APPRAISAL

A Journal of Constructive and Post-Critical Philosophy and Interdisciplinary Studies

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Notes on Contributors

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States. He studied American personalism under Dr. Thomas O. Buford, a student of one of Borden Parker Bowne's major successors at Boston University. His previous publications concern Emmanuel Levinas, Giambattista Vico, and cultural criticism. His current interests centre mainly on questions about the practical value of philosophy.

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EDITORIAL

A reminder

There is still time to reserve a place at our Conference in Nottingham on April 5th & 6th, and with 'The Person in the 21st Century' as the special theme: : *but please reply immediately.*

This issue

In this issue we presents the first fruits of the contacts established last year, and mentioned in the previous issue, with the International Forum on Persons. Three of the papers given at the International Conference on Persons are included, as well as two further papers from our own Conference last March.

Richard Prust and Gary Fuller tackle questions about what it is to be a person and how we know other persons, while Mason Marshall introduces us to the philosophy of Borden Parker Bowne, the founder of American Personalism. (We hope to feature Bowne and his school in a future issue.)

Also included is a further study by Georg Neuweg on the themes of knowing and learning, this time with reference to Ryle as well as to Polanyi.

Other journals

The International Forum on Persons, and the journal *The Personalist Forum,* take a particular, but not exclusive, interest in the American Personalists. The new Polish journal, *Personalism*, also looks to the American Personalists as well as specifically Polish and other European personalist philosophers. *Humanitas*, with which we also exchange issues, stands in the tradition of the American Humanism of Irving Babbitt , whom we featured two years ago. Details of these journals, along with those with which we have always been connected, can be found on pp.39-40.

Perhaps some of our contributors may be inspired to submit articles on, and especially developing, the work of Polanyi, to those journals. It would be a pity, and self-defeating, if we all remained within our own circles.

THE REPUBLIC OF SCIENCE REVISITED

Klaus Allerbeck

Michael Polanyi's essay 'The Republic of Science' is probably the most compact statement of his mature views concerning the self-government of science. He had dealt with this topic before: there are some German publications before 1933; he was a one-man-opposition against efforts to plan science in Britain in the late thirties; he introduced the notion of the scientific community in *Science, Faith and Society* (which made him the founding father of the sociology of science, at least according to Robert K. Merton), the Gifford Lectures (*Personal Knowledge*) contain his theory of science, but the essay, the title of which I borrow, weaves all these strands together.

I will attempt to summarise this very compact essay. I will then make some remarks about the relationship of Max Weber and Michael Polanyi (this includes an attempt to buttress the statement that there was indeed a relationship). In conclusion, I will turn to the question whether Polanyi's statement can be considered valid in a time of 'Big Science' and many new alternative publishing opportunities. This includes the question whether there was a Gestalt change of 'pathological science' contradicting his thesis.

1 'The Republic of Science'

We are used to view scientists as single entities, though we discuss occasionally whether the time of the single researcher may have passed, whether he was replaced by teams, interdisciplinary co-operation, Big Science and the like. Polanyi, on the other hand, tirelessly pointed out that scientists are and must be a special kind of community, with a great deal of interdependence not only in modern times (just think of Tycho Brahe and Kepler: while the book *The Sleepwalkers* is Koestler's, but it is clearly inspired by Polanyi). But this interdependence and co-operation is possible only in freedom making the scientific community his model of a free society (he planned to write a 'Theory of Freedom' that he never finished).

Scientists do not start from scratch. They begin with questions and results of others, whether they continue along those lines, build upon these or question them. Frequently they work in competition with other scientists, and they make usually some effort to reach their goal before others get there (later Merton worked out the central place of 'Priority' for scholarly research). Their results need the recognition and confirmation of other scientists-through refereed journals, acceptance in the most recent edition of the textbooks of a field (where there are such textbooks as definitive statements). Because of the principle 'freedom' is always threatened, sometimes extremely through politics-the case of Lyssenko being an extreme

example -, but also daily through dilettantism, rubbish and, sometimes, forgery. Polanyi has documented with unequally clarity and forcefulness that this threat through nonsense, which occasionally may originate even from scientists with a high reputation, is very real and can be countered only by decisive repression.

In the Velisovsky affair the physical chemist and philosopher Polanyi was the most articulate defender of astronomic research sites who did not allow this outsider to use their facilities to test or refine his theories which were abstruse from the point of view of astronomic science. This dogmatism surprised a lay public used to the false model of the 'open-minded scientist' and lead Feyerabend, somewhat misleading and derogatory, to call Polanyi a 'Stalinist'. We can certainly hear something like the tune 'science, science is always right' in his views, but this would be erroneous. In many examples Polanyi documents scientific progress against established scientific beliefs. But he does hold up the view that the mechanisms of repression have to be effective. Scholarly journals and textbooks have proven themselves as effective means over the years.

If someone finds out that the gestation period of all mammals is an integer multiple of *pi* it has to be certain that nobody finds out such nonsense which happens to be in agreement with the known facts. If publishers do not accept it, it must be certain that nobody else prints it (in this case, *Nature* did print it: as a joke, and Polanyi keeps telling this joke which illustrates that correspondence with facts is not the only criterion of science.)

Co-optation and competition are in his view the central steering mechanisms of a discipline. Not only that leading universities make an attempt to win the best scientists; with each and every tenured recruitment comes some effort to find out which emphasis within a discipline appears most promising for a university. Procedures of science planning through control by the state, like those contemplated in Britain in the late thirties, are just useless paperwork, by contrast.

This reign of orthodoxy must appear as problematic. How can anyone in a discipline express 'dominant views', if no one, as we know, has a completely firm grip of the contents of his field and most scientist s only master a fraction of their own field? Polanyi points out that scientists besides their core competency do have an overview of neighbouring fields, and formulates his thesis of the self-governance of disciplines without governing bodies with the central idea of overlapping neighbourhoods.

This way of self-governance is not foolproof and absolutely certain. 'Scientific opinion may, of course, sometimes be mistaken, and as a result unorthodox

work of high originality and merit may be discouraged or altogether suppressed for a time.' But he adds: 'These risks have to be taken.' Science cannot flourish in any other way. The soil of science must be extraterritorial, so that only scientific authority governs it. Free scientific research does not imply the absence of authority, but demands its own. This is a peculiar authority and tradition: 'Scientific tradition enforces its teachings in general, for the very purpose of cultivating their subversion in the particular.' (KB 67)

This refers to steering within disciplines; steering between different disciplines, especially resource allocation, appears more complicated. One has to search for an analogue of the capital market which is effective in directing capital flows to areas where the expected return is largest. This concept of overlapping memberships and evaluation by neighbours appears promising and needs expansion.

2 Max Weber and Michael Polanyi

Max Weber and Michael Polanyi agree fully on one key point: both reject a false ideal of 'objectivity' of scientists who are just assessing facts. Science as a vocation means *passion* for both men. In this Polanyi continues the tradition of Max Weber, but he does take it much further.

What I will have to say about the relationship of Polanyi to Max Weber may appear speculative. Polanyi does not quote Weber, and if he mentions him he does not agree; in particular, he considers Weber's ideal of value neutrality false. The only authority I can refer to is Raymond Aron and Polanyi's thank you note (which is not unequivocal). Those who are familiar with Polanyi do not want to know about Weber, as this would conflict with the claim that Polanyi's work is unique. Those who know Weber are unwilling to accept that Polanyi corrects critical mistakes in Weber's work, as they do not want to admit that there are mistakes in it at all.

There is no proof that Polanyi, who spent two years in Karlsruhe before the war, was a guest in Heidelberg intellectual circles. Hungarian Polanyi researchers have to reject this idea, as this would imply a relationship to Georg Lukacs, and because they value Polanyi as anti-Communist (but perhaps their ways just parted, sometime during the war?). Polanyi spent the summer term 1918 in Vienna with his sister, while Weber was teaching there (he finally rejected to offer of the economics chair he was called to). In Theodor Heuss' report about Weber in Vienna, Polanyi is not mentioned (but when Toni Stolper writes to Polanyi a quarter a century later about 'our friend Theodor Heuss', this does suggest where all these minds must have met: in Vienna, 1918).

The proof of my statement can only be the content of the works of Weber and Polanyi, which differ, of course. Typical for Weber is the triad 'Tradition', 'Rationality', and 'Charisma'. In his speech 'Science as a vocation' everyday life and the exceptional show up again under the label of 'Work' and 'Inspiration' (Einfall). Polanyi's work does not contain 'charisma', as there is no need for it (he allows tradition to embed multiple rationalities, whereas Weber needs 'charisma' to break out of the one Rationality. His view of Tradition is much richer than Weber's .Tradition is not just an earlier stage of everyday life before the onset of rationality.

A fundamental flaw of Weber's view of rationality is the lack of the notion of 'error'. Weber makes two attempts to deal with error: in 1913 he comes up with a six-point-scale which is faulty, and in 1920 he claims that error cannot be understood at all. The reason for this problem is obvious: Weber's view of rationality is flat, whereas Polanyi has a hierarchical view of rationality most definitely stated in the third chapter of the 'Study of Man' which allows him to cope with three types of error.

For Weber rationality is obvious, at least for experts of the field (a beautiful example of his is the impossibility of 'Elektrizitätsdiebstahl' which does not fit into the dogma of German law and thus cannot happen until the law is changed to deal with this as a special case). For laymen, this in incomprehensible. The judge, according to Weber, becomes a 'paragraphenautomat', predictable by experts and incomprehensible for laymen.

For Polanyi on the other hand, rationality is not obvious even for experts. He points out that Copernicus' theory was fully understood only by Newton a century and a half later. The content of the Constitution of the United States can be assessed only after the Supreme Court has given it a close look.

The differences between Weber and Polanyi are not completely stated here; but my view is that Polanyi continues Weber's tradition. While Weber calls his field in his programmatic essay 1913 'Verstehende Soziologie', it must be understood that this is in fact a pun, as Dilthey claimed that there can be no science called 'sociology'. At that time, however, Dilthey's view of two kinds of science, Geistes- and Naturwissenschaften, had already been proven faulty by Windelband, whom Polanyi quotes, and Karl Jaspers, whom he does not refer to. (My lecture at the Polanyi centennial in Budapest gives more extensive references). For Weber, 'Verstehen' as a notion is tied to rationality, a concept that did not exist for Dilthey as yet.

Max Weber refers to the single scientist under conditions of strict specialisation. He refers to great scientists of a former generation-the mathematician Weierstraß (he does not mention Hilbert, be it for reasons of familiarity or of a didactic nature). The greatness of a scientist is largely determined by his

'imagination', though he admits that dilettantes may have valuable insights. 'only on the soil of very hard work insight prepares itself'. He uses terms like 'mania', 'inspiration' in connection with 'insight' (Einfall). For Weber, the progress of science is something continuous, and it appear to be insights driving it.

The postulate of value freedom, which he is uttering against his German colleagues who use the lecture hall for political agitation, is not quite consistent with his conclusion, which is a passionate plea for doing ones duty according the demands of the day, the duty being ones own calling.

Polanyi, of course, rejects the idea of a value-neutral science. He has plenty of experience with two dictatorships, has taken up the message of the Hungarian revolution 1956 and spread it, he has emphasised the importance of the value of science for its own sake and expressed this convincingly. Science in general, and social science in particular, can and must not be value-free as he demonstrates in the *Study of Man*, where he compares three approaches to the study of Napoleon (where his hierarchical view shows up which was not a common place at the beginning of the century). By contrast, Weber's world was flat. Weber considers, in a rather pathetic way, a tragic choice between gods, whereas in a hierarchical world some religious belief may be contained in a higher one.

While for Polanyi the personal aspect of knowledge and science is central, he does consider institutional aspects much more, though he does not extend concepts like 'scientific opinion' or 'scientific community' into the sociology of organisations or science. The takes such extensions and implications for granted. In *Science, Faith and Society* he describes the complicated path of a discovery to general acceptance in some detail. 'It took eleven years for the quantum theory, discovered by Planck in 1900, to gain final acceptance', he writes in the 'Republic of Science' (and it took, according to Polanyi, three more decades until Planck had achieved a status in the history of science comparable to Newton) (KB 66-7).

Polanyi does share Weber's belief in the progress of science. But for him this progress is embedded in a tradition which includes reverence and admiration for revolutionaries. The 'Experte 3. klasse' in the Swiss Patent Office, whose articles in journals published in 1905 were to revolutionise the scientific world view, is, though his mentor, almost a member of his generation. So Polanyi can describe science as a vocation from first-hand knowledge and a familiarity with the leading minds who revolutionised the scientific world view a century in a way that Weber, of course, cannot (though someone who prepares himself for a journey to America by buying 'Middletown' and writes 'Muncie' into the inner cover, cannot have been very far from sociology). As a matter of fact, there is a lengthy,

though not masterful, manuscript in German in the Regenstein holdings that gives his introduction to sociology. While for him there the smallest unit is the dyad, acts that cannot be meaningfully separated like a 'kiss' or a 'struggle', he shares Weber's horror vision of a rationality not controlled by people and the human mind. Whereas Weber calls for a 'Verant-wortungsethik' that takes the results of rational action into account, for Polanyi the opposite is stressed in the idea of 'automatismus', a rationality triggered by something that later on cannot be stopped once set in motion, thus producing results desired by nobody. Polanyi's experience with the Austrian-Hungarian army, carefully composed multilingually in such a way that there can be no communication on a level that is just supposed to carry out orders, must have played a part in this vision of horror so central to his thought. It may be worth mentioning the little known fact that Max Weber served in the First World war as commander of a small military hospital for almost a year while many of his professorial colleagues wrote passionate books and articles and gave passionate lectures, supporting Germany's position in the war. Weber saw their students, among the other victims, die. So his plea for value-freedom in the lecture hall is certainly not dispassionate at all-a point that bears repetition and has to be kept in mind (So Polanyi's fear of 'automatismus', quite similar to Weber's rejection of a rationality that fails to take its consequences into account, explains his long-standing opposition to machine intelligence when computer scientists, following Turing, considers this as a possibility).

Polanyi carries on the ideas of Weber's sociology especially when he writes about science. The scientific community was a model of co-ordination and co-operation without central control and force for him. I have no doubt that the scientific community was his model for a theory of freedom which he never completed.

The development of science does not end when Polanyi describes its social structure in outline form.

Two aspects need particular attention:

The social structure of science is not easily accessible. Organisations may be highly visible but this very visibility is misleading. Authority in most disciplines is not formal. The recent behaviour of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft is a case in point. The usual authority is the anonymous referee, elected by his peers (I will not elaborate the apparent contradiction). The authority rests normally in a process, not in a particular office. The Chancellor may call the President of DFG his advisor in matters of stem cell research, apparently adding political legitimacy to his own views, but the leading administrator of the DFG is not an authority in all matters considered scientific.

Polanyi gives a marvellous example of a decisive

point in his own career. Professor Bredig felt incompetent to judge a paper of the young Polanyi and sent it to Einstein. Polanyi describes Einstein's answer thus: 'Bang! I was created a scientist!' Authors of textbooks and editors of refereed journals and presidents of organizations do not necessarily make the important decisions. For a long time there were no tools to describe social structures under such conditions.

Ronald Breiger has shown in his dissertation how block model analysis can be used to describe the social structure of a sub-discipline. This technique could be used to describe overlapping memberships as well, though BMA might hit practical upper limits. Anyway, today we have procedures at hand to describe the scientific community using defined criteria.

Certainly there was a change in publication opportunities. While refereed journals have a long backlog, the popular press is quite interested in science, without time lags. The internet and the World-Wide Web offer new, rapid opportunities for dissemination and publication. What is the function of 'gatekeepers' when the gates can be easily passed by? Does the scientific community still have effective means to suppress nonsense, or does it become victim of ever increasing piles of garbage? Alexander Rausch studied 'cold fusion' as a test case.

Science appears more 'organised' than in Polanyi day. I would like to discuss the issue how functional such modern ways of organising science are using an episode as example I have vividly in mind.

Modern social research dates really only back to the days of World War II, when Stouffer's monumental study *The American Soldier* gave enormous credibility to it. More and more single-purpose studies were conducted, but were underanalyzed. Collecting them in archives and keeping the data for posterity soon appeared to be the order of the day. Thus, in the late sixties, when hopes for computer usage blossomed, a movement to create data archives evolved assuming that to amass data would be creating gold mines for future researchers, made accessible by computerised retrieval systems. The marriage of old data and future computer possibilities seemed to be the order of day. Such archives were created and funded in several countries.

The marriage, however, was doomed by a mismatch of technologies. Survey researchers stored their data on punched cards. To make the tedious task of analysis possible, a practical limit had to be observed: all the data for one unit had to fit on one card. Social researchers were very creative to use as many of the 12 x 80 possible holes at the time. These 'multiple punches', unfortunately, could not really be analysed by computers which assumed that data were numeric and that there was just one hole in each column (there was a technical way to store multiply punched data,

called 'column binary' format). The only practical way appeared then to be a combination of old-fashioned counter sorters with high-tech computers, which would have looked absolutely foolish to everybody not familiar with survey research at first look.

I have described the innovation of data analysis systems at that time, and participated in their dissemination. Had those not become available at that time, the whole archive movement would most likely have faltered, appearing outdated and super-futuristic at the same time.

Had there been the modern structures, a multiple-person competent directorate, supplemented and advised by a 'Wissenschaftlicher Beirat' considered absolutely necessary for any institute today, this would not happened. Without such structures, a student assistant stumbling upon data analysis systems and a director tolerating it were sufficient to revolutionise the way analysis in social research was done in a very short period of time. As the development is well documented in the literature, there is no need to describe it here in detail.

For Polanyi as well as Weber, change is essential for the scientific enterprise. It appears obvious to me, based on my own experience both as a researcher and a member of modern scientific supervisory bodies, that many of the organisation structures deemed necessary to legitimise the spending of considerable sums of public funds on science produce obstacles to change that may sometimes be insurmountable.

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Notes:

1 KB 49-72. Michael Polanyi's essay was originally published in *Minerva* 1, 1962.

2 Weber's lecture *Wissenschaft als Beruf* has been published in quite a few places. The most accessible may be the Reclam edition (ISBN 3-15-009388-0 http://reclamjr.buchhandelshop.de/mhtm/vlb/vlb_voll .phtml?ID=0231x3954579x19143&LID=&caller=&a ct=suche&artnr=3-15-009388-0)

3 For a more general interpretation of how Weber's an Polanyi's works relate, see my 'On the logic of personal knowledge', in *Polanyiana. A Polanyi Mihaly Szabadelvu Filozofiai Tarsasag Folyoirata.* 1992 (II) 1-2, S. 51-62 For my somewhat idiosyncratic interpertation of Weber, see my 'Zur formalen Struktur einiger Kategorien der verstehenden Soziologie', in *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, XXIV (4) 1982, S. 665 - 676.

NEO-FASCISM OR POST-FASCISM?
The Italian Way To A 'Conservative Revolution'

Anna Castriota

1 Introduction

The present paper will focus on the current intellectual debate concerning the nature of Fascist ideology according to a contemporary focus and considering as a reference the Italian new right-wing party, namely, *Alleanza Nazionale* (National Alliance). The role of the AN has become increasingly important within the Italian political arena in the last five years. The party was formed from the ashes of the neo-Fascist party, the MSI social Italian movement) during a convention on 24 January 1994 and issued an official document called the *Tesi di Fiuggi The Fiuggi Theses*) from the name of the spa town where the convention has been held.

In the present paper we will refer very often to these thesis as the main document which can illustrate the political and ideological changes of Fascist ideology in modern times when it tries to adjust itself in order to enter into the legitimate political arena of a modern democracy. The main aim of the present paper is therefore, to demonstrate whether these changes are real or if there is still an hard-core Fascist element within this new ideological and political subject. The hypothesis explored is that the AN, and other similar neo-Fascist movements such as *Action Française*), is a political subject which is ideologically and politically an hybrid, although it still retains an hard-core Fascist element. This can be shown by the many declarations of the party members as well as by its intellectuals. Furthermore, the reference to the most important Italian neo-Fascist ideologues is relevant to the purposes of the present paper for it shows how the ideology's morphology has changed and has assumed the characteristics of a political and ideological hybrid, which is the result of the fragmentation of the original Fascist doctrine and the formation of a wide spectrum of being 'Fascist'.

2 Characterising Fascism

The methodological and interpretative framework adopted in the present paper in order to demonstrate our hypothesis as explicated above, takes into account, as main references, Freeden's interpretative model and Griffin's theory of generic Fascism as the best answer on a controversial topic that have been puzzling scholars, who have been trying to find a convincing answer to the many questions marks raised by Fascism as a political and ideological phenomenon of Europe in the twentieth century. In this perspective, Freeden's model of ideological morphology[1] is a valid aid for scholars in order to define ideologies. In fact, ideologies are to be considered as conceptual and linguistic constructions, which are synchronic at a theoretical level, but diachronic in practice and always in a perpetual state of evolution. Moreover, it should be pointed out that ideologies tend to produce complex compositions under political conditions and cultural and social pressures which are difficult to classify.

Freeden's analysis presents ideologies as 'clusters' of concepts which gives significance to wide groups of political values. Thus, the de-contestation of the meaning contained within these concepts leads them to become the basis of thought in certain political realities and therefore, to act in order to establish them.

The scholar's argument is that any ideology has core concepts which are ineliminable so that if one of them is missing, other political meanings are formed. As Griffin has pointed out[2], the advantage of this model is that once accepted, ideologies are no longer considered as static and defined once for all, but they are instead a blend of different political, social, and cultural values. This leads to both an adaptation of the ideology to different political circumstances and changes while it also gives place to hybrids within the same range of political thought. As for Griffin, central to the Oxford scholar's theory of generic Fascism is the element of myth: 'Fascism is a genus of political ideology whose mythical core in its various permutations is a palingenetic form of populist ultra-nationalism'[3].

The quotation above shows that the definition of generic Fascism refers to the 'mythic' element. This is important in order to define the ideological core, namely, generic Fascism's revolutionary palingenetic ultra-nationalist element. Griffin's explanation of 'political myth' is intended as the irrational element present in all the ideologies[4] despite their rationality and common sense. AS Griffin has pointed out, if we apply the category of 'mythical core' to Fascism, it appears to be a system of beliefs and rituals that would interest an anthropologist as well as a historian[5]. In this perspective, therefore, the lowest common denominator of a Fascist ideal type is a 'palingenetic form of populist ultra-nationalism'.

