

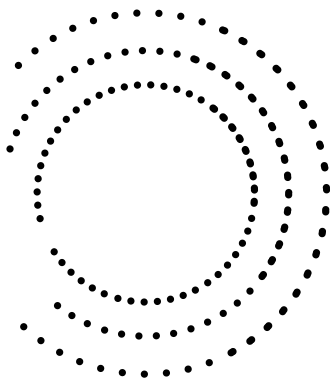


Institute of Philosophy

Faculty of Philosophy
Ss. Cyril and Methodius University
in Skopje

International Conference **Philosophy and Reality**

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



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International Conference

Philosophy and Reality

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International Conference “Philosophy and Reality”

Institute of Philosophy, Faculty of Philosophy

Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje

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WELCOME ADDRESS

Dear Colleagues and Participants,

It is our great pleasure to welcome you to the International Conference “Philosophy and Reality,” organized by the Institute of Philosophy at the Faculty of Philosophy, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the Institute of Philosophy.

The conference brings together scholars from different philosophical traditions, generations, and academic communities to reflect on one of philosophy’s most enduring concerns: reality and the many ways in which we seek to understand, interpret, and question it. The contributions gathered in this Book of Abstracts approach this theme from a wide range of perspectives – from metaphysics, epistemology and the philosophy of science to ethics, aesthetics, political and social philosophy, philosophy of language, education, psychology, and contemporary questions concerning technology and artificial intelligence.

The diversity of these approaches reflects our intention to create a space for genuine philosophical dialogue across disciplines, traditions, and generations. We are particularly pleased that the conference brings together established scholars, early-career researchers, and doctoral students from N. Macedonia and abroad, making this anniversary not only an occasion to look back on the Institute’s eight decades of academic work, but also an opportunity to open new conversations and connections for the future.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all participants, plenary speakers, colleagues, students, and friends whose contributions and support have made this gathering possible.

We hope that the conference will offer two days of stimulating discussion, intellectual exchange, and new encounters, and that your time in Skopje will be both academically rewarding and enjoyable.

Welcome to Skopje and to “Philosophy and Reality.”

The Organizing and the Program Committee
International Conference “Philosophy and Reality”
Institute of Philosophy, Faculty of Philosophy
Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje

PLENARY SPEAKERS



Stephen PRIEST

Stephen Priest is Senior Research Fellow in Philosophy at Blackfriars Hall, Oxford, a member of Wolfson College, Oxford, and Hughes Hall, Cambridge. He was a member of the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Oxford from 2000-2024.

Stephen Priest is the author of *The British Empiricists* (Penguin), *Theories of the Mind* (Penguin), *Merleau-Ponty* (Routledge), *The Subject in Question* (Routledge), editor of *Hegel's Critique of Kant* (Oxford University Press) and *Jean-Paul Sartre: Basic Writings* (Routledge) and co-editor (with Antony Flew) of *A Dictionary of Philosophy* (Pan/Macmillan). His writing has been translated into Korean, Japanese, Macedonian, Russian, Spanish, and Turkish.

Stephen Priest has been Visiting Professor at the Slavic University, Bitola (Macedonia), Université de Bretagne Occidentale (France), Dartmouth College (USA), Fort Lewis College, Colorado (USA), Saporro University (Japan), Keio University (Japan), University of Rhode Island (USA), Ruhr-Universität, Bochum (Germany), St. Cyrill and Methodius University, Skopje (Macedonia), Slavic University, Sveti Nicole (Macedonia), Tokyo Nihon University (Japan), University of Warsaw (Poland), Westfälischen Wilhelms-Universität Münster (Germany), Zagreb University (Croatia). He has held a Harvard Fellowship in Philosophy and Public Affairs at the Salzburg Seminar (Austria).

LECTURE:

IS ANYTHING FUNDAMENTAL?

Philosophy differs from other subjects in being the attempt to answer those questions we have no established method for addressing. Some are intensely personal or existential. For example: *Who looks through your eyes? Why is anything yourself?* A subset concerns what has to be, in order for anything to be. For example: *What is existence? Is anything really necessary? Why is the time now?* But, one of the hardest parts of doing philosophy is understanding the questions; partly because we think we already understand them. In the talk, Stephen Priest tries to engage in fundamental thinking, disclosing some ultimate presuppositions of everyday life, of anything.

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Olga MARKIČ

Prof. dr. Olga Markič is affiliated with the Philosophical Research program at the Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, where she taught various courses until her retirement in 2025. Her main research interests include philosophy of mind, philosophy of cognitive science, philosophy of science, logic and argumentation, and Buddhist philosophy. She is the author and co-author of several scholarly books, among them *O odločanju in osebni avtonomiji* (*On Decision-Making and Personal Autonomy*, with Toma Strle, 2021), the monograph *Kognitivna znanost: filozofska vprašanja* (*Cognitive Science: Philosophical Questions*, 2011), and the textbook *Osnove logike* (*Foundations of Logic*, with Marko Uršič, 1997/2003/2020). She has also edited and co-edited interdisciplinary volumes, including *Philosophical Insights About Modern Science* (2009) and *Mind in Nature: From Science to Philosophy* (2012), which reflect her sustained engagement with the intersections between contemporary scientific research and philosophical analysis.

LECTURE:

SCIENCE: OBJECTIVITY, VALUES AND TRUST

The position that science should be value-neutral to accomplish objectivity is still the predominant view among STEM scientists. This position accepts epistemic and cognitive values, such as consistency, simplicity, and explanatory power, but prohibits non-epistemic values, including ethical and social values, to have the power to influence the selection and acceptance of scientific theories.

Such a view of objectivity has been critically examined by authors who emphasize that science is embedded within society. In this paper, I will draw on Douglas's (2016) proposal, which highlights three challenges to this ideal of science: the descriptive challenge, the demarcation challenge, and the normative challenge. I will then consider interdisciplinarity and the role philosophy should play in it. I will criticize that interdisciplinary investigations are often used merely as an instrumental approach to solving problems. I will argue that the instrumental, means-centered view — where scientists from various disciplines develop means and instruments to reach solutions — must be supplemented by a reflection on goals and values, including non-epistemic values such as ethical, social, cultural and personal considerations. In the last part, I will focus on the question of trust, especially in the context of new technologies (e. g. generative AI), that significantly affect humans and the environment.

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Stelios VIRVIDAKIS

Stelios Virvidakis has studied philosophy at National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, at the University of Paris I and at Princeton University. He has taught at various universities in Greece and abroad and is Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at the Department of History and Philosophy of Science of National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. His publications include books in metaethics, textbooks for the teaching of philosophy in Greek high schools and many articles in Greek, in French and in English. His current research interests include ethics, epistemology, philosophy of religion and philosophy of literature. He has been a member of the European Cultural Parliament (ECP) since 2005 and was a member of the Steering Committee of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies (FISP) from 2008 to 2024. In 2006, he was awarded the title of Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques by the French Government. In 2022 he was elected as a member of the Institut International de Philosophie (IIP) and also as President of the Steering Committee of the newly founded Center of Greek and Chinese Ancient Civilizations (KELKIP), of which he is now the Secretary.

LECTURE:

ON THE RELATIONS BETWEEN EPISTEMIC AND MORAL VIRTUES - THE ARISTOTELIAN LEGACY AND CONTEMPORARY VIRTUE EPISTEMOLOGY

This paper proposes a study of the relations between epistemic and moral virtues. It begins with an analysis of the original Aristotelian model of the necessary cooperation between practical wisdom (*phronesis*) and moral virtues and proceeds to an assessment of alternative conceptions elaborated in the context of contemporary virtue epistemology. I discuss and try to counter well-known objections to virtue epistemology, especially of a *responsibilist* variety, which are similar to objections to virtue ethics as a whole. I conclude by defending a more or less strong analogy between sets of the two kinds of virtues. Moreover, drawing on considerations regarding the application of the conceptions in question to the adjudication of real life ethical dilemmas and debates at the time of the recent Covid 19 pandemic, I focus on the function of epistemic and moral virtues (and vices), with a view to highlighting their mutual relations.

I am going to argue that some of the ways in which we tried to cope with the crisis we were confronted with reveal important connections and a kind of synergy between basic intellectual virtues sustaining scientific inquiry, and more generally the pursuit of truth seeking and of rational decision making, and ethical virtues of prudence, but also courage, honesty and solidarity, both at an individual and at a social level. Conversely, epistemic vices, which have unfortunately become rather widespread in recent years, entailing indifference to truth and rationality and leading to the endorsement of conspiracy theories and to the uncritical adoption of populist agendas, go along with pernicious character defects, eventually undermining the commitment to promoting our own well-being and to fulfilling our obligations to others. My approach aims at buttressing a broader ethics of responsibility and dignity based on the respect of deontological constraints and on the cultivation of virtues ensuring the implementation of central norms of thought and action.

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Carmen VELAYOS CASTELO

Carmen Velayos Castelo is a Professor of Moral and Political Philosophy at the University of Salamanca and one of the pioneers of ecoethics and bioethics in the Spanish-speaking academic community. Since the 1990s, her research has focused on the ethical dimensions of environmental crises and climate change, exploring both individual and collective responsibility. She has published extensively on bioethics, environmental ethics, climate ethics, and ecopolitics, and has delivered more than one hundred invited lectures internationally. Her work is strongly interdisciplinary, bringing philosophy into dialogue with the natural and social sciences. She currently directs the research group Ethical Challenges for the Ecopolitical Transition in Crisis Times.

LECTURE:

**ECOLOGICAL AND GLOBAL BIOETHICS
FOR NEW FORMS OF REALITY**

We are gaining access to new realities in the field of bioethical problems that would have been unthinkable just a few decades ago. For example, the possibility of genetically editing our future children, of degrading the commons, of bringing an end to life on Earth, of addressing problems of oppression and harms that arise not so much from individual acts as from structures of action that collectively produce harm (aggregate harms); of dealing with moral harms toward the future, or harms that stem, in part, from the actions of past agents (justice oriented toward the past). These new realities compel us to justify new types of arguments in response to moral harm and within the framework of a global, ecological, and Potterian bioethics.

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SESSION SPEAKERS

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INTERPRETING THE NOTION OF EDUCATION IN HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY

ТОЛКУВАЊЕ НА ПОИМОТ ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ ВО ФИЛОЗОФИЈАТА НА ХЕГЕЛ¹

This article aims at rethinking the notion of education in Hegel's philosophy in the context of the Enlightenment as an event in human history, and to provide a short overview on the contemporary societal occurrences with an emphasis on science, politics and education.

This analysis starts by encompassing the wider meaning of the notion of education in Hegel's philosophy, compared to what we consider today as the learning process and the creation of knowledge and skills needed for the functionality of the individual and the future society. Hegel sees education as a dialectical and isolational process for the individual, through which the individual becomes part of the society and becomes real and meaningful in that society. Emphasising these characteristics, the article elaborates two very important notions from the „Phenomenology of the spirit“, the consciousness of clear insight and the conceited consciousness, which are the two main ideological characters of the European Enlightenment spirit. In this first section we can see the scientific and political consciousness as an implication of the events occurring in Hegel's era. By drawing the conclusions from this analysis we will try to create a short discernment on what has been happening in the history of democratic societies in the last two centuries.

The education through the scholarly processes, the free flow of knowledge, the effortless access to information and what we call today „the information-

1 Where a Macedonian title is provided, the presentation will be delivered in Macedonian.

al intoxication“ can be seen through the prism of the notion of education in Hegels philosophy. This article points towards the extreme generalisation of the individual and the separation from the uniqueness. As a key problem of the modern societal life of the individual we can underline the absence of ethical system and values which are needed in order to ascend to the meaning on education in Hegel.

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TROPE AND BUNDLE THEORY: A UNIFIED PERSPECTIVE

Trope theory holds that reality consists of particular properties, and objects are nothing but bundles of tropes. One advantage of this position is that it dispenses with universals and substrata, adopting a one-category ontology.

It takes two relations: the resemblance, an equivalence relation that groups tropes into similarity classes, and compresence, which ensures that bundles do not exist only because their constituents' existence (Maurin, 2011).

Trope theory is an “alphabet of being” (Williams, 1953) that deserves a “grammar”: I aim to provide a trope theory that accounts for some problems of bundle theories. I address three issues.

I claim the composition's laws ($\circ$) in terms of the compresence relation (C): $a \circ b \rightarrow C(a, b)$. However, not every combination gives rise to a particular (Fuhrmann, 1991). (1) I argue that tropes, to be compresent— and to compose into an individual— cannot lay on the same level of the same Determinable-Determinate tree. It follows that the relation of compresence is irreflexive, as it stems from the reflexive relation of “belonging to the same class”.

