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Foreword Thought

'Meaningful Musings of Future Generations'

Cast us out to sea,

And strand us with fury,

So we may struggle to breathe with the freedom we have found.

If we should find a daydream; which drags us to the shore,

Don't look back to sea,

We won't be wanting anymore.

I am the mother in my soul,

The host of darkness found,

We wander in the night-time,

Where there is no silence: and no sound.

Nothing is becoming, a paradox in my mind,

It is a yoke to bind our meaning,

When there is little else to be found.

Let's look for brighter days,

And break free from the shackles that hold us tight,

We are the breaking dawn,

We are the reason in what is right.

The next generation to follow,

Will walk our trodden path,

Let us leave such gentle footprints,

Soft, but enough to last.

They will know; that we have been here,

To a time where they will stand,

Let's offer what little we have,

With fresh and open hands.

By Charlotte Lake

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Rescher's Impossibility of Exhaustive Knowledge of Nature: The Consequences for Philosophical and Scientific Knowledge.

- By Phoebe Page

Rescher begins his deliberations by asking what the development of human knowledge can tell us about the nature of physical reality[1]. More specifically, the question is thus, what does scientific enquiry tell us about nature? Rescher concludes the same chapter, with the answer that 'what reality is like' is nothing definitive and categorical, it is rather contextually limited to the latest scientific technology[2].

In this investigation, I will assess two of Rescher's claims that lead him to reach this position, which he entitles 'contextualistic realism'[3]. For both of the claims that I will analyse, I will discuss the consequences they have for scientific and philosophical knowledge. In brief, these implications relate to the extent to which science can understand nature, and the philosophical issue of fundamentality.

The two arguments that I will discuss in this investigation can be summarised as followed;

1) The continual advancement of scientific technology creates differing insights and ways of understanding localised areas of nature. This does not imply that nature itself is stratified into distinct levels, rather, it is seemingly endless in complexity.

2) The nature of reality is not chaotic. Disorder and order are features of reality that present themselves dependent on the perspective that we adopt when we view an area of nature.

Additionally, within this investigation, I will attempt to make explicit the notion of locality, and argue that this has a crucial role in Rescher's argument that allows him to remain a realist. Therefore, I will argue in this investigation, that Rescher denies the possibility of exhaustive knowledge of nature as such, however, scientific knowledge is possible, and its significance is granted in its localised reality.

Let us now begin with the first argument:

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[1] 'What does the very fact that human knowledge of nature has developed as it has teach us about the nature of physical reality?' (Rescher, 2000, p.52)

[2] ''What reality is like' is nothing definitive and categorical but something contextual and limited to a particular state-of-the-art level of sophistication in point of scientific technology.' (Rescher, 2000, p.71)

[3] 'Our approach is accordingly not relativism but a contextualistic realism – a realism, that is to say, that sees 'truth about reality' as accessible in a capacity-variable way.' (Rescher, 2000, p.71)

1) *The continual advancement of scientific technology creates differing insights and ways of understanding localised areas of nature. This does not imply that nature itself is stratified into distinct levels, rather, nature is seemingly endless in complexity.*

Rescher states that 'scientific progress hinges not just on the structure of nature itself but also on the character of the information-acquiring processes by which we investigate it.' (Rescher, 2000, p.53) Thus, technological advancement progressively produces new ways of understanding nature. The scientific equipment 'constantly brings new phenomena to view in a way that destabilizes the attained equilibrium between data and theory.' (Rescher, 2000, p.59) By this, Rescher is suggesting that, the increase in the complexity and power of our observational and experimental tools, allows us to engage with increasingly detailed areas of nature. Science then demands to explain this detail and thus draws new sketches of nature that are able to accommodate the extra detail. Crucially however, Rescher emphasises that as far as we can tell there is 'no limit to the world's ever-increasing complexity' despite our 'ever-increasing grasp of its detail.' (Rescher, 2000, p.58)

Regardless of *how hard* we push nature to reveal her *modus operandi*, the progress we make in knowing nature, is never completed[4]. 'All epistemology is local… matters of inquiry must always be attuned to the local conditions that prevail.' (Rescher, 2000, p.30) One must at this stage ask, why must epistemic questions about nature be local?

In order to answer this, it is crucial to understand the boundaries of scientific investigation. Rescher characterises these as 'parametric neighbourhoods' that act as fields of consideration. In *Scientific Realism*, Rescher states that exploration of nature occurs within 'not just our spatial neighbourhood but our parametric neighbourhood in the "space" of physical variables.' (Rescher, 1987, p.11) The boundaries of scientific investigation are physically extended and theoretically, or conceptually, extended. The investigative technology that we use, provides us with the level of detail that forms the conceptual limit of a given area of nature. How it does so, and how much detail we are presented with, depends on the technological tools we use.

The parametric neighbourhoods that are expanded with more advanced technology, crucially do not demonstrate that nature is 'somehow stratified…. rather what we find is bound to reflect the apposite technology of observation.' (Rescher, 2000, p.55) What we find within a parametric neighbourhood, is thus and so, partly due to the parametric neighbourhood itself. Therefore, the knowledge that we obtain in a particular experiment into space X, is local only to X. This knowledge may not apply in space Y.

Interesting, this leads to the idea that no experiment can ever truly be repeated. Within each parametric neighbourhood is the dimension of time, which continually advances forward[5]. Therefore, as we are ultimately unable to repeat the

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[4] 'Everything depends on just how and how hard we can push against nature in situations of observational and detectional interaction.' (Rescher, 2000, p.53)

[5] 'To reverse the direction of time we would need infinite information; we cannot produce situations that evolve into our past!' (Prigogine and Stengers, 1984, p.295)

experiment within the exact same conditions, we cannot assert with that the result will necessarily repeat itself[6]. This illustrates how Knowledge in X cannot, truly be brought outside of the parametric neighbourhood which produced the knowledge of X[7]. Knowledge about nature is therefore localised, and there is no means to suggest that there cannot be innumerable parametric neighbourhoods. This supports Rescher's claim that it is not possible to have exhaustive knowledge of nature, *as such*, and emphasises the notion of locality in regards to knowledge.

Thus, this position has implications for scientific and philosophical knowledge. The question arises, if we can never fully understand nature's *modus operandi*, then why continue scientific investigation? Rescher suggests that we must not give up on the improvement of scientific understanding, however, the idea of a *perfect* science, is a myth that ought to be forgotten[8]. Rescher is thus suggesting that science must accept that, if it is to reflect nature, it cannot be holistic in its aims.

Science must accept itself to be a collection of specialisations that operate within their own fields of consideration. Science thus mirrors nature is so far as 'different levels of understanding can prove to be conceptually disjoint or discontinuous – the phenomena at issue in one cannot in general be descriptively characterised by means (or terms) of the vocabulary appropriate to the other.' (Rescher, 2000, p.62) Simply put, what is explicable in Chemistry may not be so in Physics.

Furthermore, this supports Rescher's claim that 'natural science is not a fixed object, a finished product of inquiries, but an ongoing process.' (Rescher, 2000, p.52) It is clear at this stage, that Rescher is not merely commenting on the epistemology of scientific investigation, but also interested in ontology. In addition to discussing the natural sciences, Rescher is discussing *the nature of* natural sciences. This is evident when he states that 'we propose, but reality disposes; we may determine the process but the product is then an us-independent manifold of physical reality.' (Rescher, 2000, p.71)

What nature is, is truly incommensurable for Rescher, it is 'necessarily thought of as having hidden depths that extend beyond the limits, not only of experience, but also of experientiability.' (Rescher, 2000, p.33) For Rescher, nature is always in excess of explanation. Despite the efforts of science to understand nature's *modus operandi* in full, there is always a new technology that leads to new information. This further supports Rescher's claim that we cannot have a *perfect* science, nor exhaustive knowledge of nature as such.

To summarise so far, technology drives us to investigate deeper into nature. With the continual probing into nature, we never reach the final level of detail. Nature presents us continually with new information. This has the implication for scientific knowledge that it cannot be universal, and rather, the knowledge we obtain is local to the parametric

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[6] For discussions on the doubt of cause and effect, see: Hume, D. (2007) *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. However, more than just this doubt, there is the issue that there are too many variables to replicate an experiment, time being just one of those.

[7] See: Hacking, I. (1983) Representing and Intervening: Introductory Topics in the Philosophy of Natural Science. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[8] 'The idea of progressively *improving* our science can be implemented without difficulty, since we can clearly improve our… explanatory comprehensiveness. But the idea of *perfecting* our science cannot be implemented in an unfathomably complex world.' (Rescher, 2000, p.50)

neighbourhood it was formed within. Despite this, science ought not to be disposed of, rather, we can understand nature as demonstrating itself as a process that is in-exhaustive through the means of natural science. The epistemic issues about nature, therefore, demonstrate the ontological discontinuity that we find in nature.

It is now appropriate to address the second argument. The implications for philosophical knowledge will be presented here.

> 2) *The nature of reality is not chaotic. Disorder and order are features of reality that present themselves dependent on the perspective that we adopt when we view an area of nature.*

Rescher third thesis states that 'Order can emerge from disorder by 'blurring' – that is, by ignoring detail.' (Rescher, 2000, p.62) This is articulated in an example of a scanner that only reads changes in order, it reads random sequences as perfectly ordered.[9] For Rescher, this occurs not just in our inductive scientific method; it occurs with 'virtually any sort of responsive mechanism.' (Rescher, 2000, p.64) Disorder can be transfigured into order, by myopia, and thus changing the knowledge that we obtain in scientific investigation.

If this is the case, then it may appear that Rescher is in agreement with Thom that 'whatever is the ultimate nature of reality (assuming that this expression has meaning), it is indisputable that our universe is not chaos.' (Thom, 1975, p.1) Thom argues that this is due to the stability of beings and things, at least for 'some period of time.' Rescher, in arguing for a realist position, must agree with Thom that the universe is not *wholly* chaotic. If it were, then scientific enquiry would not be able to begin. There would be no entities capable of the observation that science demands, with any degree of permanence or stability.

However, Rescher argues that the 'ultimate nature of reality' as lawful may be an artefact of our own *modus operandi*.[10] The reality of the laws that we thus discover, may then only be features of our cognitive structure. This gives Rescher a Kantian twist, which does not seem satisfactory.[11] Although Rescher is primarily discussing knowledge, Rescher is interested in the ontology of nature that shapes scientific enquiry.

Rescher argues that the laws are not 'flat out true', however, 'they are indistinguishable from actual reality when this is viewed from a certain observational perspective.' (Rescher, 2000, p.69) The knowledge that is obtained by science is then not merely *relative* to the perspective. It is not the case that 'anything goes' with regards to knowledge about nature.[12] The knowledge about the laws of nature are really present *in* nature, it is *real*. However, in adopting perspective 1 or 2, we may find differing laws. These laws 'have to be conceptualised in an entirely different manner as level-correlative rather than a reflection of deeper-level laws.' (Rescher, 2000, p.67)

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[9] For the full example, see: Rescher, 2000, p.64.

[10] 'The order produced by an information processing resource may well lie in its own *modus operandi* rather than the nature of the materials with which it works.' (Rescher, 2000, p.64)

[11] For Kant's discussion of the phenomenal, empirical world, see: Kant, I. (1983) Trans, N.K Smith, *Critique of Pure Reason*. London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press Ltd.

[12] Rescher's position is not relativistic, as he includes the dimension of *how* we investigate nature. See: Rescher, 2000, p.71

Therefore, Rescher appear to argue that in probing nature we are not delving deeper with new technology, rather, nature appears to us in a different manner. The philosophical implication for this account of our knowledge about nature thus relates to the notion of fundamentality. A fundamental level of laws, that potentially provide us with full primary knowledge of nature, is not possible for Rescher. The laws that we observe, do not penetrate deeper into the core of nature. Nature is not stratified into distinct levels, with an ultimate foundation that can provide us with exhaustive knowledge. Rather, Rescher suggests that there is a continuum of laws that are co-extensive.