As the term 'palingenetic' is concerned, Griffin has shown how this theme is present in different Fascist permutations whose most fitting symbol is the phoenix, the mythical bird that rises from its own ashes. Another element that characterises the Fascist mythical core is the populist ultra-nationalist element. The scholar explains this in Weberian terms as an apolitical form which refuses the 'legal' forms of politics and support the 'charismatic' ones in which the leader assumes an authoritative aura of power[6]. Consequently, Griffin

says that the Fascist minimum has 'the vision of the national community rising phoenix-like after a period of encroaching decadence which all but destroyed'[7]. According to this interpretation, Fascism is therefore, characterised by a sense of imminent change, a turning point within a democratic system corrupted and decadent. In this sense the use of violence is legitimate, although Fascist movements can accept a parliamentary system in order to get power. Moreover, they seem to consider the society as a monolithic block, as a 'national unity' against the pluralism and the differences which characterise a modern democratic system[8]. Undoubtedly, these elements can be easily identified both if we look at the historical Fascism of Mussolini's regime and at the more recent developments within the *cultura di destra* (culture of the Right) not only in Europe, with the *Nouvelle Droite*, but also, in the current intellectual debate about the subject among Italian intellectuals.

3 Marco Tarchi's analysis of Fascism

One of the most important right-wing Italian intellectuals is Marco Tarchi, whose analysis of Fascism as political phenomenon stresses a few points which I would like to point out in the present paper. Tarchi is a famous neo-Fascist intellectual in contemporary Italy and one of the most authoritative scholars where Fascist ideology is concerned. He himself has been a member of the MSI for many years until he decided to abandon his political career in order to dedicate himself to academic research[9]. Recently, he has become the editor of two new-right publications: *Elementi* and *Trasgressioni* (*Elements* and *Transgressions*) both of which represent the Italian counterpart to the French *Nouvelle Droite*. The title of one of his books[10] is explanatory of the feelings that underpin the neo/post-Fascists, being in fact, *Cinquant' anni di nostalgia*, (*Fifty Years of Nostalgia*), a neo-Fascist expression to indicate the oscillation between the nostalgia for Mussolini's regime and the reality of a democratic system where neo-Fascists were tolerated but marginalised. But *Cinquant' anni di nostalgia* also means the lapse of time in which the Fascists felt themselves to be living in a sort of *interregnum,* or political exile, waiting for a turning point in their political destiny[11].

Tarchi's analysis of Fascism is interesting for several aspects for he stresses the following points. Firstly, the sense of loss of the Fascists in the aftermath of the war and the fragmentation of the 'Front of the Right' which led to different political expedients for the survival of the Fascist ideology. The fact that in those years the neo-Fascist party, MSI, tried to occupy the space in the centre-right fits perfectly Freeden's model, namely, that ideologies do adjust themselves according to the changes in societies in order to survive. Therefore, such adjustments do not mean necessarily a mere

political manoeuvre in order to gain power or votes, but rather a 'natural' survival reaction of the ideology. But what Tarchi seems really to point out is the nostalgia for Mussolini's regime and the myth of the 'socialisation'. In fact, on one side there is the nostalgic element for the Fascist dictatorship, together with the myths of the Roman Empire, the rejuvenation of the nation and the figure of the leader depicted like the Roman model of *homo novus*. It is indubitable in fact, that these intellectual paraphernalia constitute the core of the Fascist ideology despite the more concrete and rational political and governmental programmes. What it is important to stress here is the profound belief which is that neo-Fascists consider themselves as those who belong to an élite of chosen spirits and who are willing to wait until the rising of the so-called 'Golden Dawn' and then, relive this new era like a phoenix rising from the ashes. Furthermore, Tarchi does not seem to fully accept the AN's democratic principles, although he admits that a 'a democratic participation at every level had gradually and progressively influenced the intellectual attitude of the MISSINI'[12]. The theme of the 'socialisation' is a big issue in the Italian neo-Fascist literature and its failure is due to Mussolini's compromise with capitalism[13]. Finally, the Italian scholar points out the 'anti-Communist' factor which kept Fascists together besides their common political ideals. According to Tarchi this can be perceived even now with the willingness of the AN to constitute an anti-left front. It must be remembered, however, that the period of the so-called 'black terrorism'[14] represents an important phase in the development of the right-wing movement in Italy. In fact, within the party radical elements were pushing not only toward a struggle against the 'communists' but against the system itself. On this point Tarchi seems to dismiss neo-Fascist terrorism as a sort of a political escape-goat for intrigues backed up by the Italian secret services known as SISMI[15]. In such a context Tarchi's analyses the neo-Fascist temptation for a *coup d'etat* as due to revolutionary currents sympathising with 'strong regimes'. Again, Tarchi seems to minimise the extreme radicalism of neo-Fascist figures like Pino Rauti, General De Lorenzo and Junio Valerio Borghese, who attempted a coup in 1964 and 1970[16]. Tarchi's analysis focuses as well on the philosophy of Juluis Evola and the Evolian cult of the 'heroic isolation of the *uomo differenziato* (different man) who fights his own battle alone[17]. Finally, Tarchi's comparison between the *Nouvelle Droite* and Italian neo-Fascism is interesting because according to the scholar, the ND wants to operate a transformation of a certain kind of mentality starting from the very base, through the transmission of its own conceptual framework and therefore, accomplish a communitarian 'democracy'. In this sense he can say that the ND is 'a promotion of a different form of

modernity, different from the one conceived by utilitarianism and rationalism'[18]. The intellectual values of the ND are therefore, important elements in the definition of the ideological morphology of the AN and the Italian neo-Fascist panorama.

4 Piero Ignazi's analysis of Fascism

The other intellectual considered for the purposes of the present paper is Piero Ignazi, who is a well know scholar on the subject and who represent the 'left-wing' view of Fascism. The main point in Ignazi's analysis is about the relationship between Fascism and the traditional Right[19]. Ignazi shows how in the 50's within the MSI there was a clear refusal to be identified with the Right intended as a traditional conservative force. This denial continued until the 70's. In fact, only in 1972, with the *Destra Nazionale* (National Right) project, was there the ground for a change toward a more moderate conservative Right. This is an important point both in confirming the perception of Fascism as a 'third way' between Communism and Conservatism, and to establish the definitive turning point of a different attitude within the MSI towards more moderate conservative positions. Therefore, it can be argued that the passage between MSI and the AN has just been the accomplishment of a gradual permutation. In fact, the history of the party shows that since the 50's there was a moderate current within the MSI that was working toward a *strategia dell'inserimento* (strategy of introducing) which implied abandoning certain positions clearly considered 'Fascist' while pushing the party forces toward a moderate conservative Right. According to this perspective, the AN is truly the ultimate result of a series of permutations which have produced an ideological hybrid. In this sense Ignazi is wrong when he says that

> Therefore, when the MSI showed its Bad Godesberg, the Congress not only does not produce a hint of ideological revision, but does not take any effort neither in elaborating an update in terms of programmes, nor a change in alliances[21].

The point here is that Ignazi has not acknowledged one important factor, namely, that the evolution toward a more 'traditional' Right has already started far before the recent changes of direction of the party[22]. Ignazi here seems to make a mistake quite common among left-wing Italian intellectuals with regard to the subject, that is, to undervalue a complex political and ideological phenomenon like Fascism. The changes are not superficial as Ignazi claims, but substantial; in this sense, the late MSI already contains in itself the germs of permutation and this permutation is the AN. According to this interpretation therefore, the scholar seems to forget three points. Firstly, the willingness of the MSI, especially in the 60's, to build an anti-Communist front within a democratic system recalls

Fisichella's project of an *Alleanza Nazionale*[23]. Secondly, the 'Fascist element' within the party is only one of the components that form the AN and that the latter is the amalgamation of different *Destre* ('Rights'), as on many occasions party members have stressed[24]. Therefore, the AN project is a concrete, political entity whose main characteristic is to be a fusion of the many feelings of the Right.

5 Recent transformations of Fascism

Finally, and most importantly, if we accept both Freeden's model and Griffin's interpretation of Fascism as ideology, Ignazi's analysis cannot be entirely accepted for ideologies do change and adapt themselves in time although maintaining their original ideological core in order to adjust themselves within a new social an political context and therefore, survive in time. In addition, it must be pointed out that what Ignazi has misunderstood is that the neo-Fascist party like the MSI had, although unaware, gradually ideologically transformed itself in matter of contents and language. This can be easily demonstrated by the analysis of the history of the party, as well as by primary sources which illustrate its political evolution. It is in fact unthinkable that the party ad preserved itself in a sort of ideological and political mummification. Moreover, if one accept Freeden's model[25], Ignazi's position is no longer tenable. What the scholar seems to overlook is that by the 50's and 60's, and especially in the 70's and 80's , the MSI is no longer a 'Fascist party' in the strict sense. In fact, although keeping 'Fascist elements'[26] within it, the party strategy had clearly moved on[27]. There is a willingness to overcome the Fascist legacy for a complete legitimisation. Therefore, the AN is no longer truly Fascist but the product of a wider conceptual and political discourse that embraces different *Destre* 'Rights'):

> This is why one cannot identify the political Right with Fascism [for] neither one can exclude a different ancestry from it. The political Right is not a child of Fascism for the 'values of the Right' pre-exist the Fascism, they have gone through it and they survived it[28].

The passage above quoted explains much of what had been said before, namely that the AN is a blend of different *destre* where Fascism is one of the ideological references within a large spectrum of different political realities. Therefore, Fascism is no longer the only ideological referent but an historical phenomenon that belong to the past. This distinction is important in order to allow the AN to form its composite ideological morphology and, in this way, justify alliances with parties or coalitions only apparently ideologically different[29]. In this process of hybridisation, the political writings of D. Fisichella have a pivotal role. What emerges from those is the willingness to create an 'anti-left alliance', not just be the opposition but

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actually rule the country. This willingness is shown in several articles that Fisichella wrote between 1992 and 1993[30] where it is possible to trace back the ideological core of the Thesis. In fact, he wrote

> Therefore, if the Progressisti are working for a democratic alliance, on the other side of the barricade all those two had enough of the game of the progressisti must start to work for a national alliance capable of opposing the left-wing coalition[31].

From the above passage two things emerge. Firstly, the willingness to create an alliance of conservative forces to oppose the Left is the old MSI's strategy of establishing a coalition of anti-Communist forces[32]. Secondly, the willingness to form an alliance with the intent to govern the country and not just be in opposition. The AN is a new potential government force, not just an opposition force like the MSI. Therefore, Italy seems ready for a 'Right-wing government':

> . . . ask for the necessity of a big, articulate national alliance which could prepare now a new political class, promote a new asset of the Institutions, save the unity of the state and the nation[33].

Fisichella's project of rebuild a new Italy can be therefore summarised in four points.

1. The defence and unity of the territory. That means no political space for a possible devolution of the North from the rest of the country.

2. The reinforcement of the state and authority at all levels in order to work at the rebuilding of the nation.

3. To fighting statism and corruption.

4. Defend the citizens against bureaucracy, the taxation system, the complicated legal system.

But this project of rejuvenating the country cannot avoid the legacy of the past: '*to be a people, to be a nation it is necessary to rescue our historical identity, this sense of belonging*'[34]. The 'sense of historical belonging' express the rescue of golden historical periods of the Italian history and want to give to the Italian people a sense of national identity.

In conclusion, the project of neo-Fascists and conservatives is to 'give back Italy to the Italians' through a 'conservative revolution' where the main political force able to do so is a renewed Fascist party, that renegating the historical Fascism, has evolved itself in a political hybrid which gather together different feelings of 'being Right-wing' and recycling itself in a 'post-fascist' force with all the ambiguity that the adjective 'post-fascist might contain.

Note:

At the time when this article was written the Right-wing coalition was in power. Many of the theoretical writings quoted in the present paper have been ignored by the very same authors while they are in power. At the present time, Italy is living one of its more worrying periods concerning issues such as freedom, equality and race, which greatly increase social tensions. Therefore, the question of the title: 'neo-Fascists', or 'post-Fascists'? still remains unanswered.

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Notes:

1 Freeden, M., 'Political Concepts and Ideological Morphology', *Journal of Political Philosophy*, vol.. 2, 2, 1994, pp. 140-6.

2 Griffin, R. 'The post-Fascism of Alleanza Nazionale: a Case-study in Ideological Morphology', *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 1996, vol. 3, 2

3 Griffin, R. , *The Nature of Fascism*, Routledge, London, 1995, p. 26

4 ibidem, Griffin 1994), p. 27

5 ibidem, Griffin 1994), p. 27

6 ibidem, Griffin 1994), p. 37

7 ibidem, Griffin 1994), p. 39

8 ibidem, Griffin 1994), p. 44

9 Tarchi, M. , / Carioti, A. , *Cinquant' anni di Nostalgia. La Destra Italiana dopo il Fascismo*, Rizzoli, Milano, 1995

10 See Tarchi 1995), p55

11 Servello, F. *Caro Fini*, Edizioni Nuovo Meridiano, Roma, 1995, p. 4

12 ibidem, Tarchi 1995), p. 39

13 ibidem, Tarchi 1995), p. 31

14 In Italian the expression *terrorismo nero* ('black terrorism') indicates far-Right terrorism

15 ibidem, Tarchi 1995), p. 76: 'But when the contestation wave began to ebb, there emerged the necessity to find a figure to be against. Fascism was ideal for such purposes, both because of its characteristics, and because, since 1968, there have been many episodes of violence against the students' movement' (my trans.)

16 ibidem, Tarci 1995), p. 81

17 ibidem, Tarchi, p. 115

18 ibidem, Tarchi 1995), p. 149

19 'Traditional Right' is considered here as the conservatives predating Fascism, and subsequently, its allies e. g. some Liberal and Christian Democrats.

20 Ignazi, P. , *Storia dei partiti Italiani*, il Mulino, Bologna, 1997, pp. 201-03

21 ibidem, Ignazi 1997), p. 234

BEING RESOLVED, HAVING IDENTITY, AND TELLING ONE'S STORY

Richard Prust

1 Introduction

When we claim to know somebody personally, to know *who* he is, we make two crucial assumptions. First, we assume that we understand the character of at least some of his action: you wouldn't claim to know me personally if you couldn't understand anything at all that I did. Second, we assume that understanding what someone does is in fact our basis for knowing *who* he is: persons are somehow manifest in their actions, and when we know *who* they are, the character of what they do is somehow transparent to their personalities.

We need not dwell on the fact that both of these assumptions are currently under a dark cloud of suspicion. Contingency celebrants tell us it is naive to think that the character of somebody's action could identify him personally since it is naive to regard any characterisation as privileged in the way it would have to be to identify him. Others will say that our metaphysical disillusionment should disabuse us of any attempt to identify persons since the untenability of substantial selfhood makes the whole program irrelevant.

These doubts, fostered by the prevailing orthodoxy of postmodernism, directly challenge personalists, and it seems to me that the only way we can respond effectively is to provide a clear and cogent account of the connection between the character of somebody's actions and his identity as a person. Though that connection is never challenged in ordinary reasoning, because of the prevalent scepticism it has become incumbent upon us to explicate the reasoning that justifies it. How can it be that our characterisations of one another's actions make it possible for us to know one another personally?

Let me begin by narrowing the topic somewhat. It is not, after all, just any action of yours that I characterise and, on that basis, know who you are. For your action to manifest who you are it must be that I perceive what you do as something you were resolved to do, something you meant to do. What I want to demonstrate in this paper is that resolving to do something involves an imaginative feat which gives the resolute action the very character feature that makes it the avenue to personal identity. Resolve, adequately characterised, provides a window on personality. Specifically, what I want to demonstrate is that somebody can project resolve only by representing the character of his action in a certain type of narrative context. To be a resolute agent one must see oneself as advancing a narrative of which he is the protagonist. He has to be able to tell a certain kind of story about himself.

My argument has two parts, a phenomenological part and a practical part. First I am going to describe some of the distinctive features action has when we see it as resolute and then I am going to make an argument about the only way it is practical to project resolve given those features.

2 Action as resolute

It helps in practical matters to think as concretely as possible, so let us begin by trying to imagine our way into a few examples of people who are resolved to act in some way:

> The senator resolved to gain her party's nomination for President.

> The gymnast is resolved to compete in the next Olympics if he qualifies.

> My neighbour is resolved to adopt a cat.

> My friend has resolved never again to fly Austerity Airways.

What is it about the character of such action that makes it resolute? Let me suggest three features which are essential.

(1) That upon which an agent is resolved he imagines as a course of action. I emphasise 'course'. It cannot simply be that someone is resolved upon some outcome he thinks of abstractly. This is because abstract outcomes remain abstract only until their plausibility gets tested in the imagination, and we always assume that if an agent is acting resolutely he has run some sort of plausibility test in his imagination. While one might be resolved to beat the odds, one cannot be resolved to do the impossible, and that means that a resolute agent must have grounds for assuming that what he is resolved upon is doable. He has to envision a course of action successfully negotiating the conditions he finds it reasonable to assume will prevail and get done what he is resolved to do.

This course of action, in other words, must be plotted in the agent's practical imagination, though how specifically his imagination lays it out can vary greatly. Sometimes when the resolved action is particularly problematic, the agent's imagination may articulate its accomplishment in some detail. Other times when assumptions about how things will work out are thought to be dependable, the imagination will be satisfied to plot the course of its accomplishment rather more vaguely. But whether it is plotted in detail or largely assumed, it is a course of action rather than

simply an outcome which resolve represents.

Moreover, we can distinguish two types of elements playing in the imagination which mark the course of resolve. Most obviously, there must be some sequence of moves by which the resolved-upon action promises to get done. So, for example, the would-be Olympic gymnast might think through how much parallel bar work he will have to hold himself to, how he might work out a schedule with his coach, and whether he can arrange a work schedule to fit his training. And the senator resolving to win her party's nomination for President might see herself proving she can raise the funds, getting herself on Senate committees which deal with high profile issues, writing a book about her vision of the nation's future, and controlling as well as she can how she appears in the media.

But there is a second imaginative task required for projecting resolve which I believe has tended to escape the attention of philosophers of action. In addition to the moves he projects making to realise the resolved-upon accomplishment, a resolute agent also projects other moves calculated to realise other of his active engagements, specifically to realise them under certain modifications which (he imagines) will better accommodate his resolved upon action. In other words, when we are resolved to do X we not only project how we are going to realise X, we project how we are going to realise other parts of our intentional life, Y and Z, in ways that accommodate X. Knowing that my neighbour is resolved to adopt a cat I assume that she will take the necessary steps (clearing it with her landlord, figuring out where to put the litter box, and reading up on different breeds of house cats, say), but I also assume that she will adjust other activities and intentions (forgoing challenging her rent increase [to avoid provoking the landlord whose permission she needs], and moving the laundry hamper into her bedroom [to make room for the litter box]). Likewise my friend who is resolved never again to fly Austerity Airways is now resigned to making somewhat more expensive travel arrangements in the future and adjusting his budget accordingly. (We'll see how resolved he really is then!)

(2) A second feature common to the character of resolute action is that it purports to be as comprehensive of its agent's intentional life as is possible to imagine. It purports to determine the character of as much of the rest of his intentional life as it can realistically imagine modifying to accommodate the resolved upon accomplishment.

I am going to refer to this feature of resolve as its pretence, using that term in its barest etymological sense to indicate the assumption we make about the hold or hegemony of our resolve over our intentional life: we pretend to having modified as many elements of our intentional life as we can (without sacrificing those other intentions) to accommodate our resolve.

We can formalise this pretentiousness of resolve with a simple conditional statement: to say that someone is resolved to do X is to say that, if his imagination comes up with some alternative way to accomplish one of his other intentions, Y, a way which gets Y done but also better accommodates X, he will determine the character of his action accordingly. He will modify whatever undertakings his imagination suggests can be modified (again, assuming he can do so without sacrificing their intent) so as better to accommodate X, his resolved upon action. I do not mean to suggest that somebody's intentional life as a whole can be brought into accord with his resolve, but only that, where it can, there it will.

Let me try to illustrate this point with the senator. Imagine that she has a young daughter and that she is also resolved to be a good mother, even if that commitment occasionally constrains the way she pursues her political career. It is not evidence against her resolve to win the nomination that she occasionally lets motherly duties take precedence over political expediencies. We know that that is how she is resolved to conduct her political pursuits, compatibly with her resolve to be a good mother. But suppose that one day we hear she has scheduled a summer vacation in Europe exactly during the nominating convention. We surmise she could have just as easily scheduled it another time. That news, I think it is clear, would jeopardise our sense of her resolve. If that conflict (between her resolve to win the nomination and the resolve to take a vacation) were avoidable it would lead us to suspect that she really was not resolved to win her party's nomination after all.

(3) My last phenomenological point it that all characterisations of resolve are momentary in their determination of the character of the agent's action.

Resolve is always provisional on certain conditions holding during the course of action projected. Because they rarely do hold for that long, somebody's projection of resolve can only momentarily determine his character of action. He may be resolved to see some undertaking through, assuming all along that the conditions under which his projection was made will continue to obtain and that therefore his projection will continue to be realistic. But then new events intrude and render that inherited projection of resolve impractical, the trajectory of the action projected suddenly appearing to be on a collision course with the new eventualities. Almost always past projections of resolve get rendered unrealistic before their course has been run, and we have to project anew, again and again, with each new turn of events.

Our gymnast has a conflict with his boss about revising his work schedule. The boss is unwilling to accommodate the training the gymnast thinks is required for a serious Olympic bid. Obviously the gymnast will have to rethink his aspiration. He may

give it up or he may look for a new job. In either case, the unforeseen eventuality the boss has introduced by his refusal to co-operate calls for a reconfiguration of his resolve, a course correction, a redetermination of the character of what he is doing and intending.

I mention this momentary nature of the reign of personal resolve because I want to draw attention to the projection of resolve as a continuing personal task. We can never escape for long the need to employ our imagination this way. While this is simple common sense, it yields an interesting and important insight when we reflect on the distinctive way the term 'moment' behaves logically when it applies to action. We do not use the term in the same sense we use it when we refer to the time of an event. Consider two distinctions. While the moment of an event is a point in time, a point at which certain antecedent conditions had the outcome they did, the moment of an action is the time in which an action is real, the time between its inception and its completion. This means accomplishments can be of greater or lesser moment, a feature reflected in our common reference to some of them as more 'momentous' than others. The second distinction is related to this elasticity of active moment. While points in time are always situated relative to one another as before and after, it is also reasonable to understand two active moments as nested one within the other. 'Caesar crossed the Rubicon River', 'Caesar defied the Senate' and 'Caesar made a bid for imperial power' all characterise what Caesar was doing at a particular point in time. On the assumption that Caesar's defiance did not end with the river crossing, nor did his power grab end with his defiance, it is fair to say that the moment of the first accomplishment is nested in the second, encompassed in its moment, and likewise the second in the third.