(2) Regarding the bundles' identity, I integrate Simons' (1994) nucleus theory with Fine's (1994) notions of dependence. For Simons (1994), bundles are constituted by a nucleus of essential tropes and a halo of accidental tropes. I propose a dependence in which the bundle depends on tropes, and tropes on the bundle, while still respecting the asymmetry of dependence. Indeed, the individual's identity is structured on the rigid depend-

ence on essential tropes of the nucleus, and on the not collective plurality of tropes in the halo, and tropes generically depend on the bundle of which they are constituents.

This account allows changes (3): non-essential tropes can change without affecting the bundle's identity; the object's identity changes if essential tropes change.

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RETHINKING JEAN BAUDRILLARD: SIMULATION, HYPERREALITY, AND THE PHILOSOPHICAL FATE OF REALITY

This paper reconsiders Jean Baudrillard not as a thinker who merely announced the disappearance of reality, but as a philosopher who anticipated a decisive transformation in the conditions under which reality becomes recognizable, credible, and socially operative. Baudrillard has often been read as a postmodern provocateur, a theorist of nihilism, or the author of the fashionable claim that “everything is simulation.” Such readings, however, weaken the philosophical force of his work. His central problem was not the simple non-existence of the real, but the historical mutation of the real into something increasingly organized by models, signs, media, codes, and systems of circulation.

Taking the conference theme “Philosophy and Reality” as its point of departure, the paper argues that Baudrillard compels us to rethink a classical philosophical distinction: the distinction between appearance and reality, image and referent, representation and truth. In contemporary societies, images and models do not only distort an already-given world; they often precede, format, and authorize what can count as real. Hyperreality is therefore not the absence of reality, but the overproduction of reality through signs that no longer require an original referent in order to function.

The paper finally suggests that present developments—artificial intelligence, deepfakes, algorithmic visibility, digital war images, and the commodification of identity—make Baudrillard's diagnosis newly urgent. To

rethink Baudrillard today is not simply to ask whether reality still exists. It is to ask how reality is produced, believed, consumed, and philosophically defended after simulation.

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THE CALL OF REALITY: KARL POLANYI ON MARKET ABSTRACTION AND ECOLOGY

How can philosophy help us recover reality when contemporary life is governed by market abstraction? This paper addresses this question through Karl Polanyi's idea of the "reality of society," a tool for interpreting the present. Polanyi's realism does not consist in accepting the market as unavoidable, but in recognizing society as a complex and interdependent reality. No individual, institution, or economic process is autonomous: actions unfold within social, institutional, and ecological relations.

From this perspective, the ecological crisis can be read as a consequence of the denial of reality. The market presents itself as an autonomous mechanism, organizing collective life through prices and exchange. Yet this abstraction conceals the material and social conditions on which it depends. Polanyi's theory of fictitious commodities is central here. Labour, land, and money can be treated as commodities only by obscuring what lies beneath them: human beings, nature, and the productive organization of social life. These are not variables of an economic system, but ineliminable components of reality itself.

The neoliberal extension of market logic intensifies this tension. By treating ecological limits as externalities and social bonds as obstacles to efficiency, it widens the gap between economic thought and the world as it is. Efficiency, which Polanyi discusses in his postwar writings through Aristotle, is not rejected, but deprived of autonomy: it cannot determine collective ends. The result is not environmental damage, but a crisis of freedom. If freedom depends on the conditions that make human action possible, then their destruction or commodification produces unfreedom.

The paper thus proposes a contemporary use of Polanyi: reality is not merely something to be described, but something to be recognized and politically protected through democratic action.

PEDAGOGICAL DISCOURSE IN THE CLASSROOM

ПЕДАГОШКИОТ ДИСКУРС ВО ЕДНА УЧИЛНИЦА

This paper examines the role of the teacher in creating a classroom environment that fosters a positive learning atmosphere while promoting the development of moral values in children, moral responsibility for their own actions, and the ability to recognize bias in everyday communication with peers and teachers. The study focuses on the professional responsibility of those involved in the educational process in preschool and primary education (preschool educators and teachers), exploring the values, moral principles, and practices they convey to children, as well as their professional “ethos” and ethics within the classroom.

This involves the promotion of ethical pedagogical practice that consistently upholds core values such as respect, responsibility, integrity, honesty, and care for oneself and for everyone involved in the educational process. The teacher’s personal example—that is, the model of teacher they present through their everyday conduct—has a direct influence on children’s self-confidence.

The findings are based on qualitative research into the educational process, including a case study, participant observation, and interviews. They indicate that teachers and preschool educators demonstrate varying levels of ethical sensitivity and respond differently to ethical dilemmas encountered in their daily educational practice. The study identifies several challenges that point to the need for greater commitment to and support for children in preschool and early primary education as a prerequisite for strengthening their self-confidence and enhancing their awareness of the applicability of the knowledge, skills, and competences they acquire.

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LARGE LANGUAGE MODELS AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE TRANSCENDENTAL FIELD: TOWARDS A NEO-KANTIAN CRITIQUE OF ARTIFICIAL REASON

The classical epistemological paradigm is grounded in the implicit assumption that human subjects are the primary locus of epistemic agency, endowed with an integrated unity of sensibility, understanding, reason and language. The transcendental philosophy of Immanuel Kant systematically explored the conditions of possibility of experience and meaning as inseparable from the human subject and its “transcendental unity of apperception”.

The emergence of large language models (LLMs) within the contemporary epistemic and communicative landscape seems to challenge this traditional presupposition. It shows that at least some forms of linguistic mediation, conceptual articulation and inferential practice can occur without being directly rooted in human rational subjectivity as classically conceived. This phenomenon gives rise to a new, hybrid, human-machine epistemic field that begins to partially redistribute functions traditionally associated with the transcendental capacities of the human subject.

The main goal of this paper is to explore the double effect of this “technological provocation” for the Kantian transcendental philosophy. On one hand, it destabilizes the classical identification of rational structure with a human subject, which underlies the Kantian approach. On the other hand, however, it revitalizes the transcendental perspective by reopening questions concerning the conditions of possibility of knowledge, experience, objectivity, meaning, and truth.

The central thesis of the paper is that the philosophical significance of LLMs lies in their capacity to transform the conceptual horizon within which rationality, conceptual articulation, and epistemic agency have historically been understood. The paper argues that LLMs increasingly participate in the transformation of the conditions of intelligibility. From a methodological perspective, this approach is neo-Kantian in a double sense. It draws upon the neo-Kantian conception of symbolic forms, especially

Cassirer's analysis of language as a symbolic form, while simultaneously extending the critical impulse of Kantian philosophy toward historically new forms of cognitive organization and symbolic infrastructure. At the same time, such analysis may also motivate a renewed search for those dimensions of human rationality that resist reduction to pattern manipulation and probabilistic coherence. In this context, the Kantian concept of the 'transcendental unity of apperception' may regain particular philosophical relevance.

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INTUITIVE SYMBOLISM IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF SUSANNE LANGER

ИНТУИТИВНИОТ СИМБОЛИЗАМ ВО ФИЛОЗОФИЈАТА НА СУЗАНА ЛАНГЕР

Contemporary commentators interpret philosophy of Susanne Langer as a philosophy of mind, given the ambitions of the discipline to encompass both cognitive and mental, as well affective phenomena. It would be equally, or possibly even more fruitful, however, to claim that Langer explores the epistemic capacities in their totality through their multilevel variety, as protological, logical, discursive and intuitive, and that she does so by applying her single explanatory tool of the exclusively human capacity of symbolization to both fundamental mental processes like symbolic logic and lofty, but equally universal aesthetic cognition.

This paper considers the concept of non-discursive or intuitive symbolism central to her treatment of aesthetics with regards to its cognitive potentials and will draft an analytical map of intuitive symbolism by situating the concept in contrast to understanding of intuition in Bergson and within metaphysics of Whitehead.

IMAGINATION, PERCEPTION AND LITERATURE: REALISM AS A MORAL CATEGORY IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF IRIS MURDOCH

ИМАГИНАЦИЈА, ПЕРЦЕПЦИЈА И КНИЖЕВНОСТ: РЕАЛИЗМОТ КАКО МОРАЛНА КАТЕГОРИЈА ВО ФИЛОЗОФИЈАТА НА АЈРИС МЕРДОК

This paper offers an analysis of the concept of realism in the philosophical writings of Iris Murdoch. It argues that realism, in the work of Murdoch – herself both a philosopher and a novelist – constitutes a point of convergence where her central philosophical and aesthetic concerns surrounding the concepts of the Good, love, and truth intersect. The paper’s central thesis is that realism in Murdoch’s thought is neither a “naive” or immediate copy of reality (“photographic realism”), nor a result of the concealment of the arbitrary relationship between the signifier and signified (the “reality effect”). Rather, it is the result of the progressive purification and refinement of perception, brought about by love under the guidance of the ideal of the Good. The paper also argues that, for Murdoch, realism is not the starting point of artistic creation or ethical deliberation, but rather the unattainable endpoint of a process of moral achievement, one whose very core consists in seeing reality clearly: above all, the reality of other people. Realistic perception presupposes the discipline of the imagination and its liberation from the false projections of the ego, which Murdoch terms “fantasy”: the ego’s impulse to control and simplify other people. Within this framework, the distinction between imagination and fantasy becomes essential for understanding the relationship between ethics and art. Finally, the paper argues that, in Murdoch’s thought, literature – and the novel in particular – does not function as an illustration of philosophical theses but as a privileged domain of moral perception. By embedding complex and autonomous characters, novels educate perception and foster love of the Good. Reading literature thus constitutes a distinctive form of moral education, while art itself may be understood as the structural equivalent of the good life: a practice directed toward the truthful apprehension of reality.

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BENJAMIN AND THE REALITY OF THE WORK OF ART IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

БЕНЈАМИН И СТВАРНОСТА НА УМЕТНИЧКОТО ДЕЛО ВО ДОБАТА НА ВЕШТАЧКАТА ИНТЕЛИГЕНЦИЈА (ВИ)

The change in the reality of the work of art, which Walter Benjamin identified ninety years ago in his important essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technical Reproduction" (1936), is an immediate reason today to reconsider Benjamin's aesthetic and cultural positions. At the same time, the increased influence of artificial intelligence (AI), in the context of art and the works of art that are increasingly created with its help, once again raises the question of the loss of the aura of the work of art itself. That is why, today, it seems that these questions require a reconsideration of the relationship between reality and artwork, but now from the perspective of the emerging influence of AI on literary and artistic creation.

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THE LIMITS OF REALITY: PLATO'S ALLEGORY OF THE CAVE, THE GOSPEL OF JOHN AND RELIGIOUS PERCEPTION

The limits of reality emerge not from its absence, but from the conditions under which it is perceived. Plato's *Allegory of the Cave* articulates this problem through the distinction between *phainomena* and *to on*, showing how

human perception remains confined to appearances that are taken as reality. The transition from *doxa* to *epistēmē* thus represents not only a shift in knowledge, but a transformation in the subject's capacity to perceive what is. This framework can be extended to forms of belief that operate within similar limitations, including religious perception mediated through images, symbols, and representations. In this sense, the allegory may be read as a critique of unexamined belief that remains at the level of appearance. A different model emerges in the Gospel of John, where reality is disclosed as light: "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12, NRSV). Methodologically, the analysis proceeds through a comparative and hermeneutic reading of Plato's Republic (Book VII) and selected Johannine passages, with attention to Neoplatonic mediation, especially in Plotinus.

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LOVING KNOWLEDGE: PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT REFLECTED IN GREEK PERSONAL NAMES

ЉУБОВ КОН ЗНАЕЊЕТО: ОДРАЗОТ НА ФИЛОСОФСКАТА МИСЛА ВО ГРЧКИТЕ ЛИЧНИ ИМИЊА

Words related to the semantic domains of mind and thought, such as νόος (νοῦς) 'mind, intellect', σοφός 'skilled, wise, prudent', σῶφρων 'of sound mind', φρόνησις 'thought, wisdom', λόγος 'reckoning, relation, reason', γνῶσις 'knowledge', μαρθάνω 'learn', and ἐπίσταμαι 'know how to do, understand', are common elements and bases in the formation of Greek personal names. The continuous use of such names testifies to the fact that being wise, mindful, prudent, and skilled were desirable and widely valued qualities in Greek society. With the rise of philosophy, however, these common abstract words became part of the intellectual and scientific lexicon of the Greek language and acquired new, more specific and technical meanings.

