and at the same time recognized it as the ultimate good and purpose of life, to which all moral norms and virtues should be only means. (He added that it was the happiness of humankind that should be this end, not of an individual.)

Since then the construction of the concept of happiness has been in progress. What is the maximal state of personal well-being? Is it at all possible to calculate the highest possible balance of pleasures? Can pleasures derived from different sources be added together? One solution formulated by the Nobel laureate Daniel Kahneman and called the objective hedonism proposes to compare the ratio of pleasant to unpleasant periods, disregarding the intensity and the sources of pleasure.[214]

It has always been feared that, despite many declarations by the hedonists, the care about maximizing one's own pleasure could have an antisocial outcome which may ultimately threaten the development of humanity. For a long time hedonism was combated, during the Enlightenment it became fashionable (in France and Britain as Bentham's utilitarianism) but very soon even the utilitarians (Stuart Mill, Sidgwick and their followers in the 20th c. - Richard M. Hare, Peter Singer and Richard Brandt[215]) had problems defining morality as the search for pleasure. It was unclear what should be the final aim for each individual - his or hers own pleasure or the pleasure of all; as well as

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[214] Daniel Kahneman, 'Objective happiness,' [in:] D. Kahneman, E. Diener & N. Schwarz (Eds.), *Well-being:*
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why one should seek higher pleasures when he or she may be satisfied with lower ones. Utilitarians first moved from act utilitarianism to rule utilitarianism, which among others might explain why sacrifices of some pleasure are required for a better overall result. And secondly, they replaced pleasure as the aim of life with satisfaction of desires (so called preference utilitarianism): everyone has desires and preferences and seeks to fulfil as many of them as possible, an action is morally right if it contributes to the optimal satisfaction of desires of all members of society. This change in the definition of happiness (from pleasure to satisfaction of desires) was accompanied by distinguishing a positive balance of pleasure from a positive assessment of one's whole life as the aim of life (which implied that to be happy one needed to lead a life that could be assessed in a positive way, in short - a good life).

Hedonists do not give up easily. Even if everyone wants to get what he or she desires, everyone finally desires pleasure. Those who sacrifice their pleasure for other aims make mistakes, so the better informed they are, the more pleasure-bound they become.

The answer could be social pressure (of which Freud was fully aware). Even if originally one desires only pleasure, living within society forces them to abandon some sources of pleasure and seek others, more sophisticated, higher, pro-social. Thus, humans created culture and identified with it more than with nature. Each member of society may want only pleasure for oneself but require perfection from others and to achieve one's own pleasure has to fulfil the requirements of others. It is not freedom from the eyes of others interaction with their requirements that foster personal development and prevent individuals from seeking simple pleasures and falling into simple hedonism.

Contemporary social scientists studying the quality of life often define happiness as the subjective assessment of one's own life (at a given time) on a scale of 1-10. This needs not be at all related to the balance of pleasure, because one can evaluate one's life taking into account the extent to which the life complies with social requirements.

Władysław Tatarkiewicz also formulated an eudaimonistic definition: happiness is contentment (intellectual and emotional) of the whole life, full (deep), durable and justified.

Research shows that the level of the individual happiness (no matter whether intellectual or emotional) is fairly constant over long periods of time and oscillates around the same level. However, short-term moods change from moment to moment.

There are various theories, developed by psychologists, which study what determines happiness.[216] It is:

(1) A happy childhood, filled first with love, then with parental support, and finally freedom, but also discipline. According to psychoanalysis (Karen Horney), the lack of those factors causes neurosis.).

(2) Genes. The level of happiness is relatively stable, and therefore it may be genetically determined. Then it is rather the cause of life events (successes or failures) and not their result (a happy person achieves more). However, the level of happiness changes over the lifetime, which may be also influenced by genetic make-up, and tends to drop down in people aged between 20 to 40.

(3) Experienced pleasure. The simplest method of improving one's happiness is to collect pleasant events and avoid the unpleasant ones. It is relatively easy to identify sources of simple pleasures - food, sex, alcohol, drugs, relief of severe stress (e.g. after passing an exam), victory over an enemy, a sense of power, discharging accumulated emotions (such as anger). The trouble is that such pleasures are short lived and in the long run they do not bring steady happiness. It is even suspected by psychoanalysts that the more one seeks such pleasures, the more one is basically unhappy (Saturday Night Fever after a boring week). Filling one's life with pleasures requires thoughtful strategy, which include:

* Gradation of pleasures, since pleasure quickly fades (the phenomenon of habituation of the organism to stimuli - the Hedonic treadmill). Every success lasts only for a moment, a loss hurts twice as much as a gain is pleasant. Therefore, one must take care of a steady flow of success and pleasure - hence the idea of sustainable development.

* Lowering aspirations, since aspirations grow with achievements and do not allow to appreciate what has already been accomplished.

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[216] For scientific details see: Michael Argyle, *The Psychology of Happiness*, 2nd edition Routledge 2001.

* Flow, as described by M. Csíkszentmihályi[217], a strategy of engagement and the pursuit of ambitious goals, which completely absorbs the attention, diverts it from pain and provides a steady flow of positive emotions. Certainly, it does not lead to the satisfaction with life as a whole. It is, however, possible that it may result in addiction - one cannot stop even for a moment, because the feeling of emptiness follows.

* Selecting sources of pleasure so that they produce long-term beneficial effects and leave pleasant memories, which sometimes count more than the actual experience.

* Spending time with people (and extraversion) is considered better than loneliness (and introversion) for the mood. However, introverts are more creative and artistic.

* Using different stress relief techniques. Since the level of happiness may be genetically determined, instead of trying to raise it (which brings only short term results), it is better to be careful not to lower it by negligence. Excessive stress destroys happiness (stress may also trigger genes of depression). Useful strategies are: treating problems as a challenge; recognizing the positive aspects of any situation; acquiring the support of family, friends and religion - people of faith are generally happier (or at least declare so). The ineffective strategies are: frontal confrontation with an enemy; avoiding the problem ("burying one's head in the sand"); resorting to illusions, day-dreaming and shutting oneself off. Avoiding suffering is more important than seeking pleasure, because suffering takes away more than pleasure gives. However, it is hard to build good memories on avoided suffering. In the second half of life current pleasures become less important than memories and achievements. The fact that people live longer than in the past significantly changed the view on what is important in life.

* Authenticity - it is said (supposedly by Freud, but this is uncertain) that a real joy stems from doing what was dreamt of in the childhood. Doing things for money does not give the same pleasure.

* Does money bring happiness? Only to a certain level of income, unless society is deliberately organized to make life difficult for people who are not wealthy.

* Meditation and yoga are good for many aspects of life.

(4) Satisfying one's needs. Many of these needs were listed by Maslow, but some more have been added later: the appropriate stimulation (much or little incentives - both

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[217] Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*. New York: Harper and Row 1990.

boredom and excessive stress are destructive), freedom (to decide about one's life according to one's values, expressing emotions, authenticity); creativity, achievements, shaping the world around us.

Having a rich personality, able to derive pleasure from a variety of sources, promotes happiness. If someone's happiness depends only on a few sources it may collapse if they fail. It is reasonable to learn how to find pleasure in what is also beneficial for later life and to the community.

(5) The reinterpretation of one's life. Often more important than what happened in one's life is how one interprets it. Moderate illusions should be cherished, while painful episodes forgotten. Disasters should be reinterpreted. In a half-literary and half-psychotherapeutic trend called narratology it was discovered that once tragic events are described and some positive sense assigned to them (the moment of actual writing them down is essential), the trauma is alleviated. (Perhaps that is the reason why writers write about their private traumatic experiences.)

(6) A mature personality. Researchers with the eudaimonistic attitude insist that the mature personality enhance happiness or even is essential in its achievement. One should develop noble qualities of character. Perhaps not because they affect emotions directly, but because they foster reciprocity: a noble person cares about others, and they reciprocate it, which contributes to their mutual happiness. Taking pleasure from harming others is socially detrimental, so generally not welcomed by educated people and indeed risky, because it results in retaliation.

(7) Social life also affects happiness in a positive or negative way. According to Ruut Veenhoven[218] to happiness contribute: (1) material well-being, (2) political stability and legal protection of individuals (1 and 2 are usually accompanied by economic development), (3) freedom, tolerance and democracy, (4) free market and lack of business barriers.

Scientists disagree about how important is subjective attitude in happiness. Some claim that happiness arises form satisfying needs that are universal (they may differ from person to person, but do not depend on conscious reinterpretation of one's life.)[219] Others suggest that happiness depends on thinking that one has what one thinks one

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[218] Ruut Veenhoven, *Conditions of Happiness,* Kluwer Academic, Dordrecht/Boston 1983.
Ruut Veenhoven, *Happiness In Nations: Subjective Appreciation of Life in 56 Nations 1946-1992.* RISBO, *Studies in Sociale en Culturele Verandering,* nr. 2, Erasmus University, Rotterdam 1993.
[219] Rutt Veenhoven, 'Is Happiness Relative?' *Social Indicators Research*, 1991, 24, s. 1-34.

wants and changing mental perspective can considerably change one's happiness. Thus the role of the state which can persuade people that they are happy may be crucially important.

Individualism is conducive to the happiness of energetic people, especially self-made-men, but may be disastrous for people less mature and more dependent.

People not suffering from depression (which completely impairs the ability to experience happiness and requires medical treatment) find happiness in achieving what they consider valuable. This is not a simple goal. Its fundamentals are subjective - what is valued, which in practice is expressed in the form of desires (usually one wants what one values). However, the individual values may be contradictory (and then they cannot be reconciled with each other - for example, a lazy life and achieving many successes) or reckless (and then living according to them leads to frustration). If our desires are disapproved by those around us it may be the reason to change them, or live in isolation, or rebel against the views of the surrounding majority and even changing them. Once one has decided how to live and what to strive for, a success in still to be achieved. Otherwise, happiness is not possible. Faced with failures, one can change one's own desires, standards for evaluating the life and the successes, one's aspirations, the environment. All of the processes mentioned in this paragraph occur simultaneously and are never completed. Life and the pursuit of happiness are more than anything a continuous reconstruction of the ship during mid-voyage, the incessant adjustment of various factors in the name of the ever-changing aims, which boils down to being true to these or other values and desires, among them the desire to achieve success and happiness. Almost every value, desire, standard of evaluation can be changed, but only in the name of other values, desires or standards. If the world is in constant development, no achieved harmony is permanent and the process of constructing oneself never ends. This is the burden of freedom realized by the 20th century philosophers, which forces people to escape from freedom, to dependency on others, living inauthentic conventional lives. In this context the appeal of the concept of the Last Judgement may be understood - a man living in constant uncertainty finally gets rid of it by learning how much his life was worth.

Apart from situations where unhappiness needs medical treatment (e.g. depression), the quality of life can be improved by eliminating factors that cause persistent pain, such as behavioural tendencies based on ill-shaped habits that cause recurrent psychological distress (e.g. selecting the wrong job, immersing oneself in toxic relationships with people, provoking negative reactions, clinging to destructive thoughts). Those habits are often imperceptible to the person concerned and their discovery requires consultation with a good counsellor (basically this was just the idea of Freud's psychoanalysis; patients told him their life, and he corrected their mental attitudes; now a cognitive-behavioural therapy is considered much faster method).

Perhaps the essence of happiness is after all the predominance of pleaser over pain in life. Some pleasures are biological but many depend on the intellectual interpretation - to be happy one needs to have what one believes is valuable. If a government shapes the expectation of its citizens and then give them what they expect - they are happy. It is perhaps the key to the success of Bhutan, a small Buddhist state bordering with Nepal. Buddhist monks shape constantly their expectations[220] while the king organizes their life according those expectations. Although their GDP per capita is about 2 000 dollars (6 000 when corrected by the purchasing power), they allegedly belong to the happiest nations on earth and even declared happiness the main aim of their state policy (called Gross National Happiness).

Philosophers (e.g. Spinoza) searched for the permanent happiness, independent of external circumstances. However, this would pose an immense risk - such happiness might eliminate motivation for further life and the need to interact with others.

Psychologists researching happiness maintain that happy people make better citizens. Two prominent psychologist Michael Frodyce[221] and Sonja Lyubomirsky[222] within an interval of 35 years formulated similar instructions on how to care for happiness. Their recommendations are simple and clearly go beyond collecting pleasurable moments. It is a program for a sustainable development of personality well

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[220] http://www.kingdomofbhutan.com/kingdom/kingdom_2_.html
[221] Michael W. Fordyce, *Human Happiness*. Cypress Lake Media, 1974.
Michael W. Fordyce, 'Development of a program to increase personal happiness.' *Journal of Counseling Psychology,* 1977, 24, 511-520.
Michael W. Fordyce, 'A program to increase happiness: Further studies.' *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 1983, 30, 483-498.
[222] Sonja Lyubomirsky, *The How of Happiness,* Piatkus, 2010.

integrated into the world. Here is a summary of them based on the Lyubomirsky version as more precise and up-to-date. To be happier one should do the following.

Express gratitude, convey appreciation: often, for little things. It lifts up emotions and improves communication with the world.

Cultivate optimism: imagine an ideal future and believe in it.

Avoiding overthinking and social comparison: do not worry, use strategies (such as distraction) to cut down on how often you dwell on your problems and compare yourself to others.

Practice acts of kindness: overcome selfishness, altruism adds energy, radiates and makes the world a better place. Nurture close relationships with others: investing time and energy in them, friendship and love are the foundation of happiness; a lot of social contact improves mood, extroverts have easier lives.

Be active, do what truly engages you (~ engage in the flow): do not focus on the past, but the present and the future.

Develop strategies for coping: plan your tasks, practice ways to endure or surmount a recent stress, hardship, or trauma, reinterpret facts to find new meanings in them, heal thoughts, find support from others.

Forgive: let go of anger and resentment towards one or more individuals who have hurt or wronged you, it frees you from bitterness.

Enjoy small momentary pleasures: pay close attentions to them and take delight in them.

Commit to your goals: pick a few significant goals that are meaningful to you and devote time and effort to pursuing them; do not be a workaholic, goals must be internal, authentic, consistent with each other, flexible, proactive, not materialistic.

Practice religion and spirituality: get involved in activities, read, but do not become fanatic.

Take care of your body: engage in physical activity, meditating, and smiling and laughing, sleep enough.

Those findings, if they are correct, demonstrate that to achieve high level of happiness two things are needed. First, one must live in a society that is well organized

so as to respect human needs. Secondly, it pays to be a cooperative well-integrated member of such society.

Two important problems about social role of happiness are recently discussed. Firstly, whether happiness is the ultimate aim of social life. While utilitarians would answer positively, their opponents maintain that although happiness is important there are many other things people care about in life. The aim of life is to satisfy desires, especially considered desires.

Secondly, whether government should care for happiness of citizens. On the one hand there are reason to decide that only individuals should be responsible for their own happiness. However, it is obvious that in a democratic framework politicians benefit from making citizens feel happy because citizens will reciprocate this voting for them.

Further reading

Dan Haybron, "Happiness", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2011/entries/happiness/>.

The meaning of life

The meaning of life is a concept hard to define. Today, from a psychological point of view the question of the meaning of life (or its purpose, or its sense) is a question of the conditions under which life seems to be engaging. The opposite is the loss of engagement in life similar to the symptoms of depression. Philosophically the meaning may be understood as objective (somebody's life may have the meaning even if the person does not experience it) or subjective (then it is a personal conceptual framework that makes a person experience their life as meaningful). A meaningful life is not synonymous with happiness. It becomes important when life turns unhappy but finding it meaningful helps overcome its hardship. However, it is still important for happiness since it is useful in diminishing suffering and perhaps is necessary for deep happiness. A meaningful life is not the same as a worthy life, especially when seen from the outside. One can lead a life blessed by others, but regarded as meaningless by him- or herself. The perfect solution would be to discover the objective meaning and then to experience it personally and find one's life meaningful. The practical question is if one can find a life (subjectively) meaningful knowing that no single objective meaning exists. The sceptical answer might be that finding one's life meaningful is a subjective

phenomenon but to experience it one has to believe that it has objective reasons. In ideologically uniform societies where the same framework was universally accepted it was easy to believe in the objective meaning (as participating in the plan of salvation, building a paradise on earth or struggling for the supremacy of one's nation. It is far more difficult in pluralist societies.

The philosophical conceptions were preceded by religious ones. According to all monotheistic religions (Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam) God created a perfect order that was spoiled by sinful actions of Men, which now Men have to improve to deserve reward in future life. The role of men is passive - they ought to understand God's plans, obey and implement them. Those views played crucial role in organizing societies for thousands of years. They justified the need for hard work and perfecting human nature, and explained why life was full of suffering without suppressing optimism about future reward and eternal justice (requirements of obedience and promises of rewards are perhaps best combined in Islam, hence its universal appeal).

Polytheistic religions of the ancient Middle East and Europe lost competition with monotheism although they granted individuals more personal freedom. In the Far East they survived, however, their message is far from optimistic. They also stress the existence of cosmic order with which everyone ought to harmonize their lives and the need for perfecting one's nature (often in many cycles of death and rebirth). But since earthly life is full of suffering the main aim is to free oneself from it and disappear in nirvana or moksha.

Philosophers first changed those religious ideas. In Platonism, the meaning of life was either to accent to the Good by intellectual contemplation or to find a suitable place in society organized according to this Good. Aristotle retained this opposition: one should either live according to nature (the essence of every being) or contemplate God intellectually. For the Cynics the aim was to perfect virtues by avoiding negative emotions and rejecting wealth, power, health, and fame, and finally customs of society. The Cyrenaics preferred immediate gratification of desires but without losing the sense of control over their lives. Epicurus found greatest good in seeking modest pleasures. He seemed one of very few old philosophical masters who did not mourn over human finitude. Stoicism advanced the idea of subordination of one's desires to the Universe's

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divine rational order, logos, through self-discipline, apatheia, clear judgement, overcoming destructive emotions. Christianity combined the Bible, Platonism, Aristotelianism and Stoicism. Meaning of everything in the created world was conferred to it by God the Creator, required obedience, self-control, participation in God's plan, perfecting one's nature to deserve the reward - enjoying His presence in the afterlife.

The Renaissance revived ideas of participation not in God's plans but in the cosmic infinite Universe, full of different energies and hidden meanings (hence popularity of Platonism, alchemy and mysticism in style of Giordano Bruno). Religious wars of the 17th c. again emphasized fear and the need of salvation, however, later the development of Europe and its colonialism largely replaced them with the aim of creating social order that best satisfied human needs.

Liberal thinkers of the 17th and 18th c. (Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Adam Smith) contrasted the barbarous state of nature with civilisation which sought out means to balance human rights across society. Humans emerged from nature through work, and needed rights to life, liberty and fruit of their work (property) to construct civilisation whose rules had to be based on social contracts. French thinkers of the Enlightenment stressed the need for freedom from religious dogmas and the role of pleasure in life. Their ultimate aim was to build a paradise on Earth. Bentham developed those ideas. Since "nature has placed humankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure" the greatest good to be achieved is "whatever brings the greatest happiness to the greatest number of people".

Other continental philosophers also undermined traditional religious views. For Spinoza the meaning of life consisted in discovering in an intellectual way the union with God and the Universe, which were actually one in themselves, and overcoming the feeling of being a separate being torn by mundane emotions, which would result in seeing the world *sub specie aeternitatis*.

Kant may be regarded as a follower of Descartes who proclaimed the rejection of traditional superstitions and rebuilding knowledge through the use of reason possessed by everyone. Kant wanted to retain traditional morality and ground it not in God's Commandments but in Reason which formed the human essence. All those Enlightenment trends culminated in the Freemasonry movement, which influenced

Polish and American Constitutions and aimed at building perfect society based on rational principles. This was the aim of life.

The 19th c. was preceded by the Industrial Revolution in Britain and the French Revolution that destroyed the old aristocratic and religious order. Then Napoleonic wars devastated Europe. The first reaction was Romanticism, an outburst of previously marginalized extreme emotions, depression and disgust with the real world together with euphoric fascination with the realms of imagination and spirituality. Before then spiritual commitments had been organised by official churches, now they became individualistic.

A powerful vision of reality was presented by Hegel who was only partly a romantic. The history of the world is driven by the Idea that seeks self-awareness. Individuals only play the part of cannon fodder in this scenario, in which their interests and desires do not matter at all. (Incidentally the very expression, as *la chair à canon,* was coined by the French writer François-René de Chateaubriand in his anti-Napoleonic pamphlet *De Bonaparte et des Bourbons* in 1814.) It was Hegel who destroyed the harmonious vision of the Universe created for humans. For Hegel humans neither controlled the direction of world development nor could find happiness in it. True romantics understood this vision perfectly well. Schopenhauer, having found the very idea of world and development repulsive and meaningless, spent life elaborating on different ways of staying away from it seeking solace in art or meditation. Kierkegaard overwhelmed with dull routine and emptiness of everyday bourgeois life longed for intense existential experience of infinity provoked by paradoxes, choosing absurd and leap of faith.

Towards the mid-19th c. there was a new eruption of post-Enlightenment optimism. Feuerbach claimed that while worshipping God early humans admired hidden at that time potentialities of the human species which should be discovered and cherished. Individuals could find the meaning of life only by feeling parts of humankind. Comte designed the Religion of Humanity to replace Christianity. J. S. Mill advocated individual liberty as a means to develop the potential of every person, which was an end in itself.

The development of 19th-century capitalism was supported by the ideas of Malthus and Darwin. The natural world is based on evolution, which is a painful brutal

process of eliminating the less adjusted. Taking part in the rat race provided ultimate framework for life. In social Darwinism, e.g. in Spencer, competition, domination and suffering were highly praised although the aim of the whole process was obscure.

The development of early capitalism resulted in misery of the working class and later in over-regulation in many spheres of life (also personal), which was called rationalizations by Max Weber and Jürgen Habermas.[223] Three main critics of the bourgeois culture (Marx, Nietzsche and Freud) accused it of existential emptiness resulting from suppression of natural desires. According to the Messianic Marx capitalism, by subordinating people to the process of industrial production of material goods and amassing capital, deprived them of their inherent creative essence (the solution was revolution and the creation of a new social order). According to Nietzsche traditional culture was petrified ("God is dead"), devoid of life and creativity (the solution was the creation of the overman who rejected lifeless illusions (social, psychological and religious), accepted subjectivity and uncertainty, embraced the fragile temporary being as the only valuable reality. According to Freud suppression of natural desires was inevitable but it enabled the creation of culture by means of sublimation; the identification with culture and not basic desires made Man like creative God.

Existential philosophers of the 20th c. (Heidegger, Sartre, Camus and also Fromm) strengthened this perspective - the essence of Men is not what they are but the process of becoming, confronting Nothingness in front of them and filling it with their own creation.

Different religions stressed the idea of obedience to the cosmic order to be reproduced on earth as a basis for the meaning of life. They usually assumed that meaning came from a valuable general purpose or at least contact with worthwhile, higher spheres of being. It could be: participating in God's plan, having immortal soul, being immortal, creating things that would last forever. If there is no God and no plan to be part of, if we are not immortal and do not have a soul, if the world ends in billions of years, then nothing can be meaningful. The turning point was Nietzsche, for whom the fragile world around us was the only one, so accepting it and enjoying it was the only

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[223] Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, Polity Press 1985.

meaning. If philosophy has a distinct conception of the meaning of life it is based on the assumption that there is a creator. If the cosmic order exists it is the constantly changing evolutionary order or rather a process in which each person plays a different part competing with others and contributing to the development of the Universe. The history of this conception goes back to the Renaissance alchemists and Giordano Bruno and runs through Spinoza, Hegel, Darwin, Nietzsche, Feuerbach, Comte, Heidegger, Fromm, Sartre and Rorty. It seems difficult to accept that perhaps humans are responsible for the creation of their own nature and the future of the Universe, but since it resonates louder and louder in the history of philosophy it is probably what constitutes the main message of modern thought. From an individual point of view finding the meaning of life in being part of a creative and developing humanity, and through it of the Universe, has many advantages. Humanity is not an illusion, it exists and beyond doubt everyone is part of it (while any organization can expel their members). Humanity has a rich tradition, of which one can be proud, and still a promising future ahead. The concern for humanity requires the care for transmitting its potential and developing it over generations. The future of humanity is under constant creation, unlike Paradise in most religions, it may be a journey into the unknown, which for the modern man can be exciting. Humanity may be destroyed or degenerated, but then every other really existing institution will share its fate. There are more durable meanings, but they are probably based on illusions. They used to provide consolation when human life was nasty, brutal and short, filled with frustration due to diseases, war and poverty. Nowadays, following the encouragement from Faust and Nietzsche we can take the risk of searching for meaning in the real world. So far, such meaning does not include personal immortality, but it may change with the development of technology, and death is frightening for those who have not actualized important parts of their potential or feel that they have missed something important in life. Those who have had creative and intense lives, begin to think about death with equanimity. For Aristotle the closest humans could get to gods and immortality was through philosophical contemplation. Now by contemplating the history of humankind and planning its future everyone can identify with it and participate in its (possible) immortality.

Further reading

Thaddeus Metz, "The Meaning of Life", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2013/entries/life-meaning/>.

Values and morality

Axiology and morality

People constantly have to choose and do it intuitively. Sometimes they want to improve their choices (for instance when they often regret what they have chosen previously), sometimes they want to influence choices of others and find reasons to persuade them to choose otherwise. Axiology explains what to choose and since it is a rational activity it is expected to provide reasons for its claims, to justify them. Those claims either modify the existing tendencies of choice or dispel doubts when someone does not know what to select.

If something is an obligation it means that it should be chosen against the other possible actions, if something is better than the other options it also should be chosen. Ancient philosophers talked about goods, Good or goodness, the term "value" became popular in the 19th c. Individual valuable objects are goods; the qualities because of which they are valuable are values. "Democracy is a value" means that the quality of having democratic social order is valuable, so it is better if a society is democratic. Goodness is the quality of being good.

Morality constitute a special subset of values or rules that are regarded as overriding other good and norms. Morality usually specifies what is forbidden (killing others, lying, stealing) and what is prescribed (developing one's talents, helping others) - in general (e.g., Never steal) or in particular situations (When you see an unconscious person in the street, help them). Between forbidden and commanded is the realm of personal freedom - what is allowed. Within the sphere of what is allowed choices also have to made and their ground is personal. So there are two levels of rules and good - individual, which would be applied if morality did not intervene, and moral, which override them coercing individual decisions.

Axiological prescriptions what to choose may have a form of specified (1) goods/values or (2) norms. (Ad 1) The former perspective assigns value to different objects (in a wide sense - also actions, states of affairs) and prescribes to choose what is better, what has greater value. Usually many objects are means to some ends and only

ends are valuable in itself, has intrinsic value. (Ad 2) The latter perspective prescribes actions (e.g. Never kill the innocent), which are right as opposed to wrong. There is widespread discussion which of them is more fundamental. Greek axiology was based on goods, while Judaism on rules (Commandments). Both these tendencies influenced Western culture. Plato believed that Ideal forms represented ultimate standards of goodness while individual objects were more of less good. Another view which can be traced back to Ancient Persia and its Zoroastrianism decides objects into good and bad, evil. If the choice is between a bad thing and a good one, the good one should be chosen; but if there are many good things or many bad ones the best of them or the least bad/evil should be selected. Thus, it is absurd to think that bad things never ought to be chosen. Rules and values are often translatable into one another although sometimes it is easier to use one approach than the other. Kant's Categorical Imperative is one general rule that was meant to justify many particular rules without discussing values.

Some values are *instrumental*, they are means to other ends. To work hard is a means to earning money, having a successful life, contributing to flourishing of society. Already Aristotle observed that although many things were chosen for something else, some were aims in themselves. Namely the intrinsic values. They are desired and chosen to furnish the world. If beauty is valuable it means that it is better to make the world beautiful than ugly. If friendship is valuable it means that it is better to have friends than enemies or be alone. Values may be defined as preferred qualities of the world. All the intrinsic values of a person together constitute the ideal of his or her world. Values indicate which shape of the world (in different distinct spheres of life) is preferred over other alternatives.

An important contribution to the theory of value was made by the Theory of Rational Choice which describes relative importance of different values to each other taking into account resources possessed by a person who makes a choice. Someone may prefer living in a house to living in a flat, driving a car to riding a bicycle, but having limited resources has to decide whether to choose a house and a bicycle or a flat and a car.

The list of intrinsic values (desires qualities to furnish the world with) suggested by William Frankena are: life, consciousness, and activity; health and strength; pleasures and satisfactions of all or certain kinds; happiness, beatitude, contentment,

etc.; truth; knowledge and true opinions of various kinds, understanding, wisdom; beauty, harmony, proportion in contemplated objects; aesthetic experience; morally good dispositions or virtues; mutual affection, love, friendship, cooperation; just distribution of goods and evils; harmony and proportion in one's own life; power and experience of achievement; self-expression; freedom; peace, security; adventure and novelty; good reputation, honour, esteem, etc.[224]

Intrinsic values (what is simply good - simpliciter, *tout court*) are often contrasted with what is good for a given person (what is pleasant or useful for their self interest). Historically speaking in ancient times many moralists drew a distinction between what was good for a person in the short run and in the longer perspective of the whole life (and advised to choose the latter, e.g. the sophist Prodicus in his *The Choice of Heracles,* reported in Xenophon's Memorabilia 2.1.21–34.). Plato advocated the view that pursuing one's good should be subordinated to pursuing good simpliciter (though the term was introduced much later) and it is philosopher who defines what is good in itself or as such.

Already Aristotle distinguished what is good as (1) what is really good (the noble), (2) what is good for someone (the pleasant), and what is (3) good as means to something else (the advantageous), (*The Nicomachean Ethics,* Book II, 3, 1104 b).[225] Aquinas accepts this distinction in Latin as (1) scilicet bonum, idest honestum (the good or virtuous); delectabile (the pleasurable); conferens, idest utile (the helpful or useful). Their opposites are scilicet malum, idest vitium, quod opponitur honesto (evil or vice as opposed to the virtuous,); triste, quod opponitur delectabili (the sorrowful as opposed to the pleasurable); nocivum, quod opponitur utili (the harmful as opposed to the useful).[226] The main opposition is between the noble good - what must be done, what imposes obligation; and the pleasurable good, what people what to do as it good for them.

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[224] William K. Frankena, *Ethics*, second edition, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall. 1973, pp. 87–88.

[225] "There being three objects of choice and three of avoidance, the noble, the advantageous, the pleasant, and their contraries, the base, the injurious, the painful" Ross, David *Aristotle The Nicomachean Ethics: Translated with an Introduction* (Book II, 3, 1104 b). Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1925, Re-issued 1980, revised by J. L. Ackrill and J. O. Urmson, http://www.virtuescience.com/ethics2.html [pobrane 1.11.2013]

[226] COMMENTARY ON THE NICOMACHEAN ETHICS by Thomas Aquinas, translated by C. I. Litzinger, O.P., Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1964, 2 volumes. Book II, lecture 3, comment 273. http://dhspriory.org/thomas/Ethics2.htm#3 [pobrane 1.11.2013].

In the Modern Era the good in itself was replaced with the good for society and later with the sum of what is good for different individuals. Towards the end of the 19th c. the opposition against utilitarianism grew. Many philosophers (e.g Gorge Edward Moore, Nicolai Hartman, Max Scheler) claimed that they valued many things more than their private pleasure or even maximisation of social pleasure. Moore rejected the very notions of good for somebody holding that everyone acted towards what he or she considered good absolutely. However, when it came to defining what is good absolutely those philosophers had to resort to intuitions which in spite of their efforts appeared inevitably subjective. A subjectivist view was concisely exposed in Moritz Schlick's *Problems of Ethics* (*Fragen der Ethik*) written in Vienna in 1930. What followed was that although not always the aim of action is selected by what is good for the agent it is usually selected on the basis of what is good from this person's point of view, according to this person. (A clear support for subjectivism was articulated in one of the clearest books on meta-ethics ever written *Podstawy nauki o moralności* (The Foundations of the Science of Morality) by a Polish student of G.E. Moore Maria Ossowska, which unfortunately was not translated into foreign languages.)

The terms "subjective" and "objective" are used in different meanings. What is objective is independent of human attitudes or activity, what is subjective is the product of them, especially of human minds. There are many attempts to explain how human attitude can determine what is good. Perhaps more important is the opposition between *absolutism* (if something is good, everyone is expected to accept it) and *relativism* (what is good according to one person may not be good according to another). This should not be confused with being good for somebody (rain may be good for farmers and not for tourists but everyone can agree about it).

Since Western philosophy is said to be a series of footnotes to Plato, it is not surprising that it was him who formulated this opposition in the *Euthyphro*. It should be thoroughly understood. Either (1) the gods like (approve of) something, and therefore they (and we) call it good (in Plato: pious), or (2) things are good in themselves and the gods, knowing this, approve of them. The Sophists supported the former view, subjectivist and relativist. Plato's teacher Socrates advocated the latter, objectivist view, which prevailed in Western culture for more than two millennia slowly giving way again to subjectivism in modern times. (I do not claim that this view is dominant

nowadays. Most religions oppose it. Many philosophers still held that values were objective and imposed obligation to act in a certain way. In Poland Henryk Elzenberg and Władysław Tatarkiewicz advocated such views.[227] However, in Anglo-American philosophy subjectivism was prevailing throughout the 20th c.)

Reflection on values and morality may be descriptive or normative. Study of values may reveal what different individuals and societies believe in. However, the essence of axiology and ethics is normative reflection on what *ought to* be done, valued and chosen. It is fairly unproblematic to justify instrumental values, i.e. means to an end, or (to some extent) what is good as a specimen within a species, what is a good knife. In fact it may be counted as a part of the descriptive study of values. The justification of intrinsic values is a major normative issue. Moralists preach "You choose this, while you ought to choose that. It seems good to you, while really good and worthy of choice is that." Can it be justified? Or even more importantly - what does "justified" mean in this context?

