

# Abstracts





## THE PROBLEMATIC OF DATUM IN LOCKE

John Locke launched the agenda of Modern Empiricism. He believes that we should move forward to knowledge by uncovering the veil of words, the illusions of language that lead to the false problems of Philosophy. Locke's Philosophy is the beginning of the tradition called "Empiricism". In the history of Empiricism from Locke to Carnap there is one overruling question: Which of our knowledge refers to experience? The answer to this question is that however things exist outside the subject (intellectus), their knowledge is based upon our own ideas, which are formed in our mind through the senses. The foundation of knowledge lies in the datum of raw experience. Locke rejects the theory of innate ideas, a priori knowledge, but he is compelled to accept the notion of pure experience which exists a priori. While Descartes believes that experience hinders the way to the truth, Locke emphasizes that experience is the only way to know the truth, such that if one uses the senses properly, then one can attain knowledge.

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## SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS AND MORAL CONSCIENCE IN SPINOZA

In this article I maintain, first, that Spinoza's argumentation concerning consciousness is radical, as can be corroborated from the "Appendix" to the first part of the Ethics, where there is a presentation of false consciousness as a terrain of prejudice. Spinoza seeks to uproot prejudice, a basic prerequisite for the liberation of the power of the mind, the emotions, and consciousness.

Second, there is a focus on the question of self-consciousness, deriving from Spinoza's theory of the relation between mind and body. The mind,

defined as idea of the body, acquires consciousness of itself, since it refers to the idea of its power and to the ideas of its affections. Consciousness develops as a concomitant of the kind of ideas formed by the mind concerning its own power and the ideas of its affections.

Third, moral conscience is explained as conscious affect and depends on our emotions and experiences. Conscience is therefore not in the position to assume the role of the judge who might censure a person for his deeds or thoughts as in Christian ethics. Moreover, emotions cannot be suppressed through the imperatives of reason. Ethics is determined through development of the mind's power, through the perfection of emotions and at the same time through human sociability. In Spinoza the concept of good is preserved as a rule of conscience, to be conveyed through the paradigm of the rational and at the same time social human being.

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### ELYTIS'S METAPHYSICS

When exploring the nature and logic of poetic forms in Elytis's work (taking as a field of reference poem xii from *Axion Esti*), we discover that they are defined by the following principle: the sensible element, incorporating the noematic one, acquires a dynamic subjectivity, by which it develops an unusual capacity of feeling, of ontological autonomy. This development actualizes a specific order of reality, where the relation between the surfaces and the depth of beings as forms highlights the metaphysical character of the poetic world.

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## FROM THE UNITY OF NATURE ACCORDING TO EMPEDOCLES, TO A THEORY OF EVERYTHING IN MODERN PHYSICS

Empedocles considered the four elements of which the world is composed as united. This unity creates the imaginary world of Sphere. This situation existed before the presence of the four elements and was the cause of the creation of everything. Today, researchers in particle physics construct detectors of elementary physics which can perform collisions of particles in a high energy environment. Initially the four forces in nature were united, and due to the existence of disorder were activated and created our Universe. Thus, both the philosophy of Empedocles and modern scientific research aim at exploring the underlying unity that exists in the physical world, which is not perceived by human senses.

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## SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS AND SELF-FULFILLMENT IN THE ARISTOTELIAN ACCOUNT OF FRIENDSHIP

In Aristotelian moral theory, the ultimate goal of moral self-fulfillment is achieved under the guidance of virtue and practical reason. A virtuous person gains happiness through deliberation and choice by being fully aware of what is a life in virtue. However, for the virtuous to have this kind of knowledge it is necessary that they are aware of what the actions and activities that define a virtuous life are. Accordingly, a moral agent can reach his full potential only by gaining awareness of himself. For Aristotle, a virtuous friend, the *other self*, but a self outside us, provides an external point of reference necessary for observing and contemplating moral activity so as to achieve self-consciousness. Detachment and externality are required in order to obtain a better view of moral action than the one we can acquire through direct self-observation. Self-consciousness, the awareness of a virtuous and happy life, can only be attained through the knowledge of the good of the other, the awareness of

the life of a virtuous friend and the intimate acquaintance with that friend's moral character.

