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Plato as Prophet

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Abstract

This article endeavors to ascertain whether Plato may be regarded as a prophet. This involves defining what a prophet is and examining a number of literary sources in order to uncover the needed evidence and to make appropriate comparisons with known prophets from ancient times. Thus, this treatise includes evidence obtained from several classic texts, plus excerpts of Plato's writings, life experiences, influence from Socrates, and Plato's foreign travels. Also considered are biblical passages about prophets from the Old Testament. Thereby, a philosophical and theosophical investigation is undertaken to examine the extent to which Plato satisfies the criteria for being considered to have been a prophet in the classical sense.

Keywords: Plato, philosophy, prophet, Socrates, Old Testament.

1. Introduction[1]

Piecing together the clues from Plato's life and dialogues, plus writings of authorities on his philosophy in order to reveal his prophetic nature was, admittedly, a challenging task. For, although a good deal has been written about Plato's theology, there are only hints, suspicions, and unanswered questions that allow speculation on Plato's prophetic background. Of the scarce writings on this topic, there are a few examples to note. Belfiore (2006) asked if Plato was a prophet and briefly stated that his writings "adumbrated" (vaguely foreshadowed) western thought about art and literature, but did not examine Plato's personal life experiences as possible evidence of his prophetic nature, nor did it offer any detailed comparisons with biblical prophets. Jaeger (1927) offered only one brief sentence saying that Aristotle (who had once been Plato's student in the Academy) likely viewed Plato as a prophet. Pollard (1898: 328) stated that "Plato calls poets the 'prophets of the Muses'" and "in several respects are poet and prophet one" without mentioning Plato again; but if Plato's idea that poets are prophets is considered with the realization that Plato himself was a poet (see Hartland-Swann, 1951), then there is at least this basis for considering the possibility that Plato was a prophet (albeit, of course, that not all prophets are poets, and vice versa). Buber (1938/1997) came closest by comparing Plato with the biblical

[1] In this article, consistency has been maintained in the selected style of English spelling, except in quotations from sources that used a different spelling style. Language that is considered sexist has been avoided, except in quotations, which were not changed in order to maintain the verbatim integrity of the original sources. The word "God" appears often in Plato's writings, sometimes as a singular and sometimes as a plural noun, as well as being sometimes capitalized and sometimes not; thus, the source versions were used to preserve the original text.

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prophet Isaiah, noting a few likenesses that might imply a type of similarity between the two personages. But it must also be noted that some authors opposed Buber's idea as being erroneous (e.g., Kroeker, 1993). This paper, then, is an attempt to piece together the fragments of the jigsaw-puzzle picture of Plato's life and writings in an effort to bring into focus – as a coherent whole – the hypothesis that Plato may be considered to have been a prophet.

For a discussion to be logical, it is necessary to begin by defining the nature, or essence, of the thing that is to be discussed. In this case it is a prophet, because, once the concept of a prophet has been defined, the definition can be consulted as the need arises. In this way, after reviewing the facts about, qualities of, or experiences in the life of a given individual, it becomes possible to determine whether a person – here, it is Plato – fulfills the criteria for being a prophet. Lindblom (1963), in his book on prophecy in ancient Israel, spent no little time analyzing just what these criteria would be. After touching on certain qualities of known prophets, such as the fact that they have been persons who have had something to "proclaim", which is typically in the form of a prediction or oracle (see Westermann, 1991), Lindblom (1963) was quite exclusive in his definition by deciding that a prophet is "a person who, because he is conscious of having been especially chosen and called, feels forced to perform actions and proclaim ideas which, in a mental state of intense inspiration or real ecstasy, have been indicated to him in the form of divine revelations" (p. 46). This, then, shall be the working definition in this treatise (while adding additional criteria as needed).

2. Plato's early life

When Plato's life is studied in an historical light, a better understanding is obtained not only of his writing, but of Plato himself. Also, to the extent that a person, in this case, Plato, the man, is a function of his environment, it becomes possible to determine what influences were at work on him.

Indeed, even in Plato's youth, there were so many social and cultural activities taking place in his aristocratic surroundings that it would have been impossible for him to not have been influenced in some way by the polytheistic rites, ceremonies, feasts, and orgies that were occurring in Greece at that time. Whereas Plato was born to a wealthy family in 427 BC (Hall, 2004), it is logical to surmise that he was quite likely to have been exposed to that sort of life, especially as his aristocratic family could well afford to partake of those culturally embedded activities.

Also, in concordance with wealthy families' participation in those cultural traditions, it was also traditional for a young man to undertake military training. Thus, Plato joined the military, and he excelled as a soldier, and had won prizes at the Isthmian Games (see Miller, 2004). Although soldiers today are not generally expected to be philosophically inclined, it was at that time that Plato encountered Socrates. Furthermore, Plato's love of competition (vis-à-vis military training and the Isthmian Games) could very well be what led him to enjoy the dialectic game of Socrates. According to Durant (1964: 12), Plato took such delight in this "sport" that he, in fact, became a devoted pupil of Socrates.

3. Plato and the prophetic influence

The intention of the following discussions (in the next two Sections of this treatise) is to show how the prophetic influence in Greece reached Plato, through both religious culture and through Socrates (see the next Section). Perhaps Dodds (1957) was the best authority to have discussed this question. Dodds argued that the early shamanistic (i.e., primitive or prophetic) culture still existed in Siberia (at the time of Dodds' writing) and left traces over a wide area "extending in a huge arc from Scandinavia across the Eurasian land-mass as far as Indonesia" (p.

140); which, of course, includes Greece and even Judea. Thus, if Dodds' argument is correct, i.e., that prophecy in both Greece and Judea is derived from – and therefore shares – the same prophetic ancestry, one can begin to draw parallels between prophecy in Israel and in Greece. First, in Israel, there were known to have been prophetic groups (or guilds), e.g., "a company of prophets" (I Samuel 10:5-13 King James Version), and (as explained below) Socrates numbered among them as they existed in Greece.

Before proceeding, it should be remembered that other authors (e.g., Ghaffari, 2011) had also argued that Socrates was a real prophet. This suggests even more strongly that Plato could have been a prophet because he studied under and loved and respected Socrates in such a way that his joining the Socratic school may be compared to joining a prophetic guild.

4. Evidence from Socrates

To begin this inquiry, one should consult some of Socrates' speeches (albeit written by Plato). "Our greatest blessings", says Socrates in the *Phaedrus* (244a), "come to us by way of madness", which may be understood as a reference to divine madness or ecstasy (Dodds, 1957: 64). That gives direct evidence of shamanistic influence on Socrates, i.e., it is said in the *Phaedo* (60e) that "he [Socrates] took dreams and oracles very seriously". And he habitually heard and obeyed an inner voice which knew more than he did (see Dodds, 1957: 185). Also, Plato indicated that Socrates had his own private oracle (*Apology*, 40a).

And there is further evidence in Plato's writings that Socrates had strong ties with Greek shamanistic, i.e., Corybantic, rites (*Euthydemus*, 277d). Those Corybantic rites were composed of three parts, each of which had a corresponding counterpart in Israeli tradition. The first was a musical ceremony that was often a purging of evil spirits, an Israeli counterpart of which (although more subtle) might be David's lyre playing to soothe Saul's spirit (I Samuel 16:14-23). The second Corybantic rite was a sacrifice by each participant to the god to whose music the participant had responded. And the third Corybantic rite was a dance that was performed by the individuals whose sacrifices were accepted. Comparable biblical references to the last two rites may be found in the form of sacrifices and dances, e.g., such as performed by David for Yahweh (II Samuel 6:16-18).

Before proceeding, it should be remembered that all the evidence for the prophetic nature of Socrates is intended to emphasize the same nature in Plato, who so greatly admired Socrates. Thus, it would probably be best to focus on the direct influence that Socrates had on Plato. Dodds (1957) gave additional testimony supporting this idea by stating that "Plato was no doubt influenced by Socrates' shamanistic practice of prolonged mental withdrawal" (p. 225); as described in the *Symposium* (174d-175c & 220cd).

Dodds (1957), however, is not the sole advocate of this idea because Caird (1923) also discussed Socratic influences on Plato, and did so at length. Caird began by equating the Platonic Ideal with spirituality, e.g., Plato "is bent on establishing an ideal or spiritual conception of the principle of unity… an idea which he had derived from his master, Socrates" (p. 61), and "The idealistic or spiritualistic element in the Platonic thought is derived mainly, if not entirely, from Socrates" (p. 64). Also, in direct accord with Dodds' view, Caird also stated that "Socrates himself … did not profess in all cases to guide his own life by ethical science, but fell back on what he called a divine voice that spoke within him, i.e., upon an unreasoned intuitive perception of what ought to be done, which he regarded as a kind of oracle of the gods" (pp. 72-73). This brings to mind a part of Lindblom's (1963) definition of a prophet, "He must say what has been given him to say and go where he is commanded to go" (p. 1). Moreover, in further discussion of Socrates, Caird (1923: 75) stated the following:

> His attitude was like that of a modern religious teacher who is endeavoring to make men feel the necessity of acting from the highest principle.... For what he seeks is not merely to make men act rightly, but to make them act upon the right motive; and he may even be inclined to accept the dangerous maxim that "whatever is not of faith is sin", and to treat the outwardly good and the outwardly bad as upon the same level, insofar as the former no less than the latter, want that deep religious principle from which alone, in his view, true moral life can spring.

This "acting from the highest principle" is another quality that seems to be common to all representatives of the prophetic type. Without much stretch of the imagination, one can draw an analogy between Socrates, who quashed dogmas and dispelled presumptions of the social elite of Athens, and Elijah, the Tishbite, who confronted the dogmatic prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel (I Kings 18:17-40). To further this analogy, Elijah chose Elisha to succeed him, and Elisha so revered Elijah that he asked for "a double share" of his spirit (II Kings 2:9) and completed the tasks assigned to Elijah. Similarly, there is abundant evidence of Plato's respect for Socrates, especially in the fact that Plato accredited Socrates for the arguments in all of his *Dialogues*. (Further meaning in this fact is discussed below.)

Thus, Plato, in his own way, carried on the work "assigned" to Socrates by continuing to utilize the Socratic Method. And, just as Elisha saw Elijah taken away in a chariot of fire (II Kings 2:11-12), so Plato had envisioned Socrates in a heavenly chariot that awaited him (Levy, 1956: 148). As for fulfilling Socrates' duty, Caird (1923) said of Platonic philosophy that it "may be described as an extension to the universe of the principle which Socrates applied to the life of the individual man" (p. 80). But this is not the final word, for there is yet more evidence of Socrates' religious experiences as discussed by Levy (p. 35) and Dodds (1957: 210), as well as Plato's admission that meeting Socrates was the most significant event of his life (Levy: 18, 35).

Returning now to the question concerning the presence of Socrates in the *Dialogues* as evidence of his influence on Plato, Ryle (1966), in *Plato's Progress*, took a much stronger stand than has been thus far maintained in this essay. Ryle argued that Plato "meant his public to identify his 'Socrates' with himself" (p. 169). Ryle also believed that "the bulk of Socrates' defence is no more historical than Thucydides' speeches are historical. The *Apology* is, for the most part, a defence of the Socratic Method" (p. 152).

Ryle (1966) further argued that writings such as the *Apology*, *Crito*, *Meno*, et al., were really dialogues that Plato wrote in defense of himself. Thus, Socrates was presented mainly as a figure, or character, in the allegorical dialectics. That view, says Ryle, introduces a very different man, i.e., "Socrates is now a prophet, a reformer, a saint and a martyr" as seen by Plato (p. 159). Thus, Plato's own recognition of Socrates as a prophet supports the analogy of the biblical "sons of the prophets" (I Samuel 10: 5-13).

5. Evidence from Plato's travels

With the execution of Socrates in 399 BC for his politico-philosophical views, Plato, as his follower, was wisely advised to leave Athens until the political ruffles that Socrates had caused were finally smoothed out in the minds of the Athenian citizens. Thus, Plato set out on long periods of foreign travel, which were broken occasionally by required service in military campaigns (Riginos, 1976: 51). Durant (1964) appears to have been very interested in Plato's travels, particularly to Egypt, by observing that Plato "was somewhat shocked to hear from the priestly class which ruled the land, that Greece was an infant state" (p. 13). There is also further evidence that Plato did indeed study for a time in Egypt, which brought him the knowledge of that nation's priests who taught him "the divine basis of her [Egypt's] society, and its relations to the heavenly circuits" (Levy, 1956: 26). Some authors have suggested that Plato might also have gone to Judea and that he was "moulded for a while by the traditions of the almost socialistic prophets; and even

that he found his way to the banks of the Ganges, and learned the mystic meditation of the Hindus" (Durant, 1964: 13); but evidence to support that latter speculation has not been sufficiently documented.

