

Abstracts



CERCIDAS THE MEGALOPOLITAN RE-EXAMINED

How can we legitimately characterize Cercidas the Megalopolitan a cynic? Despite the existing tradition, I argue that (a) such a classification is not sufficiently evidenced; (b) a re-examination is needed; (c) some of the «evidence» used is inferential, simply based upon hypotheses drawn from parallels, analogies and poetical metaphors; and (d), unless new, strongly convincing evidence is discovered, this established classification and its reproductions should be set aside.

The main argument supporting Cercidas' cynicism is based upon Diogenis Laërtius' parathema that: *Cercidas of Megalopolis who in his meliambies writes thus: ... That famous one who carried a staff, daddled his cloak, and lived in the open air... he soared aloft with his lip rightly pressed against his teeth. And holding his breath withal. For in truth he was rightly named Diogenes, a true-born son of Zeus, a hound of heavens.* But to admire a personality and express admiration in a poem, does not mean that the poet necessarily adopts the ideas, the ways of living and generally the persons behavior. In this case Cercidas, the “ἄριστος νομοθέτης καὶ μελιάμβων ποιητής” (Stephanus of Byzantium s.v. “Μεγάλη πόλις”), did not wear clothes as a beggar and did not wander in the streets and various cities like Crates and Diogenes; he was not like Crates a cosmopolitan and an anti-militarist; he was himself a soldier, leading one thousand Megalopolitans in the Salassia battle, where he fought bravely. These and other *martyries* do not indicate that Cercidas was a cynic.

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RIGHT ACCORDING TO REASON: KANTIAN THEORY OF LAW

Kant's theory of Law, until recently, had not attracted the same attention as other parts of his philosophy enjoy. The aim of this paper, after presenting the general frame of Kant's practical philosophy, is to examine his concept of Law and its relation to both Natural and positive Law.

Kant's theory of Law is, together with Ethics, a part of the *Metaphysics of Morals*. That is, a universal practical philosophy founded on the underlying principles of pure Reason and Freedom. According to Reason, ethical and legal principles are universal and necessary, and in this sense, a priori or transcendental. Based on Freedom (as opposed to necessity of any kind, e.g. natural or social), the subject matter of the *Metaphysics of Morals* is free actions of rational human beings. In this sense, it is distinguished from genetic or historic (e.g., historical, sociological, psychological etc.) inquiries on human activity. It should be noted, however, that Kantian practical philosophy does take experience fully into account.

Kant's theory of Law builds up a complete and thorough transformation of traditional Natural Law into rational Law (or "Law of Reason"). Whereas Natural Law derives its norms from an ontological order – either immanent: Nature, human nature, or transcendent: God – Kantian rational Law recognizes universal Reason as its sole foundation, while it does take into account a critical teleological perspective of Nature.

Kant distinguishes between two levels, viz. legislation and application of Law. On the subject of legislation, Kant recognizes a set of universal rational principles and values (mainly: freedom, liberty, equality, "republicanism") as norms and criteria of the validity of Law. It is only with regard to the implementation of positive Law –provided that it has been legitimately posed– that Kant accepts the strict duty to obey it.

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THE HERMENEUTICAL PHILOSOPHY OF KOSTAS AXELOS

Kostas Axelos (1924-2010), a modern Greek philosopher, lived in Paris from 1945 onwards and wrote in French books and articles where he developed his own philosophy on language and truth (hermeneutics). Reason and myth are two different and equivalent modes of human expression beyond rationalism and irrationalism. Ethics and logic are interdependent, while human reasoning has exile as its true home like Socrates. Apophatic thinking, i.e. negative (apophatic) instead of positive (cataphatic), is the most appropriate method according to Kostas Axelos,

including humor and silence. Truth and knowledge are in a complex relation to one another following the basic frame of Axelian thought, i.e. the “play of cosmos”, according to his own formulation. Reason (Logos) and wisdom (Sophia) are considered as two distinctive realms of human thought leading to, in his own words, a “poetic friendship”.

