1Q. Series of Reflections on What it Means to Be 'Critical'?
Part II – Particular Analyses

The Pursuit of Philosophy as a Discipline

Volume III

The Prescience of Philosophy as a Discipline:

Beyond Criticism:

How Should Philosophy
Progressively Perfect an Ongoing Critique of its Discipline,
And,
Through Such Constructive Insight,
Perceptively Appreciate the Nature of the Human Condition??
A Critique of Theory *versus* A Theory of Critique…

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0. Pre-Introduction

Being 'constructively critical' can make two kinds of contribution, namely, either arguing for what appears not to be the case and/or arguing for what appears to be the case. I.e., either designating and dismantling what appears to not be in conformity with lived-reality, however perceived and interpreted, and/or constructing and affirming what appears to be in conformity with lived-reality as 'found' to be re(-)configured in and through such efforts… best regarded as 'provisional' and as 'ever a work in progress'. But, then, whatever is done, is also limited by the experiential fact that we do make mistakes but that such mistakes can also be undone, and, at the same time, paradoxically, extend to us a certain freedom to both err and make some degree of progress in our passages through this world at large both before(-)ourselves and before(-)others.[1] (0)

1. Introduction

A series of critical philosophers will be very briefly looked at from the perspective of initiating a 'critical turn', in some form or other, and, where each transformation of method will be viewed as an influential shift in the ongoing history of philosophical thinking. A similar series of insights will also be looked at. (1)

Moreover, each one of these 'philosophical revolutions' will be useful in the creative construction of a critical philosophy, as will be explored in Part III. (2)

* For latest version of this text: www.homestead.com/noelshomepage/noels homepage5.html

[1] Getting the balance right between the 'both before(-)ourselves and before(-)others' must demand a certain degree of existential authenticity. E.g., how can we contemplate a considerable tranche of supposedly well-informed Republican lawmakers siding with one more of Trump's big lies, namely, the false claim that 'the election was stolen'. As a phenomenon, this is something that is very difficult to comprehend. If such folk are now fearful of rightwing extremists reacting to the way they vote then it might have been advisable not to have signed on to such sorts of deceptions in the first place. That such a 'slippery slope' is ever a slippery slope. Or, again, why would people give loyalty to a person who inevitably discards a loyal person when their sacrifice is perceived by the former as being to the short-term advantage of that person? Surely such a person who is reluctant to pay his debts and legal bills, who is notoriously dishonest in his business dealings, and so on, would not be a good choice for a political leader lest their seemingly odious past catches up with them, assuming, of course, that they lived in a country where 'timely justice was justly dispensed in time'? Interestingly, the expression 'ourselves' is ambiguous being a mix of single and plural forms of the first person. A certain existential moral could be drawn here if we were to understand that there is an existential need to suspend all senses of the first person and neither over-identify with one's own sense/s of self nor those communal affiliations conducted at the expense of our being more authentic before the 'totality of both ourselves and others'. Paradoxically, it would seem that one of the paths to a reversal and healing of such deluded communal behaviour might well be for those in power to 'talk truth' to their constituents whilst those constituents, who demand a democratic polity, 'talk truth to power'? As ever, though, over the course this dialectic, the overall flows of money will eventually decide such issues. One good reason why large donors, and their large donations, are taken out of this picture in order for the public to better facilitate their own pathways for resolution (less inflamed by such partisan proponents).

In a series of provisional conclusions, etc., certain tentative insights will be highlighted for further consideration, etc. (3)

2. A Second Series of Reflections on what it Might Mean to Be 'Critical'?

In a first section I will explore six different philosophical turns executed by six different philosophers. Each one of these turns will be briefly evaluated. It is not my intention to discuss these manoeuvres or the philosophies of these individuals in any great depth. My purpose is to highlight what I intend to borrow for the tentative formation of a critical philosophy that attempts to overcome some of the defects and difficulties that we will meet along the way. (4)

In a second section I will explore, more generally, the critical ambitions of certain Postmodernists, members of the Frankfurt School, and others, to the extent that the narrow confines of this essay will allow. Again, my primary purpose is to select a small number of features that either appear to be positively insightful, and useful, or negatively insightful, at least to the extent that they would be better avoided in any creative attempt to construct a critically oriented philosophy as will be attempted in a third Series of Reflections. (5)

A. Taking a Turn for the Better or Worse?

i. The '(ontological-)epistemological turn'…

The Pre-Socratics it would appear, from an inspection of textual fragments and historical comments, that they were obsessed with finding ways of 'critically' re-seeing this world at large, albeit through a rather ontologically oriented type of lens.[2] A very long and creatively argued list of possibilities would emerge…. whose mutual deconstruction was almost assured. E.g., the philosopher Thales (C. 624/620 – 548/545 bce) argue that the primary element of the world was 'water' (although he might have meant this in a more metaphorical sense; given that water exhibits forms that are solid, liquid and can also evaporate?). In a diametrical contrast, we have Heraclitus (c. 535- c. 475 bce) arguing that fire is the basic material of the world (although, again, we might be more charitable and suggest that such an identification is meant more in a metaphorical sense; i.e., as analoguing the fact that the world is a world of change just like the nature of fire?). If we were to run both of these proposals together, we must worry if all water, present in this world, will be turned to steam, or, that this watery element would completely extinguishes this element of fire. Then, into this confusing mix of first principles, Empedocles (born 494 bce) proposed that the world was composed of four elements, namely, Earth, Fire, Air, and Water (although, hopefully not all in the same place?). In hindsight, it is not fair to poke fun at such embryonic attempts to think both scientifically

[2] An ontological obsession to reduce the obvious complexity of the world to some less obvious, simple set of elements; preferably in the form of a set whose membership contains only one element.

and philosophically. Are we any better today when some people subscribe to the possibility of a theory of everything and others think that such a proposal cannot even be contemplated (just as mathematicians like Tarski, *et al*, have shown that systematic forms of mathematical presentation can be demonstrated to have certain profound limitations as to what can be known, proven, stated as true, etc.). (6)

Along comes Plato (428/427-348/347 bce), perhaps courtesy of Socrates (c. 470-399 bce) and his Socratic method. In a profound change of reflective emphasis, rather than exploring the thought 'that X was primarily p or not-p', it would be reconsidered to be more profitable to reflect, instead, on the epistemological basis that would allow us to either confirm of disconfirm such perceptions, beliefs, theories, and so on and so forth. I would argue that this epistemological shift is a turning away from 'the seeing of our world' to 'the world of our seeing' and, in that sense, is more a 'turning around'.[3] (7)

If you were in the marketplace, as a metal merchant, you would want to know accurately what was gold and what was merely polished brass or something similar. You would welcome then those simple tests that would allow you to confidently distinguish, quantify, such items that possessed a gold content and those that merely seemed to possess such content but, as a matter of fact, had no such content whatsoever. Instead of just looking at this world and taking things as they seem, instead, 'look' at this seeing in order to ascertain when things are as they seem and when things are not as they seem! (8)

In this process of turning around a former emphasis upon conceived of ontological categories, Plato proposed a theory of forms, as an other-worldly realm inhabited with universals postulated in order to account for our recognition of particulars as being indirect 'reflections' of the former, etc. (9)

Let me now run the following quotations together from a short section of the Republic in order to give an intimation of this refocusing more on the means of knowledge rather than what that knowledge might entail:

> So, said I, the method of the dialectic is the only one which takes this course, doing away with assumptions and travelling up to the first principle of all, so as to make sure confirmation there.
>
> …first, knowledge; second, thinking; third, belief; and fourth, imagining. The last two taken together constitute the apprehension of appearances in the world of Becoming; the first two, intelligence concerned with true Being.
>
> And does not this not apply to the Good? He must be able to distinguish the essential nature of Goodness, isolating it from all other Forms; he must fight his way

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[3] We have here a contragrammatical structure (on the form of an 'x of y' and the 'y of x'). In many ways it is a natural suspension and 'the reality of its truth' and 'the truth of its reality' should more be observed at the psychic center of such a device by treating it as 'suspension' (able to induce what I would term an 'extensive suspension' as discussed in both extended-essays central to Volume II & III, in *The Pursuit of Philosophy as a Discipline*.