It is known, however, that Plato sailed to Italy and Sicily and, for a time, joined the school (or sect) that Pythagoras had founded. And Pythagoras is universally regarded as a "seer" (Durant, 1964: 6). Thus, it now becomes evident that Plato was influenced by yet another mystic-type person, namely, Pythagoras. Pythagoras, too, seems to have been inspired not only by the Greek shamans (Dodds, 1957: 143), but also by Egyptian practices, some of which he seems to have adopted (*Ibid*.: 171-172). There is also evidence of Greek syncretism (i.e., a combination or merging) with Egyptian religion that dates as far back as Socrates, for it was the Sun (Ra) to which Socrates offered a prayer in the mornings before he went about his daily activities (*Symposium*, 220d).

To return to Plato's travels, his first visit to Sicily, in the spring of 387 BC, took him to Tarentum (present-day Taranto) in Southern Italy, to visit his friend Archytas. Archytas was a distinguished statesman and mathematician, the city's chief administrator, and also a member of the Pythagorean Order, which was a religious and scientific community. As for the Pythagorean religion, Dodds (1957: 79, 154) noted that "some form of musical catharsis [much like that in David's time (I Samuel 16: 14-23)] had been practiced by Pythagoreans in the fourth century, and perhaps earlier". Dodds argued that it is known "that Pythagoras founded a religious order, a community of men and women whose rule of life was determined by the expectation of lives to come" (p. 144), and that they "are said to have avoided meat, practiced catharsis, and viewed the body as a prison. There cannot in fact have been any clear-cut distinction between the Orphic teaching, at any rate in some of its forms, and Pythagoreanism" (Dodds, 1957: 149). In the following discussion, evidence is offered to support the idea that many of these beliefs are expounded in Plato's later dialogues.

While in Tarentum, Plato talked each day with the Pythagorean leaders; and he also met with the "listeners", who studied the religious teachings of Pythagoras, which were conveyed by word of mouth (*Phaedrus*, 275bc). Through the Pythagoreans, Plato found the scientific and religious teachings to have been part of a single vision of the world, and Pythagoras taught him further that the advance of truth is also the revelation of beauty. So it was this Pythagorean view, i.e., that the body is the prison of the soul, that Plato especially noticed and took to mind. It was here, then, that Plato's purpose first emerged (see below for further explanation of the idea that the soul is imprisoned in the physical body).

Before turning to an analysis of Plato's writings, there is yet one more very critical aspect of his first visit to Sicily that must be investigated. It seems that Plato had hoped to visit the craters of Mount Etna before returning to Athens. Knowing this, Dion, a statesman from another Greek colony, invited Plato to visit Syracuse while he was on the island. Thus, Plato left for Sicily and camped on Mount Etna; and one historian viewed the three days that Plato spent there as having been tremendously meaningful for Plato (Levy, 1956: 34):

> The second night found him deep in meditation. The cruelty of nature wounded him less than the violence of men, and this solitude, coming after the adventures of the previous months, had enormously enhanced his perceptions. A gigantic realization of unity suddenly enveloped him. The certainty of the oneness of all life… would seize his groping consciousness from time to time and always left a lasting mark behind it.

Furthermore, Ryle (1966), suggested that there was some significant occurrence in Plato's life at this time by stating "there must have been some crisis in Plato's life in the later 370s which is reflected at once by the disappearance of the elenchus from his dialogues…, by the passion with which Plato writes in the *Gorgias* monologue and in the *Apology*, *Crito*, and *Phaedo*; and even perhaps by Socrates' very uncharacteristic lament at the divine veto on suicide in the opening

conversation of the *Phaedo*" (*Ibid.*: 160).

With these two clues, could one suspect that a mystic experience had occurred for Plato at the volcanic craters on the peak of Mount Etna? This question may be asked because other prophets (especially Moses) are reported in the Bible to have received revelations on such "high places" where God appeared amidst smoke and fire (e.g., Exodus 19:18). Was it here in the form of a divine inspiration that Plato learned "the Idea of the Good" at first hand, just as other prophets of the Old Testament had received their calls?

This might not be an implausible idea because there are certain things about Plato that should be remembered. First, there is Plato's personality, namely, he was essentially a philosopher and thus could be expected to deal with the world, even the "divine world", in this way, i.e., as a philosopher. Second, as pointed out by Wright and Fuller (1960: 59-60) in speaking of the reason for God to choose a prophet, "there is no concern for religious experience – rather, just a concern for His purpose". Now consider what Lindblom (1963) explained, that is, "What can at all events be maintained is that the prophets receive their revelations in a state of inspiration which has a tendency to pass into ecstasy" (p. 35).

This event of Plato having climbed up to the volcanic craters at the top of Mount Etna and spending time there in deep contemplation seems to have been of such major importance, as evidenced by the changes which Plato and his writings underwent, that one might surmise just what form this experience could have taken. And it is not unreasonable to do this, for even Habakkuk awaited a vision that he was told to report (Habakkuk 2: 1-3). Therefore, in consideration of the fact that Plato, by virtue of his thought, writings, ideas, etc., was arguably the most influential figure in the history of the western world (exceeded, perhaps, only by Jesus Christ), it might well be conjectured that Plato had a perception of himself as having been given the task (by divine providence) of shaping the western world.

In whatever form this perception of Plato's might have been, it should be remembered that "a revelation may be a vision in the proper sense or an audition; but it may also be an inspiration of purely intellectual ideas, an inspiration with a content of abstract thought" (Lindblom, 1963: 23). If this is not enough evidence for accepting that Plato received visions, more evidence can be found in his writings, which virtually abound with them, e.g., the *Phaedo* 111b, *Republic* II 382e, VII 518, VII 532ac, VII 533c, X (Vision of Er), and *Sophist* 266c. Furthermore, there is another vision, i.e., one that Plato disguised as a myth in the *Statesman*, which must not go unnoticed. Specifically, according to Levy (1956: 137), Plato described it as a vision of God himself turning the wheel of the universe, and who, at the end of the cycle, lets it go.

At this point, one might ask whether Plato was a "seer" rather than a "prophet", but, as Lindblom (1963: 93) explained, "It is not easy to draw a definite dividing line between the 'seer' and the 'prophet' either in the pagan world or in ancient Israel" because both could, on occasion, execute the same functions. Therefore, whereas the same definition could serve for both a seer and a prophet, namely, an individual who claims to possess the faculty of knowing things that are concealed from ordinary people, these two terms may be considered to be interchangeable.

Hence, this event on Mount Etna, which Ryle (1966) called a "crisis", could, at the time of its occurrence, have led to confusion for Plato with regard to reconciling his earlier scientific writings with this new, divine knowledge. It seems, though, that the rest of his journey to Syracuse helped Plato immensely in solving this dualistic-like problem, for, contrary to the orthodox notion that Plato left Sicily disheartened by his failure to found his Ideal State, "the truth is that he left Sicily in excited possession of a new *natural* science" (*Ibid.*: 64).

Thus inspired, Plato returned to Athens and, taking the Pythagorean societies as his model, set up his Academy. It was a *thiasos* (*θίασος*), i.e., a religious group of worshippers who revered the Muses, to whom Plato began to build a shrine even before constructing the lecture hall

or the library. Also, once a month, teachers and scholars would partake of a communal meal, at which Plato would always be present, in honor of the Muses. Here, then, is further evidence of Plato's mystic experience, i.e., because the Muses, to the Greeks, were the source of genius and inspiration. To clarify this point, an analogy may be drawn between the Muses and the Angels of the Lord because on various occasions in the Old Testament Angels of the Lord appeared to certain individuals to deliver revelations from God, thus defining those individuals as prophets (e.g., Joshua 5:13-15; Genesis 16:7, & 19:1-23).

Other authors have pointed out Plato's familiarity with "divine madness", not only by showing that Plato was concerned with defining such "madness" as "possession by the Muses" (Dodds 1957: 71, 80), but also by Plato's frequent references to inspired prophets as a familiar contemporary type (*Apology*, 22c, *Meno*, 99c, *Ion*, 534c); and by Plato's intimate knowledge of Corybantic ritual (*Ibid*.: 75; see also *Phaedrus*, 244de). Nor does Plato hide the fact that he was accustomed to various types of inspiration, for, in the *Symposium*, he speaks of four types of divine madness, namely, prophecy, healing, poetry, and love.

With the foundation of the Academy, the intellectual life for Plato, as for Pythagoras before him, was to be an offering to God. This "intellect", which can be equated to "mind", or "soul", "is actually the mysterious vitality that makes one alive and gives him vigor according to biblical thought" (Wright & Fuller, 1960: 101). From this point on, Plato's message and mission can now be understood. In short, he used philosophy as a discipline, or mantra, in the sense familiar to the Pythagorean Order, as a way to salvation. In line with this is "his deliberate… practice of mental withdrawal which purifies the rational soul – a practice for which Plato in fact claims the authority of a traditional lŏgos" (Dodds, 1957: 210). This purity, for Plato, had become a cardinal means to salvation.

Plato's message, according to classical literature, is basically that (from Plato's point of view) "the body is a kind of tomb of the soul from which it can rise only at death," and that life "has to be conceived as a practice for that final moment in which it shall free itself from this 'muddy vesture of decay that doth so grossly close it in' (*Phaedo* 79c) and hinder it from the vision of the intelligible world" (Caird, 1923: 115-116). Thus, it seems that Plato's purpose was a social attempt (like that of the biblical Amos, whose concern was with social injustice) to build a bridge between the intellectuals and the people, and thereby save the unity of Greek belief and of Greek culture.

One might ask how Plato proposed to achieve his mission to save Greek beliefs and culture. The answer is "by teaching," so that the soul (or mind, or intellect, as the three were equated by Plato) will be purified by a clearer understanding of nature, raising itself by stepping-stones of logic until it has attained an understanding of the One beyond the Many, the One Wisdom that comprehends the One Beauty. Just how this could be accomplished was explained by Levy (1956: 69):

> At first, he [the student] will learn from his own intense experience that the beauty of one person has kinship with that of another. So, he becomes a lover of all corporeal beauty, and his compassionate love of one will seem in comparison a small thing. Then fair souls will have more value to him than fair bodies, and in company with such souls he will bring to birth the beauty of moral law and of abstract thought. So being no longer a bondsman to single beauty, he arrives at last at the great ocean of beauty…. When a man has ascended from those beauties by the right way of love, using them as steps of a ladder, and begins to perceive that Beauty, he has reached his goal.

Thus, Plato provided a picture of a process of education, or elevation of the soul (*Symposium* 210a), which begins in the wonder and desire produced by the outward beauty of one finite individual and that rises by gradual steps from the body to the soul, from one to all beautiful forms, until it finds at last its perfect satisfaction in the contemplation of the ideal principle of

beauty itself. Plato, then, was striving for unity, seeking to merge the particular in the universal and the temporal in the eternal, and, ultimately, to lose the intelligible world and the intelligence in an absolute divine unity. That is, he sought to liberate the corporeal person from the prejudices of the natural understanding, and to open up (for any person) an ideal world in which one can find refuge from the narrowness and inadequacy of life.

To better understand what Plato was trying to do, perhaps it would be beneficial to consider his idea of the natural progression of the souls. The *Timaeus*, which, theologically speaking, is considered one of Plato's latter compositions might be thought of as his final doctrine, i.e., something in the nature of Plato's Book of Genesis, because it is very much his address on the origin of the World and of Mankind. Therein, one learns that souls are formed by an entity that is subservient to the gods, namely, the Demiurge (*Timaeus*, 41d-42d); subsequently, the souls are sown in the Earth and then the gods establish mortal parts of the body to frame the soul. Thus, the soul, at its first coming into the body is crushed and overwhelmed by its mortal nature and loses all memory of the higher life in which it had previously partaken. Thus shocked, the soul becomes impure, and Plato's thought was to purify it because he was convinced that the nature of God is good and did not mean for the soul to become impure, but rather to gain intelligence. This is revealed in Plato's description of God (*Timaeus*, 29e et seq.):

> In a perfectly good being, no envy or jealousy could ever exist in any case or at any time. Being thus far removed from any such feeling, he desired that all things should be as like himself as it was possible for them to be.... God desired that everything should be good and nothing evil, so far as this was attainable. Wherefore, finding the visible world not in a state of rest but moving in an irregular and disorderly fashion, out of disorder he brought order, thinking that in every way this was better than the other. Now it is impossible that the best of beings should ever produce any but the most beautiful of works. The Creator, therefore, took thought and determined that out of the things that are by nature visible, no work, destitute of reason, could be made which would be so fair as one that possessed reason.... He also saw that reason could not dwell in anything that is devoid of soul. And because this was his thought, he put intelligence in soul, and soul in body, that he might be the maker of the fairest and best of works.