The aim of this paper is to explore how the rise and development of philosophical thought are reflected in naming practices in Greece and, conversely,

whether names such as Φιλόσοφος, Σώφρων, Σωφρονίσκος, Γνώσις, Γνώμα, Σοφία, Φιλοσοφία, Σωφροσύνα, Ἐπιστήμων, Ἐπιστήμη, Λόγος, Φιλομάθης, Φιλομάθεια, and Φιλομάθιος can be taken as testimony to the social status of philosophy. An attempt will be made to analyze the relationship between the popularity of such personal names and philosophical trends, and to relate the prosopographical and onomastic data to the philosophical literature and other literary sources.

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SCIENTIFIC ASPECTS OF EUROPEAN ART DURING THE MODERN ERA

НАУЧНИТЕ АСПЕКТИ НА ЕВРОПСКАТА УМЕТНОСТ НА МОДЕРНАТА ДОБА

Starting with the early Renaissance in Italy, when artists were inspired by ancient classical artefacts in their pursuit of representing reality, and continuing until the second half of the nineteenth century, mimesis formed the foundation of European art. In their attempt to achieve precise and convincing artistic representations, artists became deeply engaged with science. Renaissance art maintained a close relationship with various scientific disciplines, including arithmetic, geometry, physics, and anatomy, while simultaneously reviving Platonic ideas from the beginning of the fifteenth century. Renaissance artists sought to create the illusion of reality through scientific knowledge. Deeply involved in what were known as the Liberal Arts, many of them learned Greek and Latin in order to read classical authors in their original languages. They also wrote treatises and scholarly commentaries while expanding their knowledge through direct observation of nature. From Leon Battista Alberti to Leonardo da Vinci and Albrecht Dürer, these tendencies evolved into a highly active intellectual process that lasted for nearly a century.

During the following centuries, the artistic world increasingly embraced the camera obscura as an important optical invention. It offered painters new possibilities for capturing the physical world around them while enabling

more accurate renderings of figures, atmosphere, lighting, and perspective. Johannes Vermeer, Canaletto, Bernardo Bellotto, and possibly even Caravaggio before them, employed this instrument to present their subjects with a remarkable degree of realism. This new medium influenced painters on several levels, providing innovative compositional solutions, new viewpoints, unusual angles of observation, and other visual possibilities.

The next major step came with the invention of photography, an innovation that fundamentally transformed the process of artistic representation. Photography profoundly changed European art by marking the end of the dominance of mimesis, as it was capable of producing a direct mechanical record of reality itself. In doing so, it created the conditions for the emergence of modern and contemporary non-representational artistic movements, whose most radical expression appeared at the beginning of the twentieth century with the abstract art.

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BIOETHICAL GROUND OF THE INTERACTION BETWEEN AI, SOCIAL ROBOTICS AND MEDICAL MORALITY

Morality is one of the most demanding area for research considering the multifactorial conditioned moral behavior. It consists of various domains, in which moral decision-making belongs to the cognitive one. Moral rea-

soning and moral decision-making are complex processes, both on individual and professional level. On personal level, having in mind that situations differ in terms of their moral relevance for an individual, this complexity is elaborated by many empirical findings from cognitive and affective neuroscience, showing that different types of moral dilemma (eg. personal or non-personal, concrete or abstract, or morally neutral dilemma) activate different brain regions during moral decision-making process. Moreover, moral reasoning is many times a matter of affective and intuitive responses and not a result of in-depth and deliberate reasoning. On professional level, this complexity is particularly visible in the so called “helping professions” such are psychology, medicine, dentistry, education, law etc. These professions frequently face the challenge of dealing with different types of moral dilemmas (many times personal and concrete ones), which pose high demands on professionals’ moral integrity, responsibility, honesty, moral reasoning and their value system. This paper focuses on medical practice, since the newest trends show that AI systems and social robotics are increasingly revolutionizing medical profession with their integration in it. There is a debate in the academic circles regarding the pros and cons of such rapid advancements and inclusion of these complex technologies in early diagnostics, interactions with patients and recommendation of treatments, having in mind the ethical and legal aspects of such process. Thus, medical practice will further be viewed as a meeting point of AI, social robotics and morality, in order to understand the benefits and potential challenges that need to be considered in the future development and integration of the advanced technologies in helping professions and medicine, in particular.

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THE ECONOMICAL GESTURE OF THOUGHT: PHILOSOPHICAL MORPHOLOGY OF THE TEXT

In the context of contemporary intellectual postmodern fragmentation – characterized by a chaotic plurality of finite, hermetic discourses – this paper proposes a radical epistemological shift from the trauma of linguistic decay to the morphology of the philosophical text. Re-evaluating the classical triad of meaning-making (*μονή – πρόοδος – επιστροφή*), we position the contemporary crisis

as *πρόοδος* (ceaseless centrifugal movement) and offer a method of *ἐπιστροφή* (the morphological turn). This approach redefines aesthetic and philosophical attention as an “economical gesture” – a disciplined act of returning to the living form of the text to restore the subject’s resonance with the Logos.

The study substantiates a method where the philosophical function of language is rooted not in easily logicalized syntax or mere lexis, but in idiomatic morphology. Drawing on J.W. von Goethe’s organic principle, Roman Jakobson’s poetic function, and A.F. Losev’s dialectics of form, the author argues that the formal, rhythmic, and phonetic structure of a text over-determines its semantic depth. Synthesizing broad text-linguistics with philosophical inquiry, this method treats highly motivated, poetic texts – primarily within the highly morphologized Ancient Greek tradition – as spatial configurations of meaning rather than static objects of interpretation.

Critiquing traditional historical-philosophical reductionism, which isolates concepts through inadequate translations, this paper treats philosophical works as non-temporal artistic artifacts (A.G. Barabashev). By demonstrating unconditional trust in the textual fabric of European thought, the morphological approach seeks the ultimate “spatial configuration of sense” behind the text. Thus, philosophical morphology emerges not as mere hermeneutics, but as a performative strategy to continue the philosophical tradition from within the living form of the text, overcoming cultural entropy by anchoring thought back in its ontological “home”.

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TRUTH AS AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL CATEGORY AND A HUMAN VALUE

ВИСТИНАТА КАКО ЕПИСТЕМОЛОШКА КАТЕГОРИЈА И ЧОВЕЧКА ВРЕДНОСТ

All human cognitive endeavors, regardless of the goals that motivate them, ultimately aim at knowledge endowed with a particular value that we call “truth”. In this simplified sense, all human knowledge may be understood as the prod-

uct of the search for truth. The systematic pursuit of true knowledge constitutes an essential characteristic of modern science. There is no doubt that truth is not only one of the fundamental concepts of epistemology but also a central concept of philosophy, from its ancient origins to the present day. Different conceptions and definitions of truth have given rise to different theories of truth, which in turn have served as the foundation for diverse epistemological frameworks.

The classical theory of truth, traditionally attributed to Aristotle, possesses undeniable strengths, but it also exhibits certain limitations. Owing to its merits, this theory has been incorporated into several modern accounts of truth, including the Marxist reflection theory and Alfred Tarski's semantic theory of truth. At the same time, its shortcomings have inspired varying degrees of departure from the classical view and the development of new approaches, collectively referred to as non-classical theories of truth. Accordingly, one of the principal aims of this paper is to present a concise overview of the essential features of these diverse conceptions of truth as a fundamental category of scientific knowledge.

In addition to being an epistemological category, truth is also one of the central concepts of philosophical axiology. In this sense, we speak of true morality, true goodness, true beauty, and the true human being. Accordingly, the second objective of this paper is to develop and defend the thesis that truth is a necessary condition for the realization of goodness, justice, and authentic human existence.

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POLITICAL REALITY AND THE TRACES OF THE PAST IN THUCYDIDES

In The History of the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides repeatedly turns to the traces of the past to illuminate the realities of political life. Ruined cities, ancient burial sites, memories of former powers, and other vestiges of earlier times are not merely objects of historical curiosity. Rather, they serve as evidence through which Thucydides seeks to disclose the reality of political power beyond its immediate appearances.

This paper examines a series of passages in which Thucydides relies on material remnants of the past, including the discoveries made during the purifications of Delos and his reflections on the ruins of ancient political communities. I argue that these references are not simply historical illustrations or antiquarian observations. Instead, they reveal a distinctive understanding of political reality: while political communities rise and fall, the fundamental reality of political power persists across changing historical circumstances.

The traces of the past therefore function as more than evidence about what once existed. They provide access to enduring features of political life that remain operative in the present. By interpreting the material remains of former political orders, Thucydides invites his readers to move beyond the surface of historical events and to perceive a deeper reality underlying the various manifestations of political power.

Through an analysis of these passages, this paper argues that Thucydides presents political power as an intelligible and enduring reality rather than as a collection of isolated historical phenomena. Historical inquiry thus becomes a means of understanding not only what political power was, but what political power is. In this way, Thucydides offers a philosophical account of the relationship between historical experience, political reality, and the enduring structures of human affairs.

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THE CONCEPT OF REALITY IN AN ETYMOLOGICAL KEY

КОНЦЕПТОТ НА РЕАЛНОСТА ВО ЕТИМОЛОШКИ КЛУЧ

This paper explores the ontological implications of linguistic and visual structures that shape the understanding of reality within Western European and Eastern Christian cultural spheres. Starting from the thesis that **grammatical modes—indicative and subjunctive—function as “invisible modulators” of being**, the author analyzes two opposing models of reality through

the counterpoint of Raphael's *School of Athens* and Rublev's *Holy Trinity*.

The central part of the paper is dedicated to the archaeology of the **concept of the Idea (Gr. *eidos/idea*)**, which the author deconstructs as a battlefield between two functionally distinct Proto-Indo-European roots: ***ueid-** (vision, receiving the whole) and ***ueidh-** (cutting, analytical division). The research demonstrates how these two roots within the Idea itself generate different grammatical and visual modes: while Renaissance perspective visualizes the "ontology of the indicative" and the triumph of the ***ueidh-** root (the world as a segmented object, *res*), Byzantine inverse perspective manifests the "ontology of the subjunctive" based on the ***ueid-** root (the world as an ethical event and conciliarity). This division is further decoded through the phenomenology of key terms constituting the concept of reality in the Indo-European linguistic area—ranging from Latin objectification (*realitas/res*) and Greek unconcealment (*aletheia/ousia*) to the Slavic experience of reality as createdness (*stvorenost/blago*). The paper concludes that Western civilization, through Latin *scientia* (from the root "to cut"), predominantly affirmed the analytical edge of the Idea, leading to the contemporary crisis of reality in the form of digital simulacra (VR). Thus, the only true re-construction of reality lies in the return to the Hypostatic Logos.

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NAME, VOICE, BODY: THE SEMIOTICS OF LOSS IN THE MYTH OF ORPHEUS

This paper examines the structure of loss in the myth of Orpheus through three semiotic categories – name, voice, and body – analyzing their gradual dissolution in two key ancient sources: Virgil's *Georgics* (IV, 453–527) and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (X, 1–85; XI, 1–66). The central thesis posits that loss in the Orphic myth is not a singular event but a three-stage process in which the sign (name) is lost first, followed by the means of communication (voice), and finally bodily presence (referent). A close reading of the relevant passages in both texts demonstrates that this tripartite structure is symmetrically mirrored in both Eurydice and Orpheus: while Eurydice loses body, voice,

and name as she descends into Hades, Orpheus loses all three in reverse order through singing, the backward glance, and ultimate dismemberment. The interpretive framework draws on Blanchot's reading of the Orphic gaze as a constitutive gesture of poetic creation. The paper concludes that the myth of Orpheus functions as a map of the semiotic dissolution of the beloved object, and that precisely for this reason it continues to serve as a productive model for thinking about loss in the Western literary tradition.

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RECENT VARIETIES OF MENTAL IRREALISM AND ERROR THEORY

Among recent unrealistic theories concerning the mental or some aspect(s) thereof are Toon's (2023) fictionalism, Poslajko's (2024) belief anti-realism, Horowitz's (2024) intentional anti-realism, and Egan's (2025) representational deflationism. These theories differ in important respects. One of the aims of this talk is to explicate their main differences. Horowitz denies even the possibility of intentional content but assigns (so-called) propositional attitudes logico-syntactic structures, Egan and Poslajko deny even such structures – indeed any architectural element that we pre-theoretically assign to (so-called) propositional attitudes, and Poslajko goes further and does not allow such attitudes to be causally relevant vis-à-vis behavior. Toon suggests the most radical among these unrealistic views, in denying the reality of the mental altogether, but in an important sense, his view is realistic: we do not err in ascribing mentality to people, because we are under no illusion when so doing. That is, such a practice is a pretend, an employment of a useful metaphor. In this respect, Toon's fictionalism is in a direct conflict with Horowitz's claim that intentional anti-realism is an error theory: that we (falsely) take our content ascriptions to be true. (Poslajko makes a similar claim.) The second and main aim of this talk is to defend Horowitz's view. My main argument focuses on our having disagreements regarding content ascriptions (consider the well-known Gödel-Schmidt example and experimental philosophy's finding regarding it), which fact attests that in making such ascriptions we take ourselves to be making truth-evaluable claims. Could it be that we deem our ascriptions to resemble, in this re-

spect, “Ice cream is tasty”, which we state with no pretense of truth? No, I’ll argue, since what grounds disagreements over content ascriptions cannot be a matter of taste, interest, etc., but must concern either evidence or the weight we assign them, both of which are truth-evaluable.