Rescher's philosophy of science is therefore not directed to finding a fundamental level of nature, rather, nature is endlessly complex. Science cannot demonstrate to us that one level is more fundamental than another. The macro laws are not dependent on the micro. At each level of investigation, the laws are usually discontinuous with one another.[13]

Moreover, the laws that are observed in scientific investigation therefore depend on the specific parametric neighbourhood employed. The parametric boundaries employed in the consideration of nature, determines the understanding of nature that we reach. If we change, or advance, the technology used in experiments, then the image of nature will alter in accordance with this change in parametric neighbourhood.

Therefore, nature is not chaotic to Rescher. The appearance of order and disorder is dependent on how we probe nature, as Rescher demonstrates with the example of the sleepy scanner. Moreover, I have shown that the investigation into nature is not into *layers* of nature, reaching further down with increasing technology. We find new laws and ways of understanding nature dependent on the technology, and one level of detail does not have fundamental priority over and above another. The consequence of this, is that the search for fundamentals is inappropriate for Rescher. There will always be an excess of nature. Thus, it is not possible to have complete knowledge of nature.

To conclude, science is thus the 'acknowledgment of truth at a certain level of technical competency.' (Rescher, 2000, p.69) Therefore, knowledge is dependent on the technological tools that are used to investigate nature, as I have demonstrated in my first discussion. Moreover, due to our ever increasing technological ability, it is not possible to have exhaustive knowledge of nature. This means that there is no possibility for science to fully grasp nature as a whole. The knowledge that is therefore obtained must be accepted as local to certain parametric neighbourhoods. This does not imply science is futile, it is able to tell us about the nature of reality. However, science must look beyond an 'ultimate theory of reality'.

Rescher is thus not taking a Kantian stance towards nature, as wholly constructed by our conceptual tools. Nature is thus and so, depending on how it is investigated. Furthermore, as I have demonstrated in the second discussion. In regards to the philosophy of science and nature, Rescher's position suggests that there is not a fundamental level of reality, nor is nature either wholly ordered or disordered. Rescher is thus in agreement with Thom that the universe is just chaos. The reality of nature, should rather be viewed as necessarily *localised.* It shows itself as either ordered or disordered, depending on *how* we investigate nature.

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[13] Rescher notes that the fractal geometry of nature that Mandelbrot suggests is a rare occurrence in nature, and not the general pattern. See: Rescher, 2000, p.60.

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A Discussion of Kant's Paralogisms in the First Critique.

- By Peter Hingley

Throughout the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant aims at establishing certain knowledge, which for him involves the application of empirical sense data to the concepts of our understanding, and thus no knowledge can be gained by purely rational means. Kant is therefore critical of rational psychologists, who aim to base a system of knowledge on the grounding of 'I think', deriving knowledge through pure rational means, and aim to apply this to the self. This is an illegitimate way of gaining knowledge for Kant, as it holds no place for empirical sensibility, a prerequisite for knowledge. The flaws of the rational psychologist are what Kant aims to highlight in the Paralogisms, which show that despite all the analytic truths we can say about the self, we gain no new knowledge of the I. This would be synthetic knowledge, relying upon our intuitions, and as we can have no intuition of the thinking I, we can have no knowledge of the self. In order to analyse Kant's argument, we shall begin by discussing his aim and method, before developing the argument in his First Paralogism. We shall use the First Paralogism as a tool to show the structure of argumentation throughout all four Paralogisms, as similarities can be drawn amongst them all. We shall then show how Kant was successful in meeting his aim showing the weaknesses of the rational psychologists argument, and thus Kant is able to demonstrate, through the Paralogisms, that knowledge of the self cannot be achieved.

Aim and Method

In order to fully assess Kant's arguments in the Paralogisms, it is important to understand his aim, as well as the method he uses within them.

The purpose of the Paralogisms is to criticise the rational psychologists claim that we can know the self as an indivisible and immaterial substance. Kant stated this was a 'Transcendental Illusion', as a result of the rational nature of those who he was critiquing, as 'I think' is "the sole text of rational psychology, and from it the whole of its teaching has to be developed" (Kant, 2003, A343). Kant wanted to show how we can't infer anything about the self from this rational viewpoint, and thus the "explicit concern of the Paralogisms is to provide a systematic critique of rational psychology" (Allison, 2004, p333). The key error that the rational psychologist has committed is to claim knowledge of the self as a 'noumenal' self, thus ignoring the fact that, for Kant, "knowledge requires two things" including "sensible intuitions" (Atkins, 2005, p48), along with the concepts of the mind. Kant's aim, therefore, is to use the Paralogisms as a tool to show that any claims about the self with a mere rational basis are invalid.

The form that the Paralogisms take is that of invalid syllogisms. A syllogism is a style of arguing, whereby you state that all A's are B's; this is an A and, therefore, this is a B. The conclusion necessarily follows from the premises.

However, Kant wishes to show that the arguments used by the rational psychologists are invalid, whereby the premises seem to imply the conclusion, but the conclusion doesn't actually follow. By using this form of argument, Kant is able to successfully show how the illusion of knowledge about the self may have arisen for the rational psychologists, and simultaneously is able to show the faulty nature of their thinking.

<u>First Paralogism</u>

We shall begin by discussing the First Paralogism, as the themes of it are common throughout all four of the Paralogisms, and thus it is a good starting point for an analysis of the arguments of the Paralogisms in general. The argument that Kant aims to show as invalid runs as follows:

Premise 1: That which is the subject of judgement and cannot be predicated of anything else is a substance; Premise 2: I, as a thinking being, am always the subject of my thoughts; Conclusion: "Therefore I, as thinking being (soul), am *substance*" (Kant, 2003, A348).

Here, the claim of the rational psychologists is that I am a substance, as I exist as a subject. Kant agrees that I exist as a subject as an analytic truth, however, to then suggest that we are therefore substance involves a leap from an analytic to synthetic truth, which the rational psychologist is unable to make. The error of the argument lies in that the 'thinking I' stands in contrast to thinking of the I as an object. Whereas 'I experience' is an undeniable truth, we can't then objectify the I as a substance without deployment of the concepts, which is an invalid leap. As Allison suggests, "the claim is that the major premise makes a merely transcendental use of the category of substance, whereas the minor premise and conclusion make an empirical use of the same category" (Allison, 2004, p335). Thus, the argument is invalid as the premises appear to be discussing the same concepts, however, whereas the initial premise talks of the I that experiences, the second talks of the I as an object of experience, and thus the conclusion cannot follow from the contrasting premises.

The argument, therefore, commits the error of 'equivocation', whereby there is a confusion between the logical use of 'I think' with its extra logical use. As is stated by Kant, within the consciousness of "the transcendental subject, all our perceptions must be found; but beyond this logical meaning of the 'I', we have no knowledge of the subject in itself" (Kant, 2003, A350). Whereas the second premise refers to an unknowable, noumenal self, the conclusion implies that the self is a knowable substance, and herein lies the error of the argument. For the rational psychologist to stay true to their aim of building knowledge upon the ground of 'I think', thought is all that they can reply upon, however, what "is needed for the concept of substance to have application, is for it to be employed in synthesis of the manifold of intuition" (Gardner, 1999, p226). Thus, for them to move from the claim that we are a thinking being to us being a substance that thinks requires experience, and thus is an invalid leap for a purely rational argument.

It is clear to see how this error of the rational psychologists comes about, in that they posit the self as a thing in itself. This is an important point to make as it is a common error that throughout all of Kant's paralogisms he is able to

highlight, and so is an integral point of the discussion of them. As Allison claims, the rational psychologist's mistake "consists in the conflation of appearances with things in themselves" (Allison, 2004, p340). This is to say that they take what we perceive in the empirical world, and infer that this is how things truly are in themselves, disregarding the cognitive process required for empirical reality to appear to us as such. They take the dogmatic approach that what we see is the reality of the noumenal world. However, Kant's project in the *Critique of Pure Reason* shows this not to be the case, as we cannot rely upon the empirical world nor logic alone for knowledge, and that seeing as "we do not have any intuitions of the soul, we cannot conclude that the soul is a substance; in fact, we cannot come to any conclusions whatsoever" (Atkins, 2005, p48). Although we are the subject, we cannot experience ourselves as such, and therefore cannot posit any knowledge about ourselves as a thinking being.

The First Paralogism can be used as an excellent tool to reveal some of the mistakes that the rational psychologist makes. We have seen that they make an invalid inference of deriving a synthesis from analytic propositions, without adding experience, as well as, more glaringly, mistaking the noumenal self for a knowable self. We shall now discover how these mistakes are also shown in Kant's other Paralogisms, and we shall discuss these in order to show how strong Kant's arguments are.

<u>Continuing arguments throughout the other Paralogisms</u>

We shall now discuss how the arguments against the rational psychologists doctrine of gaining knowledge about the self by rational means is further shown in Kant's other Paralogisms.

The first argument we shall develop further is that the Paralogisms highlights the rational psychologists attempts to obtain a synthesis from purely analytic propositions, which, for Kant, in this case is impossible without the addition of experience. In Kant's own words, "the expectation of obtaining knowledge […] while extending beyond the limits of possible experience is […] grounded in deception" (Kant, 2003, B423). The point Kant raises here is that whilst our mind attempts to transcend the limits of experience, it is wrong to suggest that knowledge can be gained by doing so. An example of such an attempt to grasp knowledge in this way is found in the second paralogism, which runs as follows:

Premise 1: A simple isn't made of parts; Premise 2: The soul has no parts; Conclusion: Therefore the soul is a single unified substance (a simple).

Kant agrees that the self in its thought is always unified, but by utilising the concept of substance, we have moved from analytic *a priori* to synthetic *a priori*, yet this doesn't follow without deployment of the understanding. Therefore, concluding that the soul is a single unified substance doesn't follow from the premises, as "this concept, as also the proposition, tells us nothing whatsoever in regard to myself as an object of experience, since the concept of substance is itself used only as a function of synthesis, without any underlying intuition, and therefore without an object" (Kant, 2003, A356). As Kant shows, without an intuition with which the concepts of the understanding can be applied to, we can have no knowledge of the self. Thus, the argument which Kant first proposed in the First

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Paralogism, whereby the rational psychologist makes an invalid leap from analytic truths to a synthesis, is further exemplified in the Second Paralogism, and highlights a clear weakness in the reasoning of the rational psychologists' proposed claim.

The second argument that Kant brings up in the Paralogisms is his most important, which is to state that the noumenal self cannot be a knowable self, as is inferred by the rational psychologists, for example Descartes "identified this formal or transcendental I with a real self" (Allison, 2004, p356). Kant views this as in illogical move, as we can't know the thinking I as an object *within* experience, as it is a precondition *of* experience. This is highlighted within the Third Paralogism, which runs as follows:

Premise 1: "That which is conscious of the numerical identity of itself at different times is in so far a *person*"; Premise 2: "Now the soul is conscious, etc."; Conclusion: "Therefore it is a person" (Kant, 2003, A361).

Here, the claim is that being conscious of identity at different states of time, I am identical with myself, and because I can conceive of myself in different times, I am a person. Kant agrees that I am identical with myself (I=I), but the invalid synthetic move is to talk about the self from an outside perspective, thus not concerning the I as a subject but as an object of experience in time. This is invalid as to be conscious of something, we presuppose that we are conscious, which involves experience and space and time. This "really says nothing more than that the whole time in which I am conscious of myself, I am conscious of this time as belonging to the unity of myself" (Kant, 2003, A362). However, the rational psychologist attempts to use this as reasoning to talk about the self as a knowable entity, whereas we "cannot, however, claim that this judgement would be valid from the standpoint of an outside observer" (Kant, 2003, A364). This is because we can never know anything other than our subjective experience; we can't know of the self from outside of our own perspective. As to know something presupposes our experience, and we cannot go outside of this to know the self as a noumenal entity, treating the self as a knowable self is a conclusion that can't be reached. Therefore, Kant has been able to show, through his arguments within the Paralogisms, that we cannot regard the self as a knowable entity, and that it is a mere illusion to say we can.