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CRITIQUE ON METAPHYSICS: CARNAP AND WITTGENSTEIN

Logical positivists and Wittgenstein debated Philosophy’s metaphysical function. Carnap based his critique on the criterion of non-verifiability of metaphysical sentences, while Wittgenstein stressed the prevalence of ordinary language. Carnap’s and Wittgenstein’s main arguments are thoroughly examined. What is shown, is that neither Carnap nor Wittgenstein considered seriously the exegetical dimension of metaphysical ideas and their exegetical meaning.

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GREEK PHILOSOPHY AND ITS OFFSPRING

Philosophy is the most precious gift of Ancient Greece to humanity. Ionian philosophers inaugurated scientific research and critical thinking. Greek philosophical terminology supported the language of patristic theology. The idea of “Paideia”, education and culture as the humanization of man, is also rooted in ancient philosophy. Nowadays philosophy witnesses reflection and rationality within an antiphilosophical world marked by eudemonism and scientism. In a contemporary globalised “Technopoly” (N. Postman), anthropological and existential issues move rapidly towards the center of philosophical thinking.

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PLATO'S ASSESSMENTS OF HIS *BEST STATE*
AND ASPECTS OF HIS *SECOND BEST STATE*

The Republic, the famous platonic dialogue as well as Plato's program for its possible practical application, is the subject of this paper. By examining the original text of this work as well as that of the *Laws*, we aim to elucidate Plato's firm belief that the *Republic* would actually be a realistic plan of a political form apart from a utopian plan for a state that would never, indeed, exist. Restructuring and re-approaching the usually misinterpreted perceptions of liberty and equality –as far as it concerns the latter, both in its usual, widespread form and in its real form– and through the ideas of human self-determination and value in the *Republic* and in the *Laws*, we try to provide the necessary arguments that show how Plato really endeavored to give both these works of his a nature of practical possibility and a character of realism.

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EXISTENCE AND KNOWLEDGE: BETWEEN KIERKEGAARD
AND MOLLA SADRA

We try to determine the nature of existence by connecting the latter with the movement of the formation of the meaning of the tension between finitude and the subjective potential of the infinite, in other words of the tension with which Being is particularized by the subject. We show that this movement produces knowledge to the extent that the aforementioned process of the particularization of Being is ruled by the logic of the *reflective imagination*: the meaning of the existential movement embodied in the form that makes it specific. From this perspective the quality of the content of the reflective imagination expresses the corresponding tension of the movement of existence. Examining the relation of this observation with the content of two characteristic (concerning the connection of existence and knowledge) excerpts from the related works of two important philosophers of existence, the Danish Kierkegaard and the Iranian Molla Sadra, we come to realize the following: in the one case (Kierkegaard),

the privileged rendering of the logic of existence by the imagination does not lead to the formulation of a corresponding theory of knowledge; in the other case (Molla Sadra), the metaphysical character of the knowledge of the degrees of the existential tension presupposes the view, which we develop, for the innate capacity of the reflective imagination to capture the movement of existence.

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TECHNOLOGY AND EMANCIPATION: HEIDEGGER AND EGBERT SCHUURMAN

According to Egbert Schuurman, Heidegger's thought, structured as it is in terms of the the destiny of Being, involves him in dichotomies between Being and human being, and between Being and thinking. These dichotomies lead him to a vicious circle: if technology as danger is a disposition of Being, then no "deliverance" from technology is possible. On the other hand, if "deliverance" is possible, then technology is not a destiny of Being.

This criticism, imposing on Heidegger the categories of metaphysics, sees the relation between Being and human being in terms of cause and effect, and thus fails to grasp both that Being conceals itself in its revealment in technology and also that thinking in Heidegger's sense is a response to that concealed source of that or any revealment.