> through all criticisms, determined to examine every step by the standards, not of appearance and opinions, but of reality and truth, and win through to the end without sustaining a fall. If he cannot do this, he will know neither Goodness itself nor any good thing; if he does not lay hold upon some semblance of good, it will only be a matter of belief, not of knowledge, and he will dream away his life here in a sleep which has no awakening on this side of the world of Death where he will sleep at last for ever.
>
> …this explains what is wrong with the position of Philosophy and why she has fallen into disrepute: as I have said before she should not have been wooed by the base-born, who are unworthy of her favours.[4] (10)

Unfortunately, Plato went off on a tangent to theoretically explain too many things with too little theoretical materials to realize a viable pathway for such resolutions. Moreover, he preferenced aspects that deserve to be relatively privileged but certainly not in any absolutistical sense. I suspect that even Plato was embarrassed by his theory of forms, but, had nothing better to hand in order to explain universals, the particular characterizations of such specific instantiations (as so-called 'particulars'), the persistence of identity in a world of change, the apparent cessation of certain forms of identification (like soul, substance, etc.), the limitations imposed upon thought as to how far identities and counter-identities, and so on, can be either dialectically differentiated and/or integrated. A number of other modes of criticism could also be leveled at the suppositions and presuppositions that relatively ground the course of such ensuing argumentation before even getting to deal with the conclusions of such theoretical constructs. Still, in my estimation, this focusing of our attention on how we engage with the world, rather than just what is being engaged with, has much to commend itself. But, that said, we are still dealing with a minefield, and a no-man's land, as long as we cannot find a viable form of human habitation therein, between such extremes, such legislated prejudices, dialectical oversights, blind-spots, and so forth. (11)

That a good place to start would be to recognize 'what should be privileged and what should not be privileged?'[5] Our psychic experience of 'wholes', indeed, is greater than the mere some of its psychic parts', and, duly deserves to be commensurately privileged. In my opinion, this observation accounts for discerning a basis that can be carved out for an existential appreciation of lived-experience.[6] On the other hand, allowing our prejudices to run amok and legislatively enshrine such attitudes in the institutionalized

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[4] Plato; Republic; Book VII, approximately 533-535: Greek Philosophy: Thales to Aristotle; Second Edition, Free Press, 1968/1985; p. 239-241.

[5] In this regard, we have a major fault-line running between so-called Modernist philosophies and so-called Post-Modernist philosophies. The former privilege far too much *versus* the latter either privileging nothing or far too little!

[6] I.e., observing an 'existential difference' between 'wholes' and 'parts', mediated by 'wholes-and-parts', all in a dynamic state of balance the net effect of which is to act as an 'entrance' to such a domain via the (extensive) suspension. This existential dimension being superimposed upon all experience, and v.v., and experienced, from the perspective of the (extensive) suspension, as 'lived-experience'. This 'experience' being fully 'lived' when the existential hallmarks of that experience are fully encountered, recognized and engaged as an indication that the co-associated relationship, itself, from its own perspective, is being fully encountered, recognized and engaged.

constitutions of such ensuing august philosophies is a recipe for both their imminent and well-deserved deconstruction! (12)

I also perceive another 'mistake' made by Plato to be his apparent tendency to literalize metaphorically oriented analogies that might have been better left as such rhetorical devices. Remaining as 'invitations' to reflect upon rather than presented as definitive 'declarations' of how the wider world was actually constituted as if he, himself, was nothing more than one more Pre-Socratic in this regard. However, I am of two minds here, because if Plato was actually running one more Socratic dialogue then everything along the way is only a step closer to the truth through some form of partial removal of what was not in conformity with reality and/or a partial confirmation of how things were in some approximate conformity with the way the world was constituted. Read more as analogies, we would save ourselves from being overwhelmed by much philosophical perplexity in our valiant attempts to interpret and literally trust such descriptions, etc. (13)

In many respects, I regard Plato as running a series of covert transcendental suspensions and by such means, in effect, exercising an evolving variety of transcendental philosophy which then lets me accord him the honour of being an 'absolute philosopher' rather than his being treated as a mere 'absolutist' (like many but not all of the Pre-Socratics). The centrality of the cave metaphor, with the imputation that this world at large is an illusion, like an illusion, means treating this world 'as if' rather than as a 'this' or a 'that'. This ontologically oriented habit of the Pre-Socratics would be arrived at through some form of preferential treatment of some form of cultural bias that was then reified rhetorically well-passed its metaphorical origins, etc. Not that Plato was immune from such thinking. His insistence, e.g., that the soul was 'immortal', or, that the Form of the Good was immutable, etc., are all forms of philosophical distortion that could only be salvaged, in part, by being retreated back through a metaphorical or rhetorical lens as open indications, destinations that cannot be limited by language, exhortations to experience in an experiential mode, if that was being considered possible, and so on… (14)

But, now, let us jump many centuries forward in time to the first *Critique of Pure Reason* published in 1781 by Immanuel Kant (1724-1804); second edition 1787… and explore this idea of a 'transcendental turn'. (15)

ii. A critical 'transcendental turn'…

Philosophically troubled by the divisive debates between realists, or empiricists, like, e.g., Locke *et al*, and idealists, or rationalists, like e.g., Leibnitz *et al*, that did not seem to be able to find any form of resolution, and, in response to this impasse, he proposed a critical circuit breaker in the form of a quite complex argument, as refracted through my minimal use of technical language, that proposes, to the effect, that perceptual processes were seen to belong primarily to the imaginative sphere whilst conceptual processes belong primarily in the realm of understanding. Whereas, in contrast, all judgments are located in the faculty of reason (quite separate from both the imaginative and conceptual spheres). Indeed, given that 'judgments are of or between concepts' (as either concepts *qua* concepts or concepts *qua* conceptual translations from the perceptual imag-

ination), but where judgment cannot be reduced to the same (in their experiential immediacy as an ongoing judgmental processes) it follows that all judgment must be 'trans-conceptual' (and, by default, must also be 'trans-perceptual'). However, to complicate matters, trans-conceptually oriented judgments can be then rendered in a conceptual form post such judgmental acts. Just as law judges make legal judgments in law that are then handed down in a written form as the said 'judgments'. (16)

The critical nature of this complex insight is to take a 'transcendental turn', nothing more and nothing less! That from this 'transcendental position', within the psyche, at least hypothetically, we should be able to clearly delineate between those epistemological entities whose primary origins are either to be found in perceptual imagination or in the understanding, and, that what is able to decide such issues is to be found in this faculty of reason. Or, put another way, by myself, admittedly in as simple language as possible, is this apparent fact that, in such judgment(al processes), judgments are not to be treated as conceptual processes and products, but, rather as trans-conceptual processes with trans-conceptual-content. In an appreciation of the important ramifications of this transcendental turn is to realize that we should not confuse 'percepts' with 'concepts', and v.v., nor confuse judgment(al act)s with either of the former. That to say otherwise, is to run a fallacious argument (which, for Kant, as has ever been the philosophical character of the historical controversies entered into between realists and idealists, etc.) and who, both consequently and subsequently, make a 'transcendental mistake' along with the creation of a philosophical state of ensuing 'transcendental confusion…' (17)

In other words, realists 'materialize' judgmental idealities, and, idealists, dematerialize such judgmental realities (as well as confusing both these spheres of the perceptually imaginative and the conceptually regulative). Basically, we should ensure that the critical philosopher observes the following maxim, as proffered by myself, namely, 'that we should critically differentiate what needs to be critically differentiated within the limitations of its critical employment, and, critically integrate what needs to be critically integrated within the limitations of its critical employment!' I.e., recognize that all these aspects of perceptual imagination, conceptual understanding and judgmental reason, whilst all interrelated in acts of judgment, must also be duly distinguished from one another lest we commit such transcendental mistakes along with their ensuing non-critically oriented forms of philosophical confusion, and so on… (18)

In the section in the *Critique of Pure Reason* titled *Amphiboly of Concepts of Reflection* we find:

> Reflection does not concern itself with objects themselves… but is that state of mind in which we first set ourselves to discover the subjective conditions under which we [alone] are able to arrive at concepts. …this question must be asked: In which of our cognitive faculties are our representations connected together? Is it the understanding, or is it the senses, by which they are combined or compared? …All judgments, however, indeed all comparisons, require reflection… The act by which I confront the comparison of representations with the cognitive faculty to which it belongs, and by means of which I distinguish whether it is as belonging