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### ETHICS AND POLITICS IN ARISTOTLE

Our aim was to present as thoroughly as possible interpretations in Anglo-Saxon literature which seek that which the imitative art imitates in Plato's *Republic*. To this end we sought to identify the intentional object of mimetic art, that which it intends to, and then separate it with what it ultimately produces, with its product. The range of responses and the differences between them are vast in this type of literature, thus it was considered appropriate to present these responses separated into three categories: a) the interpretation according to which mimetic art in the *Republic* imitates Ideas, b) the interpretation which considers mimetic art as imitating the objects of the natural world, that is, the products of artisans, the concrete, physical objects, and finally, c) the interpretation which disagrees with all the above and considers mimetic art as imitating neither Ideas nor objects of the natural world. Some of the scholars of this direction were found to share common interpretive considerations, such as the view that imitation is a kind of expression, that imitation is a form of creation, and finally that imitation is an interpretation of the world.

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### MERLEAU-PONTY'S POLITICAL THOUGHT

Merleau-Ponty's political thought is not developed in a systematic and autonomous way, but unfolds as the philosopher's outlook toward burning political issues of his time. His first exclusively po-

litical work published in 1947 and entitled *Humanism and Terror: an Essay on the Communist Problem* is an attempt to understand and also justify the totalitarian outcome of the Soviet experiment. The book's philosophical appeal lies, on the one hand, in the sincere and comprehensive presentation of the underlying logic of the Stalinist regime and, on the other, in some profound observations on the nature and the *modus operandi* of the political sphere in general. These observations are pervaded by a pure Machiavellian spirit which is emphatically confirmed by the text entitled "Note on Machiavelli" written in 1949 and later included in *Signs*. The other purely political work of the French phenomenologist was published in 1955 and entitled *Adventures of the dialectic*. Therein, Merleau-Ponty, influenced by Max Weber's "heroic" liberalism and by Georg Lukacs's "western Marxism", revises his prior position, which was supportive of the Stalinist regime, and recognizes the value of liberalism, thereafter placing himself in the liberal, non-communist left that seeks a balance between the utopian project and pragmatism.

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## THE CONCEPT OF DIALOGUE IN PHILOSOPHY, POLITICS AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

This essay considers different kinds of dialogue: philosophical, educational, political and therapeutic. It regards their similarities as well as their differences. It is widely accepted that knowledge is the outcome of a participatory process and that the purpose of dialogue is the activation of the other side, that of the interlocutor in the context of philosophical/educational discourse; of citizen, in political dialogue, and of the analysant (analysed) in therapeutic dialogue (psychoanalysis).

The truth which is sought through philosophical-educational dialogue applies erga omnes. In a psychoanalytic session, truth is that of the analysant (analysed). It is unique, subjective and experien-

tial. Truth in politics concerns the facts (factual truth). Society and politics, as well as the human brain belong to non-linear dynamic systems (chaotic systems). Society could have been different, according to Aristotle («και άλλως έχειν»). In politics, the dependence on initial circumstances of a system is weak, whereas a long term prediction is impossible. A minor divergence in the beginning leads to a major divergence in the future.

Moreover, dialogue activates thinking, cultivates sensitivity and emotions, and simultaneously contributes to the pursuit of democracy.

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### GENETIC ENGINEERING, THE GENE POOL, AND A SLIPPERY SLOPE

Today's cutting-edge genetics foreshadow for mankind a brave new world of diminished misery and enhanced autonomy. Genetic engineering, in particular, especially germ-line, promises to alleviate or, even, to eliminate human genetically-imposed suffering. By reprogramming reproductive or early embryonic cells, germ-line engineering seems capable of eradicating – once and for all – every mutant gene from the human genome, thus rendering obsolete all genetic diseases such as Tay-Sachs, Alzheimer's, drepanocytosis and the like. This, however, would impoverish the gene pool of our species, since the elimination of mutant genes would be irreversible. In this short essay I will outline some of the most critical benefits germ-line engineering is expected to produce for our species, to wit the elaboration of human autonomy, the bolstering of some human and moral rights – such as the one in reproductive freedom, and the enhancement of our ability to benefit others; then I will proceed to the potential dangers germ-line engineering entails, namely the diminishing of our species' adaptive abilities due to the permanent loss of mutant genes. I will argue that, although permanently eradicating genes from our species' gene pool seems like making the first

step down a slippery slope, this slope in my view is neither that slippery, nor that steep.