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THE OPPOSITION AND HETEROTROPIC THEOLOGY OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT

The Greek enlightenment is both an inversion of and a form of opposition to the framework of any kind of uniform unravelling of the Greek spirit,

suggesting an opposite point of expression to the world of classical Greece and a general replacement of, and new vision for, the theological problem, in the form of an awakening of a conscious nature. New knowledge, and a heterotropic form of syllogism and comprehension which aspire to abolish of the old, express the intellectual governance of the movement of the enlightenment. Protagoras' wonderful proposal in *homo mensura* shifts the truth from the region of the being of mankind, and seeks the implementation of a subjective relativocracy. The consequences of it mean a gnosiological inversion, and in the form of spiritual development there manifest unforeseeable subversions. Gorgias, representative of classical skepticism, narrates the weakness of knowledge, and creates the famed triptych for the eternal weakness of knowledge. Within the framework of the accentuation of anthropological character, the mytho-poetic inclination, logocratic precedence, and the social situation, the sophists developed a homotropic theology which we can characterize as innovative, a religious devaluation and diminution against the theological mindset. The perceptual nature of the questions asked works analytically and leads by necessity to embellishments. Prodicos gives a beneficial dimension to deification of cosmological proportions. For Critias, a kind of fear gave birth to the idea of God. It gives as fundamental the divine power of creation and its motive, which in turn appears in many forms and versions in the story of spirituality. The opposition of Aristophanes to divine punishment reveals the depth of the problem, but also the fact that this great comic negotiates at great depth and density of meaning the problem of the divine. Thucydides overlooks the problem of God and refers only indirectly to it, and stands with caution against the praises of the religious population, points out their conventional character with the meaning that he sees the religious feeling as mixed with their circumstances.

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THE LONG WAY TO MAKE LAW A SCIENCE

The purpose of this paper is to determine and analyze the fundamental characteristics of the great intellectual adventure called science of Law. The critical presentation of schools of legal thinking and theorizing is based on

modern philosophy of science, a crowning achievement of age-long efforts to discover and found goals and methods of knowledge, evaluation and regulation of the world. The paper aims to show that Law must remain a normative discipline, rejecting otherwise interesting proposals to transform it into a kind of positive science. However, Law must be restructured according to modern analytical principles by overcoming traditional hermeneutical approaches and using results of highly developed social sciences, above all economics in its positive as well as normative form (welfare economics).

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EUDAIMONIA AS TRANSCENDENCE OF PAIN IN CICERO

The criticism by Cicero of the peripatetic and epicurean views on eudaimonia allow him to assert the stoic credibility on the same issue. In his interpretation of the stoic dogma, he maintains that pain is not to be affirmed as the greatest evil but as one among many. Eudaimonia is not averted by the presence of pain provided that what is to be rejected is only the possibility of a life of vice as the only life that is not eudaimonistic. Cicero proceeds to suggest specific measures for the avoidance and relief of pain that can lead to its complete transcendence: a) practice and continuous discipline (as in the case of soldiers), b) reason, that can make pain endurable. In accordance with the views of ancient stoics such as Zeno, Cicero upholds that virtue is the unique constituent of eudaimonia and he seeks to ostracize passion from the mental and psychological sphere of man. While he remains an agnostic on issues of the soul, he decides that the best existential strategy is for man to retain his fortitude in order to become capable of defying death and all other so called evils. His conclusion is that virtue does suffice for a eudaimonistic way of life, as it is not susceptible to the changes of Fortune and to the passions which lead to a life of pain that resembles a state of disease; accordingly, virtue is nothing less than the healthy and upright condition of the soul.

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THREE WAYS TO UNDERSTAND EUTHYPHRO'S DILEMMA (OR, WHAT'S THE USE OF PHILOSOPHY TO ARCHITECTS)

There is more to Euthyphro's dilemma than just manoeuvring our moral intuitions between God's goodness (in willing the good) and God's overall greatness (in defining good). It is argued that in the same spirit as the Socratic classical dilemma, our mathematical intuitions concerning truth and proof can likewise be manoeuvred as long as we duly assign to proof the role of leading us to the truth of a mathematical proposition (theorem) (analogous to God's willing the good), or the role of constructing the truth, or, indeed, the 'meaning' itself of a mathematical proposition (analogous to God's making, or, defining good). This is an important issue also in Wittgenstein's philosophy of mathematics. Last, the structure of this type of dilemma, is even more forceful and informative when we come to the notoriously thorny issue of the relation of artists with their own 'creations'. The informativeness of the dilemma in art and/or architecture is revealed when we realize that neither artists (even architects) nor mathematicians are gods, while answering this type of dilemma definitively in either direction remains a serious challenge, but a promising one to reveal on these earthly matters useful, albeit partial, answers.