> to the pure understanding or the sensible intuition that they are to be compared with each other, I call *transcendental reflection*.
>
> …we may therefore say that *logical reflection* is a mere act of comparison…
>
> In the absence of such reflection, the use of these concepts is very unsafe… based on nothing more than a transcendental amphiboly, that is, a confounding of an object of pure understanding with appearance.
>
> …therefore deceived by the amphiboly of the concepts of reflection, the celebrated Leibniz erected an *intellectual system of the world*… In a word, Leibnitz intellectualized appearances, just as Locke.., sensualized all concepts of the understanding… Instead of seeking in understanding and sensibility two sources of representation.[7] (19)

A number of criticisms could be directed at this type of scheme. Given that we have a dialectical relationship between interdependent conceptually and perceptually oriented intentional states we may well wonder to what extent they could actually be so categorically divided up between the so-called 'pure understanding' and those 'imaginative processes of intellection dealing with sense perception, imagination, and so on'? On the other hand, there are 'intentional states', as 'intentional objectives' that are more 'objectives' rather than 'objects' or 'object-states' that have little or no imaginative input that such a distinction could be observed, albeit with certain qualifications and limitations. E.g., we might observe two individual who are apparently in love with each other, but, the concept of love, itself, cannot be found in spatio-temporal terms of reference and whether it is written in terms of dispositions, or in some other scheme, this point still holds. That, the beauty of this 'turn', shift in philosophical orientation, is to recognize that the intentional productivity of judgment *per se* cannot be reduced merely to logical forms of comparison since judgments, primarily, being judgments 'about' concepts must be trans-conceptual, i.e., trans-cognitive, i.e., 'transcendental' in this sense of having a transcendental place or 'location' (which, primarily, must belong to pure reason and not to pure understanding even though such concepts of pure reason can be treated as just another set of concepts at the end of the day under less critical conditions?).[8] (20)

Similar considerations could also apply to ideas of apparent subjectivity; e.g., as those ideas of subjectivity that deserve to be distinguished in a similar manner. Drawing a

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[7] Immanuel Kant; *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*; translated by Norman Kemp Smith; *Appendix*: *The Amphiboly of Concepts of Reflection*: *Arising from the Confusion of the Empirical with the Transcendental Employment of Understanding*. A similar type of argument is presented by the transcendental phenomenologists who note that to prioritize noematic intentional objectivity over noetic intentional activity is an impossibility since through noematic-noetic correlativity they must co-occur and be simultaneously co-associated. On the other hand, we can relatively prioritize one dialectical aspect over the other, as occurs in intentional experience, just that we cannot do this in any completely absolutistical sense. Just as chopping a stick in half still leaves us with a piece having two ends, however many times we foolishly try to achieve the impossible, namely, an impossible stick with only one end!

[8] A determination as to whether a certain concept is to be located in pure understanding or with sensibility gives it its 'transcendental location'. For Kant the four rules that apply to this identification of transcendental location are defined as its 'transcendental topic'.

distinction between ourselves as 'thinkers', and 'embodied subjects' along with noting our ability to make that type of distinction as someone, as an agent, possessing some form of 'transcendental subjectivity', albeit only in this critical, transcendental sense (without extrapolating such ideas beyond the reasonable limits of their critical employment through the unsupported importation and reification of such concepts like an immutable soul, Self, spirit, etc.). (21)

iii. An (eternal re)turn of the skeptical *epoché*'…

Nietzsche (1844-1900) was ever the critic *par excellence*. From art to culture, from psychological ideas to philosophical positions this philosopher, it would seem, took his tools for dissection to work with him every day:

> It seems to me more and more that the philosopher, being *necessarily* a man of tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, has always found himself and *had* to find himself in contradiction to his today: his enemy has always been the ideal of today. Hitherto these extraordinary promoters of mankind who have been called philosophers and have seldom felt themselves to be friends of knowledge but, rather, disagreeable fools and dangerous question-marks – have found their task, their hard, unwanted, unavoidable task, but finally the greatness of their task, in being the bad conscience of their age. By laying the knife vivisectionally to the bosom of the very *virtues of the age* they betrayed what was their own secret: to know a new greatness of man, a new untrodden path to their enlargement. Each time they revealed how much hypocrisy, indolence, letting oneself go and letting oneself fall, how much falsehood was concealed under the most honoured type of their contemporary morality, how much virtue was outlived; each time they said: 'We have to go thither, out yonder, where *you* today are least at home.' In face of a world of 'modern ideas' which would like to banish everyone into a corner and 'specialty', a philosopher, assuming that there could be philosophers today, would be compelled to see the greatness of man, the concept 'greatness', precisely in his spaciousness and multiplicity, in his wholeness in diversity: he would even determine value and rank according to how much and how many things one could endure and take upon oneself, how *far* one could extend one's own responsibility… 'He shall be the greatest who can be the most solitary, the most concealed, the most divergent, the man beyond good and evil, the master of his virtues, the superabundant of will; this shall be called greatness: the ability to be as manifold as whole, vast as full.' And, to ask it again: is greatness – possible *today*?[9] (22)

What is the point of being critical for the mere sake of being critical? Such a wrongly formulated question for Nietzsche would be seen as evidence of an abrogation of our responsibilities to others. There is a point to such social madness. Society 'wallows'

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[9] Friedrich Nietzsche; *Beyond Good and Evil*; translated by R.J.Hollingdale; Penguin Books, 1971, Section 212. In the next section, 213, Nietzsche asks What is a philosopher, is, is hard to learn, because it cannot be taught: one has to 'know' it from experience – or one ought to be sufficiently proud *not* to know it. But that nowadays all the world talks of things of which it *cannot* have experience is most and worst evident in respect of philosophers and the philosophical states of mind – very few know them or are permitted to know them, and all popular conceptions of them are false.

in a dark pit of its own making that, if not seen for what it is, will metaphorically encapsulate us in the increasingly dark world of that form of cultural entombment. Basically, without ongoing contestment of our ideas, the attuned intent of such cultural forms of expression, for(-)us, will become increasingly lost. Just as with a bowl of apples not eaten, those pieces of fruit left to their own devices, will start to shrivel and eventually rot before our very own eyes if should we look. And, in this regard, we would not need to look too closely to realize what has happened in the midst of such neglect or oversight. (23)

Being skeptical has an important set of roles to play, namely, the testing of our ideas by looking to see how they were configured;[10] re-learning to see through their historical traces what original insights were being focused upon in their formulations; discerning their dialectical roots in both the complexity and simplicity to be re-met in this world at large through processes of ongoing resolution; just how such modes of engagement render this world as a place that appears to be understood by overlooking what is more easy to leave overlooked, and so on. All in all, such criticisms create an *epoché* or bracketing or a more balanced mapping of that being subjected to such ensuing criticisms. Seriously entertained, criticisms can free us from forms of cultural ossification and institutionalization; an almost inevitable consequence of habitual forms of cultural iteration, proliferation of the relatively non-consequential, the invasion of time-consuming forms of meta-enaction into all corners of our lives, and so on. For Nietzsche, I envisage that the critical use of the skeptical epoch*é* should proffer a reset, a timely mode of redress, a suspension of that being iterated for the mere sake of reiteration, a transcendental or transcendental-like attitude of reflection that would be more open to what might be revealed in the lived-reality of that phenomenon being re-found to hand…? (24)

iv. A ‘transcendental-phenomenological turn’…

Edmund Husserl (1759-1938), over the professional course of his academic career migrated from mathematics to transcendental phenomenology. He is regarded as the founder of transcendental phenomenology. (25)

Around 1906, the idea of the transcendental *epoché* was given its first formulation and marks the beginning of a turn towards a transcendental phenomenology. Husserl argues that all intentionality has an inescapable intentional objectivity towards which the intention intends. Hence the ‘intentional object’ which I more commonly refer to as the ‘intentional objective’ given the range of intentional objects can extend from apples seen in a fruit bowl to your apparent desire to eat one of those apples, from listening to classical music to discussing the intricacies of quantum theory, and so on.[11] (26)

He has been described as introducing two types of *epoché*, namely, a local variety and a global variety. In the latter we are to imagine, e.g., that the whole world has been as if annihilated. It the former we do something similar but only in reference to the situatedness in question along with those phenomena considered as constituting the situatedness of that situation in question. I do not see any difficulties in these two conceptions of the

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[10] Realized through the use of an appositely engaged series of negations, etc.