<u>Has Kant met his aims?</u>

Kant has shown that when talking about the unity of apperception, the self, we can't talk about the noumenal self, only the self that experiences. We can have no *knowledge* of the subject, as it is a presupposition *of* experience, and experience is required for knowledge. Therefore, the soul can't be defined as a substance, as "transcendental apperception is a condition *for* application of the concept of substance along with the other categories, not conditional *upon* it" (Gardner, 1999, pp226-7). For there to be experience there must be an I, and so to define the I through the necessary conditions of experience presupposes this very concept. We can only talk about ourselves as we *experience* ourselves, not how we truly are. As Kant states, "I am conscious of myself, not as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself, but only that I am" (Kant, 2003, B157). Kant has successfully demonstrated that we can't hold

the thinking I as a knowable self throughout the Paralogisms, and so maintains a strong argument against the mistakes of the rational psychologists.

Conclusion

Kant used the Paralogisms as a tool to demonstrate why knowledge about the self can be described as an illusion, contrary to the belief of rational psychologists. In his First Paralogism, Kant shows that to posit the thinking I as substance, and thus an object of knowledge, would require us to have experience of the self in the world, so an intuition of the self can be gained. However, this is impossible, as we as 'experiencers' cannot be experienced, as this rests on the presupposition of our faculties that make experience possible. The mistake of the rational psychologists to posit knowledge about the self in light of this leads to them aiming to achieve a synthesis from analytic propositions, an invalid leap, as well as to treat the thinking self, the noumenal self, as an object of knowledge. We have demonstrated that these mistakes were consistently highlighted by Kant throughout the Paralogisms. Therefore, the Paralogisms importance cannot be doubted as a tool to demonstrate that as the subject is presupposed *for* experience, it can't therefore be an object of knowledge *within* experience. Thus, the arguments that Kant raises within the Paralogisms are successful in showing the flaws in the rational psychologists arguments, thus completing Kant's aim of showing that the self as a thinking entity cannot be an object of knowledge.

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Habermas and the Role of Science Fiction Literature in Discourse Concerning Technology.

-By Jessica Brown

At a time when technology is progressing rapidly, surpassing current discussions concerning it, it is of much importance that its concepts be put forward to the public for discourse, a task that Habermas understands as being one of literature (Habermas, 1971, 52). Here I intend to argue the significance of specifically science fiction literature as a tool in this discourse in relation to some of the unique aspects of the genre, such as its foresight. In doing this I will address the challenges that literature must face if it is to become the subject of undistorted discourse, my conclusion being dependent on its ability to overcome these.

Technology is a product of instrumental rationality, a rationality aiming at domination and control which lies in contrast to communicative rationality in which action is non-strategic and communicative reason is used in the deliberation of norms. Communicative reason cannot be used in the strategic sphere as it is the home of instrumental rationality meaning that all discussion will be involved in domination. This means that deliberation concerning its products, such as technology, must fall to the communicative rationality of the public sphere. Here I will argue for the importance of science fiction literature in acting as a prompt, subject and product of public discourse concerning technology.

The rise of fiction brought literature to the heart of the public sphere; the heartfelt themes literature explored nurtured an intimate relationship between the private author and the public communities of readers which grew rapidly in the late eighteenth century[14], prompting a rise in public discourse. What is specific to literature is the pretension of illocutionary, or dramatic, action when it exists only as an utterance, or written action and it is in this way almost "indistinguishable" from non-fictional writing, making fiction only truly discernible by its author (Searle, 1975, 327). In both cases the elaborate utterance allows the reader to familiarise himself with a situation prior to actually experiencing it in reality (Habermas, 1992, 51), allowing him to exercise emotions and perspectives. For example, a manual may allow a mechanic to understand the workings of a particular model of car prior to working on it equally as an individual may experience the feeling of fear while reading a horror novel prior to being in a physically fearful situation.

Science fiction has the ability to stress the need for public discourse about science with many plots dedicated to the unintended consequences of scientific technology such as in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (Shelley, 1969); novels such as this act as an important reminder that science will never be able to take over from common sense in the act of making judgement (Habermas, 2003, 108). This value judgement must be made through the communicative rationality in the public sphere. The exercise of communicative rationality requires an ideal speech situation (Habermas, 2001, xv); in which there is free speech, freedom for criticism, in which justification is made through reasons and everyone

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[14] See (Leavis, 1932, 130)

participates as an equal. In the ideal speech situation anything can count as a reason, yet in a case of rival claims it will be the better reasoned claim that is accepted.

The presupposition of the possibility of an ideal speech situation is a key factor of Habermas' theory and an aspect that can be heavily criticised; it is reliant on autonomous participants, and this autonomy must be created by communicative action which is itself dependent on an ideal speech situation. This endless cycle of reliance seems problematic as, unless we are already in it, it is difficult to see a point of entry; to gain autonomy we need to engage in communicative action but to engage in communicative action we need to be in the ideal speech situation which requires that we are already autonomous. I, however, propose that fictional literature is able to overcome this problem as fictional characters are literarily free. They can be created with any mind, be written to participate in any politics, live by whatever law their author chooses and flourish in the form of character development. In these ways the fictional character has fictional autonomy and the narrative character lends this autonomy to the reader when he adopts this role. Furthermore, all readers are equal, this means that all critics will be equally adept. Justification for criticisms may only be provided through reason, for the empirical content of literature is limited to the paper that it is printed on and the unbounded world of fiction allows these reasons to be unlimited. Although it may seem problematic that fictional literature is, by definition, a product of the imagination and does not relate to real world events, I want to argue that this does not make public discourse regarding it any less meaningful.

The science fiction genre is one which I see to be an important matter for public discourse due to its influence on the technological world. As a world of possibilities removed from moral and consequential restrictions it becomes scientific thought; ideas such as artificial intelligence, alien life forms and utopian societies, intoxicating biologists and engineers alike (Habermas, 2003, 15). These ideas present a challenge with modern technology attempting their actualisation, and in this way science fiction can be seen as a precursor to science fact. A famous example of this is genetic engineering, a term which was first explicitly mentioned in Jack Williams' novel *Dragon's Island* (1951) that then became a scientific project under the same name in the 1970s. As technological progress is moving faster than current discourse is able to form official judgement concerning it, I believe that this foresight will be crucial.

As a subject of public discourse, science fiction is able to entice both the scientist and the non-scientifically educated public into common debate, allowing for the pragmatic model of politics in which the distinction between expert and politician is dissolved in favour of critical interaction (Habermas, 1971, 66). In this model, neither experts nor the political public have full control over advancement, unlike the decisionistic and technochratic models in which control is given unequally, in the former, to elected politicians and, in the latter, to the experts. For Habermas, a rationalised scientized society must ascribe to the pragmatic model, for the descisionistic and technochratic model both limit rationalisation; the subjectivity of decisionism makes the decisionistic model irrational. Technocracy is also not suitable, for it would come to reduce technology to the statistics of its demand (Habermas, 1971, 80) as it is those statistics that it has as its sole data. Discourse surrounding science fiction, in this way, allows for deliberation about the norms of technology that is based both on public opinion and expert advice. The possibility of this deliberation happening prior to

the technology coming about allows that the scientist may turn most attention to technology that is in line with the common consensus and avoid technologies that are in contradiction with it; science fiction literature may not only be seen as promoting and contributing to discourse about technology, but also as having an effect on the direction of technology itself. In this way I see science fiction as mediating a conversation between the expert, the public sphere and the private author. On the one hand the author is proposing elements of technology from the strategic sphere to the public sphere to promote discourse, and on the other he is communicating the common consensus of the public sphere to the expert. I see this second point to be realised in the themes of utopian and dystopian societies; utopian societies acting as an expression of the authors interests, presenting themselves as an end for technology and science to strive towards.

Although thus far I have presented science fiction literature as a non-coercive promoter, contributor and outcome of communicative rationality concerning scientific technology, I do not believe it to be completely undistorted by instrumental rationality in its current state. The deterioration of emancipatory aspects of culture such as literature is described by Habermas as being due to a shift from a "culture-debating" public to a "culture-consuming" one as a result of the mass production (Habermas, 1989, 159). Literature was no longer a product of the private author, but a product of the mass market, created simply for passive consumption. This move separated 'popular' from 'public' fiction, 'popular' taking on its derogatory meaning of describing a lesser form of literature and thereby dividing the public sphere (Luckhurst, 2012, 73). The power of the market to separate public and popular literature is exercised in the form of media advertisement and the term 'bestseller'; the term judging literature not on its quality but on its success of sales. This strategic governance of literary works mediates the interaction between the author, public and expert, distorting the communicative rationality that fiction once allowed to occur. Furthermore, this instrumental mediation gives rise to the possibility of using literature itself as a means of strategic action; the reader may be led into desiring a certain technology by their endorsement within science fiction literature.

Though it is not only the subject of literary discourse that can be seen as becoming distorted by strategic intervention, but the form that the discourse itself takes. The commodification of free discussion into panel debates and conferences imposes rules and structures, creating a pseudo form of communicative rationality in which the ideal speech situation is lost to limited participation, restricted reasoning and, in many cases, a predetermined outcome (Habermas, 1989, 164). In this way the mass media is able to project the appearance of being consistent with the public sphere and reflecting the valid moral consensus while, in reality, it is acting under instrumental rationality. When this strategic influence on the public sphere becomes too strong, it cannot be said to be truly engaging in communicative action, making it impossible to reach a true common consensus.

The manipulation of the emancipatory nature of literature as a result of the infiltration of the strategic sphere into the public sphere has not changed its content but merely the means of discourse surrounding it and the common subjects. Due to this I believe that science fiction literature may still have a positive and important role to play in public discourse about technology if we are able to return to its origin; when the literary sphere existed in its most ideal form (Habermas,

1989, 176). For this to be achieved firstly the distinction between 'public' and 'popular' would have to be dissolved and, secondly, mediatised discourse would have to be understood as strategic, rather than communicative action and therefore cannot be thought to contribute to norms.

One aspect of the current literary sphere which I believe ought to be retained is the mass marketing of books. Although it was arguably the mass market which led to the degradation of the literary sphere (Habermas, 1989, 160), I also think there is at least one result of the mass marketing of literature that may contribute to emancipation; namely, translation. As the effects of technology are no longer local and can be seen globally, common consensus concerning it can no longer be limited to single, separated, public spheres (e.g. nation states). A major problem with the concept of a global public sphere is that the lack of a single common language disables the possibility of worldwide communicative action. Mass publishers overcome this by translating texts as a means of extending their market, allowing literature to transcend the language barriers usually present in discourse. By means of translations the whole world is able to engage simultaneously in discourse concerning the same norms. The availability of book translations will, however, rely on the books market success in its country of origin; only those that are popular would be considered for translation for overseas marketing, otherwise it would not be profitable. This means that, again, it is the mass market that takes control of the public literary sphere.

Although the distortion from the mass market has come to present itself as a significant challenge, this discussion has come to consider literature as an important tool in regards to public discourse and science fiction literature particularly in regards to discourse about technology. This is possible due to the ability of literature to satisfy the requirements of communicative rationality along with some of the unique elements of the science fiction genre. Science fiction both stresses the need for discourse about future technology and is able to present foresight in what this future technology may be. Through this dual purpose, I presented science fiction literature as mediating dialogue between the public and the scientist, a dialogue that is crucial as, although it is the task of the scientist to create the technology, it is the sole responsibility of the public to set its norms (Habermas, 2003, 108). I do not think it will ever be able to completely overcome the challenge of the distortion by the mass market as it is this that allows for its widespread distribution, allowing many individuals to participate in the discourse it creates. However, I still remain positive about the use of science fiction literature as a tool for discourse about technology as, despite the distortion suffered, the content remains. I have therefore come to understand science fiction literature as a possible prompt, subject and product of global public discourse concerning technology and am hopeful about its success in doing this.

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An Analysis of Kant's Various Discussions of the Concept of God.