Thus, Plato had turned his idealism into spiritualism by treating soul, or intelligence, as the only thing that can be regarded as active, or self-determined. He suggested that all souls are to be viewed as derived from, or dependent on, one divine soul or spirit that manifests itself in and to them. Hence, the idea is to purify the soul by teaching and learning justice, temperance, reasoning, wisdom, etc., so that all individual minds are reflected back to one supreme intelligence who is the "first mover" of all things, and who communicates life and intelligence to all other minds or souls. As Caird (1923: 201) explained, the soul is…

> [a] memory of a former state of existence, a memory which has become dulled or obscured by the descent of the spirit into the world of sense. This memory may be revived by reflection and dialectic, though it cannot become completely restored till death liberates the soul from the body and its affections. The soul therefore is to be conceived as remaining unchanged in its essential nature through all the processes of birth and death; as being many times born into the sensible world and departing from it again, but ever maintaining the continuity of its life, and carrying with it, in a more or less explicit form, all the knowledge it ever possessed.

6. Plato compared to biblical prophets

It now becomes feasible to make some more direct comparisons between Plato and other prophets, such as Amos and Hosea. The first comparison relates to the universality of Plato's theology, for his God is the One beyond the Many (see the *Timaeus* in its entirety), just as the God

that Amos knew is a universal God (Amos 1 & 2). Also, just as Amos hoped to "help Jacob stand" (Amos 7:2-3), Plato hoped to aid humankind in the aspiration of their souls; such as in the *Phaedo*, where Plato's argument is that the soul must be lifted above time and change. And, in accordance with Amos' command to "Hate evil and love good" (Amos 5:15), a theme expounded by various other prophets as well (Isaiah 13:11; Jeremiah 13:23; et al.), Plato had developed an entire theory on evil (e.g., *Timaeus*, 86d-87b), so much so that he was almost obsessed with the Idea of the Good. This Idea seems to be the premise upon which he based much of his life, hopes, and theology. It also appears, probably most emphatically, in his *Republic*, i.e., his Ideal State. In Book I, the Idea of the Good is presented as the goal of an individual's life, which each person must discover for one's own self.

Then, in Book II, the next stage, everyone is shown to be essentially social so that everyone can find one's own good in that place in society where one's special capacities fit. Yet, to Plato, it is the philosopher who attains the highest good, and after being exposed to the Idea of the Good, the philosopher is compelled to return to the sensible world. Thus comes the obvious, if implicit, indication of Plato as a prophet when he (in Socrates' words) gives an analogy in the seventh book of the *Republic*, i.e., of the world of "Becoming" as a "Cave" in which humans are bound, and the world of "Being" as a world upon which the "most brilliant light of Being" shines (*Republic*, VII, 514):

> And now… let me show in a figure how far our nature is enlightened or unenlightened: Behold! Human beings living in an underground den, which has a mouth opened towards the light and reaching all along the den; here they have been from their childhood, and have their legs and necks chained so that they cannot move, and can only see before them, being prevented by the chains from turning round their heads. Above and behind them a fire is blazing at a distance, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way; and you will see if you look, a low wall built along the way like the screen which marionette players have in front of them, over which they show the puppets.

The allegory of the cave proceeds to explain that the prisoners would mistake the shadows for realities. And when released, they would persist in maintaining that the shadows are the superior truth.

> And if one is compelled to look straight at the light, will he not have a pain in his eyes which will make him turn away to take refuge in the objects of vision which he can see, and which he will conceive to be in reality clearer than the things which are now being shown to him? …
>
> Last of all he will be able to see the sun, and not mere reflections of it in the water, but he will see it in its own proper place, and not in another; and he will contemplate it as it is….
>
> And when he remembered his old habitation, and the wisdom of the den and his fellow prisoners, do you not suppose that he would felicitate himself on the change, and pity them?

But when that person returns to the den, Socrates explains, that person would see much worse than those who had never left the den, as Socrates further explains (*Republic*, VII, 517):

> Men would say of him that up he went and down he came without his eyes; and that it was better to not even think of ascending; and if anyone tried to loose another and lead him up to the light, let them only catch the offender and they would put him to death….
>
> This entire allegory… you may now append, dear Glaucon, to the previous argument; the prison-house is the world of sight, the light of the fire is the sun, and you will not

> misapprehend me if you interpret the journey upwards to be the ascent of the soul into the intellectual world according to my poor belief, which, at your desire, I have expressed – whether rightly or wrongly God knows. But, whether true or false, my opinion is that in the world of knowledge the Idea of Good appears last of all, and is seen only with an effort; and, when seen, is also inferred to be the universal author of all things beautiful and right, parent of light and of the lord of light in this invisible world, and the immediate source of reason and truth in the intellectual; and that this is the power upon which he who would act rationally either in public or private life must have his eyes fixed.

One may recall that "the special gift of a prophet is his ability to experience the divine in an original way and to receive revelation from the divine world" (Lindblom, 1963: 1) and "common to all representatives of the prophetic type… is the consciousness of having access to information from the world above and experiences originating in the divine world, from which ordinary men are excluded" (p. 32). When looking at Plato's writings in this light, one no longer wonders whether Plato had "special access" in order to discover the analogy described above, i.e., in the "vision" (allegory) of the "Cave". Rather, one realizes that Plato was revealing that he had special knowledge not known to everyone!

Hence, knowing also that Plato's absolute confidence is in philosophy as the supreme gift of God to humankind, one can understand thought and reason to be the highest and most perfect activity of the spirit, which brings one nearest to the divine. Plato believed it is only because this activity is obstructed and weakened by mortal nature that people do not know God fully as God really is. Similarly, according to Caird (1923: 150), Plato thought…

> that faith in God – a faith that good is stronger than evil and is all-powerful – is the necessary basis of our higher life, and that without some such faith, morality is apt to shrink into a hopeless striving after an unattainable ideal and must cease to exercise its highest inspiring power. To hold what we regard as best and highest is also the ultimate reality – the principle from which all comes and on which all depends – is the great religious spring of moral energy.

Hence, Plato was the philosopher-prophet who lived his life in contemplation of the universe and apprehended the principle of order that is manifested in it. And it was he alone (according to Plato) who could give the State its ideal constitution. Only Plato could make all things "after the patterns shown to him on the Mount". That would be Mount Etna, which is a remarkable parallel to what happened to Moses on Mount Sinai, i.e., God offered Moses a covenant for the people of Israel so they could ascend to heaven if they obey the "pattern" of the Ten Commandments. In other words, Plato, during his stay on Mount Etna, might have been inspired with the realization regarding how the soul could ascend to its highest level, namely, by understanding the "pattern" depicted in the Allegory of the Cave. This deduction is conceivable because the parable of the cave was written after Plato's first visit to Sicily in 387 BC, whereas the *Republic*, in which the cave allegory appeared, was written in 374 BC (Brickhouse & Smith, 2018), before his second visit in 366 BC (Guthrie, 1975: 437). And according to Levy (1956: 78-91), that is precisely what Plato tried to accomplish during his second visit to Sicily, where he was requested to act as the tutor for Syracuse's dictator, Dionysius the Younger (who, unfortunately, proved to be a very incompetent student).

To continue with the present comparison, this view of the *Republic* can be seen somewhat as an attempted Exodus in which a Moses-like Plato tried to lead his chosen people out of domination from an immoral and corrupt land. In this same sense, Plato can be compared to Hosea. Where Hosea called to the people to return to the desert (Hosea 2:14-15), which was really a call for an earlier and more direct relationship with God, Plato, too, as seen in the passages from the *Republic* (quoted above), was attempting to lead people to enlightenment. But he knew that such an attempt would be opposed even by those he was attempting to help. And the *Gorgias* can

even be used as a source of direct evidence that Plato himself did deliver orations on social and political matters, and that they brought him great unpopularity. This is precisely what had also happened to Amos (Amos 7:12-13).

Finally, in Plato's *Laws*, social codes are expounded that are comparable to those in Leviticus. For example, *Laws* IX, 878a, speaks of ritual sacrifice for atonement; and a similar theme can be found in Leviticus 16. Also from Leviticus 19:2, comes the idea of filial obligation, for which Plato's strongest comparable writings can be found in *Laws* IX, 881a, where death is considered not too severe a penalty for persons who had committed violence (specifically murder) perpetrated against their own family members.

7. Conclusion

This article revealed the development of Plato's prophetic concern for the soul in his writings, beginning with the early *Phaedo*, where he adopted the simple Socratic opinion that moral error is a kind of mistake in perspective, i.e., that no one commits an error if that can be avoided; to the *Republic* (IV, 441b), with theory transmuted and elevated to where "passions of the body" become an internal dialogue between parts of the soul; and then on to the *Timaeus* (69c), in which Plato tried to reformulate his earlier vision in terms compatible with his later psychology and cosmology (Cornford, 1937). Briefly, Plato revealed that only after one has mastered the nature of the parts taken in isolation would it be safe to go on to recognize that, after all, they are not isolated. Here is revealed his prophecy that science can go only so far and then must admit to spirit, for, to paraphrase Plato in the *Timaeus*, it is just when analysis had done its work as completely as possible that a person becomes clearly conscious that no final account of being can be given until the person has discovered the one principle that manifests itself in all its differences and binds them into one organic whole.

And only after his attempt at trying to make his Republic become a reality (in Sicily), did Plato return with his keenly stringent *Laws*, where he proposed everything from saving Greek society (*Laws*, 85d), which may be compared to Isaiah, whose "remnant shall return" (Isaiah 1: 1-9), to denouncing false prophets (*Laws*, 909b), comparable to Micah 2:6; all of which is accompanied by severe punishment for miscreants, particularly in *Laws*, 907d-910e, which may be likened especially to Amos for this theme.

In conclusion, the evidence appears to provide testimony for seeing Plato as a prophet; from his poetic style of writing (compare the Hebrew Torah), through his various dialogues, which abound with documentation regarding his mystic experiences, and on to his visions and prophecies. Perhaps the best summary of the considerable evidence that has been accumulated for considering Plato to number among the prophets would be a brief synopsis of Plato's life, as provided by Caird (1923: 216):

> In short, life for Plato is the life of intelligence more or less adequately realized.... Hence, the individual who is capable of moral and intellectual activity – who... can become a "spectator of all time and existence," and who, in his practical efforts, is guided by a consciousness, or at least a foretaste and prophetic anticipation, of the universal good.

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Creativity as a Miniature of a Boundary Situation

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Abstract

Recently, I have introduced the notion of a miniature of a boundary situation (Dimkov, 2018). It views the process of creativity as a miniature of a boundary situation, in which the ideas of Karl Jaspers and Sigmund Freud are combined. Thus, the miniature represents a problem-solving situation via the means of a regression in the name of the ego or a third thought process (Dimkov, 2016). In such situations of creativity, one is forging a new worldview or a Weltanschauung by discovering new knowledge. The third thought process, as well as the miniature of the boundary situation, can be experienced only inward and subjectively by personal immersion in the situation, they lie outside the scope of objectification and they receive meaning only from a concrete personality and a concrete miniature situation, but their product is objective, it is a creative product. In this sense, heuristic methods do fail in boundary situations. Moderate stress is inherent to the boundary situation, the phenomenon of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013) and its miniature, in which quantitative accumulations lead to qualitative changes, laying on a single continuum. Such a continuum is constructed nowadays in phenomenological psychiatry. In conclusion, the creative process viewed as moderate stress represents an intellectualizing of the miniature of a boundary situation or a sublimation.

Keywords: Karl Jaspers, boundary situation, miniature, creativity, stress, third thought process, philosophy, psychology.

1. Introduction

Research in the field of psychology of creativity is flourishing, whereas research in the field of philosophy of creativity is scarce even nowadays. In the current article, I make a connection among three concepts in order to elucidate both the *philosophy and psychology of creativity* in their intimate interrelationship, namely: (1) the concept of a third thought process, (2) the concept of flow, and (3) the concept of a miniature of a boundary situation. The first two are psychological concepts, whereas the third as a *synthesis* of the first two is a philosophical concept. The concept of a *third thought process* is derived from the Freudian dichotomy of a primary and secondary thought processes, whereas the concept of a *miniature of a boundary situation* is derived from the concept of boundary situations (Grenzsituationen) of Karl Jaspers. The concept of flow is part of the psychology of creativity, but it has a phenomenological aspect as well.