[11] As noted in the previous essay, from real object(ives) to the irreal object(ives).

transcendental *epoché* or suspension. What is more important is this evocation of an intentional terrain that is being 'cancelled' through some overall, apposite forms of negation. A form of virtual cancellation that, in turn, will also need to be de-suspended (lest we feel trapped within (or without the bounds of that same suspension). This suspension prepares the intentional object, in its apparent constitution, to be explored at face value, i.e., as those phenomenal presentations present themselves to us as either a phenomenon and/or set of relatively related or unrelated phenomena. In our scrutiny, critically attempting to understand how our 'representations' are put together, in terms of their constitution, and so forth. Hence our apparent transcendental appreciation of such matters (27)

We could say that the *epoché* or transcendental suspension prepares the grounds for our critically controlled reflections on the topic to hand to be reduced, subjected to a transcendental reduction; i.e., to be analyzed in order to exhibit the parts of the phenomenal constitution in the manner as it appears to be constituted. Then, to even the books, so to speak, and assist in continuing the dynamically balanced nature of the suspensional process, as a methodological aspect of that process of suspension, we also need to apply a counter-balancing form of transcendental synthesis. Hence these three dialectical, economic modes of 'suspension' or '*epoché*', 'reduction' (or 'analysis'), and, 'synthesis' (or 'reconstitution'). Admittedly, this is how I would 're-interpret' the designs and trends apparent in key sections of Husserl's published works (although Husserl himself laboured over the formation of a voluminous body of writings that are still being prepared for publishing on an incremental basis). (28)

What is to be philosophical gained through the exercise of such a suspension? A set of phenomenological descriptions that should insightfully inform us as to the transcendental constitution of that phenomenon or phenomena being placed under such scrutiny. In effect, the situation in question should reveal to us in what manner it is constituted, what is essentially characteristic of that type of situatedness in question, and so on. At the very least, inform us at to the constituted significance of that being explored through being subjected to such close(r) scrutiny. (29)

Although imaged in the form of the following metaphor, as supplied by myself, and in a form that should not be taken too far, it is as if the intentional objective were 'a patient being interviewed by a physician', but, 'where that patient is freely allowed to voice their anxieties and hopes, their senses of identity and vocation, and so on and so forth, whilst being neither directed nor interrupted by that professional disciplinarian…' In a similar manner, let me cite a few key ideas articulated and disseminated by this philosopher in order to impart an initial understanding of what might be involved:

> Phenomenological reduction is nothing other than a *change of attitude* in which the world of experience comes to be contemplated consistently and universally as a world of *possible experience*, that is, the experiencing life comes to be regarded, that life in which what is experienced is in every case–and universally–a sense of experience with a determinate intentional horizon.[12] (30)

[12] Edmund Husserl; *Ester Philosophie* (*First Philosophy*) [436]. This comment is discussed in *An Introduction to Husserlian Phenomenology*; Rudolf Bennet, *et al*., p.71.

Hence the famous injunction in the opening section of the Logical Investigations, Part II: ('to the thing themselves'):

> Meanings inspired only by remote, confused, inauthentic intuitions–if by any intuitions at all–are not enough: **we must go back to the 'things themselves'**. We desire to render self-evident in fully-fledged intuitions that what is here given in actually performed abstractions is what the word-meanings in our expression of the law[13] really and truly stand for.[14] (31)

The skeptical argumentations (especially those of Hume and the ancient sophists Protagoras and Gorgias) made a deep impression upon Husserl. At the same time, however, they seem directly to have given rise for him to the "transcendental turn" so decisive for his idea of philosophy. He discovered in skepticism itself the hidden transcendental motivation for this turn and proceeded to work this motivation out in a consistent fashion… According to him, such a clarification will succeed thanks precisely to the phenomenological reduction.[15] (32)

Husserl notes that thought, as an intentional process (*noesis*) has intentional content (*noema*) and such objectivity is exposed through the use of the phenomenological reduction:[16]

> The object is an intentional object: this means there is an act that has a determinate intention, and determinate in a way that makes it an intention towards this object. This 'reference to an object' belongs peculiarly and intrinsically to an act-experience, and the experiences manifesting it are by definition intentional experiences or acts. *All differences in mode of objective reference are descriptive differences in intentional experiences*.[17] (33)

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[13] By 'law' Husserl is referring to the laws of a pure logic dealing with the sense of 'concepts', 'judgments', 'truths', etc.

[14] Edmund Husserl; *Logical Investigations* (in two volumes) first published in 1900/1901; translated by J. N. Finley from the second German edition of *Logische Untersuchungen*, Routledge, 1970; [Quotation Volume I, p.168]/Reference: Volume II, Part 1.2.

[15] I am quoting the comments made in *An Introduction to Husserlian Phenomenology*; Rudolf Bennet, *et al*., p.63.

[16] Husserl's understanding of such expressions like *epoché*, transcendental suspension, phenomenological reduction evolves over time. Sometimes overlapping and at other times they have a number of different meanings, different ways of being defined, etc. In my own phenomenological research, I have tried to economically distinguish such dialectical moments and hence my more precise re-interpretations of Husserlian expressions like 'suspension' and 'reduction' (along with another moment of 'reconstitution', etc., along with different degrees and aspects involved in the overall process of the '(extensive) suspension', etc.).

[17] Edmund Husserl; *Logical Investigations*, II.2.20. (p.120). This quotation is discussed in *An Introduction to Husserlian Phenomenology*; Rudolf Bennet, *et al*., p.91.

Hence transcendental phenomenology, in this regard, is a descriptive discipline.[18] Moreover, conducting our descriptions from the perspective of such transcendental objectivity (*noema*) can also be matched by a correlative set of descriptions conducted from the *noetic* side of this same ledger, in a descriptive recognition of those co-associated intentional acts. Hence the important Husserlian concept of a *noetic-noematic* correlativity (which I will take up in Part III in the form of a tripartite economic correlativity envisaged as taking place between phenomenal-phenomenological, hermeneutical and existential aspects and inputs, and, where such a triple commentary, collectively, can both self-correct and self-corroborate a critically enacted form of research when these three subdisciplines, themselves, are critically overseen and are found to find forms of mutual alignment). (34)

The intentional act can be perceived as having three dialectical time-orientations co-occurring in the genesis of the intentional act and its co-associated formation of the intentional object(ive), namely, (present) 'primordial impression', (retrospective) 'retention', and (prospective or anticipatory) 'protention'.[19] For Husserl these constitute the concrete living present, the originary temporal field.[20] (of lived-experience as I would prefer to nominate it). Furthermore, we can run static or genetic sets of descriptions where the latter can be divided between passive or active forms of explication.[21] To this list I would also add *transformative* patterns of enaction and their co-associated sets of descriptions (with the invocation of an existential dimension concomitant with the activity of enacted volition realized through the de-suspended suspension of lived-experience; re-realizing the existentially oriented nature of lived-nature should the relationship in question be preferentially treated[22] in such suitable terms of reference[23]):

> On the basis of phenomenological evidence we can… describe an object and the way it is determined… what belongs to the essence of consciousness insofar as consciousness is consciousness of a certain objectivity… and [we can describe what belongs] to the correlative objectivity to the extent that and in the manner

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[18] Elsewhere, I have argued that hermeneutical concerns are primarily 'prescriptive' in orientation (in a following of genre rules etc.), whereas, existential concerns are primarily 'proscriptive' in orientation (in a determination of what behaviours are seemingly not relatively pro-relational, etc.).

[19] In a re(-)presentational economy these aspects, respectively, would be (phenomenal-phenomenological) presentation, (hermeneutical) representation and (non-systematic existential) re-presentation. 'Phenomenal-phenomenological' in the sense that we must recognize the non-ultimate reducibility of the textually presented objectivity. 'Non-systematic' because we are dealing with the existential 'third moment' and not an ensuing overall sense of an existentially oriented transformation of intent, etc., should the latter be instigated either by the relationship and/or on the behalf of that relationship.

[20] This temporal understanding is discussed in *An Introduction to Husserlian Phenomenology*; Rudolf Bennet, *et al*., p.103.

[21] *An Introduction to Husserlian Phenomenology*; Rudolf Bennet, *et al*., p.201.

[22] Along the lines as noted in the previous essay, Part I, paragraph 47 (III.1p.47). Correctly, the emergent whole' is preferenced as the third moment (and not the 'whole' *per se*) which, effectively, is equivalent to 'whole-and-parts'. Refer to paragraph xx.