- By Mariana Grove

'Belief in a God and in another world is so interwoven with my moral sentiment as there is little danger of my losing the latter, there is equally little cause for fear that the former can ever be taken from me' (Kant, 1953, A829)

The aim of Kant's philosophy began with attempting to reconcile aspects of religious faith and scientific knowledge. As a dedicated Christian, Kant's aim was to discover whether in the world there could exist an unconditioned intelligible being outside the series of appearances; and whether such a Supreme Being, like God, had been proved to necessarily exist by his predecessors. Kant argues against the likes of Descartes and Anselm and the three arguments which supposedly outline God's necessary existence; the ontological, cosmological and physico-theological. However, Kant did not originate his philosophy from a critical perspective, like in his *Critique of Pure Reason*; but initially produced his own ontological argument to prove the necessary existence of God. I wish to acknowledge Kant's early efforts in his philosophy, to validate the existence of an *a priori* Supreme Being in *The One Possible Argument in Support of a Demonstration of the Existence of God (1763)*, and illustrate his personal struggle in escaping nihilism by attempting to reconcile faith and knowledge. The history of his philosophy should not be pushed aside, for even in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, God remains at the heart of his philosophical struggle, which leads him into his own personal argument to keep intact his faith even if *reason* fails him.

During Kant's pre-critical period he provides his own ontological or 'ontotheological' argument for the existence of God. However, his understanding of an *ens realissimum* differs from the ontological argument provided by Anselm in his extensive work *Proslogion*, to which Descartes proceeded with a very similar argument. 'The argument for the existence of God which [Kant is] presenting is based simply upon the fact that something is possible' (Kant, 2003, 134), in *The Only Possible Argument in Support of a Demonstration of the Existence of God*. God is argued to be the foundation of all possibilities and the presupposed backdrop of all experience, as he is the purest perfection and contains within him all possible properties. 'The possibilities of things themselves, which are given through the divine nature, harmonise with his great desire' (Kant, 2003, 2:92), as only God could be the one able to affirm all thinkable properties through his divine nature. If the effect exists then the cause must also exist, because 'as soon as you deny the existence of God, every concept of possibility vanishes' (Kant, 2003, 1:396), written in his early work *New Elucidation (1755)*. The non existence of an all perfect being is unthinkable, at this stage of Kant's philosophy, for God must be the grounds for the possible. The fact that we exist, determines God's antecedent existence.

This theoretical argument which Kant creates contrasts to the ontological argument of Anselm and Descartes, as for Kant admits that 'in the world contains an argument which is at once powerful and very beautiful; unfortunately, it is

incapable of the rigour required of a demonstration' (Kant, 2003, 2:163). Kant is not in denial about the dogmatic structure of God's existence and its incapability of being fully demonstrated, 'metaphysics [being] a dark and shoreless ocean, marked by no beacons' (Kant, 2003, 2:66). For the philosopher who aims to solve this problem of metaphysics is bounded to endless scrutiny. His argument against the Cartesian ontological argument stems from his premise that, for something to be possible it requires not only formal logic, but also material or real possibility. And the Cartesian ontological argument, only addresses formal logic. Kant's 'ontotheological' argument combines both the material world and the metaphysical, the material world being bound to the latter due to the fact that it is unthinkable that nothing should exist. Therefore, 'there exists something which is "absolutely necessary", since the undeniability of the possible demands this' (Logan, 2007, 353).

In *The Critique of Pure Reason,* and begins what he calls; his *transcendental argument* as Kant awoke from his "dogmatic slumber". The 'empiricist shift that led to Kant's rejection of the objective reality of the conclusion of his ontological argument in OPB' (Logan, 2007, 248); he gives a new perspective into the concept of God, and critiques if such a single entity could ever be represented by rational deductions of the possible. This empirical shift in his philosophy began to destruct what he had previously determined as things which are possible to exist in reality in OPB, for in *The Critique of Pure Reason*, his view of the possible is restricted to sensibility; as without any application to the empirical world nothing can be considered a *vom Realmöglichen*. Kant's reconstruction states that we are lacking evidence of such a being's existence to be objectively true in the material world, because the *noumenon* only ascribes itself to things thinkable and not known. Therefore, we cannot ever know if it is necessarily certain, if such a necessary being could exist or non-exist.

Despite of his religious background, Kant does not wish to provide a philosophical standpoint that gives empty statements about God based on pure reason alone, but find another way to 'make room for faith'(Kant, 1953, Bxxx). Prompted by David Hume's scepticism, Kant applauds Hume's initial skeptic nature of reason, as both agree that metaphysics can be understood by none. 'He proved irrefragably that to cognate such a function *a priori* and from conceptions, is totally impossible for reason; for that comprises necessity; but it is inconceivable' (Kant, 1799, VII) that *reason* permits itself to prove anything *a priori*, when we are unable to infer the likeness of a concept, like God, in the world. This consideration of reason, for both Kant and Hume, has been created on a false pretence, comparing reason to the 'bastard of imagination which, impregnated by experience, has brought certain representations under the law of association and substitutes a subjective necessity' (Kant, 1799, VII).

Kant wants to enforce that, the world *could* have an unconditioned, intelligible necessary being outside the series of appearances, but that it cannot be necessarily concluded that such a necessary being does exist. Anselm tries to prove God's necessary existence by attempting to infer that; God possesses all perfections, existence is a perfection, therefore, it would be impossible for God to not exist. Kant on the other hand, says that 'God exists' would assert that God can be exemplified in the world, as to merely attach the property of existence onto a thing, is a not grounds enough to prove that it really exists. The predicate defines a property of a particular subject, and is an attachment external from the

contents of the subject itself. For example in the case of this statement 'Grace smiled', the fact that Grace is smiling is a property which she can either possess or lack, not a definition of Grace. If that is true, then God could lack the property of existence; which demonstrates that *existence is not a predicate.* If 'God exists' was an analytic statement, as the Cartesian ontological argument suggests, existence must be contained within the subject, but it is not definition, but a property of. And yet, it can neither be a synthetic statement, for that would argue that we are able to look for God within the perimeters of experience. Neither option can be deemed feasible for the concept of God. Therefore, Kant proves existence is not a predicate.

'Existence can never be added to a concept by a judgement in such a way that 'renders' the referent of the concept actual' (Logan, 2007, 358), as we cannot ever know for certain because reason has the faculty to transcend its limits and 'the concept of a supreme being is in many respects a very useful idea; but just because it is a mere idea, it is altogether incapable, by itself alone, of enlarging our knowledge in regard to what exists' (Kant, 1953, A602). Denying existence denies that the concept has an object, not the concept itself, as we are able to conceptualise things from within the noumena, but we just can't prove its objectivity. The possible existence of such a being *a priori* has no grounds in experience, and therefore, cannot be necessarily true.

The cosmological and physico-theological arguments for the existence of God do not provide us with any new information, but instead rely completely upon the basis that the ontological argument can be proven to be necessarily true. As they both need to adopt the principle that God does exist in order to provide any new information about the nature and causal implication of God's presence on the world. What the cosmological argument aims to suggest is that; 'If anything exists, an absolutely necessary being must also exist. Now I, as least, exist. Therefore an absolutely necessary being exists' (Kant, 1953, A605). The cosmological proof, which is fairly similar to Kant's ontotheological argument, begins with experience and the fact that objects like us exist. The cause of affects upon the *cosmos* must be outside the world of representations, for we ourselves and the world are an effect, and due to the fact that we are contingent and are not bound by necessity, a being must exist outside contingency and must be the primary cause.

Whether or not we are causally determined by a *single* entity of necessity is not clearly supported in either argument as 'experience may perhaps lead us to the concept of absolute necessity, but it is unable to demonstrate this necessity as belonging to any determinate thing' (Kant, 1953, A608). The *ens realissimum* is a mere concept and we cannot extract all experience to deduce that one single entity is the causal determinate of everything in existence, and further that, the *ens realissimum* must necessarily exist in itself. The cosmological is completely dependent upon the ontological argument being necessarily true, as; if existence is not a predicate of such a being of necessity, then it is impossible for this argument to stand on its own two feet.

The physico-theological argument follows by the same principle of the ontological argument, that God must exist and must adopt the primary role of the designer of the world we experience. An all sufficient being is the highest power over and above the world of representations, and should therefore take on the role of the designer, which takes full

precedence over the conditioned. Kant argues that, if every effect must have a cause and God being the cause of our existence, then God as a designer cannot have come from nothing either, but instead it would be a member in a series and would call for its own cause for its existence. Such a Supreme Being 'leaves us at a loss, partly because we can never find in experience material sufficient to satisfy such a concept' (Kant, 1953, A621), and as our only attempts are available in the conditioned, trying to reach beyond 'and pass over to a realm of mere possibilities, where they hope upon the wings of ideas' (Kant, 1953, 524) to draw near to a unconditioned necessary being; forces us to make dogmatic statements about the world.

'The very most that can be demonstrated about synthetic a priori judgements is that it is necessary for us to make them, but not that these judgements are true' (Haldane, 1999, 2)for the latter cannot be proven by means of the transcendental. We are unable to affirm anything positive beyond the field of sensibility, for a concept of mere thought does not show anything to be objectively given, but only an a approximation of an absolute knowledge. Although Kant believes that, 'we should not be cut off from employing intellectual presuppositions and faith on behalf of our practical interest; only they could never be permitted to assume the title and dignity of science and rational insight' (Kant, 1953, A471). What Kant wishes to propose in replacement to the rational arguments in support of God, is a moral argument which encompasses our practical interest in an absolute perfect being. Kant has always accepted that there exists a transcendental gap between the noumenon and the phenomenon, the thing-in-itself and the understanding of it. But Kant suggests an idea that through the concept of morality, we can provide an accurate reason for the existence of God which is more than theoretical, but is grounded in practical reason.

Kant would argue that morality is universal; and that it would be rational to act in a moral way as our moral behaviour constitutes towards our own practical interest. Kant's idea of morality is prior to experience, as moral laws provide us with reason as to what we *ought to do,* from what we purely desire to do. Freedom must exist in order to choose 'the good', so that God can decide whether based upon the moral choices we make, we are worthy of entering the *kingdom of grace*. 'We must assume that moral world to be a consequence of our conduct in the world of sense, and therefore to be for us a future world' (Kant, 1953, A811). Kant still grasps onto his Christian perspective and this inflicts heavily in his moral theory. His idea of an *a priori* concept of morality (before experience), stands in order to universalise the nature of man, and its ability to pass into the afterlife; knowing that we acted in a rational and correct way as proposed by moral law. Only God is able to judge if our actions abide correctly to moral law, for he is; an all perfect, and rational primordial being, whose infinite nature can make a judgement upon our moral actions after our own death. Only a being of this magnitude can reward us in the afterlife, therefore, it is morally necessary to assume the existence of God.

Kant admits that he 'cannot assert anything that is, declare it as a judgement necessarily valid for everyone, save as it gives rise to conviction. Persuasion I can hold to on my own account, if it so pleases me, but I cannot, and ought not, to profess to impose it as binding on anyone but myself' (Kant, 1953, A822). He understands that not everyone is able to accept religion into their conception of thought, for there has been little grounds in experience which can provide evidence that it should be so. Kant's struggle against the non-existence of God and his Christian faith begins in his early

philosophy in *The Only Possible Argument in Support of a Demonstration of the Existence of God* and remained with him until his last work *Opus Postumum, which was left unfinished before his death. I must applaud Kant and his determination, which did not result in conceding to the arguments of his predecessors, but to reign above those to attempt a new vision of the concept of God. In successfully refuting the Cartesian ontological argument by proving that existence could not be a predicate, Kant could move away from dogmatic claims and form his own transcendental philosophy, which understood its limitations in absolute knowledge.* 'There is something strange and even absurd in the assertion that there should be a concept which possesses a meaning and yet is not capable of any explanation' (Kant, 1953, A245). God demonstrates the absurd idea which rational philosophy attempts to prove, and yet, is guaranteed to fall into the category of mere thought. I believe Kant failed in his task of suggesting God's necessary existence in his moral argument, as there is little grounds for us to believe that God's necessary existence is bound to the fact that we are in need of absolution after death, as Kant is merely positing the idea from Christian ideologies.

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Is there a Fundamental Layer to Reality?