Main historical approaches to values and morality

Morality of absolute goodness

Choices are made by individual people according to their preferences and desires. Social life from the very beginning shaped those choices very strictly. Early humans had no privacy, they lived in small tribes and were all the time watched by others, so they did not even know that they can disobey or have private opinions. Primitive societies had collectivist morality, accepted by everyone in the community (though of course not always obeyed) without asking about justification. It arose in frequent everyday face-to-face contacts and was imposed on individuals. The whole community accepted the same rules, and nobody even demanded reasons for them. (It is significant that even when Confucius formulated his famous ethical system he omitted any justification of it; later it was accepted only because it was taught by teachers with authority.)

In larger societies the elites appeared and separated themselves from the masses. Even if the elite fostered morality which protected their privileges in their own interest society was developing as a whole.

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[227] Henryk Elzenberg, Pojęcie wartości perfekcyjnej [w:] *Wartość i człowiek*, Toruń 2005. Władysław Tatarkiewicz, O bezwzględności dobra, [w:] *Droga do filozofii i inne rozprawy filozoficzne, Pisma zebrane* t.1, PWN, Warszawa 1971, s.264-289.

Suddenly Greek democracy supported individualism and relativism of the Sophists, who were willing to recognize that goodness was what societies accepted. This aroused the fury of the authoritarian Socrates, who (according to Plato) formulated a philosophical conception of the Absolute Good - existing independently of human decisions, discovered intellectually and demanding obedience.

The objectivist axiology has three main forms. What ought to be approved is (1) substantively good, or (2) in agreement with nature, or (2) ordered by gods.

(Ad 1) Plato believed in the Good exiting objectively, independently of human activity. The forms (which were standards, patterns for different classes of objects, qualities required from them) participated in the Good which made them universally valid. An individual soldier or table was better when it was closer to the form, ideal of a soldier or a table.

(Ad 2) Aristotle described the particular pattern of a man (based on virtues) which he tried to justify by reference to human nature and the Logos (rationality of the whole Universe).

Although Socrates claimed that it was enough to understand what was good to obey it, both Plato and Aristotle appreciated the role of the state institutions needed to enforce good conduct. Thus they ensured philosophers a prominent place in the social structure - they were advisers to the elites. It initiated long-lasting friendship between philosophers and politicians. Philosophers provided politicians with theories which justified their rule, while politicians respected philosophers and implemented their theories. Today this approach is criticized as paternalism but at the time when educated people were few it strengthened social organization and spread intellectual values, which made Western culture unique.

(Ad 3) Jewish tradition, based on commandments (e.g. the Decalogue) that is norms rather than patterns of excellence, drew morality from the will of God. On the surface the purpose of obedience was to avoid the wrath of God and gain His favour. However, the social function of Commandments is obvious (they secured the position of priests and were beneficial for the whole society), which must have been tacitly assumed by the priests. When the Jewish covenant with God was less beneficial, Messianism emerged, Jesus came and the benefits were expected in the future – after entering the Kingdom of Heaven.

Christianity, when it became the official religion of Rome, and later of Europe, has weakened the ascetic elements of Jesus' teaching, and reinforced the Old Testament worship of the almighty Creator. The current mundane world, though far from God, became progressively less bad (cf. Augustine's theory of evil, Thomas' hierarchy of beings). Thomas connected the justification of moral norms with the appeal to human nature. God is good, so things created by Him are good. God created human nature so men would seek goodness under the guidance of reason. Thus, the pursuit of goodness and obeying the moral norms is a natural process, disturbed only by the original sin.

All of these concepts of goodness belong to the objectivist "horn" of the *Euthyphro* dilemma. What is good (1) can be discovered and (2) ought to be respected and obeyed just because it is good (or in accordance with nature of God's will).

Both these fundamental claims are problematic. How do we know what is objectively good? Why should it be respected and obeyed only because it is good? Philosophers have argued endlessly about what was objectively good and right, but it was the rulers who terminated discussions by decreeing the standards for their countries. The mysterious property of "being good" is being discussed till today.[228] If something is good (which does not yet mean "approved") why should anyone desire it? If somebody justifies that circling around every hundredth tree passed in the street is good, should this be done because it is good? The absolutists might answer that if it is good it ought to be done, however, it would be absurd to claim that it is good. One can then point out that the proponents of absolute goodness despite their grand assurances never presented a method of discovering what is objectively good (they often relied only on their own intuition).

Already Hume held that claims about values do not follow from claims about facts alone. Looking at the world one cannot see any rules, norms or moral natural law. In the 20th c. Mackie[229] reaffirmed that there was no such property in the objective world which would impose an obligation to act in a certain way. An object is good if it satisfies the requirements which are imposed on it by some social practice. Kraut believes that the concept of absolute goodness was invented in order to persuade people to do something they do not want to do. When something is neither pleasant nor in

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[228] Richard Kraut, *Against Absolute Goodness*, Oxford University Press, 2011.
[229] John L. Mackie, *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong*. Harmondsworth: Penguin 1977.

someone's interest, it can still be argued that it is simply good and therefore should be done.

In addition, every objectivist position has its specific disadvantages.

Platonism. Things are good when they come close to their patterns of excellency (a perfect soldier, flute player, knife). But how are those patterns created? It is easy to see that they are created by people – since the aim of soldiers is to defend the country, it is expected of soldiers to be brave. In the absence of such consensus no universal pattern arises. What would be a good holiday, a good car, a good house? The patterns are subjective, because people have different tastes. Plato took into account a few commonly accepted patterns and overgeneralised that every object has a commonly accepted pattern.

Aristotelianism. Nowadays it would be difficult to conclude that nature sets goals to be achieved by people. Or event that human nature is rational. Natural is what is genetically determined (often it is aggression, jealousy or sadism), which is not always accepted as good by common standards. Natural mechanisms are often disgusting, and since they are constantly changing no timeless standards can be based on them. Fidelity to nature is not a virtue.

Thomism. Despite attempts to show that reason discovers moral guidance in the world, religious morality is mainly based on the revealed texts. Since the Enlightenment proofs of God's existence have been questioned, those texts may be mistaken. The multiplicity and diversity of religions undermines religious justifications of morality.

Social good and social contract

The Modern era, which began with the collapse of the medieval order, undermined the faith in absolute goodness. Suddenly it was realized that everyone could have different views, which might result in chaos. It may be prevented either by a strong ruler, or by a kind of social compromise.

Transition to the new paradigm was done by Hobbes. Man has natural needs and rights (e.g. security and freedom) but may decide to abandon them, for example, when they come into conflict with each other (clinging to freedom leads to the lack of security). This concise theory contradicted the whole tradition. Good is what people want. Morality is a means to achieve that goal. Basic conflicts arise between members

of a society, and therefore morality must be the result of a social contract, a compromise between individuals. Neither God nor absolute goodness is needed, and although human nature makes some human desires similar in everyone, it does not prevent conflicts (it is the opposite, similar desires provoke conflicts, for example, when everyone wants to be at the top of the social ladder).

However, these revolutionary ideas required time to be comprehended and accepted. The Age of Enlightenment was the era of reform and rebellion against the Catholic aristocratic tradition. The existing morality was considered a superstition based on deceitful rhetoric leading to injustice. It was necessary to create new morality based on social contract to protect individuals against evil (suffering) and enable the attainment of pleasure (good). For Hobbes, the contract was to be a formal one, and needed to be signed. For Hume it was an informal process of adjustment (such as when two rowers adapt their movements for the common benefit of setting the boat into motion). For Locke the basic values (life, health, liberty and property) were self-evident (they were rather basic needs which had to be satisfied to ensure the progress of humankind) and not included in a contract, which determined only ways of their execution. For Rousseau, the emergence of the agreement was to serve the public and it would cover all aspects of life, but in its development an important part was the extraction of the will of society (general will) from wills of individuals. This will was to determine all norms and goals valid in a society and was supposed to be imposed on everyone. In Britain after the Glorious Revolution 1688 the optimism about social contract prevailed since the economy flourished. Smith and Hume emphasized the natural mechanisms which made the consensus or contract possible - empathy (called sympathy), which made people sensitive to the suffering of others; the willingness to create an internalized observer, which promoted the same criteria to judge oneself and others; well thought out self-interest which led to a compromise in the name of maximization of benefits.

Kant rejected this British approach and trying to save the traditional morality (based on rules rather than consequences, and on doing the right things instead of maximizing benefits) he found the Enlightenment justification not in the will of God or Absolute Goodness but in the universal law of Reason. The main aim of morality, which should be obeyed with good will and without any interest, was to serve some

deep rational intuitions about what should be done. We want to do it but not because any self-interest.

Smith and Hume were not reformers, they rather believed that the empowered public would spontaneously develop the best possible morality. Reformist tendencies flourished in France and after some time returned to England to manifest themselves in Bentham's utilitarianism. He proposed a thorough reform of the British legislation, which in his opinion was in a deplorable state. In the spirit of the Enlightenment egalitarianism ("everyone counts as one"), and on the basis of a renewed hedonism (pleasure is the only value and goal) he proposed universal ethical principle, which measured the values of actions in terms of social happiness.

Throughout the Enlightenment it was generally accepted that morality should serve the whole society, which is made up of equal individuals. Each may be allowed to be guided by self-interest, only if it ultimately benefits all (Smith and Hume), otherwise selfishness must be suppressed (Rousseau, Kant). Enlightenment optimism survived in the works of Feuerbach (*Das Wesen des Christentums* 1841) and Comte (*Système de politique positive* 1851-1854), who believed that the rejection of superstition would lead to human moral flourishing.

Grounding morality in social contract involved two problems: (1) what is the content of morality and (2) why obey it. The simplest answers were that the content was determined by the whole society and that it should be obeyed because all its members agreed to it. Both of them proved very dubious.

(Ad 1) The role of a social contract during the Enlightenment was seen as very limited. Contract was not an agreement in which free individuals could codify whatever they wanted. Enlightenment thinkers assumed that people have natural needs which should be coordinated, adjusted to form a flourishing society. Social contract or agreement is the justification of moral norms but its content was not in fact negotiated by individuals. Only Hobbes (before the Enlightened) assumed that the basic decision - to prefer security over freedom - was the result of people's free choice. Others assumed that the content of the contract either arose spontaneously (according to Hume or Smith) or should be designed by philosophers and imposed on citizens who lost direction (Rousseau, Kant). Negotiations or consultations were necessary only to detect basic needs (Rousseau) or to strengthen methods of executing morality (Locke).

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(Ad 2) The idea that the contract is binding because it was agreed upon by everyone is even more dubious. No such formal agreement ever happened. And if it happened why should it be biding for the next generations. Any contract can be terminated by those who agreed to it. And finally - anyone can cheat, first agree to a contract, demand respecting it from others but violate it themselves. Such behaviour cannot be punished as immoral because it is only the contract that defines what is moral or immoral. Someone who only pretends to agree to a contract but violates it in fact does not accept its rules so does not break the contract. So, for this person keeping promises is not good or right, and cheating may not be wrong. If this person is punished it is not on the basis of a contract but as a result of decisions of those who have real power in society. (Morality or law do not have any force over people. If they work and organize social life it is because of people who decide to accept certain rules and then execute them out of their free will.)

The idea that morality serves the good of society is only partly acceptable. Some basic requirements are universal, societies whose members steal, lie and kill other members freely would disappear together with their moral systems (this explains why all existing societies respect certain values). However, beyond that rudimentary level opinions differed about what was good for society. Should a good society be based on monogamy or polygamy; wars or peaceful commerce; hard work or leisurely pursuits; economic equality or inequality; tradition or progress; perfectionism or permissiveness; one religion, many of them or atheism; state intervention or free market? Should divorces and same sex marriages be allowed? It is impossible to decide on many values on the basis of what is good for society. The opposite is true - what is considered good for society depends on the accepted values.

And above all - is the aim of every person to adjust to a good society and serve its good? The nineteenth century discovered that individuals were more than building blocks of societies and quickly wiped out the optimism of the previous era.

Individualism and subjectivism the 19th and 20th c.
After the Napoleonic wars Europe departed from the ideals of the Enlightenment.

Hegel questioned the ideals of the Enlightenment: social harmony and a paradise on earth. The essence of history is war, its aim is the progress of self-awareness of the

Idea, not building efficient societies for humans (here Hegel opposed both the Enlightenment and individualism). No single morality is possible, since every age and nation produce their own and different ones. Hegel declared historic relativism - moralities are products of the development of humankind. What was right at one stage may be wrong at another.

Modifying Hegel's system Marx thought of morality as relative to the class which produced it. It makes no sense to ask what is good, because what is good from the point of view of one class, may not be good from the point of view of another. Perhaps one could find the ultimate justification in the historic progress: the values of the winning class are the right ones. If workers were to defeat the bourgeoisie their values would be better.

Darwin (or rather social Darwinists) heralded another departure from the ideals of the Enlightenment. A species is not the sum of its members, it is rather a certain characteristic pattern (later identified with genetic information) that is transmitted and developed over time. The good of the species lies in the good of its best members only (that is why 90 percent of crocodiles die in their infancy). There is no reason to treat people as morally equal, on the contrary, morality should favour the strong because they represent the essence of every society.

Anarchist movements, which became popular in the mid-nineteenth century, clearly demonstrated individualistic trends in moral and political thoughts. Ideas of philosophical anarchism were first forcefully formulated by William Godwin (*Political Justice*, 1793), then developed by Max Stirner in Germany (*Der Einzige und sein Eigentum*, which translates literally as The Unique Individual and His Property, 1844), Pierre-Joseph Proudhon in France (*Idée Générale De La Revolution Au XIXe Siecle* - General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century, 1851).

J. S. Mill developing utilitarianism unveiled its fundamental flaws. The principle of the greatest utility (pleasure, satisfaction, happiness) may lead to intuitively unacceptable behaviour (e.g. it justifies taking the life of one person for a small increase in happiness of thousands of others). It can be prevented by introducing rule utilitarianism (which prohibits such practices as having long-term negative effects[230]). It

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[230] Although the distinction between rule and act utilitarianism seems obvious, intuitive and present tacitly in many nineteenth century utilitarians (J. Austin, *The Province of Jurisprudence Determined*, 1832), it was made explicit only by R. Harrod ("Utilitarianism Revised", *Mind,* 1936, 45: 137–56), while the terms were introduce by J.O. Urmson ("The Interpretation of the Moral Philosophy of J. S.

is even worse that if one could achieve the greatest pleasure by discarding any concern for the future and noble dimensions of life, utilitarianism would have to recommend it. Trying to prevent this Mill distinguished between higher and lower pleasures, but it was equivalent to admitting that there are values that justify giving up some pleasures (it is better to choose a smaller amount of a more valuable pleasure than a greater amount of a less valuable one) thus pleasure is not the only value. Mill, who resembled Nietzsche in some respects, was much more individualistic than his liberal predecessors. While for Smith introducing individual freedom was best for the development of society, for Mill the development of individuals was a value in itself (although he believed that it also benefited society). Mill also observed that to experience pleasure human attention had to be directed to aims other than pleasure (in fact this paradox of happiness has been known for a long time). To achieve most pleasure, pleasure cannot be the only goal, things other than pleasure must be valuable in themselves, and not only as means to pleasure.

Utilitarianism caused considerable resistance. George Edward Moore attacked it by distinguishing two kinds of pleasure - before and after taking a decision. What we aim at is not what brings most pleasure when achieved but what is thought of with most pleasure.

William David Ross maintained that certain actions were good (the so called *prima facie* obligations) as well as some values (knowledge, beauty). The validity and hierarchy of the rules is given intuitively. However, the final decision about what to do must be taken by a responsible moral subject who cannot be helped by rules on how to weigh different reasons against each other because rules of this kind do not exist. What makes individual choice even more difficult is that apart from rules Ross admitted also good aims to be achieved (e.d. wisdom, beauty).

In a similar vein, though in a more sophisticated way German ethicists from the turn of the 19th and 20th c. Nicolai Hartmann and Max Scheler formulated their theories. According to Hartmann the objective hierarchies of values existed, although there was no easy way to discover them. For Scheler values were discovered through

Mill". *Philosophical Quarterly* 1953, 10: 33–9) and Richard B. Brandt (*Ethical Theory*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall 1959, pp. 369, 380). For detains see: Brad Hooker, 'Rule Consequentialism', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/consequentialism-rule/>.

direct emotional experience. The spontaneous approval (or love) indicated good and disapproval (hatred) indicated evil.

From this short reminder two things should become obvious. First, that according to ethical intuitionists things other than pleasure were often considered (or felt as) valuable. Secondly, that is was impossible for ethical intuitionists to reach agreement on what these values were (they suggested different sets of them and their hierarchies, representing both teleological and deontological approaches). This raises the suspicion that the subjective states indicated by them (feelings of approval or disapproval) do not disclose any objective values, common and existing independently of their approval or disapproval, but express subjective and individual attitudes. They first approved of something, then called it good. Willingly or not they represented the subjective horn of the Euthyphro dilemma - good is what is approved. Approval is not a symptom of goodness, approval constitutes goodness.

Darwinists and Freud offered an explanation of moral intuitions. From Darwinism emerged two disciplines which investigated the evolutionary basis of the psyche and society (evolutionary psychology and sociobiology). They systematically explore the evolutionary roots of moral norms which impose themselves as intuitively right because they are enshrined in the genes. It is postulated that the tendency for revenge, jealousy or reciprocity (close to the Golden Rule) proved to be beneficial in the process of evolution, offered a better chance of survival and thus became part of the genetically determined mental equipment.

Freud developed the theory of the super-ego, or conscience, which houses moral standards (what should be done) and the ideal of the self (what should be achieved in life, whom one wants to be). The conscience is formed in childhood as a result of indoctrination by parents and society. The voice that speaks inside grown-ups and requires certain behaviour is in fact the voice of their educators and society to which they belonged.

However, as Sartre stressed, neither the pressure of the past millennia of evolution nor social tradition restricted human freedom. Even if revenge seems an obvious response to an insult or the inner voice orders turning the other cheek, one can always distance themselves from those reactions and ask, "My nature and my upbringing favour this solution, but what is the right solution in MY opinion?"

Radical subjectivists went still further explicitly rejecting the existence of objective good that could be discovered and considered binding to all.

Nietzsche, who was condemned to tragic loneliness and illness, proclaimed the "death of God" and the collapse of objectivity. Humans are biological organisms, what we call true or good are just our personal opinions which must serve our lives. Master morality and slave morality serve different people with different personalities. Everyone creates their own morality and is free in deciding what to approve.

Alfred Ayer (*Language, Truth and Logic*, 1936), an English proponent of positivism, believed that the essence of moral judgements was emotional reaction to events (it can also be regarded as a symptom of approval or disapproval, although Ayer's formulation was more radical).

Sartre recognized not only that valuations were based on a free choice of values, but that choosing values was also an act of creating oneself. This may be further elaborated: personality grows around the accepted values.

Finally, on the outskirts of the philosophy appeared cultural relativism (with Ruth Benedict as one of its exponents; *Patterns of Culture*, 1934). In the era of colonialism, Western civilization believed their values were better than those of the conquered cultures. To oppose it, the founders of cultural anthropology began to promote the theory that every culture created its own system of values that optimized its functioning. A single rule cannot be extracted from the system and compared with the equivalent Western rule. If a system of rules makes a culture able to develop it is as good as any other system of a well developing culture.

Cultural relativism, reminiscent of the views of the Sophists, causes at least two serious problems. First, it does not give any guidance on how to resolve disputes about values and norm within a given culture. Relativism implies that every culture (or civilisation) is a homogeneous, coherent regulatory system that as a whole is matched to the needs of people living in it. But often it is not the case. Every culture evolves changing its social structure with new inventions. New problems arise and there must be some method to solve them, other than an appeal to the existing customs.

Secondly, relativism does not provide the tools to resolve conflicts when different cultures come into contact. If representatives of another culture are abusing their children in the next room, because their culture allows it, should we tolerate it? If a

Hindu widow wants to be burnt together with the deceased husband, should representatives of Western culture allow this to happen? Halting of human sacrifice is the standard reason justifying interference of the Spaniards in the culture of Native Americans. But if such interference is justified, why prohibit Arabs actively combating Western freedom, which they believe offends God?

The morality of reflective equilibrium and social compromise

The situation of Western ethics in the face of subjectivism is unique, different from any other culture. How is it possible to resolve disputes over moral problems (or in fact all axiological problems) if everyone can have their own values? How normative ethics is at all possible? How can one say: you approve of this, but you ought to approve of that? Does it not boil down to saying: you approve of that and I do not? (This is what Schlick maintained.[231])

A contemporary answer to these question can be split in two: How an individual crystallises his or her own values; and how people within communities negotiate morality. Although both processes are simultaneous they have different mechanisms. The former are studied under the label of reflective equilibrium, the latter of social contract (contractualism or contractarianism). After rejecting realist justifications of values, this approach combines what was discovered during the Enlightenment (social contract) and later (individualism and subjectivism).

Personal systems of values and the reflective equilibrium

It is generally accepted that certain things are approved or desired, while others are disapproved. Certainly, different people find may differ in their opinions. (Nobody ever questioned this fact, however, ethical realists claimed that when opinions about values were split some of them were wrong.) What is approved by a person is good according to him or her. Being good according to someone must not be confused with being good for someone. A rain may be good for a farmer, and bad for a hiker, but they both may agree about it, according to each of them a rain is good for a farmer and bad for a hiker. On the other hand, two persons may disagree about what is good for everyone. According to one of them it is living fast and short; according to the other leading healthy, boring and long life.

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[231] Moritz Schlick, *Problems of Ethics* (1930), New York: Prentice-Hall, 1939.

What is good according to a person cannot be equated with what is pleasant for this person. As Moore pointed out what is good is thought of with pleasure but not necessarily brings pleasure. I may think that telling the truth is good even if lying might be more beneficial to me and thus more pleasant.

Anchoring morality in the subjective acts of approval and disapproval may be further developed as grounding values in desires. If I value democracy over dictatorship, I prefer one to the other, and I desire the world to develop within a democratic and not dictatorial framework. This solves the problem of why one should do what is good or right. Good and right means the same as approved, accepted, and the essence of approval is that one wants what is approved to exist. Approving of something is a mental disposition to choose what is approved. Another question is why a person approves of this and not that. However, when something is approved or disapproved (e.g. abortion, same sex marriages, stealing, lying and so on) the question why to act in accordance with what is approved does not make sense.

Two reservations must be made here. First, things are not just approved and disapproved, but generally one thing is approved more than others, is preferred to others and this is a basis for our choices. Things to be chosen are better or worse. This is why instead of approval and disapproval it is better to talk about preferences.

Secondly, approval can be declarative or factual. Since mind is modular, it often happens that one of the modules approves of what another disapproves. Someone may condemn alcoholism, and be subjected to it. It may not necessarily be a case of hypocrisy or intentional creation of appearances. This may indicate a tragic dilemma or a conflict between the psychoanalytical consciousness and subconsciousness. A philosopher might ask where is the real *I* of man, the self - in the consciousness that approves of certain values, or in the unconscious mind (or just the body, the organism outside the consciousness) which forces a person to act against those values. Or maybe in such cases the coherent *I* able to resolve this contradiction does not exist at all and could be created as a result of a long psychotherapy.

Desires may be conflicting so the next step is to bring order into one's desires or values. If one wants to eat a lot and be slim his desires contradict each other. To fulfil one of them the other ought to be avoided (the *conditional ought to* has a conditional meaning here, it specifies means to an end as in "If you want to make tea you ought to

have hot water"). The process may be arduous. Someone wants to achieve a lot, and at the same time is lazy. This often results in frustration, which may be unpleasant. A contradictory system of values (or desires) leads to contradictory recommendations: do something (to succeed) and do it not (because of laziness), which again is frustrating. The person has incentive to revise the system of values. She can either stop being lazy or give up the desire for achievements.

Certainly one can undertake contradictory actions and act after the strongest desire at a given time. This rarely leads to a lasting success. That is why axiology is needed even in the sphere of personal choices. Being exposed to frustration people construct their selves (or character in more traditional terms, or strong ego in Freud). Experiencing different conflicting desires at different times they select some as dominant and stable and suppress or at least control others which help them navigating in reality (although does not guarantee a success - sometimes after many years of being on a stable course they decide they are not what they would like to be).

The utilitarian Henry Sidgwick[232] suggested that the good should be identified not with what is desired but with what would be desired if the person was perfectly well-informed about all consequences of their possible desires and choices. In the example, a person starts with certain initial desires which appear to be contradictory or incoherent. Thus, it is impossible to say that those desires define what is good according to them. Only when they become well-informed about the possibilities of improving their desire and when they finally make up their mind whether to give up laziness or ambitions, their desires become well-informed and qualify as a valid definition of what is good according to them.

Some additional comments are necessary. First, the desires in question may concern anything, not only one's personal life, e.g. the future of the Universe.

Secondly, the condition that the system of values/desires may not be contradictory is not a universal condition. Most people prefer to avoid contradictions since they cause trouble. However, if a well-informed person decides to pursue contradictory aims, their choice cannot be challenged. (Seeing that changing any conflicting desires may be difficult the person in the example may finally prefer the frustration from living with contradictory desires over the frustration from unsuccessful efforts to change them.) It

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[232] Henry Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics,* Macmillam, London 1907, bk. 1, ch. 9/4 pp. 111-112.

is possible to define what is good according to a person as what she would desire if her desires would achieve the state of coherence which she herself desires.

Thirdly, it is by no means certain that a well-informed person who wants to avoid contradictions would have coherent desires. A well-informed alcoholic may desire to stop drinking and at the same time desire to drink.

However, fourthly, the whole definition is mostly useless. If the good is what should guide human action, how can one be guided by one's idealised desires if all he knows are his actual desires. How can anyone know what he would desire if he was perfectly well-informed? If he knew it would mean that he already was well-informed, but his well-informed desires would be actual? All that follows from the requirement of being well-informed is that the better one is informed, the more trustworthy are his desires. In other words: if one becomes better-informed and changes his desires, his new desires are better than his old ones. (Even this is by no means obvious. Someone may claim that when he was ill-informed about the real world as a child, his desires defined better what was good according to him, since they were more authentic. A romantic may maintain that the more we know about real world, the more we become corrupt.)

A similar solution was suggested be Rawls in his *Theory of Justice*, which he called reflective equilibrium. It is a state of balance among different ethical beliefs created as a result of deliberate mutual adjustment among general principles and particular judgements. They begin with "considered judgements" of an individual. Considered judgements are basic axiological convictions of a person, both individual (attitudes towards events) and general (accepted rules and principles). Some of them represent deep moral convictions as described by intuitionists. If the judgements are conflicted in any way, they are being adjusted until "equilibrium" is reached – a stable state that eliminates conflicts between judgements and provides consistent practical guidance.

"The method of reflective equilibrium consists in working back and forth among our considered judgments (some say our "intuitions") about particular instances or cases, the principles or rules that we believe govern them (…). An acceptable coherence requires that our beliefs not only be consistent with each other (a weak requirement), but that some of these beliefs provide support or provide the best explanation for others.

Moreover, in the process we may not only modify prior beliefs but add new beliefs as well. (...) In practical contexts, this deliberation may help us come to a conclusion about what we ought to do when we had not at all been sure earlier. (…) The key idea underlying this view of justification is that we "test" various parts of our system of beliefs against the other beliefs we hold, looking for ways in which some of these beliefs support others, seeking coherence among the widest set of beliefs, and revising and refining them at all levels when challenges to some arise from others."[233]

The method of reflective equilibrium seems to neglect the role of the free choice. If one has conflicting desires, they can be adjusted or improved in many ways. One can give up laziness to have achievements - or vice versa. One can give up freedom to find more security - or vice versa. Scrutinize one's existing desires does not give clear answer on how to make a coherent whole of them. It is the person in question who must decide. How is the final decision made? One hypothesis, suggested by Damasio[234] is that the crucial role is played by emotions. Each option has its emotional value. They are weighed against each other by the emotional machinery of the brain and the outcome is presented to the mind. Another hypothesis[235] stresses the role of desires about desires, which are in fact rules on how to deal with basic desires (e.g. avoid contradiction; practice what you preach): some of the may be ethical principles.

However, this is still only a coherentist method of adjusting different opinions of an individual. It does not justify them as absolutely true. Different people starting with the same considered judgements may arrive at different equilibria, even one person may sort out his or her judgements in different ways. When judgements of many persons are taken into account the chances of reaching one common equilibrium are negligible (though Rawls was unwilling to admit this).

Many people may want to be free and to be safe, but seen this mutually exclusive, some will give up safety while others freedom. Perhaps the clue is that we do not compare and adjust opinions but desires. Desires has strength. Some people desire freedom more that safety while with others the opposite is the truth.

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[233] Norman Daniels, 'Reflective Equilibrium',*The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*(Winter 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta(ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2013/entries/reflective-equilibrium/>.

[234] Antonio Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain,* revised Penguin edition 2005.

[235] Harry Frankfurt, 'Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person', *Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 68 (1971), pp. 5-20. Reprinted in John Martin Fischer (ed.), *Moral Responsibility* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986).

Social contract

If everyone followed his or her individual system of values, social life would become chaotic and unpredictable. Some persons would prefer to tell the truth others to lie and no one would know whom to believe. Society needs fairly stable rules that override individual preferences. Those rules are established as a result of social contracts. The tradition of social contract stemming from Hobbes has been described above.

Contemporary discussions of social contact as the basis of morality and law split in two streams - *contractualism* (referring to Kant) and *contractarianism* (referring to Hobbes).[236] Contractualists (including John Rawls and Thomas Scanlon) seek ideal norms which all persons would jointly will if they adopted the perspective of free and equal citizens. Contractarians (e.g. David Gauthier) assume that morality results from agreement between real people and reflects their bargaining power.

Contractualism

Contractualists first define hypothetical situations in which a contract is agreed upon (e.g. Rawls' original position) and then hypothetically indicate what its content would be (e.g. the Rawlsian rules of justice), and finally recommend their use in the real world. This raises serious doubts about both the content of the contract and its binding force - why real people would respect the hypothetical contract. Critics argued that the hypothetical contract is not binding for anyone,[237] and that the contents of such contract may be freely manipulated by adopting different sets of assumptions which determine the hypothetical foundations of contracts.[238] As a result it cannot be said that arguments of Rawls prove anything - he finds in his contracts only what he put in it himself while defining the original position.

Contractualists believe that the essence of morality is fairness, visible in this formulation of Kant's Categorical Imperative which postulates that man is always also an aim in itself, and not just a means to someone's aims. However, it seems that

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[236] Will Kymlicka, 'The Social Contract Tradition' [in:] Peter Singer (ed.), *A Companion to Ethics*, Wiley-Blackwell 1993, pp. 186-196.

[237] Ronald Dworkin, "The Original Position" in *Reading Rawls*, Norman Daniels, ed. Oxford: Blackwell, 1975, pp. 16-53.

[238] Bruce Ackerman, *Social Justice in the Liberal State*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980.

contractualists (especially Rawls) are more concerned with equality or care for others and are motivated by respect for their dignity or by compassion. Impartiality is not crucial in this - Darwinism is also impartial: all are fighting for survival on equal terms, and the weak perish. (It is also not certain if the essence of Kantianism is egalitarianism. Neither is Kant favouring the Golden Rule. It is also possible to understand his position as urging to transcend personal needs and aim at something bigger.)

Seeking the essence of morality in impartiality, fairness and equal treatment of all human beings is much older than the idea of social contract (as in the Golden Rule ubiquitous in the history of ethics). Richard Hare[239] founded his system of universal prescriptivism, in which (in gross simplification) a person is justified to utter an Ought-to sentence only if being in a similar situation he would be ready to submit to the same obligation. One can say "you ought to help the poor" only if one is willing to help them too.

Another difficulty in Rawls' system stems from the ideal nature of its norms - they characterise a timeless, perfect morality. Would such a morality be useful in the real world, where people are full of flaws? (Similarly, Jesus advocated morality, which would fulfil its function only in the Kingdom of God. Someone who would follow it in real life would be defeated or condemned to martyrdom.) In the ideal world there will be no psychopathic thugs, but they exist in the real world and morality must decide how to deal with them.

Other contractualists are John Harsanyi, Stephen Darwall and Nicholas Southwood and Thomas Scanlon.[240]

In Scanlon's version real people are involved in consenting to a contract, not using the veil of ignorance, but jointly determining which actions are bad. (Scanlon essentially focuses not on values but on rules.) Generally speaking, an action (or a norm) is bad, evil, wrong if one cannot justify it to others, and it is this fact that makes

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[239] Richard M. Hare, *The Language of Morals*. Oxford: Clarendon Press 1952.

[240] John Harsanyi, *Essays on Ethics, Social Behaviour and Scientific Explanation*. Boston: Reidel 1977.
John Harsanyi, "Morality and the Theory of Rational Behavior." In: *Utilitarianism and Beyond*, Amartya Sen and Bernard Williams (eds.), Cambridge University Press 1982, pp. 39-62.
Thomas M. Scanlon *What We Owe to Each Other*. Harvard University Press 1998.
Stephen Darwall, *The Second-Person Standpoint: Morality, Respect, and Accountability*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2006.
Nicholas Southwood, *Contractualism and the Foundations of Morality*. New York: Oxford University Press 2010.

it bad. „An act is wrong if its performance under the circumstances would be disallowed by any set of principles for the general regulation of behaviour that no one could reasonably reject as a basis for informed, unforced, general agreement".[241] The badness or wrongness of an act does not stem from its inherent qualities but from the very fact that it is socially unjustifiable.

The weakest point in this theory is the central criterion for wrongness. What does it mean that principles disallowing an act could not be reasonably rejected? If this should be understood as the actual rejection, then probable for each action a person could be found whose principles allow or disallow the action. Moral opinions are divided.[242] If the criterion should be understood as ideal, hypothetical rejection (or its lack), than an additional normative criterion must be introduced, clarifying when a principle (or their set) could (or rather: should, in a normative sense) be rejected. This criterion is not based on any contract, any actual agreement, but must be accepted a priori, or at least prior to any contract. Then again, as in Rawl's version, morality rests not on any real agreement but on a criterion defined by a philosopher. (It seems that any norms agreed upon by real people are determined by what they individually consider good. However, according to Scanlon what is good is determined by what could be justified. It runs the risk of a circularity. Nothing can be justified without determining first what is good; and what is good is determined on the basis of justifiability.)