[23] Basically forming, in representative appropriation, an 'existential dialectic' involving the immediacy of existential forms of intervention. This 'dialectical economy' will also be seen to economically consist of a prospective 'positively oriented dialectic' (somewhat along the lines as envisaged by Hegel) and a retrospective 'negatively oriented dialectic' (somewhat along the lines as envisaged by Adorno). But this dialectical economy will be briefly introduced and explored in Part B of this same essay.

> that it is intended in this thus constituted consciousness… We are thus continuously occupied with this objective and yet we do not accord it the status of an existent.[24] (35)

Indeed, a primary purpose of the transcendental suspension/reduction is to oversee this suspension of all values. Through such bracketing we are not to be distracted by our ontological and epistemological commitments, etc., in order, therein and thereafter, to attend more closely to the phenomena themselves as phenomenal presentations. But, just as in the noetic activity of intentional consciousness there is an ever-present intentional objectivity, so, too, there is the ever-present sense of transcendental subjectivity, a transcendental Ego or Ego-Pole,[25] which as a polarity and dialectical moment in the constitution of conscious experience must also be correlatively co-associated with the aforementioned *noetic-noematic* correlativity:

> To the cogito itself belongs an immanent "glancing-towards" the object, a directedness which from another side springs forth from the "Ego", which can therefore never be absent. This glancing of the Ego towards something is in harmony with the act involved, perceptive in perception, fanciful in fancy, approving in approval, volitional in will, and so forth.[26] (36)

We can treat these tripolar, correlative facets of phenomenological experience each in a descriptive phenomenological mode, or, more from their own sense of their being experienced in the course of lived-experience. In this regard, I would argue, treating *noetic* activity as relatively hermeneutical in orientation, and, transcendental subjectivity as relatively existential in orientation.[27] In the next section of this essay, let me focus on the hermeneutic side of this three-columned 'ledger'. I will allude to some observations of Heidegger from *Being and Time* but expanding them to illustrate what sort of things would be involved in taking a hermeneutic turn.[28] (37)

v. A 'hermeneutical turn'…

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) makes some interesting comments *vis-à-vis* our use of a hammer. When we need it, and it is to hand, we use it. But, in the course of hammering, if it were to break, become broken and useless, we would then view it quite differently. In effect, the 'ready-to-hand' versus the 'present-to-hand'. I.e., as the 'ready-to-hand' it is there in the world to be used, like a hammer, without actively considering it

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[24] Edmund Husserl; *Logische Untersuchungen*, 230f. Discussed in *An Introduction to Husserlian Phenomenology*; Rudolf Bennet, *et al*., p.96-97.

[25] 'Ego-pole' is suggestive of a polarity towards which we can metaphorically face (and intentionally focus upon to some extent) but that as an objective it is something that can never be reached, obtained, realized in and of itself, etc. *Cartesian Mediations*, No.4, 31-34.

[26] Edmund Husserl, *Ideas*, Part 2.2. 37; translated by W. R. Boyce Gibson; Routledge, 1931.

[27] AAs noted, *noematic* content being primarily treated in a phenomenological mode.

[28] E.g., Heidegger's ideas, e.g., on the hermeneutical circle are here also apposite. Some scholars might also prefer to see Heidegger as more famously taking an 'ontical turn' but my interest at this point is to discuss the critical contributions that could be made by a hermeneutic subdiscipline.

in any theoretical (or critical) mode. It is seen as a handy object, as being there to hand, and only if it were to break would we then see it as the present-to-hand. Basically, in contrast, the 'present-to-hand' is seen as if we were concerned only with the bare facts of that thing being looked at… beheld more in a spirit of disinterestedness, in a neutral space, etc.[29] Somewhere between either a casual observer or scientist. (38)

Now, let me link a few comments made by Heidegger on the use of a hammer and, in exploring them, let me demonstrate my take on this hermeneutic dimension brought into view through the exercise of a hermeneutic turn…

> Equipment can genuinely show itself only in dealings cut to its own measure (hammering with a hammer, for example)… the less we just stare at the hammer-Thing, and the more we seize hold of it and use it, the more primordial our relationship to it becomes, and the more unveiledly is it encountered as that which it is–as equipment… The kind of Being equipment possesses… we call ready-to-hand (*Zuhandenheit*).[30] (39)

But, I must point out that this 'functionality' of the hammer, observed as if beyond the mere appearance of the hammer (in its mere present-to-handedness), is also something that applies to everything… objects; object-states; objectives, like abstract concepts, e.g; indeed, all language itself, etc. (40)

As Heidegger observes:

> (But the 'indicating' of the sign and) the 'hammering' of the hammer are not properties of entities… Anything ready-to-hand is, at the worst, appropriate for some purposes and inappropriate for others… it is not appropriateness of some entity; it is rather the condition (so far as Being is in question) which makes it possible for the character of such an entity to be defined by its appropriateness.[31] (41)

'Appropriateness' is a characteristic hallmark of meta-textual genres, etc., that assist in the operation of a hermeneutical dimension in the use of language, the directedness of behaviour, etc. A text with writing on is as much a blank sheet of paper, or, more correctly, even less than that,[32] if we do not recognize the writing upon its intentionally made surface (as something to be written or drawn upon) to be 'writing', i.e., to fall within the genre of writing (as split between the subgenres of 'writing to be written' and 'writing to be read', and so on). (42)

Now, just what is entailed in our looking at an object or situation or person or persons as if it or they were 'there to be used'? I would argue that our ability to pick up a hammer and hammer, or bash or pound or planish something means we recognize in that

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29 As noted per Wikipedia.

30 Martin Heidegger; *Being and Time* (3rd Edition, 1931); translated by John Macquarie & Edward Robinson; Basis Blackwell, 1962, reprinted 1967; Section 69.

31 *Ibid*; 83. My use of brackets in the first instance of bracketing.

32 Since the intentional recognition of textual depositions must already be in place in order to view, e.g., that 'piece of paper' as that 'having been made as an artifact to be written on'.

object, etc., the co-association of a series of expectations, as possibilities of behaviour, that are codified in the form of genres of behaviour. These meta-textual facets, that facilitate our passage through this world of experience, effectively, are instructions that assist us in reading and/or writing the surface of the world in a manner that has become instrumentally associated with (the particularity of that type of instrument as) that specific object or situation or person or persons, etc. That attendant upon the performance of all forms of activity are these meta-textual genres that inform how we are to utilize that which has come to hand so to speak. In other words, all intentions are performances exercised within these meta-textual restraints that then allow us to find a 'freedom' through the successful delivery of such aspirational intent. Try sweeping a backyard thick with Autumn leaves with a broom that is basically broken and keeps falling apart, more often than not? (43)

The hermeneutic appreciation of the world at large is realized through the exercise of genres of both attitude and behaviour, encompassing both passively oriented reception ('reading') and actively oriented inscription of behaviour ('writing'). To assist us in this informing of intentional attitudes and patterns of behaviour we have what I refer to as con-textual types of situations (*con-texts*) that have co-associated sets of genres associated with the same. So, e.g., with a hammer we pick it up, swing it onto the target chosen, and hopefully, we are successful in hitting the target as intended. From con-textual recognition of type, in the light of behavioural aspirations, we have genres of behaviour whose rules of prescription/s are progressively defined through conventional practice. In the pursuit of such genres of attitude and behaviour we construct 'narratives' in which we tell either ourselves and/or others just what we intend to do and achieve through the use of such behaviour. The ensuing choice of narrational structures adopted and adapted to the re(-)direction of present exigencies also reveals the sense of the 'persona' of that person (re)enacting such a self-narration/other-narration, be that exercised either advertently or inadvertently. (44)

So, e.g., today, I have been given a small bag of walnuts. Now, I would like to eat them. They need to be cracked open. This is the 'con-text'. I take each nut and wrap them in a piece of tissue. I line them up on a chopping board. With the hammer I smash each wrapped-up nut. Hence the patterns observed in this instance of nut-cracking conform to this 'genre' of 'nut-cracking' (albeit in a 'style' as adopted and adapted by myself). I tell myself, that I would like to eat these walnuts hence this 'self-narrative'. The anomalization driving the instantiation of this narrative is the fact that 'I want to eat these walnuts and, therefore, need to open their shells'. In this narrative, my specified persona is as a 'nut-cracker using a hammer'. When those nuts are cracked, opened and duly eaten, the resolution of this narrative is duly observed. In this regard, we can say our narrative has a definitive 'hermeneutic objective' and that that objective, in this instance of a narrative, was met (bringing that narrative to a decisive sense of an ending).[33] (45)