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THE DISCREET CHARM OF DYSTOPIA IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

ДИСКРЕТНИОТ ШАРМ НА ДИСТОПИЈАТА ВО ДВАЕСЕТ И ПРВИОТ ВЕК

Utopia and/or anti-utopia. Dystopia. Is it all the same? Is the revolution a change of system or the change of who owns the power? Is the utopian project such that the new world will be created only and just only we completely destroy this/that old one? For utopia to be total, it must not contain any remnants of the old world. If that happens, then it will be that rotten thing that destroys the fresh fruit in the basket, just picked from the cherry orchard. Utopia demands a monopoly on truth, a monopoly on morality. Utopia has some unusual, yet basic features. There are no people like us in it. There are no hospitals, everyone is completely healthy and we can never come across sick people. No sick people. Then, there are no criminals, consequently, there are no penal institutions – prisons either. Everyone has abandoned lies, deception. Everyone is perfect. This means that there is no place here for those who are not like that. They have already been eliminated or completely transformed. In short – there are no people like us – we have all successfully resisted the temptations of the utopia. And now, we are all completely perfect. But... Where does this perfection come from? From an engineering, a social engineering, through which we have all gone. The pluralism of values has been abandoned – the conflicts between ideas is no longer there. The world is paradise. (...) Through the historical descriptive passages of the development of the utopia, we discover the foundations on which dystopia was later created. Although there is no exact beginning of either utopia or dystopia, analyzing the social changes in which the concepts appear, grow and change,

we conclude that utopian thought takes its nominal contours somewhere at the beginning of the 16th century and lasts until the end of the 19th century, at which time, dystopia culminates and replaces the classical vision of utopia. However, it seems that the projection of the future society, which is being realized in reality today, begins in the 20th century, after World War II, and already in the late 1970s, after Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher came to power in the United Kingdom, modern society, with its entire wide range of repressive apparatuses, limited freedom, control mechanisms, surveillance, censorship, is slowly but surely turning into a dystopia.

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PACTA SUNT SERVANDA OR REBUS SIC STANTIBUS?

PACTA SUNT SERVANDA ИЛИ REBUS SIC STANTIBUS?

The text sheds light on the dilemma between *pacta sunt servanda* or *rebus sic stantibus*. The first principle, towards keeping the obligations and promises that originate from the international agreement. The second principle, which is defined as a corrective of the first one, carries the idea of stepping back from the international agreement. It examines a dilemma, as it is said earlier, a pretty dark situation, and the reason to shed light on that dilemma makes me examine, additionally, the material about the origination and development of the status of the constituent nations in the Constitution of the back-then Socialist Republic of Macedonia, the additional Amendments of the Constitution some decades later, the constitutioning of modern, sovereign and independent Republic of Macedonia, the conflict from the year 2001 and the origination of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, the consolidation on the international plan of the back-then (before the signing of the Prespa Agreement) Republic of Macedonia. Additionally, the text examines the importance of the Prespa Agreement in relation to the identity issues with the Republic of Bulgaria, on which, as a foundation, I offer a modern interpretation of the Agreement with the Republic of Bulgaria, having in fact the articles from the same Agreement and the solutions that originated from the French Proposal. As a conclusion, I offer interpreta-

tion on the patriotism, the foundations on which it needs to be based upon. Practically, the conclusion is about developing a modern patriotism, which has the idea of eliminating the nationalistic phenomena, and is directed towards building and developing a normal, healthy and civic patriotism.

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND MORAL PROGRESS

In recent years, individuals, corporations, and state agencies have increasingly relied on artificial intelligence recommendations in their decision-making processes. Whether a person is granted a loan or issued a travel visa today often depends to a significant extent on analyses conducted through AI-driven algorithms. This raises the question of whether such a world is morally superior to one in which decisions were based exclusively on human judgment. According to one of the most influential contemporary theories of moral progress, moral progress consists in the improvement of our moral capacities, such as the capacity for moral judgment. As regards both the quantity of information available and the speed of its processing, AI unquestionably surpasses the average human agent, thereby opening the possibility that it may assist human beings, at least in certain respects, in processes of moral decision-making. In this presentation, I examine both the positive and negative aspects of AI's influence on moral progress. The argument is developed through a philosophical analysis of contemporary examples of AI-assisted moral decision-making. After a brief introduction outlining the concept of moral progress, I discuss several examples of AI use in moral decision-making. Particular attention is devoted to cases in which the use of AI contributes to the formation of so-called echo chambers and epistemic bubbles, thereby undermining our capacities for critical reflection and moral judgment. In the concluding section, I consider how AI ought to be regulated if it is to function as a genuinely beneficial tool for moral decision-making. Such regulation is required, on the one hand, in the design of AI technologies themselves, where algorithms should be developed in accordance with principles of fairness and impartiality, and, on the other hand, in the design of the institutions that govern the use of AI in decision-making practices.

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INVISIBLE WORLDS AND TRUTH-APT THEORIES: TOWARDS THE NATURE OF REALITY THROUGH THE PRISM OF SCIENTIFIC REALISM AND INSTRUMENTALISM

This conference presentation will focus on the epistemological status of scientific theories, with particular emphasis on the question of whether they represent reality or merely function as instruments for prediction. Starting from the fact that every scientific theory contains linguistic expressions that denote and describe observable properties, as well as terms that refer to empirically inaccessible and unobservable entities and processes (proton, quark, gluon, Higgs boson, DNA replication, mitochondrial energy synthesis, ideal gas, point mass, etc.), the presentation addresses the question of their ontological, epistemological, and truth-apt status.

Accordingly, the central part of the presentation will address the contemporary debate between scientific realism and instrumentalism, particularly concerning whether scientific theories genuinely describe reality or merely function as successful predictive models. Within this framework, the key arguments against scientific realism will be systematically examined, including L. Laudan's pessimistic meta-induction argument; W. V. O. Quine's argument concerning the underdetermination of theory by data (UTD); N. R. Hanson's theory-ladenness of observation argument; Bas van Fraassen's constructive empiricism; T. Kuhn's argument concerning historical discontinuity and scientific revolutions; the problem of unobservable entities (van Fraassen, Mach, and Duhem); the problem of the failure of reference of theoretical terms; and the problem of successful but demonstrably false theories and models (phlogiston theory, luminiferous ether theory, the geocentric model, the miasma theory, etc.).

Furthermore, the presentation will analyze the most significant aspects of realist positions, including H. Putnam's and R. Boyd's "no miracles" argument; Ian Hacking's argument from intervention; E. McMullin's argument from the convergence of independent evidence; and G. Harman's and P. Lip-ton's arguments from inference to the best explanation.

In conclusion, this presentation aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the relationship between scientific knowledge, the meaning of theoretical constructs, and their connection to reality. It argues that the dispute between realism and instrumentalism is not merely a question of scientific methodology, but a fundamental epistemological problem concerning the limits of human cognition and, consequently, an ontological question regarding the very nature of reality. Through an analysis of the central arguments on both sides, the presentation seeks to illuminate the status of scientific theories as mediators between empirical experience and the theoretical conceptualization of the world. It also aims to highlight one of the central problems of contemporary analytic epistemology — the so-called correspondence rules or truth conditions for theoretical language.

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FROM SOCRATIC DIALOGUE TO GENERATIVE ECHO: ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF LLMs ON MORAL AGENCY

Philosophy traditionally views the pursuit of truth as a dialectical struggle—a Socratic journey requiring intellectual friction, doubt, and the self's active engagement with reality. However, the rapid proliferation of Large Language Models (LLMs), such as ChatGPT, marks a shift from this active inquiry to what can be called the Generative Echo. In our presentation, we will examine the ethical and ontological implications of this change, stating that the frictionless nature of AI-generated content poses a systemic threat to human moral agency and critical thinking. In the first part of the presentation, we will analyze the contrasts between Socratic dialogue and the stochastic output of OpenAI's models. While Socratic questioning compels the individual to confront the limits of their knowledge and the intricacies of reality, LLMs produce probabilistic syntheses that emphasize coherence over truth. This creates an epistemic bypass: by offering immediate, seemingly authoritative answers, these LLM systems remove the cognitive effort necessary for genuine understanding. We argue that this results in epistem-

ic passivity, where the human is no longer a seeker of truth but a consumer of an algorithmic echo lacking ontological grounding. In the second part of our presentation, we will consider the impact on moral agency. In Sam Altman's Silicon Valley technocratic vision, AI alignment is proposed as a solution to ethical risks. But from a philosophical perspective, moral agency is not a set of pre-defined rules but a practiced virtue that requires lived deliberation. By outsourcing ethical judgment to an algorithm, individuals undergo moral deskilling. When the generative echo supplies the moral consensus, the person hollows out the autonomous moral self, because it is free from navigating the complex reality of ethical life. In conclusion, we argue that the generative echo threatens to sever the connection between thought and reality. In that sense, philosophy must reaffirm the importance of the difficult path, reclaiming the Socratic friction of thought against the alluring, automated mimicry of the machine.

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THE METAPHYSICS OF INCOMPLETENESS AND ITS ROLE IN AXIOMATIC STRUCTURES

Within every theory is a gap. No theoretic description about reality can be said to be truly complete and consistent, since it would have to contain its own reference. And if it were to contain its own reference, it must contain its own opposition.

In other words, if one conceptualization of reality is said to be true, then, naturally, every alternative or opposing conceptualization must then be regarded as either false or incomplete. If one theory of reality is true, opposing theories must be false or incomplete. But if the "true" theory cannot account for its alternatives, it is itself incomplete. And if it does include its opposites, applying it creates a performative contradiction. A theory that explains all reality ultimately undermines itself by trying to justify even the unjustifiable.

Completeness must ultimately make sense of paradox.

In the wave of the twentieth century move from a more strict determinism to a more fluid probabilism, Kurt Gödel's work established a new basis for the grounding of mathematics (and ultimately philosophy). He demon-

strated - to explain in rather simplistic terms - that no axiomatic system can prove the truths it uses as its foundation. These truths must be predetermined. In other words, they must be established with something outside the axiomatic system itself.

This leaves an open question. What is to be done with those concepts that are not (or cannot be) contained inside the theory?

The ultimate aim of this argument will be to demonstrate that this incompleteness is actually the key metaphysical element through which all theory and knowledge is established. That this incompleteness reveals how lower axiomatic theories are simply reflections and aspects of higher axiomatic theories. The validity of a theory can only be truly tested against its own reflection.

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THE PHILOSOPHER'S WAGER: RATIONALITY AND EPISTEMIC DESIRES

In this presentation, I offer a critical analysis of Pascal's Wager, arguing that it rests on an overly narrow, hedonistic conception of utility and neglects the significance of epistemic desires. Among these desires are those constitutive of the need to achieve lasting and at least minimal success in one's epistemic life with respect to the question of God's existence. I argue that this need is one of the components of the normative ideal of the philosopher. Within a traditional theological framework, however, the theist and the atheist are not symmetrically situated as regards that need. If God exists, the atheist's mistaken earthly view is corrected after death. If God does not exist, by contrast, the theist remains in error about God's existence until death, with no possibility of correcting that error, since in a godless world there is no afterlife. I conclude that, once certain outdated theological assumptions are set aside – most importantly, the assumption that morally innocent disbelief is an obstacle to salvation – this asymmetry may tip the balance in favour of accepting atheism. More specifically, accepting atheism may turn out to be practically rational on the basis of a wager-type argument analogous to Pascal's, which I call the Philosopher's Wager.

BEYOND RHETORIC: NARRATIVE ARGUMENT IN A MORE PERFECT UNION

Contemporary argumentation theory increasingly acknowledges the importance of narrative in public discourse. Nevertheless, narratives are still frequently treated as rhetorical or illustrative devices rather than as constitutive elements of argumentation itself. This presentation argues that narratives shape not only the persuasive force of arguments, but also the interpretive framework through which arguments are understood and evaluated.

As a starting point, I examine Christopher Tindale's rhetorical analysis of Barack Obama's 2008 speech *A More Perfect Union*. Tindale demonstrates that narrative can create identification, presence, and audience engagement, offering an important alternative to reductive models of argument based solely on premise-conclusion structures.