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MORALITY AND LAW

The question is posed, whether what is legal is also moral and, conversely, if what is moral is necessarily legal as well. The question does not allow for unambiguous replies. What is legal, under certain conditions, may be rendered moral, while what is moral, under certain conditions, may also be legal. Ethics refer to a broad behavioral field, in which the person performing the action is at best acting without prejudice and ulterior motives. Ethics is the relationship with others and the respect for their rights, their needs and their wishes. There is no such notion as absolute ethics, given the differences in each land and

culture. The content of the laws, and the extent to which they are just or unjust is defined by the government in power each time, and usually acts under the influence of special interests. Laws would be ethical if we lived in a society where the feeling of community and the protection of both personal and social rights reigned. What is legal is usually not moral, while what is moral usually conflicts with what is legal, in order to stand out from the crowd. The laws are not, in most cases, at conflict with age-long values, but also with nature itself; that is, with everything that people consider as a natural need and a natural function. Nature also leans toward truth, while the law usually leans toward the side of the simple opinion. John Rawls points out that justice, as fairness, in order to prevail in civil society, requires the support of a philosophical and ethical basis for its democratic institutions; while on the other hand it requires that the necessity to satisfy the universal request for liberty and equality become common notions. Thus, the constitution of a fair society, where laws and ethics operate within the framework of harmonious relations between people and groups, is impracticable based on historical experience. All that is left are the social and political battles towards the attainment of this great purpose.

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INTENTIONALIST THEORIES OF ART

In this paper, I take for granted that an intentionalist approach to the meaning of a work of art is both possible and fruitful. I concentrate on the discussion and the critical assessment of the main intentionalist theories, ranging from Actual Intentionalism, to different versions of Hypothetical Intentionalism. The main issues of this discussion evolve around the notions of artistic intentions, the ideal public, the informed critic. Questions which will be tackled include the possibility of an adequate and non-circular description of the artist's ideal or appropriate public, as well as the expectations that the artist may have of it. For instance, it will become apparent that an effective intentionalist approach should be able to deal with the possibility of failed artistic intentions, which raises the issue of

whether the ideal interpreter should be able to grasp the real, though failed intentions with the artist, or perceive what one should perceive without succumbing to an interpretive error, compatible to the artist's misconceived plan. I propose that a version of Hypothetical Intentionalism along the lines of Tolhurst's approach may, with certain modifications, be seen as the most promising candidate.

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THE DIALECTICS OF SOCIAL BEING: HEGEL ON PROPERTY, SOCIAL DISPARITY AND SLAVERY

This article is part of a broader research project on Hegel's social and political philosophy, and especially on his views on property, social inequality, colonialism and slavery. In this article I discuss his views on property, social inequality and poverty. The general context of my discussion is Hegel's analysis of the objective spirit, in particular the sphere of *Sittlichkeit*, of ethical life. In this context, I also refer to his views on the family and civil society. The aim of my study is to examine critically Hegel's views on these issues and, at the same time, to relate his views to the broader context of his philosophy of history. In this respect, Hegel's discussion of social inequality and poverty is, in my opinion, directly connected with the way he conceives the process of World history. It is argued that there is a certain tension in the way Hegel conceives modernity and the way he conceptualizes concrete reality. It seems that Hegel takes as the premises of his analysis certain aspects of modernity, such as the distinction of civil society and the state, the market economy and the class structure of modern society. He also takes for granted the functions of property and social inequality. It is also argued that Hegel cannot see a way out of the contradictions of civil society, of its internal failings, not so much because of his idealism, his tendency to reduce the social dialectic to conceptual processes, but because he takes sides with the dominant ideology, with the status quo. That is why he cannot see a way out of the impasse of poverty and the only real remedy which he can suggest against poverty is that of colonization. Somehow, Hegel justifies not only

colonialism but also slavery. In this way, I would argue, Hegel's dialectic of the objective spirit is interwoven with the dialectic of history.