3 Being resolved, imagination and a history of resolve

So much for the phenomenological part of my argument. Being resolved to do something involves projecting a course of action which pretends to determine momentarily as much of our action as we can imagine determining in accordance with what we are resolved to accomplish. Now let me try to advance my argument by citing several matters of practicality in projecting resolve. What does it take to project resolve successfully? In particular, the measure of success I want to focus on is resolve's inherent pretension. What does it take to project resolve so that it sustains its pretence?

Presumably whenever we are confronted with new conditions that compel us to project resolve anew, our imagination must work with elements of our intentional life that have become problematic under the newly prevailing conditions. It stands to reason that if the

imagination is to work creatively to co-ordinate those elements, it has to have some access to them. It has to be able to represent them. How does imagination represent the actions which circumstance requires us to project anew?

We can distinguish two ways to grasp the character of somebody's action, abstractly, as the concept of a certain type of act, or concretely, as the series of moves by which that action has been and is being accomplished. There are purposes for which thinking about actions abstractly is most expedient, like when we think about their legality. But a little reflection confirms that abstract thinking would tend to hobble us in trying to co-ordinate our actions in a new projection of resolve.

Take the senator resolving to win her party's nomination for president. You will recall that she is also determined to be a good mother. That too is her resolve. She knows all too well that her two resolves are going to be in tension from time to time, so she is committed to continually modifying both agendas so that they support one another as best she can imagine them doing. She knows that the two resolves might someday devolve into irreconcilability forcing her to chose between them, but since she now believes that there is a course of action she can follow which will satisfy both her mothering resolve and her political resolve, she is resolved to find that way. We can say she is resolved to resolve her two resolves.

If we consider what kinds of considerations are likely to go into resolving her various commitments, I think we can see why she has to represent those commitments concretely. Let us imagine that one day she is invited to speak at a fund-raiser. The invitation presents itself as a good way to advance her campaign for the nomination. Unfortunately, the event is scheduled on her daughter's birthday when a party has been promised. Imagine too that last year the same conflict presented itself and the senator had sacrificed being at her daughter's birthday party in the interest of attending a fund-raiser. Would that fact about last year make a difference in how she tried to resolve matters this year? One hopes and expects it would. Why so? Because how she has realised her resolve to be a good mother in the past is partly what determines the character of her maternal resolve now. We do not fully understand some present-tense undertaking we are committed to unless we grasp how we have brought that undertaking up to the present stage of its realisation. If we had no imaginative access to how our present undertakings have been realised up to this point, we would be deprived of what is necessary for practical reasoning about them.

Notice though: how our present undertakings have been advanced in the past is a function of how they have entered into our earlier projections of resolve. So the upshot of this practical need for a sense of our

present accomplishments is that we cannot project resolve effectively without being aware of moments of resolve in the past wherein the mode of realisation for our present undertakings were determined (momentarily). This means that in trying to grasp our present undertakings for the sake of resolving them anew we are referred to a history of our own resolve as it bears on the character of those problematic present actions.

Our argument so far has brought us to this point: playing in our sense of what we are doing (when the imaginative feat called for is a new projection of resolve) is something like a history of our resolve as it pertains to those problematic elements of our present intentional life. Only with reference to this history can we understand with sufficient concreteness the character of what we are doing. Thus the narrative essential to the projection of resolve is a narrative linking certain past moments of resolve, specifically the ones that bear on our understanding of what is presently problematic in our attempts to reconcile present intentions. But recall what we noted earlier about the pretence of resolve. If I am resolved to do something, the whole of my intentional life is accountable to modification where possible in the interest of drawing it into better accord with my resolute action. That accountability assumes an accessibility of the whole of my intentional life to my practical imagination. The pretence of resolve, calling the whole of my intentional life into accountability, can only be exercised if I have a way of cross referencing my whole set of inherited resolutions so that their constraints on what is acceptable as resolution under current conditions can be brought into play. This implies that the history of resolve must entail not simply the moments of resolve in which what is currently problematic were determined in character, but all the moments of resolve in which all of my current undertakings have been determined as to character.

Now this is of course a history only accessible for telling. It is never actually told exhaustively as a single history. Nonetheless, it is a tacit history of resolve implicated in an imaginative feat essential to personal life. When we project resolve, we understand ourselves to be advancing that history of resolve, and doing so in a way that optimises the realisation of our intentional life as a whole. That makes it a one-of-a-kind story, the one we have to advance if our present projection is to sustain our pretence as a resolute agent.

My object in this paper has been to show that projecting resolve—that most personally practical of our imaginative feats—employs as a matter of practical necessity a narrative, a single history of resolve, albeit a history of which we are tacitly not explicitly aware of, yet a history which is accessible to being made explicit in matters that count, a story wherein our protagony finds its best resolution. The privilege born by having that unique quality makes that history of resolve uniquely our story, our identity as a person. If my argument is sound, then characterising somebody's action as resolute does reasonable tell us who he is, manifesting his identity in the character of his action.

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UNDERSTANDING PERSONS BY MENTAL SIMULATION:
Whatever Happened to the Old Normative Issue?

Gary Fuller

Abstract

The recent and very fashionable dispute about simulation historically grew out of a dispute about the appropriateness of methods of empathy, or *verstehen*, in the human, or social, sciences. The old dispute is presently unfashionable. I want to resurrect the old dispute by asking whether the new discussion can shed any light on it. I shall argue that the new dispute can help to clarify the old notion of a method of empathy, but that the new dispute may also give rise to a certain pessimism about the range of such methods for predicting and explaining human behaviour.

I want to discuss two ways in which the idea of mental simulation has entered into philosophy: the new way (appearing within the last dozen years or so) and the old way (which goes back at least to the last century). The new way involves interdisciplinary claims about how we actually *do* cognitively handle mental phenomena; the old way involves normative claims about what is *justifiable* ways of doing so. The new dispute, which I will label 'the cognitive-science dispute,' is between those who hold that we handle psychological phenomena by deploying a psychological theory and those who hold that we do so by making use of mechanisms of simulation. The old dispute, 'the normative dispute,' is about whether the human, or social, sciences can, or even must, use methods of *verstehen,* or empathy, which are distinct from methods of theory construction and empirical testing thought to be used in the physical sciences. The cognitive-science dispute is associated with such philosophers and psychologists as Jane Heal, Robert Gordon, Stephen Stich, and Paul Harris, the normative dispute with names such as Dilthey, Collingwood, and Charles Taylor on the side of *verstehen*, and Carl Hempel and Ernest Nagel somewhat hostile to it. The cognitive-science dispute is very much in vogue today; the normative issue is out of fashion.

Today I want to resurrect the old normative issue about simulation and ask two interrelated questions: Is there anything to the old normative issue? And What light does the new, cognitive-science, dispute shed on the older one? My answer will be that the new dispute helps to clarify what might be meant by a method of empathy or *verstehen*, but that it also may show that the range of such a method is much narrower than *verstehen* sympathisers would hope for. In other words, there is something to the old normative issue but not that much! My talk will be divided into two parts. Part I will give you a sketch of the new cognitive-science dispute and some highlights of how things now stand in the dispute. Part II will be concerned with the old normative dispute.

1 The cognitive-science dispute: the theory theory (TT) vs. the simulation theory (ST)

We turn first to an overview of the recent cognitive-science dispute. I shall of course be highlighting those aspects of the dispute that may be relevant for the old normative issue.

A. The Nature of the Dispute

The cognitive-science dispute is between two views about how we attribute, predict, and explain the psychological states of others: the TT and the ST. Let us concentrate on prediction, since this has been the most discussed and it is also easiest to work with. Examples are always helpful, so let us begin with a few.

The Delayed Flights

A Mr. Crane and Mr. Tees were scheduled to leave the airport on different flights, at the same time. They travelled from town in the same limousine, were caught in a traffic jam, and arrived at the airport thirty minutes after the scheduled departure time of their flights. Mr. Crane is told that his flight left on time. Mr. Tees is told that his flight was delayed, and just left five minutes ago. Who is more upset? (This example was originally from Kahneman and Tversky, 1982; it is also used by Goldman, in his 1995, p.83.) I and almost everyone else are correctly confident that Mr. Tees is the more upset person.

The Restaurant Customer

Mrs. Smith has just sat down at a table in a local restaurant, is hungry, and is being handed the menu by a new waiter, when she notices the distinctive scar on the waiter's hand and thereby recognises him as a wanted criminal. What will she do? (This example is adapted from Heal, 1996b, p. 79.) Most of us would not be surprised if Mrs. Smith were to put down the menu and, perhaps after making a plausible excuse, go over to the public phone and call the police.

Now according to the TT, we predict, or retrodict,

the thoughts and actions of Mr. Crane and Mr. Tees and of Mrs. Smith by deploying a psychological theory in which something like psychological generalisations, which may be more or less rough and ready, are represented in some way or other. An example of such a psychological generalisation which takes us from beliefs to beliefs might be: Others things being equal, if a person believes that if P then Q, and also believes that P, then she will believe that Q (or perhaps better, then it is not the case that she will believe that not-Q). According to the ST, on the other hand, in making our predictions in the two examples above we do not rely on theory; rather, we exploit the similarities between ourselves and others and we simulate them. In the restaurant case, I imagine myself in Mrs. Smith's situation, see what I would do, and conclude that Mrs. Smith will do the same. In simulating Mrs. Smith I make use of my own inferential and practical reasoning mechanisms, and also assume (perhaps as a default position) that her psychological mechanisms are relevantly similar to mine. I do not, however, theorise about my psychological mechanisms; I just use them.

According to the TT, I predict others' psychological states and actions by applying a theory which is represented in my mind in some form or other. The theory-theorist's position, at least initially, seems reasonably understandable. That of the simulation theorist, however, stands in need of much more clarification: what exactly is it for me to simulate another person? Two conditions (suggested by Goldman, *op. cit*.) seem plausible necessary conditions for simulation. First, the investigator (or predictor) must go through a succession of states that is relevantly isomorphic to the actual succession of states in the subject under consideration. Second, the investigator's undergoing such a succession must be 'process driven' rather than 'theory driven', that is, it must be explained, at least partly, by underlying psychological mechanisms which drive the process but which the investigator does not theorise about.

At this point it will be useful to introduce a rather important further distinction between actual (or actual-situation) simulation and off-line simulation (or pretence-driven-off line simulation) [see Stich and Nichols, 1997]. This distinction can be illustrated by contrasting two additional examples with the earlier ones. Consider the example of:

My Sister's Present

I usually get my sister a present for her birthday. This year I want to get her a recording of a piece of music that she will enjoy. Luckily, because of very similar musical backgrounds and training she and I have similar musical tastes. I am thinking of getting her Glen Gould's recording of the late Brahms Intermezzi. To predict whether she will enjoy the CD I buy a copy for myself and listen to it: I am enthralled. So, I predict that she will like it as well.

And the example of:

Sally's Grammatical Reaction

My friend, Sally, who is from California, is asked whether the following sentence is good English: 'The piano weighs this pound'. Using simulation, I ask myself, or get you to ask me, the same question, judge that the sentence is deviant, and go on to predict that Sally will agree (from Harris, 1995, pp. 210-211).

In both of these new examples I use actual, or actual-situation, simulation. In the example of my sister's present, the input of the simulation, listening to the CD, as well as the output, enjoying it, are 'real'. I really do listen to the CD. In the case of simulating Mr. Tees of *The Delayed Flights*, however, I did not hop in a taxi, get delayed in traffic, and find that my flight had just left five minutes after I arrived; rather, I simply imagined that I was in such a situation. This is off-line simulation: here I disengage some of my psychological mechanisms from their natural inputs and outputs and feed them 'pretend' beliefs, desires, and so on.

The cognitive-science dispute is about the issue of what cognitive mechanisms underlie our ability (or abilities) to attribute, predict, and explain others' mental states. For the theory theorists the underlying mechanisms are theoretical; for the simulation theorist they involve simulation. It is true that most simulation supporters are willing to concede that perhaps in many cases a mixture of simulation and theory are used, but they still hold that simulation is widely used and even that it is somehow the central or primary cognitive mechanism. I should note here, if only to put to it one side, that some of the disputants think that the outcome of the dispute will have important philosophical consequences. Some simulation theorists, especially Robert Gordon (see his articles in Davies and Stone, 1995a and 1995b), have argued that simulation should play an important role in accounts of the possession of psychological concepts, of the meaning of psychological terms, and of the ontological status of mental states. I am sceptical about most of these further claims for simulation (see Fuller, 1995).

B. An important concern: the range of simulation.

There are a number of important concerns that have arisen with respect to the cognitive-science dispute and which are very much alive today. One very large issue has to do with the lack of clarity about the notion of simulation and its differences and similarities to cognitive processes such as theorising and making rationality assessments. For example, once one makes uses of the notion of implicit or tacit knowledge the distinction between theorising and process-driven simulating is much more difficult to draw. Luckily,

given our concern with the relation between the new and old disputes, we can focus on another important concern, the concern about the range of psychological phenomena for which we do use simulation mechanisms.

Let us suppose that we are able to draw a clear and satisfactory distinction between theorising about and simulating another's mental processes and states. An important concern is about the range of simulation: if we do use simulation in predicting others' thoughts and actions, how comprehensive is this use? Here what is especially at issue is the range of *off-line* simulation. Do we use it to infer perceptual beliefs from external stimuli, to infer beliefs from other beliefs, to infer intentions from beliefs and desires, and so on? Do we use simulation to predict emotions? Do we use to handle cases of irrationality? And what about cases of people who are intellectually more or less able than us? On this issue of the range of simulation there could of course be a wide spectrum of positions.

Jane Heal has argued (Heal, 1996b, p.56) that supporters of ST should restrict the range of simulation to psychological processes that move from states with content to other states with content, i.e., from propositional attitudes to propositional attitudes. We do not use off-line simulation to move from non-contentful situations or states to contentful states, she argues, because off-line simulation does not work in these cases. In such cases simulation will generally not work because the real inputs are too different from the pretend inputs used in simulation. A good example is that of asking someone unfamiliar with its effects to simulate (off-line of course) another person's being presented visually with the Muller-Lyer illusion. To get the potential simulator to use such an off-line method, we could instruct her as follows. Imagine that you are looking at two equal lines encased by pairs of wedges arranged in the familiar Muller-Lyer manner: what further perceptual beliefs about the figure do you now imagine yourself having? I have serious doubts that she will come up with the right answer.

Stich and Nichols (in many places) have appealed to experiments in which odd and generally unknown psychological factors are at work to try to show that at the very least we do not use off-line simulation in such cases. An important example of such a case is the following.

The Langer Lottery Experiment

In 1975, Langer (a psychologist)

> reported an experiment in which subjects who have agreed to buy a ticket in a lottery are later offered an opportunity to sell their ticket. What Langer found was that subjects who are offered an opportunity to *choose* their own ticket set a significantly higher price than subjects who are simply handed a ticket when they agree to buy one (Stich and

Nichols 1997, p.311; see also, Nichols, Stich, and Leslie, 1995).

Stich and Nichols found that people generally fail in predicting this kind of behaviour, even when the circumstances were 'designed to make it easy for the predictors to generate the right pretend beliefs about the situation.' They argued, at least earlier on, that the TT handles prediction failure in such Langer cases, sometimes called 'surprising-effects' cases, better than ST. TT theorists would handle the prediction failure by saying that our folk-psychological theory is not a perfect theory. We should not expect it to contain clauses about the Langer effects above, and so we should expect predictors to go wrong in these cases. On the other hand, simulation processes should not be influenced by lack of theoretical knowledge about inference and decision mechanisms, and so, according to the ST we should expect predictors to be successful in the Langer cases such as the lottery case above. At the very least then the simulation theorist should restrict the scope of simulation to exclude such cases.

There is a reply on behalf of the simulation theorist that could be made to the Stich-Nichols argument here; indeed, it is one that has been made by Heal (in Heal, 1996a). What is going on in the Langer cases, according to Heal, is not bad theorising but rather bad simulation. The idea is that in these cases we do use simulation, but the simulation, better, the use of off-line pretence driven mechanisms, fails to work. Heal argues that off-line simulation only works in cases of rational transitions between contentful states and other contentful states; in cases, such as the Langer cases, where irrational factors are at work it fails. Exactly, how we should go about deciding which of the two accounts of the Langer cases is more plausible is rather tricky, and luckily I will not have to deal with that here.

What is important for our purposes about this issue of the range of simulation is that questions about where we do use simulation have become connected to questions about where simulation, and especially off-line simulation, works. And this connection provides a nice transition from our discussion of the cognitive-science issue to the older normative issue, to which we now turn.

2 The normative dispute: do verstehen/ empathy methods work?

The normative question, if you remember, is whether in addition to familiar theoretical methods of arriving at knowledge used in the natural sciences there are also justifiable methods of *verstehen*, or empathy, which can be, or even must be, used in the human, or social, sciences. What bearing does the new, cognitive-science, discussion have on this old, normative, issue?

There are two important connections here. First, it is natural to think that the cognitive-science ideas of simulation, of actual simulation and especially of off-line, pretence driven, simulation can be used to clarify the old idea of a *verstehen* or empathic method. Second, and sadly, however, the cognitive-science discussion about the limits of off-line simulation does lead us to a certain pessimism about *verstehen*.

A. The method of verstehen/*empathy defined in terms of simulation.*

We can use the ideas of actual and of off-line simulation to clarify the idea of a method of *verstehen* or empathy. To use the method of *verstehen* or empathy is simply to use either actual or off-line simulation. Simulation theorists in the cognitive-science dispute are interested in only whether we do use simulation irrespective of whether we know we do or not. If simulation is to be a justifiable normative method, however, the inquirer, or investigator, must not only simulate the target but also know, or at least be justified in believing, that she is doing so. Methods of inquiry, after all, are supposed to consist of explicit steps each of which one can have good reason to think one is carrying out. If engaging in simulation of the target is to be a (or part of a) justifiable method of, for example, predicting the psychological states of the target, then the investigator must, among other things, have good reason to believe two things: first, that she is relevantly similar to the target and second, that she is really using process-driven, rather than theory-driven, mechanisms.

Can an inquirer be justified in believing that she is similar to the target and that she is using process-driven mechanisms? In many cases yes, or so it seems very plausible to think. Begin with process-driven mechanisms. One has to be careful here. I think of myself, or at least use to, as a pretty good empathiser, but it may well be that much of my empathising is in fact theory, rather than process, driven. What will Elmer say? I am great at adding numbers in my head. Elmer is very bad at this activity and I know it. I know that he has been asked, 'What is 55 + 55?' I put myself in Elmer's shoes. I imagine being asked the question and go on to imagine feeling that I just do not know the answer. I correctly predict that Elmer will say that he does not know. On reflection, it is clear that my empathising here was theory-driven rather than process driven: it relied on my general knowledge about people who are weak at mental calculation. Had I used process-driven simulation, I would have predicted that Elmer would have said '110'. In general, then, how can I make sure that I am using process-driven simulation? In a large number of cases, one very plausible answer is this. To make sure, or at least to make it very plausible, that I am using process-driven simulation, in

imagining myself in the other's shoes I need to focus on the world and not my psychological processes. To simulate Mrs. Smith in a process-driven way, for example, I do *not* ask: What would I do if I noticed a distinctive scar on the waiter's hand? Rather, I pretend that the waiter is serving me, etc., and ask: What to believe? What is the right thing to do?

Now what about the inquirer's knowledge of relevantly similarity between her and the target? Here ordinary life provides support for claiming that we can have such knowledge. In the case of my sister's present I do have good inductive reasons for believing that she and I have similar musical tastes. I know that she and I had the same musical education when we were young, including many of the same piano teachers, and also that we tend to agree in our likes and dislikes of classical music pieces of a wide range and in a wide range of circumstances.

What is interesting, and important here, is that an investigator can often have good reason to believe that there are appropriate similarities between her and the target without having any detailed theory about the psychological processes of herself or the target. The emphasis here is on 'detailed'. In the case of my sister's present I have good reason to believe that we have similar tastes even though I do not have any detailed theory about how the psychological mechanisms of musical taste work. An important analogy here is that of an engineer successfully predicting what will happen to an actual bridge (aeroplane, building, etc.) under very complicated conditions of stress by constructing setting up a smaller-scale model and submitting the model to analogous forces, say in a wind tunnel. Although some general theory is necessary in order to set up the model and decide what would be analogous forces, e.g., various generalisations about what properties are preserved under expansion, etc., engineers do not need, and often do not have a detailed theory of, e.g., bridge dynamics. Often the best that they can do in predicting whether a bridge will collapse when exposed to winds of a certain force is to use the scale-model method (see Ripstein, 1987, p.476).

All this seems to be good news for *verstehen*! Whether or not we actually use simulation, we can use it to yield knowledge of others' psychological states, and so on. Even better, the discussion of the example of my sister's present and the bridge analogy seems to show that *verstehen* methods are in many cases practically indispensable: they are often the best that we can do. We do not have detailed psychological theories about rational processes, about irrational processes, about emotions, about tastes, and so on. Nevertheless, we can often have good reason to believe that we and our targets are relevantly similar in these areas, and so can bring *verstehen*/simulation to the rescue.

B. Scepticism about the Normative Use of Off-Line Simulation

I said earlier that a second connection between the cognitive-science issue and the normative issue is that the new issue has some sceptical consequences for the old normative one. The cognitive-science discussions may lead us to pessimistic conclusions about *verstehen*. After all the optimism above, how can that be? The careful listeners among you will have noticed that so far in my discussion about the normative issue I have to a certain extent slurred over the distinction between *verstehen* as a method of actual simulation and as a method of off-line, pretence-driven simulation. The optimistic cases above, e.g., of my sister's present, involved actual simulation. When we ask what the cognitive-science discussion has to say about off-line procedures as a normative method, there is where the story turns more pessimistic. It turns out that in general off-line simulation does not, at least at present, provide us with a good method for arriving at knowledge or justified belief. Let us see why it does not.

Go back to the Langer-lottery case and similar cases. In the cognitive-science dispute the question was whether we use theory or simulation in predicting what the targets will do in such cases. With a little bit of extrapolation, however, I think that we can use Langer-like cases and others to show that in cases like these explicit off-line simulation will not work. Not that much extrapolation, however: in some of the Langer-case experiments cited by Stich and Nichols the subjects were asked to predict the target's behaviour by showing them a detailed video tape of the target; but in other cases they were asked to imagine being in the target's situation: in other words they were asked to go through an explicit off-line procedure. Even in the latter cases, they failed to predict correctly. The extrapolation, then, is to other similar cases. What the cognitive-science discussion has indirectly shown, then, is that explicit off-line simulation procedures will fail to predict successfully in certain cases.