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- Research in psychology of creativity is flourishing, but the research in philosophy of creativity is scarce.
- To elucidate creativity is to connect findings in psychology with certain philosophical concepts.
- The third thought process, the phenomena of flow and stress represent some of the basic psychological features of the process of creativity.
- The concept of a miniature of a boundary situation represents a philosophical elucidation of creativity.
- The miniature represents a synoptic synthesis of some basic psychological features of creativity, which are sublated in it.

2. The Existenzphilosophie of Karl Jaspers

Karl Jaspers developed his *Existenzphilosophie* firstly in his monograph on psychopathology *General Psychopathology* (Jaspers, 1959/1997). The notion of "Existenz" plays a major role in his philosophy. *Existenz* is defined as "One of the four modes of the *Being we are*; a being suspended between itself and Transcendence, from which it derives its being and on which is based; what never becomes an object, the origin, from which issues my thinking and acting" (Lefebre, 1957, p. XIX). Existenz cannot be formally defined, but one can think about it. Existenz has a relation to freedom and the freedom of choice. Existenz is the Kantian *Ding-an-sich* (the thing-it-itself) (Kant, 1781/1967).

In his book *Way to Wisdom: An Introduction to Philosophy* (Jaspers, 1951/1964), Jaspers speaks of *unconditional imperatives*, whose origin is in ourselves in comparison to the conditional imperatives, whose origin lies outside of us. The unconditional imperatives represents commands from one's authentic self (Existenz). Those imperatives are not objects of our will, but rather they are its foundation: "Only when I live by something that can no longer be explained by object knowledge do I live by the unconditional" (Jaspers, 1951/1964: 56). The unconditional is manifested in *extreme situations* (*boundary situations*) by guiding man on his path. It can never be objectively, but can be philosophically elucidated and interpreted. The unconditional has a reality only in a man, who follows it in his faith and awareness (Jaspers, 1951/1964: 57). The unconditional imperative is atemporal, thus it is eternal. Freedom cannot be an object for objective research, it has its origin in the unconditional imperative, in Existenz, in eternity, in our authentic self. In this way, "We men are never adequate to ourselves" (Jaspers, 1951/1964: 65). This means that we, as a Ding-an-sich or Existenz, know more than we actually know.

The more authentically one lives, the bigger is his faith in God: "A man's humanity depends on how deeply he gains guidance through this listening. To be a man is to become a man [...] *God is for me in the degree to which I authentically exist*" (Jaspers, 1951/1964: 65, 73; my emphasis). The more free and aware a man is of this certainty in God, the more he is aware of Transcendence, through which he is (Existenz): "Psychologically speaking, the voice of God can be heard only in sublime moments. It is out of such moments and toward such moments that we live" (Jaspers, 1951/1964: 70). God works through the free actions of man. Humanity, thus, depends on the level of following the guidance of God through listening to his voice.

Man's life is full of automatism and we rarely discover our true or authentic self or Being. Only when the vicious circle of automatism is broken, one can reach the undiscovered territories and aspects of our own identity (Dimkov, 2018: 76-77). The latter is revealed and manifested only in the face of Transcendence or before the other persons. *Existential elucidations* are not intellectual, but rather they require personal investment and empathy.

Existenzphilosophie is sometimes defined as theological; however, here it is a question of a personal God, which Existenz represents and not of a universal one. The communication with this personal God or Existenz is performed through *ciphers*, which are always subjective, concrete

and immanent, they are "signs from the Transcendent we are". The ciphers are a form of communication between the total self (Existenz) and the world subject, that is, the concrete personality.

3. Boundary situations (Grenzsituationen)

Karl Jaspers introduces the notion of a "boundary (or limit) situation" (Grenzsituation) in his monograph *The Psychology of Worldviews* (Jaspers, 1925/1960). Later he elaborates the notion in the third volume of the book *Philosophy* (Jaspers, 1932/1970) and *Way to Wisdom: An Introduction to Philosophy* (Jaspers, 1951/1964). The notion is part of the *Existenzphilosophie* of Jaspers. There is a large portion of secondary literature on the subject (Latzel, 1957; Olson, 1979; Hoffman, 1981; Ara, 1998; Miron, 2012; Fuchs, 2013; Mundt, 2014; Dimkov, 2018). Prototypical boundary or limit situations are the following ones: chance, death, suffering, struggle, anxiety, and freedom of choice.

Jaspers elaborates the notion of a "boundary", discussed by Immanuel Kant (Kant, 1781/1967). According to Jaspers, the mere presence of a boundary includes a realm outside this very boundary. This realm is the Transcendence (Transcendenz), which man continuously strives to reach. In boundary situations, man reaches the boundary, they cannot cross it, cannot go outside it. Only through ciphers one acquires an indication for the existence of the Transcendent. Boundary situations are psychotraumas *per se*. They cannot be merely assimilated, even with preliminary preparation or via the use of heuristics methods. The situation can be understood only from within, through an empathic subjective experience. The boundary situation pierces through the comfort zone of the personality, only to allow it to forge a new and more stable Weltanchauung. The boundary situation represents the situation of man in general. Boundary situations are experience of Being itself and thus they reveal the authenticity of the individual maximally.

In the struggle with boundary situations man is forced to adopt a new Weltanschauung (or worldview) or to experience a "retreat into an illness" (existential anxiety, neurosis, psychosis) (Olson, 1979: 21). Creativity thus represents a central moment, because it is required for the forging of the new Weltanschauung or the change of the values in the person's value system (the system of axiaticy). Therefore, the more creative a given individual is, the more successfully they will battle the boundary situations (Dimkov, 2018). However, a stabilization of the "existential homeostasis" is never reached (Mechkov, 1970: 103; 1993: 16; 1995: 27), which means that the process of improvement of the actual Weltanchauung or value system is a continuous, never-ending process, which continues until the end of personal life. The established or actual Weltanchauung is under pressure *face en face* with the different types of boundary situations, which affect the personality on its basic level.

Psychologically, the change of the Weltanschauungen or the value system (axiaticy) means that consciousness has to disorganize and reorganize the actual values in the value system or to organize a brand new value system (Milev & Mechkov, 1985: 10; Mechkov, 1993: 145, 153-154, 164; 1995: 236), which is supposed to be better than the previous one, and thus it will be sublated in it (Hegelian *Aufhebung*). The organization and the reorganization of the new values in the new value system (axiaticy), which have to be stabilized, require the personal capacity and characteristics of creativity. The more creative persons/individuals are more sophisticated in changing their Weltanchaaung, because they are more flexible in the structuring and organization of a new one, which, in turn, is stabilized and crystalized into a new, quasi-stable Weltanschaaung (Dimkov, 2018: 76-77).

4. Third thought process, flow and creativity: The role of stress

I have introduced the notion of a "third thought process", an intermediary between the primary and the secondary thought process of Sigmund Freud's metapsychology and

psychoanalysis (Dimkov, 2015: 46-48, 2016, 2018: 77). The dichotomy of primary and secondary thought processes can be defined as follows: "The *primary process* is primitive, irrational, illogical, preverbal, pleasure-oriented. The *secondary process* is advanced, rational, logical, verbal, reality-oriented. The primary process is known also as ideation, the secondary process is known as thinking" (Dimkov, 2015: 46-48; 2016: 187-188; 2018: 77; emphases are mine). By definition, the third thought process represents a "Boundary process of a concrete and imaginative representation of abstract notions, which is subjected to modifications of volition. It represents a regress in the name of the ego. The third process reveals itself as an invaluable means to creative thought which is flexible, open and elastic: features classified as ones of utmost importance to the process of creativity" (Dimkov, 2018: 77).

According to my research, psychotomimetic drug, such as 2-CB (2.5-dimethoxy-4-bromophenethylamine) as well as the classical psychedelic drugs (LSD-25, psilocybin, mescaline and DMT), can artificially induce a state of third thought process thinking (Dimkov, 2018: 77-79). It represents a state of a *dream-like experience*: "[...] vivid sensorimotor imagery, alterations in thought processes, disinhibition of basic emotions and needs and changes in the feeling and control of the self [...] the experience of facilitated access to memories of the past and fantasies about the future" (Kraehenmann et al., 2017: 2032).

Psychopharmacologically, this state is related to the activation of the s*erotoninergic 5-HT$_{2A}$ receptor* and to the activation of the *mesolimbic and mesocortical dopaminergic brain systems* via the *dopaminergic D$_1$ and D$_2$ receptors* (Dimkov, 2018: 77-79). It is also related to the joined functioning of a three large-scale brain networks, namely the Central executive network (CEN), the Salience network (SN) and the Default-mode network (DMN) (Dimkov, 2018: 76). In particular, creativity as a third thought process engages both CEN and DMN, while SN is performing the switching between the two networks and their joined involvement in the process of creativity and the third thought process (Dimkov, 2018: 76). *Interest* as a feature of creativity is a subjective apprehension of an object through an attribution of a value. Interest can be defined as a *selective or an unselective arousal* purposing a mental penetration into things, with the goal of receiving or discovering a reward. Thus, interest is an individual trait, a part of the value system of a person. Interest is driven by the *mood of curiosity* (Dimkov, 2018).

Thus, creativity as a manifestation of the third thought process is related to the phenomenon of "flow experience", a "pleasant state of absorption of a person during an optimally challenging activity" and a state characterized by: "(a) intensely focused concentration on the activity, (b) loss of reflective self-consciousness, (c) deep sense of control, (d) distorted temporal experience (hours seem like seconds), and (e) the activity feels inherently rewarding (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002; Keller, 2011: 849; Peifer et al., 2014: 1; see Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002). Csikszentmihalyi defines this state as "the flow of creativity" (Csikszentmihaly, 2013: 107).

Flow-theory has been related to stress-theory (Tozman & Peifer, 2016: 329). Kaufman states, however, that "everyday creative people are *less stressed, happier, more successful, and more satisfied with their jobs*" (Kaufman, 2018: 1; emphasis added). Nonetheless, flow experience is correlated to moderate levels of stress which functions as an adaptive response or reaction (Dimkov, 2018: 76). To be noted, "stress could be transformed into flow when it is interpreted as challenge" (Kaufmann, quoted in: Peifer et al., 2014: 2). Furthermore, it has been reported that "the relation of flow-experience with arousal on the two stress systems describes an inverted u-function" [...] "flow-experience comes along with moderate physiological arousal" [...] "moderately elevated cortisol levels in a potentially stressful situation were associated with absorption is consistent with cortisol effects reported in the literature" [...] "flow-experience is characterized by a moderate level of arousal, as reflected through sympathetic and HPA-axis-activation" [...] "above a moderate level, more arousal is associated with lower flow" (Peifer et al., 2014: 2, 5). Additionally, it has been reported that "moderate "stressors"—or rather "activators"—might

facilitate flow-experience, whereas severe or enduring stressors hinder flow-experience" (Peifer et al., 2015: 1170).

Table 1. "Shallow" and "deep" flow (Moneta, 2012: 28).

"Shallow" flow
• "My mind isn't wandering. I am totally involved in what I am doing and I am not thinking of anything else. My body feels good… the world seems to be cut off from me… I am less aware of myself and my problems."
• "My concentration is like breathing… I never think of it… When I start, I really do shut out the world."
• "I am so involved in what I am doing… I don't see myself as separate from what I am doing."
"Deep" flow
• "I am really quite oblivious to my surroundings after I really get doing in this activity."
• "I think that the phone could ring, and the doorbell could ring or the house burn down or something like that…"
• "Once I stop I can let it back in again."

5. A miniature of a boundary situation: A synopsis

The flow of creativity can be explained by the dynamic of the *third thought process* (an intermediate thought process between the Freudian primary and secondary thought processes) (Dimkov, 2015, 2016). It essentially represents *a regression in the name of the ego*, where for short time there is a regression, but after it, there is a return to the normal functioning of the ego as secondary thought process (Kris, 1952; Silverman, 1965; Bush, 1969; Suler, 1980; Joffe & Peterson, 1981; Knafo, 2002; Martindale, 1999; Dimkov, 2015, 2016).

In essence, "A *"miniature" of a boundary situation* thus would amount to *a situation which is qualitatively, but not quantitatively, similar to a genuine boundary situation, being a nuance of it*. In the miniature, which simplistically represents a problem-solving situation, one is allowed to be creative through the third thought process as the feature of "boundary" is preserved: it represents an "*intellectualizing the miniature of a boundary situation, that is, performing a creative act of sublimation*" (Dimkov, 2018: 88; emphasis added). The latter, which can be illuminated only from within, stands on the same ground in this aspect as the third thought process, which can be only experienced internally, and cannot be subjected to any objective and universal testing and measurement" (Dimkov, 2018: 87-88; see Holt, 2002: 461). In this way, a *single continuum of the phenomenology* of boundary situations and related creativity scores can be established.