-   By Rupert Gaskell

In this essay I wish to discuss the possibility of a fundamental layer to reality. By this I mean a basis or ground that determines everything else in the *cosmos*. In order to discuss this, I will look at three different theories: monism, pluralism and naturalism. The first, monism, is by far the most prominent theory of fundamentality that asserts the idea that there is one ground to all being and the role of philosophy is to discover this ground. This view was most famously defended by Plato and Leibniz. The second, pluralism, takes the idea of monism and suggests that it is not the case that one layer of reality exists. Rather, there are multiple grounds to reality that each cause the world to exist as it is. And finally, I will look at naturalism. This is the rejection of fundamentality entirely and a move away from the idea of an all-encompassing first principle. This view is largely championed by Quine and it is his philosophy that this essay will look to for the strengths of naturalism.

The first theory to discuss is that which asserts the existence of a single fundamental layer of reality. That which is, exists because of a series of causes derived from the first fundamental principle of being. This idea has been discussed early in the course of philosophy, with Plato's search for the cause of everything. He, through the dialogues of Socrates in the *Phaedo,* is looking for a cause of nature. Plato wants to discover "why each thing comes into being and why it perishes and why it exists" (Plato, 1966). If we can find the cause of everything that is, then we can illuminate the cause of being itself, in all its forms. This seeking of the cause of all things leads onto what Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz named 'the principle of sufficient reason. He sets out this principle in the following way: "*nothing takes place without sufficient reason*, that is, […] nothing happens without it being possible for someone who knows enough things to give a reason sufficient to determine why it is so and not otherwise." (Leibniz, 1987).*For Leibniz, the world exists because we can describe why a certain situation or thing exists as it does and why it is not any other way. Thus, he argues, the first question we are entitled to ask is why is there something and not nothing? Why do we have being in the first place?*

Of course, it is hard to say what the first fundamental principle of reality is, yet thinkers through the ages have advocated that it does exist and have attempted to find it. Bertrand Russell and Alfred North Whitehead attempted just such a thing when observing logic. This is thought of as being a key element to the nature of the world and vital to the natural sciences and is what led them to attempt reduction. This is the effort to reduce mathematics to the structure of logic. However, they realised that in order to do this, they had to substitute logic for set theory, and thus failed to show a coherency in the nature of logic and maths. This seems a particularly damaging failure for the fundamentalist. If analytic areas of knowledge could not be directly correlated with one another then how can we say that such things share a fundamental element of cause with the empirical world or our ability to experience it? This is, at least, evidence against the case of a monist. After all, monism asserts that there is one first element of being that is prior to all other elements. This view is not necessarily refuted by the failure of mathematical and logical structures to

be aligned, but it does discourage its support for monism inasmuch as these two analytic realms are located so close to each other in our faculty of reason. Perhaps then, it would be wise to take up another stance in defence of a fundamental layer of reality that depended less on a singular, all-encompassing cause.

It seems apt to look towards pluralism as giving a stronger case for the existence of a fundamental layer, or rather layers, of reality. In doing so, Leibniz' theory of a principle of sufficient reason is not lost. We can say that the way the world exists is thus and so because of any one of these fundamental principles; so long as we provide a sufficient reason for being, we can say why there is something and not nothing. So pluralism appears to adhere to this principle, but does it have strength in terms of an account of fundamentality? If we look to the natural sciences to examine a kind of naturalistic priority of the world, there appears to be such a structure. If we look at life, or biological organisms, we might ask how they came to be? The natural sciences tell us that, were it not for gravity, all life would fly off into space and break up. Thus, no life as we know it would have such constitution. So under the principle of sufficient reason we can say that things are because there is the force of gravity that allows matter to collect together and form bodies. It would be tempting thus far to argue that gravity is the fundamental layer to reality, that it is this force that allows all things to be. Yet the natural sciences have also developed the idea of chemistry and biology. The fusion of different elements is possible because of chemical laws in the world, not just that a gravitational force allows them to be spatially combined. There is a strong case, if we abide by what the empirical faculties of the sciences tells us, for the necessity of multiple grounds for being.

However, this theory has several weaknesses of its own. First and foremost, it is an a posteriori theory of the grounds of being. We assume the senses are not deceptive and that the explanation of the structure of the empirical world that the natural sciences give us are reliable. It is an epistemic basis for being that seems too contained within the confines of our faculty of empirical knowledge. Secondly, if there are indeed multiple grounds to the nature of being, how do they relate? There may well be a set of fundamental layers but when does one reach the limits of its own grounding and border another layer? Do they ever overlap? To outline a theory of numerous fundamental grounds seems an arduous and complex task and seems to confuse the nature of fundamentality. Indeed, would these grounds not share some predicate of some kind that would itself be the fundamental layer of being? If gravity and chemistry were two kinds of fundamentals, one could assert that the realm in which they both exist is more fundamental. If they both function within the cosmos then surely the cosmos is prior to its mechanical parts. This brings us back to a form of monism that advocates reality itself to be prior to all of its components. Although monism did have its complications, they are far fewer and less convincing than those of the pluralist view.

So there are issues with fundamentality in both forms. The view that opposes this error of a search for the grounds of being is sometimes called 'naturalism'. In naturalism, there is a rejection of the idea that the world has a foundation, or that there is any need for one. It has been shown that the pluralist view of fundamentality has many issues, but even the monist view, which seems the strongest and most popular account of fundamentality, is unfavourable when observing the following arguments made by o*ne such naturalist.* For a long time philosophers have sought to find this ground of being in order to derive scientific knowledge from it. Thus, the grounds have to be self-evident, but also outside of scientific knowledge itself, as if it were to be *within* scientific knowledge, it could *not* reasonably be said to

be foundational. However, if it is outside the realm of scientific knowledge then how is it accessible to the rational agent? Thus, it seems a near-impossible task to discover a foundational layer to reality. Additionally, the theory of quantum mechanics is a problem for monism and fundamentality in general. This is the idea that there are an infinite number of universes that exist and thus the world can exist in these many different forms. If this is the case then one cannot reasonably claim that things are the way they are because of the principle of sufficient reason. As things just so happen to be this way but could exist in an infinite number of different ways, then the idea that everything in the world is causally determined by a ground of reality is rendered a weak concept. For more convincing and coherent is the idea that everything is spawned randomly, in an infinitely possible *cosmos*.

Willard Van Orman Quine takes particular issue with the idea that there is a fundamental ground to being. He believes that philosophy has made a mistake in doing "creative reconstruction" of what the grounds may be. Previous philosophy has been so concerned with a lack of certainty in sense data that they have failed to see its comparative successes in giving a coherent account of the world: "The stimulation of his sense receptors is all anybody has had to go on, ultimately, in arriving at this picture of the world" (Quine, 1969). For Quine, philosophy should instead become a branch of behavioural psychology. He believes that accepting the efficiency of empirical knowledge is, in fact the only way one can proceed. As seen before, talking of a fundamental layer to reality is almost contradictory insomuch as it necessarily must be located outside of the faculty of the natural sciences. Quine argues that this is the case because in speaking about a fundamental ground to nature we are reasoning *within* the bounds of knowledge provided by the natural sciences. "If the epistemologist's goal is validation of the grounds of empirical science, he defeats his purpose by using psychology or other empirical science in its validation" (Quine, 1969). Thus for Quine, to attempt to seek the fundamentality of the natural sciences is to use that information that the natural sciences have granted us, and thus is a circular notion.

In assessing the three different theories regarding fundamentality all but one of them have significant problems. The monist view, has an appealing element in that it offers the idea that there is a coherence in reality that makes sense of the world. The issue lies in its inability to outline this coherence and the evidence against such coherence in the attempts at reduction. Monism can theorise the possibility of an all-encompassing ground but the evidence for such a thing is certainly against it. Pluralism, however, has even more damaging issues. The nature of fundamentality simply does not translate into what pluralism suggests. There is always a sense that beneath these multiple grounds is a common ground that they all rest on, and thus leads back to monism, exposing pluralism to both its own problems and the problems of monism. Thus, naturalism is the theory that encounters the least issues, but rather through its critical nature of the concept of fundamentality. Its stance is that of opposition to a ground for reality and in doing so it provides a convincing rejection of such a theory.

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Is John Stuart Mill Either an 'Act' or 'Rule' Utilitarian?

- By Gabriel Dent

The question of whether Mill is an act or rule utilitarian, asks whether he places primacy in an act, or in rules, when relating the utilitarian theory to moral actions. This essay will argue that what commentators have interpreted as Mill being an advocate of rule utilitarianism, is rather an attempt on his behalf to solve the issue of practicability when it comes to applying the utilitarian method to everyday life. It will also establish that it is feasible for Mill to adhere to a type of act utilitarianism that, within it, still contains room for the possibility of forming moral rules as guidelines. As must be the case, these rules can be broken for the sake of maximising utility[15]. This, however, does not mean that these rules should not be followed habitually for the sake of practicability, with regards to decision-making and the maximisation of utility. It will conclude that any sort of rule utilitarianism is incompatible with Mill's understanding of utilitarianism, and so this means he must be an act utilitarian.

Before exploring whether Mill's *Utilitarianism* conforms more to an act utilitarianism notion or a rule utilitarianism notion, it is first important to state clearly what is actually meant by act and rule utilitarianism. As J. J. C. Smart identifies, act utilitarianism can be understood as "the view that the rightness or wrongness of an action is to be judged by the consequences, good or bad, of the action itself" (Smart, 1973, 9). In contrast, rule utilitarianism is the view that morality should be judged by "the goodness or badness of the consequences of a rule that everyone should perform the action in like circumstances" (Smart, 1973, 9). If the idea that 'nobody should steal' was classified as a moral rule, then rule utilitarianism would hold that stealing is wrong in every circumstance; even in a particular situation where stealing would actually create more utility than not stealing. Act utilitarianism, on the other hand, would hold that in an unusual scenario - for example, a scenario where stealing would enable you to feed your starving family –where stealing brings about more utility, then it is morally right to break this rule for this particular circumstance. Act utilitarianism thus places primacy in an act that "promotes happiness" [16] (Mill, 2007, 6), over a rule that *generally tends* to promote happiness[17].

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[15] If this were not the case, then these rules would have to be understood as more important than the maximisation of utility, through an action. This would, therefore, be a description of rule utilitarianism, and not of act utilitarianism.

[16] Act Utilitarianism can hereafter be understood as conforming absolutely to the grounding principle of utilitarianism. In other words, it asserts that one must always act in a way that brings about the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. See *Utilitarianism*, pp. 5-22.

[17] Rule utilitarianism can still be justified as a type of Rutilitarianism, in so far as its rules are established because they are believed to promote the most utility, or are seen to promote the most utility from experience. See Mill on rules of action,

Now that we have shown the meanings of, and difference between, act and rule utilitarianism, we can proceed with examining why it is such a contentious issue amongst Mill's commentators, as to whether he is either an act, or rule utilitarian. The aim of *Utilitarianism* is to explain what it is as a theory, and how it can be applied to determine the right moral action in everyday life. There is no clear evidence to support that Mill was setting out to establish that he is either an act, or a rule utilitarian, in this book. In fact, Mill appears to advocate both act and rule utilitarianism at different times. In Chapter 2 of *Utilitarianism*, Mill claims that:

"In the case of abstinences… it would be unworthy of an intelligent agent not to be consciously aware that the action is of a class which, if practised generally, would be injurious, and that this is the ground of the obligation to abstain from it"

(Mill, 2007, 17).

From this, it can be said that Mill seems to be in favour of rule utilitarianism, as he is claiming that if a moral rule suggests that we should abstain from something because its consequences generally tend to be injurious, we should abide by that rule and abstain from the injurious thing. He appears to prefer sticking to this rule, rather than breaking the rule in a specific circumstance where it might produce more utility, and thus seems to be promoting rule-utilitarian-values. In contrast, in the final chapter of *Utilitarianism*, Mill also claims that "to save a life, it may not only be allowable, but a duty, to steal, or take by force, the necessary food or medicine…" (Mill, 2007, 55). One would only assume that Mill would recognise that 'not stealing' should be a moral rule, if we are to have any; as not stealing generally tends to promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people. Paradoxically, this statement seems to brand Mill as an advocate of act utilitarianism.