But so what? Perhaps off-line procedures are successful in other cases. That is true: they seem to work in the case of the delayed flights and in the restaurant case, for example. But here is the rub: at present at least, no one knows how to tell the difference between the cases where off-line simulation works and cases where it does not work. Jane Heal's attempt to distinguish the two is perhaps as good a one as any and unfortunately there are quite a few problems with it. Her idea (which we touched on earlier) is that off-line simulation works for rational processes but not for irrational ones. The problems with this way of drawing the distinction are threefold. First, the rational-irrational distinction is very unclear. Are the decisions of the targets who get to choose (as opposed to those who are merely given) their ticket in the lottery case

really irrational? For that matter was the great annoyance of Mr. Tees (of *The Delayed Flights*) who, if you remember, was told his flight was delayed, rational? Second, even if the distinction can be made clear, at present there seems to be no easy way to distinguish between the rational and irrational cases on the basis of recognisable features. Even if there is some sense in which the choosers in Langer-Lottery case exhibited irrationality there was no easy way to know beforehand that this was going to be so. Finally, even if we can surmount the first two worries, it is plausible to think that there will be many 'rational' cases where off-line simulation still does not work. My suspicions are that, among other things, it often will not work in many cases of predicting emotions, such as fear (although it did seem to work in the case of the delayed flights), and that it will not always work in cases where the target is confronted with an intellectual problem which involves a delicate weighing of evidence.

If off-line simulation is going to be a justifiable normative method, then, it looks like it is going to have to be used in conjunction with much more theoretical knowledge than we have at present. If my worries here are well founded, we are in an epistemological position with respect to off-line simulation somewhat analogous to the situation in the following, and last, (true) example.

Guessing Names

I am at the point in the semester where almost all of my students have told me their names. I am confident about many of their names, but not at all confident about others. Sometimes when I guess the name of a student who falls into the latter group, to my great surprise I get it right! I suspect, and even have reason to believe from my limited knowledge of psychology, that when I do get it right, this is not coincidence, but rather some cognitive mechanism is at work. The trouble is that other times when I guess I get the name wrong. Moreover, I have no idea how to tell the difference between the cases where I get it right and those where I get it wrong. Perhaps the names that I get right have two syllables or less; then again, perhaps not. Further, I have not kept track of the ratio between right answers and wrong ones: I know merely that sometimes I am right, and sometimes wrong, but I cannot tell you even roughly the percentage of right guesses. Suppose that on a particular occasion I form the true belief that a certain student's name is 'Nicolette' as a result of using this guessing procedure. Do I know that the student's name is 'Nicolette'? Am I justified in believing this? On both counts, my intuitions, and hopefully yours, are 'No'. I might note here that these intuitions are supposed to be neutral, but I am also very sure that they would be bought by most epistemologists, even reliabilists. Do I even have better

reason for believing that the student's name is 'Nicolette' than that it is not? Here again, pretty clearly no.

Much more can be said about this normative problem about off-line simulation, but I will stop here. A brief summary: My aim in the paper has been to resurrect the old normative issue and to show that the new cognitive-science issue helps to clarify the old issue but also to cast some doubt about the range of empathy/*verstehen* methods.

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THE VALUE OF METAPHYSICS FOR BORDEN PARKER BOWNE

Mason Marshall

There may be a number of reasons that the enterprise of metaphysics has lost most of its appeal for Western philosophers today. Perhaps Pope John Paul II is correct that philosophers now shy away from metaphysical speculation because they no longer trust the faculty of reason.[1] Maybe they also doubt that any of the grand metaphysical systems corresponds to ultimate reality, and so philosophers have grown wary of doing metaphysics when for century after century, metaphysicians have failed. In any case, interest in speculation has waned considerably.

This trend touches philosophers of many different stripes, of course. Much of American pragmatism, for example, can seem to leave little room for doing metaphysics. Though William James meant for his pragmatic method to settle metaphysical disputes, aversion to metaphysics can flow even from his thinking.[2] And representing neo-pragmatism, Richard Rorty hastens to escape any trace of metaphysics, wanting philosophy to be only a kind of thoroughly 'privatised' personal therapy.[3]

It is possible, though, to see metaphysics itself—done in a traditional style—as therapeutic and as vital on pragmatic grounds. One of William James' friends, the American philosopher Borden Parker Bowne (1847-1910), viewed metaphysics as such. In this paper, I explore how Bowne's vision for metaphysics fits into his overarching approach to philosophy.

At Boston University while James was close by at Harvard, Bowne founded the Boston Personalist tradition in philosophy. As a scholar of that tradition writes, 'Personalism is a philosophical perspective for which the person is the ontological ultimate and for which personality is the fundamental explanatory principle.'[4] One of Bowne's chief successors adds that '[M]ost fundamentally, personalism is a philosophy committed to the *primacy of person-al (subject-related) categories of value and meaning*, to the mutual respect of all beings in a *reality experienced as a community of persons* who are convinced that subject-related categories are subjectival, not subjective in the sense of being private and arbitrary.'[5] In short, for personalists, the world of persons is the starting point and end of all philosophy. For awhile, the Boston Personalist tradition played a major role in American thought. For example, Martin Luther King, Jr. declared that Boston Personalism was the basis of his social thought and action.[6]

Perhaps the chief relevance of Bowne's approach to philosophy is that, as one scholar puts it, Bowne 'was involved in the historical transition from absolute idealism to pragmatism. . . .'[7] Having studied with Hermann Lotze, Bowne still did traditional metaphysics. Yet he crafted a philosophy that has strong affinities with pragmatism. Unsurprisingly, there are certain tensions in Bowne's work. They reveal a lot about his ideal for the role of metaphysics, and so I will spend the greater part of this discussion exploring them. Responding to those tensions, one of Bowne's earliest critics, Edward Ramsdell, charges that Bowne fails to square his 'rationalism' and his pragmatism with each other.[8] Since there has been debate about whether Bowne qualifies as a pragmatist, in some official sense of the term, I should make it clear that I do not mean to join that debate here.[9] My main aim is to account for how Bowne unifies two seemingly disparate elements in his philosophical approach so as to produce a vision of metaphysics as therapeutic. Though, admittedly, those elements stand in some tension, I will argue that if we recognise the value Bowne attributes to metaphysics, the apparent conflict disappears. I hope to show that for Bowne, the proper function of metaphysics is twofold: (1) to fulfil an appetite for speculative thinking and (2) to clear away the false beliefs that end up clouding moral intuition.[10] This view of metaphysics as therapeutic finds parallel in the philosophy of William James, perhaps revealing some ways in which Bowne and James influenced each other's thought. Yet there still are key differences between their perspectives, and a juxtaposition highlights the distinctive character of Bowne's philosophical approach. In the final sections below, I briefly compare Bowne and James on the topic of the value of metaphysics.

1 Reason versus common sense

Let me begin with the apparent conflict as identified by Edward T. Ramsdell. When overtly doing metaphysics, Bowne enacts what Ramsdell calls rationalism; outside of his more metaphysical works, Bowne tends to write in a mode that Ramsdell deems pragmatic. In his critique of Bowne, Ramsdell defines rationalism as

> any method or methods that make reason, as the logical understanding, the final standard and arbiter of all philosophical questions. Rationalism may proceed deductively, after the manner of Descartes and Herbart, or it may proceed empirically, gathering the facts of experience and attempting their ultimate theoretical explanation under the standards of consistency and coherence. The distinguishing mark of rationalism is its ultimate appeal to reason for its criteria of truth.

Ramsdell sees pragmatism as 'those methods which

make various extra-rational factors the final standards of philosophy, such as fruitfulness or favourable results, or the satisfaction of our human interests and feelings.'[11] The distinction may be fuzzy enough to warrant questioning, but I think Ramsdell is pointing to a recognisable contrast between philosophical approaches. Let me flesh out that contrast.

In his more speculative or 'rationalistic' mode, Bowne appoints reason as the sole rightful judge of philosophical theories.[12] When using the term *reason* in this context, he means that the metaphysician must bring experientially-based beliefs into strict accordance with the laws of thought.[13] The laws of thought, for Bowne, are relations inherent in the mind that determine 'the order of reason'—the principles of logic. He affirms the assumption that as a measure of how tenable a belief is, the rules of logic are 'valid for all and binding for all.' They must be, he points out, in order for there to be any 'mental community.'[14] The idea here is that in order for you and me to have a conversation, we each need to do more than say what we believe: each of us must be able to give *reasons* for holding certain beliefs. My reasons will be of value to you, and yours to me, only if we have a shared standard by which to judge the merit of various reasons.

Chief among thought-laws is the law of non-contradiction, which is 'that a contradiction in a notion proves its untenability.' In the original version of *Metaphysics*, Bowne states the law of non-contradiction in those words and proclaims it *the* 'guiding principle throughout [this] entire discussion.'[15] And often in that work, he rejects certain beliefs accordingly.[16]

Notably, he often tends to reject commonsensical beliefs in particular. Why is that the case?

Bowne identifies two kinds of beliefs, associating each with its own ideal mode of thinking and its own different 'test' of truth or rationality.[17] Far more than the second type of belief, the first sort is grounded on 'phenomena' or 'facts,' as Bowne typically calls them. Those facts consist of certain features of the world which are given or self-evident to everyone through sensory perception. From those basic facts, all persons make inferences out of which they form beliefs.[18] Such beliefs are the first kind which Bowne identifies. He notes that they 'belong to the realm of probability; that is, our belief arises and falls with the amount of objective evidence. We take all the facts into account, and our belief is the resultant average'—in other words, the average of what the facts indicate is probably the case.[19] Beliefs of this sort can spring up in many areas of thought. They constitute the bulk of common sense; at a more sophisticated level, they take the form of scientific theories.

Beliefs of the first class may also take the form of metaphysical views. When they do, they require more

scrutiny. Bowne explains that for practical purposes, the beliefs that make up common sense and scientific theories work well enough. But when they become the basis of metaphysical views, they mislead.[20] Thus, Bowne urges caution toward metaphysical views that issue from common sense, and he puts far more stock in reason than in common sense.

2 Listening to reason

It is also worth noting that in crowning reason the sole arbiter of thought, he specifically says the senses should be fully subordinate to reason.[21] That move bears mention here because of how heavily common sense relies upon the senses, according to Bowne. In drawing inferences from the basic facts given to everyone, persons use reason—that is, we employ the laws of thought.[22] But we do so with varying degrees of rigor. We spontaneously form common sense mainly to meet the demands of everyday life, and so commonsensical beliefs tend to be precise and reasonable only to the extent that daily life requires.[23] Among other things, it requires that we trust primarily what the senses tell us; after all, the senses connect each of us to the rest of the world—the only context in which everyday life can unfold. Thus, we favour belief-systems which seem most closely to reflect sensory experience—regardless of how exact they are and how fully they abide by the laws of thought—and we shrink from a set of beliefs which are precise and perfectly rational but seem remote from sensory experience. As a result, commonsensical beliefs typically are vague and self-contradictory. When made into metaphysical views, Bowne writes, 'their slight parallax with reality is magnified until the result is some grotesque absurdity or some pernicious untruth.'[24] In explaining his method, therefore, Bowne promises to subordinate the senses to reason.

Of course, in doing so, he does affirm that he will 'make the data of the senses [my] starting-point, and on them . . . build up a rational system.' Nonetheless, he immediately adds that metaphysical speculation 'is never a matter of the senses, but an inference from their data,' and that it '[carries] us into a world of realities whose existence can be assured only by thought.'[25] And this considered view is revealed in such lines as the following, which appears just two pages later: 'In one sense, philosophy is a war against the senses; and in this sense no one can be a philosopher until he gets out of his senses.'

No doubt, in its context, that line primarily conveys the message that the senses have no final say about the tenability of beliefs; and the second meaning in that line—that philosophers are daft—lends a touch of humour. But it is more than *just* a joke. That is, there is a sense in which, in Bowne's own estimation, it really *is* daft to give reason alone the last word and to dismiss 'objections based only on the senses

themselves,' as he sometimes advocates doing.[26]

3 Getting back into one's senses

I now reach a turning point in this discussion, at which the contrast that Ramsdell is gesturing toward can slowly start to emerge. Thus far, I have addressed mainly Bowne's more metaphysical writings, underscoring the extent to which he favours reason over common sense. Let me now address the degree to which his thought moves in the opposite direction.

Take, for example, an argument that Bowne makes in three of his less metaphysical works, where he sounds quite a different note regarding the relative authority of reason and the senses.[27] For my purposes, he is worth quoting at length here:

> We may ask if our senses ever deceive us; and the answer must be, Yes. And then we may continue, with true closet logic: Well, if our senses may deceive us, how do we know that they do not always deceive us? And the answer must be that we can not tell. And then, of course, the conclusion is drawn that we have no standard for distinguishing truth from error, and that scepticism is upon us.

Now academically this is all right. This problem admits of no abstract theoretical solution. If we stay in the closet we can argue forever, and draw the most fearful logical consequences. But the problem solves itself in practice. We know both that the senses deceive us and that they help us to most valuable knowledge. We find out that they can thus help us, not by theorising about them, but by using them. . . . We meet all such difficulties by coming out of the closet and looking at the concrete facts. And then many a thing which may be difficult in theory is found perfectly simple in practice. Plato expounded the abstract impossibility of motion; and Diogenes refuted him by walking up and down before him. Concrete matters must be concretely tested; and abstract objections may often be removed by walking.[28]

Clearly enough, what Bowne advocates can seem a direct violation of the method he sets forth elsewhere. After all, in *Metaphysics*, for example, he insists that only reason and never the senses must have the last word. Yet in the present passage, he urges abandoning reason for the senses. In *Metaphysics*, he declares that philosophy has 'disdain' for 'objections based only on the senses themselves.'[29] But in the argument at hand, he expects an objection of that very sort to carry the day. And particularly revealing, the tone in which he does so suggests that he finds the posture of abstract theorising unacceptable and untrustworthy in its tendencies.

4 The ills of the closet

Perhaps most in keeping with that didactically chaffing tone is Bowne's image of the closet. It appears fairly often in his writings. And it carries much the same connotations as did Bacon's image of the cave or den—to which Bowne explicitly refers—and much the same connotations as such images still do today in familiar depictions of philosophers.[30]

To get a sharper sense of those connotations, consider the following joke from a popular site on the Internet:

> A philosopher went into a closet for ten years to contemplate the question, What is life? When he came out, he went into the street and met an old colleague, who asked him where in heaven's name he had been all those years.
>
> "In a closet," he rep[l]ied. "I wanted to know what life really *is*."
>
> "And have you found an answer?"
>
> "Yes," he replied. "I think it can best be expressed by saying that life is like a bridge."
>
> "That's all well and good," replied the colleag[u]e, "but can you be a little more explicit? Can you tell me *how* life is like a bridge?"
>
> "Oh," replied the philosopher after some thought, "maybe you're right; perhaps life is not like a bridge."[31]

Obviously, the philosopher in that joke is a preposterous character—in the sense in which the word *preposterous* means 'contrary to common sense.' But his actions hardly seem contrary to *reason*, as the word can also denote. In fact, that is the very idea here, namely that philosophers take reasoning to its extreme. They are submerged in it—and are in over their heads. They also seem more like disembodied minds than whole persons. The description leaves the impression that this philosopher stayed in the closet for the full ten years—never eating or sleeping, not to mention interacting with other human beings. The closet—in general, as well as in his case—is a hideaway, a place of seclusion and retreat from everyday living and the common experience our living affords us.

At least for Bowne, the closet is, of course, also a metaphor for metaphysical speculation. Speculation proceeds according to a certain ideal of thinking. The common theme in Bowne's caution against speculation is that '[T]he speculative ideal is inapplicable to practical life. . . .'[32] For one, it calls for a kind of thinking that threatens one's ability to function well in everyday life. Recall that the speculative ideal subordinates the senses to reason. And picture the philosopher in that joke as he, after ten years of speculation, opened the closet door again for the first time. One imagines that he must have squinted in the light after the darkness had deprived his vision for so long. By analogy, the activity of speculation is so remote from everyday human activities that it can deplete common sense, 'on which daily life so largely depends.'[33] Common sense equips persons to meet vital

needs and interests which they must fulfil in order to thrive, or at least to survive. It is because of that danger of speculation that in the Preface to the first edition of his *Metaphysics*, Bowne frets over '[w]hether in the views herewith presented I have grasped any truth; or whether, by long brooding in solitude, I have fallen a prey to some idol of the speculative den. . . .'[34] Speculation can even lead to beliefs which are *contrary* to common sense. In fact, the conclusions that the speculator can reach may be paralysing and incapacitating. Think again, for example, of the ominous conclusions Bowne points to regarding whether sense perception is trustworthy.

Accordingly, for Bowne, there is a class of far more pragmatic beliefs. Ideally, in forming the first sort of beliefs, a person surveys the basic facts and infers from them certain probabilities. By contrast, 'Beliefs of the second class are not founded on objective facts, but on subjective tendencies, and express only [subjective] interests or postulates.'[35] For example, 'There are practical, speculative, aesthetic, and moral interests. These are the motive-powers of the mind, and outline its development.'[36] In due course, Bowne appoints another test of truth—one which fits the nature of that second class of beliefs: a belief is true to the extent that it fulfils or helps fulfil those subjective interests.[37] A contrast thus emerges between what Bowne calls 'formal truth' and 'concrete truth': 'The test of formal truth is the law of contradiction. . . . The test of concrete truth is practical absurdity. Solipsism involves no contradiction, and is easily conceivable, so far as logic goes. . . . The absurdity which emerges is practical rather than speculative. Life is crippled.'[38]

5 The tensions highlighted

We might object here that Bowne never pursues formal truth or the speculative ideal when doing metaphysics. Thus, I should stress that Bowne characterises speculation in such a way as to cast his own ideal for metaphysics—namely, that which I have already related—as speculative to a significant degree. For example, consider the following. The speculative mind wants to proceed according to what Bowne, borrowing Matthew Arnold's term, calls 'the method of rigor and vigour.'[39] In his *less* metaphysical works, Bowne cites at least three features of that method, all of which are common to the method he adopts in his *more* metaphysical works. First, in a less metaphysical work, he notes that the method of rigor and vigour makes reason 'the final test of truth.'[40] Second, the law of contradiction is foremost within the order of reason which provides the truth-test.[41] Third, Bowne writes: 'If we were looking about for an ideal conception of [the method of rigor and vigour] it would run something like this: Let us first find some invincible fact or principle, something which cannot be doubted or denied without absurdity, and from this let us deduce

by cogent logic whatever it may imply.'[42] Bowne's statement of that ideal conception continues for a few more lines, but at least so far as my quotation goes, it names the very spirit behind the following decree in his *Metaphysics*: 'If philosophy be possible at all, it can be on the basis only of self-evident and reasoned propositions. . . . [I]f philosophy be possible, there must be self-evident propositions at its foundation.'[43] In *Metaphysics*, he shapes his truth-test accordingly, explaining that, in key part, 'Ultimately this test will consist . . . in the self-evidence or *necessity of the conception*. . . .'[44] Yet in his less metaphysical works, while asserting that truth can come through fulfilling subjective interests, he readily admits that the 'practical demands' of those interests 'are not *necessities of thought*, but rather true *axiomata*, that is, things worthy to be believed.'[45] To juxtapose such passages is to find evidence that Bowne himself was fully aware of a tension within his work as a whole.

Further, there are places in Bowne's work where he explicitly tries to meet speculative standards. An instance occurs in his essay 'The Speculative Significance of Freedom.' In its opening pages, he affirms that—in 'life'—every person has the *experience* of being free. But Bowne presents that essay as an attempt to establish the existence of human freedom on other grounds. As he explains, certain determinists insist that even if persons have the experience of freedom, that experience appears illusory when one examines the question of freedom on a purely 'speculative and transcendental' level. In other words, as he puts it, '[T]he difficulty in accepting freedom lies, it is said, in the very nature of reason itself.' Thus, as Bowne explains, he seeks 'to show that freedom is as much an implication of the rational life as it is of the moral life. Hence the title of this paper— "The Speculative Significance of Freedom".'[46] That essay is not the only one in which Bowne vows to reach 'formal' truth, rather than the 'concrete' kind, but it is one of the more obvious ones.

6 The voice of conscience

By now, it should be apparent that the second class of beliefs and its related truth-test are indeed significantly different from the first. In light of such a contrast in Bowne's work, Ramsdell asks how Bowne's rationalism and pragmatism can be consistent with each other:

> How are consistency and "adequacy to the facts" to be equated or harmonised with results, interest satisfactions and survival as criteria of truth? Will an idea tested by one set of criteria meet the truth-requirements of the other set? If they will, the use of the two sets is superfluous; if they will not, we are confronted with contradiction. When the pragmatic and the rationalistic conflict, by what criterion shall we decide between them?[47]

In effect, Ramsdell says that Bowne's approach to philosophy is half rationalistic, half pragmatic, and therefore completely incoherent. Ramsdell does seem to have a point. Is Bowne, indeed, mired in incoherence?

I think he is not. In the rest of this discussion, I will try to show why.

For Bowne, what ultimately unifies the more speculative with the more practical modes of thinking is the voice of conscience. At multiple points throughout his work, he argues at length that, as he puts it at one point, 'There is no department of belief into which subjective interests do not enter as controlling,' and hence, '[*All*] belief is moulded by practical aims and necessities rather than by the processes of logic.'[48] In other words, not only beliefs of the second class Bowne cites, but also all beliefs of the *first* class rest at bottom on subjective interests. Recall that, for Bowne, everyone embraces certain 'postulates' in order to fulfil those interests or tendencies, and that those 'practical demands' of human 'nature' are 'true *axiomata*—that is, things worthy to be believed.'[49] Thus, the final truth-test in Bowne's philosophy is this: 'Whatever the mind demands for the satisfaction of its subjective interests and tendencies may be assumed as real, in default of positive disproof.'[50] Here alone there is evidence enough of Bowne's insistence on 'the primacy of life over speculation.'[51] That theme overtly surfaces in many of his works: in one, he affirms 'the primacy of the practical reason, and the subordinate character of the speculative,' in another he stresses that 'Life is richer and deeper than speculation,' and in still another he urges that 'living'—as opposed to speculation—'is the main thing, after all.'[52]

Bowne adds something that reveals the supremacy of conscience in his philosophy:

> In the last analysis these *axiomata* have an ethical root. They rest upon an idea, not of what must be, but of what ought to be. . . . This basal faith rests upon nothing deeper than itself, and hence it cannot be argued. Both acceptance and rejection are finally acts of choice rather than reasoning. The dispute finally reduces to this: The believer assumes our nature to be true until it is proved to be false; the unbeliever regards it as possibly false until it is proved to be true. So far as logic is concerned there is little to choose between them. . . .[53]

But unless I can rely entirely on rationalistic conclusions in discerning 'what ought to be,' as he puts it, how will I know how to live my life?

