

Abstract



SPINOZA AND NORMATIVE ETHICS

Recent interpretations of Spinoza's *Ethics* have pointed out the fact that Spinoza develops an ethics of power, as opposed to a normative ethics based on the concept of moral duty. In this research paper I argue that, contrary to the Kantian freedom, which is "manifested in moral law", Spinoza's concept of freedom is directly deduced from the *conatus* (*Ethics*, III, 7), that is, a dynamic principle from which any notion of obligation or coercion is absent. This paper attempts to show that there is, however, a normative moment in Spinoza's *Ethics*, which becomes obvious both through the "dictates of reason" (*dictamina rationis*) enumerated in the part IV of the *Ethics*, and through the portrayal of the free man as a regulatory ideal enlisted in the field of "hypothetical rationality" (*Ethics*, IV, 67-73). This normative moment indicates the specific modality in which reason appears within the limits of human bondage as described in part IV of the *Ethics*. The results of this study suggest that the fifth part of the *Ethics* ("Of the power of the intellect, or on human freedom") can be interpreted as an attempt to think of the liberating dynamics of *conatus*, and therefore of rationality itself, beyond any normative ethics.

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ARENDRT–CASTORIADIS: THE DIALOGUE THAT NEVER
TOOK PLACE. THE ONTOLOGICAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL
CONDITIONS FOR THE EMERGENCE OF THE CONCEPT
OF THE POLITICIAN

The stakes of this study/research is placed in a particular area of theoretical thought, in the meaning that its objective purpose, which is the enlightenment of the meaning of politician in the work of two major modern philosophers such as Hannah Arendt and Cornelius Castoriadis, has its base on specific ontological and anthropological conditions. Through the study/ research of the work of the two philosophers, we attempt to specify the field within which the idea of

politician is established. In the case of Arendt, the area of the theoretical establishment of the politician is found in the anthropology of the so-called “Human Condition”, while in the case of Castoriadis it is found in the ontology of the so-called “Radical Imagination”. The element of indeterminacy, even if used in a different scale, constitutes a basic variable for the conception, comprehension and processing, not just politics as a special field but also for the determination of the model in case of a potential political and social reformation. Furthermore, an attempt is made to create the theoretical conditions for a dialogue between the two philosophers, which could result in the synthesis or even the excess of the individual theoretical proposals of Cornelius Castoriadis and Hannah Arendt.

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VIEWS OF THE PRE-SOCRATIC PHILOSOPHERS
ON THE BEGINNING OF LIFE AS A CRITERION
OF THE MAN-NATURE RELATIONSHIP

In this paper we show that, according to the way of thinking of the pre-Socratic philosophers (Xenophanes, Zenon, Democritus, *Prometheus Bound*) the human of that age did not consider himself separate from «nature», since he believed that he was stemming from her. For him, the “nature”, whatever the term might mean (one or many elements) was a «mother» but also a wise teacher who taught him the arts of living (Democritus, Epicharmus). This conviction made him to respect nature, since, in this way, he was respecting himself and his life. Furthermore, he knew that in «nature» there is coherence, measure, harmony and purpose (Aristotle, *Politics*) and that his life was almost inseparably connected to the nature, provided that he would reveal her properties, since nature «loves to remain hidden» (Democritus) especially when it is arbitrary and «abusive» against her (Heraclitus) since the «teleology» existing in her is wailing. There our remarks, based on the official texts (it is worth mentioning that almost all

pre-Socratics have written «On nature», Alcmaeon, DK, 28A2, extant as fragments) confirm that in this initial period of philosophy, a code of principles for environmental ethics was formulated.

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THE PEDAGOGICAL ROLE OF IMAGINATION IN PLOTINUS

From philosophy to contemporary neuroscience, the pedagogical role of imagination is increasingly recognized, not only in the use of experience in the educational process, but more importantly in the solution of practical pedagogical problems. Plotinus's theory of imagination is surprising in its timeless power and applicability to education, by linking imagination to intelligence - by means of geometric shapes, contributing to the inner journey of the insight of truth, highlighting the role of virtue, recalling one of the cornerstones of Platonic theory, and finally, in the pursuit of the goal of eudemonia.