To show that Mill is an act utilitarian, it is essential to now explain why he *isn't* a rule utilitarian, as many readers of him have suggested. One major criticism of utilitarianism, specifically act utilitarianism, is that it is impractical to calculate which decision, out of the options presented, maximises utility the most, each time it is required that somebody make one. This, for a rule utilitarian, may be a good enough reason to establish rules: so that one can act "in accordance with rules… because there is no time to think" (Smart, 1973, 42). This doesn't, however, necessitate the need to abide by these rules at all times. Thus, it is still possible to have rules for the sake of practicability and still be an act utilitarian – so long as when there is a particular decision that breaks rules, but clearly promotes happiness the most, it is the decision that is made by the person making it. This can be understood as "multi-level" (Crisp, 1997, 109) act utilitarianism[18], which has rules for the sake of moral guidelines, rather than rules as 'absolute rules'[19]. Mill's quote about abstinences

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and 'the end to which they are subservient'; *Utilitarianism*, p.2. And J. O. Urmson, on his summarisation of what, according to utilitarianism, constitutes a moral rule, in 'The Moral Philosophy of J. S. Mill'; *Mill's Utilitarianism: Critical Essays*, p.3.

[18] As opposed to 'single-level act utilitarianism'. See Roger Crisp, *Routledge Philosophy Guide to Mill on Utilitarianism*, pp. 109-113.

[19] Rules that are merely moral guidelines, have elsewhere been referred to as 'rules of thumb', which refer to rules followed habitually that are allowed to be broken for the sake of maximising utility. 'Absolute rules' can be understood as

above, that at first seems to advocate rule utilitarianism, can henceforth be reinterpreted as being about the practicability of calculating each decision, rather than about the primacy of utilitarian rules, over acts that produce the most utility. Here, Mill is addressing the impracticability of calculating each decision for the sake of maximising utility, by suggesting that rules should be used as a time-saver when it seems most likely that they'll produce the maximum utility out of the options available. It is important to note that we can never know whether a decision is right, according to utilitarianism, until we have experienced the consequences of that decision; and so these rules are the most practical way of estimating whether a decision maximises utility, as they have generally shown to do so in the past. When it isn't obvious that a particular rule will maximise utility, it is then necessary to consult the utilitarian method to determine which decision creates the most happiness. This interpretation shows Mill to be an act utilitarian, as it now understands an act as more important than a moral rule.

A critic of this interpretation may suggest that this is still, in some cases, an example of Mill choosing utilitarian rules, over the maximisation of happiness. However, to argue as such, would be to miss the fact that more utility is created in saving time by not calculating each decision, than would be created in doing so. If you were to calculate each decision you make to determine which produced the most utility, then you would have no time to actually enjoy life, and thus less utility would be produced. This, therefore, would not fit with the grounding principle of utilitarianism; the 'greatest happiness principle'. As Mill states, "to inform a traveller respecting the place of his ultimate destination, is not to forbid the use of landmarks and direction-posts on the way" (Mill, 2007, 21). Just because landmarks and direction-posts can be used to save time and assist a traveller, this does not mean that the traveller must always follow them to reach his ultimate destination. This interpretation still has at its core the first principle of utilitarianism, and is thus more compatible with act utilitarianism, than it is with rule utilitarianism.

Another type of rule utilitarianism might suggest that Mill advocates a type of moral rule that already has within it particular exceptions, for the sake of maximising utility. Such a rule could be stated as follows: 'You shouldn't steal, unless it is to save a life or help somebody who is suffering immensely'[20]. An issue with understanding Mill in this way, is that it places his utilitarianism in the situation that we now understand Mill as trying to escape. It is highly impractical to work out every exception needed for every moral rule, and thus, we are again presented with the issue of practicability. Furthermore, Smart identifies that by having rules with exceptions, this type of rule utilitarianism must eventually "collapse into act utilitarianism" (Smart, 1973, 12). Any exception in a moral rule that has been formulated, can have "an infinite number of unseen types of contingency" (Smart, 1973, 12). These exceptions would all ultimately be shaped around the first principle of utilitarianism, meaning that, in essence, this type of rule utilitarianism is in fact just an act utilitarianism, being represented as something it isn't. It is for these reasons that Mill is clearly an act utilitarian, and not a rule utilitarian.

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rules that must always be followed. See the idea of 'rule worship' in Smart's *Utilitarianism: For and Against*, p.10; and the idea of 'rules of thumb' on p.42.

[20] For further information on these kind of rules, see *Forms and Limits of Utilitarianism*, David Lyons; pp.121-143.

In summary, it can be said that, while Mill often appears to be adhering to the rule utilitarian notion, this isn't actually the case. Rather, in these cases Mill is actually attempting to solve the issue of the impracticability of calculating utility for each decision. By calculating the utility of each decision you would waste a lot of time, and therefore less utility would be produced overall – this is obviously undesirable. It can also be argued that Mill promotes a type of rule utilitarianism that has, already built within its rules, exceptions that allow it to be practical, and more fitting to the seemingly act-utilitarian-statements made by Mill in *Utilitarianism*. Arguing this, however, only creates more issues in terms of the practicability of utilitarianism. It also appears to be synonymous with act utilitarianism. Mill didn't want an impractical theory, and so he must be understood as an act utilitarian because of this.

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Under what Conditions does a World Exist for Wittgenstein?

- By Stephen Reynolds

The question at hand is tautologous, If "the limits of my language are the limits of my world," (Wittgenstein, 1955, 5.6,) then surely it is only at these supposed limits at which we can begin to understand the world. Furthermore, if these limits are linguistic then they must necessarily exclude any possibility of the 'thing-in-itself,' objects in themselves can only find representation in language. It follows that the question at hand can only be answered by looking at how Wittgenstein applies language to a physical world and what he grounds this application on. In the 'Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,' Wittgenstein explains his conditions for language by grounding them in a logical framework. He then fortifies this linguistic account, his account of "pure realism" (Wittgenstein, 1955, 5.64) by comparing it the impossibility of idealist metaphysics in which the 'thing-in-itself' is accessible. Forthwith, Wittgenstein's logical framework shall evolve into this comparative and shall be the focus of my attention.

The world for Wittgenstein is not merely the culmination of all that is in it. Rather the world is held together by a specific, logical framework, "A totality of facts, not of things." (Wittgenstein, 1955 1.11.) Wittgenstein uses the example of a square mesh covering a black and white surface, with this mesh he has "brought the description of the surface to a unified form." (Wittgenstein, 1955, 6.342.) This statement implies that objects in themselves are inseparable from the logical structure in which they exist; furthermore a world apart from this structure is inconceivable. For example, happiness cannot be blue because colour is not a property that it can possess. Wittgenstein does not define what he means exactly by 'objects' however he describes them as "simple" (Wittgenstein, 1955, 2.02) and as "substance of the world," (Wittgenstein, 1955, 2.021,) therefore we shall assume they are presupposed as anything that falls within this pre-mentioned, logical structure. It is when we project this logical structure in language that we see under what conditions the world exists, logic finds its limits in the world and therefore in language.

A simple proposition projects the form but not the content of its meaning. It is made a fact, regardless of its truth or falsehood, because it expresses a meaning that a simple list of objects cannot articulate, "the words are combined in it in a definite way" (Wittgenstein, 1955, 3.14) that make sense. A proposition is meaningful if it coincides with logic for example; "Liverpool is the capital of England" is not a true proposition however we can conceive of a world where it is true, the proposition has meaning. The world is the culmination of all true propositions, thus are the conditions in which it exists as language.

So the world is a "totality of true propositions" (Wittgenstein, 1955, 4.11,) however this implies that Wittgenstein sees each one as an individual, as a basic, logical fact. This view seems rather difficult, how can we justify each proposition as a structured, factual entity in the case of a complex? James Bogen gives an example of King's College being on fire, "we

might speak about the…constituents of the college buildings to explain how a fire could have started there but not…of the fact that King's College is on fire." (Bogen, 1972, p.136.) Complexes are inevitable however the difficulty lies in their verification. We could assume that a collection of true propositions results in a true complex, but what proves this other than consistency? A man could guess every aspect of King's College and conclude that it is on fire without ever seeing it, accidentally.

Language without experience contradicts its application, how can one speak of King's College if one does not know King's college? Initially it seems that Wittgenstein's own personal account of logic may be flawed, in its application the use of language cannot always be grounded in sense experience. However this is not necessarily a fault. Bogen states that "the rules of a system cannot ensure that or explain why it has a non-arbitrary 'correlation with reality'," (Bogen, 1972, p.182,) however Wittgenstein's attempt is "arbitrary," (Bogen, 1972, p.182,) it is concentrated heavily on sense experience (whether he meant it this way or not.) Instead it is important to simply interpret language as conforming to the vague logical framework which Wittgenstein outlines, for a sincere "correlation with reality" (Bogen, 1972, p.182) the theory needs to be grounded in something permanent and universal; sense experience is a temporal aspect which has no hold on the meaning of one's words.

 In light of the confused relation between sense experience and language it seems we must necessarily look at the possibility of a physical world and a 'thing-in-itself.' Our goal here is to find any room for a subject in Wittgenstein's ideas. In regards to a physical world Wittgenstein introduces an analogy. Just as the eye is not in the field of sight, and there is nothing in the field of vision to presuppose the eye, there is no world in which the "metaphysical subject" (Wittgenstein, 1955, 5.633) is contained. Rather the subject is the limit of his own world, "the world and life are one." (Wittgenstein, 1955, 5.621.) This claim conforms to Wittgenstein's linguistic argument as our world is all we can think, and to get outside this limit is impossible we "cannot…say what we cannot think." (Wittgenstein, 1955, 5.61.) it seems there is only room for a metaphysical subject insofar as that subject is the entirety of his own world and a 'thing-in-itself' can only exist as far as his language, and thus his knowledge, extends.

 Since language is the seat of knowledge in this account Wittgenstein holds it as first philosophy, a physicalist position would seek to ground these first principles in objects themselves. Heidegger comes to Wittgenstein's aid and seeks to destroy this position; he states that physicalism is "the technicalization of all languages into the sole operative instrument of interplanetary information." (Heidegger,1982, p.58.) Heidegger's use of the words "instrument" (Heidegger, 1982, p.58) is a concise reminder that this form of metaphysics would simply reduce and analyse statements as a simple evocation of 'things-in-themselves,' the limits of my language are not the limits of my world in this account as language is simply a medium. A "technicalization of all languages" (Heidegger,1982, p.58.) implies that physicalism would have language as a code to decipher and communicate objects in the world, this nominalist account is argued concisely by Heidegger, "language is the house of being." (Heidegger, 1998, p.145.) It is being that resides in language, not language that resides in being.

We have arrived at the construction of a purely personal world in which being and world do not constitute each other, but are one. Wittgenstein has reformed a traditional solipsist argument for his own purposes. He only differs from it in the following way, traditional solipsism constitutes the self as all that can be known to exist, and there is no proven physical world. For Wittgenstein however the self and world are one, the limits of which extend only as far as the each other as he proclaims that "Solipsism…coincides with pure realism;" (Wittgenstein, 1955, 5.64.) This verb, "coincides," (Wittgenstein, 1955, 5.64,) is used rather than say, 'conforms,' precisely because they are not the same thing. Rather, a traditional solipsist account and Wittgenstein's linguistic account are two ways of seeing the same thing; they both oppose idealism and in their own way consider the self as fundamental philosophy.

Following on from this solipsist account, the beliefs one has about himself and others could potentially exist in Wittgenstein's philosophy under ethical conditions. For an idealist morality exists as an abstract concept, meaningful as a driving force of our actions, however Wittgenstein's definition of morality is dulled in comparison. Moral values are simply general attitudes towards everyday life, every opinion we have about anything is an ethical value and the world exists under ethical conditions insofar as this. However there is a problem, to speak about the world generally we would have to look at it objectively from an outside source. The failure of metalanguage has shown this to be impossible in Wittgenstein's account. This is as close as Wittgenstein comes to an admittance of metaphysics. He seems to allow set values, the content of which lie outside of our knowledge and so we cannot speak of them. If "the limits of my language are the limits of my world" then it seems the world can exist under pretence of ethics, but not under any specific values.