Part of the answer lies in Bowne's belief that moral intuition is instinctive. As he writes, 'Our claim is that when two motives appear in the soul, we instinctively know which is higher. When gratitude and selfishness appear together, we know one to be worthy and the other base.'[54] Further, he proclaims his belief 'in the absolute authority of conscience.'[55] Nonetheless, while I best make ethical decisions by means of 'instinctive'

moral intuition, Bowne holds, reason should inform my understanding of what conscience urges.[56] Through dialectical interplay with conscience, reason must sort out both the metaphysical and the more practical or logistical meanings, implications, and consequences of what the conscience demands.[57] Bowne warns that 'The ethical consciousness . . . is rarely in full possession of itself, and consequently many ethical theories acquire currency which, developed into their consequences, would prove fatal to all ethics.'[58] The case is similar with the religious consciousness. Accordingly, conscience should not 'determine action, but the principles and direction of action.'[59] Upon unfolding the meanings, implications, and consequences of ethical demands that the conscience issues, reason reports back to conscience, enabling a person's intuitions to be informed ones.[60]

What, then, is the value at all of rationalistic conclusions? To put the question differently, how does Bowne's stress on conscience unify his approach to philosophy, and in what sense does he view metaphysics as therapy?

7 Metaphysics as therapy

Here I come to my thesis. For Bowne, metaphysical speculation ideally has two functions. The first ideal function relates to the human interest in, or tendency toward, seeking speculative truth. Like the other subjective interests, it warrants fulfilment: 'A mind which could not interest itself in truth or beauty, which found the pursuit of knowledge tiresome and had no high aspirations, such a mind could never be considered as other than atrophied or a case of arrested development.'[61] Further, Bowne writes elsewhere: 'Thought, then, which has any relation to truth and knowledge, or which concerns itself at all with its own presuppositions and implications, can never escape making a general metaphysical assumption about its objects and their systematic connection.'[62] In other words, for the mind that cares about truth, doing metaphysics is not optional.

But recall Bowne's concern that the speculative mind can easily go astray. 'Correct thinking does not come by nature,' Bowne characteristically warns.[63] It takes careful, schooled, and savvy reflection to deliver the speculative mind from the messes it often gets itself into. And so the second function of metaphysics is to rescue the whole person from the speculative mess. The emptiness of closeted thought is not the only danger. In fulfilling the speculative interest—which, to repeat, is worthy of fulfilment—the mind also runs the risk of reaching conclusions which are at odds with those *axiomata* Bowne identifies. The point is to sound out a metaphysics that is in harmony both with itself and with those *axiomata* and thus poses no threat to practical life. As Bowne writes, '[W]hile a good

philosophy may not have much positive value, a bad one may do measureless harm.'[64] He therefore concludes that metaphysics has a crucial 'negative function': 'We need, then, a sound philosophy at least as a kind of intellectual health officer whose business it is to keep down disease-breeding miasmas and pestiferous growths, or as a moral police whose duty it is to arrest those dangerous and disturbing intellectual vagrants which have no visible means of support, and which corrupt the people.'[65] Keeping in mind the connotations of his image of the closet, consider also another passage in which Bowne makes largely the same point: 'Our knowledge of anatomy is mainly the product of disease. Nerves reveal themselves and their functions by disordered action. In like manner, philosophy is mainly a product of mental disease. The attempt to harmonise the mind with itself is the great source of philosophical knowledge and advance.'[66] Using reason in its third function, the metaphysician is a philosophical therapist who cures speculative minds of the ills of the closet. No doubt, Bowne offers his metaphysics as such a cure. He is purging the Western mind of the impersonal metaphysics that has long infected it.[67]

Further, he is wading into metaphysical speculation only by what he views as necessity—to fulfil his own speculative interest and to clear the way for truth—and not to find truth.[68] And he is doing so in the service of morality—which long precedes his metaphysical conclusions.[69] Again and again, throughout his work, he denies the validity of following reason wherever it may lead.[70] As he explains in the Introduction to *Metaphysics*, it matters relatively little whether there is a correspondence—in the stricter senses of the term—between the conclusions that speculation yields and what absolutely exists:

> It is not the lack of harmony between our conceptions and reality which disturbs us, but their discord among themselves. . . . Our conceptions may be purely phenomenal; but none the less will the mind demand that they be harmonised with one another. The importance and the justification of metaphysics are not dependent, therefore, on the falsehood of the philosophy of relativity.[71]

In the same passage, he spells out the chief impetus behind his speculation: 'Mental discord and contradiction we cannot endure. . . . [U]ntil our thought-life ceases, there will always be an attempt on the part of the mind to bring its conceptions into a consistent system. . . . Metaphysics finds its warrant in the mental demand for harmony in thought.' Its value lies in its function as therapy.

8 How metaphysics can cure

Granted, it might seem unlikely that Bowne thinks metaphysics can be curative. After all, in addressing the value of metaphysics, he concedes that certain beliefs stand impervious to argument since those beliefs are not 'founded on argument' in the first place.[72] Similarly, referring to faith in the 'true *axiomata*,' he writes: 'Nor can faith be recovered by arguing; this will often rather deepen the unbelief.'[73] And elsewhere he notes that '[T]he Churches whose creeds are speculatively the most elaborate have never been the most efficient in turning from darkness to light.'[74]

But there are also passages in which Bowne contends that intellectual health rides on speculative philosophy. For example, in his capstone work, he declares:

> Intellectual campaigns . . . are commonly decided at points quite remote from the apparent battlefield. . . . These are the strategic points that command the field and decide the day. They lie in our epistemology and metaphysics—subjects which seem to have little or no practical bearing, yet out of them are the issues of intellectual life or death. Our notions of knowledge and its nature, our conception of reality and causality, our thoughts respecting space and time . . . these are the things that decide our general way of thinking and give direction to our thought even in morals and religion.[75]

And more succinctly, in the same work, he proclaims: 'Only a good philosophy can displace a bad one,' suggesting that metaphysical arguments are not only effective but essential in curing weakness of faith in those *axiomata*.[76]

There is no conflict between the former three and the latter two passages quoted immediately above. The belief which shines through the former three is that a good philosophy can displace a bad one only for persons who already are inclined toward faith but simply find their speculative tendencies getting in the way.[77] Metaphysics can serve such persons merely by freeing them of the false beliefs that undermine their trust in conscience.

9 Comparing Bowne and James

In revealing ways, Bowne's vision for metaphysics both differs from and resembles William James' plan for resolving metaphysical disputes.[78] Let me start with the similarities and then note one contrast that helps distinguish Bowne's approach.

James himself drew attention to certain congruencies. After reading Bowne's last major work, *Personalism*, he wrote in a 17 August 1908 letter to his colleague:

> It seems that you and I are now aiming at exactly the same end, though, owing to our different past, from which each retains special verbal habits, we often express ourselves so differently. It seemed to me over and over again that you were planting your feet identically in footprints which my feet were accustomed to—quite independently, of course, of my example, which was what made the coincidences so gratifying. The common foe of both of us is the dogmatist-

rationalist-abstractionist. Our common desire is to redeem the concrete personal life which wells up in us from moment to moment, from fastidious (and really preposterous) dialectic contradictions, impossibilities, and vetoes. . . . I think we fight in exactly the same cause, the reinstatement of the fullness of practical life, after the treatment of it by so much past philosophy as spectral. . . . [T]he essential thing is not [the] differences [between our philosophies], it is that our emphatic footsteps fall on the *same spot*.[79]

It is easy enough to see why James would say this.

For example, especially in essays such as his 'The Sentiment of Rationality,' he is motivated by a concern that parallels Bowne's dedication to reconciling the speculative with the more practical interests.[80] For James, the sentiment of rationality marks success in thought—it reveals that the mind has lain hold of rationality itself. To have the sentiment of rationality is to feel at home in the world: it is to experience a 'feeling of the sufficiency of the present moment, of its absoluteness,—[the] absence of all need to explain it, account for it, or justify it. . . .'[81] He singles out two ways of gaining this sentiment—'the theoretic way' and a more practical way. Each way answers a certain 'need' or 'craving,' as he calls it. The 'theoretic need' is to make life more manageable by turning complexity and chaos into simplicity and order. Fulfilling this need requires classifying diverse phenomena under concepts that are to some degree reductionistic. The theoretic mind places a premium on consistency and coherence of ideas, and it moves toward building totalising systems, such as Hegel's. A more practical way of attaining the sentiment of rationality corresponds to a different drive: 'This is the passion for distinguishing; it is the impulse to be *acquainted* with the parts rather than to comprehend the whole.'[82] It is the impulse to seize upon the vividness of concrete experience and stay in close touch with it, even at the expense of consistency and coherence.

For James, there are dangers in both the theoretic and the more practical tendency. The theoretic can close us off from the richness of everyday life. The practical can breed a kind of scepticism born of such an intense focus on the particular moment that a general view of the world stays beyond reach. Accordingly, each of these two tendencies threatens ultimately to undermine the sentiment of rationality.

In similar fashion to Bowne, James wants to mediate the theoretic and the more practical approach. In order to reach the sentiment of rationality, he thinks, I need to develop a theory which connects experiences in the present moment with my expectancy of the future—in such a way that allows me to predict what will happen next: 'I therefore propose this as the first practical requisite which a philosophical conception must satisfy: *It must, in a general way at least, banish uncertainty from the future*.'[83] Clearly, he aims not for

certainty in a rigidly Cartesian sense, but for a philosophical conception that, on the one hand, will not land us back in doubt as soon as we act on it and, on the other hand, will satisfy our habit of expectation. Regarding that habit, James makes the psychological claim that humans cannot help but try to anticipate the future.

10 Three views in common

Of course, already it is plain that there are slight differences between Bowne's and James' ways of characterising speculation and more practical thinking, but here their projects complement each other to a significant extent. Underlying both projects are three particularly key views which go hand in hand with one another.

On one occasion, Bowne presents the first view in claiming that '[O]ur beliefs represent not our conclusions, but Us. They reveal the drift of our sympathies and the tendencies of our nature.' He makes this claim to dismiss the assumption that human beliefs are 'logical deductions from formal premises.' ('[N]othing could be more absurd than' that assumption, he exclaims.)[84] James often makes largely the same point: 'Pretend what we may, the whole man within us is at work when we form our philosophical opinions. Intellect, will, taste, and passion co-operate just as they do in practical affairs. . . .'[85] Bowne continues: '[O]ur beliefs also reveal the quality of our soul and the grade of our development.'[86] James adds a gentler, but similarly evaluative, note, suggesting that while 'the average man' may 'risk [merely] a little beyond the literal evidence,' persons 'of vigorous nature' tend to *relish* 'a certain amount of uncertainty in their philosophic creed, just as risk lends a zest to worldly activity,' and that in so doing, persons of vigorous nature display 'the same moral quality which we call courage in practical affairs.'[87]

James and Bowne hold a second view in common. As discussed above, Bowne finds relatively little value in attempts to ensure that one's beliefs *correspond* to some ultimate reality. At least expressly, so does James. He stresses that the sentiment of rationality 'is constituted merely by the absence of any feeling of irrationality,' and rationality itself 'mean[s] only impeded mental function.'[88] Often in their writings, both Bowne and James imply that if our beliefs *could* fulfil our subjective needs and interests while failing to correspond to ultimate reality, it would be just as well. Of course, James and Bowne apparently think that if my beliefs would turn out to be false on a correspondence model of truth, they will fail by pragmatic standards, too: doubt will eventually come upon me, and I will end up having to face the falsity of my beliefs.[89] Thus, we can determine what is true, on a correspondence model of truth, by figuring out what is best to believe. Yet for example, in referring to 'more

mystical minds' that seek the 'peace of rationality . . . through ecstasy when logic fails,' James states that if we could develop 'a systematised method' whereby mysticism could allow everyone's 'heart . . . [to] thus wall out the ultimate irrationality which the head ascertains . . . [it] would be a philosophic achievement of first-rate importance.'[90] Here and elsewhere, he suggests that all means of attaining rationality are equally legitimate. By the same token, Bowne writes at one point: 'We might well conclude . . . that we should let philosophy alone, as at best a useless science. Unfortunately this cannot be done. . . . [E]very one has a philosophy of some sort, implicit or explicit . . . If men could and would let philosophy alone I sometimes think I should be willing to have them do so. . . . But since we must have a philosophy, whether we will or not, it is important that we get the best.'[91] Fulfilling practical needs and interests is so important to James and Bowne that they are willing to give up the speculative ideal entirely. To invert a line from John Stuart Mill, at times it is as if they would even deem it better to be a fool satisfied than Socrates dissatisfied.[92]

The reason appears in the letter quoted above from James to Bowne: both of them affirm 'the primacy of life over speculation,' as Bowne puts it—that is, they share the third view that thriving in everyday life is what matters most.[93] Further, James, as well as Bowne, is centrally committed to remaining faithful to experience—which he understands as the most general sense of one's interaction or encounter with the world—and to upholding the potency of the human person against doctrines of determinism, pessimism, and so on. For James, as for Bowne, any philosophy which discourages us from fighting to make the world a better place is silly and misguided, since if the world really can be improved, we have a responsibility to try to improve it.[94]

11 Two metaphysical therapies

These three views—especially the third—provide the impetus for Bowne's and James' attempts to reconcile speculative interests with more practical needs. Both philosophers aim for a reconciliation that will restore the practical life; each of them tries to show a way of taming the problems of philosophy enough to preserve or restore one's ability to act. As James explains, 'A definition of the world which will give back to the mind the free motion which has been blocked in the purely contemplative path may so far make the world seem rational again.'[95] In other words, not only Bowne, but also James crafts a method of solving metaphysical disputes that is supposed to be therapeutic.[96]

James' treatment of a dispute surrounding the Eucharist provides an example of how he uses his pragmatic method to subdue metaphysical problems. He first introduces the notion of substance—as 'the bearer of . . . [an object's] attributes,' or that 'in which they inhere'—noting that '[T]he phenomenal properties of things, nominalists say, surely do not really inhere in names, and if not in names then they do not inhere in anything. They *ad*here, or *co*here, rather, *with each other*, and the notion of a substance inaccessible to us, which we think accounts for such cohesion by supporting it, as cement might support pieces of mosaic, must be abandoned.'[97] To the contrary, James then points out the pragmatic import of the notion of substance in scholastic accounts of the transubstantiation. The 'accidents' of the bread and wine—the qualities, properties, or attributes of bread and wine, such as dryness and sweet taste—stay the same during the Eucharist, and thus the substance that stands behind the attributes must have been switched from 'bread-substance' to 'the very substance of divinity.' For persons who already believe in transubstantiation, the notion of substance, then, should turn out to have momentous pragmatic value. James means for his account to make it is possible, in a therapeutic way, for such persons to get on with life in the face of the metaphysical quandary about the idea of substance.

James' approach to metaphysics may seem too pragmatist to bear much resemblance to Bowne's approach: Bowne's approach still involves rationalist methods, and James' does not. But the key point is that to whatever extent they employ different means, James and Bowne aim their metaphysical therapies at similar ends. In making this point in the letter quoted above, James remarks: 'I personally prefer my own directer method; but so far has the thinking (at any rate the "academic") mind been warped away from directness by school traditions, that I have no doubt your more complex treatment will prove by far the more effective in the philosophy market.' Should we wonder why Bowne's method differs from James' if his aim is so similar, James provides an answer: it may take rationalism to fight rationalism.[98]

Further, what James says on the subject of transubstantiation also underscores the extent to which he sees metaphysical questions as meaningful, similarly to Bowne and in contrast to fellow pragmatists Charles Sanders Peirce and John Dewey. Peirce can sound nearly positivist as he deems metaphysical issues meaningless and thus insoluble. In direct opposition to James, he argues at some length that, for example, 'It is foolish for Catholics and Protestants to fancy themselves in disagreement about the elements of the sacrament, if they agree in regard to all their sensible effects, here and hereafter.'[99] Even more than Peirce, Dewey lacks James' reconciliatory attitude toward traditional philosophy, aiming to subvert traditional questions, instead of just discarding them in Peircian fashion.

It is further revealing that—in turn—Bowne's and

James' perspectives on religious belief are quite similar to each other.[100] As hinted in James' comments on transubstantiation, his philosophy of religion is a-theological—so much so, in fact, that in a public lecture, James entreats his audience to 'exempt my own pragmatism from the charge of being an atheistic system.'[101] James' approach to religion is a-theological insofar as he treats religious beliefs therapeutically, as he does with *all* metaphysical beliefs, testing their strength by asking not whether they correspond to some ultimate reality, but whether they are most fruitful to hold.[102] He endorses what he himself calls a 'pluralistic moralism.'[103] It is pluralistic in the metaphysical sense of maintaining that there are more than two ultimate realities, and its moralism consists of meliorism—a belief that the world will neither worsen nor improve on its own, but that human persons can improve it and should try to do so.

Bowne shares this meliorism (if not the pluralism), and more important, while his approach stops short of being fully a-theological, it comes remarkably close to James', particularly considering that Bowne was a devout Christian and prominent Methodist.[104] In one instance, Bowne contends: 'Whatever our theological faith, whatever our religious practices, and whatever our religious pedagogics, their sole use and value consist in helping us to lives of love and righteousness before God and man. This is that for which they exist and that which gives them meaning and justification.'[105] Here and elsewhere in Bowne's work, as in James', the question of whether religious belief corresponds to ultimate reality loses any importance, and the value of faith becomes strictly instrumental: faith has value only insofar as it helps us improve ourselves and the world.[106]

12 A decisive contrast

Nonetheless, Bowne's and James' approaches to metaphysical questions are fundamentally different in certain ways. I want to draw attention to one way I find most definitive. Think again of Bowne's claim that by means of 'instinctive' moral intuition, we can know what values we should hold. ('Our claim is that when two motives appear in the soul, we instinctively know which is higher.'[107]) He implies that moral facts are the same for everyone, and that everyone can discern them in the same way. In complement, in one essay, for example, he comments:

> [A] religion for developed humanity, and one capable of developing humanity, must satisfy man's entire nature . . . and must furnish the will with a supreme end and inspiration. It is, then, right that we should be well-disposed toward all non-Christian religions, and we should be glad to recognise any good that may be in them; but this must not lead us to overlook their imperfection and practical inefficiency, and the resulting necessity of replacing them by something better.

When we compare Christianity with the outlying religions, we feel its measureless superiority.[108]

James is far less confident that there are universally discernible moral facts. He writes, for example:

> Men's active impulses are so differently mixed that a philosophy fit in this respect for Bismarck will almost certainly be unfit for a valetudinarian poet. In other words, although one can lay down in advance the rule that a philosophy which utterly denies all fundamental ground for seriousness, for effort, for hope, which says that the nature of things is radically alien to human nature, can never succeed,—one cannot in advance say what particular dose of hope, or of gnosticism of the nature of things, the definitely successful philosophy shall contain. In short, it is almost certain that personal temperament will here make itself felt. . . .[109]

James' mention of temperament is key. He tends to use the word *temperament* where Bowne would use the term *conscience*, and this difference highlights the extent to which James thinks both the good and the capacity to discern it are relative to each person. Bowne, by contrast, rests his final hope for humanity upon the power of conscience, crafting a philosophy in which achieving moral ends remains the primary concern.

13 Conclusion

That concern, I maintain, grounds Bowne's whole philosophy, accounting for the coexistence of the rationalist and pragmatic elements in his approach. No doubt, there is some tension between these elements. When doing metaphysics, Bowne tends to seek what he calls formal truth, testing propositions mainly by such standards as the law of non-contradiction. Elsewhere, he focuses more explicitly on what he terms concrete truth, embracing or rejecting beliefs chiefly on the basis of whether they fulfil a range of practical and subjective needs and interests. As Ramsdell aptly points out, if Bowne used these two modes of thinking independently of each other, his philosophy as a whole would be fundamentally incoherent. Yet the two modes fit into Bowne's overarching philosophical approach—thereby cohering with each other—and though Ramsdell overlooks Bowne's meta-approach, he performs a vital service in prompting others to see it. Bowne's stress on the supremacy of conscience unifies his more speculative and more practical modes of thinking, yielding a vision of metaphysics as therapeutic. Within this vision, conscience provides vague, general principles by which to live. Reason enters into dialogue with conscience, clarifying its aims and principles, crafting plans for acting on them in specific ways, discerning the potential consequences of the actions planned, and checking back with conscience to test the results. Metaphysics also answers the

genuine human need to seek formal truth in speculation. But the activity of speculation and the conclusions that come from it can easily weaken one's capacity to hear what conscience urges. In addition, therefore, metaphysics serves as a kind of philosophical therapy, restoring that capacity by bringing order to the bedlam that emanates from speculation. A metaphysical system is therapeutic insofar as it both passes the test of formal truth—thus satisfying the requirements of the speculative interest—and accords with practical needs and interests and with what conscience requires, thereby fulfilling the whole person and meeting the standards of concrete truth. This form of metaphysical therapy is much like William James', though it differs such as by resting on far more trust in human capacity for moral discernment than James can justify.

In the end, Bowne leaves his reader mainly to heed the voice of conscience, spend time in serious thought—drawing out tacit aims and logical consequences—and then make the most informed decision that conscience calls for. He offers no guaranteed method for discerning what is right or wrong, good or bad, correct or incorrect. The voice of conscience can be faint, the path of logic can be dim, and even the role of reason itself can remain something of a mystery. Regarding the degree of mystery that remains in his account of the role of reason, Bowne offers what I will make his final word here: 'It is often easier to maintain an extreme than a moderate doctrine. The extreme is clear, while the moderate doctrine has an air of vagueness and compromise about it. This makes the latter obnoxious to all those who crave finality and sharp definition, forgetting that reality declines to be too sharply defined. In the present case . . . it is not easy to draw any sharp line of distinction.'[110] For now, at least, that conclusion seems to me the only one conscionable.[111]

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Notes:

1 John Paul II, Fides Et Ratio: On the Relationship between Faith and Reason (Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1998), 55.