However, one point in Scanlon's system deserves special attention. It seems that the author was eager to construct morality in analogy to scientific theories. If we move from the classical definition of truth to a cohenerentist-pragmatist definition of knowledge we can define the aim of science not as discovering objective truth by as constructing the best theories on the basis of given evidence and accepted methodological rules, e.g. assuming the Popperian methodology (perhaps with some adjustments) and having gathered a large number of astronomical data the Einstein model of the Universe is better than the Newtonian model, although they both accept the Copernican model, and are far better than the completely outdated Ptolemaic model. No-one who accepts the hypothetical methodology and a set of astronomic and other physical observations could prefer the Ptolemaic model.

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[241] Thomas Scanolon, *What We Owe to Each Other,* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998, p. 153.
[242] Thomas Nagel, *Equality and Partiality*, Oxford University Press 1991.
Thomas Nagel, "One-to-One", *London Review of Books*, 4 February 1999.

A similar tendency can be found in Scanlon. If we assume that there is a commonly accepted set of principles, what is morally wrong is what cannot be accepted by anyone sharing this set. The Scanlonian methodology is certainly not as well developed as the scientific methodology (and in fact one can predict serious dissimilarities between them), but the basic assumption is similar: what matters is not the objective truth or goodness, but what can be accepted by people sharing common basic principles (which may comprise both methodology and considered judgements).

Contractarianism

The contractarian approach was clearly expressed by the economist James Buchanan[243] even before Rawls propagated his contractualism. *Calculus of Consent* is considered a path-breaking book in the field of public choice. Buchanan assumed that the aim of a state, the good that is to be achieved, must be determined by the actual desires of its citizens established in the procedure of voting. The result is easily obtained when a project, about which a decision is taken, is beneficial to all. When opinions are divided, this is a challenge for the voting system. (It seems that Buchanan is overlooking the difference between voters who elect politicians, and politicians who do actual bargaining and trade-offs.) In his view there is no tension (explored during the Enlightenment) between the common good and private intents. Only individual good (or in fact individual desires) are real. The common good cannot even be defined independently from individual desires. At best the common good can be defined as the state of affairs that is desired by everyone. But then the conflict between individual desires and the common good is by definition impossible. In political reality we encounter only conflicts between individual desires of different persons - and compromises between them.

(Buchanan uses Pareto's optimization. A solution is optimal if it cannot be improved without worsening the situation of at least one participant. However, Pareto offers an illusory strategy in solving social problems. In many cases every possible situation is optimal, even if it is glaringly unjust, while every change is against Pareto optimality. If a sum of money is divided between many people, every change in the way it is divided will result in someone having less than before, so every change will not be

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[243] James Buchanan, Gordon Tullock, *The Calculus of Consent*, University of Michigan Press, 1962.

Pareto optimal. It is almost impossible to change the world in a way that does not hurt anyone. Adopting the requirements of Pareto optimality will then stop any changes, which will be evidently suboptimal and not welcome.)

Another contractarian is David Gauthier, who uses procedure of rational choice theory.[244] On the surface, he adopts a realistic perspective. A contract is consented to by real people, each of whom tries as much as possible to realize their preferences. (Gauthier uses the term "self-interest", but he understands by it all values and desires of a person. If someone wants to work for the benefit of others - this is his self-interest. Many commentators, e.g. have overlooked this fact, accusing Gauthier of reducing all aims to egoistic self-interest. e.g. Virgina Held who criticized Gauthier for promoting the concept of homo oeconomicus.[245]. On the other hand his use of the concepts of the rational choice theory may be not perfectly suitable for comparing altruistic desires. So although Gauthier stresses that someone's self-interest is what is good according to the person, not what is good for the person, his concepts may favour the attitude of consumers aiming at amassing possessions. It is still possible that basing morality in negotiating self-interests may trigger selfishness in many people.) Before trying to satisfy them preferences should be put in order according to the standards of the choice theory.

* Preferences of a person should be coherent (if A is preferred to B, and B to C, then A must be preferred to C.)

* The same preferences must be expressed consistently in verbal declarations and behaviour.

* Preferences should be considered (rest on reflection and deliberation) and based on experience with things which are preferred.

"Morals by agreement offer a contractarian rationale for distinguishing what one may and may not do. Moral principles are introduced as the objects of fully voluntary ex ante agreement among rational persons. Such agreement is hypothetical, in supposing a pre-moral context for the adoption of moral rules and practices. But the parties to agreement are real, determinate individuals, distinguished by their capacities, situations, and concerns. In so far as they would agree to constraints on their choices,

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[244] David Gauthier, *Morals by Agreement.* Oxford: Oxford University Press 1986.
[245] Virginia Held, *Feminist Morality: Transforming Culture, Society, and Politics.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press 19093.

restraining their pursuit of their own interests, they acknowledge a distinction between what they may and may not do. As rational persons understanding the structure of their interaction, they recognize a place for mutual constraint, and so for a moral dimension in their affairs." [246]

Contrary to Rousseau Gauthier allows bargaining and mutual concessions of the parties to create a contract. Finally he arrives at a general guiding principle of morality (i.e. the restrictions placed on spontaneous behaviour of individuals). The four main pillars of his postulates are:

(1) the existence of the morally free zone afforded by the perfectly competitive market - nie ma takiej strefy (*MA* ch. IV);

(2) the principle of minimax relative concession (morality should minimize the maximum relative concessions of each party to the bargain), which is somehow equivalent to the priniciple of maximin relative benefit (*MA* ch. V);

(3) the disposition of all persons to be constrained maximizers, i.e. to seek success accepting constraints on personal desires (*MA* ch. VI)?

(4) the proviso against bettering oneself through worsening others (that is the constraint of Pareto-optimality; *MA* ch. VII),

All of them are dubious. (Ad 1) Free market requires a strong moral and institutional framework, which prevents crime, dishonest competition, monopolization and exploitation. (Ad 2) In cases of non consumer choices it is impossible to measure concessions, e.g. when some want to introduce driving on the left, while others on the right. (Ad 3) Being a constrained maximizer is not as much a part of morality as its prerequisite, which is neither common nor rational for egoists. As the prisoner's dilemma, the tragedy of the commons and the free rider problem demonstrate it is often reasonable to avoid constraints while imposing them on others. (Ad 4) Pareto-optimality is impossible to observe in many cases and if it is observed it does not guarantee justice.

The rules postulated by Gauthier seems seem to me unreasonable and inconsistent with the whole theory. If morality is the result of a compromise between individuals, it is based on the simple principle that those who have greater bargaining power more effectively promote their own preferences (although preference may be, for example,

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[246] Gauthier, *Morals by Agreement.* Oxford: Oxford University Press 1986. Chapter 1, 3.1.

the spread of universal compassion). No additional general principle is needed or even possible. (If we assume the principle of maximin, it privileges those who have the greatest requirements, because a solution that requires the smallest concessions will be the best for them.)

Both Rawls and Gauthier seem to use rhetoric instead of careful argumentation. Both assume liberal assumptions (it is individuals with their personal desires who negotiate the content of morality) only to depart from them and promote their own preferences, socialist in case of Rawls and free markets in case of Gauthier, which they present as objectively optimal solutions. It shows how little the paternalistic attitude of philosophers have changed since Plato and Aristotle.

However, the problem is much deeper, because the scene has changed completely since Plato and Aristotle. For millennia philosophers assumed that there was a true morality, the one and only set of goods to be pursued and norms to be observed, at least in a given community but preferably in every community and at any time. They aimed at discovering and justifying it. Step by step consecrations had to be made and by now the project has virtually collapsed. The adoption of the conceptual framework of rational choice theory makes seeking rationally justified morality difficult if not impossible. What does it mean to be rational or to find a rational solution? If one has preferences (or in fact desires, which are more actual than preferences) and knows what resources she possesses to satisfy them (in simple economic situation: how much money a consumer has to buy what she wants), it is possible to calculate the best combination of desires to be satisfied. This is an example in individual rationality. However justifying morality requires a different method. A group rationality must be defined. Morality is supposed to be a set of rules that would satisfy in an optimal way the desires of a society. I doubt if rational choice theory could be of much help in justify morality. Realistically speaking if on knows what are the desires of different persons and what is their bargaining power one can predict what compromise will be reached. If desires, social resources and bargaining power of individuals change, the compromise will change as well. Historic evidence is abundant. Young societies (with low average age) prefer freedom and risk, while old ones safety. Different sets of rules were imposed by different social groups (aristocracy, capitalists, the Bolsheviks, the Nazis, neo-

liberals) when they seized power and then abandoned when they lost it. Apart from some obvious common elements, whose abandonment would result in the self destruction of a group, differences are significant while the main general rules are those which relate the content of any morality to desires of its members, whichever they are.

Predicting the shape of morality will take in a given society is not the same as justifying it. It seems that rational choice theory is unable to justify morality because it lacks criteria for social rationality. Individual rationality seeks solutions which would best satisfy individual desires. If such a solution is found it counts as its justification. But there in no analogy on a group level. Society does not have one set of desires to be satisfied. Only individuals have desires. And what is equally important only individuals are motivated to undertake an action on the basis of reasons, deliberation and choice. Rational choice theory can determine what actions would be optimal according to every individual member of a society but not according to society. Individual rationality can also suggest what morality (if adopted by the whole society) would suit best desires of a given person. But it cannot specify what morality would suit a whole society because the content of such a claim would empty. Nothing can suit a society because societies do not have desires, emotions, will etc. Individuals have their desires, they can calculate what kind of morality they would prefer to exist in their society but their opinions will be split. Then they can bargain and finally reach a compromise. This compromise will constitute a morality for this particular society at this particular moment. This compromise may suit different individuals to a different degree, so each of them may undertake further actions to change the compromise so that it suit this persons desires better. (This activity is well known and called lobbing.) The theory of decision is can perhaps predict what compromise is most likely to be reached. This does not justify it. Every individual can evaluate the compromise differently. And what is equally important, the compromise may change with every change of individual desires and the braining positions of their possessors.

Let me illustrate it again with the Hobbesian dilemma. Freedom and security exclude each other. Young people in a given society may prefer more freedom even if it means insecurity, the elderly would prefer more security. As an outcome of bargaining and lobbying the parliament may introduce laws which grant either more freedom or more security. Always some people will be more satisfied with it than others. Can

anyone asses what is best for society? I doubt. Different persons have different opinions what it means to be good for society. The old would say that security and stability is better, while the young that freedom and and fun makes society flourish.

Even if it can be predicted what compromise will by most satisfactory for individuals in a given society it may not motivate them to seek it. Every individual is interested in compromise that will be most beneficial to himself or herself. Only personal desires motivate individuals. This is the pitfall of seeking good for society. Even if such good could be defined the fact that something is best for society (or statistically for its members) is not a reason which can motivate an individual to strive for it.

Preference utilitarianism

A new form of utilitarianism is called preference utilitarianism. The aim of Bentham's classical utilitarianism was to take into account what was good for individual people (which was technically called utility), calculate the best method of aggregating it (to find the best social sum of it) and finally make the maximisation of the social sum of utility the ultimate aim of human action. Specific moral norms should be deduced from it as means to this ultimate aim. For Bentham utility what was good for individuals was pleasure.

Classical utilitarianism seems to me both dangerous and arbitrary (in fact not only unjustified, but contradictory to the point of absurdity). It is dangerous because assuming that pleasure is the only aim of life may easily lead to degeneration and abandoning all perfections goals in life. Perhaps reducing human ideal to striving for what is good for individuals, even if it is not pleasure, would be equally harmful. Certainly, pleasure and what is good for individuals are important in ethics but not as the sole foundation of morality. To make things even more dangerous the whole project of Bentham is paternalistic to the point of totalitarianism. (It is worth remembering that Bentham also designed a perfect prison in which prisoners would be constantly watched by guards hidden from their sight.) Bentham, in much the same way as Rousseau, demanded that once the ultimate end was established every action should be directed towards it. (John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* extolled freedom but this book has little to do with the spirit of utilitarianism.)

Utilitarianism is arbitrary and unjustified when it adopts the principle of utility (an action is right if it best promotes general happiness). Although utilitarianism rejects intuitionism the principle of utility cannot be supported without recourse to intuitions. Everyone, according to Bentham, aim at his of her own pleasure. Being moral, which means aiming at the maximisation of social pleasure, can be either irrational (if one has a strong intuition that it is right; this is what Sidgwick suggested) or done under legal pressure (in which case taking care of the social good is instrumental and serves one's own good; this was the original Bentham's proposal).

The 20th century preference utilitarianism changed the definition of utility. It is not pleasure (or the surplus of pleasure over pain), but satisfaction of desires or rather preferences.[247] Preference utilitarianism assumes that the only good is having one's preferences satisfied, fulfilled (no matter weather this causes pleasure or even is beneficial to the person in question). Morality is based on the maximisation of utility on a social scale or rather average utility, which means that a morally right action is that which results in the greatest satisfaction of all existing preferences (perhaps combined with the requirement that they should be satisfied in a just way, e.g. proportionally: it is better to fulfil preferences of every person in, say, 60 per cent than preferences of some of them in 80 per cent while those of others in 20 per cent).

Preference utilitarianism adds new problem to the old faults of its classical predecessor.

(1) Preferences are abstract concepts taken from rational choice theory. What matters in real life are desires not preferences. I may prefer to go to Mars than to Venus, but I do not desire either journey so this preference is irrelevant in my life.

(2) The very idea of comparing preference satisfaction is vague. If I have just desires - to drink a glass of water and to spent five years travelling round the world - does it mean that no matter which one I fulfil, I will have 50 per cent of my desires satisfied? If two persons have two desires each (*A* wants to eat scrambled eggs and to drink tea, *B* wants to establish a world wide corporation and to have a palace on a Pacific island) is it a fair deal to satisfy one desire of every person (50 per cent of the existing desires)?

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[247] Richard M. Hare, *Moral Thinking*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1981.
John C. Harsanyi, "Morality and the Theory of Rational Behavior", *Social Research*, 1977, 44 (4): 623–56. Reprinted in Sen and Williams (eds.), *Utilitarianism and beyond,* Cambridge, 1982.

(3) As in classical utilitarianism moral requirements are set to high. Everyone was obliged to devote all their energy to biding a paradise on earth, maximising the social sum of happiness. It is unreasonable to demand from everyone to care all the time for the pleasure of others. Changing pleasure for desires is not an improvement. In simple cases (who should occupy a parking space if two persons need to park their cars) it is a matter of a simple decision, but in many cases satisfying desires requires substantial efforts and is a reward for this effort. That is why people should strive themselves to satisfy their desires. If someone is constantly more hungry than others does it mean that others have a moral obligation to feed him? In preference utilitarianism it is society as a whole that is obliged to satisfied desires of its members. All should try and fulfil desires of all. As with the saying by Marx "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs"[248] it would encourage people to have great desires, do not care for resources and expect others to satisfy them.

(4) Desire satisfaction is not a measure for what is good for a person. If I desire life was discovered on Saturn there is nothing good for me in it. My desires and preferences often express what is good in my opinion. It seems that the proponents of preference utilitarianism have not noticed that defining personal good not by pleasure but by what is desired leads to abandoning the concept of *good for someone* and replacing it with *good according to someone*,[249] although the difference between them seems often overlooked (as by a recent proponent of grounding ethics in what is good for individuals, Richard Kraut[250]).

(5) In classical utilitarianism (a) every person was supposed to aim at his or her own pleasure, but (b) morality required that every person aimed at the maximization of social pleasure. In preference utilitarianism everyone has personal preferences and desires and additionally should have moral preferences and desires which override the former.

Where do they come from? Why do they override personal desires? If, as many 18th century British moralists suggested, human action is motivated by desires (which

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[248] Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Program,* Part I. 1875.
https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1875/gotha/ch01.htm [retrieved 14.8.2013]

[249] Thomas Hurka, `Good' and `Good For' *Mind, New Series*, Vol. 96, No. 381 (Jan., 1987), s. 71-73.

[250] Richard Kraut, *What is Good and Why: The Ethics of Well-Being*, Harvard University Press 2009, and *Against Absolute Goodenss*, Oxford University Press 2011.

were sometime called emotions or passions), moral desires (even if called second order desires) must still be someone's personal desires to play any role in making choices. According to Harsanyi human behaviour should be rational and ethics should help find the best choice under given circumstances and preferences. He distinguishes three levels on which decisions are calculated - individual rationality, game theory rationality and moral preferences.[251] The ethical level serves the common interest of society and is based on impartial preferences. The paradox, overlooked by Harsanyi, is that every choice is made by someone on the basis of his or her desires. To use impersonal ethical preferences/desires one must desire it personally. A person taking a decision has several different and often conflicting desires, must compare them, weigh them, and choose the option which satisfies them best. To do this individual rationality is enough - one compares only his or her desires, even if they are aimed at universal peace, happiness and so forth. Moreover, what counts as moral also depends on personal preferences. Some people choose morality of compassion, others are social Darwinists, some believe in egalitarianism others are elitists. Even if they decide to take into account moral requirements which override their personal interests they themselves determine the content of those requirements.

Utilitarianism is basically an Enlightenment project which substitutes objective goodness of Plato and Aquinas with what is *good for* individuals and society. Although what is good may be subjective in different senses (pleasure is experiences mentally, desires depend on individuals) the outcome should be objective. After scrutinizing what is good for individuals the good for the society is strictly calculated and them becomes the ultimate good to be pursued by everyone in every situation.

This project never worked well and the main reason (apart form many important but minor technical difficulties) is that what is good for individuals is an empty concept. People take decision on the basis of what is good according to them. If they take into account their personal interests it also is *what is good for them according to them*. Let's consider a paradigmatic example used by Kraut: smoking cigarettes is bad for a person if it harms her health. That smoking is bad for a given person is an objective fact, Kraut claims and tries to construct morality on facts of this kind.

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[251] John C. Harsanyi, "Morality and the Theory of Rational Behavior", *Social Research*, 1977, 44 (4): 623–56. Reprinted in Sen and Williams (eds.), *Utilitarianism and beyond,* Cambridge, 1982, s. 42-45.

In my opinion it is not an objective fact. It may be true that if a given person smoked 20 cigarettes a day he would die of lung cancer at the age of fifty. But is it necessarily, objectively bad for him? The person in question may compare two options (1) have a nice small pleasure twenty times a day and die at fifty being spared ageing, and (2) live up to seventy five under stress without those small pleasures - and decide that he prefers and desires the former. Then (1) is *better according to* the person (or it better for him in his opinion). The question whether it is objectively *good for* the person can neither be answered nor is important.

Ethical theory of the 21st century?

In ancient times and in the Middle Ages ethics was based on the concept of *objective absolute goodness*. The modern era with its peak in the Enlightenment favoured the concept of *good for* (more subjective and yet still objectively calculated). Now both those paradigms seem contradictory, self defeating and outdated. Philosophy rejected them and disclosed the burden of our responsibility (in the Sartrian sense) - all we have are our personal preferences/desires which define what is good according to us. We compare them, coordinate them both individually and interpersonally, reach agreements which are always unstable equilibria based on subjective element and equally subjective criteria applied to them. This is an ongoing process without any eternal rules to be discovered and observed. There is no point in searching them. There is no-one who could tell us for sure what is good or bad, right or wrong, not even at the Last Judgement. All we can do is to engage in this process and enjoy it.

Critics of this perspective lament over its subjectivity. "If there is no God (that is objectively justifiable standards) everything is allowed." The world returns to chaos. Perhaps Spinoza and Hegel could cure this anguish. What happens in our brains and minds is not subjective (and thus unimportant) individual creation of thought, opinions and desires. My thinking is not necessarily my individual activity, as Descartes claimed. It is the Universe that is thinking in me, as in everyone else. Human species is unique. It is in human minds where the Universe attains self-awareness. The proses of creating, formulating, expressing and discussing thoughts, opinions, ideas may be one of the most important processes in the Universe, through which this whole of what exists develops. Perhaps our individuality and free will are illusions. We are only parts of this

great develop/ment, vortexes in which thoughts of the Universe crystallize and come to existence.

It cannot be excluded that finally the shape of morality (and actually the whole development of societies and even humankind) is affected by forces over which people have no conscious control (for Catholics it is the Holy Spirit, for Hegel the spirit of history, for Marxists the laws of historical development, while for Richard Dawkins genes, for which people are only survival machines). However, their existence would count as circumstances of human decisions and not as reasons for them. Genes may influence human decisions (like rain can make tourists change their plans) or even what people consider good, but this does not constitute an argument for what should be considered good.

Another problem is what is the scope of the compromise. Traditionally moralist were talking about basic goods and/or norm which reduced to a certain core morality. Although such core morality can be often found (and its existence can be explained by genetic tendencies installed in the long process of evolution), equally important are numerous rules and institutions which constitute the whole social order of e given society. The core morality can be as small as a few basic commandments, *prima facie* duties. As of late one of the proposals of the general rules that serve as a basis for social order was formulated by L.P. Pojman (in his textbook written for the West Point Military Academy):[252]

1. Do not kill innocent people.
2. Do not cause unnecessary pain or suffering.
3. Do not steal or cheat.
4. Keep your promises and honour your contracts.
5. Do not deprive another person of his or her freedom.
6. Tell the truth or, at least, don't lie.
7. Do justice, treating equals as equals and unequals as unequals.
8. Reciprocate. Show gratitude for services rendered.
9. Help other people, especially when the cost to oneself is minimal.
10. Obey just laws.

This may be a compromise wise people arrive at. The reasons to adopt it may be that they help create the world in accordance with common human intuitions and set up a framework within which different individual aims may be pursued. It is, however, not true that from those general principles all other norms and values could be deduced. On

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[252] Louis P. Pojman, *Ethics: Discovering Right and Wrong,* Wadsworth Publishing Co Inc 2002, ch. 3, pp. 50-51.

the contrary, those principles form a skeleton which can be supplemented with different extensions. And those additional elements are equally important. It is not only, as many contemporary textbooks suggest, problems of same sex marriages and rights of animals. It is also questions of how rich the rich can be, what are the basic rights of the poor, how privileges should be divided, what should be the major concern of societies - develop understanding of arts or having large houses full of material possessions. I doubt if maximizing individual happiness should be a moral aim. If perfect happiness could be achieved thought the administration of drugs which would make the whole humankind peaceful, stupefied and cheerful, although unproductive, this would not be worth attaining although it could count as happiness. So not every kind of happiness seems worth attaining (at least to us as we are today).

A moral and political order is then a result of the interplay of individuals endowed with subjective preferences. If it is justified at all its justification is that it arose as a result of a social contract, but in fact it is created by all members of a society in the process of bargaining. The bargaining power of individuals plays a crucial role. In democracy it is supposed that the majority takes final decision. It overlooks the role of the elite. Every society requires an elite, skilful persons who can govern and run the state, and it is reasonable that their preferences (no matter if they are egoistic or not) have greater impact on the whole system than the preferences of others. On the other hand, if the majority become dissatisfied with the elite it may lead to a revolution in the course of which almost everyone loses. So although the shape of morality is the result of social interplay of everyone with everyone, some have more privileged positions which also involves more responsibility. The sheer use of power by different parties is mitigated by commonly accepted rules of bargaining.

Rawls himself rejected bargaining solutions to social contract since, in his opinion, such solutions relied on threat advantage and "to each according to his threat advantage is hardly a principle of fairness."[253]

Rawls' reservation is justified. If all parties of a contract retain their disparate views and preferences, the achieved compromise may not satisfy anyone. Such a compromise would always require concessions which would be interpreted as hurting. Then it will be challenged by anyone who will see an opportunity to impose his or her

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[253] John Rawls, "Justice as Fairness", *Philosophical Review* 1958, 67(2): 164-194.

own views and rules on others and thus the compromise will be unstable. In fact an individual can feel safe only when a compromise is accompanied by a fairly wide consensus, a foundation of commonly shared values and preferences concerning how a society should be organized. People faced with the complexity of real decisions, can agree to some general rules which they would require from each other. This can be the utilitarian principle or the rule of impartiality (fairness), or some combination thereof. Contractarianism does not rule out this possibility.

To achieve this a compromise of rational free agents is not enough. Personalities of citizens must be shaped from their early childhood, certain pro-social habits must be instilled in them as in Freud's conception of conscience. This may be done through open persuasion but also and perhaps more efficiently through social manipulation, e.g. television programs which model those who watch them. A rational individual who wants to live in a safe and well-ordered society should accept this since it is the only way to achieve stability. The success of German or Scandinavian societies rests on their trust in their elites and their willingness to be shaped by them, to personally identify with nation-wide moral standards and not to obey them as only a working compromise.

But it is hardly possible that Rawlsian socialist principles of justice could constitute the core of morality. It is equally possible (but also not necessary) that the core might comprise a commitment to competition and the admiration for especially energetic individuals who occupy the top of social hierarchy and take the lion's share of privileges. Except some absolutely basic moral rules most of morality, as well as law and the structure of social institutions are justified as *a working compromise*, which all citizens agree to obey, although they individually would prefer other solutions. Morality is thus a compromise negotiated within a society and (at least partly) distinct from view of its member, and not a consensus shared by all of them. Individuals are willing to respect the negotiated compromise and yet they retain their private opinions. Let us imagine a community where half of the population want very low taxation, and the other half very high one. When they finally meet halfway, nobody considers it appropriate, but everyone should pay taxes, because it is the best compromise which the community can afford. At the same time everyone has the right to promote their own views and to lobby for tax reform.

The effective functioning of a compromise requires rather complex mental attitude from individuals. Each person is faced with two independent foundations of morality - what has been negotiated by the community, and their own deep intuitions. Both of them are important. One ought to respect a compromise as a good citizen and out of respect for the community. And one needs to be true to oneself, to one's own personality usually crystallized around one's deep intuition and considered judgements. If there is a conflict between the two, everyone must work out his or her own individual compromise between them, trying to be truthful to oneself and to respect a compromise. An example would be the issue of abortion - in many countries neither the supporters of a pro-life option nor of a pro-choice option are satisfied with the existing compromise. However, they all need to respect it as a social compromise.

(In some cases someone is so deeply convinced that the community follows the wrong path that he decides to act against its moral order in the name of his own intuition. e.g. assassinating president. Later he may be hailed as a hero or cursed as an outcast. Such acts, which sometimes dramatically change history of humankind, are undertaken at one's personal risk.)

Certainly if much of morality is only a working compromise it may be unstable, but not necessarily in a negative sense of the word (as in Rawls). This instability could be rather described as a constant process of recreating the social order. At some time social spendings are high, which produces too much laziness and mediocrity, than competition is restored, which results in increased homelessness and crime, so with time another solution must be found. Much of the social order can be often revised to adjust to emerging problems and desires of individuals. (The American society is much better at this than somewhat less versatile European societies.)

Morality understood as a compromise is specific to a given society and is valid only for its members. This is also a claim by the relativist Gilbert Harman.[254] It may follow from this that no moral obligations apply to persons from other communities. Though it is true that a compromise binds only those who have consented to it, this claim oversimplifies problems of morality. First, certain compromises impose obligation towards beings who do not consent to the agreement (humane treatment of animals and concern for future generations are the flagship examples). Secondly, in

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[254] Gilbert Harman 'Moral Relativism Defended', in G. Harman, *Explaining Value: And Other Essays in Moral Philosophy*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 2002, 3–19 (a revision of the original text of 1975).

situations when social contract does not indicate anything, individuals rely on their own intuitions which are not community-based. Being in need of money one may want to rob another person and at the same time may reject this action as being against his basic moral intuitions. They are admittedly subjective, but as evidenced by the development of philosophy, subjectivity is unavoidable. Thirdly, members of different communities who are not bound by a common agreement may meet and come into conflict which may require force to be solved. To avoid violence an agreement is needed, i.e. morality. It seems the main reasons for the existence of social contracts are to prevent violence and enable cooperation. Communities that do not come into contact do not need any agreement. When they do, it is often reasonable to negotiate common norms (but if they are not willing the only solution is to fight until one of the parties is defeated, as in the case of the American Civil War).

Morality is recognized as a compromise that does not nullify personal beliefs mainly within the liberal tradition of Western societies, in which every attempt to introduce uniform moral order encountered difficulties. Greece was divided into *poleis*, the Roman Empire was multicultural, Catholicism introduced a unified ideology in the Middle Ages, but had to fight with heresies, and fell apart under the influence of the Reformation, while the religious wars of the seventeenth century showed the impossibility of returning to uniformity, the United States developed as a multicultural country of immigrants and without dominant religion.

Privacy

One way of avoiding possible interpersonal conflicts is separating the private sphere in which everyone follows their individual subjective values from the social sphere in which the same rules must be observed by everyone. The widening of the private sphere helps reconcile pluralistic individualism with what social life required from individuals. (This distinction is fairly new; throughout most of history everyone was constantly watched by others. Aquinas insisted that even when alone everyone should follow the objective goodness. This is a different distinction than between the public and private sphere in Habermas.[255])

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[255] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a category of Bourgeois Society,* Polity, Cambridge 1989 (German original 1962).

Stuart Mill with a Nietzscheanian fervour wanted to grant individuals as much individual freedom as possible. But this raises serious problems. First, the developed societies require intensive cooperation. If the differences between individual preferences are large (half of a society would like to take risks, be independent and pay low taxes, while the other half want stability, high taxes and pervasive welfare state) widening the private sphere although it would help avoid conflicts or coercion could also disintegrate society and prevent cooperation. (The widening of the private sphere gives individuals more freedom but results in weakening of social solidarity. The solution might be developing skill of cooperation with other individuals, without the pressure for collectivism and solidarity as suggested by a London School of Economics professor Richard Sennett[256]).

Second, an important goal of morality, which results from mutual requirements, is to inspire the development of individuals. Without social pressure laziness might prevail. Human personality needs standards and institutions based on centuries-old tradition as beans need a pole. The weak need social pressure that will shape them, otherwise they would not cope with life; the strong need tradition to argue with it.

In liberal democracies of the West the principle: "You can live as you like, if you can afford it," seems to be used to solve the problem of exuberant individualism since to earn a living one has to adapt to the requirements of society. Outsiders do not earn much. However, those who possess enough money may develop dangerous individualism out of any control.

The ideal of the pluralistic paradise, although tempting, is susceptible to various hazards. One day a pluralistic society may discover that there is so little that holds them together that they lose the ability to cooperate with each other. Or that a group which has built a strong consensus among its members will be able to dominate the rest of society. Not many values are shared. But living in a society in which a substantial consensus is imposed on everyone may be safer. After the attacks of 9/11 the American society, in spite of its individualism, was able to show genuine attachment to its basic common values and demonstrated that pluralism had not weakened its foundations.

Tolerance

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[256] Richard Sennet, *Together: The Rituals, Pleasures, and Politics of Cooperation*, Yale (2012)

* In a subjectivis-contractarian approach to morality the issue of tolerance is often controversial. When cultural relativism was propagated by e.g. Ruth Benedict it fostered tolerance towards other cultures. Does the fact that none of the moral views are objectively true imply that all should be treated equally? "In this context, tolerance does not ordinarily mean indifference or absence of disapproval: It means having a policy of not interfering with the actions of persons that are based on moral judgments we reject, when the disagreement is not or cannot be rationally resolved. The context of discussion is often, but not always, moral disagreements between two societies. Does moral relativism give us a reason to be tolerant in this sense?"[257] The answer might be negative.

Firstly, since all moral norms are relative to persons or communities, also rules about how to treat other people's views are relative. Someone may prefer tolerance, while someone else may regard his own views as the best and impose them on others.

Secondly, opponents of tolerance may argue that since moral views are not objectively justified, and permissiveness towards all views would lead to chaos, some rules must be adopted specifying which views should be tolerated and which suppressed. A support for this view comes from evolutionism. Many organisms are born, then they compete and only the strongest influence the next generations. The same may apply to values and moral norms. People come out with different proposals, then they (people or proposals) compete and those who win constitute morality. It seems that a rule of this kind has been effective since the beginning of philosophy and morality. Different values compete and the very fact that some have won makes them better. As held by Hegel, what is real is rational: individual attitudes expressed as ideas compete and those who win are right. However, rules of competition also compete and change over time.

When in Plato's *Republic* Socrates argued against Thrasymachus that not the brute force but compliance with the objective Good should determine the rightness of actions he in fact only suggest new rules competition - instead of physical force he suggested rhetoric (because assuming the existence of the Good was a rhetoric trick) and was very successful.

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[257] Chris Gowans, 'Moral Relativism', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2012/entries/moral-relativism/>.

Manipulation

One of currently criticised methods of promoting ideas is manipulations, i.e. influencing others by underhanded, deceptive, or even abusive tactics, hiding real intentions.[258] At least since the time of Machiavelli the discussion has continued whether running a large country is possible without manipulation. To require that all members of the community should consciously accepted a moral compromise, it may be a noble goal, but aiming at it in actual societies would lead to endless discussions and paralysis of the state. On the other hand, if the Machiavellian views are accepted it can easily lead to abuse of power and a catastrophe. At the beginning of the twentieth century Edward Bernays fostered methods of manipulation as Public Relations (which is an elegant synonym for "propaganda").[259] Governments are often criticised if they use manipulation but it must be remembers that manipulation used by local groups, private organizations or religious denominations is even more dangerous. It may be much safer when uneducated masses are manipulated by the educated elite than when they are manipulated by equally uneducated fanatics.