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THE EMOTION AS MAGICAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE WORLD ACCORDING TO SARTRE

The aim of this paper is to elucidate the main aspects of the original definition of the emotion as magical transformation of the world in the *Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions* (1939), a work by the French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) that belongs to the phenomenological period of his philosophical output. I attempt to clarify the terms used in the particular definition, as well as the role of consciousness in the Sartrean theory of the emotions, by means of a careful reading of this demanding short work and of other phenomenological writings by Sartre [especially, *The Imaginary: A Phenomenological Psychology of the Imagination* (1940) and *Being and Nothingness* (1943)]. I also discuss the use of these terms –with identical or similar meaning– by other phenomenologists, as well as by other thinkers (in a wider sense), in the context not only of the specific philosophical moment, but also of the preceding and the following moments, in France as well as in Germany. As a final point, I bring to light the influence that Tamara Dembo, a well known Gestalt psychologist of the day, seems to have exerted upon the aforementioned aspect of Sartrean thought.

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MONTAIGNE: A THEORY OF DIA-LECTIC READING

Michel de Montaigne creates a new literary genre, the essay, in order to essay (put to the test) the boundaries of self-knowledge. Although he is a man of action, he is also a true Renaissance man: he reads the Ancients and writes.

His personal philosophy oscillates between an Apollonian and a Dionysiac vision of the world. The object of this study is based on his random notes on the role of the reader. Philosophical and original, his insights on reading foresee many aspects of the twentieth-century reception theories.

Towards the end of his life he reads Plato systematically and appreciates him deeply; he also shares with him an optical vision of the world. His metaphorical discourse invests images with a Platonic dialectic which moves on two levels: between the sense and the object of seeing, between the eye and the Sun. The definition of the “efficient reader” as one who goes beyond the “intentions” of the author and the questions that arise from it can produce a highly original theory of reading, far ahead of its time and based on the concepts of reflection and refraction, or interpreting and over-interpreting.

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FROM PRESOCRATIC PHILOSOPHICAL MONISM TO RELIGIOUS- SCIENTIFIC DUALISM AND FROM DUALISM TO MONISM OF THE THEORY OF EVERYTHING

Monism is regarded as the philosophical system that considers that the creation of the Cosmos derives from the one and only ‘principle’. Accordingly this philosophical term directs our thought to the ‘first principle’ of the presocratic natural philosophers.

Dualism, on the other hand, considers that the Cosmos has come about from two –basically opposing– and mutually contradicting substances. Dualism as a theory has played an important role in the History of Religions, as well as of Science (Wave-particle duality). It seems, however, that after the development of Quantum-Mechanics and efforts to unify it with the General Theory of Gravitation, physicists have increasingly focussed their endeavors on formulating a Theory Of Everything (TŒ). This theory will express with certainty the trend of Contemporary Physics towards a monistic in general consideration of the Cosmos.

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D. SOLOMOS –THE FREE BESIEGED: HOW THE POET PHILOSOPHICALLY ENGAGES IN DIALOGUE WITH POETRY

This article examines how poetry can hold a philosophical dialogue with history. The overall approach includes the following points: 1. High poetry requires thinking of the whole, whose movement is understood as Hegelian dialectic reconstruction of different meanings. 2. The *Free Besieged*, as a poetic whole, combines a multiplicity of meanings, which reflect the historicity of the siege and fall of Mesolonghi. 3. These meanings are transubstantiated into moments of a poetic composition, that goes beyond the specific historical place and time and always has an ontological orientation. 4. High poetry emerges from the dialectic of the aesthetic and the moral.

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THE CONCISENESS OF EDUCATION IN ARISTOTLE: THE RELATIONSHIP OF MORAL VIRTUE AND POLITICAL ACTION

Aristotle is not just in appearance but in essence dialectical (*διαλεκτικός*) (and not *έριστικός*) against the founder of dialectic (*διαλεκτική*) Plato. He is also synoptical (*συνοπτικός*) as a laconic limitation determines relevance by four pillars a scientifically based education of individuals and citizens. The final statement of “this is the proper education” (*ή γάρ όρθή παιδεία αύτη έστίν*) resembling the Socratic dialectical vision leaves no room for doubt about how confident the philosopher was of the scientific validity of his positions.

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