Such interpretative considerations also indicate that we need to take into account the recognition of a distinctive, experiential, pro-relational sense of a 'hermeneutic ho-

[33] Exemplifying, so far, five out of the six hermeneutical characteristics explored in the extended-essay. The sixth being the concept of 'hermeneutic holism' about to be introduced.

lism'. I.e., that if we were merely to observe 'wholes' versus their 'parts', and v.v., no amount of time spent would communicate to ourselves the 'emergent sense of that whole' as a 'relatively totalized process of totalization' just as no staring at some part of a totality would ever extend to us the idea of that part as a part of its relatively co-associated totality, and v.v., A 'bag of coins' would then merely be a mere 'bag of coins', and, each 'coin' would be no more and no less than a mere 'coin', and, therefore, neither the twain would ever meet. Indeed, part/s and whole/s would have no meaning *vis-à-vis* each other! To understand that the 'bag of coins' is also a '"bag' with 'coins'", and v.v., we need to entertain a third party, the so-called 'third moment', namely, a '(non-systematic) existential moment' (within the economics of an archetypal economy). Indeed, a third party with the functional-structure that could be equated with 'parts-and-whole(s)' (or, 'whole(s)-and-parts').[34] Arguing here, that this third moment allows us to experience the emergence of that whole as something greater than the mere sum of its parts, being (experienced), namely, as 'whole-and-parts'. This third moment contributes a necessary third dimension to our experience of the relationship between a 'whole and its mere determination of 'parts', and v.v.' I.e., this 'existential aspect'; without which the emergence of its relative totality in the relationship could not be experienced as being something greater than either a mere 'whole' or a mere 'part'.[35] [36] (46)

Importantly, in the light of this exposition, we should understand that no phenomenological dimension would be ever able to view either the intentional constructiveness imposed upon the world or the mere manifestation of its naturalness (to that extent it is left uncircumscribed by human intentions) without this hermeneutic dimension in which appropriate genres of behaviour are prescribed for(-)us, and *vice versa*. Moreover, like a three-legged stool or chair, an existentially oriented dimension must also be in place lest our world of lived-interactions fall over for us in a state of lived-non-comprehension. Let me explain myself. (47)

vi. An 'existential turn'…

A hermeneutic relationship is observed between our psychic perception of what is relatively regarded as 'parts' and 'wholes'. But, the emergence of a relative sense of totality greater than the 'mere whole' as a 'mere sum of its parts' necessitates this existential dimension in (economic) experience. Hence this so-called 'third moment' expressed through the (hyphenated) designation of 'whole-and-parts' and to be discerned as that existential aspect of experience that cannot be merely reduced to either 'a collection of parts' or the 'mere totality' of the 'mere whole as a sum of its perceived parts'. That our

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[34] On par with 'the chicken and egg problem, as to which came first?' Proposing that we have 'chickens', 'eggs', and 'chickens-and-eggs' where the latter moment gives us our 'primordial entry' to that distinctively problematic relationship. Or, in lived-experience we find the simultaneous co-association of both 'eggs and chickens', so to speak metaphorically.

[35] Hence these six hermeneutic characteristics explored under the concepts of con-texts, genres, narratives, personae, narrational objectives and hermeneutic holism.

[36] In a harmonic reading of the archetypal economy we start with World (consonance), Object (dissonance), and, Ego (resolution). In this harmonic ordering, World is the 'first economic moment' whereas the moment of 'whole-and-parts' is equivalent to the resolutional nature of Ego and is usually read as the so-called 'third moment'.

existential experience of 'wholes' should be regarded as aspects that are also limited or scoped, as emergent, as interactive, as experiences to be had in our experience of 'whole/s-and-parts' whilst, at the same time, not (mis)-treating such 'lived-experience' as an impossible, absolutistic totality imagined without limits in some form or other, etc. Hence the necessity of experience to be regarded as a threefold interaction between phenomenological, hermeneutical and existential aspects dialectically co-inhabiting an interactive 'space' between their apparent individuality (of approach) and overall totality (in their being collectively approached). (48)

In effect, this third moment, of the non-systematic existential moment, is the 'doorway' to the lived-experience that is realized as a 'systematically-oriented sense of the existential'.[37] I.e., that metaphorical 'space' between 'the relatively individual parts, whole/s and parts-and-whole/s' and the 'lived-experience of their relative totality…' (49)

Our lived-experience takes on an existential tenor characterized by profoundly different senses of time, space, subjectivity and inter-subjectivity along with a difference in our experience of those economic moments of Object, Ego and World; i.e., including how we perceive and treat embodiment, find an embeddedness with(-)others, and, our embankment with a sense of world that no longer can be treated non-environmentally as a mere world, as a background that is just there for us to use in a mere instrumental modality, and so on! (50)

Or as Martin Buber (1878-1965) puts it:

> The world of experience belongs to the basic word I-It.[38]
> The basic word I-Thou establishes the world of relations.[39]
>
> The basic word I-Thou can only be spoken with one's whole being.
> The basic word I-It can never be spoken with one's whole being.[40]
>
> When I confront a human being as my Thou and speak word I-Thou to him, then he is no thing among things nor does he consist of things.
> He is no longer He or She, limited by other Hes and Shes…[41] (51)

The existentially oriented sense of experience has different hallmarks that on reflection we, too, can recognize. In expression, perhaps we can find and refine a language already embedded in natural language in which such existential insights are to be revealed (through a repurposing of such language, giving it a pro-relational reading, invok-

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[37] I have also argued elsewhere, in the extended-essay in this third volume, that through economic correlativity that the adequate simulation of any one economic mode will established all three economic modes, and, whose collective suspension, in turn, will also radiate out into the totality of the extensive suspension (instrumental in the economic re(-)direction and productivity of that same economy).

[38] I.e., Buber is treating both the expressions 'I-It' and 'I-Thou' as basic words.

[39] Martin Buber; *I and Thou* (1923); translated by Walter Kaufmann, T. & T. Clark, 1970. P.54. I have translated 'You' by 'Thou'.

[40] *Ibid*., p. 54.

[41] *Ibid*., p. 59.

ing the [extensive] suspension, etc.). Sadly, this dimension of being is more overlooked even though it is also intuitively understood by most people should they reflect upon its deeply abiding being-there as if 'waiting' to be found 'for(-)us/by(-)us' in lived-experience:[42]

> The It-world hangs together in space and time.
> The Thou-world does not hang together in space and time.
> The individual Thou must become an It when the event of the relation has run its course.
> Then individual It can become a Thou by entering into the relation of the event.[43]
>
> And in all seriousness of truth, listen: without It a human cannot live. But whosoever lives only with that is not human.[44] (52)

So, we are called upon to recognize this two-fold nature of human existence. I.e., recognize both a natural, material, intentional sense of experience, and, a transcendental, trans-intentional, existential sense of existence… where both realms must play their part given that 'the existential is realized through an existentialization (Thou-ing) of the relatively non-existential (It)'; i.e., through a pro-relational treatment of the relatively non-pro-relational… which, among a number of ways of seeing this, would basically involve a re(-)aligned process of re(-)centering within the pro-relational being of the relationship… (53)

Hopefully, in our critical reception of a relatively non-critical philosophy or in critiquing a philosophy with such pretensions, or, indeed, in our setting out to formulate a philosophy worthy of that objective, it behooves us to take such insightfully productive 'revolutions' on board. Now, in this regard, it would appear to me that whilst most philosophies are somewhat lacking a critical tenor, still, most philosophers have a range of insights to fruitfully bear on this important pursuit. In continuing this second essay let me look now at a set of six more insightful features that will further refine our critical appreciation of lived-experience even though no final, refined interpretation of the same will ever find a perfect accord with this world as lived, this overall life-world, this world-of-life to be shared both 'with others' and 'with-others'…[45] (54)

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42 This existential dimension being attested to in many wise sayings, like e.g., 'two heads are better than one', 'like minds think alike', and so on.

43 *Ibid*., 84.

44 *Ibid*., 85.

45 Our research ever being as a 'work in progress', deconstructing so-called forms of indubitable truth (although not without reference to relatively valid forms of truth determination), without (a need for) 'foundations', and, steering clear of all form of absolutistical totalization of so-called lived-experience (which could not be totalized without 'death', i.e., the 'death of the relationship' and all who (no longer can) sail therein).