When negotiations will not result in a generally satisfactory compromise, coercion may be inevitable. Consider a simple example. Some residents of a community want to be driving on the left, while others on the right. None of the parties wants to resign, which paralyses traffic. Both preferences are equally subjective. Should they enjoy equal rights and be mutually tolerated even if this situation leads to a drastic reduction in the quality of life of the community? In such situations, both in one community and within the whole humanity (when disputes between communities set at risk its development) a final and effective solution is the emergence of a strong elite which will introduce a single common standard.

This solution is also burdened with disadvantages. The imposed solution may not be optimal, and the group imposing it may become oppressive. Communities aware of these pitfalls are more strongly motivated to reach a wide compromise thought discussion. However, if they cannot agree (and the larger the society, the more difficult

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[258] Harriet B. Braiker, (2004). *Whos Pulling Your Strings ? How to Break The Cycle of Manipulation.* McGraw-Hill.
Simon, George K (1996). *In Sheep's Clothing: Understanding and Dealing with Manipulative People.* Parkhurst Brothers Publishers Inc

[259] Edward Bernays, *Propaganda.* Routledge, 1928.
Larry Tye, *The Father of Spin: Edward L. Bernays and the Birth of Public Relations* Picador 2002.
Adam Curtis *The Century of the Self.* A BBC documentary film, 2002.

it is to reach a compromise), dictatorships may be better than chaos. The strong and responsible elite using manipulation in a responsible way is probably the best compromise between chaos when everyone wants to rule and the dictatorship of an individual who usually becomes corrupted by power.

The second major problem is the enforcement of social contract between the parties. In fact, it is a fragment of a much broader problem - how to make a political system satisfactory and stable. This will be discussed in the section on government.

Ethics versus science

Why is a consensus in ethics more difficult than in science? Science developed when scientists accepted (at least tacitly) a common methodology which enabled theories constructed on its basis to be universally accepted by all who share this methodology. Is it possible to agree on such rules in ethical, axiological discussions? To some extent this is possible. As in science it demands the clarity of the language, analysing all consequences of the discussed claims, avoiding contradictions, selecting ultimate ends and adopting appropriate means, making a list of relevant evidence and always taking them into account (e.g., animal suffering, the impact on future generations), banning the use of rhetoric tricks, exposing all mistakes in argumentation (and thereby eliminating any pseudo-justifications). This would undoubtedly lead to rejecting many ill-formed but popular ethical theories.

However, at least two significant difference between science and axiology would remain. (1) The intersubjectivity of science is based not only on common principles but also on a fairly consistent foundation of commonly accepted basic statements describing what was observed by the senses. When a bridge collapses, all the observers agree about this fact. As regards sensory observation there is a far-reaching natural consensus. In ethical issues, like abortion, begging, euthanasia, wealth distribution, exploitation, etc., attitudes of approval and disapproval are often different. Abortion is disgusting for some, while acceptable for others.

(2) Science discovers means to certain ends, ethics is about choosing ends. There can be universal agreement about theories of nuclear physics which enable construction of nuclear power stations, however, there is less agreement about whether they should be constructed. Those who disagree about ends can still agree about means leading to them.

Further reading

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William FitzPatrick, "Morality and Evolutionary Biology", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/morality-biology/>.

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Terrance McConnell, "Moral Dilemmas", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/moral-dilemmas/>.

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The state and economy

Although originally the structure of the state was discussed by philosophers, now political science has become independent of philosophy. The following comments are based on traditional philosophical considerations. They are far to scarce to function even as an introduction of political philosophy. They are rather a commentary to it.

What are the goals of the state? Different thinkers - Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Acquinas, Machiavelli, the inventors of Renaissance Utopias, Hobbes, Rousseau, Locke, Hume, Smith, Marx - formulated various proposals: applying universal patterns, implementing the will of God; striving for ideals, satisfying human needs, protecting people from mutual aggression, eliminating conflicts, fostering cooperation, developing economy; serving the interests of the powerful; protecting own people against external enemies; preserving traditions and culture; promoting the general welfare and development of society, creating an environment for the development of individuals and happy life; promoting equality.

In the background, there is also the problem of how states were created - by gods, strong individuals, the dominant class (Marx), the general public (Hobbes), or perhaps by impersonal forces, the spirit of history (Hegel) or by natural processes over which we have no influence. Regardless of how they came into being, the question how those who live in them can change their structure remains open.

Despite the difference in their structure, the objectives of morality, law and the state are similar - they all serve the purpose of organizing life of individuals and societies. Remembering Fromm's penetrating observations on the three types of authority (external, internal and anonymous), we can build the following succession: the primitive community, where morality was collectivist and universally accepted, was replaced by the hierarchical society governed first with explicit orders; then, to increase efficiency, the conscience was harnessed to control people; and when the formation of conscience turned out to be very time consuming the media created anonymous authority. When viewers see ads and commercials every now and then, in addition to

information about products they receive a general message: "Consume!". As a result, they spent more time in stores and help the economy.

The idea to rest morality on self-interest leads to the growing number of institutional solutions. Instead of penalizing throwing the garbage in the forests, compulsory fees are introduced for its utilisation so that carrying it to the forest becomes unprofitable. In fact, the entire financial system of capitalism is designed to encourage the development of economy (or rather of the GDP). The tax income rises if the economy develops so politicians encourage this development to have more public money to use. Everyone invests money in the stock market (e.g. through pension funds); since shares become on average more expensive if new money flows to the stock exchange, which happens only when the economy grows, so everyone, in their self-interest, is interested in the growth of the GDP. Contemporary capitalism is devised as a self-perpetuating system.

Unfortunately, mechanisms favouring the idea of the contract of rational egoists do not develop other areas of morality. This may impair personal life (marriage based on a selfish contract may not be a pleasant idea) and lead to a disaster if the institutional mechanisms once break down (people would not know what to do without them). Therefore, the state must also create other opportunities for moral development.

Liberty

Liberty or freedom is a classical subject of philosophy. It breaks down into two issues - metaphysical (does free will exist at all - or is everything determined) and moral and political (if free will exists, to what extent people should be allowed to do what they want). Here we will deal with the latter. For more convenience, it will be split into three issues: (1) the definition of freedom, (2) the value of freedom (whether and why one should strive for it), and (3) the rules that define its limits.

(Ad 1) The definition of liberty. When is a person really free? What do people want when they want freedom? Many definitions of freedom have a persuasive character - certain claims about freedom are suggested by its very definition. For example, the Christian definition (freedom means being able to do what one should do) suggests that freedom does not consist in discussing what should be done, but only in having means to do what is already decided (preferably by some authorities). Seeing that many people admire liberty some philosophers played rhetoric tricks and claimed

that freedom is very important but it means e.g. understood and accepted necessity (in Hegel and Marx).

However, a definition should be as neutral as possible, not prejudge anything, so that it could be acceptable by all the parties involved in the discussion. Whether freedom is one of the main values or not should be discusses after such a neutral definitions is formulated. Hobbes gave a good example of a neutral definition: freedom is the lack of external constraints on action.[260]

Is an alcoholic free when he can drink? Is the answer affected by the fact that (1) he accepts his addiction without reservations, or (2) at times he wants to abandon the habit of drinking? In the second case it can be concluded that his real "self" wants to stop drinking, so when he drinks he is not himself. However, it can also be assumed that he is free when he drinks, and when he regrets he is enslaved by the external pressure. The difficulty is more general and applies to all non-permanent desires (which leads to conflicts presented in the novel by R.L. Stevenson *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*) - only a man of consistent desires can identify freedom with the lack of external constraints in doing what he wants. However, conflicting desires are common.

Even more worrisome would be the situation in which an efficient regime instilled dires in the minds of the people and then satisfies them. Everyone seems to be free (they can get what they want), and also happy (for the same reason). An example would be a society in which everyone wants only to make money and spend money, never mind on what, and they have opportunities to do so. Although this society would not see any needs for change, to us it would be wrong. Fortunately, attempts of consistent indoctrination usually fail - there are always external threats, unwanted desires, rebellious leaders, or simply failure to satisfy the created desires, which lead to progress and revolution. Since it is possible that new methods of manipulation may be produced, constant vigilance is required to protect the continuous development of human potential.

The most worrying reflections come from empirical science which claim that there are no proves (except our subjective opinions or 'intuitions') that free will exists. What may it mean? We are organisms with attitudes, desires, feelings and opinions. We act on the basis of them, feel pleasure and pain as results of our actions. In the process our

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[260]   "a free man is he that in those things which by his strength and wit he is able to do is not hindered to do what he hath the will to do" (*Leviathan*, Ch. XXI).

attitudes, thoughts and desires undergoes restructuring as well as the surrounding world. Yet no change involves free will, always the next step is determined by the previous one under strict cause-effect rules. How much should it change the way we live and think about our lives? We can still deliberate on our choices and ideals because deliberation strengthens or weakens our sympathies and casually changes the effects that will occur. However, accepting determinism requires reformulating political liberalism. One cannot claim that in democracy people are more free than in despotism, because freedom as such does not exist at all. One could only claim that democracy better suits our desires and emotions and this is the only reason why it is better.

An important distinction between positive and negative freedom will be discussed later.

(Ad 2) The value of freedom

Why do we value freedom? The simplest answer is: it is pleasant to do what one wants, freedom encourages personal development and contributes to the development of society and humanity. At the same time freedom makes so much trouble that for most of history it was by no means universally appreciated.

Both supporters of the monotheistic religions and Absolute Good regarded human freedom as an obstacle to choosing the right conduct. If what is good is obvious, the only choice is between obedience and sin. Plato wanted to deprive the citizens of his state of freedom. Aristotle admitted that if a man is not brought up according to the right values, he cannot find the right way of his own. In Christianity, which has been more prudent, freedom was considered essential - man without freedom would be a machine programmed by God. But freedom is given to man so as he could choose freely what is expected form him by God and thus deserve a reward; freedom should not encourage a debate about what is good (this was decided by experts). Machiavelli and Hobbes were of the opinion that freedom posed problems for both rulers and people. Spinoza was attracted by determinism and the demand to submit one's own subjectivity to the timeless laws of Nature-God. The Enlightenment largely sought to reduce the role of tradition, monarchy and the Church, but by no means delegated the decisions about values to individuals. On the contrary, individuals were to obey new legislators: the general will of society (Rousseau), impersonal Reason (Kant), almost

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impersonal maximization of pleasure (Bentham). And again it was philosophers who were supposed to define what was good. Even laws and institutions created by the people according to Locke were supposed to protect the "natural" rights given to man by God. Even the Scots Smith and Hume only apparently granted individuals freedom in pursuing their goals. Their goals were regarded as natural and in fact were highly standardized (everyone has the same goals: to be liked, to avoid suffering and to protect their own interests). If the natural process of adjustment and competition is not hindered, the best social order will evolve, but as a whole it will not be the result of free decisions (no one should shape society or perhaps even their own life, these should emerge automatically as a result of natural processes).

It was only in the 19th c. that freedom was appreciated, when philosophers became disillusioned with objective standards or the natural course of events and lost faith in obedience to them. According to Hegel, though history is the progress of liberty, freedom does not actually exist, and the development of history is executing the scenario laid out by the Idea. Man, reduced to the role of an actor, had no reason to identify with it. The divine or cosmic plan of the previous millennia, which deserved love and respect, was replaced by an oppressive plot. The revolt against it came immediately. Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche questioned the value of the order of the world, into which they felt thrown against their will (it was, respectively, the world of the Will, the world of the bourgeois middle class, the world dominated by the herd morality). Since the order was reasonable, the only escape was into irrational individualism in which everyone has to rely on themselves in deciding what is good. For the first time in history it was true freedom. Accusing these thinkers of bringing a major change in the foundations of Western culture overestimates the role of philosophy. They expressed, as romantic artists, the change in culture rather than provoked it. It was the culture that exhausted its faith in Logos, in the wisdom of the plan underlying the world. These philosophers, no longer related to the elites, represented the rebellious individuals and therefore could extol freedom - out of desperation.

Paradoxically, when we consider the future impact of his doctrine, it was Marx who emphasized the optimistic side freedom. Men actualize their potential and flourish when they are free to set their own goals, pursue them and use the fruit of their efforts.

Man's destiny is to create while the capitalist alienation causes dehumanization. Unfortunately Marx mixed his ground-breaking noble ideals with a plan of the workers' revolution and the Hegelian metaphysics of historical inevitability, which eventually compromised these ideals through their participation in the construction of real communism.

J.S. Mill (in his *On Liberty*) advocated individual freedom having in mind creative individuals (preferably outstanding and unconventional) restricted by social conventions (this is also a Nietzschean thread in his philosophy) whose initiative could also enrich humanity. Also here his ideas developed independently of his original intentions. Today slogans of freedom daze uncritical masses, deprive them of the guidance from educated elites and eventually expose to manipulators preying on their confusion. Mill forgot to warn them that the right to shape one's own life is beneficial only to the strong, reasonable and resistant to failures.

Spencer and the Darwinists also valued freedom. Nature creates new qualities, society should not restrict the freedom of competition as a result of which the better equipped individuals eliminate the ill-fitted, strengthen the species or society and introduce novelty. Political freedom does not necessarily serve human happiness. This similarity to Hegel (the development of the whole requires suffering and sacrifice of individuals) is accompanied by a depressing difference - the development of the world has no final purpose.

Freud did not value freedom. Man is basically destructive, selfish and hypocritical. Embarrassing and burdensome social norms are necessary to make social life possible. Maturity consists in understanding it and consciously submitting to social rules. Adaptation to social requirements was also a major demand of Karen Horney, who popularized psychoanalysis in the United States.

Another optimist in matters of freedom was Fromm drawing from Marx and Freud. A mature person breaks free from the habits imposed by society, the rigid social character, abandon the attitude "to have" and chooses the true and spontaneous life ("to be" attitude)

Sartre stressed the inevitability of freedom with a mixture of awe and horror. Man is condemned to be free, and as a being endowed with consciousness cannot avoid it. Life is a process of creating oneself. Perhaps Sartre should have admitted that a political

system in which a person lives does not matter - man always remains existentially free. For Fromm freedom may be such a burden for those unprepared that they escape from it in panic, often under protection of cynical ideologies or dictators. Only strong, mature personalities can flourish when they are endowed with freedom, break free from the habits imposed by oppressive societies, abandon the attitude "to have" and chooses true and spontaneous life (attitude "to be").

I doubt whether an individual can be genuinely free as a rebel against a rigid social order (as it the case of the sexual revolution of 1960s). Individuals need society to grow. The only positive solution seems to change the whole social system so that it respected an individual growth producing personalities which can use freedom in a creative way. This in fact is happening in the U.S. and Fromm and the hippie revolution contributed to it.

In 1958 Isaiah Berlin in his essay *Two concepts of freedom* distinguished negative freedom (men are free in the absence of external constraints that prevents them from pursuing their objectives) and positive (men are free when they have means to pursue their objectives). When the employer forbids the employee to go on holiday, the negative freedom of the latter is limited. When the employer allows the employee to go, but the employee has no money, his positive freedom is limited. Liberals like Locke (known in the U.S. as conservatives) demanded only negative freedom, while socialists sought to provide positive freedom (i.e. the welfare state that prevents exploitation provides everyone with resources required for the actual exercise of freedom). Berlin was a liberal who discarded the need for positive freedom. The fundamental belief of liberalism (American conservatism) is that the state should be the framework for a pluralistic society made up of people with different opinions, who disagree about many issues but make up a society in which their individualism is the source of progress. Attempts to guarantee positive freedom lead to state intervention, which ultimately deprives citizens of their basic negative freedom.

Is freedom valuable? And if so, is it as a means to other ends (instrumentally valuable) or as an end in itself (intrinsically valuable)?

Freedom is often considered a means to happiness. It is pleasant to choose what one wants - provided there are enough available goods to choose from. I would call it a *passive freedom*. Those who prefer being free for this reason often picture a shop with

plenty of goods. They have money and resent the idea of being told what to buy. (Ortega y Gasset criticised this attitude which he called the attitude of spoiled consumers in his *Rebelion of the Masses*.)

It can be contrasted with *active freedom*. This is a freedom of a person, like Robinson Crusoe on a desert island, who can rely only on oneself, takes risks without any certainty of success and is responsible for creating oneself. Most people are terrified by this kind of freedom, prefer to escape from it, and do not find it conducive to happiness. However, this is the real freedom we have to face in real life.

Perhaps this is the reason why so often if a dictator promises to satisfy the needs of the people, they eagerly give up their freedom and obey his orders (often to their future regret). The commitment to freedom is often very thin and only declarative. People rebel against bad government and demand freedom, while in fact all they want is better government which would satisfy their needs.

However, as Marx, Fromm or Csikszentmihalyi (in his *Flow*) tried to prove, only active freedom, when pursued cautiously, leads to deep and lasting happiness. And is beneficial to humankind as a whole, since it propels its progress.

Is freedom also an aim in itself? For some people very much so. The world full of goods and happiness, but without freedom would be disgusting for them. Fortunately the world without freedom seems hardly possible. And certainly freedom is not the only aim in itself, it must be harmonized with other aims.

(Ad 3) The boundaries of freedom. Are there any simple rules that could determine the proper limits of freedom?

In the Bible and Christianity in general freedom is based on obedience to God, who decides what is good and evil, leaving the choice of means to Man.

At the other extreme end is Nietzsche, highly experienced by his solitary life, according to whom no rules should hamper the freedom of the Übermensch. (Nietzsche happily lived in the civilized Europe, where a number of rules and the police protected him from meeting those who might consider themselves overmen.)

Locke proposed a democratic compromise. Everyone wants to protect themselves from oppression, be able to achieve their objectives (within the framework of the basic human rights), and strive to be happy, to this end people create law and set up

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institutions to enforce it. Freedom is the subordination to such law, which protects everyone from the whims of their neighbours leaving space for individual goals within the limits of law. (It is surprising how often it is believed that it is better to break the law, e.g. speed limits, and tolerate the same in others.)

Mill's Harm Principle recognizes that the freedom of one person ends where others can be harmed. This freedom would protect minorities against the tyranny of the majority. An extravagant lifestyle might offend others, but it does not harm them and should therefore be allowed. Mill did not take into account that almost every action hurts someone (but also in other respects can bring them benefits), so consistent application of the Harm Principle would paralyse life. The automotive industry is a serial and predictable killer, free competition temporarily makes life difficult for producers and only in the long perspective is beneficial. The same can be said about the Pareto principle, which combines Mill's principle of utility and harm principle: the right action must bring benefits to someone without harming anyone else. It is a noble ideal, but difficult for practical implementation. Civilized rules determine to what extent and in the name of what aim trouble can be caused.

Spencer proclaimed an alternative rule based on Darwinism: everyone has the right to the liberty that is compatible with the equal liberty of others. Its literal understanding would introduce unlimited subjectivity. A shy person may claim little liberty for oneself and for anyone else, while an adventurous person may demand a lot. Or perhaps it is society (or its authorities) that should decide which is the greatest possible extent of liberty that can be shared by everyone.

From the whole Darwinian project it can be deduced that freedom serves the development of the species and should be protected against all privileges and monopolies, while the suffering it brings (especially for the weak) is an inherent part of development. Let all compete on the same terms and let the best man win. It should be emphasized that the development of the species (or society) is not a convincing purpose if it would not bring happiness to anyone. Social Darwinists could answer that since the strong contribute most to the growth and development they should also benefit the most from it. When, however, their privileges slow down the growth, they should be restricted.

In opposition to Darwinism Rawls proposed his rules of justice as fairness (to be agreed upon behind the veil of ignorance), which protects the weakest.

Perhaps there is no general principle that could determine the limits of liberty. The traditional question of whether man is to be free or dependent in this form is too general and does not have a meaningful answer. For each case (behaviour on the road, in a family, in business) the limits of freedom must be individually set. Together they must form a system that serves the accepted purpose.

Further reading

Ian Carter, "Positive and Negative Liberty", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2012/entries/liberty-positive-negative/>.

Gerald Gaus, Shane D. Courtland, David Schmidtz, "Liberalism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2015 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), forthcoming URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2015/entries/liberalism/>.

Leif Wenar, "Rights", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2011/entries/rights/>.

Daniel Bell, "Communitarianism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2013/entries/communitarianism/>.

Justice and ownership

In time the issue of justice was linked with problems of ownership. In the Jewish tradition (the Bible) the righteous person obeyed God's law. In the Greek tradition justice defined the state of the world in which there is harmony between often incompatible tendencies and goods. (Plato alluded to this notion in *The Republic*, when he talked about the harmony of the state and of the soul as a rigid order dominated by the intellect.) For Aristotle the basic principle was to give each what they deserve. It made sense on the basis of Aristotle's essentialist ontology, in which what people deserve is an objective fact. Currently, it is impossible to sustain this view - different people have different ideas about who deserves what.

Later main distinction was made between retributive justice (how to punish offenders) and distributive justice (how to divide goods and privileges).

Plato believed that property should belong to the state, while Aristotle did not object to private ownership. (It should be noted that what is discussed here is not items of personal use, but big property like plantations, workshops and later factories).

Aristotle, as many other aristocrats until even Locke and Marx, assumed that valuable is only hard work not intellectual of financial speculation. Thus he condemned usury and was suspicious about commerce and moneymaking. On the one hand this is not unjustified since financial speculations often lead to frauds and making fortunes that are socially useless. On the other condemning usury limited the development of economy.

Jesus in the *Sermon on the Mount* unequivocally condemned concern for material goods and wealth. The Catholic Church although it did not intend to confiscate private property stressed that the property must be used for the good of the whole community. According to Thomas Aquinas property may be owned privately but should be used for the common human benefit, although it is left to decision of individuals how this should be done. (*Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, q. 66)

The ideal situation would be if the common property was used by all individuals without conflicts. This was possible in the garden of Eden but when human nature was spoiled by the original sin, this possibility was lost (the state of nature in Locke and Rousseau were clearly indebted to the Biblical Eden). Now private property is necessary because people are not able to care for common property well enough. (*Summa Theologica*, First Part, q. 98, a. 1, ad. 3.)

The common good of a community (bonum communae) must be care for both for its own sake and as a means to personal good of its members. Those who care for the common good at the same time car for their own good. There is no contradiction between them. (Second Part of the Second Part q. 31, a. 3, ad. 2; q. 47, a. 10, ad. 2)

In the state some enjoy greater privileges than others, but this entails greater responsibility for the state, which functions like a living organism. In the 19th c. the Church supported the rich (quite unlike today), which provoked attacks by Marx ("Religion is the opium of the people"). In 1891 Pope Leo XIII in *Rerum Novarum* denounced the capitalist greed, but recognised the inviolability of private property. Pope John Paul II in his encyclical *Laborem exercens* of 1981 stressed that property, even private, is to serve the whole community.

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In the 17th c. Puritanism unexpectedly recommended accumulation of wealth, however, not for consumption but for investment (it is debatable whether this was a view consistent with the essence of Christianity). When early capitalism was beginning to flourish Locke recognized private property as an inalienable natural right, but insisted that the property must be the fruit of one's labour. Hume regarded the right to property rather as a result of a compromise which is adopted in the name of benefits of all concerned (which opens up the possibility that if property ceased to serve the common benefit it could be confiscated). Therefore Hume opposed egalitarianism, which would be disincentive to work, and also would require large administrative machinery, which in itself would pose problems.

Marx argued that the property of capitalists is not the result of their work, but of favourable political circumstances - the workers at risk of poverty agree to work for low wages, and thus capitalist profit is the result of theft, the appropriation of the surplus value. Also, capitalist property does not serve humanity

Over time, the Aristotelian concept of justice was replaced by that of Kant and Rawls i.e. impartiality and fairness: fair is what is decided impartially and acceptable to everyone. Rawls undertook a bold enterprise of reconciling liberalism with socialism. The fair rules should guarantee maximal individual freedom shared by everyone (without discriminating anybody) as well as care for the weakest.

Government and democracy

The last big problem is the question who should govern societies, countries and the world. What is the relationship of elites and masses.

There is a preliminary problem: how and why the state and social order arise at all. A few key factors prompt it: (1) fear of chaos (which Hobbes emphasized), (2) possible gains from cooperation (in Locke and Hume), (3) the need to withstand an external threat - poorly organized communities can be easily conquered and destroyed. Perhaps the crucial factor is that people are genetically prepared to live in communities. An important role is usually played by the elites who even in their own interests want to organize societies they govern well.

A few factors often make it difficult to create social order: (1) hostile emotions, (2) contradictory fundamental views of the world within society, (3) conflicting interests and disputes over the sharing of benefits. (Ad 1) Hostile or negative emotions

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may be accompanied by fanatical justifications (e.g. the allegedly sacred right to revenge of one community on another). They split communities into groups that cannot stop waging wars. The examples are numerous - Protestants and Catholics in the 17th century, Whites and Negroes in the United States, Jews and anti-Semites in Europe, Jews and Palestinians. Religious divisions usually consolidate such conflicts, even if they do not cause them.

(Ad 2) If deep moral convictions of different members of the community are inconsistent (as during religious wars) compromise is difficult to achieve, while each group aims at promoting its own preferences.

(Ad 3) That individuals have similar desires with regard to personal interests (e.g. everyone wants to be richer than others or enjoy privileges) instead of facilitating a compromise may lead to conflict within society, especially when one group regards themselves as unjustly treated.

History provides ample evidence that establishing a working social order is difficult. Let us list some basic threats:

* If no efficient government arises, the whole society plunges into chaos (as Somalia nowadays).

* If a strong central power becomes too strong, it alienates from the rest of society (as the royal court in Versailles). The result may be stagnation (when the elite defends its privileges and suppresses freedom in society) or exploitation, which finally leads to a revolution.

* If a revolution is needed to dismantle a fossilized and corrupted governmental system, usually unprepared people seize power, which provokes further catastrophes.

* If power is concentrated in hands of one person, society is at the mercy of a dictator who might turn out psychopathic as in the cases of some Roman emperors, Hitler or Stalin.

* If society is disobedient or badly organized, individual mistrust leads to the prisoner dilemma situation when everyone loses.

* If there are too many contenders for power, too many centres of power may arise, which weakens the state (as in Poland in the 17th and 18th centuries), or a civil war may break out with the same result.

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So far Western culture has tested many socio-political systems with varying success. Ancient civilizations had kings, aristocratic systems, a military system in Sparta, democracy in Athens and the Roman Republic, the Hellenistic and the Roman empires. Northern Europe had plundering Vikings, communitarian Germanic systems, efficient centralised kingdoms of late Vikings. In the Middle Ages both Western Europe and Byzantium developed religious states. In the modern era Europe had centralized and decentralized aristocratic states, the middle class capitalist states, dictatorial states in the 20th century and social-democratic welfare states after the Second World War. America originated as a right wing free-market democracy and then turned into left wing free-market liberal democracy.

No other culture has made so many political experiments in which a few basic elements (competition, cooperation, individualism, collectivism, hierarchical organization, egalitarianism, individual freedom, the influence of charismatic leaders) were being continuously adjusted to each other in different proportions and combinations.

After a period of primitive communities, the division into the elite and mass emerged and dominated the history of humankind. Marx condemned the elites (although he was mainly prejudiced against new bourgeois upstart elites of the 19th century), but one cannot deny their creative impact: making ambitious projects, stabilizing life in the country, which allow long-term planning, introducing law and order, which in turn enabled the development of large societies. After some time every privileged group tends to obstruct further development and protect their own privileges. The removal of dysfunctional elites was often violent, so a good political system should include procedures which facilitate this process (as it is done in democracy).

In the modern era, initially (Machiavelli and Hobbes) the success of the state was considered to rely on a shrewd ruler who could dominate both the elites and the masses. The Glorious Revolution of 1688 empowered the British middle class and defeated absolutism there; the U.S. went even further in 18th c. under the influence of freemasonry. Proponents of social contract triumphed, the 'public sphere' described by Habermas[261] was established.

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[261] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society.* Cambridge Massachusetts: The MIT Press 1989.

Modern democracy has not evolved from ancient experiments. The Athenian democracy was direct and included only a minority of the public (adult free men), although representing different segments of society. This model influenced Polish unsuccessful Nobles' democracy from the 15th to the 18th c. Another model, with the powerful aristocratic Senate was adopted in the Roman Republic. Contemporary democracies blended inspiration from three sources: popular assemblies of the Viking type, diets convened by feudal monarchs, and the medieval city republics[262] (e.g. Florence). In England quite early kings had to make concessions with aristocrats (initially barons), which made the model of British democracy based on a compromise between individuals pursuing private interests (as in Hume and Smith). It is significant that Germanic tribes had a strong tendency toward democracy, which included all men, had no place for kings (although left room for military leaders during wars), and created strong bonds within the community (e.g. in Germanic tribes which resisted Rome in the 1st century AD or in the Viking state in Iceland established in 870). The tendency to build a cohesive society has permanently characterised Germans and Scandinavians who as a result prefer a type of capitalism that is different from the Anglo-Saxon one.

In the 17th and 18th centuries Polish experiment with Nobles' democracy ended with decentralisation and weakening of the state. The French Revolution plunged into terror and chaos stopped by Napoleon Bonaparte. Throughout the 19th c. various social groups combated in Europe with traditional elites, while democracy, if it existed, was limited to wealthy men, who were a minority in any society. After the First World War suffrage was extended to larger sections of societies, which ended up with a number of authoritarian governments in continental Europe (resulting from coups d'état or legitimate elections). It was not until after World War II that democracies in Europe stabilized, but have they reached their goals? The ideal of democracy is the involvement of the whole society in the governing, which eliminates despots and unleashes creative energy. However, contemporary voters often focus on their personal life, and expect from governments adequate means to satisfy them, which the voter will reciprocate by voting for generous politicians in the next elections. The loser is the middle class, who not having either wealth or majority is being marginalized. In 2014-2015 in Greece

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[262] Norman Davies, *Europe: A History*, Pimlico 1997 p. 131.

democratic society opposes unpleasant economic reforms even if this might lead to the bankruptcy of the state.

Democracy basically means a method of collective decision making assuming equality among those who participate in it. The assets of democracy should limit unjustified privileges of the ruling elites and to promote public influence on the process of decision making, which would engage citizens in governance (in this respect ancient Athens serves well as a symbol of ideal democracy.) The result should be that all members of society feel responsible for its development and understand the necessity of a compromise. It contributes to the creation of law which takes into account interests of different groups. Amartya Sen stressed that "no substantial famine has ever occurred in any independent country with a democratic form of government and a relatively free press"[263] Democracy encouraging deliberation can also help its participants discover the optimal, or at least more considered and informed decisions. Stuart Mill believed that because of this it also strengthened character of the people, who had to stand for themselves, as well as their autonomy and rationality.[264] Another argument stresses that democracy (self-government) is the best way to promote liberty which is valuable in itself, no matter what else is achieved in democracy.[265] Still another approach regards democracy as a process of public justification in which laws and policies are legitimate only if they are publicly justified, that is justified to each citizen as a result of free and reasoned debate among equals.[266] (This approach seems to assume that the only legitimate conclusion is a consensus when everyone finds the same outcome justified. However, it is questionable whether democratic procedures require that much.)

Democracy assumes equality of rights and strengthens it - everyone has one voice. But it does not mean that the will of all citizens will be executed. It is surprising how often it is thought that in democracy everybody will rule and everybody's desires should be satisfied.

Since the time of the Athenian democracy it has been a matter of discussion whether direct or indirect democracy is better. Most philosophers advocated the latter.

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[263] Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, New York: Knopf 1999, p. 152.

[264] John Stuart Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, (1861) Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1991, p. 74. J. Elster, "The Market and the Forum: Three Varieties of Political Theory," in *Philosophy and Democracy*, ed. T. Christiano, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2002, p. 152.

[265] Carol Gould, *Rethinking Democracy: Freedom and Social Cooperation in Politics, Economics and Society*, New York: Cambridge University Press 1988, pp. 45-85.

[266] Joshua Cohen, "Procedure and Substance in Deliberative Democracy," in *Philosophy and Democracy*, ed. T. Christiano, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2002, p. 21.

Although pure (direct) democracy is often believed to be the most just political system it probably is not possible at all and its implementation would end in a disaster. Both Plato and Aristotle believed that direct democracy led to chaos, from which dictatorships often arose. Plato sketched the succession of deteriorating political system (*Republic*, book VIII), the outline of which is still a very sober diagnosis: the rule of the educated elite (he called it aristocracy, but in his *Republic* the elite should be selected on the basis of merits) > the rule of the army (he called it timocracy, but referred to Sparta as an example) > the rule of the rich (oligarchy) > the rule of all (direct democracy), which leads to excess of freedom and general chaos > tyranny, when someone seizes dictatorial power.

Indirect democracy is sometimes referred to as elective aristocracy (Rousseau): the voters select one of a few possible elites and entrust them with power. The regularity of the elections protects against the domination of one elite. However, such democracy does not engage the general public in governing the country. This system can also degenerate - different parties may form coalitions which then dominate the country; or they may fiercely compete making populist promises.

Democracy as a method of governing large societies has many critics. Joseph Schumpeter[267] argued that citizens should only select one from many competing elites to govern them but should not influence their subsequent decisions. The elites and strong leaders should be responsible for governance, while democratic procedures should only prevent them from committing serious mistakes. [268]

Critics of democracy (since Plato) emphasised that if decisions are taken by inexperienced majority they are often wrong, especially if they are manipulated by demagogues. Hobbes (in chapter 19 of the *Leviathan*) remarked that since individual voice is unimportant in the decision process individuals may tend to be irresponsible. Deliberation and taking decision is also time consuming so that many citizens cannot afford to participate.

Utilitarianism rejects democracy since what should be done is a matter of the utility principle (what contributes to the maximum happiness) and not a matter of compromise between different individuals.

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[267] Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, New York: Harper and Row 1956, chapter. 21.
[268] Anthony Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, New York: Harper and Row 1957.

The elite theory holding that it is (and perhaps should be) the elite that run successful countries is represented in philosophy by Elmer Eric Schattschneider, C. Wright Mills, Floyd Hunter, G. William Domhoff, James Burnham, Robert D. Putnam, Thomas R. Dye, George A. Gonzalez, Ralf Dahrendorf. An opposing account is Interest Group Pluralism (groups of interest forms coalitions). But neo-liberals as early as in 1965[269] argued that only groups around economic interests are strong enough to crystallize and influence public choice.