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REMARKS ON THE PHILEBUS COMMENTARY OF MARSILIO FICINO

Marsilio Ficino reintroduced Platonism in the Latin West in an effort to combine his Christian doctrinal assumptions with the neoplatonic tradition of his predecessors. His *Philebus Commentary* marks the beginning of his translations of and commentaries on various platonic dialogues and represents his syncretistic, *prisca theologia*-approach. In this essay, I will attempt to bring out the reasons why Ficino attributed such importance to the *Philebus* and the historically crucial connections between this commentary and his Aristotelian counterparts. Next, I will focus on Ficino's conception of the One or Good and try to unearth his vast, though unacknowledged, debt to Proclus; in the

latter's *Elements of Theology* he found a very convincing account of the one-many relation, which he incorporated in his introductory chapters. Moving to the intellect-will controversy, I will partially present their respective contribution to the acquisition of the Good and underline Ficino's outright acceptance of cognitive pleasure. My central claim is that Ficino intentionally invokes certain Aristotelian motifs, in order to substantiate the inherent compatibility between Plato and Aristotle and support the idea that one's return to the Good can be accompanied by a robust and psychologically rewarding pleasure.

Θάνος Κιοσόγλου

Κάτοχος μεταπτυχιακού διπλώματος
Φιλοσοφίας από το ΦΠΨ του ΕΚΠΑ

THE TROLLEY PROBLEM.

THE POSING OF A MORAL DILEMMA BY PHILIPPA FOOT

This article presents the so-called Trolley Problem, first raised in 1967 by the philosopher Philippa Foot. This particular problem poses a moral dilemma, which has occupied and continues to occupy the speculation of theoreticians and philosophers. The problem of the runaway trolley brings into sharp relief the dilemma surrounding the uncontested right of man to life. Each person has the right to life, but the duty not to interfere with the lives of others.

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THE QUESTION OF AUTONOMY OF PARTICIPANTS IN PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH USING DELIBERATE DECEPTION: AN ETHICAL PROBLEM

Deliberate deception is a particularly useful research technique, as it allows the study of psychological processes and interactions that is not otherwise possible. Nevertheless, it creates ethical concerns as

the researcher has the duty to inform the participants and in this case the full revelation of truth is impossible, because it leads to invalid results. It comes into contradiction with informed consent and decisional autonomy of participants and the question which arises is whether or not it is acceptable to use such research methods. Looking more closely at this issue, we realized that even in researches without deliberate misdirection, not all information is revealed and no moral issues are raised nor the validity of informed consent is questionable. This paper discusses this issue in the light of various ethical theories and concludes that it is acceptable to use such methods under certain conditions. The respect for participants' autonomy depends on the type of hidden or falsified information and its manipulation by the researcher. Therefore, with the proper planning and management of information, these problems could be overcome and any potential negative effects could be eliminated, so that the deliberate deception through a research would contribute, without ethical dilemmas, to the production of new useful knowledge.

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THE KANTIAN NOTION OF AUTONOMY OF THE WILL:
THE "SOLID FOUNDATION AND DEPARTURE POINT"
OF PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY

In the present paper I explore the Kantian notion of the autonomy of the will, on the occasion of the Hegelian claim that this concept stands for the solid foundation and proper starting point of practical philosophy. First, I attempt to briefly expose the transcendental composition of the concept of freedom in Kant's theoretical philosophy. Next, I convey the conditions that determine the practical use of the concept of autonomy in the region of Kantian moral philosophy. In this context, I scrutinize the central notions of the Kantian conception of rational conduct, such as the 'fact of reason', the categorical imperative and the moral duty. At the same time, I present rough elements of the Hegelian critique of these concepts, in the general framework

of their radical speculative reconstruction, towards the direction of a philosophical discourse, whose legitimacy and validity is inextricably linked to its entirely self-determining and self-founding character.

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A DISCUSSION BETWEEN CARNAP AND QUINE ABOUT ONTOLOGY: LINGUISTIC CONTEXTS OR CONVENIENT MYTHS?