B. Gleaning Insights in the Critical Pretensions of Modernists, Postmodernists, etc.

i. The positive nature of the Hegelian dialectic..?

'Dialectics' has figured in philosophy right from the beginning given that people proffer different ways of seeing the 'same' world, change their minds, question their own understandings, and so on. E.g., the Socratic method that promises, at the very least, to discard that which is shown to be wrong and not knowledge; even if never quite supplying a promised vision of the truth able to stand the test of time. I suspect that the best critic of Platonic forms was Plato himself. But, heading in an idealistic direction, through the over-preferencing of universal (forms) what else could be have proposed given that type of prejudice (that despite some small variations in the Platonic argument even Aristotle could not discard)? (55)

I would like to perceive the overall arc of the Hegelian dialectic as relatively positive; through an expansion of terms, through a focusing on an actualized realization of possibilities that are no longer left as just potentials. So, e.g., in the death of the seed the seedling arises. The so-called 'being' of the seed contains its own destruction in the form of the becoming of a seedling (or the dissolution of the seed unable to sprout) where the 'seed' has embedded in its ideality the potential to be a viable non-seed. (56)

However, if we were to take a more epistemological and transcendental orientation, we would be moving away from such concepts like 'being' (or the 'abstract'), 'nothing' ('negation'), and 'becoming' (or the 'concrete'), etc., that almost possess a deceptive, metaphorical-like tenor. In their place we should see such categories as conceptual-ideas that are engaged wherein we realize that through the economic limitations placed upon the intentional experience of all forms of thought we would then recognize that no pure concepts like 'being', etc., could even be thought.[46] But, we overlook that small fact and persist with such bankrupt ideas and ideals. It is because they cannot be definitively thought, however, that they are dialectical(ly engendered). So, e.g., we cannot think 'heat' without its correlative of cold (or as 'non-heat' or 'not hot') and, so, understandably, the concept of heat cannot be something that exists 'purely in and of itself' or be found well-represented through the adoption of any other pseudo-philosophical or pseudo-scientific formula. Given our interactive engagement with represented states and that the nature of experience is change (if only through the very nature of thought being able to arise through economic variation arising within the requisite economy/economies) it

[46] However, it should be noted, in one type of situation, that the phenomenologist is allowed to talk about so-called 'pure experiences'. I.e., when they are dealing with particular phenomenological instances apparently possessing the same particular sense in essential type. I.e., when, e.g., a specific taste experience of saline water, with a salt concentration that allows it to be determined as salty to the taste, then allows us from such similar experiences to invoke a certain range of taste experiences that will be denominated as 'salty', In reverse, we can then eidetically imagine a range of salty experiences within the ambit of that field co-associated with the designation of 'salty' (and whose synonyms include 'saline', 'brimy', 'brackish', etc). In this regard, the phenomenologist postulates a miscellany of such distinctively essential-like experiences from which a semantic mapping of our cultural-intercultural world utilizes as the relatively basic inventory in its working with such essential-like units, and, where semantic rules exist for those molecular combinations whose integrations are considered to be possible and demonstratable in experience. E.g., 'salt' plus 'water' gives us 'salty tasting water' (but 'salt' plus 'red' is semantically forbidden).

follows that dialectical progressions would naturally arise (if only through our noticing such different or divergent progressions), and so on. (57)

Georg Wilhelm Friedrick Hegel (1770-1831), we should note, never used the formula 'thesis, antithesis and synthesis'. For a start, the dialectical progression should preferably follow a harmonic trajectory of 'background synthesis of field, consonant focus, and ensuing resolution (characterized as a moment of 'framing' or 're(-)framing')' and consequently the dialectical moment of 'synthesis' is the first dialectical moment and never the third moment when given a harmonic reading! In this regard we could dynamically treat the 'abstract' as relatively unchanging and static or consonant, but, through change, it loses that status through negation to introduce and element of the dissonant that then finds a form of resolution in the concrete realization whose reality was already present in the abstract, albeit as a potential ideality. Just as the potentially ideality of the oak tree is entailed in the acorn that if viable and given the right pre-conditions and conditions can become the post-condition of an oak tree… (58)

I would also like to argue that the expansive nature of a positive dialectic is relatively prospective and progressive in orientation. Moreover, such non-reductive, emergent tendencies will also open it up to the need to invoke new genres of behaviour through either the adaptive extension of the same, hybridization of genres and/or the adoption and adaptation of other genres regarded as more appropriate for where that dialectical progression is found to be heading and hence its taking on a relatively hermeneutical flavour or complexion. (59)

ii. The negative nature of the dialectic as proposed by Adorno..?

In a contrast to this vision of the Hegelian dialectic, the negative dialectic of a Theodore Adorno (1903-1969) recognizes that at some epistemological level of scrutiny, through the unique specificity of the object, etc., we just will not be able to observe forms of ever-enlarging forms of emergent accommodation, sublation, negation of the negations, etc. Under such circumstances, an emergence of an identification of identities and non-identities into wider terms of reference is just not possible, and, we are left with discontinuities that just have to be accepted. Such a dialectical sense of focus taking a retrospective, more detailed, analytical style of approach that parallels the phenomenal-phenomenological subdiscipline. (60)

In arguing for these diametrically opposed styles of dialectic, whether proposed or not proposed as such, by such philosophers, I would also like to conjecture that an 'existential dialectic' can be added to this otherwise bimodal contest between such positive and negative styles. That collectively, these three dialectics in their mutually determining degrees of correlativity or non-correlativity as determined as present or absent, by such means that they would eventually be able to run a philosophical prospect that is both self-correcting and self-corroborating in the same manner as I will later propose could exist

when hermeneutical, phenomenological, and existential subdisciplines are exercised in parallel.[47] (61)

iii. Derridean Deconstruction..?

Derridean deconstruction could be read as but a continuation of the dialectical spirit bubbling along beneath the efflorescence of Western culture? (62)

'Deconstruction', technically, in keeping with the spirit of Postmodern thought and criticism, should be read as 'a present(ed) de-privileging of cultural preferences which were imposed as cultural imperatives through forms of cultural oversight, short-sightedness, blindness, etc., and where that culture is effectively oblivious to the distortions that have ensued from such past prioritizations with inevitable ramifications for the continuance of future forms of cultural promotions that will also continue to distort the diminished 'spirit' or 'tone' of that culture… unless suitably self-dismantled… (63)

Personally, given that the artifacts of our thinking, more or less, are 'cultural relics rethought', and, given that we cannot think without the adoption and adaptation of genres already to hand, it follows that deconstruction should apply to all intentional constructs given their ideological antecedents. (64)

Then, again, given the dialectical engendering of all intentional forms of production, both epistemological and ontological, it follows that dialectical criticism should apply to all constructs, both epistemological and ontological,[48] etc. (65)

But, from an existential perspective, let us observe through experience and reflection that all texts when leant upon will deconstruct, but, that texts that are less authentically fabricated are more easily deconstructed! (66)

That such critical pressures can 'test' the degree to which a text, a series and/or set/s of texts is or are constructed in a relatively *ad hoc* manner. That, I am sure, Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) had great enjoyment in this form of philosophical playfulness when through various strategies the binding of a textual situation is suitably unfastened… (67)

iv. Prejudice/prejudgment and the fusion of horizons according to Gadamer..?

Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002), as a hermeneuticist, to my mind, supplies two very influential ideas with critical ramifications. First, that we have to begin somewhere and that somewhere begins with our 'prejudices' as 'prejudgments', but, that through suspensions and other strategies we can travel beyond the prejudicial boundaries of our first beginnings. Indeed, finding a form of freedom through such migration given that we no longer need to be so beholden to these first beginnings (despite their initial necessity

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[47] Indeed, we could argue that this mix of these three dialectical styles does exactly the same economic work as would be involved in exercising these three subdisciplinary economies in parallel.

[48] By contrast with the epistemological, merely implying that the 'ontological' is 'all that beyond the intentional world of thought…'

of having to be put forward in such a prejudiced/prejudged format or form). Second, that we can expand our hermeneutic horizons, and move well past our first beginnings through a fusion of horizons when different perspectives find a relevant, emergent form of overlapping, integration, ensuing transformation of our understanding as a working understanding, given that all understanding is ever a work in progress, etc. (68)

v. The democratic-like dissemination of power according to Foucault..?