When ordinary people are presented with prospects of democracy and especially of direct democracy they usually believe that it would enable them to have influence on the government and protect their personal interests. But this is an illusion. First, if all people would try to influence legislation no working compromise could be achieved. Second, most people do not know what the will prefer in the long perspective and what may make their preferences satisfied, so even if they achieved a compromise, it might be harmful to them interests or they may regret it after a while. Third, disoriented and ill-informed people without political experience have to rely on "advisers" who might be populists manipulating them. Fourth, a good government should thing not only about personal interests of citizens (their happiness or income) but also about what the country as a whole will achieve and what will contribute the development of the whole humankind. Most individual people are not able to do so. This is why Plato opposed democracy. Direct democracy would be nowadays again possible thanks to new technologies (the internet), however, it would still suffer from old defects.

Conservatism versus liberalism

A few words must be spared to the misleading dichotomy between conservatism and liberalism. In the past ideologies were held by large social groups. In the Middle Ages Europa was governed by kings, aristocrats and clergy, whose ideology was (European) *conservatism*. In Britain it was represented by the Tories.

Around the end of the 17th century new energetic class of entrepreneurs began to emerge In Britain - the Whigs after the Glorious Revolution) with a new ideology - (European or classical) *liberalism* (Locke is regarded as its main figure, but Hayek distinguished between the British tradition of Bernard Mandeville, David Hume, Adam

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[269] James Buchanan & Gordon Tullock, *The Calculus of Consent: Logical Foundations of Constitutional Democracy*, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press 1965.

Smith, Adam Ferguson, and the French tradition of Rousseau and the Encyclopedists and the Physiocrats[270]).

There was a more political understanding of it, with a flavour of humanitarian idealism (freedom for all individuals but within abnegation limits set by the approved government), and a more practical free market understanding.

Finally the working class organized and its ideology was called socialism. This ideology favoured social justice, egalitarianism, minority right. Thus there were three historically formed ideologies, each opposing its predecessor, with large groups behind them: European conservatism, European liberalism and European socialism

Because American society crystallised on the basis of liberalism and never produced strict socialist ideology, the main ideological options in America are all variants of liberalism. *American conservatism* stresses: respect for American tradition, support of republicanism, its law, the Christian religion, the domination of Western culture, but opposes both multiculturalism, socialism, totalitarianism.[271] Then different amendments were introduced, called progressive or liberal, because they were new. During F.D. Roosevelt's New Deal more socialism was added to form *social liberalism*. After 1980 atheism and multiculturalism were introduced under a level of *liberal democracy*. Usually the Republican Party in the U.S. represent conservative liberalism, while the Democratic Party new versions of liberalism. Also British conservatism evolved (around the mid 19th century) to embrace the ideas of free trade and combined it with concern for stabilisation, democracy, imperialism (at the times of the British Empire) and the care for all British people, which somehow introduced the ideas of a decent welfare-state. An important factor was marriages between rich British businessmen and poor aristocrats with the titles, which helped forming a new upper class.

After the second world war the main opposition was between conservatives, who by that time had embraced free market and trade, and socialists (e.g. the Labour Party in Britain). Now new changes are occurring. Thatcher and Reagan introduced deregulation hoping to revive conservatism, then the movement way taken over by liberals, who used globalization to promote individualism and multiculturalism, which lead to

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[270] F. A. Hayek, *The Constitution of Liberty.* Routledge, London 1976.

[271] G. Schneider, *The Conservative Century: From Reaction to Revolution* Rowman & Littlefield 2009. See also www.conservapedia.com/.

crystallisation of new suer-rich elites and deteriorated living condition of the masses in America. Now the right wing parties represent the ideas of (roughly) social justice, stability and strict morality against the liberals behind globalization (I prefer to call the global liberals).

The term "liberalism" is so ambiguous that it should not be used without qualifications, e.g. classical liberalism (of Locke but also of Thatcher and Reagan), social liberalism (of Rawls), global-liberalism (of multinational companies supporting globalization).

(It must be also remembered that from the historical perspective what is at a certain time traditional (and is regarded as worth preserving by conservatives), earlier was often innovative (and introduced by liberals or progressivists). The debate between the old and the new is always local. Egalitarianism and paganism were once common, then Christianity and hierarchical society were introduces as modernisation of primitive societies. That is why I appreciate the Hegelian dialectical vision of history. What is traditional (thesis) fights with what is modern (antithesis), then out of scraps of both a new stage of development (synthesis) arises.)

Elitism

While discussing problems of government we should not lose sight of the main problems - what are the aims of society whose achievement requires governments. Some of them were listed at the beginning of the section about the state and economy but now it is time rethink them. What do we expect from a good government? Different people have different expectations, so working compromises should be achieved. My suggestions are as follows. Humans are an exceptional species, endowed with different potentials thus a good social order should not waste them but use for the benefit of the whole humankind. At the same time we are the product of evolution and some of our instincts are destructive so they must be tamed. We are guided by pain and pleasure so social life should save us of from excessive suffering give a reasonable amount of pleasure or happiness. And finally some people are stronger, more energetic, determined and creative than others and they should influence decisions more than others for two reasons - because they deserve it and because preventing them from this is a futile waste of energy. A working compromise about the prerogatives of a good government

should take all this into account. It is not necessarily true that democracy is always the best way in achieving this.

Sometimes a false dilemma is presented: either democracy, or dictatorship. In fact, the most successful political order seems to be democracy restricted to the upper section of society. If this section is built on meritocratic principles so that all energetic, responsible and educated persons can join it, they can find the best solutions through discussions and negotiations and select political elites to govern the country. It was in fact the order of ancient Athens, ancient Rome, Venice or Victorian Britain. (It is also possible that nowadays most societies are still governed in this way, although the elites are hidden and use more sophisticated rhetoric to convey their decisions to the larger audience. Some kinds of this rhetoric seem not only less successful but positively harmful e.g. when they undermine perfectionism or glorify the taste of "a simple man.")

Even if it seems frustrating for the advocates of egalitarianism the existence of the responsible and well-informed elite is indispensable for stability and development of states and societies, no matter whether socialist or capitalist. In a welfare state the elite restricts free competition so as not to expose individuals to instability and conflicts. In a free-market state the elite guards free competition and prepares citizens to it.[272] The activity of the elite may be more or less conspicuous, but it is an illusion that democracy could be the rule of all and make elites redundant. Perhaps the main concern of societies should be the selection of a good elite to govern them.

Egalitarianism may be deadly harmful for the development of humankind. It income was distributed equally, most people would spend it to make their lives more pleasant. If top 10 per cent of society have at their disposal most of its wealth they also would make their life pleasant but a lot would remain for more noble aims - developing art, science, technology. One of the most vicious aspects of contemporary life is that most people are preoccupied mainly with their personal pleasure. Egalitarianism strongly supports this tendency.

Strategic decisions about a society or the whole world are to important to be taken by all since the majority is simply not prepared to do it responsibly and wisely. Those who are in charge of those decisions are usually rewarded with privileges, but should

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[272] See also a controversial book by C. Wright Mills *The Power Elite* (Oxford University Press Inc 1956) about American elites half a century ago.

always observe the old principle of the medieval political philosophy: Those who have more privileges also have more responsibilities for the community.

Certainly, it is not a perfect solution, sine the upper class often degenerates concentrating on its privileges, which can sparkle a revolution. However, both a dictatorship and a kind a democracy in which everyone wants to decide about the shape of society seem worse.

Perhaps the crux of the matter is who rules (or rather: who should rule) societies and humankind. On view was that it is great leaders (kings, etc.) and the (competing) elites. Another view is that it should be everyone, the aggregation of all people in which everyone counts as one and not more than one. O

Yet one more solution is possible if we take seriously inspirations from Hegel's philosophy of the state **as moral community**. Humans are not separate individuals. We belong to families, groups, nations, societies, humankind. We are like figures in a bas-relief, partly protruding as individuals, but also connected and belonging to the whole. (That is the reason why controversies between individualism and collectivisms are so long lasting and inconclusive - both options are partly true.) Decisions influencing a community are worked out by the whole community but not necessarily as a result of democratic voting or preferences of the leaders. Decisions of the community result from all interactions between all its members, while the procedure takes different forms. A privileged position of kings or a parliamentary democracy are different shapes collective decision making took in different societies. The are not good or bad as such, each of them was optimal at a given society at a given different time, and thus it occurred. The relationship between leaders, elites and masses is flexible but all of its elements always contribute the decisions which are finally taken. We should be also aware that collective decision making is basically irrational. Both the so called individuals and the whole community they constitute are first of all organic entities and develop according to vaguely know laws. People formulate arguments, discuss them, but final decision is reached on an organic irrational level. Rational thinking an analysing reasons for and against influences this process but is by no means decisive.

Jonathan Haidt[273] compared our rational-linguistic abilities to the tail which thinks that it wags the emotional dog, which is basic in ourselves.

When Hitler completely dominated Germany around 1940 this was the shape collective decision making took. Soon everyone regretted it and this experience was added to the accumulated knowledge of humankind which should influence future collective decisions. An ongoing problem is populism. Since large section of societies are badly educated, to win their democratic support contenders must appeal to their ideas. Donald Trump was criticises for a 'brutal' (which means far from political correctness) presidential campaign. As Joseph Stiglitz observed in *The Price of Inequality*[274] it is liberal democratic establishment that close the access of average Americans to good education, which became reserved for the rich in the last decades. So who is actual responsible for the level of a political debate?

However, it is also possible that societies have little to say about who govern them. About half of the world wealth is possessed by 1 percent of its inhabitants and it is obvious that they have major influence on world's future.[275] In a recent article Martin Gilens and Benjamin I. Page, after examining 1,779 policy issues, concluded that "Multivariate analysis indicates that economic elites and organized groups representing business interests have substantial independent impacts on U.S. government policy, while average citizens and mass-based interest groups have little or no independent influence. The results provide substantial support for theories of Economic-Elite Domination and for theories of Biased Pluralism, but not for theories of Majoritarian Electoral Democracy or Majoritarian Pluralism."[276] Certainly it does not mean that their

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[273] Jonathan Haidt, 'The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail: A Social Intuitionist Approach to Moral Judgment.' *Psychological Review* 108.4 (2001): 814-834. The repeated in his book *The Happiness Hypothesis: Finding Modern Truth in Ancient Wisdom.* Basic Books 2006.

[274] Joseph Stiglitz, *The Price of Inequality: How Today's Divided Society Endangers Our Future*. W.W. Norton & Company 2012.

[275] 'Richest 1% will own more than all the rest by 2016,' Oxfam report, 19 January 2015. http://www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressreleases/2015-01-19/richest-1-will-own-more-all-rest-2016 [retrieved 20.02.2015]

[276] Martin Gilens and Benjamin I. Page, 'Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens', *Perspectives on Politics* / Volume 12 / Issue 03 / September 2014, pp. 564-581. http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=9354310 [retrieved 12.01.2015]

decisions are not beneficial to society, but supports the suspicion that the age of egalitarianism and democracy is drawing to its end.

Perhaps what the world needs now is a movement and ideology which would stress perfectionism against permissiveness, accept individualism but also require respect for society and Humankind, reject egalitarianism and restore the hierarchical structure of society but without the rhetoric of Absolute Goodness, objective values and God's commandments since nowadays those ideas have lost much of their appeal and are philosophically dubious.

However, politics is mainly not about formulating goals and ideals but about devising means that bring about changes on a large scale. Catholic church relied on knowledge (needed to run countries) and the fear of death to organize Europe after the fall of Rome. Capitalism used competition. Marx had some general ideals but his main impact was due to a brilliant idea of harnessing proletariat to their implementation. Neo-liberals used greed, consumerism and individualism. Globalization forces rely on mass social media (Facebook, Wikipedia, google) to influence social changes all over the world. Often the actual changes are far form those expected at the beginning of the process.

Further reading

Richard Arneson, "Egalitarianism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2013/entries/egalitarianism/>.

Stefan Gosepath, "Equality", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/equality/>.

Peter Vallentyne, Bas van der Vossen, "Libertarianism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/libertarianism/>.

Jeremy Waldron, "Property and Ownership", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2012/entries/property/>.

Alan Wertheimer, Matt Zwolinski, "Exploitation", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2013/entries/exploitation/>.

Julian Lamont, Christi Favor, "Distributive Justice", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/justice-distributive/>.

Owen McLeod, "Desert", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2013/entries/desert/>.

Christian Barry, "Redistribution", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/redistribution/>.

Tom Christiano, "Democracy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2008 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2008/entries/democracy/>.

Capitalism and Globalization

Winston Churchill once remarked ironically: "The inherent vice of capitalism is the unequal sharing of blessings. The inherent virtue of socialism is equal sharing of miseries."[277] Contemporary problems with deregulated global capitalism requires serious discussion. I recall the history of capitalism, then discuss its merits and vices.

In continental Europe free market capitalism has never worked well. Britain had enough time since the Black Death to adjust to market rules. Then it used its position of the first capitalist country to dominate economically the rest of the world. If one society works hard and produces high quality goods at low prices, it can export them and become rich. If all societies do the same, they end up clogged with overproduction.

While in Britain (as in China in the past decades) capitalism was build on cheap labour and exporting goods abroad, America developed its internal market. A necessary ingredient of American capitalism was strict Puritan morality which enabled the creation of (relatively) honest mechanisms of competition. Even they did not prevent sudden crises reappearing after sudden booms (drops in cotton prices in 1819 and 1837, the gold reserve crisis in 1893). Why Britain and America avoided serious social tensions, revolutions and dictatorships? In 1906 Werner Sombart wrote an essay entitled 'Why is there no socialism the U.S.?' answering this question. It seems that America and Britain had mature elites, societies and political mechanism, which adapted to changes and assimilated novelty without undergoing catastrophes. The basic trust between different parts of society is essential. Those countries have never been conquered so the trust between the elites and the masses was not broken, as e.g. in Poland, where foreign countries often corrupted political elites.

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[277] Debate on demobilisation, 22.10.1945,
http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1945/oct/22/demobilisation#column_1704

When capitalism was transplanted to continental Europe in the 19th century it immediately brought exploitation of the workers and conceit of the elite. Luxurious palaces were built adjacent to slums of the working class, which can still be seen in the preserved urban landscape of Łódź in Poland. However, after some time capitalism exhorts cheap labour and demand for products. In search of huge profits new methods of keeping the economy going are constantly invented. They can be technological progress and innovations but also aggressive expansion, financial speculations and overproduction. The current overpopulation of the world is supported by the fear that if less people are born societies will be ageing and become unable to maintain their GDP level. Governments which fear this will not undertake serious measures to reduce birth rate.

The fall of Soviet communism and of Western social liberalism encouraged conservatives to launch a deregulation campaign. Margaret Thatcher admired the old Victorian times, Ronald Reagan longed for the old good 1950s. What followed was more than thirty years of globalization and neo-liberal capitalism which did not resemble any old days. One cannot step twice into the same river. The upstart capitalists of the 21st century who willingly accept the widening gap between them and the rest of society have little in common with the pious spirit of the first American capitalists for whom work was valuable in itself. Free market solutions introduced in the last decades look conspicuously selfish and deceitful. Derivatives, investment bubbles, loans in foreign currencies are counter-advertisement of market capitalism. Conservatives lost control over deregulated globalization. Youngster who went through sexual revolution of the 1960s, the generation of 'sex, drugs and rock'n'roll' replaced them. The 1980s were filled with greed and frauds. Already in 1987 Olivier Stone depicted it in his film *Wall Street* emphasizing a slogan "Greed is good." Soon America began losing control over international corporations which began establishing a new world order dominated by international, neo-liberal capitalism. For some time it might have been tolerated. As Hegel pointed out progress is often made out of narrow-minded desires, and short term benefits for multinational corporations might be interpreted as a reward for starting the process of enormous calibre.

However negative effects mushroomed. The spread of neo-liberal ideology, expressed in *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992) by Francis Fukuyama, was

accompanied by many wars waged in the name of alleged liberal democratic values. They destabilised the Arabic world, and consequently Europe.

Even the U.S. has not gained as much as it expected from globalization. For some time the standard of living in the U.S. was growing due the import of cheap products from China, which intentionally kept prices of its products low and also bought U.S. government bonds, thereby sponsoring consumption in the United States. America swallowed the bait, relocated its factories   giving China access to American technologies, as a result China made finally a great leap forward and is becoming a superpower. (Niall Ferguson[278] is using the term "Chimerica" to refer to the constellation of the two countries, out of which America seems more dependent.) What followed was de-industrialization of America and poverty among ordinary citizens coupled with exorbitant profits of the super-rich elites.[279] The famous slogan "a rising tide lifts all boats" used to advertise deregulation (meaning that if free market economy raises GDP everyone benefits from it) proved false. The elites benefited from the de-industrialization of America, but many Americans suffered   and in 2016 voted for Donald Trump. However, China, which fought with the 2008 crisis with investments on credit, has now an enormous debt which can soon shake its economy.[280]

George W. Busch urged China to introduce liberal democracy since it was accepted as general truth that without democracy economy could not develop. Yet China has been prospering for decades while American society suffered as a result of neo-liberalism. In countries like France government intervenes to secure relatively equal development of all regions and social groups. In America some states (e.g. California) acquired great wealth while others (the rust belt) declined creating social and political tensions.

Capitalism undoubtedly has many assets. It forces people to be energetic and self-reliable. It stresses individual freedom, ingenuity, openness to changes. Brute force in every sphere is replaced with intelligence. International trade makes wars unprofitable and integrates humankind. Different corporations still wage wars but in a civilised manner.

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[278] Niall Ferguson, *The Ascent of Money: A Financial History of the World*, The Penguin Press 2008.
[279] Joseph Stiglitz, *The Price of Inequality: How Today's Divided Society Endangers Our Future*. W.W. Norton & Company 2012.
[280] 'Global watchdog warns over China's debt levels' *Financial Time* 19.09.2016 https://www.ft.com/content/fc825300-7e44-11e6-8e50-8ec15fb462f4 [retrieved 2.10.2016]

The emergence of the super rich world elite is an outcome of free market globalization. It can unite humankind breaking national animosities and creating a network of business relations across all borders. Globalization might change the world leading to a new stage of its development. What is to be gained may be a pluralistic humankind in which everyone will be able to draw from any tradition on earth and develop different lifestyles.

An amazing result of globalization, the emergence of new elites, the 1% of the super-rich,[281] shows that no matter how liberal the slogans are, the traditional hierarchical structure of society always re-emerges. The new small upper class possess the economy. The new middle class consist of individuals hired by the upper class to promote official ideology (e.g. top executives, journalists), and then those who work and consume, but should be reasonably happy. This might be a perfect structure to make the world a better place to live. As in most periods of history the world might be governed by disproportionately small elites, political, military or economic. This time the elite might be composed of excellent minds. A few example illustrate how the allegedly deregulated capitalism is carefully planned.

(1) The tax income rises if the economy develops so politicians encourage this development to have more public money to spend. (2) Everyone invests money in the stock market (e.g. through pension funds); since shares become on average more expensive if new money flows to the stock exchange, which happens only when the economy grows, so everyone, in their self-interest, is interested in the growth of the GDP. (3) Most businesses require credit, which in fact means spending today what will be earned tomorrow, so those who borrow money are hooked on future economic development, often for life.

And yet it still does not seem to work as expected. The new elite and the whole system comes under criticism. Ha-Joon Chang, Thomas Pikkety and Joseph Stiglitz are prominent examples.

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[281] 'Richest 1% will own more than all the rest by 2016,' Oxfam report, 19 January 2015.
http://www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressreleases/2015-01-19/richest-1-will-own-more-all-rest-2016
[retrieved 20.02.2015]

Cambridge professor Ha-Joon Chang[282] after studding economic history of the currently developed states concluded that most of them, especially Britain, the U.S, Germany, Japan and recently China in the early phase of development protected their infant industries and export and opened to free trade only when they were sure of their industrial superiority (or at least, as Chine, of profits it brings to the country). It is not surprising that most of the currently underdeveloped countries have not benefited from recent free trade globalization.

Chang maintains that brutal anti-inflationary policies can easily do more damage than the inflation they combat. The excesses of neo-liberal competition do not create strong and stable economic growth.

Joseph Stiglitz in another famous book *The Price of Inequality*[283] depicts how the American political system after Regan's deregulation campaign favours the super-rich, the 1% of society, who live in comfort above any troubles which affect the rest of society at the same time effectively blocking opportunities for others to get rich.

Thomas Piketty, a professor of the Paris School of Economics, in his bestselling book *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (2013 in French)[284] argues that capitalism for the last 200 years has continuously produced concentration of capital. A tiny minority of the super-rich tended to possess the majority of wealth in capitalist countries. This trend was suspended between roughly 1930 and 1975 as a result of the World Wars and the Great Depression, but with the neo-liberal turn it intensified again. Piketty's main economic claim is that the rate of return on capital (e.g. dividends, interests, rents) is bigger than the rate of economic growth. Those who already possess capital get richer faster than the rest of society and are willing to invest in financial speculations rather

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[282] Ha-Joon Chang, *Kicking Away the Ladder: Development Strategy in Historical Perspective*. Anthem 2002.
Ha-Joon Chang, 'Kicking Away the Ladder: The "Real" History of Free Trade,' Foreign Policy In Focus (Silver City, NM: Interhemispheric Resource Center, December 2003).
http://www.personal.ceu.hu/corliss/CDST_Course_Site/Readings_old_2012_files/Ha-Joon%20Chang%20-%20Kicking%20Away%20the%20Ladder-The%20%E2%80%9CReal%E2%80%9D%20History%20of%20Free%20Trade.pdf [this is an extensive summary of his book on-line; retrieved 7.10.2015]
Ha-Joon Chang, *Bad Samaritans: The Myth of Free Trade and the Secret History of Capitalism*. Bloomsbury; 2008.
Ha-Joon Chang, *23 Things They Don't Tell You About Capitalism*. Penguin Books Ltd. 2010
[283] Joseph Stiglitz, *The Price of Inequality: How Today's Divided Society Endangers Our Future*. W.W. Norton & Company 2012.
[284] Thomas Piketty *Capital in the Twenty-First Century,* Harvard University Press 2014. Review: John Cassidy, 'Forces of Divergencem,' *The New Yorker,* March 31, 2014.
http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/03/31/forces-of-divergence [retrieved 10.10.2014]

than in economic growth. The rich are not interested in the growth of production since their wealth no longer depend on it (at least in a short perspective, which is unfortunately favoured in capitalism).

Piketty reveals a major flaw of capitalism represented by its very name. Although wealth is basically produced by human work and trade, which in turn should satisfy human needs, the engine of capitalism is capital, money possessed by the rich and invested in any way that brings profit irrespective of wider social consequences. Capitalists tend to focus entirely on profits from their capital. Two thousand years ago St Paul warned against it saying that "the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil" (1 Timothy 6:10).

Piketty's diagnosis harmonises with commonly known findings showing that: (1) the middle class in the U.S. and Europe is declining in number; while top executives earn enormous salaries, teachers, clerks, even doctors earn drastically less; (2) a percentage of poor (and overworked) persons is growing, which is represented by the falling median of income, although masked by the rising average income which reflects enormous incomes of the super-rich; (3) the role of financial speculation, much criticized in Europe after 1930, is again colossal. This led Piketty to the conclusion that unregulated capitalism necessarily produces misery and undermines the democratic social order. Yet since 1 percent of humanity possess about half of its wealth[285] it is obvious that small groups are responsible for major decisions concerning the whole humankind.

To make things worse, the OECD report *Looking to 2060: Long-term global growth prospects* from November 2012[286] predicts that if global trends continue China and India will become soon the leading economies, the U.S. will retain its position, while Japan and Europe, mainly due to demographic reasons (ageing of societies), will experience 50 years of stagnation. The standard of living will remain relatively high in Western Europe, but among new members of the EU will not rise fast (the situation of Poland, Japan and Korea will be exceptionally bad due to ageing, the gap between Poland and Western Europe will widen). On the whole the economic development of the world (the rise of GDP) will slow down after 2030, with OECD countries below 2

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[285] 'Richest 1% will own more than all the rest by 2016,' Oxfam report, 19 January 2015. http://www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressreleases/2015-01-19/richest-1-will-own-more-all-rest-2016 [retrieved 20.02.2015]

[286] http://www.oecd.org/eco/outlook/2060%20policy%20paper%20FINAL.pdf [retrieved 7.10.2014]

percent growth of GDP PPP (both globally and per capita) and non-OECD below 3 percent. Capitalism is appealing when it creates impression that individuals through hard work may become rich in reasonably short time. It was possible in the U.S. fifty years ago, it is very difficult now, but after 2030 it will be impossible.

Such reports must be treated with caution - new inventions, new brave leaders, epidemics, natural disasters, revolutions or world wars can upset all predictions. One day great international corporations may choose to be loyal to China and not to the U.S., which will change the history of the world. However, the conclusion is clear. The time for huge profits commenced with Regan and Thatcher is ending. After 2030 competition will become fierce while performance meagre. Those who work will tend to be exploited (actually the only chance for progress will be through innovations), while capitalist competition will become a zero-sum game, which will only make it more fierce. Capitalism may return to the state described by Marx. It also explains why the exploitation of poor countries and financial speculations intensify. Huge profits are already becoming difficult to make in other ways.

Gross Domestic Product. The mistrust in free marked is accompanied by the mistrust in GDP as a reliable measure of the quality of social life. Not only do the different components of GDP have unequal importance (virtual financial operations or rebuilding after natural disasters contribute to GDP but not to the quality of life), but on the whole GDP does not measure what is important to human life. "For years, economists critical of the measure have enjoyed spinning narratives to illustrate its logical flaws and limitations. Consider, for example, the lives of two people — let's call them High-GDP Man and Low-GDP Man. High-GDP Man has a long commute to work and drives an automobile that gets poor gas mileage, forcing him to spend a lot on fuel. The morning traffic and its stresses aren't too good for his car (which he replaces every few years) or his cardiovascular health (which he treats with expensive pharmaceuticals and medical procedures). High-GDP Man works hard, spends hard. He loves going to bars and restaurants, likes his flat-screen televisions and adores his big house, which he keeps at 71 degrees [Fahrenheit] year round and protects with a state-of-the-art security system. High-GDP Man and his wife pay for a sitter (for their kids) and a nursing home (for their aging parents). They don't have time for housework, so they employ a full-

time housekeeper. They don't have time to cook much, so they usually order in. They're too busy to take long vacations.

As it happens, all those things — cooking, cleaning, home care, three-week vacations and so forth — are the kind of activity that keep Low-GDP Man and his wife busy. High-GDP Man likes his washer and dryer; Low-GDP Man doesn't mind hanging his laundry on the clothesline. High-GDP Man buys bags of prewashed salad at the grocery store; Low-GDP Man grows vegetables in his garden. When High-GDP Man wants a book, he buys it; Low-GDP Man checks it out of the library. When High-GDP Man wants to get in shape, he joins a gym; Low-GDP Man digs out an old pair of Nikes and runs through the neighbourhood. On his morning commute, High-GDP Man drives past Low-GDP Man, who is walking to work in wrinkled khakis."[287] The country's GDP rises thanks to High-GDP Man's expenditures so his attitude is favoured in capitalist societies. But do we honestly regard such life as more valuable and happier than the life of Low-GDP Man?

Instead of measuring what a country possesses (of produces) to satisfy the needs of its inhabitants, GPD measures the output of activities that can be taxed. If people had an obligation to exchange clothes with neighbours and paid tax on it, GPD would raise although it would not lead to more wealth in the country.

Individualism is strongly connected with capitalist economic development. First, individuals should be highly mobile to adjust to the needs of economy. They should not have roots, should not be attached to places, traditions, friends. Should be able to move at short notice to different cities. Second, when individual peasants or workers united, they made revolutions. Atomised societies are more docile. If people have access to hundreds of different TV channels, radio stations, newspapers they do not have common platforms which could integrate them. Third, individuals without many friends and large families spend more. Other people do not help them on the basis of mutual bonds. They have to pay for every service.

Consumerism is an the pillars of capitalism in Western culture. In the 17th century consumption in England fuelled early capitalism. However, it did not become the foundation of the British or European culture and identity. In America consumption was more fundamental together with idea that consumers direct production by their

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[287] Jon Gertner, 'The Rise and Fall of the G.D.P.' *The New York Times* May 30, 2010
http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/16/magazine/16GDP-t.html [retrieved 7.08.2014]

choices. Consumerism became the foundation of American social compromise. Individuals were happy when they could buy what they wanted, capitalists became wealthy when they produced what individuals wanted to buy. Consumerism did not favour high culture. In the 19th and the first half of the 20th century America had no ambition to compete with great European trends in art, to produce great myths, architectural styles, beautiful cities, operas, literature or paintings. Only very few American (like the philosophers transcendentalists) longed for those things.

In the USSR consumerism was despised. Soviet communists admired European high culture, and considered themselves more Western than Europe itself. At least on the official level their aim was to destroy the bourgeoisie and then create a new culture of the working class that would admire Bach and Mozart. At the same time communism rejected mass consumption regarded as a distraction from the strategic goals of the system – building heavy industry and the army to fight the West. Even towards its end the USSR spent almost a quarter of its GDP on armament.

After World War Two Europe somehow swapped positions with the U.S. Europe gave up her international ambitions, while America was almost forced to become a global superpower to combat communism. This determined their attitudes to consumerism. Europe embraced it even though it was undermining rich European cultural tradition. All GDP growth was used to make life in Europe pleasant and comfortable. The result – at least in my personal opinion – was questionable. In Europe, the lack of confrontation with international enemies, too much personal freedom, and the weakening role of the elites contributed to the decline of the noble European spirit. In the 1960s the youth revolt under Maoist slogans was a clear manifestation of a moral confusion on the continent. The old elites were boring, while youngsters wanted mainly free love. What happened later was only worse – first exaggerated hedonism of the 1970s, and then exaggerated greed of the 1980s. Young Europeans ceased to be Germans or Frenchmen, but they were not Europeans either, they became cosmopolites concentrated on their personal lives and desires. The USSR and the U.S. had completely different attitudes to consumerism but they both had international political ambitions which required strong cultural identity and patriotism. In America patriotism counterbalanced the individualistic consumerism. Western Europe combined two different elements, socialism based on fairly centralised political system and

consumerism, to produce the welfare state. The crux of the matter is that in the U.S. consumerism harmonizes with other aspects of the official culture and strengthens it, while in Europe it dissolves culture and identity of the continent.

China does not consume much, but when debt is accumulating there,[288] expert advice to stimulate consumption solve the problem.[289] Yet to things are obvious. (1) Consumption do not reflect spontaneous need of consumers. Advertisements, ageing of products force consumers to buy, which litters the world, drains resources, but does not make life better. If consumerism is essential to the development of economy and the survival of capitalism, then capitalism will destroy the world quite soon.

Workaholism. Since it was discovered that labour produces wealth societies have been forced to overwork. Marx was right that exploitation of factory workers was more intense than that of peasants who had to work in harmony with the pace of nature. Crops do not grow in winter. Unrestricted competition makes people work more but with diminishing returns. A few centuries ago it was believed that when human work was replaced by automated work, people would have more time and means to enjoy life. With the development of capitalism everyone works more than in the past. Overproduction and competition force people to devote all their time and energy to work. But when everyone works 70 hours per week no-one has time for consumption. It is a case of the prisoner's dilemma - everyone tries to work more than others to be more competitive, as a result everyone works too much, consumption falls and everyone loses.

Since individuals have so little time to consume goods and services for pleasure more and more goods and services are produced and bought as means of production of other goods. Computers, cars, motorways, planes etc. are used to produce other computers, planes, cars etc. Everyone is busy manufacturing something or performing services which do not satisfies important desires. It is needed to keep economy working. The very maintenance of the system of contemporary capitalism devours increasing amount of time and energy.

It is not even true that competition always raises the quality of production - supermarkets are full of low quality goods, and television of trash cultural products. All this litters the world. Huge profits might be generated when productivity rises through

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[288] http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-08-28/digging-into-china-s-growing-mountain-of-debt
[289] http://www.mckinsey.com/global-themes/china/chinas-consumption-challenge

innovations. But not everyone can invent computers. And skilled labour, which also requires training, does not necessarily leave workers with more free time and less stress. Have we crossed the line behind which maintaining free market economy costs more that it produces?

This is another inherent vice of capitalism discovered by Marx - it devours all human powers, produces more than can be consumed and leaves people exhausted and unsatisfied. Who benefits from it? Perhaps those who are on the top of social structures, the 1% who is above all the troubles of average people. Will it be also beneficial to the development of humanity?

Overpopulation is closely connected with the development of medicine and hunger relief humanitarian operations. The problem is that when population issues were regulated by natural mechanism beyond human control individuals suffered but the species developed. When the control was partially taken over by humans it suspended natural selection, which may cause major health problems because genetic engineering is unable to correct genetic defects, and led to overpopulation. It is extremely awkward in democratic societies to announce that because humans suspended natural evolutionary mechanism by which humankind evolved now it is humans who should decide who can live and who must die to protect humankind from negative results of this suspension. Large overpopulated countries are difficult to govern, culture is difficult to spread among masses of young people, without the intimacy of small communities certain valuable aspects of social life may be lost. Sometimes it seems that the answer is further development of genetic technologies. However, this will pose new and even greater problems. The rich will be able to enhance their genetic make-up and in a short time humankind will split into super-intelligent Masters and Slaves full of defects. This may happen even within a few decades.

Culture. During the last five millennia humankind has produced numerous beautiful cultures, full of emotions, symbols, myths, spirituality. Since the 17th century capitalism has been conquering the world changing interests, values, habits of humanity. At their core capitalism placed "rationalisation" as defined by Max Weber and Jürgen Habermas.[290] It restricted the mental horizons to careful calculation of measurable results, which now seems to impoverish human culture. The focus on GDP

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[290] Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, Polity Press 1985.

growth as the only goal worth pursuing is the best illustration. For millennia humans developed economy to find means for other, more noble aims - arts, science, philosophy, love, friendship. Now developing economy is an aim in itself, while everything which does not serve this aim becomes redundant.