As Peter Hacker points out Wittgenstein's propositions contradict his linguistic account. He asserts that we can only talk about singular facts in the world, Wittgenstein himself often talks about the world as a whole for example he states, "One can describe the world completely by completely generalized propositions." (Wittgenstein, 1955, 5.526.) In a similar way to ethics Wittgenstein's own attempt to establish worldly conditions have contradicted themselves. Wittgenstein acknowledges this himself and admits all his propositions as nonsense, Hacker explains Wittgenstein's meaning, "there are indeed metaphysical truths about the essential nature of the world…however…they are essentially ineffable." (Hacker, 1996, p.44.) Wittgenstein's attempt to ground truths should be seen in this way, all that we know conforms to language and language therefore is the limits of our world. However beyond this language, beyond our knowledge, there are possible metaphysical truths to which Wittgenstein does not dispute but rather disregards as unknowable. He has turned metaphysics into an irrelevancy.

In conclusion, it is completely valid to hold language as first philosophy. The conditions under which the world exist are best expressed through the manifestation of language in describing the physical world around us, and the vague use that it has in explaining the role of metaphysics. More specifically, Wittgenstein's logical framework provides an excellent base from which we can analyse language and see exactly where it fits in our world. What binds Wittgenstein's philosophy together so tightly is the consideration that language and knowledge are one, we can only speak of what we know and this projects the world outwards, creating it from our very being. I believe it is important to see Wittgenstein's philosophy not as a finished account of what constitutes first philosophy but rather as a basis from which

we can begin to explore the conditions under which the world exists. The conditions which Wittgenstein lays down himself, namely a logical framework in which we can safely apply language to the world, give us a legitimate direction in which knowledge can be expanded.

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An Analysis of the Dialectical Structure of Consciousness in Hegel and Fichte.

- By Freya Wolsey

This paper is going to present an analytic account of the relationship between the dialectical structure of consciousness in Fichte, and its relation to the dialectic as presented in the work of Hegel. I wish to focus on the surrounding ideas of subjective idealism and consciousness in Fichte's 'Science of knowledge'. (Fichte, Heath and Lachs, 1982) I am going to analyse and compare this within the objective accounts of absolute idealism and consciousness shown in Hegel's 'Phenomenology of Spirit'. (Hegel, Miller and Findlay, 1977) I will be making reference to both of these texts and some secondary readings which have contributed to my analysis. Throughout the essay I wish to present my own argument on consciousness and how my understanding of consciousness has developed from analysing the different views surrounding the 'self'.

On the one hand, Fichte is concerned with the subject account of transcendental subjective idealism. This means that he mainly focuses on the subject, because the subject is what is necessary for consciousness and experience. For instance; I necessarily have to subjectively experience consciousness in order to know what consciousness is. This is what appears to be the 'I' (self) or the 'subject', which is considered to be most important for consciousness. (Bowie, 2010) On the other hand, Hegel is concerned with an objective account of absolute idealism. It is quite right to suggest that it is a necessity to have both subject and object as an absolute in order to experience consciousness. For instance; I need myself, the 'subject', as well as the external world, or other objects around me in order to experience consciousness. In contrast to Fichte's dialectic, Hegel's dialectic has an intimate connection with the external world. It is clear that you need both subjective experiences in the mind, and objective experiences in the external world, in order to know what is real or what is not. (Bowie, 2010)

Both Fichte and Hegel take on different transcendental views of consciousness. Fichte's system is grounded from Kantian approach of transcendental philosophy, he claims that, '"the consciousness of a thing outside of us is absolutely nothing else than the product of your own capacity of thinking", only the consciousness of the thing outside of us is the capacity for thinking, not the thing itself, so he could be seen as offering a version of Kant's transcendental idealism. (Bowie, 2010) Whereas, Hegel's approach is transcendental in the way that it holds a relation between soul and spirit. This is evident throughout his Dialectic in the 'Phenomenology of Spirit', 'to come to an understanding about cognition, which is regarded either as the instrument to get hold of the Absolute, or as the medium through which one discovers it.' (Hegel, Miller and Findlay, 1977) Understanding what consciousness is also explains why there has to be a connection between the subject, and object in order to have these experiences. Consciousness remains and must always be recognised through the relation or interaction between; subject and object, reflection and mediation, internal and external, the 'thing in itself' and the 'thing'.

Throughout Fichte's works in the 'Science of Knowledge' he has presented a dialectic between practical and theoretical reason. Fichte proposes a new philosophy and speculation of the 'I', which he considers to be a structure of consciousness itself. The structure of the 'I' is not only self-positing, but is entirely self-grounding, because it cannot be created or moulded by another. Fichte acknowledges this structure in the 'science of knowledge' as he begins to question the origin of subjectivity and consciousness. "How do we come to attribute objective validity to what in fact is only subjective? Or, since objective validity is described as existence: How do we come to believe in an existent?" (Fichte, 1982) It is true to suggest that Fichte wants to propose a solution to German idealism, maybe this is because all previous forms, and structures to consciousness are lifeless and have no grounding concepts.

In contrast to Fichte, Hegel's dialectic in the 'Phenomenology of Spirit' shows a story of consciousness coming to itself as a development towards self-consciousness. It is clear this is rather important, because it acts as a reflection, and shows how our human self-consciousness has developed through the external world. However, this development is only applicable through myself, yourself, the 'I' or 'subject', because is it the production of the world and in the same way the world is a production of the subject. At the start of the 'Phenomenology of Spirit' Hegel makes it clear that a "cognition of what truly is" needs to be understood beforehand in order to get hold of the 'absolute'. So if this is the case then in order to reach the 'absolute' the subject must acquire knowledge and understanding through thought, therefore the conscience, and make sense of the external world (Hegel, Miller and Findlay, 1977) Therefore, the start of Hegel's dialectic demonstrates that we can only talk about the external world, and its interaction with the subject in order to experience consciousness.

It is clear that you might subjectively experience consciousness every day, however what isn't very clear is how the process works in order to do this.

I believe that Fichte's account of consciousness is somewhat agreeable, because the system he poses is applicable to myself. If I think of the 'I' which is self-positing and is also only grounded by myself and no one else, this makes it very personal and independent from everything and anything. As described by Fichte, (1977) the structure of the 'I' has to contain both 'I' and '-I' in order for consciousness to happen, it is what appears to be a creative dialogue between two opponents. The first, is what is called as the principle of reality and the second is called the negation of reality. Both of these seem to oppose one another as the 'I' strives and is what Fichte believes to be 'pure reason', and the '-I' is considered to be 'practical reason'. Therefore, this primary principle of theoretical knowledge leads us to practical knowledge as it takes a turn towards inner life. Fichte calls this the 'intellectual intuition' (Fichte, 1977) as it is the starting point, which we actively start to make sense of the world.

Not only do we need a subjective account of consciousness that we can reflect on, but also, the way we reflect upon the external world, and the objects around us. Although Fichte believes there is a relation with the 'I', and the external

world, it turns into a problem for him. This is because you cannot know anything about the external world without consciousness. Thus, the 'I' creates the world just as the same way it creates our consciousness. This is because 'the only concept which unites the two worlds that exist for us, the sensible and the intelligible', therefore, the 'act' itself is dependent on actions themselves. (Fichte, 1977) We need absolute knowing to know about consciousness, and this can only be done through subject and object interaction. Therefore, is this a limitation? Are we simply limited by the 'I' because we can't know about the external world without knowing about the 'I' first? It seems that the focus is predominantly on internal consciousness, and doesn't focus much on the account of a world outside of consciousness, neither a world to be constructed by consciousness.

It is clear that the relationship between Fichte and Hegel is surprisingly different and that Hegel has a significant problem with subjective idealism. Thus, being the reason that everything is presupposed from the end point to the starting point. I believe that Hegel's dialectic is a lot more grounding and proves that we can ultimately have a connection with both subject and object internally and externally. Hegel's response to consciousness in the 'Phenomenology of Spirit' is the view of sense-certainty and pure being as a way of knowing and understanding. Is it that I am aware of myself and having immediate knowledge that I can truly know my consciousness from the external world? Or is it that I am both subject and object as one, therefore I cannot experience one without the other.

Sense-certainty immediately appears to be the richest form of 'knowledge or knowing which is at the start or is immediately our object cannot be anything else but immediate knowledge itself, a knowledge of the immediate or of what simply is.' (Hegel and Houlgate, 1988) Hegel believes that sense-certainty is where we cannot start thinking anywhere else other than immediacy. Therefore, this internal concept is considered as immediate knowledge, and to look at certain things in the world is the best knowledge I can have. However, in contrast to Fichte's dialectic, Hegel believes this immediate knowledge is accessible without the notion of the 'I' and '-I'. Therefore, consciousness must be a pure form of being and knowledge, and 'for its part, is in this certainty only as pure 'I'; or I am in it only as a pure 'This', and the object similarly only as a pure 'This'.' (Hegel and Houlgate, 1988) I am certain of pure being because I have the awareness of myself the 'I', and the awareness of 'this' as an object. Therefore, my self-consciousness is always mediated with something else, because I am certain I know what this thing is.

I believe there is a certain similarity to Hegel and Fichte's dialectic is the way the '-I' for Fichte, and the reflection or mediation for Hegel. Both of these explanations of consciousness are used to reflect upon knowledge and experience in the world, and how we perceive of certain 'things'. Fichte uses something he calls the 'check' which is seen to be a negation of reality. When the negation of reality happens to check consciousness, there is a reflective period which then grounds consciousness. Therefore, the reflection is not the object reflected on, but rather the activity of reflecting. Dunham, Grant and Watson (2011) note that this is an 'activity', says Fichte, is spontaneous in us, and is *positing*, but

not *by* us. It is, he says, an "act of absolute freedom, and this is a creation out of nothing, an act of producing something that did not exist before, and absolute beginning." (Fichte and Breazeale, 1992)

The one entity that truly interests me is understanding of self-consciousness through the work of Hegel. Firstly, it is important to understand the idea of sense-certainty, before going on to explore his philosophy of self-consciousness in the 'Phenomenology of Spirit'. This is truly because Hegel's dialectic proves different to Fichte's. Hegel has faith in the fact that there is no such thing as an 'I' which is dependent on another 'I'. What is important to Hegel, is the true relationship between the 'I' and the external world. This relation turns the 'I' (which would be pure subject), into 'we', as something collective. I believe that this is important for Hegel, because he recognises that we can have a certain relationship with everything we interact with, and this is what ground our consciousness into something that is more understandable and recognisable. The relationships we have in the world including such things like; love, community and if you are religious, then of course a god, is never going to be singled out to be only 'subjective', because we need 'objective' experiences to achieve consciousness. It is everything rather than being one subjective being. "Self-consciousness exists *for a self-consciousness.*" (Hegel, 1997) Self-consciousness for Hegel solely exists as much as it is recognised. Therefore, if self-consciousness doesn't exist for yourself then you're only interacting as an objective force. It is essential to have freedom and necessity going both ways, in order to have an equal balance.

The analysis I have made from both dialectics of Fichte and Hegel have contrasted in various ways, however, there have also been some parallels drawn between the two. This includes the notion of subjectivity which Fichte regards to be the centre of his structure; the 'I', and therefore, what moulds consciousness or the 'self'. On the contrary, Hegel, is more open to the idea of having both a subject and object interaction in order to understand consciousness. However, they both agree at some point that consciousness needs interaction with the external world, nevertheless Fichte is somewhat illusive to this idea until later on. I somewhat insist from my evaluation, that Hegel is slightly more favourable, as he allows more movement between his system of consciousness.

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Submerged Reality: A Critical Engagement with the Relation between the Real and the

Ideal in German Idealism.