If I had to focus on one creative, critical idea put forward by Michel Foucault (1926-1984) it would be one aspect from his ideas about the dissemination of power. Contrary to conventional perceptions all forms of power inherently have a democratic basis. In a short-sighted mode we might be tempted to say that 'person A has power over person B if a command is emitted by A and that communication is received by B and where B then does as directed'. But, in the usual transmission of power such enactions usually do not follow on from the reiteration of commands. Instead, the dissemination of power is cooperative affair and here each 'node' on this 'chain' in the dissemination of power is democratically assented to, at least hypothetically, by each and every link in that dissemination of power. Now, such cooperation could be arrived at through either co-operation and/or co-option, still, that chain of dissemination when it exists could be broken or obstructed or distorted or diverted or subverted by any one or more links in that chain of dissemination. In other words, this chain of dissemination can be broken at any time should one of those links 'democratically' decide not to transmit such power through their participation. Of course, this could be a dangerous practice for such a non-participant. Still, looked at *en masse* if enough participants decide not to cooperate or set out to obstruct or corrupt these chains of command then the power differentials between such agents is effectively disabled. A phenomenon that both democratically elected and non-democratically non-elected rulers are most fearful of having to confront, especially the latter. (69)

In the envisaged dissemination of existentially oriented forms of intervention in and through our relationships, as we will be called upon from time to time, if not day by day, the same rules apply; suggesting, on balance, that it might be better to win the cooperation, affection or respect of others in the dissemination of such power rather than co-opting those involved parties to do as such. Where this tendency for 'co-option' is usually more indicative of a non-existentially oriented exercise in power relations. (70)

vi. Habermas and the theory of communicative action..?

In our passage through this world at large we have 'navigation' around things, 'negotiation' with others, and, a much more complex form of negotiation I refer to as 'arbitration'. In examining the aspirational economy,[49] and its formation and realization of

[49] The aspirational economy narrowly oversees the need for a realistic appraisal of where we are, where we idealistically intend to head towards, and, the pragmatic nature of how we go from the qualified realism of the former to the qualified idealism of the latter. Hence the dialectics of this economy entail these considerations of our negotiating the 'where (we are)', the 'why (of our prioritized intentional objectives)' and the 'how (we pragmatically arrive at this idealized sense of a destination)'.

personal desires and ambitions along with interpersonal forms of social aspiration, it soon becomes obvious that as a person 'emplaced' in this world we are also 'displaced' because our non-virtual intentions cannot be enacted spontaneously like those intentions given a virtual simulation. Hence our need to observe short-term projects and more complex, longer-term programs. By such means we eventually displace such displacement in a process of 'de-displacement'. Ever as 'works in progress' it is also obvious that we have had to both internally and externally compromise over which projects and program, hopefully, we will be able to oversee and direct to a successful state of fruition. As we are all dependent upon others, and others are dependent upon us, it follows that to prosecute the realization of our aspirations we must also seek the cooperation of others, and, through internal arbitration work out which projects and programs get prioritized in the light of our recognition that we must also oversee those projects and programs entrusted to us by others. This dialectical complexity obviously deconstructs the relative simplicity of an aspirational economy given that complex forms of arbitration need to be negotiated with both ourselves and others, indeed, no doubt, in and through quite involved processes of re(-)negotiation as our personal-interpersonal landscape must changes both for(-)us and about(-)us. It is in attempting to better comprehend the complexity of such negotiations that I find the work of Jürgen Habermas (1929-) to be quite attractive, at least to the extent of acting as a beginning point in our philosophically confronting such situational complexities. In this regard, trying to understand how we negotiate with others, how do we do that in good faith, how do we deal with people who have non-coinciding interests, how do we democratize the *demos*, how should we deal or not deal with conspiracies, to what extent should people be open to each other, just how do we communicate our own concerns and discern the concerns of others, and so on. The type of theoretical approach that, in all honesty, needs to be radically rethought whilst also preserving those insights that do proffer some valuable form of theoretical stability and deserve to be re(-)valued and not devalued or disvalued, and so on. (71)

3. The Problem Has Taken a Philosophical Turn and is Now No Longer with Us…

It was not that too long ago, at least for some of us, to remember that houses were designed to incorporate a meat safe on the side of the wall. Preferably, on the sunless southside of the building. Then, along came refrigerators and motor cars, pre-conditions for the rise of the modern supermarket. The downside being, in all probability, you no longer strolled to your local shopping center to reengage *the butcher, baker and candlestick maker*… and, had to buy a car if the local transport was inadequate or absent… but, such is progress. (72)

In the philosophical life-world, through consensus, we can also periodically announce instances of such progress… (73)

With the advent of philosophical turns, old problems have gone away… They have been dissolved, solved or resolved; they have been retired, all too soon to be buried or cremated. Inevitably, though, new problems have arisen keeping new philosophical souls fully ensconced in such worthwhile employment… (74)

I jest, but, exercising a suitable philosophical turn is one way philosophical progress can be demonstrated. Hence this profitable reframing of a problem. In effect problematizing the problem and rendering the way that problem was once seen as now no longer so problematic or as problematic as it would have been viewed. In this regard, we can see Plato as making philosophical progress… which we are still talking about today. But, as noted, such turns invite the advent of new problems… which, itself, can be seen as a form of progress..? (75)

Philosophical insight, new ways of dealing with philosophical problems, the creative addition of novel methods, and so on also indicate the semblance of philosopical progress. (76)

However, I would contend that the critical exercise of a philosophical approach should proffer more that merely discovering new problems, but, in its deployment of a sense of insight that it also has existential ramifications beyond the philosophical discipline, indeed, beyond disciplines in general. To this extent, a critical philosophy must also have a critical non-philosophical dimension wherein the fruits of its labours have beneficial consequences for both philosophers and non-philosophers alike… (77)

In these six philosophical 'turns' and sets of 'insights' just articulated, from my relatively *ad hoc* list of twelve chosen philosophers, can the imputation of this existential dimension be demonstrated? (78)

I would like to think that the fact that we are dealing with the insightful discourses of such individuals, sometimes centuries later, is reason enough to believe that the philosophical discourse is not just philosophically discursive, within the philosophical discipline, but also has an existential path to tread as well. (79)

In this light, I like to think that the innovations of others should also be incorporated and integrated into those revised critical frameworks that can continue this sense of 'our' making philosophical progress; albeit step by step… that, alas, is sometimes decried, but, at other times, is to be so admired… (80)

Hence the understood appropriation, misappropriation… of the innovations of others, something that is both inescapable and inevitable… (81)

Thence our creatively qualified admiration for philosophical 'turns' that are epistemological, transcendental, skeptical, phenomenological, hermeneutical, existential, and so on, and, our lasting admiration for those 'insights' into the re-strengthening of dialectical engagements and required forms of deconstruction, appreciating the prejudiced nature of our philosophical origins, observing a desire for the fruitful fusion of horizons (through forms of economic complexification, e.g.), in developing an understanding as to how political forms of power are both disseminated and can be instrumental in the successful preservation and advancement of an ongoing democratization of the political-economy…. (82)

4. Provisional Conclusions, Comments, and Observations

Sadly, in my estimation, most philosophers run philosophical enterprises as if they were unwieldy ships trapped upon the high seas and where a lack of flexibility, deficient adaptation, an inability to find an ongoing modification of their ideas, etc., will inevitably mean they will end up either sunk at sea or smashed upon the rocks of some nearby coast. But, not all is lost. Stripped down, they can proffer valuable and profitable lines in salvage… (83)

At the core of most philosophies are existential insights that are worth salvaging, so to speak… (84)

We do not have to subscribe to a certain philosophy, but, what is overlooked within their august presence, more often than not, may be well-worth re-appropriating, purloining, making your own. But, then, in such reclaiming, new forms of philosophical expression will also emerge… given that old ideas put in new bottles will present that same ideas in a new light, perhaps with a renewed sense of flavour and vigour, able to inspire further ideas, an enrichment of our understanding of this world at large, and so on and so forth… (85)

Let us take the very best from antiquity[50] and yesteryear, critically transforming it more to our own liking, more in harmony with the spirit of our own times..!? (86)

Noël Tointon, Wentworth Falls, 28.1.21.

[50] A Confucian way of seeing the past; learning from the past and avoiding, hopefully, remaking past mistakes.