This paper addresses the controversy between R. Carnap and W. V. Quine concerning ontology. Carnap takes seriously standard semantics according to which singular terms refer to certain entities. On the other hand, as an empiricist, he is not willing to approve any metaphysical platonistic ontology. Carnap believes that we insert certain entities into scientific theories by putting forward appropriate linguistic contexts. He proposes the distinction between *internal* and *external* questions concerning what kind of entities exist. So, whether an entity exists or not should be an internal question formulated inside the relative linguistic context and receive an answer inside the context. External ontological questions have no sense (they are meaningless). For example, the question about whether there is at least one irrational number is an *internal* question and takes a positive answer inside the linguistic context of the theory of real numbers. Questions about the existence of a whole range of entities establish the conditions for the acceptance of a new linguistic context which includes terms that refer to those entities. On the other side, Quine objected to Carnap's approach to ontological questions. He attacked the distinction between internal and external questions and argued that those questions Carnap characterizes as external are practical questions settling the issue of whether certain linguistic contexts should be chosen to be established. Quine believes that the question about the kinds of entities our scientific theories include is answered if one detects the values of the bounded variables appearing in scientific sentences. So, what is taken to exist according to a theory is the *value* of a bounded variable. Besides, Quine supports ontological relativity and takes ontology to be inscrutable because of the indeterminacy of the reference of linguistic terms. Then Quine

introduces the notion of a conceptual scheme instead of the notion of linguistic context to defend the view that ontological schemes aim at certain goals, serve purposes and seek for classification and arrangement of various parts of empirical reality.

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THE MODERN INTELLECTUAL AS A SKEPTIC PHILOSOPHER:
CRISIS AND 'EPOCHE'

In the ancient world it is accepted that the wise, the intellectual of the time, must maintain some symmetry between theory and practice. The absence of this requirement in our epoch means not only that the intellectual preserves the right not to act in accordance with his views but also that his non-participation in political action is justified by his absorption in theory. Many modern scholars discuss how there is a certain social role for the intellectual, however for the ancient Skeptics things appear to be quite more complicated. Starting from the point where a model of firm epistemology does not seem possible, the Skeptics wonder whether that will have to influence the way the sage connects with the community. Of course, even nowadays it seems crucial that the intellectual is not drifted to fallacy due to his ideologies or personal preferences. For the Skeptics, it remains imperative that the intellectual should have an accurate view not only of the subject of his science but also of the general nature of things or the more specific nature of economic, social, political, psychological and other particularities. Cicero points out that the rational thinker should intend to maintain his critical ability in an integral manner so as not to be forced to support views dictated by others. For this reason, the intellectual cannot ultimately commit himself to definitive judgments about public life. This affirmation does not amount to a subsequent affirmation of social apathy. While many nowadays would willingly portray the intellectual as the product of a social construction or as an entity that could also have a managerial role in social issues in times of crisis, the Skeptics perceive the intellectual as an individual that is himself in crisis, in other words ever-changing, ever reoriented, within a set of arbitrary

answers and judgments that come from dogmatic speakers. It is not that the intellectual, in the role of Skeptic, does not care about the truth or the problems of the people. It is simply that he does not wish to belong to either the prophets or the demagogues. Thus, he maintains his autonomy as social responsibility towards truth. Of course, what one is not allowed to do as an intellectual still he may be able to perform as a citizen, but on that level the political responsibility is different and less prone to proposing fundamental resolutions.

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SEARCHING FOR SALVATION OF BYZANTIUM: BESSARION'S CASE (1403/8-1472)

Bessarion, bishop of Nicaea and later cardinal of the Roman Church, was one of the most important figures of the fifteenth century. He devoted himself to preserving the Greek heritage, to uniting the Orthodox and Latin Churches, and to promoting a crusade against the Ottomans. The aim of this paper is to interpret Bessarion's views concerning the salvation of Byzantium by giving an overview of his key works, orations and letters, focusing on the rise of the Ottomans: his *Oratio dogmatica pro Unione* delivered to the Byzantine delegation at the Council of Florence on 13 and 14 April 1439; his *Epistola encyclica* addressed to the Greeks on 27 May 1463, when he was appointed Latin Patriarch of Constantinople; his third and last letter sent to Constantine Palaeologus, Despot of Mystra, in the middle of 1444; his letter addressed to the Doge of Venice, Francesco Foscari, written on 13 July 1453, shortly after receiving the news of the fall of Constantinople; and his *Epistolae et Orationes contra Turcos* composed on the occasion of the capture of the Venetian colony of Negroponte by the Ottomans (12 July 1470).