Nationalism. One of the unwanted results of deregulation and globalization is nationalism. As described by Ernst Gellner[291] different ethnic groups tend to consolidate if they see that this strategy gives them advantage in economic competition. In a globalised world in which mainly rich countries of the North are getting richer, ethnic groups in pour countries have good reasons to develop nationalism as self defence. Unless rich countries cares for more equal distribution of world's wealth the spread of nationalism may cause serious catastrophes. When globalization shifts hyper-globalization, dominated by truly international corporations, even people in previously affluent countries show nationalistic tendencies. (An interesting case is 'small globalization' within the EU. The EU is based on free internal trade. As a result countries with strong industry dominated the whole EU causing poverty in the whole belt of countries from Portugal through Greece to Estonia. The current wave of nationalism in Europe seems the inevitable outcome of it.)

No wonder that the opposition to deregulated capitalism is strong. In China a group of up to 10 people runs a country of 1.35 billion inhabitants, in Russia authoritarian Putin enjoys huge support from the society and controls the country's economy, Islam is spreading with its message of universal obedience, Latin America often turns to socialism, in Africa the Chinese have started to promote their values. In America, where around 2050 non-white Americans will outnumber the white ones,[292] Donald Trump was elected President in 2016. In Europe social tensions generated by the introduction of free market mechanisms resulted in the rise to power of radical left-wing parties in Southern Europe. Together with right-wing parties in Northern Europe which oppose ill-assimilated immigration they may destabilise politically the whole EU. Is deregulated globalization a solution to the problem of the world or rather a cause of too many new ones?

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[291] Ernst Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*. Cornell Univesity Press 1983.
[292] Vegard Skirbekk, Anne Goujon, and Eric Kaufmann, Secularism or Catholicism? The Religious Composition of the United States to 2043 (2008), *Working Papers of the Vienna Institute of Demography,* http://www.oeaw.ac.at/vid/download/WP2008_04.pdf [retrieved 7.09.2014]

An interesting case is Australia and New Zealand. With a small population and controlled immigration those countries have constructed harmonious conservative social order based on consent of all citizens.

Let us summarise the vices of capitalism. Capitalism uses greed and competition to force people to produce, consume and overwork. This mechanism is self-perpetuating. The more one competes, the more one has to compete. Deregulated capitalism produces inequality and crises, frauds, finical speculations, and exploitation which excludes many important human activities and interests. It cannot produce great culture to match great cathedrals, Bach and Mozart, Da Vinci and Goethe. It destroys the environment and litters not only the world but also lives of individuals with numerous gadgets. It promotes only certain interests (those which produce high profit), devours all human time and energy leaving little room for many valuable Low-GDP activities.

It focuses on immediate profits instead of on long term care for human development. Persistent high unemployment is sheer waste of human resources. It creates the super-rich elite who may either monopolise the market or corrupt it with exploitation and financial speculations.

How can it be amended? In the past capitalism was accompanied by strict morality which at least partly prevented frauds and exploitation: Puritans feared hell. Later it was controlled by democratic governments. Now we are told to believe in self regulating mechanism. Yet self regulation is painful and leads though continual crises, phases of destruction, some of which may prove to fatal to the whole world. Besides the natural outcome of chaos is the emergence of the elite who seize political power. (And anyway the very existence of free market requires political forces to protect it from monopolization.) If both the main governments and the main multinational corporations lose all control over deregulated globalization (as in the third Transformationalist perspective in Held[293]), a period of chaos, of war of all against all may follow, from which perhaps finally new leaders will emerge.

Who or what may prevent it? Western culture accelerated the recent phase of deregulated globalization and it is morally responsible for protecting humankind from its destructive side effects. Considering how much effort has been invested in the global

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[293] D. Held et.al. *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture.* Stanford: Stanford University Press 1999.

business network it may be unwise to dismantle it. It may be more reasonable to put it in better use for the benefit of the world.

Certainly I am far from condemning the Globalisation Age which started around 1980. The best pattern of development is perhaps to alternate periods of ambitious though chaotic progress and safe stabilization. In Britain it is reflected in the history of the Conservative Party (with its Tory antecedent). The conservatives offered stabilisation, allowed for periods of changes, and then evolved assimilating positive new elements and offering new stabilization. Now the same should be done with the results of globalization. How? At least two suggestions may be put forward. First, the strategy symbolized by Bill Clinton's slogan "The economy, stupid" must be rejected. Moral, spiritual, cultural values must be more important than economy, while greed, competition, consumerism, workaholism, overpopulation must be restricted. Second, people who understand how dangerous the situation is must unite and start an open discussion on how to stabilize the world. put We are part of humankind and the great process of its development. We cannot spoil it.

Further reading

William Scheuerman, "Globalization", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/globalization/>.

Nenad Miscevic, "Nationalism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2014/entries/nationalism/>.

Dan Philpott, "Sovereignty", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/sovereignty/>.

Michael Blake, Patrick Taylor Smith, "International Distributive Justice", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2013/entries/international-justice/>.

Pauline Kleingeld, Ericf Brown, "Cosmopolitanism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/cosmopolitanism/>.

Catherine Lu "World Government", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2012/entries/world-government/>.

James Nickel "Human Rights", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2014/entries/rights-human/>.

Looking into the Future of Western Civilisation

In this final part, revised after Brexit and Donald Trump's victory, I endeavour to look at the future of Western Civilisation and its possible impact on the history of the world. For obvious reasons this part is different from all previous ones. So far no-one has mastered the art of predicting a political future. These few remarks are meant to indicate problems, sometimes disturbing ones, and convey my personal worries and hopes, although I do my best to be impartial.

Human cultures have a turbulent past, and the Greco-Judeo-Christian-Western path was the boldest experiment of testing the limitations and possibilities of humanity. Western culture was neither the smartest nor the most fortunate. European Christianity was a religion of paradoxes and contradictions, so it generated tensions and inspired progress (Islam was perhaps a better basis for a stable and peaceful social organization, less dramatic but also less challenging). Western political systems were often unstable, Western rulers were selfish, greedy and narrow-minded. But the West was brave and creative, deeply believed in the power of human mind and the search for beauty. (Perhaps it would be illuminating to look upon Europe as a work of art rather than a comfortable place to live.)

Advocates of modernization usually argue that while most of the world is stuck in more or less agrarian models of societies (with rigid social structures, little freedom and individualism), the West made a great leap forward building industrial and later post-industrial societies. It assumes that the Western model is more advanced and thus better. While it is true that this model enabled the domination of the West at the end of the 19th century, it also created numerous problems for which many nations paid enormous price. It is understandable that many societies hesitate to follow the Western example.

Niall Ferguson listed six "killer apps" which made Europe powerful after the year 1500: (1) competition, (2) the Scientific Revolution, (3) the rule of law and representative government, (4) modern medicine, (5) the consumer society and (6) protestant work ethic.[294] One cannot avoid noticing that exactly the same factors created many problems. Competition led to world wars; science gave humans power beyond their ability to control (so that they can destroy the Earth, now even individual terrorists could produce deadly weapons); representative governments made the elites hostages of

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[294] Niall Ferguson, *Civilisation: The West and the Rest*, The Penguin Press 2011.

the masses, which undermined high culture and weakened political leadership; medicine suspended natural selection, contributed to overpopulation and ageing of societies; consumerism destroys the environment; protestant work ethics drives societies into workaholism. As it is impossible and unreasonable to return to the paternalism of the Middle Ages it would also be unwise to continue the greedy path of aggressive expansionism which prevailed between at least 1400 and 1945 and which Ferguson seems to advocate.

After the second world war America assumed a role of a world power opposing communism, in the 1960 was flooded with the sexual revolution of the hippies and experimented with a limited welfare state (known as Johnson's Great Society). Western Europe healed her wounds building welfare states, which curiously did not prevent students' revolts in 1968. Around 1980 Britain and the U.S. turned towards deregulation and globalization, while continental Europe after the fall of communism embarked on strict unification as the European Union. Thirty years later the whole Western culture is at crossroads again. Both deregulated globalization and European unification look unsatisfactory, which may be regarded as fairly optimistic. In the last decades the world has become culturally superficial, intellectually stagnated and dominated by economic concerns. (In the film *The Third Man* of 1949 one of the characters remarked bitterly: "In Italy, for thirty years under the Borgias, they had warfare, terror, murder and bloodshed, but they produced Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci and the Renaissance. In Switzerland, they had brotherly love, they had five hundred years of democracy and peace – and what did that produce? The cuckoo clock.") Hopefully the time for changes has come. The problems of different regions are different.

America

Globalization and deregulation created enormous problems, vividly presented by economist Paul Krugman[295]. They were accompanied (or even prepared) by liberal culture of relativism, deconstructionism and toleration for all opinions at American universities (criticises as early as in 1987 by Allan Bloom in his book *The Closing of*

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[295] Paul Krugman 'What the 1% Don't Want You to Know' an interview for Moyers & Company https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QzQYA9Qjsi0 [7.11.2014] Paul Krugman 'Wealth over work' *New York Times* 23 March 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/24/opinion/krugman-wealth-over-work.html?_r=0 Paul Krugman 'Why We're in a New Gilded Age' *New York Times* 8 May 2014 http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2014/05/08/thomas-piketty-new-gilded-age/

the American Mind). During the last forty years America is increasingly torn apart. While previously American society was strongly consolidated around some core values respected by all major political faction, since L.B. Johnson's 'Great Society' and the Vietnam war different gaps (between the Democrats and the Republicans, the rich and the poor) are widening. The educated elites seem to forget about their obligations towards all parts of society. Yet the U.S. is a powerful country which probably can overcome its problems as it managed to survive the Civil War or the Great Depression. Towards the end of the 19th century America went through the so called Gilded Age marked with exaggerated greed yet later curbed it in the Progressive Era. Many persons with exorbitant incomes will be fighting for the recent era of globalization to continue yet it its inequitably running out of fuel. A striking example is the pro-democratic state of California whose opposition against Trump's presidency is perfectly in line the growing contemporary nationalism. California has a size of an average European state, is rich and wants independence to protect its own interests and the style of living. The controversy between Trump and California may become a conflict between two nationalisms - American and Californian. The supreme position of the super-rich 1% is nothing unusual, it was the case thought most of the history of the world. The point is how they will use their power. In the past their freedom was restricted by traditional morality, independent intellectuals, e.g. from the church, or territorial proximity (the elite lived in the same land as their subjects; it the land was too big, e.g. the Roman Empire, the system collapsed). Now the free floating elite of globalization equipped with the post-modern morality may become too confused to bear responsibility for the future of humankind and they may fail. Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely, as Lord Acton observed. Thus for the sake of us all the power of the new elite of globalization should be curbed and they themselves should facilitate this process. Then positive elements of globalization (the internet, Wikipedia, personal computers, some cultural innovations etc.) will be retained, while the destructive ones suppressed.

Great Britain and its Commonwealth

The situation of Great Britain may turn better than usually admitted. Brexit was no surprise. Britain not only has had a political history different from the rest of

continental Europe but also has ties with its former colonies: Canada, Australia, New Zealand and India. Britain at least after the Hundred Years' War was never specially preoccupied with problems of the continent but it has enormous experience in creating a worldwide empire. The British Empire was one of the greatest political successes of Western culture. If Britain embarks on a task of reviving its English speaking Commonwealth, a very successful economic and political structure may be created around the globe. Even if Brexit was a surprise for the British political elite, it opens a tempting perspective which may mobilize Britain to become again an important pillar of globalization. Britain, too, may be great again. It is a much more important than participating in perennial problems of the continent. Britain is already a leader in creating global identity, which is demonstrated by a great many excellent films about the history of humankind and its possible future produced by BBC (some are listed in an appendix to this book). Britain also shows how new trends can be assimilated without a revolution. British conservatives embraces the ideas of liberalism in the 19th century, accepted social liberalism after World War Two, departed from it the 1980s, and finally curbed wild neo-liberalism so that it has not torn apart British society, to give just a few examples. (Yet it is interesting that after more than three decades after Thatcher's revolution, in 2014 GDP PPP per capita was ca. 35000 USD in Britain, and ca. 42000 in Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Austria, and 36000 in socialist France.[296]) Britons know how to disagree without fighting wars and antagonizing their society. Many countries are as if ashamed of parts of their history, while at the same time stuck in traditionalism. France condemns its pre-revolutionary past, Austria regards the Habsburgs as aliens, Germany would like to think it started after 1945. Britain is proud of its whole history and is open to the future. Yet Britain may fail to build its global Commonwealth and in that case it will either by marginalized and dominated by the U.S. or readmitted to the E.U.

Continental Europe

Unfortunately continental Europe is in great trouble. Europe has always been a conglomerate of groups of people difficult to hold together. Ancient Greece was not only more Eastern than Western but also evidently divided into city-states or Hellenistic

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[296] http://www.tradingeconomics.com/country-list/gdp-per-capita-ppp

kingdoms. Rome imposed efficient political and military structures but was not very creative culturally. The native peoples of Europe - Celtic, Germanic and Slavic tribes - were unable to provide such structure themselves and adopted East-born Catholicism. Those tribes were often democratic yet at the expense of individualism (it is not surprising that communism, socialism and Nazism preferred collectivism). When Vikings settled in different countries, they produces strongly centralised and hierarchical organisations. Catholicism, although also centralised and hierarchical, was perhaps less oppressive and in fact it provided the only efficient form of pan-European identity. After the Renaissance Europe was divided into nation-states. Protestantism did not unite the whole continent. In the 19th century what united Europe was not the ideals of the French Revolution but imperialism ('Europe rules the world'). After the Second World War both Western and Eastern Europe were united by socialism and egalitarianism to be summed up in the slogan "welfare for all". European welfare states flourished in exceptionally favourable international conditions. Europe had technological advantage over most other countries. The world was divided between the USSR and the U.S., both of which had to spend huge sums on armament while Europe could devote its entire GDP to welfare. A paradise existed mainly in 1950s and 1960s but even then Europe was not filled with enthusiasm. When international competition intensified, serious flaws became visible.

After World War Two the integration of Europe began with the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC, 1951) and the European Economic Community (EEC, 1958). In 1993 the Maastricht Treaty established the European Union. In 2009 the Treaty of Lisbon introduced importation amendments aiming at creating a European superstate with a central government. The creation of the European Union was an undertaking of enormous calibre but it has generated only lukewarm enthusiasm and is hardly a success.

The EU perhaps is willing to build a social market economy, different from the Anglo-Saxon free market. The model might be Germany with its social solidarity and regulated cooperation of different parts of society, moral education, high quality of products, long term planning, avoiding both financial speculations and domination of

large corporations (with a strong position of *Mittelstand*, a highly efficient sector of small and medium-size businesses[297]).

Germany followed the American example and introduced 'small globalization' in Europe, which poses serious problems for the new members of the EU. The European Single Market is based on the 'four economic freedoms:' the free movement of goods, capital, services, and people within the European Union.[298]

Yet it does not work well. As demonstrated by Chang[299] free trade favours countries with strong industry and prevents industrial development in weak countries. (Yet strong industry is crucial to economic prosperity. Statistics which show that GDP of rich countries is based mainly on services try to hide this fact, but services provide employment for the majority of population while their needs are satisfied mainly by agriculture and industry, now highly automatised. Countries, like Poland, which underwent de-industrialisation believing that they could make up for this in services made a mistake.) As a result of those 'four freedoms' rich countries of the EU are becoming richer while poor countries are made dependent on them, import goods, export cheap although often highly qualified labour (e.g. Polish enormous emigration to Western Europe after joining the EU).

Most Europeans expected that integration will improve their living standards, both in the old member countries and in the new ones. However, there is not enough welfare in Europe to satisfy those expectations. In 2013 the EU had a much larger population

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[297] Bernd Venohr, 'The power of uncommon common sense management principles –The secret recipe of German Mittelstand companies – lessons for large and small companies' Vortrag auf dem Peter Drucker Forum, Wien, November 2010.
http://static1.squarespace.com/static/548ac75ce4b0a10ad41f38e7/t/54ae83f6e4b01e0916daf436/1420723190463/101117_B_Drucker+Forum_FIN_PowerOfUncommonCommonSense.pdf [retrieved 7.08.2014]
Bernd Venohr, 'The uncommon common sense' Business Strategy Review, Spring 2009, pp. 39-43.
http://static1.squarespace.com/static/548ac75ce4b0a10ad41f38e7/t/54ae8116e4b0c8f53be12cae/1420722454223/business_strategie_review_spring2009.pdf [retrieved 7.08.2014]
Bernd Venohr, Klaus E. Meyer 'The German Miracle Keeps Running: How Germany's Hidden Champions Stay Ahead in the Global Economy.' Working Paper 30. FHW Berlin. 2007.
http://static1.squarespace.com/static/548ac75ce4b0a10ad41f38e7/t/54ae828de4b04c0d6f5e7ee7/1420722829237/The_German_Miracle_Keeps_Running.pdf [retrieved 7.08.2014]

[298] http://ec.europa.eu/growth/single-market/

[299] Ha-Joon Chang, *Kicking Away the Ladder: Development Strategy in Historical Perspective*. Anthem 2002.
Ha-Joon Chang, 'Kicking Away the Ladder: The "Real" History of Free Trade,' Foreign Policy In Focus (Silver City, NM: Interhemispheric Resource Center, December 2003).
http://www.personal.ceu.hu/corliss/CDST_Course_Site/Readings_old_2012_files/Ha-Joon%20Chang%20-%20Kicking%20Away%20the%20Ladder-The%20%E2%80%9CReal%E2%80%9D%20History%20of%20Free%20Trade.pdf [this is an extensive summary of his book on-line; retrieved 7.10.2015]

(ca. 505 million) than the U.S. (ca. 317 million), but only slightly higher global GDP (ca. 17500[300] vs. ca. 16800[301] billion USD in the U.S.). After 2000 Europe is stagnated economically, politically and culturally. In the rich countries many sections of societies live in relative poverty and do not accept sharing wealth with the new members. The whole long belt of the new members from Portugal through Greece to Estonia is poor and desperate.

It seems that money invested in European integration was badly spent. Spain received enormous money but when the funds stopped flowing Spanish economy plunged into crisis. Then in a German laboratory of unification former East Germany received enormous money (1.8trillion euros)[302] yet they did not improve East German industry. As a result there is still a large gap and even hostility between Easterners and Westerners in Germany.[303]

Then the same strategy was applied in post-communist countries. European funds have helped restore old churches, create bike paths, build concert halls but did not revive economies in those countries. The Greek crisis is also a striking example. Goldman Sachs Bank helped cheat the EU standards when Greece was being admitted,[304] then the money offered to Greece by the EU was mismanaged, and finally the austerity measures and bailouts made the situation even worse, as repeatedly emphasised by Joseph Stiglitz.[305] During the Greek crisis Joseph Stiglitz claimed that

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[300] *IMF World Economic Outlook Database, October 2014.*
http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2014/02/weodata/weorept.aspx?
pr.x=72&pr.y=2&sy=2013&ey=2014&scsm=1&ssd=1&sort=country&ds=.&br=1&c=001%2C998&s
=NGDPD%2CPPPGDP%2CPPPPPC&grp=1&a=1   [retrieved 12 November 2014.]

[301] *IMF World Economic Outlook Database, October 2014.*
http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2014/02/weodata/weorept.aspx?
sy=2012&ey=2019&scsm=1&ssd=1&sort=country&ds=.&br=1&pr1.x=70&pr1.y=12&c=111&s=PP
PGDP%2CPPPPPC%2CPPPSH&grp=0&a=

[302] Leon Mangasarian 'In Germany's east, an economic force emerged from the dust of the Berlin Wall' Washington Post April 2, 2014 https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/in-germanys-east-an-economic-force-emerged-from-the-dust-of-the-berlin-wall/2014/04/03/bc624c44-b8f3-11e3-899e-bb708e3539dd_story.html?utm_term=.ff3f3f71715a

[303] Julia Bonstein, 'Homesick for a Dictatorship: Majority of Eastern Germans Feel Life Better under Communism' *Der Spiegel Online International,* 07/03/2009, http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/homesick-for-a-dictatorship-majority-of-eastern-germans-feel-life-better-under-communism-a-634122.html [retrieved 7.10.2014]
Rick Noack 'The Berlin Wall fell 25 years ago, but Germany is still divided' *Washington Post* October 31, 2014.
https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2014/10/31/the-berlin-wall-fell-25-years-ago-but-germany-is-still-divided/?utm_term=.b74d7829e8ec

[304] Beat Balzli, Greek Debt Crisis: How Goldman Sachs Helped Greece to Mask its True Debt. Spiegel Online International, 8 Feb 2010. http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/greek-debt-crisis-how-goldman-sachs-helped-greece-to-mask-its-true-debt-a-676634.html [retrieved 9.10.2014]

[305] http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/greece-eurozone-austerity-reform-by-joseph-e--stiglitz-

not Greece but Germany should leave the Eurozone because the single European currency makes German products too competitive[306] while products of less developed countries uncompetitive. (Brigitte Young in 'Imaginaries of German Economic Success: Is the Current Model Sustainable?'[307] confirms that the German economic success is the result of both well-restructured domestic economy and an international advantage of Euro which stimulates export.) In 2016 Stiglitz was convinced that Euro hinders the development of the continent and should be abandoned.[308] However, this is hardly a solution. If living standards are lowered in Germany, the inhabitants will turn against the pro-European government (as poor American turned against the pro-globalization establishment).

The German anthem has only one stanza sung. As a gift to Germany I have written another one to emphasise the role and responsibility of Germany in European integration.

Europa ist kein Fränkisches Reich,

das erobert und bezwingt.

Sie ist Hoffnung der Nationen,

Wohlergehen, Glaube, Kultur

Von Mickiewicz bis Cervantes

Und von Shakespeare bis Homer.

Gott erhalte liebes Europa,

Wer sich bemüht, wird hier erlöst.

Seid umschlungen, Millionen,

Freundliche Union wird hier getan.

2015-02

[306] MISH'S Global Economic Trend Analysis
http://globaleconomicanalysis.blogspot.com/2014/02/stiglitz-leaving-euro-painful-but.html
CNBC News http://www.cnbc.com/id/102367704#.
http://www.cnbc.com/2015/01/26/nobel-winner-germanys-the-problem-not-greece.html
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/lynn-parramore/joseph-stiglitz-deep-seat_b_8020522.html

[307] http://nearfuturesonline.org/imaginaries-of-german-economic-success-is-the-current-model-sustainable/ [retrieved 10.10.2016]

[308] https://www.euractiv.com/section/euro-finance/news/stiglitz-the-easiest-way-would-be-for-germany-to-leave-europe/ [retrieved 10.10.2016]
See also: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/12/germany-enjoys-economic-growth-spurt
https://www.ft.com/content/dbbd151c-62f4-11e6-8310-ecf0bddad227

Perhaps from the beginning it was impossible to satisfy conflicting expectations in rich and poor countries of the EU. To make the poor countries richer the living standards in the rich countries will have to be lowered. Now citizens in both the rich and the poor countries feel frustrated and rebel against the EU. Citizens of the former treat the poor members as a burden and would like to do business with Russia. Citizens of the latter feel exploited by the rich countries and protest. Additionally Putin is actively trying to strengthen anti-EU attitudes, while Europe would not be able to defend herself in case of war, while building an army would further drain her resources.

Creativity, culture and identity - Europe as a stuffed eagle

In Europe after 1945 creativity, true culture and cultural identity are suppressed. The mistake was committed first by the socialists and later by the liberals. The centralised welfare state suppressed the need for achievements, while neo-liberalism encouraged mostly economic ambitions. Yet human action is shaped mainly not by individualistic calculations but by great narratives, symbolic frameworks.[309] Both the EU and the world acquired new highly educated elites who could lead them to a better future. And yet Europe ceased to be a culturally creative continent of Beethovens and Michelangelos and subsequently to base her identity on them. No pan-European identity has emerged in the process of integration. Europe is unfinished.[310] It needs at least two things: great creative pan-European culture and a new pan-European identity based on it.

Establishing very large political structures is a demanding task for which we are not prepared genetically. Humans flourish in communities in which in face to face contacts problems are settled and common identity arise. Successful large political entities normally develop from small communities (Rome was a perfect example) in a bottom-up manner. Both world globalization and European integration relies on a top-down strategy (in Europe it is evident, in the world perhaps more hidden). It disrupted natural bond between people, natural ways in which in which values are crystallized and produced superficial stagnation overlanding emptiness. One Polish poet (Stanisław

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[309] This view is stressed in Yuval Harari's *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (Vintage London 2015).

[310] Z. Bauman, *Europe: An Unfinished Adventure*. Cambridge: Polity 2004.

Wyspiański) once said about another (Adam Ansyk) "Asnyk is a stuffed eagle, ha has all, a beak, wings, only that he will not fly." The same could by said about contemporary Europe (and partly about the world). It is an intelligent design, imposed by means of centralised regulations, which suppressed real life. (In world-wide globalization real life was reduced to greed for economic aims).

Curiously, in Poland it is easily sensed because Poland went though similar changed in 1960s and 1970s. First left-wing ideology of egalitarianism was imposed which crashed opposition from strong independent individuals attached to traditional culture. And then Edward Gierek 'opened' Poland to the West, borrowing money, manipulating society with the media and centrally planned regulations and also creating superficial centrally inspired but lifeless artistic and intellectual culture. When it brought little economic success, the *Solidarity* movement burst out. At that time Gerek was regarded as a communist, now, however, some similarities between his methods and those to the EU seem visible. (Can a term *Gerkovshtshizna* be coined in English?)

Pope Francis summarized the problem in his address to the European Parliament in Strasbourg on 25-11-2014: "(…) we encounter a general impression of weariness and ageing, of a Europe which is now a 'grandmother', no longer fertile and vibrant. (…) The great ideas which once inspired Europe seem to have lost their attraction, only to be replaced by the bureaucratic technicalities of its institutions (…) The time has come for us to abandon the idea of a Europe which is fearful and self-absorbed, in order to revive and encourage a Europe of leadership, a repository of science, art, music, human values and faith as well."[311] Even if the Pope's claims are a rhetoric exaggeration it is significant that today he says what almost one and a half century ago the militant anticlerical Nietzsche predicted and warned against.

Certainly it is not that Europeans are not creative. Industry, technology and science develop, the Salzburg Festival has searching productions of great operas, individuals invent ways of arranging their flats and houses, social changes (e.g. gender issues) are underway. But this is a small scale creativity or only technological creativity, not the second Italian Renaissance. Throughout the history the essential characteristics of Europe was the search for beauty and novelty, depth and sophistication – in culture,

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[311] Pope Francis: *Address to European Parliament* 25.11.2014.
http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2014/11/25/pope_francis_address_to_european_parliament/1112318
[retrieved 1.12.2014]

in religion, in personal development, in human relations. Europe was highly creative, ambitious and perfectionists, bold and optimistic. This was the foundation of the common pan-European identity from which Europeans took their pride. It formed a cultural framework which permeated the life of the continent and invigorated it. Now although the European Union adopted Beethoven's music as its anthem Europe lacks his titanic energy.

Many museums, concert halls, opera houses exist. Yet they function as a reminder of Europe's glorious past. People visit them because they think it is an appropriate pastime, yet culture is neither vivid nor permeates their lives as it was the case in Ancient Athens, the whole Europe in the Middle Ages or Renaissance Florence.

In the past everyday comfort was generally not expected. People who had great ideals - religious, political, artistic, social - were prepared to suffer for them. In the Middle Ages poverty was intense but nobody complained. Europeans built marvellous cathedrals, went on crusades, suffered and still found their lives meaningful. They were inspired by the spirit of Europe. However, great ideologies are often misused by self-appointed elites, like the Nazis and the Bolsheviks. One of the aims of the welfare state was to pacify aggressive social and nationalistic movements. The method was granting everyone security and pleasant personal life, and suppressing any involvement in great common causes. This strategy worked for some time, especially when Western Europe was rich.

The main battle in the West seems to be waged between socialists, who prefer to regulate life, redistribute income and care for the poor to get their votes, and free market liberals, who foster competition and consumerism, which ultimately confers power to the richest 1%. In any case the middle class is weakened and made redundant (it is no longer needed to run a country and is replaced by carefully designed structures requiring only few persons at the top, while the rest is done by temporary hired individuals who do not form the middle class) and the high culture disappears with it. Throughout the whole history societies had a clearly hierarchical structure with the elite at the top responsible for developing culture and convening it to the masses. Now in the West the elite is hidden from view, societies are atomised (to make them powerless) and shaped by PR specialists and pop-culture. No cultural greatness emerges from it. No Beethoven or Michaelangelo. Neither socialists nor the richest 1% need them.

Atheism poses another problem. For millennia religion has provided a symbolic framework (an imaginary in terms of Charles Taylor[312]) for humanity and encouraged the search for deeper meaning in life. Gothic or Baroque art although served propaganda purposes also developed the believers spiritually. Marx, Nietzsche and Freud propagated deeply metaphysical (one may say: religious) atheism. Later on symbolic spirituality began disappearing from public space in Europe but flourished in art (e.g. sophisticated opera performances) or in philosophy and similar disciplines confined to academic circles. Now even they are marginalized. Religious claims may be false but nevertheless the Western European atheism has become as shallow as supermarket consumerism or the Eurovision Song Contest.

Europe's great capital is its *cultural heritage*. Yet it is neglected (only Britain and the U.S. are extensively introducing this heritage into contemporary pop-culture). In any civilisation common culture, myths, works of art, religion have been important. Ancient Greece was composed of many city-states but they shared common Greek cultural tradition with Homer and theatre at its core. The Hellenistic empires, although badly governed, were Greek to the backbone, with the jewel of Alexandria as its best manifestation. Ancient Rome and later Orthodox Byzantium were built around common cultural core. Medieval Europe had many kings in different countries but Christianity provided a common framework for the continent. It consisted of religion, ideology, language (Latin), common music, art and literature. The same legends of Rome (ancient myths), of France (about Charlemagne and his paladins) and of Britain (about King Arthur) were known throughout Europe. When in the 16th century two Italians wrote two great poems about Charlemagne's knights and the crusades (Ariosto's *Orladno furioso*, and Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*) they were admired all over Europe and inspired a large number of paintings and operas in the next two centuries. The Renaissance unleashed rivalry between European national states but Catholic culture was thriving until the French Revolution in 1789 and gave the continent its identity. European countries competed for colonies but were united by their belief in Europe's mission to rule the world. Soviet communism wanted to perfect Western civilisation by moving it to the next stage of development. At schools in the Soviet

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[312] Taylor, Ch. (1989) *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity.* Harvard University Press.
Taylor, Ch. (2004) *Modern Social Imaginaries.* Duke University Press.
Taylor, Ch. (2007) *A Secular Age.* Harvard University Press

block so lessons in the history of Western music and art were compulsory. Outside Europe all significant civilisations were and are cemented by their common culture respecting their whole past – China, India, Japan, Russia, Arabic countries. The U.S. was carefully guiding its cultural identity until the last decades.

A common cultural framework has many advantages. It increases the cohesion of the state (which should be of crucial importance to the EU), helps forming personal identity and finding personal meaning of life (but it does not have to impose them), mobilises against adversities, helps survive times of misery and harmonizes personal goals. A perfect model of such framework was Islam in its Golden Age. It had a distinct profile, unified different groups of people, was fairly tolerant and not brutal or aggressive, accepted foreign trends, combined earthly pleasures with sublime spiritual commitments, was religious but not fanatical, cherished humanistic knowledge as well as mathematics, astronomy, and medicine, and was so attractive that without much coercion people were willing to convert to it from Spain to India.

However, after the Second World War Europe began neglecting her cultural past gradually replacing it with the search for individual pleasure (the impact of utilitarianism) and material prosperity (the impact of neo-liberalism). Pluralistic, individualist and consumerist culture might have seemed more open and less chauvinistic, more welcoming to immigrants. Social-democrats relying on Marx's analysis of "the superstructure" rejected religious, aristocratic and bourgeois culture of the previous ages. As a result, culture has been reduced to a pastime to be chosen by individuals after work at their discretion. Cultural products are consumed and forgotten as any other transient goods. Although today more people listen to Mozart than in the past his music does not make the foundation of European civilisation and identity. Europe not only has ceased to produce Beethovens and Michaelangelos but even has not replaced them with strong pop-culture which in continental Europe is weaker than in Britain or America. Now this attitude may prove lethal. If Europeans continue to care only about personal happiness, income and hobbies, Europe will collapse.

Europe is a continent of bold experiments. The experiment of consumerist individualistic cosmopolitanism has obviously reached its limits. To survive new challenges, a confrontation with China, Islam and Russia, Europe must integrate. Now

an enormous task facing Europe is to blend elements from its long and rich past into a new cultural framework.

Certainly, the point is not to return to the Middle Ages. United Europe should afford a completely new version of an official pan-European culture, flexible enough to integrate Europeans, both natives and immigrants, to inspire their creativity without suppressing their individuality, and making them proud of belonging to Europe. A true open-minded European should feel equally at home everywhere in Europe, finding that her ancestors built Acropolis and El Escorial, composed Gregorian chants and operas, sculpted numerous pietàs and cast the *Thinker*, wrote *Faust* and *Hamlet*. Many Europeans I met in different countries are bored with the culture of their countries. If every European felt at home in every country of the United Europe, their lives would be much more interesting.

This culture would not suppress individualism. It is always a question of setting a the boundary between what is common in a community and what is particular in individuals. Recently too much has been particular, now nationalism goes in the opposite direction. (Nationalism is a natural reaction to intentional capitalism, as I explained in the previous section referring to Ernst Gellner's theories.) Strengthening pan-European identity would be a golden mean between those two extremes. Individuals could draw strength from belonging to a great culture and then enrich it by following their individuals paths of creativity. In the U.S. this mechanism is implemented in businesses, now we need to devise ways of applying it to culture.