However, this presentation argues that Tindale's account remains primarily rhetorical. While it explains how narratives strengthen persuasion, it does not fully address how narratives shape the conditions under which premises become acceptable or meaningful to audiences. Drawing on insights from philosophy of narrative and narrative identity, I propose that narratives function as interpretive frameworks that organize social reality and guide the evaluation of arguments. In doing so, they shape the audience's perspective, values, associations, and sense of collective identity.

Through a close reading of *A More Perfect Union*, I argue that the speech does more than support political conclusions through storytelling. Rather, it constructs a shared narrative framework within which racial conflict, national identity, and political unity become intelligible in a particular way. The presentation concludes that narrative arguments should be understood not merely as rhetorical supplements to argumentation, but as constitutive elements in the formation of political and social reality.

SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF NATURALISTIC fMRI RESEARCH ON SOCIAL COGNITION

СИСТЕМАТСКИ ПРЕГЛЕД НА ФМР ИСТРАЖУВАЊАТА НА СОЦИЈАЛНАТА КОГНИЦИЈА СО НАТУРАЛНИ ПАРАДИГМИ

Every social interaction is grounded in our ability for social cognition. The neural instantiation of social cognition has been vastly studied, and various meta-analyses systematize the convergence of the evidence, although there is variability in how social cognition is defined and operationalized. However, the accumulated evidence is based on fMRI experiments that rely on artificial tasks designed to explicitly evoke social cognition, as well as static and constrained stimuli. These paradigms lack ecological validity and do not capture the nature of social cognition as an ongoing, dynamic, and contextually driven process. The development of the so-called naturalistic paradigms, which use complex and dynamic stimuli such as movies, audio, and spoken narratives, offers new hope of simulating social cognition as it happens every day. Furthermore, the complex temporal dynamics and the multimodal nature of naturalistic stimuli have promoted the development of new analytical frameworks beyond the general linear model (GLM), including approaches such as intersubject synchrony or data-driven methods. The heterogeneity of the methods used in naturalistic paradigms poses a unique challenge. Following the PRISMA 2020 guidelines, in this systematic review I synthesize naturalistic fMRI research on social cognition. Studies included in the review are conducted on non-clinical adult populations using naturalistic social stimuli (e.g., films, narratives, or social audio-visual materials) and reporting whole-brain analyses. The review aims to explore how social cognition is conceptualized and evoked in naturalistic neuroimaging research, and to compare analytical frameworks used across studies, contrasting GLM and alternative frameworks such as intersubject synchrony/correlation and other data-driven methods. Furthermore, the review aims to summarize and integrate the findings of neural correlates of social cognition in terms of brain regions and functional networks, and to examine whether convergent evidence

emerges across paradigms. Finally, the review reflects on the epistemological enthusiasm of using naturalistic paradigms, questioning whether social cognition catalyzed by naturalistic stimuli approximates social cognition as experienced in the wild.

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PHILOSOPHICAL MINIMALISM IN POLITICS: EPICURUS AND CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES OF FREEDOM

This paper explores Epicurus' philosophy with a focus on the concept of pleasure and inner freedom, relying on his ethics based on reason and a deliberate life. Special attention is given to the distinction between bodily and spiritual pleasures, as well as Epicurus' idea of ataraxia, a state of inner peace and liberation from fear. The paper analyzes how rational choice, being aware of the avoidance of unnecessary pain and the pursuit of moderate pleasures, enables the achievement of long-term happiness and psychological stability.

In addition to the theoretical framework, the paper examines the contemporary implications of Epicurus' teachings in the context of philosophical and psychological approaches to well-being, emotional resilience, and personal autonomy. It particularly highlights how his principles can contribute to modern discussions about the meaning of life, moral responsibility, and the rational management of desires. The analysis also includes a critical review of possible interpretations of Epicurus' views in modern society, including issues of balancing short-term and long-term goals, as well as the role of self-knowledge in shaping an ethically fulfilled life.

The conclusion of the paper emphasizes that Epicurus' approach to pleasure, although developed more than two thousand years ago, provides relevant insights into contemporary discussions on ethics, happiness, and inner freedom, showing how philosophy from the ancient period can enrich the understanding of the modern concept of wellbeing and a meaningful life.

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ON ORIGINAL PHILOSOPHICAL KNOWLEDGE

ЗА ИЗВОРНОТО ФИЛОСОФСКО ЗНАЕЊЕ

From its very beginnings in antiquity, philosophy distinguished itself from both theology and science. When Heraclitus or Xenophanes speak of God, they refer to a philosophical concept rather than the traditional deity (Zeus). Likewise, when Thales speaks of water or Anaximenes of air, these should be understood as metaphors rather than objects of scientific investigation.

This thematic orientation toward the non-sensible realm developed into a henological mode of thought that remained dominant throughout philosophy until late antiquity.

Alongside this henological orientation, the gnoseological method of self-knowledge emerged, originally designated by the term *theoria*. While elements of this approach can already be found in certain Pre-Socratic philosophers, it reached its most developed and sophisticated form in the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle.

Thus, from its original formation in antiquity, philosophy acquired defining characteristics that would continue to shape and sustain the philosophical tradition in Europe over the course of the following millennia.

POSTTRAUMATIC REALITIES: THE MULTIFINALITY OF PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMATIZATION

ПОСТТРАУМАТСКИ СТВАРНОСТИ: МУЛТИФИНАЛНОСТА НА ПСИХОЛОШКАТА ТРАУМАТИЗАЦИЈА

Exposure to potentially traumatic events results in dynamic and variable adaptation processes. However, psychological literature and clinical practice continue to conceptualize posttraumatic responses predominantly as binary outcomes: the absence or presence of posttraumatic stress disorder. This reductionist perspective obscures the diversity of posttraumatic efforts to accommodate new realities and limits the nuanced understanding of subjective traumatic experiences. Neither resilience, the most frequently empirically documented posttraumatic response, nor posttraumatic stress disorder, the most extensively studied response, manifests uniformly or leads to a single set of psychosocial outcomes. Given that posttraumatic adaptation is shaped by the complex interplay among traumatic events, individual life history, and the social context in which traumatization occurs, this paper examines key challenges currently facing psychotraumatology in distinguishing universal from specific features of psychological trauma responses. The review addresses dilemmas and implications arising from inconsistent operationalization of traumatic events, the contrast between prototypical adaptation trajectories and the broader spectrum of posttraumatic responses, the distinctive features of traumatic memories, and the necessity of reconstructing shattered worldviews and personal identities as opposed to integrating the traumatic experience into existing core beliefs about the self and the world. The conclusion adopts both global and contextual perspectives on effective treatment and prevention of long-term dysfunction, emphasizing approaches that reflect the inherent and culturally shaped heterogeneity of peritraumatic and posttraumatic psychological responses.

THE CRISIS OF MEANING: LATENT NIHILISM IN CONTEMPORARY WORLD

КРИЗАТА НА СМИСЛА: ЛАТЕНТНИОТ НИХИЛИЗАМ ВО СОВРЕМЕНИОТ СВЕТ

The contemporary world, despite its technological and scientific progress, is increasingly confronted with feelings of existential emptiness, fragmentation, and the loss of meaning. This paper proposes that the crisis of meaning is not merely a psychological or sociological phenomenon, but above all a metaphysical crisis resulting from the materialism and the gradual abandonment of telos, transcendence, and participatory understandings of reality. From Friedrich Nietzsche's diagnosis of the "death of God", to Martin Heidegger's critique of the „forgetfulness of Being", and the technological reduction of the world into resource and utility, contemporary thought increasingly operates within immanent frameworks incapable of providing stable ontological grounding for meaning.

The paper examines the thesis that many contemporary attempts to overcome nihilism through individual self-construction, consumerism, technological progress, or relativistic conceptions of truth, ultimately represent forms of latent nihilism, insofar as meaning remains deprived of transcendental and ontological foundation. In this sense, nihilism does not always appear as an explicit denial of value, but rather as a concealed consequence of a worldview in which being, purpose, and truth are reduced to subjective construction or functionality.

In response to this condition, the paper points toward a potential solution through a return to a more traditional and participatory metaphysics, particularly through the concepts of Logos and logoi in the thought of St. Maximus the Confessor, where beings are understood not as isolated objects, but as bearers of intrinsic meaning and participation within a higher order of reality.

The paper seeks to open a philosophical dialogue concerning whether the recovery of metaphysics and the transcendent are the necessary conditions for overcoming the crisis of meaning in late modernity meaning.

REALITY AS AN IDEOLOGICAL CONSTRUCTION: A NEO-MARXIST READING OF CYBERPUNK NARRATIVES

СТВАРНОСТА КАКО ИДЕОЛОШКА КОНСТРУКЦИЈА: НЕОМАРКСИСТИЧКО ЧИТАЊЕ НА КИБЕРПАНК НАРАТИВИТЕ

The paper *Reality as an Ideological Construction: A Neo-Marxist Reading of Cyberpunk Narratives* explores the possibility of a neo-Marxist hermeneutic interpretation of cyberpunk as a distinctive science fiction subgenre that articulates the fundamental contradictions of contemporary technocratic and neoliberal capitalism. The analysis focuses on the problems of reality, simulation, desire, identity, and freedom under conditions of hyper-mediated and virtualized existence. It argues that cyberpunk is not merely a futuristic fantasy but a symptomatic cultural diagnosis of contemporary society, in which corporate power, digital technologies, and media systems actively participate in constructing the experience and perception of reality.

Through an analysis of works by William Gibson and Philip K. Dick, as well as films such as *Blade Runner*, *The Matrix*, *Dark City*, and *Ghost in the Shell*, the paper identifies three ontological modes of cyberspace: cyberspace as virtual reality, cyberspace as everyday reality itself, and cyberspace as a domain in which the distinction between the real and the simulated becomes blurred. Within these modes, reality is gradually transformed into a simulacrum, while human experience becomes the object of technological manipulation, prosthetic intervention, and ideological mediation.

Drawing on the theoretical insights of Jean Baudrillard, Slavoj Žižek, and the neo-Marxist critique of late capitalism, the paper argues that cyberpunk thematizes the crisis of authenticity and the collapse of the clear boundary between the real and the virtual. At the same time, the genre raises fundamental questions about the possibility of freedom in a world where desires, memories, and identities are shaped by centers of power. From this perspective, cyberpunk is interpreted both as a narrative form that problematizes the contemporary condition of alienation and as a space for critically rethinking the relationship between technology, capital, and human subjectivity.

EXPERIENCE: APPROPRIATION AND CREATION OF REALITY

ДОЖИВУВАЊЕ: ПРИСВОЈУВАЊЕ И СОЗДАВАЊЕ НА СТВАРНОСТА

"How does the individual become aware of the distinction between what is inside and what is outside, between 'thought' and 'reality'?" is one of the questions posed by the founders of Gestalt therapy. As a direction toward answering this question, the authors propose the concept of **experience**. In order to define this concept, this paper connects the ideas proposed in Gestalt therapy with those found in the phenomenology of Heidegger and Hegel. Additionally, however, this paper attempts to answer the question: *"In what way does experience perceive and create reality?"*

The phenomenological method is present throughout the entire paper. Description, as the primary tool of phenomenology—which also includes language as the bearer of phenomena—is simultaneously the aim of this paper. In fact, the sole task of this paper is to describe experience in a way that demonstrates how, exclusively through it, both the one who experiences and that which is experienced are simultaneously brought into appearance. Experience is understood as a process of the simultaneous creation of the individual and reality.

Experience not only brings Gestalt therapy clients toward a gradual expansion of their awareness, but is also of relevant importance for reality itself. For the individual, reality is the result of experienced, and thereby disclosed, phenomena. Furthermore, experience reveals that what constitutes reality for the individual is not only the concrete, tangible objects of empirical reality; rather, in the creation of reality, experience actualizes potential phenomena. The paper concludes that it is exclusively through experience that things and phenomena are brought to the individual, to reality, and to the individual's reality.

The reinterpretation of the concept of **experience** offered in this paper provides a perspective from which phenomenology can be viewed as a philosophical discipline. Furthermore, this understanding contrib-

utes to emphasizing the method of Gestalt therapy through which encounters with clients take place. In this way, psychotherapy is redefined from a corrective tool into a possibility for moving and enriching the clients' experience.

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ANDRÉ BAZIN IN THE 60S AND NOW: THE WORLD OF POST-REALITY

АНДРЕ БАЗЕН ВО 60-ТИТЕ И ДЕНЕС: СВЕТОТ НА ПОСТРЕАЛНОСТА

André Bazin devoted a particularly great significance to the reality, believing that a serious author must not allow filmmaking to become the creation of some invented reality. In this he found particular backing in the authors of the *cinéma vérité* group, as well as in those of the New Wave, but also – surprisingly only few works have been written about this – in the anthropological films, which had their zenith in the 1960s, under the great patronage of Jean Rouch. However, the young, post-war European democracies at that time did not develop regressive tendencies, like those of the post-reality, which exist today. The rapid aesthetic, but also the rapid economic development of the art film, was then in a system that valued reality, in fact truth, unlike today when European quasi-democracies develop a reality that is in favor of someone. Those who do not support the created reality risk being retaliated with violence, which is turning our “democracies into democratures” (Žarko Puhovski).