Creativity as a subjective phenomenon of consciousness has not been researched in depth. This is an issue for the *phenomenological philosophy*. There is a multitude of questions that are raised, namely: What is to be creative? How is the creativity represented within subjective consciousness? How does man, as a free agent, act when he or she is creative? Can we induce creativity by subjective and objective means? Why is man creative? Can creativity be learned? What is the role of creativity in one's life?

The subjective phenomenological side of creativity can be researched, not so much by studying the history of geniuses, but rather through a study of the basis of creativity and its relation to adaptation to the changing circumstances in the objective world. Thus, *adaptation is creative in definition*. The creative thinking bears a likeness to the *practical or active thinking*. Creativity can be studied in two ways: (1) as a specific adaptational syndrome, and (2) as a partially controlled behavioral reaction and behavior in general.

Third thought process and the miniature of a boundary situation are represented by the immersion in a concrete situation, in which the concrete individual constructs a concrete creative product. To be noted, "If genuine boundary situations are coupled to extreme negative emotions, to emotional stress, then stress in principle includes an aspect of the boundary situation in itself" (Dimkov, 2018: 88). According to the concept of *Hegelian Aufhebung* or sublation, quantitative accumulations lead via leaps or jumps to qualitative transformations or changes (Vekilov, 1982). Stress can possess *an adaptive role* and it is subjected to U-inverted curve effects, where the optimum is placed on the top. When stress levels are moved towards the end of the curve, then a genuine boundary situation occurs. Creativity can be viewed as *intellectual disinhibition*, partially controlled, a feature of the third thought process (Dimkov, 2016). In *neurobiological terms* it is related to the level of entropy, randomness and probability; in *existential terms* it is related to authenticity and uniqueness; in *philosophical terms* it is related to ethics and freedom.

6. Conclusion

The concepts of a third thought process, the miniature of a boundary situation and the phenomenon of flow represent the process of creativity *per se*. Both the third thought process and the miniature of a boundary situation are subjective phenomena, which require an immersion into experience or consciousness, represented by the phenomenon of flow. The latter can be viewed as an adaptational syndrome, which is related to moderate levels of stress. Thus, creativity is defined as a problem-solving strategy and a coping with miniatures of a boundary situation via a partial disinhibition of the intellect (third thought process). If the process of creativity and its products are creative enough, then one has successfully coped with a concrete miniature of a boundary situation. All this allows one to position creativity scores and the success of dealing with a miniature of a boundary situation in a single phenomenological continuum, where there are quantitative changes and, sometimes, qualitative ones.

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Habermas on Heidegger and Bataille: Positing the Postmetaphysical Experience

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Abstract

This article critically exposes Habermas' discussion of Martin Heidegger's philosophy of Being and George Bataille's heterology as a way of identifying the postmetaphysical stance as the guiding spirit of Habermas' modernity. In his work The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity, Habermas argues that whereas Heidegger's Being sacrifices actuality in the name of interpretation, Bataille's heterology sets up the unlimited experience which fails to provide an impetus for societal critique. Here a postmetaphysical approach is envisaged by Habermas as a way of going beyond the confines of the metaphysical tradition, although it also needs to pay attention to charges of misreading in its attempt to deconstruct the discourse of the modern.

Keywords: being, heterology, postmetaphysical.

1. Introduction

In the world of increasing skepticism towards metaphysical systems and the attempt to subsume particularity and difference into a general system; Habermas' critical theory explicitly advocates postmetaphysical thinking. In such an attempt, the epistemological problem of certainty is replaced by linguistic commerce, and the isolated I with the intersubjective realm. In his engagement with Martin Heidegger and George Bataille in his *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, Habermas resists the philosophy of Being and the heterogeneous that try to dislocate the boundaries of communicative action. In criticizing Heidegger's philosophy of Being, Habermas argues that Being posited as the ultimate point of analysis undermines actuality and also negates potential critique from individual actors. As such, Heidegger's Being reincarnates Nietzsche's Dionysus as the enigmatic other of reason. In return, Bataille's heterology in its attempt to destroy conventional boundaries that limit the unique human experience, only ends up positing a non-rational experience that negates all possible communal validation.

Section one starts by analyzing Habermas' critique of Heidegger's philosophy of Being. Then in section two, Bataille's heterology is critiqued in light of the communicative paradigm and intersubjective recognition. This is followed by section three that laments postmetaphysical thinking as the alternative approach that Habermas uses to critique dominant philosophical traditions. Finally, in section four, Habermas' discourse of modernity is scrutinized in terms of charges of misreading that question its interpretation of the various thinkers within the discourse.

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2. Habermas on Heidegger's philosophy of Being

For Habermas, the fact that Heidegger's philosophy arrives at an analysis of beings through time that ends up in tracing everything to Being, can easily be seen in the "four operations that Heidegger undertakes in his confrontation with Nietzsche" (Habermas, 1987: 131). First, Heidegger restored to philosophy its traditional status of being the highest authority on truth. As Habermas sees it, what the young Hegelians had affected was the primacy of the particular and the material over the ideal, concrete relations against thought, sensibility over reason and the immediate over the conceptual. The result of this was, philosophy lost its status as the judge of all truth claims. Heidegger again empowered philosophy by calling for an ontological analysis, analyzing things in their wholeness through a horizon and interpreting them; in trying to contemplate how Being manifests itself in beings and how the existential structure of these beings as a whole could be laid out.

Traditionally metaphysics has taken over the task of interpreting "beings". So, Heidegger tried to destruct the "history of metaphysics", by reminding it of its "forgetfulness" of Being, and philosophy was given the task of unraveling this forgetful metaphysical tradition. Still, how does this affect Heidegger's critique of modernity? Secondly, at the same time, Horkheimer and Adorno were writing the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* which criticizes Western rationality for being immersed in an instrumental rationality, Heidegger was also depicting "European modern dominance of the world" (*Ibid*., 132), as being the result of the "will to power" and its excessive manifestations. The 'overman' as expressing the truth of "will to power" and "eternal recurrence of existence" was manifesting itself in the truth of the European dominance of the world. This dominance resulted in a fierce struggle to manipulate the materials of the world. Hence, "Heidegger sees the totalitarian essence of his epoch characterized by the global techniques for mastering nature, waging war, and racial breeding" (*Ibid*., 133)

Heidegger locates the modern "European Man" and his dominance of the world as a logical result of the modern conception of man as it is developed from Descartes to Nietzsche. In modern philosophy, man became the center and measure of things. This was pioneered by Descartes' thinking "I", and culminated in Nietzsche, as man becomes the one who expresses the truth as "will to power" and existence as "eternal recurrence". The "overman" becomes the one who actualizes the "will to power" in its fullest sense, by exploiting others, including other humans As William J. Richardson sees it, Heidegger conceived man for Nietzsche in the sense that;

> If the Being of beings is will unto power, what must be said about the nature of man? His task is to assume his proper place among the ensemble of beings according to the nature of Being which permeates them all. More precisely this means to… endorse with his own will, this dominion over the earth of universal will by assuming the responsibility of achieving to the limit of his possibility the global certification in which the truth and value of all constants consist. (Richardson, 1967, 373)

For Habermas, this understanding of Heidegger of the interpretation of Being in a being that actualizes itself, and is at the center of all things, made Heidegger unable to differentiate between the positive and negative sides of the modern project. Thirdly, it's Heidegger's analysis and the fact that he is trying to go beyond modern period that leads to his destruction of the metaphysical tradition. The philosophy of modern period started with Descartes' cogito and culminated in Nietzsche's attempt to think of Being, as a universal desire for power that's best expressed in man's urges to actualize its inclinations. Further, Heidegger saw the present as chaotic and questioned whether it heralds the beginning of another period or consummation of the historical process. So, Heidegger conceptualized the need to decipher the nature of the present, and in his philosophy of Being tried to salvage the present. Still, Nietzsche's desire to revive the present through the revival of a past ideal like 'Greek tragedy' is replaced by Heidegger's vision of how the future comes out of a proper relation with the past and the present. This idea of the coming future and the reformulation of the metaphysical tradition in its forgetfulness, as Habermas claims

were influenced by "romantic models, especially Holderlin, the thought figure of the absent God, so as to be able to conceive of the end of metaphysics as a 'completion', and hence as the unmistakable sign of another beginning" (Habermas, 1987, 135).

Further, Nietzsche's Dionysus is taken over by Heidegger's Being, specifically in the "ontological difference". Heidegger differentiated between the ontological or the concern with Being as such, and the ontic or contemplation of beings in their particularity. In this scheme, both "Being" and "Dionysus" are what are absent, and manifest themselves in the particular. In Heidegger's case, being manifests itself in things and entities, while in Nietzsche, Dionysus shows itself in the passionate, emotional and non-rational. Hence, "only Being, as distinguished from beings by way of hypostatization, can take over the role of Dionysus" (*Ibid*.). Finally, for Habermas, Heidegger does not escape the philosophy of the subject in his attempt to destruct the metaphysical tradition, since he is still, trying to employ Husserl's phenomenology as the method that excavates the existential structures within which Dasein is said to dwell daily.

Heidegger criticized the traditional approach to knowledge, the subject/object distinction and presupposed an idea that Being comes before knowing and that knowing is just one form of being. For Heidegger, to be in the world doesn't mean, I am here and they are there, we are not here dwelling in an attempt of grasping other dwellers, we are dwelling with others. In other words, to know that one is there in the world, Dasein doesn't need to objectify the others, it's there and this implies being there with others. According to Habermas Heidegger takes on Husserl's phenomenological method of investigation with an aim of unconcealing the truth of Being. This entails trying to phenomenologically dig out or lay out an experience, the existential structures through which being manifests itself. Here for Richard Polt, there are two major notions that Heidegger appropriated form Husserl's phenomenology. These are, first, "Evidence", or that there are conditions in which phenomena manifests itself and that the task of the phenomenologist is to make the hidden truth manifest itself, second, "categorical intuition", or that through beings we can have an insight into what underlines and can never be grasped in itself i.e. Being (Polt, 1999: 14-15). The difference between Heidegger and Husserl is the distinction between Being as such and beings, and then trying to apply the phenomenological method to Being itself. Still, Heidegger for Habermas "does not free himself from the traditional granting of a distinctive status to theoretical activity, to the constative use of language, and to the validity claim of propositional truth" (Habermas, 1987: 138).

3. Habermas on the limitations of Heidegger's philosophy of Being

Thus, what are some of the consequences of Heiddegerian philosophy for the critique of modernity and the modern project in general? First of all, as Habermas sees it, the need for a unifying force other than religion which was supplanted by artistic, mythological and rational ideals, was replaced by Heidegger's critique of the metaphysical tradition and its forgetfulness of Being. Heidegger emphasized on the difference between the ontic and the ontological. For Habermas, this results in an inability to address problems that arise in everyday world, and possibilities of unifying, emancipatory, ideal being generated. Secondly, Heidegger's conception of modernity is divorced from specific practical, concrete questions that are addressed by the various sciences which are oriented towards specific validity claims. Hence, "the critique of modernity is made independent of scientific analysis" (*Ibid*., 139). Finally, Heidegger arrives at a kind of an acceptance of current realities in conceiving Being itself as beyond what can be described and conceptualized, and could only be deciphered indirectly. Accordingly, "[t]he propositionally contentless speech about Being has, nevertheless, the illocutionary sense of demanding resignation to fate" (*Ibid*., 140). Habermas goes on to specifically look at Heidegger's earlier position as developed in his *Being and Time*.

Heidegger in his *Being and Time* claimed that his interrogation of Dasein was aimed at revealing the truth of Being as such, and to this extent criticized the metaphysical tradition for focusing on beings and not Being. The Dasein Analytic was supposed to be the foundation. For Habermas, this gives one an inadequate background of the context in which Heidegger developed his ideas in *Being and Time*. This context is for Habermas; "the post idealism of the nineteenth century," and specifically "neo-ontological wave that captured German philosophy after the first world war, from Rickert through Scheler down to Hartmann*"* (*Ibid*., 141). It was a scene in which, Kantianism and pre-Kantian forms of philosophizing were being abandoned in favor of forms of thought that emphasized the concrete and the particular. The paradigm of the subject that is at the center of thought transcends itself, reflects on itself and the world, and was starting to dissolve. Even though "the idea of a subjectivity that externalizes itself, in order to melt down these objectifications into experience, remained standard" (*Ibid*., 142). Heidegger's approach is seen as one of exposing how the metaphysical tradition has been focused on things and entities rather than Being as such. Still he tried to preserve some aspects of the tradition like the analysis of phenomena, from Kant's critique of reason to Husserl's phenomenology.