Realizing that the only life we have on earth should be spend on really valuable things, Europeans could organize Europe wisely, creating space for numerous Low GDP-Men, who devote three days a week to highly specialized labour (Henry David Thoreau would liked to reduce it one day a week![313]), while for the rest of time focusing on things European civilisation has been neglecting for some time - classical education, studying history of art, music and literature, painting, writing short stories, discussing philosophy, visiting museums and architectural monuments, analysing personalities, developing deep and sophisticated emotional relations with others, practising yoga or tai-chi, seeking union with nature following in the footsteps of the romantics and so

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[313] H.D. Thoreau, *Walden* (1854). https://archive.org/details/waldenorlifeinwo1854thor [retrieved 7.10.2015]

forth. In short: developing human potential in a European way, as the search for beauty and novelty, wisdom, depth and sophistication.

Philosophy and the future of Humankind

Philosophy, which may be regarded as an important part of the past development of Europe, is still crucially important in creating its future. I see at least four areas in which philosophers' competence may be very useful. (1) Critical thinking, separating rhetoric from sound argumentation, building theories that require the ability of synthesis on a high level of abstraction (because empirical researchers are often unaware of the methodological pitfalls in doing so). (2) Problems of values and goals in moral, political, and social theories (scientists are often unable to deal with axiological issues); personal search for the meaning of life (it is a rapidly growing need in individualistic societies). (3) Producing a coherent scientific outlook on the world and the role of humans in it. (4) Protecting the cultural heritage of humanity, all this vastness of ideas which, once formulated, are often forgotten. Philosophers should be guardians of wisdom.

Since the times of Plato intellectuals have been responsible for shaping the development of humankind. They created stoicism, Christian theology, the Enlightenment, socialism, nationalism. The crowing glory of philosophical contributions might be the '**Religion of Humanity**' - not to oppose the existing religions but to build a common platform on which all of their believers as well as atheists and agnostics could meet. Humankind needs a new global cultural framework, which would help integrate human species. It is not enough to list human rights. A new sets of myths, ideals, rituals and institutions are required to emphasise the uniqueness, value and potential of us, humans. It is philosophy that shows us the world from a wide perspective, as if *sub specie aeternitatis*. It reminds us that the history of humankind is stunning. Crocodiles have existed for 80 million years, while humans at most 200 thousand. A small group of our ancestors left Africa 70 thousand years ago and populated the entire world. Only 6-7 thousand years ago urban civilisations began. In the history of the Universe it is less than a moment, but filled with a wealth of ideas, religions, institutions, cultures, passions, inventions, as well as crimes and disasters. In the entire known Universe there is no species endowed with similar developmental

capabilities. Are we unique? Every one of us exists as part this extraordinary species through which the Universe becomes self conscious and manifests its culture-creating potential. Realising it we cannot consider everyday happiness our ultimate aim. WE may be responsible for the future of Humankind and perhaps even the whole Universe. What shall we build in the next 6 thousand years? Were shall we go in 70 thousand? Human cultures are extremely prone to follies. The more powerful we are, the more harm we may cause. We can be destroyed by great wars and greed, stifled by dictatorships, overpopulation, environmental destruction or social chaos. But it is also possible that we will expand to large parts of the Universe and somehow following Feuerbach's intuitions discover that human species can become powerful, wise, merciful, and even - as a whole - immortal.

Appendix I. The role of philosophy in the age of science and globalization

For more than two millennia philosophy was considered one of the main pillars of Western culture. Philosophy has always been close to the core of this culture. It often became stagnant, but its development usually accelerated to accompany significant changes in Western culture. Let us recapitulate.

Philosophy appeared in the Greek colonies when the freedom of thinking was born, attempted to deal with the important existential issues, which produced theories that combined knowledge, poetry and existential experience.

When Athens became the vortex of cultural trends Socrates and Plato linked the philosophy with sophistic rhetoric to launch a discussion on the aim of life and the state. Aristotle showed how to create systems engulfing all knowledge.

During the Hellenistic and Roman periods philosophy offered therapy of desires and taught virtues necessary in coping with life in great empires.

Catholic philosophy first defined a new world outlook which shaped human life and helped unify Europe at the same time improving intellectual capacities of man.

During the Renaissance mainly art revived, even music continued and perfected polyphonic trends of the previous ages. Philosophy only rediscovered ancient Platonism and planted seeds for the 17th century explosion of ideas.

In the Age of Baroque intellectual curiosity woke up following brutal religious wars and aimed at capturing the rational and irrefutable truth about the world. The rational tradition of the continental Europe was opposed by British empiricism of Francis Bacon and Hobbes which accompanied the birth of a distinct culture on the Isles.

The wave of the Enlightenment ideas poured out in the 18th c. from Britain and gradually overthrew the old social and cultural order of Europe, unfortunately at the expense of the beauty of the Catholic and aristocratic Europe. Philosophy helped stage an attack on tradition and introduce the idea of building a paradise on earth.

Napoleonic Wars liberated energy that fuelled romanticism and nationalism, which was immediately reflected in philosophical discussions.

The rapid development of Europe in the 19th c. inspired a huge variety of trends - critical analysis of knowledge (positivism, scientism) as well as visions of a cultural crisis (Nietzsche), optimism (Comte, Mill) and pessimism (Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard), world improvement projects (utilitarianism) and Messianic revolutionary dreams (Marxist); philosophy both expressed and tried to solve personal, social, and national problems. Europe did not manage to cope with too rapid pace of changes, turned its traditional aggressiveness against itself. The richness of diversity gave way to totalitarianism and escapism.

In the 20th century philosophy for a moment was completing discussions began before 1914 (scientific methodology by Popper), and under extreme conditions plunged into existentialism. After World War Two Europe undertook an ambitious project of creating the welfare state, but it somehow lost momentum and suddenly ceased to produce geniuses and new cultural trends. With the U.S. becoming the new leader of the world its philosophy began to develop now absorbing the whole philosophical tradition of the world to meet the demands of globalization. (Although in continental Europe in recent decades it seems a bit marginalized.)

Recently there has been much rumour that with the decline of objectivism philosophy would die (for a short discussion see Peter Suber *Philosophy Is Dead?*[314]). I am sure that reports of philosophy's death have been greatly exaggerated. At most some forms of philosophy must by replaced by new ones. During its history philosophy used to lose direction for long periods, and then find it back.

Yet, what is philosophy? Originally it was a search for answers to fundamental questions (what exists, what to do, and how it can be known) by means of abstract reasoning and argumentation. The initial results were chaotic and marred with rhetoric tricks, with time methods or reasoning have been improved and their crowning glory was the scientific method. The emergence of science shook the foundations of philosophy.

One group of philosophers came with programmes of a "scientific" or "strict" philosophy" (Marx, Comte, Franz Brentano, Husserl, the Vienna Circle). Their success was moderate, largely due to misunderstanding of the essence of science. Marx promoted pseudoscience, Brentano was Aristotelian, Husserl eventually turned against

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[314] Peter Suber, 'Is Philosophy Dead?' *The Earlhamite,* 112, 2 (Winter 1993) pp. 12-14.
http://legacy.earlham.edu/~peters/writing/endphilo.htm [retrieved 1.10.2014]

science, positivists wanted to reduce philosophy to physics, and logical positivists tortured philosophy with formal logic.

Another group of philosophers put forward a critique of science and the concept of objective truth (Nietzsche, Jaspers, Heidegger, Derrida, as well as philosophers of science Kuhn and Feyerabend). It indeed undermined the authority of science, but also made all knowledge meaningless. Although this did not prevent further successes of science it paralysed philosophy. Philosophy could not have methodology and make any progress.

In the second half of the twentieth century, as a result of both failure of scientific philosophies and prevalence of trends hostile to the scientific method philosophy has become a refined academic game, focused on building complex and abstract conceptual constructions but without the ambition of giving credible answers to the fundamental questions.

Philosophy has become a kind of fine art. Its theories can be analysed as paintings. Their concepts and structure of argumentation can be classified as different methods of applying paint or using different kinds of perceptive. New theories can be created as new poems of a certain school, which leaves no place for a discussion between them, let alone deciding which of them is right or at least more credible. Different traditions do not come into contact at all as, say, cubism and impressionism have no common platform where they could meet. Bizarre philosophical concepts, which were once meant to convey answers to basic question, have become a focus of attention, while real problems fell out of it.

Although this kind of a sophisticated conceptual game can be valuable as a product of long-evolving culture, it cannot represent the whole of philosophy. Also its status as an academic discipline is questionable. Academic experts investigate different problems on behalf of society and present the results of their work to the general public. Although physical theories are complex, they ultimately inspire technological progress and contribute to a widely accepted scientific view of the world, included in school textbooks and understood by most educated people. Philosophy cannot boast of similar results. Many philosophers, often divided into schools with narrow interests, write only for themselves.

At the same time a growing number of educated people would like to find answers to philosophical questions. When they turn to philosophers, they are helpless and apologize that all they know is the evolution of the concept of noumenon in Kant or intentionality in Husserl. (Similarly, Quine gave an evasive answer to the question about social responsibility of philosophers.[315])

The above diagnosis is exaggerated, especially philosophy in English defies it. However, the gap between philosophical production and social expectations is a pressing issue. What has philosophy, a precious product of Western culture, got to offer in the age of science and globalization?

Philosophy can still aim at justifying reliable answers to some basic questions. The collapse of objectivism does not exclude the possibility of reliable knowledge, only its definitions should be changed. Knowledge should no longer be defined in a classical way as justified true beliefs. It is rather a set of beliefs which deserve to be accepted (and be used for action and mutual communication) on the basis of intersubjective evidence processed and in accordance with the current methodology. Both science and philosophy can (or even should) aim at this. Moreover, the Popperian hypothetical methodology (when purified from unnecessary realistic elements added by Popper himself) can serve this purpose perfectly, especially because it is consistent with the intuitions of Zeno and Plato (the dialectical method), which recommended the formulation of hypotheses, drawing consequences and questioning them if the consequences proved unacceptable (e.g. contradictory). Philosophy should cooperate with science, which means that the programme of scientism should be revived.

Certainly, philosophy may continue to be distrustful of science and develop as conceptual fine art and thus running the risk of marginalization because of lack of social interest. Art needs audience who buy tickets. Also as pseudo-knowledge and disguised rhetoric justifying preconceived ideological theses philosophy may gain little social attention - the educated will see through deceptive arguments, the uneducated will not understand them at all. While philosophy was used as rhetoric for millennia, nowadays much better techniques are in operation.

Philosophy may also focus on safe and uninvolved theorizing, the study of formal relationships between concepts, without taking a position on the claims made of them.

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[315] W.v.O. Quine, 'A Letter to Mr. Osterman.' In *The Owl of Minerva*, ed. by C.J. Bon- tempo & S.J. Odell. New York: Free Press, 1975

(It is easy to develop philosophy as conceptual work: a philosopher defines, preferably not very clearly, a few new concepts and then study the refashions between them, classifies their uses, compare them with other existing concepts. It can be an endless job, but not very productive.) This kind of idle theorizing is plenty in all fields of knowledge. (In my PhD dissertation I analysed methodology of the so-called generative enterprise in linguistics. Its author, Noam Chomsky, every few years devises a set of abstract propositions sparsely referring to examples from real languages and then linguists supplement them with minor *ad hoc* hypotheses. The whole procedure does not meet the requirements of empirical science and is only an apparent study of languages, while in fact it boils down to studying Chomsky's imagination and developing his fantasies.)[316]

However, only as the search for reliable knowledge about basic matters, that is wisdom, philosophy is justified to occupy a prominent position which it enjoyed in the history of Western culture. All other ways of doing philosophy will result in its marginalization.

If philosophy decides to aim at reliable knowledge what shape should it assume? ("Should" in this context means both what I should prefer and what would be beneficial to philosophy.)

Scientific philosophy should rest on an in-depth ability of critical thinking. Since Aristotle philosophers have been constructing a reliable methodology, although they often restricted it to formal logic. Neither science nor disciplined philosophical reflection should produce axiomatic-deductive systems or require the use of formalised languages. The human brain is designed to use natural language, and philosophers should perfect this ability in educated persons, and not substituting them with logical formulas (most people will never learn to use them in a productive way). Courses in critical thinking (which I taught for many years) are more useful in preparing to build responsible knowledge. They should comprise problems of definitions, classifications and concepts creations, different methods of justification (observation, deduction, induction, and above all the hypothetico-deductive method), explanations, basic ideas

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[316] Młot na językoznawców, czyli o metodologii generatywizmu Chomsky'ego, [w:] *Metodologie językoznawstwa. Współczesne tendencje i kontrowersje.* red. P. Stelmaszczyk, Lexis, Kraków 2008, s. 43-104

of formal logic - entailment, contradiction, conditional relationships, and numerous formal and informal fallacies, which often are deliberate rhetoric tricks, also in complicated contexts of sophisticated arguments.

Philosophy has a long history, the existence of which is often a burden. What attitude should be adopted towards past theories? Treating them as still valid or worth developing creates the impression that there is no progress in philosophy, only a multiplicity of competing monologues the choice of which is arbitrary. Past theories have always been a philosophical commentary on current events and within historically limited mental horizon. A modern researcher should try to understand how their author saw their problems, where they made mistakes, how those problems could be expressed in modern terms, and what inspiration can be found in them. The benefit from studying old theories seem to be twofold. Firstly, they are a testimony to the struggle of human mind. As Pascal remarked in his *Pensées* "Man is only a reed, the weakest in nature, but he is a thinking reed." The world can easily destroy him, but only man can create a theory of the world.

Secondly, the translation of philosophers' ideas into contemporary language is an effort that can inspire new insights. Philosophers have often used metaphors and strange mental shortcuts, contradicted themselves or changed their minds. Studying their texts, guessing their meaning stimulates researchers' minds. For this reason interpreting great philosophers is an endless process, which requires formulating hypotheses about hidden intentions and meanings, going beyond the literal wording of the text. Next generations usually find new interpretations of old text (which does not mean that every interpretation is justified).

Philosophy must interact with science, on the one hand to examine its methodological foundations (in fact scientists are often unaware of many methodological issues of their disciplines), on the other to create an interdisciplinary summary of its results. Since specialization dominates in science, philosophy should aim at syntheses based on hypotheses from different fields, be able to draw bold conclusions from them or suggest new solutions.

What, therefore, should be the role of philosophy in contemporary culture? I would suggest that first of all philosophy should be taught to non-philosophers, students, even in high schools, and also to specialists from various fields. It should

introduce them to the intellectual achievements of humanity. In this context, philosophers should be:

* tutors of intellectual skills, who teach basic methodology, critical thinking, analysing of arguments, theory building, flexibility of thinking, creative thinking, writing good essays and academic texts;

* counsellors on issues of values, who teach how to develop personal preferences, how to understand the preferences of others and negotiate a social compromise;

* consultants on the complexity of the world, who explain the mysteries of the mind, free will, personal identity, time, etc., and depict a coherent picture of the world and of man, and above all of humanity as a species of a cosmic destiny and responsibility;

* guardians of cultural tradition, who introduce new generations into the cultural heritage of humankind.

Philosophy should not only use natural language, but also give up superficial sophistication. True wisdom requires the ability to approach complex problems in a simple and concise manner. Theories too obscure usually contain seeming or insufficiently considered problems.

However, in the age of globalization philosophy must be something more than a generalization of scientific knowledge. Globalization leads to dialogues between cultures, creates frameworks within which diversity can coexist. What does it mean in relation to philosophy?

* Philosophy should belong more to the humanities. When the world was dominated by mythology and fantasy, it made sense to emphasize the intellectual discipline in philosophy. Today, when technical, mathematical and economic education prevails, it would be advantageous to emphasize humanistic aspects of philosophy, its relationship to literature, art, mythology, spiritual dimensions of life. The need for less intellectual philosophy probably could explain the popularity of university courses in Heidegger.

C.G. Jung distinguished four basic psychic functions: intuition, sensation, feeling, and thinking. "Under sensation I include all perceptions by means of the sense organs;

by thinking, I mean the function of intellectual cognition and the forming of logical conclusions; feeling is a function of subjective evaluation; intuition I take as perception by way of the unconscious, or perception of unconscious events."[317] If philosophy is to represent the core of Western or even human culture, there is no reason why it should rely on only one of those modi. Logical positivism represented intellectual thinking, Heidegger intuition, critics of society emotions, Plato perhaps combined all of them but without finding balance - perhaps leaving this task to us. Different philosophical schools must not develop separately, but should try to understand each other. The result should be a synthetic philosophy which produces a versatile outlook on the world, a genuine representation of the globalized human culture.

Philosophy which would follow this programme could regain its position as one of main pillars of culture.

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[317] Carl Gustav Jung, *Psychological Types* (1921)*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1971, p. 518.

Appendix II. God's playground - Poland and its philosophy.

Polish philosophy will be presented against the background of Polish history. It is impossible to summarize the history of philosophy in Poland in a few pages, so all I could do was to list the main names and achievements and provide links to additional sources. However, I decided to sketch a brief outline of the turbulent history of Poland, which may help e.g. foreign students to understand this country. Discussing the most recent period is most difficult since Polish historians have conflicting opinions. I did my best to be unbiased but I suspect I will not please everyone. For those interested in the subject I recommend the work of an eminent British historian Norman Davies *God's Playground: A History of Poland.*[318] Information about philosophers is based on Władysław Tatarkiewicz's *Outline of the History of Philosophy in Poland*[319] (which may be difficult to access, but the entry *History of philosophy in Poland* in the English Wikipedia is based on it) as is the the internet *Polish Philosophy Page*[320] edited by Francesco Coniglione, which provides ample bibliographical data for the 20th century.

Poland never belonged to the Roman Empire but when it was established by Mieszko I as a Slavonic kingdom in 966 it adopted Roman Catholicism and the Church became the basic patriotic institution throughout all Polish history. (Usually Catholicism connected a country to Rome, while Protestantism was more local and nation-oriented. But Poland has been an exception.) In 1000 the connection with the Western culture was strengthened by a visit of the Holy Roman Emperor Otto III.

Polish territory originally comprised what belongs to Poland today (without Mazury), but soon Silesia and Pomerania were lost, while large gains were acquired in the East.

In 1226, Konrad I, Duke of Masovia in north-eastern Poland appealed to the Teutonic Knights to defend his borders against the pagan Baltic Prussians. The Knights came and stayed for many centuries continuously enlarging their warlike state (with the capital in Marienburg - Malbork). It turned laterinto secular Prussia in 1525 (later East Prussia) and was finally dissolved by Stalin in 1945.

[318] Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland. 2 vols.* Columbia University Press, 2005
[319] Władysław Tatarkiewicz's Outline of the History of Philosophy in Poland *The Polish Review*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (1973), pp. 73-85 [http://www.jstor.org/stable/25777138]
[320] The Polish Philosophy Page, http://segr-did2.fmag.unict.it/~polphil/polhome.html

The true beginnings of Polish philosophy reach back to the thirteenth century and Witelo (ca. 1230 – ca. 1314), a Silesian and a contemporary of Thomas Aquinas who had spent part of his life in Italy at centres of the highest intellectual culture. His famous treatise, *Perspectiva*, while drawing on the Arabic Book of Optics by Alhazen, was unique in Latin literature.

After a marriage of a Polish princess Jadwiga with the Lithuanian Grand Duke Jogaila (King Władysław II Jagiełło 1386–1434) the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was formed. It stretched from the Baltic to the Black Sea, covering at the beginning of the 17th c. today's Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Belarus, Ukraine with almost 1 mln square km, which made it the largest kingdom in Europe except Russia.

The formal history of philosophy in Poland may be said to have begun in the fifteenth century, following the revival of the University of Kraków by King Władysław II Jagiełło in 1400. It no longer harboured exceptional thinkers such as Witelo, but it did feature representatives of all wings of mature Scholasticism.

Poland was usually a tolerant country, between 14th and 16th c. perhaps the most tolerant in Europe, which explains why the majority of European Jews settled in the eastern regions of Poland. (A magnificent POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, opened in Warsaw in 2013, presents the thousand year old history of this largest Jewish minority in Europe.)

During the Renaissance the royal court in Kraków (kings Sigismund I the Old and Sigismund II Augustus) witnessed an immense cultural and scientific flowering (the Golden Age). The astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus (born in Toruń, died 1543) invented the heliocentric model of the Solar System.

In the 16th c. Calvinism was popular in Poland, and even a more radical movement emerged from it, called The Polish Brethren (Bracia Polscy, Arians or Unitarians), a Nontrinitarian Protestant church that existed in Poland from 1565 to 1658 until it was expelled from Poland and moved to the Netherlands influencing the British Enlightenment and partly also deism (e.g. John Locke' views were preceded by a few decades by Samuel Przypkowski on tolerance and by Andrzej Wiszowaty on 'rational religion'. Joseph Priestley (1733 – 1804), an English theologian, natural philosopher, and chemist helped found Unitarianism in England in 1774 continuing this tradition).

Jesuits, who arrived in 1564, strengthened Catholicism as a part of Counter-Reformation, so that in the 17c. it was an absolutely dominant religion. In fact, at that time the position of the Catholic upper class of landowners hampered social progress, development of cities, ideological pluralism. This reflected a general division between Western Europe, where cities and the middle class were developing, and Eastern Europe based on agricultural production. In the 16th and 17th centuries the Ottoman Empire endangered Europe. Poland eagerly assumed the title of *antemurale christianitatis* (the bulwark of Christianity). In 1683 Polish king Jan Sobieski played crucial role in defeating Turks at Vienna, which broke the ambitions of the Ottomans, who never again dared to attack Europe.

Polish democracy was the most exceptional. In 1425 the *Neminem captivabimus* rule, protecting the nobility or gentry from arbitrary royal arrests, was adopted. The privileges of the nobility (*szlachta*) kept growing and as early as in 1454 a democratic system was introduced in which all noblemen could gather at local parliaments to select their representatives to the Parliament (*sejm walny*). The *Nihil novi* act, adopted in 1505 by the Sejm (parliament), transferred most of the legislative power from the monarch to the Sejm. Since 1573 the king was elected by nobility and gentry and was not allowed to found a dynasty. (A similar system of electing a doge proved very efficient in Venice. In the Holy Roman Empire and Byzantium eemperors were also elected but they usually managed to preserve dynasties.)

The result was beneficial for the culture, however, in the long run detrimental to the state. Polish noble class was enormous in size - perhaps even 8-10 percent of the population (while in France, England, Spain or Russia from 0.5 to 2 percent). In the 16th c. serfdom was strengthened and in the 17th c. it was the dominant form of relationship between peasants and nobility, the majority of population was uneducated and in fact not counted as members of society at all. Nobles' Democracy created an illusion of equality among them (while only few were powerful aristocrats or oligarchs, *magnats*). For a short period of time they lived comfortable lives, were well educated, read Aristotle (some of his works were translated at the beginning of 17th c., *Nicomachean Ethics* among them).

Jan Jonston, son of a Scottish immigrant and a tutor and physician to the royal family of Leszczyński was a devotee of Bacon and experimental knowledge, and author

of *Naturae constantia*, published in Amsterdam in 1632, whose geometrical method and naturalistic, almost pantheistic concept of the world may have influenced Benedict Spinoza. A king of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Stanisław Leszczyński (1677–1766) was an independent thinker whose views on culture were in advance of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's, and who was the first to introduce French influences into Polish intellectual life on a large scale.

However, in the mid-17th c. a decline began. In Western Europe democracy was fostered by energetic middle class entrepreneurs. In Eastern Europe (Russia, Prussia, Austria) the progress of the Enlightenment was introduced by absolute monarchs. Poland had a democracy which favoured conservative landowners, decent, good-natured, patriotic, but looking backward, while both the king and the middle class were weak. In fact, the country was divided between a few powerful aristocrats, who ran almost private states, quite well-organized, with private armies. The elective monarchy, motivated with the fear of nobility against strong central authority, was lethal to the state.

In the 18th c. Nobles' Democracy, also known as Golden Freedom proved inefficient and the rulers of two powerful neighbouring countries - Russia and Prussia - began plotting against Poland, interfering with its affairs, bribing delegates to the Parliament, derailing possible reforms. Frederick the Great – for many years circulated fake currency in Poland after obtaining Polish coin dies during the conquest of Saxony. The whole political system thus became unmanageable. The king and a group patriots prepared a plan for reforms. On 3rd of May 1791 a Constitution was adopted in Poland as the first one in Europe (if we do not count the Swedish monarchic constitution of 1772). It had some freemasonry elements (as the American Constitution) and was opposed by both powerful Polish aristocrats and poor gentry. It was finally rejected under the pressure of the Russian army sent to Poland by Catherine the Great. In three partitions - 1772, 1793, and 1795 - Polish territory was divided between Russia, Prussia and Austria. It was again exceptional - one of the oldest and largest European countries suddenly disappeared from the map for 123 years. Whatever Polish faults contributed to it - stagnation, self-contentment of the noble class, anarchy, corruption, weakening of central power - it should not be overlooked that political elites of the same countries - Prussia and Russia, since Austria played a minor role in partitions and remained

friendly towards its new Polish population - one and a half century later under Hitler and Stalin began the Second World War. By an ominous coincidence another, fourth partition of Poland preceded the downfall of Europe. On the 23rd August 1939 the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact was signed. Stalin and Hitler divided Poland between their two counties.[321] One cannot help thinking that if Poland had not been destroyed in the 18th c., Europe might have avoided destruction in the 20th c., because although often badly governed, Poland has always been very loyal to Europe as a whole and did not act as a selfish and destructive individual player. It might have played a very positive stabilizing role.

When August III the Saxon (known in Germany as Frederick Augustus II) was elected as the king of the Polish-Lithuanian Kingdom (1734) German influences were heightened in philosophy (Christian Wolff and, indirectly, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz). Under the last Polish king, Stanisław August Poniatowski (reigned 1764–95), the Polish Enlightenment was radicalised and came under French influence (e.g. Condillac's sensualism). This spirit pervaded Poland's Commission of National Education, whose members were in touch with the French Encyclopaedists and freethinkers, with d'Alembert, Condorcet, Condillac and Rousseau.

This empiricist and positivist Enlightenment philosophy produced several outstanding Polish thinkers (Jan Śniadecki, Stanisław Staszic and Hugo Kołłątaj). Kant was not warmly welcomed. Jan Śniadecki warned against this "fanatical, dark and apocalyptic mind," and wrote: "To revise Locke and Condillac, to desire *a priori* knowledge of things that human nature can grasp only by their consequences, is a lamentable aberration of mind".

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Scottish School of Common Sense became the dominant outlook in Poland. The Kantian and Scottish ideas were united in typical fashion by Jędrzej Śniadecki (Jan's bother).

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[321] This pact was a complicated issue. From the early 1920s Germany, humiliated by the Versailles Treatise and not allowed to have a large army, cooperated in secrete militarily with the Soviet Union. After Hitler, a bitter anticommunist, had come to power in 1933, Stalin withdrew from this cooperation. At that time the USSR had the most powerful army in the world, prepared to conquer Western Europe and spread communism, while Germany still had almost no military forces. Then, however, Hitler made a miracle and rebuilt German power within a few years, while Stalin, afraid of possible plots in the army, destroyed himself its potential by 1937. In 1939 Stalin knowing that he was too weak to risk a confrontation with Germany (especially that he was not certain if Poland would not join Hitler) made an ingenious movement and by signing a treatise with Hitler which directed Germany against Poland, France and Britain, won two more years to prepare for war.

The whole period between 1795 and 1918 was dominated in the partitioned Poland by the fight for independence. Prussia was protestant, Russia orthodox, for Poles Catholicism was fused with patriotism. Romantic poetry and ideology glorifying martyrdom were extremely popular. This emotionally tense attitude, influencing Polish mentality until late 20th c., was briefly summarized by poet Cyprian Kamil Norwid in two stanzas of his drama *Tyrtej* (Tyrtaeus, 1866), later populrized by Jerzy Andrzejewski in a novel *Ashes and Diamonds* (1948) and a film by Andrzej Wajda (1958), when it was again revitalised under communism.

Coraz to z ciebie jako z drzazgi smolnej
Wokoło lecą szmaty zapalone.
Gorejąc nie wiesz czy stawasz się wolny,
Czy to co twoje ma być zatracone.
Czy popiół tylko zostanie i zamęt
Co idzie w przepaść z burzą.
Czy zostanie
Na dnie popiołu gwiaździsty dyjament
Wiekuistego zwycięstwa zaranie?

From you, as from burning chips of resin,
fiery fragments circle for and near;
Ablaze, you do not know if you are to be free,
or if all that is yours will disappear.

Will only ashes and confusion remain,
leading into the abyss? - or will there be
in the depths of the ash a star-like diamond,
the dawning of eternal victory?

Between the two lost anti-Russian uprisings (in November 1830 and in January 1863) the philosophical climate changed and the Polish national metaphysics blossomed

reflecting the spiritual aspirations of a politically humiliated people. At the same time it exhibited similar threads to the German romantic philosophy of Hegel. Polish metaphysics saw the mission of philosophy not only in the search for truth, but in the reformation of life and in the salvation of humankind. It was permeated with the faith in metaphysical import of the nation and convinced that man could fulfil his vocation only within the communion of spirits, which was the nation. Nations determined the evolution of humankind, and the Polish nation had been assigned the role of Messiah to the nations, so the name Messianism assigned to those doctrines. Its main proponents: Józef Maria Hoene-Wroński(1778–1853), Bronisław Trentowski (1808–69), Józef Gołuchowski (1797–1858), August Cieszkowski (1814–94), Karol Libelt (1807–75), Józef Kremer (1806–75). An important role in the Messianist movement was also played by the Polish Romantic poets, Adam Mickiewicz (1798–1855), Juliusz Słowacki (1809–49) and Zygmunt Krasiński (1812–59), as well as religious activists such as Andrzej Towiański (1799–1878).

After 1863 fast industrialization began and a new Polish identity began to form. Poland can be credited with the creation of a new social group - the intelligentsia, an educated, professional or business middle class, often originated from lower gentry, landless or alienated from their rural possessions. Later this term was applied to similar groups that emerged in other European countries. They descended from a large educated noble class who had not survived the land reforms and formed the core of Polish patriotic movements.[322]

The Positivist philosophy that took form in Poland after the January 1863 Uprising was hardly identical with the philosophy of Auguste Comte. It was in fact a continuation of the Enlightenment philosophy now enriched with the ideas of Comte combined with those of John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer, for it was interested in what was common to them all: a sober, empirical attitude to life. Poland was tired of its romanticism although it survived in the subconscious and re-emerged in times of crises. Poland was still partitioned between Prussia - around the city of Poznań (where economic development was the fastest), Russia - Warsaw and Wilno (where oppressions

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[322] For a short review in English see: Tomasz Kizwalter 'The history of the Polish intelligentsia', *Acta Poloniae Historica* 100, 2009: 241-242. http://rcin.org.pl/Content/14757/WA303_27644_2010-100_APH-11_o.pdf [retrieved 16.11.2014.]

were the most severe) and Austria - Kraków and Lwów (where Polish territories enjoyed some autonomy and were dominated by conservative landowners).

In 1898 Poland's first philosophical journal, *Przegląd Filozoficzny* (The Philosophical Review) was founded in Warsaw, and in 1904 a Philosophical Society, both by Władysław Weryho (1868–1916) . In Lwów (now Lviv in Ukraine), Kazimierz Twardowski,[323] born in Vienna, where he studied with Franz Brentano, founded what finally became the Lwów–Warsaw philosophical school, one of the greatest Polish contributions to philosophy in the analytical tradition, logic and mathematics. The school was primarily committed to the ideal of precision and scientific approach (as understood by Brentano, who admired Aristotle). An interesting explanation of the specific style of this school was offered by Barry Smith,[324] who claimed that it was a truly international philosophy, not connected to national problems. Twardowski's lectures in Lwów were enormous success and could gather two thousand listeners at a time. The main philosophers of the school were: Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz,[325] Tadeusz Czeżowski, Tadeusz Kotarbiński,[326] Stanisław Jaśkowski, Czesław Lejewski, Stanisław Leśniewski, Jan Łukasiewicz, Maria Ossowska, Alfred Tarski, Kazimierz Twardowski, Władysław Witwicki, Zygmunt Zawirski.[327]

In 1904 Twardowski founded the Polish Philosophical Society, and in 1911 began publication of the periodical *Ruch Filozoficzny* (The Philosophical Movement).

In my opinion what prevented the school from becoming truly scientific, as it aimed to be, was its loyalty to two pillars of Aristotelianism - the classical definition of truth (together with his ontological realism) and the commitment to deductive logic. It seems that the creation of scientific philosophy requires overcoming Aristotelianism

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[323] K. Tardowski, *The Polish Philosophy Page,* http://segr-did2.fmag.unict.it/~polphil/PolPhil/Tward/TwardEngl.html [retrieved 1.10.2014]

[324] Barry Smith, 'Why Polish Philosophy does not exist,' [in:] J.J. Jadacki and J. Paśniczek (eds.), *The Lvov-Warsaw School – The New Generation.* (Poznań Studies in the Philosophy of the Sciences and the Humanities, vol. 89), Amsterdam/New York, NY: Rodopi, 2006, pp. 19-39. http://ontology.buffalo.edu/smith/articles/Polish_Philosophy.pdf [retrieved 1.10.2014]

[325] K. Ajdukiewicz, *The Polish Philosophy Page,* http://segr-did2.fmag.unict.it/~polphil/PolPhil/Ajduk/Ajduk.html [retrieved 1.10.2014]

[326] T. Kotarbiński, *The Polish Philosophy Page,* http://segr-did2.fmag.unict.it/~polphil/PolPhil/Kotar/Kotar.html [retrieved 1.10.2014]

[327] Jan Woleński, *Logic and Philosophy in the Lvov–Warsaw School*, Dordrecht/Boston/Lancaster: Reidel, 1989.
Jan Woleński, 'Lvov-Warsaw School,' *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/lvov-warsaw/>.
The Lvóv-Warsaw School, by Francesco Coniglione, in *the Polish Philosophy Page* - http://segr-did2.fmag.unict.it/~polphil/PolPhil/LvovWarsaw/LvovWarsaw.html [retrived 1.10.2014]

and absorbing insights of Bacons, Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Kant, Darwinism, conventionalism and pragmatism. It was successfully done by some members of the Vienna Circle, especially when they settled in the English-speaking countries. In Poland Ajdukiewicz was in 1930s reflecting on conventionalism and on a conception of meaning as the rules of use, but then turned to empiricism and the classical definition of truth (allegedly under the influence of Tarski and his definition of truth for formalized languages). Had he not done it, he could have evolved in the direction later exemplified by Wittgenstein's of *Philosophical Investigations*. Ajdukiewicz as many members of the Lwów-Warsaw school were prone to blurring the difference between philosophical problems which concern real world and formal logic and semantics. Even if he was in good company (from Carnap to Quine and Davidson) his attitude may be controversial.