The distinction between documentary and fiction often depends on how structured reality is. Documentaries that incorporate elements of fiction (soundtrack, script) have faced criticism. Even the most realistic films are structured, as each shot involves a choice of angle, lighting, and editing that shapes reality. Realist theorists, notably André Bazin, argued that film's main strength is its ability to capture reality. They favored long takes, deep focus, and minimal editing over heavy one, in order to maintain the

integrity of space and time. The 1960s gave birth to the return of the reality-based filmmaking. In those years directors aimed to capture real life with minimal intervention, using handheld cameras, providing a sense of intimacy and “truthful” representation. On their part structuralists emphasized that the film should be a “record of its own creation” rather than a mere reproduction of a story, leading the audience to engage in the construction of the film rather than in the illusion. But the illusion of post-reality did not exist then.

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PHRONESIS IN THE AGE OF AI REALITY: NEW EPISTEMIC SENSITIVITIES FOR ETHICAL JUDGMENT

In a world increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence and technologically mediated forms of judgment, the conditions under which human beings deliberate, interpret situations, and make decisions are undergoing significant transformation. AI systems no longer function merely as technical tools, but they increasingly participate in processes of recommendation, evaluation, prediction, and prioritization, thereby influencing both individual judgment and broader social understandings of reality. As a result, ethical judgment increasingly becomes intertwined with the technological mediation through which contemporary experience is organized.

However, this does not imply that phronesis can be replaced by computational efficiency or predictive optimization. On the contrary, the growing presence of AI reveals more explicitly the complexity of the conditions under which ethical judgment is exercised today. Although phronesis continues to function primarily as an ethical virtue concerned with practical deliberation and morally responsible action, the rise of AI brings into sharper focus the epistemic sensitivities already implicit in practical wisdom itself.

The paper argues that contemporary phronesis requires the cultivation of new epistemic sensitivities appropriate to technologically mediated forms of judgment. While recent discussions have introduced concepts such as “epistemic heed” (Tsai&Ku, 2025) in order to describe responsible engage-

ment with AI systems, this paper explores the possibility of broadening such approaches by examining a wider range of ethically grounded epistemic capacities, like epistemic humility and epistemic vigilance. These are not treated as autonomous epistemic virtues, but as ethically oriented capacities that emerge from the practical function of phronesis itself. In this sense, the contemporary relevance of practical wisdom lies in sustaining human moral responsibility and ethical agency through forms of context-sensitive judgment that remain central to the Aristotelian understanding of ethical life.

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THE SOPHIANISATION OF THE SOCIUS: THE SOCIAL ONTOLOGY OF SERGIUS BULGAKOV AND ITS CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE

СОФИЈАНИЗАЦИЈАТА НА СОЦИУСОТ: СОЦИЈАЛНАТА ОНТОЛОГИЈА НА СЕРГЕЈ БУЛГАКОВ И НЕЈЗИНОТО СОВРЕМЕНО ЗНАЧЕЊЕ

In the wake of postmodern problems of alterity in a cultural and societal context, the sophiology of Sergius Bulgakov becomes particularly relevant. It provides a social ontology which grounds the structure of human subjectivity and intersubjectivity in the dynamic of communion of Hypostases in the Holy Trinity in the pre-eternal Divine-Humanity: Sophia. This dynamic is at once radically open and unfragmented, enabling the liberation of the sphere of alterity from violence and the overcoming of the dichotomy between individualism and collectivism. This also results in the possibility of an equally non-violent but really effective critique of power in the whole socius, as well as an understanding of economy in its original sense of oiko-nomia, wherein humanity is the host of the household of the world, and the world is a pan-organism and socius in a process of “sophianisation” — a maturation of organisms and subjectivities in communion towards Wisdom.

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**KARL RAIMUND POPPER, ONE OF THE MOST
ORIGINAL AND CONTROVERSIAL PHILOSOPHERS
OF SCIENCE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
(28 JULY 1902 – 17 SEPTEMBER 1994)**

**КАРЛ РАЈМУНД ПОПЕР, ЕДЕН ОД
НАЈОРИГИНАЛНИТЕ И НАЈКОНТРОВЕРЗНИТЕ
ФИЛОЗОФИ НА НАУКАТА НА ДВЕСЕТТИОТ ВЕК
(28 ЈУЛИ 1902 – 17 СЕПТЕМВРИ 1994)**

“Science is the search for truth, and it is entirely possible that some of our theories are, in fact, true. But even if they are true, we can never know this with certainty.”

(Popper)

Popper was born in Vienna on 28 July 1902. He began and completed all levels of his education, including his doctoral dissertation, in his hometown. In 1935, he went to London. After spending a year in Great Britain, he moved to New Zealand. In 1946, he returned to London. He also spent some time teaching at several universities in the United States.

He traces the history of the philosophy of science back to ancient Greek philosophy, specifically starting with Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Bacon, Galileo, Leibniz, Newton, and others, and concluding with the 20th century, including Popper, Heisenberg, and Kuhn. Regarding the latter—namely Kuhn’s paradigm, which brought about a revolution in science—I have discussed it extensively and in depth in Chapter IX of my book *“Revolution that Revolutionizes Consciousness.”* Therefore, from that chapter I will borrow only those aspects that relate to the importance and value of scientific revolution, in essence, to the history of philosophy.

Every genuine scientific book that is appreciated by professional criticism deserves respect. Since every scientific work that contains innovation deserves to be ranked among works that represent novelty in its field, such a view is also justified by Sir Peter Medawar, Nobel Prize winner in Medicine, who stated: “Popper was the greatest philosopher of science who ever lived.”

Speaking about his philosophical-scientific work, it is not only clear but also controversial. However, it is original in its creative path—on a path that, as Pythagoras would say: “Avoid the roads that everyone travels; seek and create untrodden paths.” This is confirmed by the re-publication and translation of his work *Logik der Forschung* (“The Logic of Scientific Discovery”), which was first published in German in 1934 and later in English in London in 1959, with additions, as well as in several other languages.

In this context, I focus on the work *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, in which the very first chapter addresses the “problem of induction.” The fundamental, central issue discussed throughout the book is the problem of demarcation (*Abgrenzung*), that is, the problem of defining boundaries—the criterion of falsification.

According to Popper, every principle that cannot be tested and potentially refuted should be rejected. The problem of falsification concerns the distinction between science and non-science. In other words, science must be falsifiable; it must be possible to test whether it is true or not through observation and experimentation. Any theory that does not undergo this process is not science, but pseudoscience.

Popper begins his book with the problem of induction, emphasizing that empirical sciences are often considered to be based on the inductive method. However, he challenges this view, arguing that it is not logically justified to derive universal statements from individual cases.

The classic example is that of swans: no matter how many white swans we observe, this does not justify the conclusion that all swans are white, since a black swan may exist.

Popper also distinguishes three “worlds”:

1. The world of physical processes (World 1),
2. The world of mental processes (World 2),
3. The world of the products of the human mind (World 3).

This division serves to better explain his theory of knowledge.

As for the distinction between certainty and truth, he explains it through the geocentric and heliocentric theories. Aristotle’s theory was considered certain for centuries, yet it was not true. Only with Copernicus was it demonstrated that the Sun is at the center of the system.

This shows that certainty is a subjective mental state, whereas truth is objective. As Popper himself states: “Truth is something objective, whereas certainty is something subjective.”

In conclusion, despite criticisms, Popper remains an important figure in the philosophy of science. Although some criticize him for placing too much emphasis on falsification, he made an outstanding contribution to demystifying dogmatic approaches and to the development of critical scientific thinking.

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IDEAS AS THE ONTOLOGICAL FOUNDATION OF REALITY IN PLATO'S PHILOSOPHY

ИДЕИТЕ КАКО ОНТОЛОШКА ОСНОВА НА РЕАЛНОСТА ВО ПЛАТОНОВАТА ФИЛОЗОФИЈА

In contemporary philosophy, there is an increasingly pronounced tendency to reduce philosophy to method, analysis, or an instrument of thinking. In contrast, ancient philosophy—and Plato's in particular—proceeds from the assumption that thought is inseparable from reality, with that reality grounded in the realm of ideas. The central thesis of this paper is that Plato's ideas are not mere concepts or mental constructions, but the ontological foundation of reality. In this sense, dialectic is not merely a method, but a path toward that which truly is. Special attention is devoted to the relationship between seeing and knowing, as well as to eidetic insight as a specific mode of cognition. The paper also critically reexamines contemporary philosophical paradigms that reduce philosophy to a reflection on the conditions of knowledge, pointing to the need for a renewal of its ontological horizon.

DANCE AS A HETEROTOPIA AGAINST HEGEMONIC DISCOURSES OF TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES. THE MEANING OF EMBODIED LISTENING, SILENCE AND POSSIBILITIES OF HEALING

Dance, as conceptualized in this lecture, can be understood as a heterotopic and phenomenological space in which traumatic experience is rearticulated through embodied practice. Drawing on Michel Foucault's concept of heterotopia dance functions as an "other space" that resists hegemonic narratives by enabling non-verbal, bodily expression of trauma. In line with Maurice Merleau-Ponty, silence emerges not as absence but as a meaningful, pre-linguistic mode of expression, where the body articulates what cannot be spoken. Furthermore, the notion of kinesthetic empathy expands listening into a relational, embodied attunement, resonating with Martin Heidegger. The "in-between" space, echoing relational philosophies such as those of Emmanuel Levinas and Jean-Luc Nancy, becomes a dynamic site of becoming, where meaning is co-created and identity remains open. Within this phenomenological field, dance disrupts fixed interpretations of trauma and traumatic hegemonic discourses of shame and guilt and enables processes of transformation and healing, understood not as closure but as the capacity to dwell within relational openness.

PARADOX OF AN IMAGINATION: THE ROLE OF THE INTELLECTUALS IN THE REALITY OF THE NATION

Perhaps, there is a quite subtle difference between “*to invent*” and “*to imagine*” something. In the world as a realm of continual logical and physical causality *nations* are just emerging unleveled beings depend on accidental sums of natural, biological, sociological, cultural and historical premises, merely, being caused by the circumstances, that results in unfinished shapes of their phenomenal occurrences. Blindsided multitudes divided by predated historical or newly produced borders. Simply, *crowds*. Only, within the *imagination* of the intellectuals these assembled masses become *nations*, and through this same dialectical process the intellectuals become concrete *national intellectuals* or bourgeoisie. Imagination of the intellectuals gives birth to the self-consciousness of the proposed crowd and through the conceptual definition, it secures the eternal meaning and duration of that nation as necessitate and inevitable ‘divine’ being. Anderson, Gellner, Hobsbaum and all the historical events confirm this possible perspective. For Kierkegaard the crowd is absolutely zero, nothing, emptiness. A completely irrational and unconscious contingency overflowed with depravity and malevolence, incapable of deep self-imagination. How it is possible, one peculiar existence of an educated individual, which proudly announces its independence, which posse is born from the defiance and impudence, which by essence contradicts the masses, in order to have a deep and insightful imagination and reflection of the determinations of the totality, to be willingly driven into intellectual absolute justification of the undetermined partial reality of the masse? That ‘I’ to thinks itself as ‘We’, as one with the crowd? To become domesticated livestock or advocatus even if his nation turns into evil horde? The paradox of this imagination is an existential paradox. Hegel: it is the logic of the objective spirit. Benda: it is just most miserable form of treason.

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**FRAGMENTED ADOLESCENT REALITY IN
THE DIGITAL ERA: AN HBSC ANALYSIS OF VARIATIONS
IN WELL-BEING AND DIGITAL BEHAVIOUR**

**ФРАГМЕНТИРАНА АДОЛЕСЦЕНТСКА
СТВАРНОСТ ВО ДИГИТАЛНАТА ЕРА:
HBSC АНАЛИЗА НА ВАРИЈАЦИИ ВО
ДОБРОСОТОЈБАТА И ДИГИТАЛНОТО ОДНЕСУВАЊЕ**

In the context of rapid and intensive digitalization and increasing social fragmentation, contemporary adolescent reality is increasingly shaped by the interaction between experiences in online digital environments and offline everyday life. This paper aims to analyze adolescent well-being and social media use based on data from the latest Health Behavior in School-aged Children (HBSC) survey, with a particular focus on North Macedonia and a comparison with other countries participating in the international study.