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### INSIGHT AND METAPHOR: “THERAPEUTIC” ASPECTS IN WITTGENSTEIN’S PHILOSOPHY.

Wittgenstein’s philosophical approach to language was of great importance in the twentieth century philosophy and it would not be wrong to say that Wittgenstein’s primary aim in philosophy is a therapeutic one.

According to the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein draws a line between science, which represents the world, and philosophy, which contemplates the nature of the representation. The philosopher’s task is to set the limits on the thought by denoting the determined meaning of the words and showing towards the ineffability of Ethics, *Æsthetics* and Metaphysics.

In his later period of writing, Wittgenstein employs crucial concepts such as language games, private language argument, and forms of life, by giving more exegetical and descriptive versions for the meaning of the concepts through the context of everyday affairs. Philosophy seeks to give clarity to concepts and the function of their use in language. We could suggest that both early and later philosophy share therapeutic features.

The aim of this article is to reveal a connection between the notions of metaphor and therapy using the two main readings (standard and resolute), attempting a “quasi” alternative reading that nevertheless has many affinities with these two readings. The attempt focuses on the notion of Metaphor, which possesses a therapeutic importance. In addition, metaphorical terms could make the sense and the use of linguistic expression more obvious and transparent.

If so, to describe the aim of philosophy could be an activity

which means an acceptance upon to search and hide, to reconsider or reveal the meanings of the concepts and the sense of quieting them as well. This is just a therapeutic activity which is definitely before our eyes.

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### LOGOS AND UNDERSTANDING IN ANCIENT THOUGHT

A philosophy of Logos, in Ancient Thought, is developed: a) as self-awareness and self-understanding; b) as interpretation of reality in general. The common element between understanding of oneself and understanding of the world is this: Logos aims at understanding of oneself through the Logos of another. So, knowledge is not an external erudition, but the logical ability of humans to learn who they are and how they should live. The path of the investigation: dialectic between individual and polis, between Individuality and Universality. Thus, living beings have determinate comportments: apprehending and knowing as possessions of humans. The task is then to interrogate the latter with regard to their comportments in relation to knowing, understanding, apprehending, perceiving. Therefore a penetration into the structure of human beings requires a more conceptual grasp of Logos and Nous.

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### ARISTOTLE'S PHILOSOPHY OF IMAGINATION

In the present paper, I consider Aristotle's endeavor to define imagination in *De Anima*. The complicated nature of Aristotle's account of *φαντασία* is due to the fact that it is a kind of futile enter-

prise to philosophically locate imagination as a distinct function of the mind. In my analysis, I take into account the Aristotelian connection of imagination with desire, and I come to the conclusion that both are presented as intellectual functions thanks to the unexplained appearance of some ideas, which are supposed to be ideas of both desire and imagination.

I draw attention to Aristotle's emphasis on the mediation of the desired object by the intellect. From this point of view, what matters most is the idea itself, and not as a product of whatever intellectual function. This is because there is a significant difference between taking the ideas as, for instance, spontaneous, and attributing them to a function which, in addition, may be thought as voluntary, which is partly the case of Aristotle's theorizing of imagination.

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## PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS AND PRACTICAL UTILITY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Although the presentation of the studied issues is in historical form, the questions posed and answered by this small proposition are the most important questions that could be placed in modern epistemology. The question of truth, the relationship of linguistic presentational claims to physical and social reality, the transition from the search of truth to the case study, are the starting points, but also the thread that ties the whole problematic of the following work.

The sciences are distinguished by the author in three categories: the empirical and formal, the ethical-normative, which are designed to assess and regulate the world, and the humanities, which aim to find a meaning in human actions and works of the mind. In the ethical-normative sciences the world is approached by means of a complex analytical program that connects basic evaluations and operational intentions with empirical conditions of realization. The weakness in the approach of these sciences lies in the fact that there

is no universally accepted representation of the world. The relationship between causal and evaluative approaches permeates the work from beginning to end.