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger explicitly states that the various sciences like anthropology, psychology and biology aren't adequate enough to carry out the Dasein Analytic. The only focus is on the ontic, and not the ontological, by treating humans as a "thing, substance or subject" (Heidegger, 1985: 78). But for Heidegger Dasein is unique in the fact that it is to be situated in the ways it tries to realize itself in the future, or the fact of it's a possibility. Still, Heidegger according to Habermas, when trying to explicate the nature of Dasein as being-in-the-world, resorts to the strategy of analyzing the subject, by going beyond it and looking at what is it that makes its existence possible (Habermas, 1987: 143). By being-in-the-world, Heidegger stressed that, Dasein's being in the world doesn't entail being inside the other or in something. "We are inclined to understand this being in as being in something*"* (Heidegger, 1985: 79).

Dasein's world is of being there with others and dwelling with them, being found alongside them. Habermas goes on the look at how Heidegger establishes the primacy of Dasein and what makes Dasein the center of analysis. First of all, Heidegger distinguishes between the ontic and the ontological, and bestows Dasein an ontological priority. For Heidegger, Dasein like other beings occurs as an entity, but it doesn't just occur, since it is oriented towards that understanding of Being itself. Dasein is the only being whose being is at issue and it inquires into Being by inquiring the Being of one's being. So, while ontically it is a being that's concerned with its being, ontologically it's concerned with Being as such this is to be situated in the context of its ontical questioning and uniqueness, leading to an ontological insight.

As, Heidegger puts it in *Being and Time,* "Dasein is an entity which does not just occur among other entities rather it is ontically distinguished by the fact that in its very being, that Being is an issue for it" (*Ibid*., 32). Secondly, Heidegger expounds his idea of phenomenology as the method that it is to be used in the Dasein project. For him phenomenology is not submitting a thing to theory or a philosophical doctrine from which truths are extracted, but a way or method of approaching things. Only as phenomenology is ontology possible for Heidegger. The phenomenological method is to unmask the various ways in which phenomena are concealed. Some of the ways through which phenomena could be concealed include "undiscoveredness", "being buried" and "disguised". In "undiscoveredness", a phenomenon has always been concealed and is in need of a revelation. In "being buried", a phenomenon has been discovered but is again concealed. Finally, in "disguising" the phenomenon has been represented as something which is not really its nature and when one tries to identify with the things it's disguised to (*Ibid*., 60).

4. Phenomenology and the analysis of Being

In the final analysis, phenomenology is a way of carrying out a hermeneutics or an interpretation of Dasein in its dwellings. The theme is Dasein, and it will be interpreted as it dwells in the world with other entities. It is to be interpreted in its dwellings alongside other entities in the world. Finally, in an "existentialist" tone, Heidegger interprets Dasein in terms of its choice to actualize itself or not for Heidegger, Dasein dwells with a potential of "authentic" or taking up its existence consciously towards Being. In contrast in "inauthenticity" Dasein forgets its ontological significance in its tendency to identify itself in terms of other things it encounters in the world. Dasein is the one through which the meaning of Being is to be interrogated since it turns out to be the one that raised the issue of Being. For Heidegger, whenever we ask or pose a question, it is about something and not nothing, and this in turn implies that we have to examine something for an answer, and in the final analysis we have some objective of asking. To put it differently, there is some purpose behind questioning and this can lead to a thing questioned and also a questioner further, one is to interrogate beings in their Being, to arrive at the truth of Being. But which being? It's Dasein since; it's the only being whose Being is its issue. Hence, for Heidegger, as Habermas puts it; "[t]he human being is an entity with an ontological nature for whom the Being question is an inbuilt existential necessity" (Habermas, 1987: 145).

As Habermas summarizes it, by bestowing Dasein an ontico-ontological significance, reducing all possible ontology to phenomenology, and interpreting Dasein in terms of its "authenticity" or "inauthenticity", Heidegger established his Dasein Analytic. Heidegger also established the primacy of existence against knowing; interpretation against reflection. There was also a focus on how the subject reflects upon itself and transcends one's own self. Dasein has a special insight into Being in trying to contemplate its own existence. Heidegger tried to lay out the meaningful structures within which Dasein is said to dwell. Finally, Heidegger also tries to solve the problem of existence through his notions of "authenticity' and 'inauthenticity".

One of the crucial moves that Heidegger makes in *Being and Time,* for Habermas, is from conceiving Dasein as basically different from things "present-at-hand", to Dasein as being thrown into the world of others. Earlier, in his discussion of being- in -the -world, Heidegger claims that the nature of Dasein lies in its "to be" or "mineness" or the fact that it inquiries into Being as such and is also characterized by a choice, that makes it authentic or inauthentic. This makes Dasein different from things, "Present-at-hand" which are only tools, entities, and hence have no on ontological significance. Later on, Heidegger comes to see how the question of the "who" in the existential character indicates the presence of others. Thus, we do encounter other beings in the environment that we live in. Habermas sees this as how "Heidegger extends his analysis of the tool- world, as it was presented from the perspective of the actor operating alone as a context of involvements, to the world of social relationships among several actors" (Habermas, 1987: 148-149).

Heidegger tries to show how being-in-the-world implies being constrained by others in his discussion of "oneself" and the "they". He shows, how the ways in which we act in the world is shaped by others. Thus, the way in which we behave is constructed by the one (das man) not by each Dasein privately for itself. We are thrown into the world and the inherited horizons necessarily constrain us. The "das man" is the one that provides possibility for the individual in the socialization process. As Habermas sees it, the notion of a shared lifeworld in which communicative rationality could be built is not developed in Heidegger. This is because, the context into which one is thrown is seen as a conservative state that constrains oneself in its inclination to make oneself authentic and establish a unique relation with Being. Hence; "Heidegger does not take the path to a response in terms of a theory of communication because from the start he degrades the background structures of the lifeworld that reach beyond the isolated Dasein as structures of an average everyday existence, that is, of inauthentic Dasein."

(Ibid, 149) In emphasing being beyond knowing, the focus in Heidegger becomes on Dasein. In turn Dasein returns to the subject as in the philosophy of the subject, as a point of analysis.

For Habermas, Heidegger's ontology, in trying to sketch Dasein's dwellings, and philosophy of the subject, in focusing in how the subject knows the world, managed to negate the accumulated meanings that give background and contexts for discussing issues for individuals and also the everyday communicative processes. In the final analysis, Heidegger failed to see that truth and meaning are not something that passes through, but, is produced. Hence, "He fails to see that the horizon of the understanding of meaning brought to bear on beings is not prior to, but rather subordinate to, the question of truth" (*Ibid*., 154). One of the controversial issues surrounding Heidegger's philosophy is its political implications, and specifically how it justified the Nazi rule. For Habermas one can witness in both Heidegger's lectures and addresses during the Nazis period, and the implicit ideas developed in *Being and Time*, how there is an intrinsic connection between Heidegger and the Nazi rule. In relation to the Dasein Analytic, in *Being and Time*, Heidegger applied it to show how the individual stands in a world in relation to other individuals and entities, and how one's existence could be deciphered in time, i.e. in its 'thrownness', dwelling and projection of a future. But, during the Nazi period Heidegger interprets Dasein as a collective group or society as a whole, and how this collectivity is moving in time, into the future. Further, after being elected as the "rector of Freiburg", in his inaugural address to students and professors, Heidegger stressed how the Germans as a whole are called on by their leaders, to actualize their collective potentials, to take their proper place in history, to become authentic and consolidate their unique place in history. As Habermas sees it; "Whereas earlier the ontology was rooted ontically in the existence of the individual in the lifeworld, now Heidegger singles out the historical existence of a nation yoked together by the Fuhrer into a collective will as the locale in which Dasein's authentic capacity to be whole is to be decided" (*Ibid*., 157).

Habermas also locates Heidegger's affiliation with Nazism in the latter's views towards technology. During the Nazi period, Heidegger called on Germans to employ technology, to further the national socialist movement and Germany's Greatness, but later, Heidegger came to view technology as a will to power manifesting itself in domination and exploitation of the planet and hence leading humanity into destruction (*Ibid*., 159-160). Here Richard Polt expresses how Heidegger already begun to doubt the national socialist revolution in his "private notes" in 1939. Heidegger wonders, where the nationalist movement is going, its place in history, from where it obtains its standards for collective movement and so on. Hence, for Polt, "Heidegger's frustration is obvious. A revolution that had appeared to promise a rebirth of the German spirit has turned out to be dogmatic and totalitarian" (Polt, 1999: 158).

5. Bataille and bursting of the conventional

What underlies most of Bataille's undertaking was getting beyond the conventional, the given standards and the normal. To this extent, Bataille conceives of the real human as the one that is willing to go beyond the limits, or the one that pushes the extreme to go beyond the conventional. Habermas categorizes, Bataille not under the reformers but radical critics of modernity. Habermas thinks that this radical critique of Bataille specifically focuses on the ethical side of life rather than a general critique of reason. Habermas traces the origin of Bataille's critique of modernity, to the development of the latter's concept of "the heterogeneous" at "the end of the 1920's" (Habermas, 1987: 212). Here, Bataille launched his attacks on the capitalist society, ordinary day to day life, and the sciences in favor of a kind of experience that goes beyond the standards set by all these authorities, and hence limit the human experience. For Habermas, Bataille here is echoing the surrealist notion of experience which tries to go beyond an interested, instrumental, exploitative relation to the world, abolishes given standards of right and wrong, and brings a new kind of aesthetic dimension into focus.

As Habermas sees it, Bataille in his "the Heterogeneous" focused, on those categories that don't fit into our day today lives, these are elements that are excluded from normal life, taboo, sinners "outcasts and the marginalized… pariahs and the untouchables, the prostitutes or the lumpen proletariat, the crazies, the rioters, and revolutionaries, the poets or the bohemians." (*Ibid*.) Habermas thinks that Bataille's category of "the Heterogeneous" as those excluded from the ordinary bounds of our lives, also include "fascist leaders [and their] heterogeneous existence." (*Ibid*., 213) According to Habermas, going beyond things like political affiliations, methods of interrogation and styles of writing, one could establish certain similarities between Heidegger and Bataille. Accordingly, both conceived modern society as based in a decadent form of rationality that resulted in their times "into a totality of technically manipulable and economically realizable goods" (*Ibid*.). Still, Bataille's critique of modernity like that of Heidegger is not aimed at a critique of epistemology that yields an exploitation of the world. Rather, it's a specific kind of "ethics" behind capitalism, that's at the center of Bataille's analysis.

Bataille's focus is geared towards liberating the subject from the routines of daily life and the rationality of capitalism, into a context in which the destruction of conventionality will lead one into a genuine moment. This is a moment, and experience that has been suppressed, and excluded from our networks of truth and rightness. Unlike Heidegger's ontological difference between and Being and beings, and how the whole analysis is focused on a remembrance of Being, Bataille aims at setting the subject free, and asserts that, going beyond the limits set for the subject is the essence of "liberation to true sovereignty" (*Ibid*., 214) Seen from this angle, Bataille was able to utilize Nietzsche's ideals of how the aesthetic frees, and how the "overman" leads to a new "transvaluation of values". Heidegger was unable to appropriate these Nietzschean insight, for Habermas, since his focus was geared at how Being will be grasped through a specific comportment of the ontical i.e. Dasein. Accordingly; "For Bataille, as for Nietzsche there is a convergence between the self- aggrandizing and meaning-creating will to power and a cosmically moored fatalism of the eternal return of the same" (*Ibid*.).

Also, Bataille and not Heidegger was able to appropriate Nietzsche's dissolving and defiance of all authority in the aftermath of the down fall of all ascetic values, in his attempt to liberate the subject from conventional standards. Heidegger was not able to utilize Nietzsche's destruction of the metaphysical system in his attempts to trace everything to the forgetfulness of Being. Here Habermas thinks that Foucault is justified in claiming that Bataille operates in a world where all the metaphysical, religious truths have lost their vitality, and that to this extent, Bataille directs his attention towards the annihilation of conventional standards that are products of human beings themselves, like capitalism. Instead of trying to expose the great philosophical and religious traditions, Bataille focuses on how the erotic, sensual experience sets the subject free from a post-metaphysical world where man is chained not by other worldly philosophies but exploitative, manipulable relations to the world that essentially limit the bounds of the subject's experience. Thus, "Bataille does not delude himself about the fact that there is nothing left to profane in modernity" (*Ibid*., 215).