Using descriptive and comparative analyses, the paper examines indicators related to social media use, life satisfaction, and psychosomatic complaints.

The findings are interpreted within the conceptual framework of reality as experienced, mediated, and socially constructed, highlighting the role of digital media in shaping contemporary adolescent experience.

The paper contributes to the interdisciplinary discussion between psychology and philosophy by addressing the question of whether today's adolescents live in a shared reality or in a fragmented, digitally mediated reality. The findings also provide insights into cross-national differences in adolescent well-being and digital behavior and their implications for understanding the challenges of growing up in the digital era.

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THE INFLUENCE OF POINTILLISM AND DIVISIONISM ON THERMODYNAMIC RESEARCH OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

ВЛИЈАНИЕТО НА ПОЕНТИЛИЗМОТ И ДИВИЗИОНИЗМОТ ВО ТЕРМОДИНАМИЧКИТЕ ИСТРАЖУВАЊА НА ИЗГРАДЕНИОТ ПРОСТОР

The proposed research appears from an analytical approach to researching the built environment through pointillism and divisionism. This study of architecture and energy involves the intersection of two entities of different natures: the material and spatial dimension on the one hand, and the energy and thermodynamic dimension on the other. From this point, the research problem intersects the graphic representation of the built environment and thermodynamic analysis. The architectural discourse of the study focuses on how graphic techniques from pointillism and divisionism can be applied to the interpretation of thermal influences and the assessment of the energy capacities of the built environment. The central research question addresses the role of pointillism and divisionism as techniques in the analysis of the thermodynamic properties of space. To this end, the study employs a comparative analysis of both analog and digital approaches associated with these techniques and examines their applicability within ar-

chitecture research through the discipline of architecture physics. The research further explores the speculative nature of representational techniques, which are neither entirely analog nor entirely digital. This condition suggests an epistemological perspective that leads to the recognition of the concept of mimesis. The visualization of spatial-energy interactions is examined as a process in which the characteristics of space and the conceptual characteristics of energy intersect, while representational language functions as a medium for communicating spatial and energy-related indicators. Methodologically, the intersection of divisionism and pointillism through vector and raster models is analyzed using thermodynamic simulations of built environments in Macedonia. In this way, visual research supported by energy-based analyses contributes to the integration of spatial and energy qualities into future development models and spatial planning practices.

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FROM THE CHALDEAN ἄνθος τοῦ νοῦ TO DAMASCIUS' ἄνθος πάσης τῆς ψυχῆς: THE TRANSMISSION AND TRANSFORMATION OF A HYPERNOETIC CONCEPT IN LATE NEOPLATONIC APOPHATIC THEOLOGY

This paper reconstructs the historical trajectory of the concept of the “flower of intellect” (ἄνθος τοῦ νοῦ) from its appearance in the Chaldean Oracles (Fr. 1 des Places), through the exegetical tradition of Porphyry, Iamblichus, and Syrianus, to its systematic elaboration in Proclus and ultimately in Damascius. Particular attention is given to Damascius’ doubling of the hypernoetic organ: alongside the inherited “flower of intellect,” which apprehends the Intelligible, Damascius introduces the notion of the “flower of the entire soul” (ἄνθος πάσης τῆς ψυχῆς) as a more radical apophatic organ directed toward the Ineffable (ἄρρητον). The paper argues that this doubling is not a mere terminological extension but a necessary systemic consequence of faithfully preserving the Chaldean logic of hypernoetic access within the context of a newly introduced principle beyond the One.

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PLATO'S EROS IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF CONTEMPORARY LEARNING EXPERIENCE AND REALITY

In this paper, we will consider the importance and role of eros in the modern pedagogical process. We will try to show that the return to the Platonic understanding of eros changes the way we comprehend ontological nature of the modern classroom (any space where the process of learning and exchange of ideas takes place): from a space where information is exchanged (virtual reality) to a space where a meaningful human reality is constituted.

Plato believes that eros represents not only desire, but also the driving force that leads from the sensual to the world of ideas (metaphor of the ladder). The properties of eros mentioned by various speakers in *The Symposium* (the source of virtue, the duality of eros, universal harmony, the search for wholeness, the pursuit of immortality and the ideal) can be used to describe important aspects of imparting knowledge within the modern classroom.

Modern education, due to the digit(al)ization and technologization of society, is often reduced to the mere dissemination of information and digital literacy. That is to say, education in the modern context can be understood as the accumulation of knowledge. In that way, it is losing its essential erotic dimension of knowledge: passion for research, understanding and learning. Therefore, we will consider the following questions: What is eros in today's classroom? How does eros function in the context of digital reality? How does the teacher become an "erotic mediator" who connects the student to the world of ideas? Does this kind of didactic transformation imply the instilling of passion for research, instead of just sharing information? Can the Socratic pursuit of truth and knowledge be revitalized within the modern classroom?

TRANSCENDENTAL OR EPIGENETIC CLOCK

ТРАНСЦЕНДЕНТАЛЕН ИЛИ ЕПИГЕНТСКИ ЧАСОВНИК

The aim of this paper is to explore the perspectives of transcendentals in Kant's critical philosophy, as the supreme paradigm of the schematism of reality. Different philosophers have so disputable conceptions of transcendental a priori statements, with a range that extends from biology, to mathematics, from genetics to transfiniteism. Those various perspectives were designated by Malabou, Heidegger, Foucault, but all those numerous philosophers or specialists are mainly, confronted with respect to the performative or epigenetic character of transcendental a priori statements.

The performative aspect, which some philosophers of biology advocate, but not only them - designates the transcendental ability as teleological and already existing, in the form of a germ, a seed. In this way, transcendentals in the subject are only the unfolding of the existent, which should receive its final form.

The epigenetic approach designates transcendentals in the subject through the prism of an irreducible, an unexpected, but necessary hyper-reality.

This sharp division is not actually functional in Kant's case, because there are numerous indications that can place Kant in one group or the other, without disturbing the critical approach. The absence of an explicit Kantian inclination towards one aspect or the other is fertile ground for contrasting philosophical positions, and a new dimensioning of transcendental philosophy. Among the radical understandings of performativism or epigenesis in Kant, syncretic approaches performatism-epigenesis appear, but also those that lead to the absolute rejection of either of them – as referential for transcendentalism.

In this way, Kant's hard postulate about the non-empirical origin of a priori transcendental statements becomes formatted through some elastic concepts, which as empirical, historical, scientific, mathematical are an attempt to concretize the logical schematism of ahistorical transcendental statements about reality. This is actually a search for the clock of activation of transcendental statements, or the immanent capacity of the subject, with simultaneous exclusion of innatism and psychologism.

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CONTEMPORARY ANIMAL BIOETHICS AT THE CROSSROAD

According to the holistic concept of bioethics endorsed by Jahr, Schweitzer, and Potter, which is in accordance with the regional concept of integrative bioethics (Kukoč, Čović), the attitude towards animals is part of the overall interactions of man with his environment, which is manifested today through the deontological and utilitarian framework, as well as the compromise interpretation of David DeGrazia (the middle-ground theory between Singer and Regan). However, the real picture is far more complex; let's just take the attitude towards the animal world advocated by Singer, de Fontene and Sirilnik, which, within the same body of knowledge, varies from the point of view that the rights of animals must be respected (following the concept of animal welfare, defined through the "5 freedoms" and "3Rs"), through the idea that there are not two ethics, one for animals and the other for humans (a fine touch of deontology), to the point that man misapprehends animal behavior as human patterns. There is also room for autonomy, integrity, dignity, and vulnerability, as principles of the European school of bioethics (see Kemp & Rendtorff, Barcelona Declaration), which we thought applied only to humans. Heresy? Maybe, but the arguments "for" and "against" are roughly equal in strength. Finally, we should rethink animal bioethics in the post-pandemic era, which brings us artificial intelligence with an unknown perspective and ultimately an unknown role of the human race in the future.

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HOW REAL IS A DEMON? THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE CONCEPTS OF INTERMEDIARY BEINGS

The presentation will offer an overview of the development of concepts of intermediary beings, from the ambivalent, often hybrid and liminal agents of Mesopotamian and ancient Egyptian belief systems, whether harmful and malevolent or beneficial and protective, to the conception of the demonic as intentional evil within Christian ethical thought. In addition, the complex metaphysics of intermediary figures in Neoplatonism will be examined as a philosophical exploration of the intelligibility of the constituent elements of reality.

Particular attention will be given to the fluidity of these concepts and to the shifting ontological status of liminal intermediary beings. The discussion will begin with examples from relevant magical-religious, medical, and literary sources from Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt, in which materiality, corporeality, hybrid bodily characteristics, and either divine delegation or the demons' own intentionality play dominant roles. The status of demons will then be examined through concepts of embodied evil with specific anti-Christian goals (beginning with Justin Martyr), and through representations of demonic agents oriented toward the corruption of human beings, especially believers, retaining their corporeality and nefarious purposes (through to St. Augustine).

Finally, the influence of the complex metaphysics of Neoplatonism on the transformation of intermediary beings into disembodied and intelligible entities will be considered. Attention will also be paid to the development of views concerning the ethical consequences of the different ways of positioning intermediary beings within processes of moral decision-making, with particular emphasis on free will in the struggle against harmful external influences, and on the struggle with oneself in the formation of Christian identity. The reality of the demonic will thus be examined through a trajectory from religious conceptions of corporeality, through disembodiment, to embodiment (within the human person).

THE REALITY OF THE WORLD THROUGH THE PRISM OF FR. SERGEI BULGAKOV'S SOPHIOLOGY

СТВАРНОСТА НА СВЕТОТ НИЗ ПРИЗМА НА СОФИОЛОГИЈАТА НА ОТЕЦ СЕРГЕЈ БУЛГАКОВ

Father Sergius Bulgakov (1871-1944), directly influenced by Vladimir Solovyov and especially by Father Pavel Florensky, developed his sophiological concept which takes a central place in his doctrine of Trinity and God's economy. The main failure of the Russian sophiology is that the question of God's Wisdom is not Christologically founded in the spirit of the New Testament and patristic teaching. Bulgakov neglects the theology of God's uncreated energies. He thinks that it does not sufficiently explain the creation of the world as well as the relationship between God and the world. According to him, the creation of the world and its unity with God can be explained only through a mediator who acts as an "ontological bridge" between The Creator and the creation. Bulgakov, using the ontological mediation paradigms that are characteristic for some certain ancient philosophical systems, especially Neo-Platonism, develops his doctrine of Sophia. She is immanent to both the nature of God and the creation. This attitude leads Bulgakov to the position of pantheism. In order to avoid this danger, he modifies his teaching introducing two models of Sophia: -"Divine Sophia" and "Created Sophia". Unlike the patristic theology, Bulgakov's sophiological essentialism does not tend the antinomy of apophatic-kataphatic theology, and thereby he puts into question the ontological difference between the Creator and the creation. It is a failed attempt to interpret the dogma of the creation of the world *ex nihilo*, through categories and concepts that are alien to the church tradition.

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LUPUS IN FABULA: A TREATISE ON THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF ANIMALS

LUPUS IN FABULA: РАСПРАВА ЗА СОЦИЈАЛНОТО КОНСТРУИРАЊЕ НА ЖИВОТНИТЕ

Labeling something as a “social construct” does not imply that it is not real or that it does not physically exist. Social construction presupposes a process of collective definition through which people create, maintain, and change the meanings of things—including objects, events, relationships, and even animals and other people—through interaction and interpretation. In this sense, the meaning of animals is also socially constructed, which, again, does not deny the physical existence of animals. In fact, it suggests that human patterns of interaction with them lead to what they mean to humans. In doing so, the process of social construction conveys not only meanings but also social, cultural, and moral values. In other words, the epistemological creation of animals—i.e., their social construction at the level of knowledge, building complex systems of hierarchy, domination, and power—justifies how humans treat them. It follows that the various discourses constructed about animals at social and cultural levels are themselves political, as they not only function in isolation but also influence how people treat animals at the practical level. Starting from the now classic work on the social construction of reality by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, which is complemented within the framework of animal studies by Nick Taylor’s position on animals as socially constructed repositories of culturally mediated meanings, this article offers an in-depth discussion of the social construction of animals through the prism of two theoretical concepts—the “socio-zoologic scale” by Arnold Arluke and Clinton Sanders, and the “anthroparchy” by Erika Cudworth.