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EPISTEMOLOGY OF DEMOCRACY AND MODERNITY.  
THE CHALLENGE OF OVERCOMING  
THE WEST-EUROPEAN ENLIGHTENMENT

The transition of the West from the despotic to the anthropocentric worldview in conjunction with its shift from small to large scale, brought the issue of democracy strongly to the fore. At the same time, however, democracy as a concept gained unprecedented ambiguity as a result of its ideological mortgaging and its epistemic deficit in modern science.

In the pages that follow I shall attempt to decode this course pursued by democracy and to approach the concept in the light of cosmosystematic epistemology: First, I shall outline the problematic relationship of modernity to the epistemology of democracy. Second, I shall highlight its purpose. Third, I shall outline its system, which must be taken to realize its purpose. Fourth, I shall outline the counterpart of democracy in other polities that are relevant to the human cosmosystem. Last, I shall attempt to frame the timing and place of democracy in anthropocentric “biology”.

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ARISTOTLE ON (MAINLY) ETHICAL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS

The reference to Aristotle, to his analyses, assumptions and positions for understanding crises and modern crisis may be at first

sight surprising. But once one gets to know one of the key categories of analysis and approach of modes of constitution of society and the “state”, one will find that the philosopher’s proposals are really valid for the modes of action in modern societies. “Mesotis”, the link between freedom and slavery, as well as the virtue of man, constitute for Aristotle the first base of approach to the problems that arise from the political and economic management of public affairs.

The author of this brief study, starting from the definition of “crisis” as a category of the mind, suggests that the conclusions that can be drawn from its application are surprisingly pertinent for an explanation and understanding of the contemporary crisis. The management of potential “self-sufficiency” through the “phronesis” of the citizens and the understanding and application of “mesotis” are the basic categories, as well as the ways, ultimately, to deal with every crisis.

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## SOCIOLOGY AS A SCIENCE AND ITS USE FOR US

Is sociology a strict science or is it constituted as a primarily ideological worldview and mode of representation of societies, as is indirectly but clearly accepted – albeit easily and lightly – by many unskilled or stereotypically skilled scientists in our standard modern Greek society? The implication of this state of affairs is that modern Greek society is not a society of science.

In this paper, the author attempts to explain why sociology can be construed as a science, both from the practical and theoretical perspective, just like any other science. The author attempts to define its object, in terms of the relation of production and distribution of goods, of power and of ideology – meaning, as well as the historical constitution of these relations in fields, in and through which the members of the societies operate, emerging as historically defined and different people. The main sections are examples of the analysis of

relations of production, namely property and labor and relations of power and domination.

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### FOR A MORAL EDUCATION THROUGH EXAMPLE AND SELF-MOTIVATION

Education is the way that human societies reproduce, it is the way in which every civilization reproduces and evolves, having as its target both the development and the most comprehensive integration of human capacities. Education, therefore, is not only an automation in the dawn of human history and then a necessity, but is the most important goal of any society. The question is with what methods can the best possible education be achieved and what are its fundamental dimensions. This study attempts to provide some answers to these questions, questions that also concern the goal of approaching the “Good Life”. The experience and the moral autonomy of man are the two springboards of moral education. The pleasure that results from the recognition and respect of values is one of the main driving forces of moral education. The moral character of ethical decisions complements this orientation, making everyday life the field of moral education. Ethical evaluation suggests permanently any knowledge, which of course does not cease to be on the other, daily side of any education. Education in justice is the ultimate goal.

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MARKET DISRUPTION, BANKING INSTABILITY, AND THE  
GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS OF 2008: THE FAILURE OF  
NEOLIBERAL POLICIES AND ACADEMIC APPROACHES

The 2008 crisis, the second worst after the Great Depression that followed the crash of 1929, puts an end to the neoliberal orthodoxy's certainties that market forces are in a position to prevent and address effectively eventual and prolonged depression without state intervention. Ever since the 1960s, these same certainties had removed from the academic agenda the economic cycle, and the economics of depression.

However, the regulation crisis in the 1970s imposed the return of the economic cycle, while the failure to prevent and face current crisis of 2008 extended the acceptance of financial instability hypothesis and the leverage cycle, brought back to the economic community's agenda the economics of depression and raised also the importance of studying economic history in formation of the conjectures and testings.

This big overture in the macroeconomic developments approach on the part of the academic community was concluded only after the collapse of the certainties of capitalism's post-War golden age, a process that evolved during the five decades prior to the 2008 crisis.

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