2 At one point, James writes: 'The theorising mind tends always to the oversimplification of its materials.' William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature*, eight volumes (New York, London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1902); reprinted (New York: Collier Books/London: Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1961), 39. Commenting from a Rortian perspective on that line from James, for example, one philosopher writes: 'That remark, the spirit of which I would aspire to make my own, is not just the expression of an intellectual regret; it is an ethical conviction. It is a warning against our all-too-human wish to be saved by the vision *sub specie aeternitatis*. The impulse to metaphysics—in philosophy, in theology, in ethics, in science, in politics—is the impulse to the large and consoling falsehood, to the enchanting illusion of full comprehension and control. Better that we stick to what we have some good reasons to believe—the concrete examples and cases that constitute the meat of our practical reflections—than that we move up to gassy generalisations that claim to justify our hard-won insights and achievements.' James C. Edwards, 'A Skeptical Perspective,' *Furman Studies* 39 (1997), 162. See 171*n*.4, 172-73*n*.9.

3 I borrow the term *privatise* from Richard Rorty, *Contingency, irony, and solidarity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). On 197, for example, he writes that 'The best one can do with the sort of challenges offered by Nietzsche and Heidegger is . . . ask these men to *privatise* their projects, their attempts at sublimity—to view them as irrelevant to politics and therefore compatible with the sense of human solidarity which the development of democratic institutions has facilitated.' Themes relating to philosophy as personal therapy emerge also in Rorty's *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979); *Consequences of Pragmatism: Essays, 1972-1980* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982); and elsewhere in *Contingency, irony, and solidarity*.

4 Paul Deats, 'Introduction to Boston Personalism,' in Paul Deats and Carol Robb (eds.), *The Boston Personalist Tradition in Philosophy, Social Ethics, and Theology* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1986), 2. See A. C. Knudson, *The Philosophy of Personalism* (Boston: Boston University Press, 1949); Edgar S. Brightman, 'Personalism,' in Vergilius Ferm (ed.), *A History of Philosophical Systems* (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1950), 340-52; L. H. DeWolf, 'Personalism in the History of Western Philosophy,' *The Philosophical Forum* 12 (1954): 29-51; John H. Lavely, 'Personalism,' in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York, London: Collier-Macmillan, 1967, 1972), volume 5: 107-10; Lavely's 'What is Personalism?' *The Personalist Forum* 7,2 (1991): 1-34; and Erazim Kohák, 'Personalism: Towards a Philosophical Delineation,' *The Personalist Forum* 13,1 (1997): 3-11.

5 (emphasis his) Kohák, 11.

6 King first studied personalism under George Davis at Crozer Theological Seminary. At Boston University, he later worked with some of Bowne's

major successors, including Edgar Sheffield Brightman and L. Harold DeWolf. See Martin Luther King, Jr., *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), 100, where King writes that the personal idealism of his teachers at Boston University 'remains today my basic philosophic position,' and that Boston Personalism gave him, among other things, a 'metaphysical basis for the dignity and worth of all human personality.' For further exploration of the connections between Boston Personalism and King's social thought and action, see David L. Lewis, *King: A Critical Biography* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1970); Kenneth L. Smith and Ira G. Zepp, Jr., *Search for the Beloved Community: The Thinking of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1975); Walter G. Muelder, 'Philosophical and Theological Influences in the Thought and Action of Martin Luther King, Jr.,' *Debate and Understanding* 1,3 (King Afro-American Cultural Center at Boston University, 1977): 179-89; John J. Ansbro, *Martin Luther King, Jr.: The Making of a Mind* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1982); and Paul Deats, 'Introduction to Boston Personalism,' 7-8, and Muelder, 'Communitarian Dimensions of the Moral Laws,' 245-46, 247, both in Paul Deats and Carol Robb (eds.). Such scholars as James H. Cone and Albert J. Raboteau argue that Boston Personalism and other decidedly 'white' traditions had far less influence on King than King and most of his interpreters have suggested. See especially Cone, 'Martin Luther King, Jr., Black Theology—Black Church,' *Theology Today* 40,4 (1984): 409-20; and 'The Theology of Martin Luther King, Jr.,' *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 40,4 (1986): 21-39; and Albert J. Raboteau, 'A Hidden Wholeness: Thomas Merton and Martin Luther King, Jr.,' *Spirituality Today* 40 (1988, Supplement): 80-95. In both the 1984 and 1986 articles, Cone cites and often pointedly criticises Lewis, Smith and Zepp, Jr., and Ansbro, and in the 1984 article, Cone explicitly refers to Boston Personalism, insisting that studies of 'what King learned in graduate school and what intellectual resources he used in communicating his ideas to the white community' shed little, if any, light on 'the heart of King's theology and faith that sustained him in his fight for justice' (p. 414).

7 Douglas R. Anderson, 'Bowne's Redefinition of "Telos,"' *Idealistic Studies* 18,1 (1998), 239.

8 Edward T. Ramsdell's critiques are published in a series of three articles: 'The Religious Pragmatism of Borden Parker Bowne (1847-1910),' *The Personalist* 15,4 (1934): 305-14; 'Pragmatism and Rationalism in the Philosophy of Borden Parker Bowne,' *The Personalist* 16,1 (1935): 23-35; and 'The Sources of Bowne's Pragmatism,' *The Personalist* 16,2 (1935): 132-41. Ramsdell adapted all three articles from his doctoral dissertation, which is unpublished. In this paper, I ignore the part of that charge in which Ramsdell claims that 'Bowne did not establish the rational character of the interests and feelings of the mind as he described them.' Ramsdell, 'Pragmatism and Rationalism in Bowne,' 31. In an article in which he mentions Ramsdell, Douglas R. Anderson responds to that criticism. See his 'Bowne and Peirce on the Logic of Religious Belief,' *The Personalist Forum* 6,2 (1990): 107-22. Ramsdell's other critiques get no mention here since they are far less relevant.

9 Early major contributors to the debate include Ralph Tyler Flewelling and Francis John McConnell. See Flewelling's *Personalism and the Problems of Philosophy: An Appreciation of the Work of Borden Parker Bowne*, with an introductory chapter by Rudolf Eucken (New York, Cincinnati: The Methodist Book Concern, 1915), 130-41, *passim*; and McConnell's *Borden Parker Bowne: His Life and His Philosophy* (New York, Cincinnati, Chicago: Abingdon, 1929), 55, 149-62. William James added to the debate by declaring Bowne a pragmatist. For more recent contributions, see F. Thomas Trotter, 'Borden Parker Bowne 1847-1910: An Estimate of His Contribution and Continuing Influence,' *The Philosophical Forum* 18 (1961), 63-71; Anderson, 'Bowne and Peirce'; Donald W. Dotterer, 'James and Bowne on the Philosophy of Religious Experience,' *Personalist Forum* 6,2 (1990), 137-40; Douglas R. Anderson, 'The Legacy of Bowne's Empiricism,' *The Personalist Forum* 8, Supplement (1992): 1-8; Anderson's 'Bowne's Redefinition of "Telos"': 239-46; and Randall E. Auxier, 'Time and Personality: Bowne on Time, Evolution, and History,' *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 12,3 (1998), 194, 201*n*.23.

10 Though he avoids the term *pragmatic*, Herbert Schneider argues that there is a shift in Bowne around 1884 toward a philosophical approach more in line with William James'. Herbert W. Schneider, 'Bowne's Radical Empiricism,' introductory essay in *Representative Essays of Borden Parker Bowne*, ed. Warren E. Steinkraus (New York: Meridian, 1981), xii. I believe and mean to indicate—particularly through the works of Bowne I quote in the following—that the 'empirical' and 'apriori' approaches 'run concurrently' in Bowne, as Warren Steinkraus suggests in 'A Century of Bowne's Theism,' *Idealistic Studies* 12 (1982), 63. Throughout this discussion, I often quote extensively from Bowne, sharing his own conviction that in certain cases, candour requires 'the check, both of exact quotation and exact reference.' B. P. Bowne, *Herbert Spencer: Being an Examination of the First Principles of his System* (New York: Nelson and Phillips, 1874), 5.

11 Ramsdell, 'Religious Pragmatism of Bowne,' 306. In responding to certain criticisms made of one of

Bowne's chief successors, Edgar Sheffield Brightman, Robert N. Beck offers some further clarification of the term *rationalism* in regard to personalism. See his 'Rationalism and Personalism,' *The Philosophical Forum* 15 (1957): 56-60.

12 See Bowne, *Metaphysics: A Study in First Principles* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1882), 18-23. Granted, in laying out his method in the final pages of the introduction to *Metaphysics*, Bowne does vow not only to trust reason, but also to start with the tenets of common sense and to make them 'the text for a critical exegesis.' And he insists that his method 'does no violence to the natural sense of probability' that pervades common sense. Bowne, *Metaphysics*, 19. Nonetheless, he pledges to reject any commonsensical beliefs which reason indicts. Hereafter, all references to Bowne's *Metaphysics* are to that original 1882 version, rather than to the Revised Edition that first reached publication in 1898.

13 See Bowne's *Metaphysics*, 1, 8, 19, 21. See also 'What is Truth?' *The Independent* 36,1 (18 September 1884), 1185; 'The Logic of Religious Belief,' *Methodist Review* 66,1 (1884): 642-65; reprinted in *Representative Essays*, 153-54, *passim*; 'What is Rationalism?' *The Independent* 40,1 (26 January 1888), 99; 'Theology and Reason,' *Zion's Herald* 66,1 (19 December 1888), 401; and *Theory of Thought and Knowledge* (New York, Cincinnati, Chicago: American Book Company, 1897), 17, 293-95.

14 Bowne, *Personalism*, 20.

15 Bowne, *Metaphysics*, 77.

16 For example, see Bowne, *Metaphysics*, 40-41.

17 Bowne does so at various points in his writings. The first instance I have found is in Borden Parker Bowne, *Studies in Theism* (New York: Phillips and Hunt, 1879), 62-63. He develops the point at some length in his 'Logic of Religious Belief': 149-65. See also his *Theory of Thought*, 369ff.

18 See especially Bowne's *Studies in Theism*, 76-77; *Metaphysics*, 21, 22; *Theory of Thought*, 377; and *Personalism* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1905), 23-24.

19 Bowne, 'Logic of Religious Belief,' 154.

20 Bowne, *Metaphysics*, 3.

21 Again, see Bowne, *Metaphysics*, 18-23.

22 Bowne, *Metaphysics*, 1.

23 Bowne, *Metaphysics*, 3.

24 Bowne, *Metaphysics*, 3.

25 Bowne, *Metaphysics*, 19.

26 Bowne, *Metaphysics*, 21. The full sentence reads: 'Philosophy is always ready to consider objections against the justness of its inferences from phenomena, but objections based only on the senses themselves it treats with the same disdain with which an astronomer would listen to an attack on the Copernican theory based on its opposition to appearances.'

27 One of those works is *Theory of Thought*. See 293. The other two are an article and a book in which the article appeared in modified form. The article is 'The Inerrancy of the Scriptures,' *Zion's Herald* 76,1 (5 January 1898): 7; reprinted in *Representative Essays*: 180-83. The book is *The Christian Revelation* (Cincinnati: Curts and Jennings, 1898), which was reprinted as part of *Studies in Christianity* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1909): 1-83. In the following, I quote from the modified version of the latter work, with the assumption that Bowne might have considered it a more developed statement.

28 Bowne, *Christian Revelation*, 55-58. See *Studies in Theism*, 78. Bowne echoes the theme of the last sentence in many other works. Beside *Theory of Thought*, 293, see, for example, 'Logic of Religious Belief,' 153.

29 Bowne, *Metaphysics*, 21.

30 See Bowne, *Metaphysics*, vii, for his explicit reference to Bacon's 'idols' of the den and the cave.

31 David Shay, 'Philosophers Jokes [*sic*],'

<http://www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/4661/projoke70.htm>, 2001.

32 Bowne, 'Logic of Religious Belief,' 152.

33 Bowne, *Theory of Thought*, 369.

34 Bowne, *Metaphysics*, vii.

35 Bowne, 'Logic of Religious Belief,' 154. See also Bowne, *Studies in Theism*, 315, where he writes that 'Our fundamental practical beliefs are not speculative deductions from formal premises, but *formulations of life itself*, and they depend for evidence mainly upon the energy of life they formulate. . . . In this realm, belief, or assent, involves an element of volition'; *Theory of Thought*, 371: 'Man is not only or mainly intellect. He is also and chiefly a practical being; and his thought is determined less by speculative reflection than by the pressure of practical necessities. Belief is a means rather than an end. It is valuable for what it helps us to, and its grounds lie quite as much in its practical necessity as in its speculative foundation'; and *Personalism*, 310: '[T]he great body of our fundamental beliefs are not deductions but rather formulations of life. Our practical life has been the great source of belief and the constant test of its practical validity, that is, of its truth. Such beliefs are less a set of reasoned principles than a body of practical postulates and customs which were born in life, which express life, and in which the fundamental interests and tendencies of the mind find expression and recognition.'

36 Borden Parker Bowne, *Studies in Theism*, 69.

37 Beside Bowne's 'The Logic of Religious Belief' and *Theory of Thought*, see, for example, his *Studies in Theism*, 64-65, where he writes: 'We conclude . . . that it is no objection to a belief that its grounds do

not admit of satisfactory formal statement, provided that it always works well,' and 75, where he adds that 'Those views . . . of man and his relations which must develop and dignify human nature, and which work best in practice, are at least presumptively true. . . . In addition, then, to beliefs deduced from formal data, there are other beliefs which are based on results'; *Theism* (New York: American Book Company, 1902), 291, where he concludes: 'Hence the existence of God is affirmed not on speculative or theoretical grounds, but because of the needs of the practical life. This has often been called the moral argument for the divine existence; a better name would be the practical argument'; 'Present Status of the Argument for Life after Death,' *North American Review* 191 (1910), 103; 'Gains for Religious Thought in the Last Generation,' *Hibbert Journal* 8 (1909-1910): 884-93; reprinted in *Living Age* 266 (20 August 1910): 451-56; reprinted in *Representative Essays*, 171, where he writes: 'They are the principles by which men live, and without which they cannot live their best life. And the proof of such belief rests entirely on the energy of the life they express, and on their power to further that life in practice. They meet out mental needs and they work well in life. This is the pragmatic test of truth, and for concrete truth there is no deeper or surer test than this'; and *Kant and Spencer* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1912), 209, where he proclaims: 'Thought has become pragmatic, especially in ethical and religious fields, and we are very little concerned at speculative inadequacy, provided a doctrine works well in practice and enriches and furthers life.'

38 Bowne, *Theory of Thought*, 374-75.

39 Bowne attributes the term to Matthew Arnold in *Theory of Thought*, 371. See Bowne, 'Logic of Religious Belief,' especially 152, where he refers to 'the speculative ideal' and gives much the same analysis of it as he does in *Theory of Thought* and other works.

40 Bowne, *Theory of Thought*, 373.

41 Bowne, *Theory of Thought*, 374.

42 Bowne, *Theory of Thought*, 371.

43 Bowne, *Metaphysics*, 17.

44 (emphasis mine) Bowne, *Metaphysics*, 8.

45 (emphasis mine) Bowne, 'Logic of Religious Belief,' 162.

46 Borden Parker Bowne, 'The Speculative Significance of Freedom,' *Methodist Review* 77 (September 1885): 681-97; reprinted in *Representative Essays*, 25. The speculative significance of freedom is a key theme in his *Metaphysics*, as he himself points out. Bowne, *Metaphysics*, vii. No doubt, there are certain ways in which the approach Bowne takes in his more metaphysical works does not fit his description of the method of rigor and vigour. For example, in *Theory of Thought*, 375, he notes that one dictum of the method of rigor and vigour is '[D]oubt everything that can be doubted'; and in his *Metaphysics*, for example, he takes pains to distance himself from such scepticism. See especially *Metaphysics*, 8-9, 15, 19-20.

47 Ramsdell, 'Pragmatism and Rationalism in Bowne,' 23-24.

48 Bowne, 'Logic of Religious Belief,' 152-58. See all of that essay. See also his *Studies in Theism*, 61-107, especially 65-66, where he writes that 'The whole mental life . . . springs out of feeling. It is extremely doubtful if a purely perceptive being, without any subjective interests, could attain to rationality, even if its physical existence were secured. Indeed, it is demonstrable that our sentiments outline and control all mental developments'; *Metaphysics*, 16, where he admits that 'Probably all our beliefs are, to some extent, products'; 'Concerning the "Christian Consciousness,"' *The Independent* 37 (January 1885), 35, where Bowne writes that 'The fundamental outlines of human belief are determined by various circumstances, chief of which are the essential interests of the mind. Mental activity runs in lines determined by our fundamental interests, and all our theories are adjusted to them'; and *Philosophy of Theism* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1887), 19, where he reminds the reader that 'The mind is not a disinterested logic-machine, but a living organism, with manifold interests and tendencies. These outline its development, and furnish the driving power.' Often, in the portions of his works in which he addresses the issue, Bowne makes that point repeatedly. For example, see *Theory of Thought*, 35, 368-69, 370-71, 373, 374, 376, 386-89; and 'Gains for Religious Thought.'

49 Bowne, 'Logic of Religious Belief,' 162. Regarding such postulates, Bowne asks: 'Do they prove anything? The answer must be, that primarily they are not reasons for believing, but tendencies to believe. As such they prove nothing. They become reasons only as we assume some theory of their origin.' In the sentences that immediately follow therein, Bowne unveils the ultimate ground of the theistic and personalistic claims that are fundamental to his philosophy: 'If we may assume a harmony between our nature and the nature of things, or if we assume a process of evolution such that our nature must develop into harmony with reality, or if we assume that God will take care of our faculties and their essential veracity, then these subjective interests become reasons for believing. It is plain, however, that these assumptions themselves depend on the fact to be established, the trustworthiness of our nature, and cannot, therefore, be both premise and conclusion. Our nature must finally be taken on trust.' See also, for example, Bowne's 'Concerning the

"Christian Consciousness,'" 35, where he asserts that 'Primarily, all of these assumptions are but the projection upon the universe of the demands and interests of our total nature'; *Philosophy of Theism*, 13-14, and iii, where he admits that 'There is an element of faith and volition latent in all our theorising. Where we cannot prove, we believe. Where we cannot demonstrate, we choose sides'; 'Faith in Our Immortality,' *The Independent* 48 (1896), 439, where he acknowledges, regarding such postulates, that '[N]o doubt can be cast upon them without discrediting the whole system of knowledge'; *Theory of Thought*, 377; and the quotation from Bowne's *Theism* which appears in note (32) above. A 1955 issue of *The Personalist* contains a debate between Paul Helsel and Warren Steinkraus over whether Bowne's metaphysics derives from a theological postulate. See Paul R. Helsel, 'Borden Parker Bowne and F. R. Tennant,' 47-58; Warren E. Steinkraus, 'Professor Helsel and Bowne,' 281-85, and Paul R. Helsel, 'A Reply to Professor Steinkraus' "Professor Helsel and Bowne,"' 286-88, all in *The Personalist* 36 (1955).

50 Bowne, 'Logic of Religious Belief,' 156. See *Theism*, 18.

51 Borden Parker Bowne, 'Spencer's Nescience,' *The Independent* 56 (1904), 67. See Bowne, *Theory of Thought*, 293; and a stronger restatement in Bowne, *Christian Revelation*, 69-72. See also 62 of the latter work.

52 Bowne, *Studies in Theism*, 74; *Philosophy of Theism*, 14; *Theory of Thought*, 382.

53 Bowne, 'Logic of Religious Belief,' 162-63. Throughout other works, such as *Christian Revelation*, Bowne echoes that point.

54 Borden Parker Bowne, 'Moral Intuition vs. Utilitarianism,' *New Englander* 32 (April 1873): 217-42; reprinted in *Representative Essays*, 69. See 78. As Douglas Anderson points out, though Bowne authored this line early in his career, the claim regarding moral intuition fits with his work as a whole. Anderson, 'Legacy of Bowne's Empiricism,' 3.

55 Borden Parker Bowne, 'Moral Intuition vs. Utilitarianism,' 74. Bowne does insist that 'Not moral correctness, but vital fullness, is the deepest aim in life,' meaning by *vital fullness* such things as 'the development of the great social forms, the educational facilities, the gathered knowledge, the industrial activities, the wise co-operation and organisation, and the stored wealth without which humanity cannot progress.' Bowne, 'Morals and Life,' *Methodist Review* 91 (1909): 708-22; reprinted in *Representative Essays*, 83, 82-83. But his way of reaching that conclusion indicates the supremacy of conscience in his view; for in giving no argument in support of his conclusion, he apparently discerns the deepest aim in life mainly through his own moral intuition.

56 Bowne is quick to stress that 'Conscience apart from intellect is mere whim and pathology—religious whim it may be, but whim just the same. . . .' Bowne, 'Morals and Life,' 82. Later he adds: 'One great need of the present time, in all practical fields, is the serious use of reason in the criticism of life.' Bowne, 'Morals and Life,' 85. See *Metaphysics*, 18, where Bowne points out: 'Ethics deals with duty, and the question of whether there be any duty can be answered only by an appeal to the reason that is within us.'

57 See Bowne, *Studies in Theism*, 69; 'Logic of Religious Belief,' 163; and *Personalism*, 9.

58 Bowne, 'Logic of Religious Belief,' 163. For an almost exact parallel, see Bowne's *Theory of Thought*, 383ff.

59 Bowne, 'Moral Intuition vs. Utilitarianism,' 76. On 78, he concludes: 'The sum of our arguments is this: Conscience judges actors; reason judges actions. Conscience selects the motive, reason selects the act that will best express that motive. Conscience gives the principles of action; reason applies it.' Once while fielding questions after one of his public lectures, Bowne was asked to define conscience. In his reply, he said: 'If you want to know what is the ultimate fact of conscience, I should say it was this: A perception of higher and lower in the principles of action, and in no way a perception of how those rules shall be applied. I believe that codes of life are purely manufactured. Conscience would give us this law of love, say, but how that shall be applied is purely a matter of experience, a thing which we have to grow into; and the world has not grown into very much of it yet. Suppose a person is sick. Conscience says to you, "You must aid him." You feel that you must. There is obligation upon you to aid him. But conscience does not tell you how to aid him. You might go to a drug store and get the first medicine you come to, and go back and give it to him, and kill him. To know how to realise your good purpose you must have experience and common sense.' Quoted in Warren E. Steinkraus, 'Philosophical Conversations at a Summer Colony in the 1870's,' *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 12 (1974), 343.