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 διδάσκουσα στο Τμήμα Φιλοσοφίας της Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής
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“CRISIS” AS AN EXISTENTIAL PRINCIPLE

The central argument of this essay is that “crisis” is a salient structural principle of all major problems in Greek society, notably its political instability, financial bankruptcies, and cultural wars. This essay suggests that this happened because of the incomplete process of transitioning from the cultural communities of the 18th and early 19th centuries to the political nationhood demanded by the new social organizational unit, the nation-state. Furthermore, it discusses the cult of the state at the expense of the nation and addresses the question of the responsibility of the intellectuals. It argues that most intellectuals sought to become organic intellectuals for the state as public servants and institutional functionaries. Since the establishment of the Greek state until the rise of radical left in 2015 most intellectuals vied for institutional power and authority for the sake of domination and privilege. Ultimately, the article predicts that more crises will occur and the same power games will be performed by the organic intellectuals of the state in the future; and that Greek society needs to engage in independent, critical, and oppositional intellectual dialogue with its own past in order to deal effectively with a rather ominous future.

Βρασίδης Καραλής
ατέχει την έδρα «Sir Nicholas Laurantos» των Νεοελληνικών
και Βυζαντινών Σπουδών στο Πανεπιστήμιο του Σίδνεϊ

THE EUROZONE CRISIS AND THE USEFULNESS OF POSTCOLONIAL THOUGHT

The article critically addresses the relevance of postcolonial studies and thought in light of the European crisis, especially concerning its economic dimension, namely the Eurozone crisis. Particular issues, which are raised in this context, refer to the reflection about how the colonial past is echoed in the EU’s asymmetric power relations or it can be overcome, along with how the crisis management signifies colonial manifestations and affects a postcolonial perspective of the EU. Overall, the ontological and normative assessment of sovereignty within European governance is a multi-dimensional endeavor which

considers vigilance in respect to the intellectual engagement with challenges emphasized in postcolonial thought. The latter is not the first or only perspective that focuses on the potential for the emerging euro-polity going beyond the classical ‘nation-state vs federation’ scheme. However, it does confirm that the respective understanding, in all its complexity, reasonably includes this potential

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FROM NATIONAL CONSCIENCE TO HUMANISM:
THE CRISIS OF THE STATE AND THE VISION FOR THE NATION
IN THE WRITINGS OF ION DRAGOUMIS

The present study includes an elaboration of the argumentative process by the Greek thinker and diplomat Ion Dragoumis (1878-1920) on the concept of the crisis of the state as portrayed in his writings (published works, articles, diaries). Dragoumis was indeed a distinguished political thinker of the early 20th century, a major proponent of national conscience and promoter of individual and collective humanism. The central features of his political thinking, on which this study focuses and interprets, is primarily his constructive criticism of the political situation in his contemporary Greek kingdom; of the deadlocks faced by the modern Greek society; and of the impact of the European culture and the concept of internationalism in the formation of the modern Greek identity. Through investigation of the question of how Dragoumis perceives the concept of crisis in individual (ego) and collective (state) context, the present article examines the key parameters of his political thinking, which acted as counterweight to his vehement criticism of political reality in modern Greece. Therefore, we attempt an interpretation of Dragoumis’ thinking focusing on the concept of the nation not through its identification with the Greek Kingdom but with the vision of Hellenism. In this context, the paper deals with the decisive role that folk tradition and history play in shaping and promoting a genuine modern Greek culture. Finally, I will analyze Dragoumis’ vision about the gradual rebirth and unifica-

tion of the Greek nation, the culmination of Ion Dragoumis' complex political thought.

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LOOKING INTO THE PAST: NEW PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL ELITES IN GREECE AMIDST THE CRISIS

From the onset of the Greek crisis in 2009, a number of articles about intellectuals were published in Greek newspapers, followed by numerous comments and posts throughout the media: “Where have the intellectuals gone?”. Since 2010 the situation has changed. The expanded public domain offered opportunities for engaging in debate, influencing the agenda of discussions, and guiding public attention towards current affairs. The main problem is that those who are traditionally self-defined as intellectuals failed to produce insightful contributions to the Greek crisis. Soon enough the Greeks understood that there was a huge gap between the intellectuals and the public sphere. The so called intellectuals, those who frequently joined TV shows and published perspicacious columns in high profile newspapers, lost their authority and power, because reality smacked their views. As a result, the Greek crisis proved that we need a new type of intellectual. In this paper, I argue that what is at stake is not the replacement of the modern pseudo-elites with a new hierarchy of professional intellectuals. On the contrary, we are in urgent need of people with critical thinking and broad knowledge, capable of actively participating in sociopolitical life. Education should give to people voice, not only ears and eyes. Instead of an elite of intellectuals, we ought to turn all to intellectuals.

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