- By Jools Moon

My interpretation of German Idealism can crudely be stated as the claim that the ideal is prior to and original, in relation to the real. The principle of our experience is based in or produced by self-consciousness[21]. To think is to connect self (subject) with object (S = O), such that we can only conceive something distinct or opposed to thought just when it is thought; for when I think (S) the *real* object is not thought but becomes an *ideal* object (O); for to think without an object is not to think at all. Yet in this sense for German Idealism the real is submerged in the self or the ideal and my claim is that this begs the question: how is this something other than thought? If in fact what we desire is that reality have an existence beyond its mere posited-ness in thought then a difference between the ideal and the real must obtain. On this basis I will claim that mere reflection and negative philosophy have failed to appreciate this complex relation such that an ersatz equivalence of *ideality* and *reality* is presupposed by, and the limit of German Idealism. The problem, which I will claim is the crucial issue of modern philosophy, can be stated as follows: given this non-differentiation of the real and ideal, existence is reduced to thought, or, actual genesis is conceived solely in thought such that the grounding of thought is incomprehensible (for all that can be is thought with nothing conceivable outside of it to be its ground as such). Through this rejection of the identity of the real and the ideal I will engage with Schelling's affirmation of an original existence, excluding the differentiation of the real and the ideal, that is still yet the ground of such a differentiation. In other words instead of choosing between the originality and primacy of the ideal over the real, Schelling introduces God as a concept that contains the original unity of the real and ideal that nevertheless gives rise to this distinction and therefore provides the irreducible ground of thought and reflection; it remains distinct from and outside of thought.

Reflection's closed circle

Without the difference between something ideal, thought, from something real, objects, there really is nothing at all to be known. As Schelling (1988: 10) explains "[a]s soon as man sets himself in opposition to the external world […], the first step to philosophy has been taken." Thus for Schelling philosophy depends upon the separation of thinking self and

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[21] This point might require defending for which there is no space here yet, it might benefit from a short explanation. For my claim is that German Idealism seeks a principle of experience and as such finds this to be the ideal. Now it is important to make a distinction between the fact of thought (X) and the content of thought (S is P), and on this basis any thought (X) no matter its content must obtain somewhere or in something. For German Idealism we can state that we have the self (Y) in which thought takes place (X) with content (S is P). It follows that both the self (Y) and thought (X) are ideal by nature yet consequently (S is P) is also merely ideal, so everything really is ideal and nothing opposed to the ideal obtains. In what follows I will challenge this ideal submergence of the real on the basis that the ideal self (Y) cannot be the sole ground of thought (X) and equally that if there are thoughts at all, the ideal, requires something that is *actually* distinct from it, the real.

thought object. Yet Schelling (1988: 10) is suspicious of this separation and its culmination in reflection, whence man becomes an object for himself. On the one hand Schelling (1988: 11) emphasises that "contact and reciprocal action must be possible between the two (man and world)." but that when I consider my ideas as separate from the world, i.e. I transcend the world or reflect upon myself, (Schelling, 1988: 13) "the two hostile beings *mind* and *matter* separate. I place each of them in different worlds, between which no further connection is possible." Once this separation[22] is made the problem follows to conceive of a connection between thought and extension, (SW II: 359) that is "connecting the idea to actuality." Below then I will explicate the problem of permanent separation of subject and object that is exemplified by reflection.

All philosophy that is reflective begins with the separation of subject and object, that is (Bowie, 1994: 29) it begins with a reflective act that *posits* oneself and a world that stand against us, a world of things to be known. The preceding evidently shows that this conjunction is necessary for knowledge, (Bowie, 1994: 28) "[t]he identity of thinking and being […] Schelling does not deny". The problem Schelling has is that (1988: 11) "mere reflection (as an end) […] is a spiritual sickness" because "it makes the separation between man and the world permanent, because it treats the latter (the world) as a thing in itself, which neither intuition nor imagination, neither understanding nor reason, can reach (we merely represent phenomena)." For Schelling claims (1988: 11) "contact and reciprocal action must be possible between the two" because this is how "man become[s] man." The problem then is with *mere* representation. Without overburdening the point representation assumes an identity of representing and represented. Yet, to this we must add a third term as the condition for this identity - the world. For both representing and represented are merely ideal and require something distinct to which they aim - the real. This closed circle of reflection (because it excludes the third term) does not allow for something actually distinct but makes reflection, illegitimately, the ground of itself and reduces any concept of the thing in itself to nothing at all[23].

This brings us to the second issue, negative philosophy. Schelling states that (1988: 11) "reflection [has] only *negative* value" and that it is merely a means for a true philosophy. For Schelling the problem, as Bowie states (1994: 30), is the "failure of reflection to ground itself". This is evident in Kant's antinomies; the regressive series from reflection to the unconditioned condition (ground) of itself can never be completed (CPR: A416-7/B443-5). Thus reflection cannot ground itself; the instantiation of subject and object, i.e. the reflective act, is (Bowie, 1994: 29) "not the *real* condition of the possibility of this identity (of thought and being)." There is "a priori *irreflexive* identity" that is necessarily excluded from the concept, from thought. As Bowie (1994: 31) puts it "Schelling insists that reason cannot explain the fact of its own existence and thus cannot encompass itself and its other within a system of philosophy." Hence for Schelling beginning with the thinking subject, reason or reflective thought cannot produce a complete philosophy. This is merely the negative side of philosophy in which (Bowie, 1994: 30) "each moment of thought […] is constituted negatively, by

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[22] Wherein I refer to a separation I indicate both that 1) the ideal and the real are two distinct spheres or kinds wherein contact is inconceivable, for how can we say that something ideal interacts with or *touches* something real? But equally 2) an equivalence of the two such that the real is submerged in the ideal and consequently the real is really nothing at all to be connected with.

[23] The thing in itself is a mere noumena or that which is not a possible experience and can only be thought, i.e. a thought thing and reflection is thusly illegitimately self-grounded.

not being the other elements." These problems are most pertinently levelled at Hegel, for instance (Bowie, 1994: 31) "Hegel's philosophy [is] flawed because it relies on the identity of thought and being in a manner which allows thought to dominate its other." In other words, reflection is a separation of thought and the world that results in the reduction of the world to thought, but then, whence did thought arise? Moreover (Bowie, 1994: 31) "[a]ll along Schelling is insisting, against Hegel, that one cannot articulate the identity of thought and being *within* thought, because this must always *presuppose* that they are identical in manner which thought, as one side of a relation, cannot encompass." Hence beginning with thought or reflection leaves the grounding of itself (reflection) incomprehensible such that (Bowie, 1994: 29) "[o]nce reflection, the *cognitive* ground of the beginning, has been shown not to be its *real* ground […] the real beginning does […] become the central problem in thinking about the absolute's move into a determinate world." This is the problem to which I now turn.

God's Essential Existence

For Schelling (*cited in*: Bowie, 1994: 30) the "merely logical relationship of God to the world" leaves being stranded in thought. What does this mean, a merely logical relationship? This can be traced back to Descartes whose ontological proof has subsequently been taken in the sense that the concept of a perfect being contains within in it the necessary existence of that being (Schelling, 1994: 50). We can already see the form of this sense; that the being of God is consequent upon the concept. Schelling (1994: 51) however notes an important distinction in the ontological proof such that "God, if He exists, only *always* exist, but it does not follow *that* He exists." This entails the reversal of a merely logical relationship wherein existence is not consequent upon the concept. This for Schelling (SW VII: 347) means that we cannot begin with reflection, which cannot ground itself, but with the first being that is the "procession of things from God as God's self-revelation." This is because God is conceived as the only being that contains within itself the ground of itself: "[t]his ground of his (God's) existence, which God contains [within himself], […] is only the basis of his existence, it is *nature* – in God, inseparable from him […] but nevertheless distinguishable from him."

In other words the condition of possibility for thought or reflection is not reflection itself but God or this first being, (SW VII: 360) "out of the darkness of unreason", the basis of all things, "grow clear thoughts." This then is the complex relation of God, the first being, to things. That is, it is not a merely logical relationship but if God *is* at all he must only *be* necessarily and thus gives rise to all things; there is nothing that exists outside of God (SW VII: 359). In other words (SW VII: 358) "God is prior to the basis of this basis (of himself)" and thus "could not be if God did not exist in actuality" which really amounts to saying that if we posit a first being it must contain within itself its own basis, otherwise it would not be first. Moreover we can only posit this being and its basis together, the basis *is* just when God *is,* thus positing a basis to the first being entails the actuality of that being, it is inconceivable to posit the one without the other. This then means that God or the first being contains within him a real vital basis, (SW VII: 357) "Being insofar as it exists" and an ideal opposite, "Being insofar as it is the mere basis of existence" the real and the ideal. It is the relation between these two terms that must be our final focus.

The Real and the Ideal

From the preceding I claim the entire problem of modern philosophy: it illegitimately regards the inconceivability of grounding its reflective subjectivity (thought), *as it's really having no ground outside of itself*. Thusly outside ground is forever banished from modern philosophy resulting in the logical conclusion that thought precedes or produces its object or being. Whereupon nature is a mere possibility solely made actual by its being thought by a reflective subject. This is perfectly accentuated in Kant's "virtual world of possible experience" as Mathews (2007: 28) puts it "'[p]ossible experience, however, is not real experience, and while reason proves quite successful in differentiating itself within its own sphere of thinking, it is incapable of grounding that sphere, and worse, it is rendered catatonic when faced with articulating the dynamic facticity of real existence." Moreover as Grant (2006: 63) succinctly states "Schelling will seek to show how Kant's division of the real from the formal and the material – of the world (real) from my concept of it and its appearance for me (ideal) – is able to generate a nature that is possible only, and a mind entirely independent of it."

From this perspective we can confidently claim that not only is a connection of possible nature reflecting subject inconceivable (they are resolved to sameness, to the domain of thought and non-differentiation = submerged identity i.e. no conceivable connection between things that are non-distinct) but that the real is not actual, it is merely possible; thus how does something ideal relate to merely possible real? Schelling (II/3: 164) inverts this problem, attempting to demonstrate the necessary priority of being over thinking: "[f]or either the concept must come first and being must be the result of the concept, so that it would then no longer be the unconditional being, or the concept is the result of being and we must then start from being, devoid of the concept". This refers precisely to the dynamic process of the absolute determining itself, free from both being and concept, and is (SW III: 77) "[t]he subject which is to be the object of philosophy" which "must be viewed, in a word, as *unconditioned*." How does this relate to the real and the ideal? What we are attempting to think in the unconditioned is that which is necessarily prior to all being and can be stated as the concept of creation. In the act of the infinite subjects (the unconditioned) self-creation it posits itself in opposition to itself in the form of being as something (finite) (Schelling, 1994: 115), yet it cannot but remain as infinite subject (Schelling, 1994: 117), otherwise it would not be infinite. Hence we have infinite subject A as A and inhibited being B as A, and, B, in the form of being as something, is A's going beyond itself to grasp that which is opposed to it, that is, itself (A) as B. Thus Schelling (1994: 117) claims: "As that which is *something*" the infinite subject "is the *Real*, as that which grasps this fact it is the *ideal*". That is (SW VII: 409) "the one being really divides itself into two beings and its two functions, that in the one it is *only* the basis of existence, in the other only essence (and therefore only ideal); moreover that only God as spirit is the absolute identity of both principles". So we have three terms, the duality of (1) the real and (2) ideal, and the necessarily preceding unity of these two in (3) the infinite subject.

Conclusion

We can state the problem of this essay in the form of the following hypothesis: if the real and ideal or thought and extension are either permanently separated or not at all separated then it is inconceivable how the two can ever be connected. From here I attempted to show how the projects of German Idealism, characterized as reflection and negative philosophy make precisely this mistake. I then aimed to demonstrate the necessary original unity of the real and

ideal in the identity of God through which they emerge as truly distinct yet with the capacity to *coincide*. Thus we have brought out the necessary differentiation between the real and ideal only to proceed to the necessary unity of the two in God. What then, have we achieved? To be blunt this paper has attempted to show that if we are to conceive of the 'that-ness' of nature and ourselves, thought itself, then we must appreciate the complex relation between thought and being, or the real and ideal. Instead of foreclosing the grounding of thought itself we must posit that which is necessarily opposed to thought, for otherwise there is nothing to be known, and this entails constructing the genesis of all things, including thought, from a first being or God i.e. the ground of thought. In conceiving of this God then we conclude that it must contain within itself its own basis but just when God is i.e. also its own existence. Hence it is vitally important for all modern philosophy to re-visit the relation between the real and the ideal if they are to account for the facticity of being and thought.

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