60 See especially Bowne's 'Morals and Life.'

61 Bowne, 'Morals and Life,' 83.

62 Bowne, *Theory of Thought*, 35.

63 Bowne, *Metaphysics*, 9.

64 Bowne, *Personalism*, 6.

65 Bowne, *Personalism*, 8.

66 Bowne, *Metaphysics*, 3. See also Bowne, 'The Mind Cure,' *The Independent* 38 (15 July 1886): 875-76.

67 Here I am particularly indebted to Dr. Thomas O. Buford, as I am throughout this paper.

68 See Bowne, *Metaphysics*, 23, where he writes that

'Being . . . is something to be recognised and admitted, rather than deduced or comprehended.'

69 For arguments that differ significantly from mine on this point, see especially Anderson, 'Legacy of Bowne's Empiricism'; and Richard A. Beauchamp, 'Ethics and Metaethics in Bowne's Philosophy,' 77-78, and James McLachlan, 'The Idealist Critique of Idealism: Bowne's Theistic Personalism and Howison's City of God,' 89-106, both in *The Personalist Forum* 13,1 (1997). Beauchamp believes that Bowne's metaphysics heavily influences his ethical philosophy, and McLachlan thinks that Bowne critiques the idea of ethics as first philosophy. What I argue here is far more in line with Ronnie L. Littlejohn's suggestion that perhaps 'Bowne's theory of persons is underwritten by moral not metaphysical considerations. . . .' Littlejohn makes that comment in 'A Response to Daniel Holbrook's 'Descartes on Persons' and Doug Anderson's "The Legacy of Bowne's Empiricism,"' *The Personalist Forum* 8,1 (1992), 20, pointing out: 'This means that Anderson may have Bowne's philosophy upside down. In this paper, Anderson seems to suggest that Bowne starts with a metaphysical theory of interaction, and some desire to find a role for the body in the definition of person, and then moves to his understanding of persons as makers of life.' Here is a point on which Ramsdell is incisively correct, writing: 'It is inconceivable [for Bowne] that anything harmful to personality can be ultimately true. Personalism . . . was not simply the outcome of Bowne's philosophical activity; it was the starting-point. He allowed it to determine method.' Ramsdell, 'Pragmatism and Rationalism in Bowne,' 28. To see Ramsdell's insight here, one need only note such spots in Bowne's work as the following: 'Logic of Religious Belief,' 153, where he writes approvingly that '[M]an did not begin by inquiring into the implications of ethical existence and by settling all the metaphysical difficulties involved therein, but he begin [*sic*] by being ethical, and by implicitly assuming all which that implies. He did not prove that he had a right to be ethical, but he found himself such'; *Christian Revelation*, 71-72, where he warns that 'A standard [of truth and authority] which left no room for choice, for love and loyalty, would defeat the moral ends of life'; and *Personalism*, 25, where he himself points out, referring to his own system: 'This personal beginning of all speculation should be emphasized. . . .'

70 For example, see Bowne, *Theory of Thought*, 381, where he declares: 'The fearful logical inferences which might be drawn in such a case would have significance only on the assumption that logic still has jurisdiction, and this assumption is the very thing denied'; and *Theism*, 23, where he insists: 'We do not ignore the facts which make against the [religious] view; but we set them aside as things to be explained, yet which must not in any way be allowed to weaken our faith.'

71 Bowne, *Metaphysics*, 12.

72 Bowne, *Metaphysics*, v.

73 Bowne, 'Logic of Religious Belief,' 164.

74 Bowne, 'Religion and Theology,' *The Independent* 38 (14 October 1886): 1296; reprinted in *Representative Essays*, 177-78. It seems especially appropriate to quote from that essay given Thomas Trotter's claim that in it, Bowne describes his own 'shift from the technical language of philosophy to the more direct language of piety. . . .' F. Thomas Trotter, 'Boston Personalism's Contributions to Faith and Learning,' in Deats and Robb (eds.), 17.

75 Bowne, *Personalism*, viii.

76 Bowne, *Personalism*, 9. It is clear enough that in using the word *philosophy* here, Bowne refers to metaphysics, along with other modes of philosophy. On 4, Bowne points out that *a* philosophy 'is a man's way of looking at things. The common-sense man finds a lot of bodies about him in space and a series of changes going on in time, and in these he rests final. That is his philosophy. The materialist conceives that the world of experience can be explained by molecules and atoms, endowed with forces of attraction and repulsion which work forever through space and time. That is his philosophy. The agnostic holds that we can know nothing beyond phenomena. The causal power behind is forever hidden. That is his philosophy. The theist holds that the order of things can be explained only by an intelligent cause back of all appearance and manifestation. That is his philosophy.' Obviously, all of the examples of particular philosophies involve metaphysics.

77 The context of the former three lines supports my claim here about the primacy of the will for Bowne. For example, in 'Logic of Religious Belief,' 164, where Bowne warns: 'Nor can faith be recovered by arguing; this will often rather deepen the unbelief,' he introduces the claim in the paragraph above with the following: 'In a pessimistic state of mind, where the springs of life are low, the scientist despairs and becomes agnostic. In a similar state of mind, the moralist cries out, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." The Christian, after a period of full assurance, falls into doubt even of the existence of God. . . . The trouble is with the inner spring of faith.'

78 In much of the following discussion, I owe a great deal to Dr. Robert B. Talisse.

79 The letter is published in full in Francis John McConnell, *Borden Parker Bowne: His Life and His Philosophy* (New York, Cincinnati, Chicago: Abingdon, 1929): 276-78, and in *Representative Essays*: 189-90.

80 See William James, 'The Sentiment of Rationality,' *Mind* 4 (1879): 317-46; reprinted in *The Writings of William James: A Comprehensive Edition*, ed. John J. McDermott (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1967/1977): 317-45.

81 James, 'Sentiment of Rationality,' 318.

82 James, 'Sentiment of Rationality,' 319.

83 James, 'Sentiment of Rationality,' 326.

84 Bowne, 'Logic of Religious Belief,' 164.

85 James, 'Sentiment of Rationality,' 334.

86 Bowne, 'Logic of Religious Belief,' 164.

87 James, 'Sentiment of Rationality,' 333.

88 James, 'Sentiment of Rationality,' 318, 324.

89 See, for example, James, 'Sentiment of Rationality,' 323, where he writes that 'The [philosophical] boor . . . is liable at any moment to the ravages of many kinds of doubt.' James and Bowne agree that beliefs which meet their pragmatic standards of truth would ultimately prove to meet stricter correspondence standards of truth (that is, of course, if we had a means of determining how fully beliefs correspond to absolute reality). In note (49) above, see the quotation from Bowne's 'Logic of Religious Belief,' 162. See also 163-64 of that essay.

90 James, 'Sentiment of Rationality,' 324.

91 Bowne, *Personalism*, 3-5. To repeat, Bowne here uses the term *philosophy* to refer to metaphysics or metaphysical views. See note (76) for my explanation of why.

92 See John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, ed. George Sher (Indianapolis, Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1979), 10.

93 Bowne, 'Spencer's Nescience,' 67.

94 See William James, 'Philosophical Conceptions and Practical Results,' *University of California Chronicle* (1898); reprinted slightly revised in 'The Pragmatic Method,' *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods* 1 (1904): 673-87; reprinted in part in *Varieties of Religious Experience*: 444; reprinted in part and slightly revised in *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking*, eight volumes (New York, London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1907); reprinted in full in *Collected Essays and Reviews*, eight volumes (New York, London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1920) and in *The Writings of William James*: 345-62. In his letters to Bowne, James often comments that the two philosophers are alike in being 'soldiers' who wage a moral and spiritual battle. Warren Steinkraus notes that 'Bowne saw himself as a protagonist for the truth, as a "fighter" for spiritual ends, as did William James.' Warren E. Steinkraus, 'The Eucken-Bowne Friendship,' *The Personalist* 51 (1970), 402. In his 14 April 1910 letter of condolence, written thirteen days after Bowne's death, James even remarks to Bowne's wife that Bowne was a 'valiant fighter for truth.' The letter is reprinted in full in *Representative Essays*, 194.

95 James, 'Sentiment of Rationality,' 324.

96 Throughout his writings, James states that the pragmatic method is a means of resolving otherwise interminable philosophical disputes. Among other essays, see 'Philosophical Conceptions,' and 'What Pragmatism Means,' in *Pragmatism*: 43-81; first published as part of 'A Defence of Pragmatism,' *Popular Science Monthly* 70 (1907): 193-206, 351-64; and reprinted in *The Writings of William James*: 376-90.

97 See William James, 'Some Metaphysical Problems Pragmatically Considered,' in *Pragmatism*: 85-123; first published in part in 'The Pragmatic Method'; reprinted in *The Writings of William James*, 391.

98 Further, James' way of viewing metaphysics may be more similar to Bowne's than one might think. For example, in remarking that 'Metaphysics means nothing but an unusually obstinate effort to think clearly,' James faintly echoes Bowne's claim that the foremost purpose of metaphysics is to harmonise the mind with itself. William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, eight volumes (New York: Holt, 1890), volume 1, 124.

99 C. S. Peirce, 'How to Make Our Ideas Clear,' first printed in *Popular Science Monthly* 12 (1878): 286-302, as the second paper in the series *Illustrations of the Logic of Science*, which appeared in that journal from 1877-1879; reprinted in *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, eight volumes, ed. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss (vols. 1-6) and Arthur W. Burks (vols. 7-8) (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931-1958), 5.402.

100 See Dotterer for a study of another crucial link between James' and Bowne's perspectives on religion.

101 William James, 'Pragmatism and Religion,' in *Pragmatism*: 273-301; reprinted in *The Writings of William James*, 472.

102 For example, see James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 29-38.

103 James, 'Pragmatism and Religion,' 469.

104 On Bowne's meliorism, see note (55) above and especially Anderson, 'Legacy of Bowne's Empiricism,' and Judith Bradford, 'Amelioration and Expansion: Border Parker Bowne on Moral Theory and Moral Change,' *Personalist Forum* 13,1 (1997): 31-48.

105 Borden Parker Bowne, 'Righteousness the Essence of Religion,' in *The Essence of Religion* (Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1910), 75-76.

106 Even while still a student, Bowne writes: 'The end of the law is love. The purpose for which the whole machinery of religion exists is to elevate those natural sanctities which God has planted in the human heart into controlling and abiding principles. Not to make

us partakers of an alien holiness, but to create within us a pure heart and a clean one is the aim of the Gospel.' Borden Parker Bowne, 'Faith and Morals,' *The Independent* 26 (14 May 1874): 3; reprinted in *Representative Essays*, 175. Steinkraus mentions on 186*n*.1 that Bowne wrote the piece while a student at the University of Halle in Germany. Bowne even goes so far as to claim that 'It is really an open question whether the ethics of religious persons is notably better than the ethics of others of the same opportunities and social standing, or whether, if there be any difference, it is due to their religion,' and that 'If faith and morals are really in conflict, humanity can better dispense with the former than with the latter.' Bowne, 'Righteousness,' 81; 'Faith and Morals,' 174. See also Bowne's 'Relation of Ethics to Theism: or Is There Morality Without God?' *Chautauqua Assembly Herald* 3 (20 August 1878), 3, 7. Bowne often echoes those points in later essays—such as in 'Logic of Religious Belief,' 175, where he exclaims that faith is meant 'to supplement [the moralities], to aid their growth'; and in *Christian Revelation*, 105, where he remarks again that '[T]he end of the law is love; that is, the purpose of the law is to beget love in the heart and life. . . . [T]he fundamental aim is to reproduce Christ in the disciple.' Also in that latter work, as in others, he stresses the supremacy of conscience in religious matters. For example, see 88-89: 'Mechanical interpretations of the atonement have often lent themselves to immoral conclusions, and nothing but a wholesome moral instinct has prevented it in every case'; and 92: '[I]n general, the progress in theology has consisted in adjusting *readings* to those fundamental principles of good sense and good morals to which revelation must conform, if it is to be of any value for us' (emphasis his).

107 Bowne, 'Moral Intuition vs. Utilitarianism,' 69.

108 Bowne, *Christian Revelation*, 28-29. This quotation may leave the impression that Bowne is less open to non-Christian views than he actually is. The following passage from a 12 May 1909 letter from to James may help may serve as a corrective. Bowne writes: 'I thank you for the copy of your paper in the *Popular Science Monthly* which I have read with very great appreciation. I do not think the Absolutists are entirely wrong but they are certainly not nearly so right as they think they are, and you are doing a good service in stoutly contradicting them now and then. As between your view and their view I should certainly side with you, because, as I have before said, I think that absolutist dogmatism is one of the great enemies to be overthrown.' The letter is published in full in *Representative Essays*, 194-95.

109 James, 'Sentiment of Rationality,' 332. See especially two essays by James. First, 'The Moral Philosopher and the Moral Life,' *International Journal of Ethics* 11 (April 1891): 127-137; reprinted in *The Writings of William James*: 610-29. Second, 'On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings,' in *Talks to Teachers on Psychology: and to Students on Some of Life's Ideals* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1912): 229-64; reprinted in *The Writings of William James*: 629-45.

110 Bowne, *Theory of Thought*, 371.

111 I am profoundly grateful to Dr. John Lachs for his invaluable help in the writing of this paper.

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ON KNOWING AND LEARNING:
Lessons from Michael Polanyi and Gilbert Ryle

Georg Hans Neuweg

It might be tempting to ask for the proportion of tacit, compared to explicit, knowledge an individual (or group) has; for the right blend between the two; or whether the importance of tacit knowledge is nowadays increasing, e.g. in working life. Despite these temptations, it ought to be pointed out at the outset that the tacit knowing view cannot (and does not want to) answer such questions. Of course, some people do volunteer an answer. Recently, for example, a business economist enlightened us by estimating the actual percentage of tacit (personal) knowledge in companies at 20-30 % (Böhnisch, 1999). But such a proposition (a) is nonsensical because of the impossibility of quantifying an 'amount' of knowledge. (What is to be measured as explicit knowledge? Words? By counting, or by weighing? What constitutes tacit knowledge? Unspoken words?) It also fails to see (b) that there is not much that is purely tacit knowledge. Man's gift of speech allows him to comment on nearly everything he is able to do and to explicate nearly everything he knows *in some way*. Hence, the question of whether a certain kind of knowledge is describable must always refer to a particular purpose in a particular context, for which a description may or may not be adequate/exhaustive. On the other hand, the economist's assertion fails to see (c), that there is no purely explicit knowledge. Symbols, words, and sentences by themselves contain no knowledge at all. They become meaningful by a tacit act of sense-reading, which is done by a person who looks *through* the symbols at what they refer to (and who might soon forget the text while still having its content in mind). Last but not least, the proposition (d) misses the point of the tacit knowing debate, as do the tempting questions mentioned above. The debate is not about a particular *kind of knowledge* that is to be distinguished from, and added to, explicit knowledge, it is about a different *view of knowledge* in general. (For a brief exposition of the main differences between the tacit knowing view and the cognitive view see the table in Neuweg, 2001, p. 22, 23).

I will therefore begin by presenting a rough sketch of what the tacit knowing view is all about and questioning the intellectualist and objectivist view of knowledge (section 1). Then I will distinguish different meanings of the term 'tacit' and point to different types of tacit knowledge (section 2). Finally, some implications for the process of acquisition of knowledge are discussed (section 3).

1 Knowledge as a substance?

Talking about 'knowledge' (and not, for example, about skill, mastery of an art, understanding, ability, judgment ...) invites us to seek not competences but invisible cognitive repertoires that are supposed to underlie competent behaviour: that is, a hidden mental substance (propositions, programs, rules, algorithms, theories ...), as well as mental processes using that substance. But in ascribing knowledge to people, we impute to them not mentally stored knowledge of this or that sentence, but the ability to perceive, to think, and to act skilfully. We are interested in knowledge *in use* rather than in knowledge *as a state*.

Basically, the tacit knowing view (a) concerns know*ing*, i.e. not mental storage places and their contents, but processes (e.g. perception, judgment, action, thought, discernment, contrivance) and the underlying human dispositions; (b) focuses on the relationship between knowing and its articulated counterpart; and (c) argues that *we know more than we can 'tell'*. This latter proposition usually has one or both of the following meanings:

> (Some) human dispositions are *unformalisable*. It is impossible to program a computer so that, by means of rules, it simulates a knowing person as regards to the particular disposition.

> (Some) human dispositions are *unteachable* solely *by verbal instruction*. It is impossible to instruct a learner verbally in such a way that he follows in the teacher's footsteps as regards to the particular disposition (i.e. so that he understands/can do the same without first-hand experience or demonstrations).

Both meanings are informed by the conviction that it would be dangerous to believe that explicit knowledge of propositions, rules, or theories is a *sufficient* condition for knowing; and that it is even dangerous to believe that such knowledge is always a *necessary* condition. Furthermore, an important corollary is the assertion that all (even the most academic) professions have a craft side, which, once learned, is undetachable from the knowing person.

Such a view stands in opposition to mighty traditions of thought on human insight and action. From the intellectualist or cognitive view point (for a detailed critique see Neuweg, 2000, after Ryle, 1949), knowledge is essentially propositional. Roughly speaking, everything we do is seen as deriving from propositions in our head and from thought processes dealing with these propositions. Seen this way, to do something intelligently is always to do a bit of theory and a bit of practice, practice being nothing but applied theory. (The view admits, that we are often unable to articulate how we proceed in carrying out a task. But

this is said to indicate the proceduralisation of previously conscious rules, the execution of which is now mere routine.) Given this picture, teaching seems to be just transfer of information, and learning seems to be just storage of information.

This concept, of a memory full with conscious and unconscious 'mental' rules and schemata that 'cause' intelligent behaviour, has some important consequences. For the scientist, it suggests that, in order to detect the 'causes' of skilful doing, research in knowledge has to focus on the 'mind', its content and its architecture, rather than on observable behaviour over time. And it suggests that the elicitation and codification of the expert's knowledge is not only of theoretical interest but also of practical importance. To view knowledge as some bulk of conscious and unconscious propositions entails viewing it as more or less easily detachable from knowing subjects. This would have important practical benefits. For example, externalising the substance hidden in the expert's brain enables us to shorten a beginner's learning process. Indeed, if all we know were transposable into words and detachable, we could impart many years of experience to a learner in just a few weeks. Furthermore, if people's knowledge is put down to rules and external procedures, people become replaceable either by machines and technology or by other people.

But not only educationalists and business economists find the idea of 'objective' knowledge tempting, its more famous intercessors have already been seduced. Popper (1972, p. 107, 108), for example, intends to show the existence of a so-called 'world 3' of objective thoughts, existing *independently* of, and in addition to, the (physical) 'world 1' and 'world 2' (the world of states of consciousness, mental states or dispositions to act). Imagine, he says, that some catastrophe destroys our machines and tools together with our subjective knowledge of them and their use, while libraries, as well as our capacity to learn from books, survive. It is clear, he argues, that we would not have difficulty in rebuilding our civilization. Is it?

In the late 1960s, a Canadian research laboratory succeeded in constructing a special device, the so-called TEA-laser. Harry Collins (1985) studied attempts by British laboratories to build copies of the device. The findings strongly challenge Popper's thoughts:

(1) No scientist succeeded in building the laser by using only information found in written sources; they all obtained a crucial component of knowledge through personal contact.

(2) No scientist succeeded in building the laser where the informant was a 'middle man' who had not built the device himself.

(3) Even where the informant had built a device himself, the learner would be unlikely to succeed without some extended period of contact with the informant.

(4) The flow of knowledge was partly invisible, so that scientists did not know whether they had the relevant expertise until they tried it.

Collins concluded that tacit knowledge is a crucial component in laser building, and that, therefore, written information alone turned out to be an inadequate source.

From the predominant intellectualist point of view, such findings are surprising. Given that intelligent action is the outcome of deliberation and knowledge, why should experts be unable to express all that they are able to do in words? Because practice is not always a client of its theory.

Firstly, there is empirical evidence against the intellectualist viewpoint. If knowing and deliberating are *necessary* conditions for skilful action, then what about the skilled expert doing his job intuitively? Following Michael Polanyi (PK, p. 49) '*the aim of a skilful performance is achieved by the observance of a set of rules which are not known as such to the person following them.*' Although, for example, the cyclist knows how to ride a bicycle, he is unable to state the rules of the art; i.e. that in order to compensate for a given angle of imbalance we must take a curve on the side of the imbalance, of which the radius should be proportional to the square of the velocity over the imbalance. And, on the other hand, if knowing and deliberating would be *sufficient* conditions for intelligent action, then what about theorists being unable to do what they know? In an experiment conducted by Renkl et al. (1994), for example, it was shown that graduate students of economics were less successful than laymen in controlling a computer-based economic simulation—maybe not despite, but *because of,* their broader base of explicit knowledge. And finally, it is well known that expert performance can break down if subjects try to focus on specific components of the skill and to govern its execution by rules (see for example Masters, 1992).

Secondly, there is a strong logical argument against the intellectualist point of view (cf. Ryle, 1949). If action is caused by deliberating, intelligent action presupposes intelligent deliberation. Following the intellectualist's construction, deliberation must be caused by further instruction to be intelligent. In order to avoid an infinite regression, the intellectualist must suppose deliberation to be intelligent in itself. That is not just plain wrong (people might deliberate very unintelligently), it is also inconsistent. If there are second-order-acts that are intelligent *per se*, why should there not be also first-order-acts that are intelligent *per se*?

2 The concept of tacit knowledge

Given the fact that people need not necessarily think before acting intelligently (think of the intelligent fluent speaker who talks fluently because he does *not* contemplate his words before he speaks); and that people definitely cannot prescribe all their intelligent behaviour (due to an infinite regression, one could never start acting at all), in what sense, then, are we allowed to ascribe knowledge to people?

It is important to distinguish carefully between knowledge in a psychological sense (first person's knowledge) and knowledge reconstructed from the observer's point of view (third person's knowledge). According to the intellectualist viewpoint, the intuitive actor has propositional knowledge 'in mind', albeit unconsciously. Ryle (1949) has shown that this point of view is subject to a category mistake. The ascribed knowledge-base merely functions as a construction to describe, explain and predict behaviour; the only objective mode of existence for this knowledge is behaviour over time, or, as Ryle (1949, p. 57, emphasis G. N.) puts it: 'Overt intelligent performances are not clues to the workings of minds; they *are* those workings.' People behave as they do not *because* they have 'unconscious' rules in mind but, at best, *as if* they had. In this sense, tacit knowledge is essentially implicit in one's behaviour and does not consist of internally represented rules—although it can be partly reconstructed and symbolised, either by the subject or by the observer. And memory is not a storage place of symbolic representations, it is 'the name we give to the capability of behaving in similar ways in similar situations' (Clancey, 1990, p. 61).