When Poland regained independence in 1918 it was prepared to form a well-organized state. However, its foundations were traditional. When in most Eastern European countries aristocracy lost its position, Poland remained largely a Catholic-aristocratic country. The intelligentsia - patriotic, educated and attached to civilised values - constituted new elites, high culture flourished (music, literature, philosophy, art). Democracy was weak as in any Eastern European country, but Poland avoided totalitarianism. Poland had the largest Jewish minority in the world (ca. 3 mln, 9 percent of the population), but never produced organised state. (Individual people and even whole organisations were hostile towards them but they were in the same manner hostile to other Polish individuals and organisations and did not harm their opponents physically.) This point deserves more attention since it causes misunderstanding around the world. Poles in patriotic euphoria were eager to recreate a state based on traditional Catholic values. Numerous national minorities were neither persecuted nor welcome. In Poland Jews did not make many swift careers as in Budapest, Vienna or Berlin (one exception was the city of Łódź, an international industrial enclave developed in the 19th c. not far from Warsaw, dominated entirely by German and Jewish entrepreneurs), but they were not envied as a minority. Poland cautiously avoided going to the extremes in any direction. As a result, no Polish organization (official or unofficial) collaborated in executing the Holocaust plans. However, many random acts of anti-Semitism happened during the Nazi occupation since some uneducated people felt free or even encouraged by the occupants to follow their criminal inclinations.

In 1919-1920 Poland waged war with the Soviet Russia over its pre-partition territories. In 1920 Poland stopped the Red Army near Warsaw, which prevented its invasion of Western Europe, and reclaimed Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine. Communism was never popular in Poland. The inter-war Communist Party of Poland advocated in 1919 collaboration with the Red Army and was thus unpopular even among workers. For most Poles national independence was the main value at that time and the communist internationalism had no appeal. The existence of Russian communism also had negative influence on the situation of Polish Jews. Tsarist Russia persecuted Jews and organized pogroms. Communists initially treated them as equal citizens so many of them supported communism believing in its official propaganda. Subsequently some (fortunately not many) Polish Jews welcomed the Red Army in 1920. (When Israel was established and began cooperation with the U.S., Stalin turned against Jews. In 1967, following the Israeli Six-Days War, Moscow initiated an anti-Semitic campaign, which in Poland reached its peak in March 1968 and resulted in forcing to emigration several thousand persons with Jewish roots in the following years. A Princeton University professor Yuri Slezkine remarked that Jewish sympathy for the Soviet communism was one of their gravest mistakes.[328] It seems an oversimplification. The Soviet Union protected its Jews against the Holocaust. It is understandable that having a choice between gas chambers and Bolshevism they opted for the latter. (Now in Poland attempts are made to rediscover the lost and spiritually exotic world of the eastern parts of the Polish-Lithuanian Kingdom expressed among others by Marc Chagall. A recent contribution was done in the highly acclaimed historical novel by Olga Tokarczuk *Księgi Jakubowe* [Jacob's Scriptures][329] about the excommunicated Jewish charismatic religious leader Jakub Frank, who in the 18th century established an unorthodox Sabbatean messianic movement which finally reached Vienna and Germany.)

Philosophy flourished in the inter-war period. University professors were well-paid, respected and creative. The analytical school of Twardowski expanded from Polish Lwów (now Ukrainian Lviv) to Warsaw. Tadeusz Kotarbiński was another eminent philosopher in Warsaw.

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[328] Yuri Slezkine, *The Jewish Century,* Princeton University Press 2004.
[329] Olga Tokarczuk, *Księgi Jakubowe,* Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków 2014.

In 1918 the Catholic University of Lublin was founded, where neo-Thomist philosophy was developed. The Kraków Circle was another interwar centre of Catholic thought in Poland[330] with Jan Salamucha and Jan Maria Bocheński of the Dominican Order (lecturing also in the Roman Angelicum and in Swiss Freiburg), combined logical approach with Thomist views.

Roman Ingarden[331] propagated Husserl's phenomenology (in Lwów, Toruń, and finally in Kraków). His main achievement was introducing phenomenological analysis into the theory of literature.[332] He inspired many younger philosophers, e.g. Danuta Gierulanka, Andrzej Półtawski, Józef Tischner, Maria Gołaszewska, Władysław Stróżewski, Adam Węgrzecki, Antoni B. Stępień.[333]

Music, art and literature were strong in the inter-war Poland, and two writers had serious philosophical commitments. Both were in opposition to the mainstream culture, but the inter-war Poland, although very traditional and Catholic was also tolerant to outsiders. One was Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz[334] (Witkacy), a catastrophic and surrealist playwright, painter and philosopher, who committed suicide when Stalin invaded Poland on 17th September 1939. The other was Witold Gombrowicz, who like Sartre in *No exit* (*Huis Clos*) explored the phenomenon of pressures exerted by others, who impose "form" on each other. Leon Chwistek,[335] a friend of Witkacy, was another freelance philosopher enriching the intellectual climate of inter-war Poland.

The Warsaw school of mathematical logic was headed by Jan Łukasiewicz (1878–1956) and Stanisław Leśniewski (1886–1939), whose students were Alfred Tarski (1902–83) and Bolesław Sobociński.

Axiological questions were undertaken by Leon Petrażyck (philosophy of law and morality) and Henryk Elzenberg.

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[330] The Cracow Circle, *The Polish Philosophy Page*, http://segr-did2.fmag.unict.it/~polphil/PolPhil/Cracow/Cracow.html [received 1.10.2014]

[331] Roman Ingarde, *The Polish Philosophy Page,* http://segr-did2.fmag.unict.it/~polphil/PolPhil/Ingard/Ingard.html [retrieved 1.10.2014]

[332] Roman Ingarden, *Das literarische Kunstwerk. Eine Untersuchung aus dem Grenzgebiet der Ontologie, Logik und Literaturwissenschaft*, Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1931. (*The Literary Work of Art*, Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press,1973.)

[333] Krystyna Górniak-Kocikowska, The Phenomenological Trend, *The Polish Philosophy Page* http://segr-did2.fmag.unict.it/~polphil/PolPhil/Phenomenology/Phenom.html [retrieved 1.10.2014]

[334] Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, *The Polish Philosophy Page,* http://segr-did2.fmag.unict.it/~polphil/PolPhil/Witk/Witk.html [retrieved 1.10.2014]

[335] Leon Chwistek, *The Polish Philosophy Page,* http://segr-did2.fmag.unict.it/~polphil/PolPhil/Chwi/Chwistek.html [retrieved 1.10.2014]

Maria Ossowska,[336] who attended a seminar of G.E. Moore in England, was fascinated with his approach, devoted most of her career to ethics in a rigorous style common to the Lwów-Warsaw School. She was one of few Polish philosophers who drew inspiration from British philosophy. Regrettably many of her books have never been translated, for instance her *Podstawy nauki o moralności* [Foundations of the science of morality], written between 1933-1945, where major questions of axiology and meta-ethics are discussed with great clarity without philosophical jargon or muddled metaphysical assumptions. The book was published in 1947 when the iron curtain isolated Poland and this extraordinary work was overlooked by the rest of the world.

In 1939 Poland was attacked by Hitler and Stalin's armies. Both sides aimed not only at conquering the land but also at destroying Polish culture and its educated elite. Hitler wanted to change Poles into uneducated workforce, while Stalin was more modest, and after eliminating the upper class and marginalizing the middle class and the intelligentsia he planned to develop new culture of the working class under close supervision of the communist party and secret services. Between 1939 and 1945 Poland had the largest underground resistance movement in Europe organized by the Polish government on exile in London (part of it was Home Army, *Armia Krajowa,* and also Council to Aid Jews Żegota, saving them from the Holocaust. Collaboration with the Nazis was punished by death by the Polish Underground State). On entering Poland in 1944 the Red Army began persecuting partisans loyal to the London government and instilling new administration loyal to Moscow. In desperation and informational chaos on 1st August 1944 the Warsaw Uprising began with the aim of restoring the pre-war government in Poland. As a result Warsaw was completely ruined, treasures of material culture (libraries, art collections, historic buildings) were destroyed, 200 thousand soldiers and civilians, among them many members of the patriotic intelligentsia were killed by the withdrawing German troops undisturbed by the Soviets.

Communism never worked well in Poland and was often regarded as Russian occupation. It is possible that because of this connotation the positive elements of it were overlooked and lost. Communism proved destructive but reasons for this are often misunderstood even by those who lived under it. The problem was not that secret agents

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[336] Maria Ossowska, *Moral Norms*, Elsevier Science Ltd. 1980; *Bourgeois morality.* London/New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1986.

kidnapped, tortured and killed people or that there was widespread poverty. Quite the opposite. The lives of average workers were poor but in many ways satisfactory. A kind of egalitarianism was introduced, education and healthcare were free, access to culture easy (although guided by censorship), there was no unemployment. However, those advantages did not coincide in time. At its beginning, when Poland was extremely poor, Communism was very principled; later when the regime borrowed money for Western Europe and poverty was eliminated, it became demoralized; and finally when the economy collapsed more freedom was given to society, but mainly because all other goods were scarce. The crux of the matter was the methods of organizing social life. Bolshevism deprived societies secretly through constant ideological lies. Whether this was the result of the Russian tradition of secret services augmented by Lenin, Dzerzhinsky, Stalin and many others or the inclinations of Poles selected for top positions in the state is hard to decide. The domination of one undemocratic party, the lack of open discussion and mutual mistrust spoiled interpersonal relations and lowered moral standards.

The main mistake is to regard the Soviet system as Marxist. Soviet communism had many layers - some its adherents believed in Marx, others were Russian imperialists while still others loved methods of the secrete police. In time Marxism was being marginalized, reduced to the role of official ideology to hide the true nature of the system based on secret police and overall manipulation, and finally abandoned. The proof of this is that true Marxist ideals of human development and creativity had little impact on societies in the Soviet block and were completely abandoned after 1990, while in Western Europe, where Marxism was treated more seriously by its supporters, they are often still popular. In the Soviet bloc, although the power of the rulers was absolute, very little was done to disseminate Marxism.

In the 19th and early 20th c. Poland had several independent Marxists (Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz, Stanisaw Brzozowski, Edward Abramowski, Ludwik Krzywicki).[337] In the Communist Poland Marxist philosophy was created by Adam Schaff, but lives of many Marxist philosophers underwent significant transformation.

Perhaps it is illuminating to focus on the role of intellectuals and intelligentsia in the history of communism. Many of them supported communism not because they were

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[337] The Marxist Trend, *The Polish Philosophy Page* http://segr-did2.fmag.unict.it/~polphil/PolPhil/Marxist/MarxistEngl.html

particularly concerned about the position of the working class but because they saw a chance of promoting a new style of life, creative, witty, free from conventions of the bourgeois society. The same attitude was shared by Sartre, members of the Frankfurt School and those who honestly aimed at developing new culture under the Soviet regime. In time, when the latter realised that they were manipulated by the regime, they turned bitter anticommunist. The most famous of them was Leszek Kołakowski, who on exile in Oxford wrote *Main Currents of Marxism,* a three-volume long bitter and in-depth criticism of the entire Marxist philosophical tradition. Many philosophers once close to Marxism went their own ways: J. Kuczynski, Marek Fritzhand, Bohdan Suchodolski, Ryszard Panasiuk, Zygmunt Cackowski and J. Baka, Michał Hempolinski, Adam Synowiecki, Wacław Mejbaum and Marek Siemek.

At the University of Warsaw a periodical *Archiwum Historii Filozofii i Myśli Społecznej* (Archive of History of Philosophy and Social Thought) appearing since 1957 published articles of the so called Warsaw School of History of Ideas, among others by Leszek Kołakowski, Bronisław Baczko, Jan Garewicz, Andrzej Walick, Jerzy Szacki, Barbara Skarga, Zbignie Ogonowski, Jerzy Sikora.

Zofia Rosińska focused on psychoanalysis (Jung, Freud) and its impact on culture.

In Poznań Jerzy Giedymin, Jerzy Kmita, Leszek Nowak combined Marxism with positivism and applied to the study of the history of science.[338]

In the philosophy of science Klemens Szaniawski or Stefan Amsterdamski elaborated the concept of the "ideal of science" which took inspiration from "thought-styles" of Ludwick Fleck.[339]

The main neo-Thomist was Mieczysław Krąpiec in Lublin.

Jan Woleński and Jacek Juliusz Jadacki remained loyal to the roots of the Lwów-Warsaw School as well as Marian Przelecki and Ryszard Wójcicki.

An interesting personality outside Academia is Jerzy Prokopiuk (born in 1931) an anthroposophist and gnostic, who translated many works by Rudolf Steiner and Carl Gustav Jung introducing them into Polish culture, as well as works by van der Leeuw,

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[338] Poznań School, *The Polish Philosophy Page, http://segr-did2.fmag.unict.it/~polphil/PolPhil/Poznan/PoznanEngl.html* [retrieved 1.10.2014]

[339] Fleck's keywords, *The Polish Philosophy Page*, http://segr-did2.fmag.unict.it/~polphil/PolPhil/Fleck/FleckKey1.html [received 1.10.2014]

Eliade, Meister Eckhart, Angelus Silesius. He has been continuously propagating gnostic views in Poland in cooperation with many scholars.

In major satellite states Moscow managed to install leaders who were able to stabilize social tensions (after the uprisings in East Germany in 1953, in Hungary in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968). In Poland it seemed that this was not necessary and Poles would solve their problems on their own. Yet after a period of a very unimaginative stabilization (1956-1970) Poland was grey, boring and ruled by hard-liners. In 1970 general Wojciech Jaruzelski acting from behind the scene staged a small massacre of workers and then installed his own man, Edward Gierek as the general secretary of the party. Almost overnight Poland opened to the West, took loans and became colourful at the same time pretending to be absolutely loyal to Moscow. The Polish elite began playing their own game with communism.

Yet after ten years the outcome was far from expected. The elite lost their commitment to communism and became "red aristocracy" (although it must be admitted that their privileges were ridiculously small as compared to today's finance of business elites). The gap between the rich and privileged and the rest of society began to widen, propaganda was used to present unrealistic images of reality and pacifying any criticism. Every state has its privileged elite but an elite formed under dictatorship is rotten since it is selected not on the basis of their merits but of loyalty to the leader. To make matters worse the money borrowed from the West was miss-invested or devoted to direct consumption, so they did not strengthen Polish economy and soon Poland was unable to pay it off.

In 1980 the *Solidarity* movement broke out in Poland (originally as an independent trade union). While the Communist Party had at its best 3 mln members (most of them enrolled under pressure or for personal benefits), *Solidarity* within months gathered ca. 10 mln members. It was not an organized movement with clear-thought rational goals, but an act of general protest. *Solidarity* members attacked the "red aristocracy," their methods and privileges and the alliance with the USSR. Yet actually the wanted more communism and more egalitarianism. They believed that Poland was rich and demanded more equal access to its supposed wealth. Poles by that time had lost grasp of reality, living for years in what resembled a malfunctioning Matrix. I myself remember a dirty propaganda poster from the late 1970s announcing

that Poland belonged to the 10 most economically developed countries of the world. Some workers claimed that they had the same stomachs as top executives in their factories so they deserved the same pay.

Gierek was attacked as a communist but *Solidarity*, yet from a later perspective the decade of his rule has some striking similarities with the way the EU was ruled after 2000 (especially the Gierek spent his youth in France and Belgium and was fascinated with France). Poland was centralised, everything was subsided by the central budget, intellectuals and journalists received money to present reality as a great success. At the same time an rich elite was formed and alienated from the rest of society. The popular dissatisfaction manifested in 2015 and 2016 in both Europe and the U.S. seems quite similar to that in Poland in 1980.

In 1970 Polish border became more open, Poles began travelling to the West Europe and saw the welfare state of capitalism. Many persons in Poland believed that when the communist party lost power, Polish shops would be as full as shops in Germany, France or Britain because it is the privileges of the "red aristocracy" which kept them empty. General Jaruzelski came out of the shadow and stopped the *Solidarity* movements with the martial law in 1981. All in all his methods were quite gentle. He claimed that he had to protect Poland against a possible Soviet intervention. I suspect that the main reason was rather a fear of a massive outburst of social frustration, because it was impossible to hide how devastated the country was – Polish economy was ruined, international debt was high, Russia threatened with restrictions. If so, his decision might be regarded as rational. If the situation could not have been helped, at least civil war could have been prevented.

Yet the question was whom he was protecting most - Poland, communism or the newly formed elite who only employed the communist political machinery for their particular interests. A perfect commentary was the film *Wojna światów – następne stulecie* (*The War of the Worlds: Next Century*) by Piotr Szulkin from 1983, based on the concept of H.G. Wells and O. Welles. The local political elite, brutal and corrupted, first used terror forcing society to cooperate with the invading Martians. When the Martian departed, terror was directed against those who cooperated with them while the elite remained intact. Szulkin's insight proved prophetic.

In 1980s it seemed that Poland was a collapsed state and its citizens were good-for-nothing losers continuously demonstrating in the streets against incompetent rulers.

The fall of communism in 1989 was both a miracle and a shock. Around 1985 Gorbachev began informing communists in Eastern Europe that he would not support them militarily so they would have make a democratic compromise with their nations. In Poland Jaruzelski came with a cunning plan. He organized the so called Round Table. He invited the leaders of the delegalized *Solidarity* and some other opposition groups, and agreed to sharing power with them and the transition to capitalism. For some time it was regarded as a great anticommunist success. Later many arguments began piling up showing that it was a mistake made by the opposition.

In 1990 Poland regained independence from the USSR but was poor and its economy was devastated. All *Solidarity* trade unionist ideals were abandoned and a strict free-market course was adopted. Factories went bankrupt, technological research institutes closed down, unemployment suddenly appeared, welfare benefits were scarce as in Victorian England. Poland neither continued its pre-war tradition, nor the socialist traditions of communism. Many mourned that Poland was colonised by the international capital. Individual fight for money began as in the early days of capitalism. A new class of capitalists emerged in brutal and sometimes dishonest competition. The political system had to be constructed from scraps. Sometimes the communist past and the lack of strict decommunization was blamed for this. Yet the Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek claims that although post communists dominated the public and economic sphere in Eastern Europe the deep reason behind it was the brutal nature of free market capitalism to which former communists, well acquainted with *Realpolitk*, adjusted much better than idealistic anti-communists.[340]

After 25 years the results are mixed. In spite of strong social pressure no government departed from the free-marked framework. Social democratic ideas are still not popular in Poland. (One reason may be that the social democratic party was dominated by former communists. But why no true social democracy did emerge?) The main change was in people's mentality. Under communism the majority felt helpless,

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[340] See the interview with Žižek (in Polish) Dlaczego kapitalizm zawsze zwycięża (*Newsweek* 5.01.2010) http://www.newsweek.pl/zizek-dla-newsweeka--dlaczego-kapitalizm-zawsze-zwycieza,51206,1,1.html [retrieved 12.08.2014]

developed demanding attitudes and was resentful to the state for not satisfying their needs. Now individuals have unleashed their energy, are independent, energetic and self-reliable. Some young Poles proved very creative and open-minded. However, much is still to be done. Three main flaws are: inefficient democracy, poverty and cultural decline.[341]

(1) Democracy seems reduced to voting procedures which may unexpectedly change the course of the state policy, but does not engage the general public in running their state. The level of social trust is low as well as participation in the public sphere or democratic organizations. Only 19.3 percent trust Polish legal system, and 13.3 percent political system (respectively 37 percent and 49.3 distrust them).[342] It seems that although many Poles regained their self-esteem, and perhaps are more energetic and resourceful than the European average, they still cannot develop those skills which were crucial in Poland between at least 15th c. and mid-20th c. - the involvement in public affairs, in *Res Publica,* in idealistic goals, in high culture. It contrasts sharply with the inter-war Poland, when social life was vibrant, but also with the years of the Nazi occupation 1939-45 and the *Solidarity* upheaval 1980-1981, when millions of Poles engaged in pro-social activities.

After a thousand years of history, Polish society is being remade. For obvious reasons Poland cannot continue its tradition - neither pre-war aristocratic nor communist. A new tradition must be forged - and yet, as in the whole of Europe, this creative and historic process attracts too little attention.

(2) Although I met German students saying that Warsaw was developing better than Berlin, poverty is also severe. Poland has a population of ca. 38 mln. In 2014 7.6 percent of population[343] (almost 3 mln, more than half a million children) lived below existential minimum, which means they could hardly afford one meal a day.[344] Polish

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[341] Marcin Król discussed some mistakes in his book *Byliśmy głupi* (Wydawnictwo Czerwone i Czarne 2015) and in an interview with *Gazeta Wyborcza* http://wyborcza.pl/magazyn/1,124059,15414610,Bylismy_glupi.html

[342] 'Mieszkańcy Polski o swojej jakości życia.' Raport GUS (3.9.2014) http://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/warunki-zycia-dochody-wydatki-i-warunki-zycia-ludnosci/mieszkancy-polski-o-swojej-jakosci-zycia,17,1.html

[343] Sebastian Ogórek, 'Polska bieda coraz większa' Finanse WP.pl http://finanse.wp.pl/kat,1036117,title,Polska-bieda-coraz-wieksza,wid,16644735,wiadomosc.html [retrieved 1.10.2014]

[344] 'Warunki życia rodzin w Polsce.' Raport GUS 31.01.2014. http://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/warunki-zycia-dochody-wydatki-i-warunki-zycia-ludnosci/warunki-zycia-rodzin-w-polsce,13,1.html [retrieved 1.10.2014]

Public Health Service is among the worst in Europe (which means bad organization, in spite of good qualifications of doctors), while private healthcare sector is very dynamic. Most people feel comfortable only with their families, on whom they have to rely in misfortune. (In 2015 the unemployment benefits were 831,10 PLN (ca. 200 euro minus tax) for the first three months, and 652,60 (ca. 150 euro minus tax) for the next three months.) In 2014 about 2.2 mln Poles were already unable to pay their debts,[345] which may lead them to bankruptcy. Banks through aggressive campaigns persuaded 700 000 persons to take housing loans in Swiss Francs, above their real creditworthiness. Now when Frank has become expensive their debts are well above the worth of their flats/houses so for the next 20 years they will live like slaves working only to pay their loans off.[346] This is how new Polish middle class is being destroyed. About 1.6 mln work upon contracts that does not entail to paid leaves and pension schemes. About 2.2 mln Poles live abroad,[347] 10 percent of total Polish workforce[348] and they are often highly praised by their employers. Although Poles perfectly flourish in the British institutional system, a similar system does not seem to flourish in Poland.

(3) The last 25 years were hard on Polish high culture. In Russia artists have always enjoyed great esteem. Bolshevism tried to control art but not to destroy it. The communist Poland had great composers (Witold Lutosławski, Krzysztof Penderecki, Andrzej Panufnik, Henryk Mikołaj Górecki), important literary and theatrical life, and great cinema touching existential and moral problems (the so called Polish Film School). Since 1989 no new great creative trends have appeared, almost no literary works or films of national importance have been created, although some controversial figures have appeared (e.g. Krzysztof Warlikowski). Even those who were creative before 1989 lost impetus. Only recently signs of a revival have begun to manifest.

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[345] 'Liczba dłużników w Polsce rośnie' Forbes.pl 04.11.2013 http://www.forbes.pl/liczba-dluznikow-w-polsce-wciaz-rosnie,artykuly,165901,1,1.html# [retrieved 1.10.2014]

[346] Dorota Kalinowska, Kredyty we frankach: Szwajcarska ruletka, w którą zagrało 700 tys. Polaków, *Gazeta Prawna*, 07.03.2014, http://serwisy.gazetaprawna.pl/finanse-osobiste/artykuly/782471,kredyty-we-frankach-szwajcarska-ruletka-w-ktora-zagralo-700-tys-polakow.html
Grzegorz Sroczyński, Szok frankowy. Wiedzieliście *Gazeta Wyborcza* 24.01.2015 http://wyborcza.pl/magazyn/1,143016,17302190,Szok_frankowy__Wiedzieliscie.html [retrieved 1.02.2015]

[347] 'Wyjechali, nie wracają. Emigracja z Polski bliska rekordu' Newsweek.pl 24-09-2014 http://polska.newsweek.pl/emigracja-z-polski-bliska-rekordu-liczba-emigrantow-newsweek-pl,artykuly,348282,1.html [retrieved 1.10.2014]

[348] 'Co dziesiąty pracujący Polak jest za granicą' Forbes.pl 30.04.2014 http://www.forbes.pl/co-dziesiaty-pracujacy-polak-jest-za-granica,artykuly,175912,1,1.html [retrieved 1.10.2014]

Ambitious literature is marginalised as a niche pastime, popular culture is domineering. Although it is colourful and often intelligent it cannot satisfy ambitions of a thousand-year-old nation. Philosophy is in decline since there are few students interested in it. The "economy first" attitude adopted after the fall of communism efficiently blocked the development of high culture.

In the 25 years of free market capitalism Poland produced both poverty and a new upper class. The existence of the rich might be highly beneficial if they accepted the traditional doctrine of both Aristotle and the Catholic Church that the rich are rich because they are better in administering the richness produced and in fact belonging to the whole society, which imposes on them greater responsibility for the well-being of the whole society. This also explains why Catholicism is so strong in Poland – as always in the past the Church integrates society through rituals and nation-wide organizational network, which provides psychological comfort and at least an illusion of stability.

There is some disillusionment about Western Europe in Poland (as in other Central European countries) and a shift of political sympathy towards patriotic right wing parties. It is true that GDP has risen over the last 25 years together with the level of life and that Poland receives funding from the EU but it does not revive Poland's economy.

Poland was developing swiftly between 1918 and 1939 when no foreign powers interfered. Then it was massacred. Poland emerged from World War Two ruined, impoverished and badly governed. It did not participate in the Marshall plan which revitalized Western Europe after World War Two. Although Polish frontiers were moved to the West by Stalin all German factories in the acquired East Prussia, Pomerania and Silesia were disassembled and transported to the USSR. In 1990 much of Polish industry went bankrupt, Poles began working in small shops and supermarkets selling imported goods. Poland became a vast consumer market for Western European products. When bankrupting firms were privatised and foreign capital came to Poland it temporarily created some workplaces but in the long run it did not develop strong economy which could make use of Polish human potential. Millions of Poles emigrated to Western Europe and proved very good employees, Polish computer specialists are excellent, Polish engineers are inventive but unable to implement their ideas, only very

slowly Polish firms operating abroad emerge although some of them are strong and successful. Poles are now well educated and resourceful but there is not enough skilled work for them, so young persons with university degrees sometimes work as cashiers in supermarkets. In the 19th century British working class lived in poor conditions but at least the whole country benefited from their work. Poles have been working hard after the fall of communism, did not enjoy privileges as, say, Greeks and still only a few have become rich while the whole country is behind even Greece (when GDP per capita is taken into account).

Perhaps Poland illustrates a global tendency - no matter how hard people work there will not be enough welfare for everyone. If so, the role of a good government should be to organize social life in such a way as to allow citizens to have meaningful, satisfactory, happy lives without economic prosperity, through pursuing spiritual values, engaging in high culture and friendship.

Large sections of society are, however, both overworked and fairly poor. Integration with Europe has not resulted in the creation of a state based on European values but in something which resembles 19th century capitalism. And this is the main reason why Poles are becoming sceptical about the EU and turn towards patriotic and Christian parties.

What will be the future of Poland? In the past it was a country of creative individuals and missed opportunities. Only during the Middle Ages it developed properly, later the more exceptional features it demonstrated, the more misfortunes it experienced. It had an enormous Jewish population who could have produced numerous Polish Einsteins, it was very tolerant during the Renaissance, found place for Calvinism which could develop modern work ethics, had democracy, an enormous educated upper class, and a modern American-like constitution - all of little benefit. During the last three hundred years Poland has been continuously harmed by unfavourable international conditions. Will Poland become again a genuinely pluralistic society as it was during the Renaissance?

Poles seem to have sympathy for the British and American models of society. Will also the Anglo-Saxon philosophy be of help in reviving Poland? For centuries Polish philosophers have been looking for inspiration in Germany, France, Austria or Russia and often responded with their own valuable ideas. Now it is time to concentrate on

Britain and America. With *the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* the American philosophy seems to have entered its Golden Age. It is both up to the methodological standards of contemporary science and energetically engaged in contemporary affairs, not detached from reality or lost in purely conceptual speculation. I hope Polish philosophy could both adopt and enrich this framework. However, Poles are resourceful and need to come up with their own philosophy which will express the vitality of the nation.

Appendix III. History of humanity in films

In the last decades a great many films appeared presenting different aspects of the history of human civilisation and building global consciousness of humankind. Some of them are recommended here. They can be bought from amazon, seen on TV [Discovery History, History Channel, or Viasat History, BBC Four or Earth], some of them can be found online.

Carl Sagan *Cosmos* 1980 [about history of the Universe]

Earth: Making of a planet 2010 [about history of the Earth]

Becoming Human Documentary by NOVA 2011 [about evolution of humans]

Mankind The Story of All of Us 2012 [history of humankind, short and simply, but well directed]

Micheal Wood *Legacy, the Origins of Civilization* 2010 [ancient civilisation]

Richard Miles *Ancient Worlds* 2010 [a very intelligent presentation of ancient civilisations]

Andrei Konchalovsky *The Odyssey* 1997 [an adaptation of Homer's ancient epic]

Alejandro Amenábar *Agora* 2009 [about a woman-philosopher Hypathia]

East to West 2011 (7 episodes) [a documentary showing the positive influence of the Middle East and Turkey]

Simon Schama *A Story of the Jews* 2013

Diarmaid MacCulloch *A History of Christianity* 2009

Robert Bartlett and Stephen Baxter *The Normans* 2010 [about the Vikings and their successors the Normans]

Neil Oliver *Vikings* 2012

Die Deutschen in German two series 2008, 2010 [about history of Germany through famous personality's]

Simon Schama *A History of Britain* 2002

Neil Oliver *A History of Scotland* 2010

Francesco da Mosto *Francesco's Venice* 2004 [about history of Venice through its art]

Andrew Graham-Dixon *The Art of Spain* 2010 [about history of Spain and its art]

Andrew Graham-Dixon *Art of Germany* 2011

Steven Green, Brian Sewell *The Naked Pilgrim - Road To Santiago* 2004 [about the medieval pilgrimage route from Paris to Lourd]

Christopher Bruce *Brian Sewell's Grand Tour* 2006 [how Italy and its art were discovered by the British in the 18th c.]

Alain Corneau *Tous les matins du monde* (All the Mornings of the World) 1991 [about French music in the age of Louis VIV]

Gérard Corbiau *The King is Dancing (Le Roi danse)* 2000 [about young Louis XIV]

Gérard Corbiau *Farinelli* 1994 [much about Handel and the age of Baroque in England]

Miloš Forman *Amadeus* 1984 [about Mozart]

America The Story of Us 2010 [official history of America]

Alistair Cooke *America: A Personal History of the United States* 1972

Peter Ackroyd *The Romantics* 2006 [about British poets and artist of the period]

Pinchas Perry *When Nietzsche Wept* 2007 [about Nietzsche, based on a novel by the psychotherapist Irvin D. Yalom].

Jeremy Paxman *The Vicorians* 2009 [about Britain under Queen Victoria]

Niall Ferguson *Empire: How Britain Made the Modern World* 2003 [about the British Empire]

Andrew Marr *The Making of Modern Britain* 2009 [history of Britain before World War Two]

Niall Ferguson *The War of the World* 2006 [a provocative story about the 20th century through its wars]

Andrew Marr *History of Modern Britain* 2009 [after World War Two]

Niall Ferguson *The Ascent of Money: A Financial History of the World* 2008 [about how money is changing the world]

Niall Ferguson *Civilization: Is the West History?* 2011 [how Europe dominated the world]

Niall Ferguson *China: Triumph and Turmoil* 2012 [how China will dominate the world]

Richard Dawkins *The Root of All Evil?* later retitled *The God Delusion* 2006 [an attack on religion]

Joseph-Kloska *The Rise of the Nazi Party* 2014 [a 10-episode documentary about how Adolf Hitler and his small band of criminal conspirators persuade the German people to follow him into a nightmare of brutality, genocide, and military defeat]

About the author

Paweł Więckowski, born in 1963 in Łódz, Poland, earned three MAs from the University of Łódz (theory of literature; philosophy) and the University of Warsaw (English studies: linguistics) and a PhD from the University of Warsaw (dissertation A methodological analysis of Noam Chomsky's generativism). He was employed as an assistant professor at the Institute of Philosophy of the University of Warsaw and a lecturer of philosophy, logic and critical thinking in the Warsaw School of Economics. He has published about twenty academic articles in Polish about various issues in philosophy (semiotics, ethics, social philosophy) and now is working on the book *Happiness and the Good* discussing the basic mistakes of currently popular happiness studies.