Habermas, now that he has established Bataille's project of emancipating the subject in a world where the great metaphysical systems have been destructed, would like to show how Bataille analyzes fascism and modernity. To this extent, "Bataille sees modernity embedded in a history of reason in which the forces of sovereignty and labor are in conflict with one another" (*Ibid*.). Bataille sketches the development of complex societies in humanity's history as the further degradation of freedom and sovereignty. So, how does Bataille try to sketch the move form a "reified society to a renewal of sovereignty" (*Ibid*.). According to Habermas the rise of fascism and national socialist movement in Europe was seen by some as positive and others negative. It also served as the catalytic force for the theories of Heidegger, Bataille, and Horkheimer. In this context, in his work *The Psychological Structure of Fascism,* Bataille try to go beyond Marxist categories of thought, and tries to analyze the new movements in Italy and Germany not as based

on class struggle but the psychological forces found behind such movements in history, especially the unique relation that exists "between the masses mobilized by plebiscites and their charismatic or Fuhrer figures" (*Ibid*., 216).

6. Bataille and the heterogeneous

In a Marxist tone, Bataille asserted that before revolutionizing the modes of production and societal organization by a movement like fascism, capitalism needs to "collapse because of internal contradictions" (*Ibid*., 217). Bataille was interested in studying the extra elements, elements out of the bounds of Bourgeoisie society that fascism will bring into the scene in such a revolution. Bataille tried to analyze how violence introduces a different, strange element by destroying boundaries. Generally, Bataille analyzed modernity in terms of how a one-sided focus on reason led to conventional norms, values and standards. Rather than trying to modify the modern project by criticizing its reason, Bataille focused on going beyond the ethics of modernity by a violent force that goes beyond fixed boundaries. Hence; "Bataille seeks an economics of the total social ecology of drives; this theory is supposed to explain why modernity continues its life-endangering exclusions without alternatives, and why hope in dialectic of enlightenment, which has accompanied, the modern project right down to western Marxism is in vain" (*Ibid*.).

According to Habermas, Bataille works under Durkheim's distinction of the "profane" and "sacred". The "sacred" represents the tendency to go beyond the convention and regularity and the "profane", as the uniform aspects of day to day life. In capitalist society, labor (the creative power) becomes homogeneous by being measured in terms of "time" and "money". The uniformity of labor is further established by "science" and "technology" that create a world where identical, similar things are produced based on the demands of the capitalist and the fixing of the process of production of an object by standards given by the bourgeoisie. What the unique leaders and followers of fascism introduce is a negation of this uniformity and regularity Hence, "against the background of interest-oriented mass democracy, Hitler and Mussolini appear to be the totally other" (*Ibid*., 218).

Habermas thinks that Bataille is especially interested in how the appropriation of the violent, the spontaneous, and the negated experience by fascism disrupts capitalist modes of organization. Bataille is also fascinated by how elements of order and chaos uniformity and disruption, are found alongside one another in fascism. On the one hand, sacrifice for the totality, performance of duties, and on the other, collective upheavals, festivities and absolute rule of the "fuhrer" are found along one another expressing the spirit "of true sovereignty" (*Ibid*., 219). Habermas goes on to make a contrast between Bataille's and Horkheimer and Adorno's views on fascism. One thing common to both Bataille and Horkheimer and Adorno, is the focus on studying the psychological dimension of fascist rule as it is manifested in its arousal of the masses and the collective force. For Horkheimer and Adorno, Fascism arouses the suppressed urges and passions of the subjects in modern society, under a collective ideal and vision of a common destiny. So, first Bataille, Horkheimer, Adorno, focused on suppression, and later, the strategic arousal of suppressed urges. The difference is that, for Horkheimer and Adorno the result of such an arousal is delusion or false happiness, whereas for Bataille the arousal is a moment of empowering the subject to go beyond the conventional and thereby a freeing. Hence, "in the erotic and in the sacred, Bataille celebrates an "elemental violence"" (*Ibid*., 220).

As Habermas sees it, such position of Bataille runs into the difficulty of failing to distinguish between an emancipatory ideal that utilizes the passions of the masses for revolutionizing current states of affairs versus the subsuming of such a revolutionary undertaking in the final analysis under a dictatorial, totalitarian rule. Habermas goes on to look at how Bataille tried to subsequently come up with a critique of modernity that bridges the gap of the "transition from reification to sovereignty" (*Ibid*., 221). According to Habermas, in his 1933 Treatise on *the*

Concept of Waste alongside Marxist forms of analysis, Bataille conceives labor as the way through which humans make themselves by making products. But rather than focusing on how humans have been deprived of their labor in capitalism, Bataille focuses on the difference between merely producing for survival and a "luxurious" way of laboring where one goes beyond the basic necessities and produces surplus, and locates "sovereignty" and "authenticity" of the subject on the latter. For Bataille, and not Marx, producing beyond necessity is an expression of freedom and a sign of going beyond the conventions. Hence, Bataille according to Habermas:

> [f]ears that true sovereignty would also be suppressed in a world of material abundance as long as the rational – according to the principle of balancing payments – use of material and spiritual goods did not leave room for a radically different form of consumption-namely, of wasteful expenditure in which the consuming subject expresses himself (*Ibid*., 222).

Based on this analysis, one of the defects of modern capitalist society is its tendency to subsume everything into the production process and this has a subversive effect of destroying entertainment and pursuing of luxury as an expression of Freedom. Alongside these lines, for Bataille; "[t]he essence of sovereignty consists of useless consumption of 'whatever pleases me' (*Ibid*., 224). Habermas thinks that using the thesis of the intrinsic relation between "sovereignty and power"; to explain how capitalist relations of production for profit emerge, is not sufficient to show how throughout human history the "sacred" have been excluded. In favor of the "profane", Bataille also cannot appeal to Marxian categories of thought, since his analysis already deviates from that of Marx in the attempt to go beyond reason, the conventional, and the fixed standards. It also deviates in emphasizing how the problem of labor is not of being subsumed into capitalism from expression oneself to surplus production, but instead from entertaining of the luxurious as an expression of one's superiority to an endless pursuit of surplus production under capitalism. Instead, Bataille appeals to Weber's thesis of protestant ethic and rise of capitalism and applies it to how the ethical determines negation of the sacred. Habermas thinks that this can be broken down to three points, humans are different from other animals not just in the fact that they create themselves through labor, but also in the fact that their actions, desires, and wishes are constrained by the standards and conventional ways of being that are found in the world they inhabit (*Ibid*., 230). In this context, Bataille's "excess" is going beyond the forces and standards that limit the freedom of the individual. One should conceive the conventional rules and standards beyond their role in keeping the societal order intact. Instead, the focus should be on how their transgression leads to new ways of experiencing the world and ways of being.

One can also sketch the development of a practical reason and moral rules from ancient times to the present, which succeeded in making individuals, conform to different ethical ideals, and hence bound to conventionality. In the final analysis, Bataille like Nietzsche is faced with the problem of trying to go beyond reason, and the limits set by norms but still not being able to come up with a theory that can comprehend this. What kind of theory can go beyond discourse, if all discourse is repression, and if there is a need to burst out of the boundaries of language, then what kind of theory could account for this?

7. Communicative rationality vs. the philosophy of consciousness

These days, there is a general consciousness amongst philosophers that a philosophy for contemporary society should go beyond metaphysical thinking. The metaphysical tradition failed to provide a viable alternative. In some cases, it holds absolutistic claims that fail to recognize particularity. In others, it propagated relativistic assumptions that fail to recognize the universal dimensions to humanity. The tradition also focused on isolated individuals, subjected the individual to oppressive relations, and so on. Habermas claims that the kind of rationality he

identifies and tries to develop in modern societies is postmetaphysical, in that it's situated in daily uses of language having both particular and universalistic dimensions.

Here, I will employ James Gordon Finlayson's discussion of what Habermas generally means by the philosophy of consciousness, to show in fact that Habermas does go beyond this orientation. Habermas' analysis of speech acts is part of the 'linguistic turn' in twentieth century philosophy, which abandons the look for absolute truth and certainty within a subject. Instead it focuses on analyzing the language we speak and employ. It inquiries into what this language tells us about the basic questions of reality, knowledge, values and so on. Finlayson identifies under the term philosophy of consciousness, seven major orientations in Western philosophy that Habermas' communicative paradigm supposedly stands in opposition.

1. In "Cartesian subjectivity" (Finlayson, 2005: 29), it's assumed that there is a clear essence that we can ascribe to the individual, and that this is thinking or generally thought. We can say that, Habermas goes beyond this orientation since in his approach; the 'I' cannot be separated from others. Rather, there is a world of claims through which one affirms unique individuality by raising distinct claims in relation to others.

2. In "metaphysical dualism" (*Ibid.*), it is assumed that there are two major kinds of substance in the world, one reflective and other corporal. Habermas doesn't assume that one can distinguish between thinking and the body, either in the individual or the individual as thinking and the world as body. He stresses that modern individuals have the space in which they raise their claims to one another thereby coordinating their actions.

3. In "Subject-object metaphysics" (*Ibid.*), the subject either as thinking or interested, relates to possible states of affairs in an attempt of gaining knowledge or laboring. Habermas in turn tries to show how modern individuals raise their claims in relation to the objective, social, and subjective dimensions of reality and are willing to defend their positions in an intersubjective arena in which they establish their identities.

4. "Foundationalism" (*Ibid.*), signifies the search for either an empirical or transcendental ground on which questions of ontology, epistemology and social theory could be built. Habermas didn't try to trace his theory to an underlying reality or an absolute truth about reality or the individual. Instead, he focuses on demonstrating how modern societies have gone through a historical process of rationalization, which has managed to establish an intersubjective arena in which contestable claims to truth are raised.

5. "First Philosophy" (*Ibid.*) is seen as the ultimate judge in questions of knowledge, truth, and reality. But in Habermas's approach, philosophy is located between everyday validity claims and the special fields of inquiries facilitating a mutual learning and influence. Further, philosophy "may act as a stand in for … empirical theories with strong universalistic claims, that is, it can help fill gaps in natural science by offering hypotheses for empirical confirmation" (*Ibid.*).

6. In "Social atomism" (*Ibid.*), society is the concretization of individual interests. Isolated, autonomous individuals further their desires by entering into a mechanism called society. For Habermas, there is no isolated individuality since we find our claims intertwined with one another, in an attempt to affirm our existence by seeking recognition.

7. If we take "Society as a macro subject" (*Ibid.*), macro realities, whether it be the state, meaning formation, power/knowledge nexuses, are elevated beyond the individual. For Habermas, the various forms of inquiries are in an open relationship to everyday world of validity claims. Claims raised in daily interactions relate directly to the special forms of inquiries. Habermas also claims that, modern individuals find themselves in a world of claims in which they equally participate by raising their views, not under hegemonic macro realities. There is a space for intersubjective reflection, hence for freedom and equality.

In escaping such metaphysical trapping and orientations under which modern societies are disempowered, Habermas' communicative paradigm is unique in the following terms. First of all, in principle it's a rationality in which everybody can participate. It's procedural in that, it depends on following certain rules and raising certain claims. Secondly, it's a kind of rationality which invites continuous revision since every time validity claims are raised the truth is in question and in chance of being revised. Thirdly, it's a rationality that encompasses the entire objective, social and subjective dimensions, going beyond a strict insistence on isolated subjectivity, the objective world, and macro social reality and incorporating all in modern individual's claims towards the world. Habermas' communicative paradigm does go beyond the metaphysical trappings in western thought. Still, beyond the postmetaphysical nature of Habermas' communicative paradigm, the question should be that of how this secular discourse stands in relation to non-secular communities, whether it addresses concrete asymmetrical relations, and sufficiently deconstructs the negative, other side of modernity.

8. Habermas' discourse of modernity and charges of misreading

In this section, I will briefly present charges of misreading on Habermas' discussions of Weber, Hegel, Derrida, Nietzsche, Foucault, Heidegger and Bataille in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*. Austin Harrington tries to look at Habermas' appropriation of a universal process of rationalization from Weber's sociology of religion. Harrington tries to examine the extent to which Habermas' attempt to extract the intersubjective communicative process of modern societies from Weber's "theory of social evolution", remains faithful to Weber's original ideas (Harrington, 2000: 84). Harrington asks, did Weber really regard the process of rationalization which takes foot in the West as representing the highest stage in the rationalization of humanity in general, or was he trying to point out the unique aspects of the rationalization of the occident. Harrington admits that Habermas certainly developed the optimistic aspects of Weber's work, when he tried to develop the spheres as hosting a distinct rationality, instead of Weber's celebrated thesis that modern society is being trapped in an instrumental rationality. Habermas also diverged from Weber's intention, when focusing in his emancipatory ideal not on the courageous individuals which "devote themselves to their chosen value axioms", but on the everyday communicative action of modern societies which hosts critical` and emancipatory claims towards the objective, social and subjective dimensions of reality (*Ibid*., 87). As Harrington sees it, the Habermasian analogy between Kant's three critiques i.e. of pure reason, practical reason and judgment and the three value spheres in Weber, (i.e. theoretic, practical and aesthetic ones) is flawed. This is because Weber enumerated "five spheres; the economic, the political, the aesthetic, the erotic and the intellectual" (*Ibid*., 88).