THE REALITY OF THE PERSON IN AN AGE OF ALGORITHMIC GOVERNANCE: A PERSONALIST CRITIQUE

AI-driven governance systems increasingly construct operative models of persons through data profiles, behavioral predictions, and optimization functions. This paper argues that by doing so, such systems enact a meta-physical error: they operationalize a reductive ontology that treats the human person as decomposable into data points, predictable from behavioral patterns, and optimizable through input-output manipulation. This raises valid ethical concerns. The result is a functionalist anthropology in which the person is reduced to what the person measurably does. The principles of fairness, transparency, and accountability (i.e. the dominant AI ethics frameworks) have proven inadequate to address this deeper problem. Internal critiques demonstrate that these principled approaches are contested, procedurally captured, and structurally indeterminate without an adequate philosophical anthropology. My paper identifies this anthropological deficit as the root cause of the current crisis in AI ethics.

To fill this gap, I draw on Christian Personalism, particularly the philosophical anthropology of Karol Wojtyła, Emmanuel Mounier, and Juan Manuel Burgos. Wojtyła's analysis of the acting person reveals four irreducible dimensions of personhood that algorithmic systems structurally cannot capture: self-determination (the person as self-governing agent, not a probability distribution), transcendence (the person's orientation toward truth and value beyond measurable parameters), integration (the unity of somatic, psychic, and spiritual dimensions that data decomposition violates), and participation (the interpersonal encounter through which persons co-constitute community, irreducible to platform-mediated connectivity). The paper systematically confronts the operative ontology of algorithmic governance with these personalist categories. The task before philosophy today, therefore, is not merely to regulate algorithms but to reassert the reality of the person (as a non-reductive, inexhaustible reality).

THE RESTORATION OF THE REAL: JAN AMOS COMENIUS'S *PANSOPHIA* AS A PHILOSOPHICAL THEOLOGY OF PARTICIPATORY KNOWLEDGE

Jan Amos Comenius (1592–1670) is most commonly received as a pioneer of modern pedagogy. This paper argues that such a reception, while not false, is philosophically inadequate — and that what it misses is of direct relevance to the conference's central question. Comenius's *pansophia* — the project of universal wisdom toward which all his pedagogical works consistently point — is not an educational program with theological embellishments. It is a philosophical theology of *reality-restoration*: a systematic account of how fragmented human knowledge may be reintegrated into genuine participation in the divinely ordered whole.

The paper develops this claim in three movements. First, it excavates the ontological presupposition underlying *pansophia*: that created reality is divinely ordered, intelligible, and good — that the Book of Nature, the Book of Scripture, and the Book of the Human Mind speak in consonance when rightly read. This is not naïve realism, but what the paper calls *participatory ontology*: the world is knowable because human knowing, when rightly formed, participates in the divine *logos* that orders it. Second, it examines Comenius's diagnosis of epistemic fragmentation — the collapse of shared reality into competing confessional, philosophical, and national systems — as a *theological* and not merely intellectual problem. The diagnosis was formed in the crucible of the Thirty Years War; it speaks with unmistakable precision to the contemporary post-truth crisis. Third, it reads Comenian *didactica* as the proposed remedy: not the transmission of information but the *reformation of the human being as knowing subject* — the restoration of the *Imago Dei* whose three capacities (knowing, speaking, acting) have been disordered by the fall.

The paper concludes by situating Comenius's *pansophia* within contemporary debates in epistemology and philosophy of religion, arguing that his participatory model of knowing offers genuine philosophical resources for addressing the current fragmentation of shared epistemic reality.

FROM HOMINIZATION TO POST-HUMANISM: TRANSFORMATION OF THE HUMAN CONDITION

ОД ХОМИНИЗАЦИЈА ДО ПОСТХУМАНИЗАМ: ТРАНСФОРМАЦИЈА НА ЧОВЕКОВАТА СОСТОЈБА

Contemporary technological and cultural transformations call into question the classical anthropological concept of the human being, opening space for new theoretical approaches within the framework of posthumanism. However, the concept of “posthumanism” in contemporary scholarship functions as a heterogeneous field in which mutually irreducible projects—transhumanist, critical-philosophical, and post-anthropocentric—intersect, thereby producing conceptual ambiguity. This paper proceeds from the anthropological thesis that the human being is not a finished product, but rather the result of a process of hominization and self-mediation. In this regard, the concept of constitutive incompleteness, developed within twentieth-century German philosophical anthropology, is proposed not as a substantive thesis about the human being, but as a methodological prism for mapping the differences among posthumanist projects.

The theoretical approach will draw upon the works of Rosi Braidotti, who problematizes anthropocentrism and proposes the posthuman subject as a relational and heterogeneous (multispecies) entity, as well as Donna Haraway, whose concept of the “cyborg” dismantles the boundary between the human and technology. The perspectives of Francesca Ferrando, Anna Tsing, and Eduardo Kohn will also be incorporated, as their work opens the possibility of understanding the human being within more-than-human ecologies. At the opposite end of the field, the transhumanist project as articulated by Nick Bostrom and Ray Kurzweil will be examined. Particular attention will be devoted to the hidden affinities revealed through the prism of hominization, especially the structural affinity between German philosophical anthropology and critical posthumanism.

The paper argues that posthumanism does not signify the end of the human being, but rather a field of diverse theoretical responses to the enduring question of human constitutive openness, thereby opening new methodological and ethical horizons for understanding the human condition.

WHICH REALITY IS REAL?

KOJA REALNOST E REALNA?

AIM: To rationally and logically explain a very personally sensed and individually experienced metaphysical concept called *Human Reality*. In order to explain this it is very essential to find the answers to some of the oldest philosophical questions: *What is the present? What is time? Where do we exist?*

MATERIAL AND METHODS: The insights and the direct knowledge collected from a 5-year spiritual work with my students from the *School of Applied Spirituality NEXUS – Skopje*; 10-year experience as a spiritual-psychotherapist and 30-year personal experience as a person with active meta-normal abilities.

RESULTS: By repeating the exercises and experiment I have given to different study groups and individual students and clients and proving the truthfulness of the reported insights and direct knowledge by consensus of all participants, compared with my own history of deep insights and direct knowledge I was able to discern the existence of three completely different, separated, non-mixing and non-overlapping layers of something that I called the *One Absolute Reality*. The titles of these three layers of Reality are as follows:

- 1) *the Personal Layer of Reality;*
- 2) *the Mass-conscious Layer of Reality;*
- 3) *the Universal Core of Reality;*

CONCLUSIONS: Every single person in any single time and space exists at least in one and at most in three layers of Reality. These layers in themselves are totally different, govern by different rules, principles and Laws and do not overlap, mix or in any way interact one with the other. Nevertheless, they are the three parts of the *One Absolute Reality*. And only when a person can have the knowledge and the understanding of how to create one owns reality, will be the co-creator of hers/his Destiny.

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PHILOSOPHY AND REALITY

ФИЛОСОФИЈАТА И СТВАРНОСТА

Reality is not (merely) a thing, just as philosophy is not (merely) a science. Every philosophy is born within a particular historical moment, which it comprehends in thought, yet philosophy is always contemporary. It not only interprets its own time but also seeks to understand it. In doing so, it may also contribute to shaping the future.

Some thinkers have argued that the crisis of philosophy often runs parallel to the crisis of the world. Many dismiss philosophy—as might be expected—echoing the familiar claim that “from Lao Tzu to the present day, philosophy has not provided a definitive answer to any of its own questions.” Consequently, there has been no shortage of those predicting its demise. Yet such predictions have repeatedly proven unfounded.

Philosophy itself, however, knowing more—or rather, knowing better—about its own nature, continues to describe itself as a discipline that does not know.

This paper explores and compares the philosophical thought of Pavao Vuk-Pavlović and José Ortega y Gasset, focusing on the concepts of pluralism and perspectivism, as well as on the idea of philosophy as **philosophia viva**—a living philosophy.

CAN AN OTHERWISE JUST TAX BE UNJUSTIFIABLY INTRODUCED? A SCANLONIAN ANALYSIS OF UK INHERITANCE TAX REFORM AND THE DUTY OF PUBLIC JUSTIFICATION

Recent reforms of UK inheritance tax reliefs for agricultural and business property have generated intense public controversy. The reform can be defended by egalitarian reasons: inherited wealth contributes to intergenerational inequality, unequal opportunity, and the concentration of economic power. Yet the reaction of those affected, especially farming families, raises a further philosophical question: can a tax that is justified in its general aim nevertheless be introduced in a way that is morally objectionable?

I will examine this question through T. M. Scanlon's contractualism. On Scanlon's view, the wrongness of a principle depends on whether it could be justified to those subject to it on grounds they could not reasonably reject. I argue that this framework allows us to distinguish between three levels of assessment: the justification of the aim of a tax reform, the justification of its institutional design, and the justification of the procedure through which it is introduced.

I will also reconstruct Scanlon's reasons for limiting inherited advantage, especially his claim that inheritance raises concerns about substantive opportunity, equal concern, and concentrated control of capital. It then applies the contractualist test to the UK case. I argue that the general aim of limiting inherited economic advantage may be difficult to reasonably reject. However, affected groups may still have reasonable objections to the way the reform is introduced if they are denied adequate consultation, clear explanation, transitional time, and realistic opportunities for succession planning. In my conclusion I will show that public justification is not merely an external democratic virtue added to taxation policy. From a Scanlonian perspective, it is part of what makes coercive social rules morally justifiable to those who must live under them.

CAN WE KNOW REALITY BEYOND OUR OWN WORLDVIEW? DILTHEY AND THE LIMITS OF UNDERSTANDING

Can human beings know reality beyond the limits of their own worldview? This paper addresses the problem of whether knowledge of reality is possible when all knowledge seems to be historically conditioned and rooted in specific forms of human experience. The starting point of the analysis is Wilhelm Dilthey's metaphilosophy and his related typology of worldviews, which presents philosophy not as a path to objective truth, but as a field of unavoidable conflict between different interpretations of reality. This conflict reveals the crisis of classical metaphysics: philosophy loses the ability to definitively resolve its basic problems, while still continuing to ask questions about being as a whole, the meaning of human life, and the conditions that make knowledge of reality possible.

From this perspective, reality is not given as a neutral object of knowledge. Rather, it appears only through historically changing forms of understanding and worldview-based expression. At the same time, the paper shows that similar assumptions can be found in contemporary social philosophy, especially in the thought of Jürgen Habermas. While accepting the historical and linguistic entanglement of knowledge, Habermas emphasizes the possibility of moving beyond the limits of particular perspectives through intersubjective communication and rational argumentation.

The paper analyzes how metaphilosophical reflection can be understood as an attempt to move beyond relativism. It does so not by appealing to a point of view outside history, but by reconstructing the structures that shape worldviews as historical ways in which reality becomes accessible, as well as the conditions that make different worldviews mutually understandable and translatable. In this sense, worldview philosophy does not mean giving up metaphysics, but transforming it and raising again the question of whether philosophy is still possible after the possibility of access to objectively valid truth has been called into question.

THE BEING OF SILENCE: PHENOMENOLOGY OF THE UNSPOKEN IN THE PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIP

БИТИЕТО НА ТИШИНАТА: ФЕНОМЕНОЛОГИЈА НА НЕПРОИЗНЕСЕНОТО ВО ПСИХОТЕРАПЕВТСКА РЕЛАЦИЈА

Silence in the psychotherapeutic encounter transcends the understanding of communication as an exclusively verbal process and raises questions about the nature of presence, relationship, and meaning. Rather than being treated as a void or an interruption, it is understood as a dynamic mode of experience that constitutes various forms of understanding between the therapist and the client.

The theoretical framework is grounded in the existential phenomenology of Martin Heidegger, the dialogical philosophy of Martin Buber, and the phenomenology of perception of Maurice Merleau-Ponty. From this perspective, silence is not the absence of communication, but a relational space of meaning revealed within the interaction itself.

The aim of the research is to examine how systemic and family psychotherapists experience, interpret, and integrate silence in their therapeutic practice, and what meanings they ascribe to it within the framework of the therapeutic relationship.

Methodologically, the research is based on a qualitative approach, conducted through Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), with the aim of exploring the lived experiences of 27 systemic and family psychotherapists with more than two years of professional experience working with clients. Data were collected through an online questionnaire with open-ended questions.

The results show that psychotherapists experience silence as a multilayered phenomenon: as an interpreted indicator of the client's internal processes (emotional processing, cognitive integration, and the emergence of insight), as a subjective experience of the therapist marked by uncertainty,

inner dialogue, and professional transformation, and as an intersubjective space that shapes and deepens the therapeutic relationship.

Its embodied dimension is also significant, where nonverbal indicators play a key role in its understanding.

Additionally, a developmental difference in the experience of silence is observed, where more experienced therapists demonstrate greater tolerance, differentiation, and intentional use.

The findings suggest that silence is an active, constitutive relational phenomenon and a significant therapeutic resource, thereby opening space for a more detailed examination of the role of silence in psychotherapeutic education, supervision, and future research.