This is not to say that the relationship between know-how and explicit knowledge is just one between practice and its description. It is also one between practice and its intrinsic or extrinsic instruction, of course. But the question, 'What knowledge does the expert unconsciously apply?' turns into two totally different and more fruitful questions:

To what extent does a third person's knowledge *describe* the knowledge of the first person? (Or: To what extent can explicit know-that simulate know-how?)

To what extent is explicit knowledge suited for *instructing* know-how?

2.1 Main meanings of the term 'tacit'

We are now ready to look at three different—though interrelated—meanings of 'tacit', which can be found in the pertinent debate.

(a) Tacit knowing often means doing something intelligently in an intuitive manner. Experienced women and men ordinarily reveal a kind of knowledge that does not stem from a prior act of deliberation.

Although somebody might be able to articulate corresponding rules *before* or *afterwards*, there need not be any self-instruction *during* the course of action. (In some sense, every kind of acting is intuitive as it is impossible to do something and to reflect upon one's own action *at the same time*.) Consequently,

'thinking what I am doing' does not connote 'both thinking what to do and doing it'. When I do something intelligently, i.e. thinking what I am doing, I am doing one thing and not two. My performance has a special procedure or manner, not special antecedents. (Ryle, 1949, p. 32).

(b) By reflecting on our actions we can try to make descriptions of the knowing implicit in them. Know*ing*-in-action becomes know*ledge*-in-action. It is important to note that the term 'knowing' refers to a dynamic quality, whereas 'facts', 'rules' or 'theories' are static. Therefore descriptions of knowing-in-action are always constructions, 'attempts to put into explicit, symbolic form a kind of intelligence that begins by being tacit and spontaneous' (Schön, 1987, p. 25). This leads to the second meaning of 'tacit knowing' as the residue left unsaid by a defective articulation. In this stronger sense tacit knowledge means that 'we can know more than we can tell' (Polanyi, TD, p. 4): Somebody is able to judge or act skilfully without being able to articulate what it is what he knows or, at least, to articulate it appropriately.

The workaday life of the professional, Schön (1983, p. 49, 50) argues, depends heavily on this kind of knowing:

Every competent practitioner can recognise phenomena—families of symptoms associated with a particular disease, peculiarities of a certain kind of building site, irregularities of materials and structures—for which he cannot give a reasonably accurate or complete description. In his day-to-day practice he makes innumerable judgments of quality for which he cannot state adequate criteria, and he displays skills for which he cannot state the rules and procedures. Even when he makes conscious use of research-based theories and techniques, he is dependent on tacit recognitions, judgments, and skilful performances.

(c) Even if the actor is unable to articulate fully what it is what he knows, this need not cause serious problems for detaching knowledge from people: The third person's analysis might reveal the first person's knowledge. In a third and still stronger sense tacit knowledge means that even the third person is unable to describe intelligent action in terms of rules. Here we meet a crucial point. Some psychologists think of tacit knowledge as an assemblage of 'unconscious' rules computed by the actor that careful analysis could reveal. And it might well be that in some cases this view is appropriate. But are these the really interesting cases, when we have human expertise in complex environments and ill-structured domains in mind?

Rules are abstract and standardised whereas the expert has to deal with concrete cases and their variations. As no general proposition can fit every detail of the particular state of affairs, the expert must be sensible. But if we view his good sense as a product of the acknowledgement of further general principles, we end up in an infinite regression of rules and principles. To put it another way: 'To a partly novel situation the response is necessarily partly novel, else it is not a response.' (Ryle, 1976, p.125). Note that the point here is not that skilful acting is 'intuitive'; it might well be highly conscious. But it doesn't follow strict and formalisable rules. It is creative. And this is Ryle's point against the reduction of thinking to mere computation:

When considering abstract questions about the intellect we are apt to treat arithmetical computation as its most typical exercises—as if the best thinkers in their best moments are doing in their heads the sort of things that computing machines do, only much faster, in their complex insides. I don't know where this superstition comes from. Computation is, though very important, so low a form of thinking that a well trained cashier can do lengthy and complex computations while thinking about something else. Moreover, pure computation-tasks offer no scope whatsoever for originality, talent, flair, horse sense, taste, judiciousness in the weighing of evidence, or constructiveness in the building up of chains of argumentation. (Ryle, 1979, p.52).

We sometimes refer to tacit knowledge of this kind as 'common sense'. To deepen our insight into this meaning of 'tacit', it is helpful to distinguish between two types of acts (cf. Collins, 1995). *Behaviour-specific acts* maintain routines. Examples include 'production-line'-type action such as that portrayed by Charlie Chaplin in 'Modern Times'; the standard golf-swing; or simple arithmetical operations. Anyone or anything that can follow the set of rules describing the behaviour can, in effect, reproduce the act. Hence these acts are mechanisable. If we turn to *regular acts* we see that in important cases the same act can be and must be instantiated by many different behaviours, depending on the context at hand. Although this kind of acting is usually 'rule following' and sometimes 'rule establishing', it is very difficult to describe the rules which we follow when we are doing regular action. Collins gives an instructive example:

(I)t is clear that there are rules applying to my actions as a pedestrian because I will get into trouble if I break them—perhaps by walking too close to the single person on an otherwise deserted beach, or by trying to keep too far away from others in a crowded street—but I cannot encapsulate all that I know about the proper way to walk in a formula. The little bits of rule that I can provide—such as those in the previous sentence—are full of undefined terms. I have

not defined 'close', 'distant', nor 'crowded', nor can I define all my terms on pain of regress. What is more, what counts as following the rule varies from society to society and situation to situation. A set recipe for walking will be found wanting on the first occasion of its use in unanticipated circumstances; perhaps the next people on the beach will be in actors in a perfume advertisement playing out the mysterious attractiveness of a particular aroma, while the next people in the street will be living in the time of a contagious epidemic disease!

Note that to act skilfully in working life, we mostly have to act regularly, not behaviour-specifically. It is very common that an effective form of industrial disruption is to act too uniformly, to 'work to rule'. This point becomes especially important where bureaucratic work systems are replaced by individual and organisational flexibility.

2.2 Three different types of tacit knowledge

It should be pointed out that the use of the term 'tacit knowledge' outreaches the realm of doing. We can see this in distinguishing three different types of tacit knowledge.

(a) Whenever we talk about *arts*, e.g. the art of cooking, the art of teaching, or the art of managing, we refer to tacit *knowing-how*, the tacit side of expertise which is more or even other than just the application of theory. Tacit knowing-how comprises all dispositions to judge or act and forms what Polanyi (PK, p. 87) has called the 'ineffable domain'. Polanyi emphatically invites us to accredit 'skills and connoisseurship as valid, indispensable, and definitive forms of knowledge' (M, p. 32, 33), not least because of the necessity of bringing the theoretical body of science to bear on experience:

Students of chemistry, biology, and medicine [...] seek to bridge the gap between the printed text of their books and the facts of experience. They are training their eyes, their ears, and their sense of touch to recognise *the things* to which their textbooks and theories refer. But they are not doing so by studying further textbooks. They are acquiring the skills for testing by their own bodily senses the objects of which their textbooks speak. [...] Textbooks of chemistry, biology, and medicine are so much emtpy talk in the absence of personal, tacit knowledge of their subject matter. The excellence of a distinguished medical consultant or surgeon is due not to his more diligent reading of textbooks but to his skill as a diagnostician and healer—a personal skill acquired through practical experience. His professional distinction therefore lies in a massive body of personal knowledge. (M, p. 31, 32)

The tacit component in connoisseurship and skills is easy to see if we consider motoric skills and impressionistic knowledge. It is difficult to explain how to juggle with five balls, how to class cotton or how to interpret a patient's *facies*; typically the expert

will refer to the 'right feel'. But it is important to see that there is a tacit component even in the most abstract forms of judgment and action. Take, for example, our ability to reason correctly without considering the rules of logic, the art of applying theories of different kinds in a context-sensitive way, or to maintain intelligent practices for which there are no written rules at all; e.g., the practice of invention.

(b) In our behaviour we show also a lot of tacit *knowing-that* that is difficult if not impossible to describe. It is knowledge taken for granted, our cognitive background, interpretative frameworks, viewpoints, paradigms, mental models, beliefs. Again, it is Michael Polanyi (TD, p. 64, 65) who gives an instructive example of the way tacit knowing-that functions. He refers to a letter published by *Nature*, the author of which

> had observed that the average gestation period of different animals ranging from rabbits to cows was an integer multiple of the number π. The evidence he produced was ample, the agreement good. Yet the acceptance of this contribution by the journal was meant only as a joke. No amount of evidence would convince a modern biologist that gestation periods are equal to integer multiples of π. Our conception of the nature of things tells us that such a relationship is absurd, but cannot prescribe how one could prove this.

Following Searle (1983, Ch. 5), it would be a hopeless endeavour to specify all our tacit beliefs, not only because a great number of them are submerged in the subconscious but also for two further reasons: Firstly, they are not individuated (we don't know, for example, how to count them); secondly, in trying to explicate them we would encounter states that are in a sense too fundamental to be called 'beliefs' or elements of 'know-that' (e.g. 'objects offer resistance to touch'—whatever one does with objects, one does not in addition think subconsciously that they offer resistance to touch).

(c) If we use the prevalent signs for knowledge—e.g. the spoken sentence, the text-book, the data base—are we then really talking about knowledge? We are not. Sound waves, printing ink, and magnetic disks are just physical objects, not knowledge, until somebody understands what he or she reads or hears. Knowledge is a psychological phenomenon, not a physical one. Therefore, 'tacit knowledge' might also refer to the *tacit roots of all our explicit knowledge*, i.e. to its semantic and pragmatic basis. 'There is a possibility of knowledge only if one *understands the concepts* used and the contexts in which the sentences are normally used, and that is not the same as having the ability to repeat the sentences parrot-fashion', Molander (1992, p. 14) remarks rightly. And as it is meaning that constitutes knowledge, 'a *wholly* explicit knowledge is unthinkable' (Polanyi, KB, p. 144). All knowledge is, at bottom, tacit, because deprived of their tacit coefficients, all spoken or written words would be meaningless; explicit knowledge must rely on being tacitly understood and applied in order to be knowledge at all.

3. Transmitting and acquiring tacit knowledge

3.1 Basic didactic ideas

It is common knowledge that the acquisition of practical knowledge requires learning by doing. 'We learn *how* by practice, schooled indeed by criticism and example, but often quite unaided by any lessons in the theory', Ryle argues (1949, p. 41). And indeed, shifting the emphasis from expertise in verbalising to expertise in doing supports the view that

> what we need is not so much theories, articles, books, and other conceptual matters, but, first and foremost, concrete situations to be perceived, experiences to be had, persons to be met, plans to be exerted, and their consequences to be reflected upon. (Kessels/Korthagen, 1996, p. 21).

Given that experts always know more than they can tell and even more than anyone could ever formalise, it seems clear that expert knowledge cannot be transmitted by prescription alone. Hence, tacit knowledge, at least in the strong sense, has to be learned implicitly: 'An art which cannot be specified in detail cannot be transmitted by prescription, since no prescription for it exists.' (Polanyi, PK, p. 53). Some authors even define the concept of tacit knowledge by its didactic implications, as does Molander (1992, p. 11):

> Knowledge transmitted through models or exemplars—through exemplary action, as in the master-apprentice relationship—and knowledge which is attained through training and personal experience may be called 'tacit knowledge'. This is a good label because the core of such knowledge does not consist of verbal or mathematical formulations, it consists of abilities to make judgments and to do things in practice, skilfully and with insight.

Although tacit knowledge is not teachable, it is coachable. What must be left unspoken is to be attained through personal experience and be transmitted within master-apprentice relationships and cultures of expert practice. Polanyi's analysis of tacit knowledge leads him to advocate apprenticeship as indispensable for the acquisition of tacit knowledge. He emphasises that skills, whether practical or intellectual, can be passed on only by example from master to apprentice: 'By watching the master and emulating his efforts in the presence of his example, the apprentice unconsciously picks up the rules of the art, including those which are not explicitly known to the master himself.' (PK, p. 53). Because the range of diffusion is restricted to that

of personal contact, traditions of how to act skilfully may be lost if they fall into disuse for the period of a generation. Polanyi gives the example of violin-making (SC, p. 387):

> It is pathetic to watch the endless efforts, equipped with microscopes and chemistry, with mathematics and electronics, to reproduce a single violin of the kind that half literate Stradivarius turned out as a matter of routine more than 200 years ago.

Furthermore, Polanyi argued that this apprenticeship must be an uncritical one. The more hidden the rules, the more the apprentice must surrender himself uncritically to the imitation of the master and the more he has to be convinced that there is something important to learn. Indeed, the paradox of learning a new competence lies in the fact that 'a student cannot at first understand what he needs to learn, can learn it only by educating himself, and can educate himself only by beginning to do what he does not yet understand.' (Schön, 1987, p. 93).

Within the realm of tacit knowledge, Polanyi pays special attention to connoisseurship. This faculty has to be trained case-based. The importance of case-based instruction can be exemplified by the practice of Common Law (PK, p. 53, 54). Courts follow precedents considered in other courts, for they see the rules of law embodied in prior decisions. In doing so, they recognise that practical wisdom is more truly embodied in action than in expressed rules of action. From this, common education in schools and universities could learn a lot. It often teaches what to do in situations of a certain type by representing these situations as verbal vignettes. But in reality, we have to react to situations, not words. To choose a particular course of action requires a correct subsumption of the concrete situation in general terms. This faculty of judgment and discrimination is essential for applying the appropriate rules (if there are any). But it cannot be developed by simply giving further rules, for what one must learn to recognise is a situational pattern in which the elements might vary, and the meaning of a situational detail is always context-related (cf. Neuweg, 2001, ch. 12, for more details on expertise and pattern recognition).

Beyond these more or less obvious didactic ideas, further hints can be derived by studying Polanyi's concept of tacit knowledge more closely. It basically rests upon an analysis of the architecture and working of human consciousness. Within this framework, learning appears as a process of *interiorisation*, of making things function as if they were part of our body (cf. Neuweg, 1998). The learning process aims at the instrumentalisation of elements, objects, actions, theories, in the service of some purpose. Therefore, the master ought to encourage the learner to direct his or her attention primarily to the object being worked on, and only subsidiarily to the theoretical and practical means applied. To establish relationships between parts and wholes and between means and ends, to endow parts and means with meaning, the learner must concentrate on the 'distal' (Polanyi), the situation's 'back-talk' (Schön), the overall context or purpose. By doing so, the learner becomes aware of elements, objects and actions not in themselves but as tools; in terms of operational results achieved through their use. For if the learner experiences his actions

> only subsidiarily, in terms of an achievement to which they contribute, its performance may select from them those which the performer finds helpful, without ever knowing these as they would appear to him when considered in themselves. [...] Hence the practical discovery of a wide range of not consciously known rules of skill and connoisseurship which comprise important technical processes that can rarely be completely specified, and even then only as a result of extensive scientific research. (PK, p. 62).

Polanyi would have strongly agreed with Schön (1987, p. 158) in saying that the learner needs to grasp a skill 'as a whole in order to grasp it at all [...]; for the pieces tend to interact with one another and to derive their meanings and characters from the whole process in which they are embedded.' This is not to say that all tacitly learned pieces would be unspecifiable; but drawing attention to them would disintegrate performance and deprive them of their meaning.

3.2 Some caveats and qualifying remarks

Parts of the tacit knowing debate tend to overemphasise the difference between theoretical and experiential knowledge, and to overlook the benefits of critical reflection. At least the following remarks should therefore be added:

(1) Much of what we learn is picked up incidentally, and often one can do the learning better if the mind doesn't get in the way of its analysis and rules. But even if knowledge has to be considered as tacit to a large extent, this does not imply that it has to be learned wholly implicitly, i.e. without explicit instruction and without conscious attempts to detect underlying rules. In most cases, learning involves some balance or see-saw between relatively controlled, analytical and more spontaneous, integrative processes, the right blend varying both with the person and the subject being learned. In particular, it is sometimes necessary to draw the learner's focal attention to the details and to formulate pedagogically helpful rules (for this reason, a master is not necessarily a good teacher for beginners).

Although Polanyi argued that 'an unbridled lucidity can destroy our understanding of complex matters' (TD, p. 18), he was fully aware of the benefits of

analysis, and thought 'an oscillation of detailing and integrating' to be 'the royal road for deepening our understanding of any comprehensive entity' (SEP, p. 333). A continual journey back and forth between analysis and synthesis is highly desirable, provided that analysis helps to render more of the tacit components focally known, without disintegrating our central focal meaning beyond repair. Polanyi gives the example of motion studies, which tend to paralyse a skill, but will improve it when followed up with practice. In cases of this kind, 'the detailing of particulars, which by itself would destroy meaning, serves as a guide to their subsequent integration and thus establishes a more secure and more accurate meaning of them.' (TD, p. 19). Furthermore, in many cases the destructive effects of analysis can be counteracted by explicitly stating the relation between the particulars. 'Where such explicit integration is feasible', says Polanyi (TD, p.19), 'it goes far beyond the range of tacit integration.' (Nevertheless, one must see that an explicit integration cannot replace its tacit counterpart. The skill of a driver cannot be replaced by schooling in the theory of the motorcar, nor are the rules of rhyme or prosody necessary conditions for enjoying a poem, and indeed, they can even destroy enjoyment.)

(2) Polanyi's idea of a see-saw between experience, analysis, reflection, and integration is closely related to the more elaborate concept of reflection to be found in the work of Donald Schön (1983, 1987). If a practitioner reflects in the midst of action, he focuses 'interactively on the outcomes of action, the action itself, and the intuitive knowing implicit in the action' (Schön, 1983, p. 56), always attending to the peculiarities of the situation at hand. This is what Schön calls reflection-in-action. He makes clear that it would be mistaken to view the alternation between analysis and integration as nothing more than an intermediary state in the process of becoming an expert. The very practice that leads to expertise also endangers it: Tacit knowledge is often tacit blindness. Therefore, the question, 'how one could combine a critical stance towards knowledge with the protection and cultivation of "tacit" aspects of knowledge, if this is at all possible', has rightly been identified as a key problem concerning unarticulated knowledge (Molander, 1992, p. 10). An expert is not only a person who acts intuitively, but also someone who has not ceased to learn!

(3) In many domains, the emphasis on tacit knowledge should not seduce us into underestimating the necessity of a broad theoretical background for skilful action. Take the example of medical diagnosis, to which Polanyi often refers. The identification of a specific disorder surely requires massive experiential background; but the expert's ability to perceive significant patterns of illness is also necessarily dependent upon his knowledge of medical theory. In general, the relationship between tacit knowing and the professional knowledge taught in schools should be treated as an open question, the answer depending on the respective task.

What remains tacit and has to be learned experientially, however, is the knowledge of how to apply theory to phenomena. Application can never build upon a theory of application. Furthermore, what might become tacit in the course of time are the details of theory in its propositional form. The expert might be aware of the theory just in terms of the phenomena that are seen in its light, because for gaining an understand of a situation, one need not be fully conscious of what one has studied in order to use it interpretively: 'A theory', Polanyi argues,

> is like a pair of spectacles; you examine things by it, and your knowledge of it lies in this very use of it. You dwell in it as you dwell in your own body and in the tools by which you amplify the powers of your body. (M, p. 37; see also Broudy, 1970, for an analysis of tacit 'knowing with').

(4) Given that instruction and theoretical studies form an essential part of a curriculum, where should they be placed? Remembering that all explicit knowledge has and must have tacit roots, it is clear that not only do we sometimes need a great deal of instruction to understand experience; we also need a great deal of experience to understand a theory's meaning or what instruction is telling us. What the learner sees is to a large extent dependent on what he hears the master say; yet the meaningfulness of what he hears is itself at the same time dependent on his capacity to see what the words indicate. That is why Schön (1987, p. 103) pleads for instructions in the context of the student's doing: 'Instructions are always and inevitably incomplete. Unless we already know how to do the thing in question, there is always a gap between the instruction and the action it describes—a gap we are unlikely to detect, except when we listen in the mode of operative attention.' Polanyi strongly agrees that rules should be observed within the context of skilful performance, as 'the premises of a skill cannot be [...] understood if explicitly stated by others, before we ourselves have experienced its performance, whether by watching it or by engaging in it ourselves.' (PK, p. 162)

Theoretical as well as experiential learning might therefore benefit greatly if connected in parallel. If we synchronise language and things, we will always find a dual movement of comprehension (and if the two fall wholly apart we risk the danger of a lack of comprehension in both realms). To illustrate this dual act of sense-reading, Polanyi uses the vivid example of a medical student attending a course in X-ray diagnosis of pulmonary diseases. He watches shadowy traces on a fluorescent screen and hears the radiologist commenting to his assistants. At first he can see

nothing that is talked about nor does he understand the language used. But as he goes on listening for a few weeks the pictures begin to make sense—and so do the comments made about them:

Thus, at the very moment when he has learned the language of pulmonary radiology, the student will also have learned to understand pulmonary radiograms. *The two can only happen together.* Both halves of the problem set to us by an unintelligible text, referring to an unintelligible subject, jointly guide our efforts to solve them, and they are solved eventually together by discovering a conception which comprises *a joint understanding of both the words and the things.* (PK, p. 101, emphasis mine).

In this, I think, is much wisdom—more than I can tell ...

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22 ibidem, Tarchi 1995), p. 215 'Certainly, the AN is the realisation of an idea already present in the 50s. The AN is the final result of a long process which allowed a legitimate political citizenship' (my trans.).
23 See for reference above in the paper
24 *Tesi di Fiuggi*, 1995 chap. I
25 See above Freeden's model
26 Elements of radical nostalgia are of course present in the party but alongside them, the strategy to move toward the centre is stronger
27 See for reference above in the paper
28 ibidem, Tesi 1995), chap. II, p. 2
29 Forza Italia is a right-wing party founded by the Italian media tycoon Silvio Berlusconi
30 ibidem Tesi 1995), chap. II, p. 5
31 Fisichella, D. , *La Destra in Cammino. Alle origini di Alleanza Nazionale*, Edizioni Percorsi, Assisi, 1998
32 ibidem, Fisichella 1998), p. 10
33 ibidem, Fisichella 1998), p. 14
34 ibidem Fisichella 1998), p. 16

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