Also, Habermas' attempt to extract universal moral principles from Weber's empirical observation on the development of a protestant ethic are questionable, since Weber by no means took these principles as being universal or laying objective grounds for discussion of moral issues. Harrington adds, even though the intention of Weber's empirical inquiries into the rationalization of the occident were aimed at grasping the extent to which this process managed to implant a universal structure, still it should be noted that Weber called for a further empirical inquiry and held that the universal significance of the West, is debatable. Also, Habermas' insistence on the creation of a ground where a single value sphere addresses a specific validity claim is questionable, since "it is possible to challenge one sphere from the standpoint of another sphere in a way that is not a priori refuted by the terms of the first sphere" (*Ibid*., 95). On our day to day lives we usually make aesthetic judgments about the moral, moral judgments about the scientific and so on. Thus, the idea of a single validity claim addressed in a distinct realm is questionable. Weber's ideas on the universal significance of rationalization in the West could be interpreted as instances of a civilization that strives for universality and not necessarily a civilization that implanted its lasting influences on humanity in general.

At the heart of Habermas' ideas on the inauguration and development of modernity, is the role given to Hegel as the one who pioneered the attempt to grasp what modernity is, by looking at the historical process through which modernity concretely established its own status and inquiring into the issue of normativity in the modern project. Fred Dallmayr expresses some of his reservations towards Habermas' appropriation of Hegel. As Dallmayr sees it, there is no clear distinction between the "young' Hegel which expounded his views on religion, aesthetics and mythology and the 'mature" Hegel who tried to accommodate everything into the "spirit". In other words, Hegel remained faithful to his earlier ideas, eventhough he developed his ideas in a larger context. (Dallmayr, 1987: 699) Dallmayr remarks that; "Hegel never abandoned his early views on "ethical totality or did he dismiss the notions of public religiosity the 'nexus of guilt' or the function of art as emblems of an ethical social bond. He simply proceeded to reformulate these notions in accordance with the needs of this overall system" *(Ibid.)*. Also, for Dallmayr, Habermas' interpretation of Hegel failed to fully capture the progress of reason in history and thought, and instead focused on the right Hegelian interpretation of pointing out the universal significance of Hegelianism or the left Hegelian attempt to put reason in contact with the concrete.

In his discourse of modernity, Habermas accuses Derrida of trying to destroy the distinction between philosophy and literature. Habermas also sees Derrida's threat as of emphasizing the aesthetic aspects of language and interpretation in general. Sandler wonders whether there is such a distinction taking into mind the usual employment of metaphor and non-literary forms in most philosophical texts. Simply invoking the instance of Plato's Dialogues will show that the nature of these works as artistic forms and philosophical conversations is equal. So, "how are we to decide which function of language is the dominant in Plato's dialogs" (Sandler, 2007: 3). Hence the view that philosophy is rational argumentation, and literature "ficticious" needs to be questioned. Sandler situates Derrida's project as one of introducing a moderate approach that emphasizes both literal and non-literal elements and giving a voice to the various contexts in which meaning is formed. The tendency of the Western philosophical tradition, to strictly insist on the argumentative nature of philosophy, excluding other elements dates all the way to platonic dialogs where, "the wonderfully comical and humorous nature of most dialogs is also discarded and only reappear as Socratic irony when the argument derived from the text clearly contradicts the line of argument traditionally viewed as Platonic" (*Ibid*., 5).

Sandler adds, Habermas, is right in pointing out that in Derrida, "literature and literary criticism" are conflated. But this is just Derrida's way of finding a form of writing that gives a sufficient space to diverse aspects of meaning formation, while simultaneously being critical of other forms of writing. This was not clearly addressed by the existing metaphysical tradition which operated on a theoretic, binary form, amongst others. For Sandler, the insistence of Derrida on not being authoritative, fixing meaning and hence making texts open could easily be demonstrated by looking at the terms he employs like "difference" which are neither words nor concepts" (*Ibid*., 8). Habermas' analysis of Derrida also errs in not directly interrogating Derrida's works but secondary interpretations and the application of deconstruction in American universities. Further, trying to come up with an inclusive form of writing that goes beyond argumentative and non-argumentative forms is essential as a critique to restrictive theories of meaning and the binary operations of the Western metaphysical tradition, which Habermas did not give a sufficient voice to.

For Thomas Blebricher, most of the defenses of Foucault against Habermas' severe attacks in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* are focused on showing that the former has been misread and that he could be defended against such charges of "presentism", "relativism" and "cryptonormativism". Still, what's lacking in such defenses is a broader understanding of what caused Habermas' misreading in the first place. Blebricher identifies two major causes for such grave misunderstandings. These are, first reading Foucault's later works through his archaeological method and two, misreading Nietzsche's genealogy and then reading Foucault

through Nietzsche's genealogy. Further, Habermas attacks the objectives tendencies of Foucault's genealogy when in fact the latter sees genealogy as forwarding "very modest truth claims of a peculiar character" (Blebricher, 2005: 1-2). As Blebricher sees it, Habermas' readings of Nietzsche could be traced to the Former's *Knowledge and Human Interests*, where Nietzsche is credited with developing a this-worldly, practical, approach to knowledge and truth. Nietzsche is interpreted as criticizing metaphysical conceptions of truth and putting knowledge in touch with practical interests. Still, Habermas was also critical towards Nietzsche, since he interpreted the latter as advocating "a perspectivism of values" where all we have is different interpretations, different ways of cognizing and bringing reality into our control, and that there is no good and bad, right and wrong. Blebricher maintains that; "While both philosophers agree in their critique of the positivists sciences that deny the link between knowledge and interests, Habermas treats the 'illusions' of mankind [and makes the] difference between the useful illusions of causality and other rather dream like illusions the implementation of which necessarily fails in the face of the materiality of nature" (*Ibid*., 5).

Both Habermas and Nietzsche recognize this-worldliness of all values and claims to truth. Still, Habermas interprets Nietzsche as blurring the distinction between perspectives that enhance life and those that devalue it. Habermas interprets Nietzsche as bestowing an equal value to all perspectives. Later, Habermas' views towards Nietzsche became harsher. In *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, Nietzsche's views were reduced to introducing a destructive reading of modernity, and anticipating the postmodernist movement which stood against the values of reason and Enlightenment. For Blebricher, what especially worries Habermas is the destruction of the clear-cut distinction between the theoretical, practical and aesthetic spheres, the emphasis on a heterogeneous meaning formation and reduction of all statements to that of "artistic preferences" (*Ibid*., 6).

Habermas locates two paths out of Nietzsche's critique of modern reason. These are (1) a critique of reason in terms of a will to power, and (2) seeking an alternative in reason's other. For Blebricher, "it is this clear cut distinction between two strategies and two respective 'paths' into postmodernity that lies at the bottom of Habermas' mistaken or at least impoverished account of Foucault" (*Ibid*.). Blebricher adds that both Nietzsche and Foucault focused on the emergence of diverse conception of the moral, the aesthetic and generally truth in human history, without assuming objectivity or continuity between various conceptions. Further, Foucault's genealogy didn't claim to have an objective standard by which the various discursive formations could be viewed. Foucault himself was aware that his own method was a particular power/knowledge formation and that a science having "an outside perspective" was not realizable (*Ibid*., 11). Still, Foucault was also looking for a way through which he could go beyond a description of such formations and offer an emancipatory critique.

Blebricher argues that Nietzsche's critique of modernity should not be reduced to "aestheticizing" or of reducing all questions to that of tastes. Nietzsche's project also contains diverse insights from scientific, artistic and biological backgrounds. Further Habermas' reading of Foucault like that of Nietzsche tries to reduce Foucault's project under labels such as power/knowledge nexus. Hence, both Nietzsche and Foucault tried to introduce a new form of critique that offers a "hybrid" approach (*Ibid*., 15). In both Nietzsche's and Foucault's genealogy there is an attempt to combine different forms of interrogations and insights, and Habermas' critique misses this point. Habermas shortsightedly assumed that Foucault was trying to extract the scientific element of Nietzsche's works. This is the attempt to identify various formations and apply it to genealogy that sees itself as an objective science gazing at power/knowledge formation. For Blebricher, Habermas didn't deliberately distort the ideas of Foucault to consolidate his communicative paradigm. Rather, Habermas erred in reading Foucault through his interpretation of Nietzsche. Thus, "Habermas' misunderstanding of Foucault does not have to be seen as an

intentional misreading, neither are we dealing with a strategic deformation of the Foucaultian oeuvre, the creation of a straw man" (*Ibid*., 17).

Habermas charges Heidegger's philosophy of Being as being unable to address problems that a rise in everyday world, not establishing a place for scientific analysis, and being fatalistic. For David Kolb, Habermas needs to address the difference between his theory of communication action where one finds himself in an intersubjectivist communicative arena which is open to argumentation, and Heidegger's "temporality" where Dasein is thrown into a horizon that necessarily determines its destiny in providing the existential structures through which one dwells. Further, in Heidegger, there is a place for the individual in the sense that the individual reaffirms himself by creating meanings out of the inherited horizon. Also, the claims raised in a particular horizon can have a universal significance, even though they are necessarily measured with their respective horizons (Kolb, 1992: 689). Heidegger, as Kolb sees it, should not be interpreted as conceiving Being as restrictively supplying the frameworks through which we lead our lives, but the space one is thrown into and gains "authenticity" or "inauthenticity" in its attempt to actualize its unique ontico-ontological significance. Put in simple terms, there is enough space for one to define oneself within a horizon. Hence "Heidegger's destructive point is not that validity claims are world bound but that the limited revelation of Being within a world is what makes possible any cognitive or practical claims at all" (*Ibid*., 690).

Andrew Stein raises doubts about Habermas' reading of Bataille, and tries to offer an interpretation that situates Bataille's philosophy in the historical context in which it developed. As Stein sees it, Habermas' analysis is flawed in trying contextualize Bataille in terms of German history "rather than French intellectual history" (Stein, 1993: 21). Bataille's attempt to go beyond the conventional boundaries of Western thought is interpreted as representing a Nietzschean fascism and irrationalism, and Stein tries to defend Bataille from such charges. For Stein, what motivates Habermas' reading of Bataille amongst other factors is the revival of thinking in Germany which tries to evade responsibly over crimes against the Jews. Habermas advocates a responsibility for history and proposed a tradition which will take foot in a transparent and accountable public sphere. Along these lines, Habermas sees in Bataille the rebirth of an authoritarian, Fascist German philosophy developed before the Second World War by appealing to the ideas of Nietzsche. According to Stein, for Bataille, Nazis and Nietzscheanism were not equivalent since in Nazism there is a homogeneous population led by the head of the system, while "Nietzscheanism exploded the authoritarian will that leads to fascism and all ideal metaphysics" (*Ibid*., 42).

Bataille was interested in studying the psychological aspects of fascism and wondered how fascism was able to "mobilize the aggressive instincts of the masses" but this admiration did not lead Bataille into advocating fascism. (ibid) Stein also questions the degree to which Bataille is an irrationalist, and stood against science and rationality. Stein argues, Bataille was trying to develop a science of heterogeneous states and how these states are being expressed in various practices and institutions. Bataille's science was "heterology". He studied excess and deviation "not as pathology" but as ways of going beyond repressive religious, capitalistic, conventional boundaries. (Ibid, 49) Further, in "heterology", reason was seen as the opposite of unlimited experience, a way of analyzing how this excess is being manifested in various institutions and practices, and also a boundary and "limit" to excessive experience (*Ibid*., 50).

Generally, against Habermas' charges, Stein argued that Bataille clearly denounced fascism, and that there is also a place for science and rationality in Bataille's heterology which criticizes excessive rationality and tries to awaken suppressed energies, as a viable alternative.

9. Conclusion

In positing the postmetaphysical stance against the absolute, Habermas tried to critique Heidegger's philosophy of Being and Bataille's heterogeneous. As such, Habermas charged Heidegger with neglecting everyday problems and actuality, the concrete and situated dynamism of experience and undermining critique by resigning to fate in his restricted conception of the life world. Again, Bataille's heterology advocating the unconventional, excessive and heterogeneous against the normal and three-dimensional process of validating envisions an idea which going beyond reason fails to realize emancipation. Finally, sensitivity must be developed towards charges that Habermas misinterprets authors in his discourse of modernity.

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